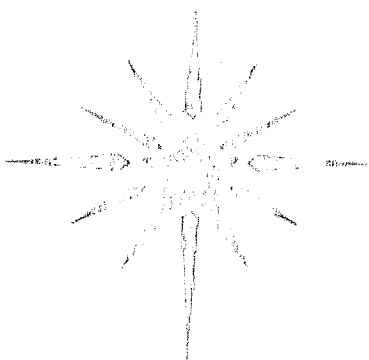




The Bethlehem Star

October 2026



Dear Bethlehem Family,

By the time this newsletter lands in your hands, the corn that was still standing gold in the fields around DeKalb County a few weeks ago will mostly be in the bin, and the harvest we talked about a few Sundays back — the urgency of it, the long hours, the way grace in that vineyard parable had nothing to do with how early anyone showed up — will have given way to stubble fields and shorter days. I keep thinking about that image as we move into October: how much of faith is learning to trust a harvest we didn't plant on our own timeline, and to receive grace we didn't earn by getting there first.

October has a way of asking something of us that September doesn't. The light changes. The air turns. And somewhere in the middle of pulling out sweaters and raking the first leaves, most of us start doing a little harvesting of our own — taking stock of the year, wondering what's grown and what still needs tending. I hope this month gives you some space for that kind of honest accounting, and I hope you don't do it alone. That's what this congregation is for.

Reformation Sunday — October 25 This year we'll observe Reformation Sunday on October 25th, remembering Martin Luther's insistence, five centuries ago, on a truth this congregation still tries to live out every week: that we are saved by grace, through faith, and not by our own effort or merit. It's worth noticing how much that Reformation conviction rhymes with the harvest parable we sat with last month — the last paid the same as the first, not because the math worked out, but because grace was never wages in the first place. Wear red if you've got it, and join us as we give thanks for a church that is always being reformed, never quite finished, and entirely held by grace rather than our own performance.

All Saints Sunday Is Coming — November 1 A heads-up now, in October, because grief doesn't wait for a calendar to catch up with it. On Sunday, November 1st, we'll observe All Saints Sunday and remember, by name, the members of our Bethlehem family who have died in the past year. If you have a loved one — a member or not — you'd like named and remembered in that service, please let the church office know by October 25th so we can prepare.

Fall Fellowship and a Practical Reminder Watch the bulletin for details on our trunk-or-treat gathering for neighborhood families. This is a wonderful, low-key way to invite a neighbor who hasn't found a church home yet.

And a friendly, practical note: Daylight Saving Time ends on Sunday, November 1st — the same day as All Saints Sunday. Set your clocks back Saturday night so you don't miss worship

A Closing Thought I keep coming back to something from Jonah this fall — the prophet sitting under his dying bush, furious that God's mercy was wider than he wanted it to be. I don't think I'm alone in occasionally being more like Jonah than I'd like to admit: quietly keeping a ledger of who deserves what, surprised and a little resentful when grace shows up somewhere I didn't expect it. October seems like as good a month as any to lay that ledger down. The harvest doesn't ask who got there first. Neither, thank God, does the God who calls us into it.

Grace and peace,

Pastor Sharon

Pulpit Schedule

October

4 -- Pastor Bob Hansen

11 -- Pastor Sharon Rogers

18 -- Pastor Bob Hansen

25 -- Pastor Sharon Rogers

October Birthdays

17 Kevin Breuer

26 Ted Woodin



Feed My Sheep Food Pantry

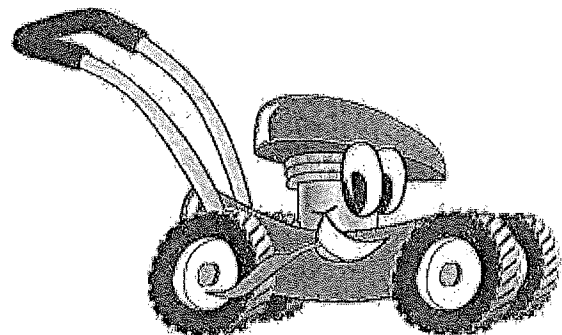
The AUGUST clients served are as follows:

