

## GIVING and OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

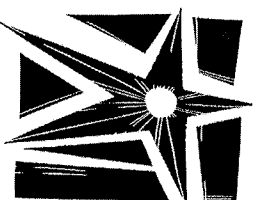
ELCA Good Gifts—a catalog is available in the office or you can go on-line to [ELCA.org/goodgifts](http://ELCA.org/goodgifts) to see the catalog. Purchase some chicks or a goat! Items are God's Global Barnyard, clean water, women & children, agriculture, health & nutrition, and more.

Hope Haven's "Night by Night" is back! "Helping the Homeless One Night At A Time" Sponsor a night for \$25 which provides 3 meals, and warm bed for the night and services for 1 person. Mail your donation to: Hope Haven, 1145 Rushmore Dr, Dekalb IL 60115 or visit their website at [www.hopehavendekalb.com](http://www.hopehavendekalb.com).

Please help support the Rochelle Veterinary Hospital's team as they travel with the Christian Veterinary Missions to do a short-term trip in Belize in July 2025. Our own Dawn George will be traveling with this group as she works at the Rochelle Vet Hospital. More information is available in the church office.

Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Naperville will be hosting a dinner on February 22, 2024, to raise money for their trip in 2026 to Mozambique. The school at the Lutheran Church in Chimoi, Mozambique has 300 children and use ePap Food Nutrition to feed the children. The principal of the school and his wife will be in attendance to share their opportunity. Contact [saragmito@gmail.com](mailto:saragmito@gmail.com) or 630-386-7194 if you need more information.

The Civil Rights Tour will be held September 19-26, 2025. Information and pricing is available in the office. The tour is being coordinated by Compass Travel in Dekalb.



## Bethlehem Star

December 2024



Grace and peace from the one was and is and is to come again, Jesus the Christ. As we enter this new time in the Church year of Advent, we're continuing to explore what it means to bless people by looking at the "E" in the acronym BLESS. Here are the highlights of this way to move toward spiritual conversations with others.

- B – Begin with prayer. Pray and ask God to open doors and provide opportunities to begin forming relationships with your neighbors and others you don't know well.
- L – Listen with care. Listen to their stories, learn more about them, and work at building connections. Invite them to Blue Christmas on December 18<sup>th</sup> @ 4pm or Christmas Eve @ 4pm.
- E – Eat together. Share a meal with your neighbors or friends. We all can think of a time someone made us feel welcomed and valued, simply by having a meal together.
- S – Serve in love. Maybe you've heard the phrase, "See a need, meet a need." Make a habit of noticing your neighbors or friends needs and helping where you can.
- S – Share the story of what God has done. After putting in the leg work to build a relationship, now is the time to share what God has done in your life and what Jesus means to you. Share the Christmas story.

Eating is one of the fastest ways to move a relationship from acquaintance to friendship. Who can you eat with (or have a coffee with) in this month of feasting that is far from God? Who can you try a new recipe together with? How about gathering some friends or family or a neighbor and create a meal or have a cookie exchange (that's what I am doing). Bake some cookies or special Christmas treats together.

Bonding over a shared activity like food creates a great space to start some meaningful conversations.

So I have an assignment for you this month. My assignment is to eat! Yes, in this season of seemingly endless opportunities for consumption, I am telling you that this week I want you to **intentionally eat**. Eat with a neighbor you don't know well. Eat with a family member or friend. You already probably eat three meals a day, seven days a week, so you don't have to do anything different— just use any of the 21 opportunities to bless a friend or neighbor by sharing a meal or treat together.

I invite you at the beginning of every week to pick just one meal or one treat/coffee to bless someone. You are not adding one single minute to your schedule. You are being a blessing by including someone in something you're already doing. What a way to be a blessing and welcome King Jesus as we remember his birth as a babe in Bethlehem and await his coming again. Be intentional! I can't wait to hear your stories!!