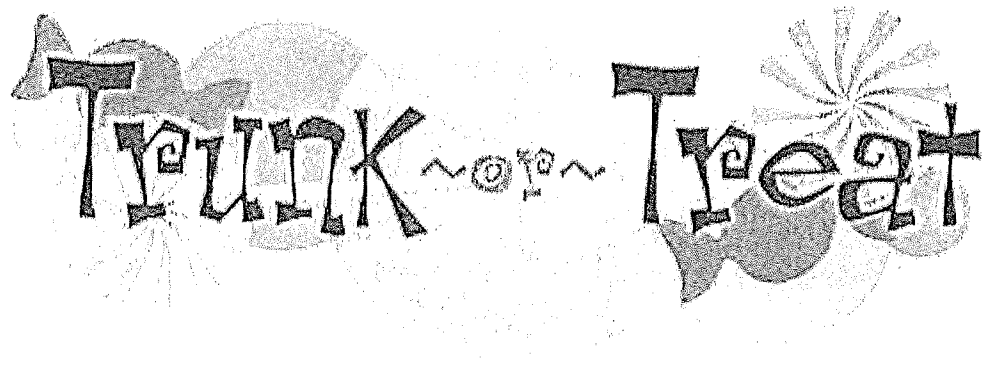


	2026	2025
Households	462	520
Individuals	1423	1673
Children	408	563
# of Pantries	8	8

THANK YOU!

We want to give a shout out to Ann Brooks, Mat Brown, and Andy Velez. You did an amazing job making the lawn look great this summer.





**SAVE THE DATE TO
JOIN US FOR SOME FUN!**

**LOAD UP YOUR
TRUNK WITH TREATS**

October 17th

2-4 pm

Bethlehem Lutheran Church

1915 N First Street

DeKalb

Everyone is welcome to join Martha's Sisters Zoom on Thursday mornings at 10:30. The zoom usually lasts about an hour.

Martha's Sisters will be starting a new book series: "Together by Grace" - Bible Conversations focusing on the Psalms.

What are the Psalms?

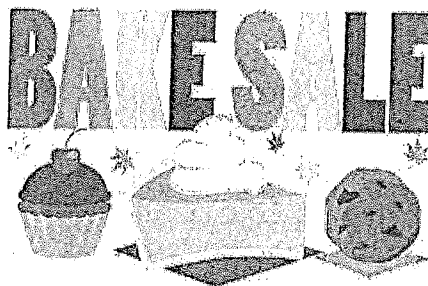
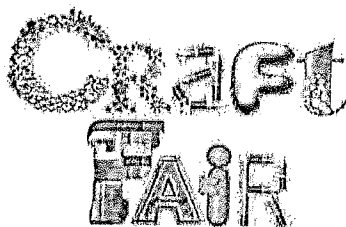
The book of Psalms (also called the Psalter) contains 150 prayers, songs, liturgies, and poems. These works were used by individuals, ancient communities of God's people, and Israelite kings. This includes a wide variety of psalms:

- Prayers for help
- Hymns of Praise
- Liturgies
- Instructional psalms
- Songs of thanksgiving
- Royal psalms
- Trust psalms
- Acrostic poems
- Festival psalms
- Historical psalms

Martin Luther wrote that the book of Psalms might well be called a little Bible. In it is comprehended most beautifully and briefly everything that is in the entire Bible. It is really a fine enchiridion or handbook. In fact, I have a notion that the Holy Spirit wanted to take the trouble himself to compile a short Bible and book of examples of all Christendom or all saints, so that anyone who could not read the whole Bible would here have anyway the almost an entire summary of it, comprised in one little book. (LW 353:254).

Save the dates for some fun Upcoming Events at Club 55:

- 10/1 TRIAD Senior Safety & Prevention Fair from 10-Noon.
- 10/6 Kristie Cooks at 11:30 am – Asian egg roll bowls
- 10/7 FSA Community Action Lunch and Learn at noon
- 10/13 Addus Memory Lane: Fall Comfort Foods from 11:30-12:30
- 10/16 Halloween Costume Party from Noon-1:30. Surprise menu, spirited games, and contests.
- 10/19 Trick or Treat Trivia with Heritage Woods at 9:30 am.
- 10/22 Jonamac Orchard trip – 10-1 - Leave at 9:45. Bus is \$8. Admission to orchard is free.
- 10/30 Soups and Scoops Potluck at noon



4th Annual Makers and Bakers Holiday Market

Handcrafted Gifts
Festive Baked Treats

Local artists , crafters, bakers, and artisans share their creations at a gathering filled with holiday cheer and community spirit.

Saturday
November 14
10 am – 2 pm

DeKalb Senior Center
1915 N First Street

OCTOBER 2026

Monday thru Thurs 8-1
Phone: 815-758-3203
Website: bethlehemdekalb.org
Email: belcdekalb@comcast.net
Facebook: bethlehemdekalb

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

1

2

3

8-1 Office Open
8:30 FMS Pick-up
9:30-11:30 FMS
Pantry
10:30 Martha's
Sisters

8:30/9:30
FMS Pick-up



4

5

6

7

8

9

10

9:30 Worship
Pentecost 19

7:30 FMS Truck
Delivery
12:30 Cut-Ups

8-1 Office Open
3-5 FMS Pantry
7:00-9:30
HarmonEssence

8-1 Office Open
10:30 FMS Pick-up
Noon-VAC Lunch

8-1 Office Open
8:30 FMS Pick-up
9:30-11:30 FMS
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10:30 Martha's
Sisters

8:30/9:30
FMS Pick-up

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

9:30 Worship
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Sisters

8:30/9:30
FMS Pick-up
2-4



18

19

20

21

22

23

24

9:30 Worship
Pentecost 21

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25

26

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31

9:30 Worship
Reformation
Sunday

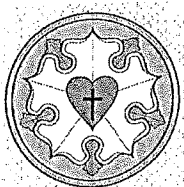
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A Life Stitched with Purpose

At 94 years old, Charlotte Kirkegaard is retiring from her decades-long service, yet her legacy of love will remain stitched in time forever.

Her quilting ministry started in the 1960s when her late husband, Rev. Anton Kirkegaard, was serving a congregation in Iowa. Years later, after moving to Osage, Charlotte joined her church's quilting group and was invited to help make quilts for Lutheran World Relief. She quickly embraced the challenge — and encouraged fellow quilters to make 100 quilts in just one month.

They met the goal, igniting a ministry that would span decades.



Over time, Charlotte transformed her basement into her own quilt factory. At her most productive, she completed a quilt or more every day. Her family estimates she has made nearly 4,000 quilts for her neighbors in need over the years!

Reaching neighbors who need her help all over the world motivates Charlotte. "I think about how these go to so many places people will never travel to," Charlotte says. "There's a lot of people that work together for this amazing thing. **It makes a difference.**"

Her faith has sustained that conviction through the years and so has the generosity of her community. Friends and neighbors who are inspired by her dedicated service regularly donate fabric, sometimes leaving bundles on her doorstep or in her garage. When supplies run low, Charlotte again channels her faith.

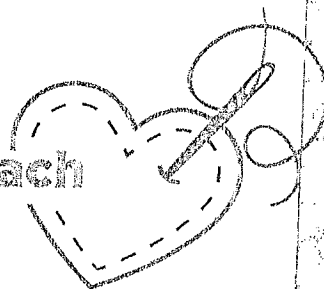
"I pray for fabric," she says. And somehow, more always seems to appear on her doorstep.

After more than 20 years of quilting for Lutheran World Relief, Charlotte's legacy is measured not only in the thousands of quilts she has created, but also in the countless lives she has touched along the way.

Ken Wendt, a custodian at Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Osage, has known Charlotte for at least 20 years. "Charlotte is a very special lady," he says. "And humble. She is an artist of recycling; no fabric ever goes to waste. And there's nothing she couldn't do with a needle and thread."

With every stitch, Charlotte reminds all of us that selfless acts of compassion can travel farther than we can imagine. ○

The Global Reach of LWR Quilts



To truly appreciate the significance of Charlotte's work, consider how quilts impact our neighbors in need:

- In a refugee camp in the DRC, quilts provided warmth during cold nights and a sense of security to neighbors in uncertain times when no one else could reach them.
- After the hurricanes, tornadoes, flooding, wildfire and other disasters ravaged states across the U.S., quilts offered comfort, warmth and hope to families who lost everything, reminding them that they were not alone.
- In Tanzania, LWR quilts prevent childhood stunting by providing warmth, helping little ones conserve energy for growth instead of body heat.

Each quilt tells a story of hope and resilience, stitched together by hands like Charlotte's.