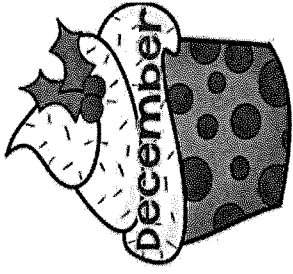
Blessings on your Advent Journey,  
Pr. Sharon

## Blue Christmas Service December 18th Service begins at 4 pm

While the holidays can intensify grief, there is hope. The truth is not everyone is up and cheery for the upcoming Christmas holidays. Dealing with the death of a loved one, facing life after divorce or separation, coping with the loss of a job, living with cancer or some other disease that puts a question mark over the future, and a number of other human situations make parties and joviality painful for people in churches and communities.

*A Blue Christmas service is reflective, accepting where we really are, and holding out healing and hope.*

Presented by Pastor Sharon Rogers



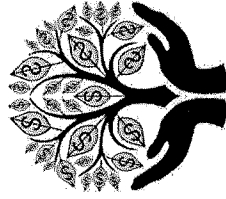
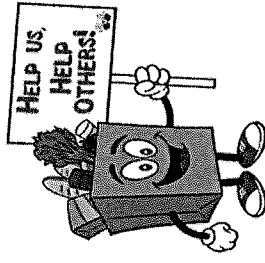
## Happy Birthday!

1	Richard Stokke
8	Joe Inboden
9	Helen Vlahakis
15	Randy Huffman
20	Noah Brooks
26	Margaret Hayes

## Bethlehem Feed My Sheep Food Pantry

The October clients served are as follows:

	2024	2023
# Households	647	510
# Individuals	1870	1653
# Children	537	555
# of Pantries	10	9



### Current Finances:




Income	6,715.00
Expenses	-12,702.84
Shortfall	- 5,987.84

OFFICE HOUR INFO: Monday 8-1  
 Wednesday 8-1  
 Thursday 8-1  
 Phone: 815-758-3203

Website: [bethlehemdekalb.org](http://bethlehemdekalb.org)  
 E-mail: [belcdekalb@comcast.net](mailto:belcdekalb@comcast.net)  
 Facebook: [bethlehemdekalb](https://www.facebook.com/bethlehemdekalb)

If you'd like anything to be included in the December newsletter, please have it to the office by December 20. Thank you.

# December

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
9:30 Worship 1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday in Advent	2 Office open 8-1 7:15 FMS Delivery 12:30 Cut-Ups	3 3-5 FMS Pantry	4 Office open 8-1 10:30 FMS Pick up Noon-VAC Lunch	5 Office open 8-1 8:30 FMS Pick-up 9:30-11:30 FMS Pantry 10:30 Martha's Sisters	6 8:30/9:30 FMS Pick-up	
8 9:30 Worship 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Advent <i>Part 1 Annual Meeting</i>	9 Office open 8-1 12:30 Cut-Ups 7 pm Council Meeting	10 3-5 FMS Pantry 9:30 Sarah Circle	11 Office open 8-1 10:30 FMS Pick up Noon-VAC Lunch	12 Office open 8-1 8:30 FMS Pick-up 9:30-11:30 FMS Pantry 10:30 Martha's Sisters	13 8:30/9:30 FMS Pick-up	14
15 9:30 Worship 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Advent <i>Christmas Potluck Brunch following worship</i>	16 Office open 8-1 12:30 Cut-Ups	17 7:15-FMS Delivery 3-5 FMS Pantry	18 Office open 8-1 10:30 FMS Pick-up Noon-VAC Lunch 4 pm-Blue Christmas Service	19 Office open 8-1 8:30 FMS Pick-up 9:30-11:30 FMS Pantry 10:30 Martha's Sisters	20 8:30/9:30 FMS Pick-up	21
22 9:30 Worship 4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday in Advent	23 Office open 8-1 12:30 Cut-Ups	24 <i>Christmas Eve Worship at 4 pm</i> 	25 	26 Office open 8-1 10:30 Martha's Sisters	27 8:30/9:30 FMS Pick-up	28
29 9:30 Worship 1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday of Christmas <i>Service of Carols</i>	30 Office open 8-1 12:30 Cut-Ups	31 3-5 FMS Pantry	1 	2 8:30/9:30 FMS Pick-up	3 8:30/9:30 FMS Pick-up	4

