

Bethlehem Lutheran Church e-Blaze for February 1, 2024

Office Hours: Tuesday - Friday 9:00am - 3:00pm

317-283-6559

This Sunday is Service Project Sunday: Laundry Fair.

General Operating Net Income Update and Appeal

The Employee Retention Tax Credit ("ERTC") is a tax credit for businesses and tax-exempt organizations that retained employees and were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. After filing for this tax credit, we received \$50,191 from the IRS in August and expect to receive about \$4,000 more. This is a one-time tax credit and will not provide ongoing income for the church.

Excluding the ERTC receipts, as of December 30, 2023, net income for Bethlehem's general operating fund for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2023 and ending June 30, 2024 was **(\$17,957)**, which is a negative figure. Actual non-ERTC receipts for the period were \$171,633 as compared to budgeted receipts of \$192,578. Actual expenses for the fiscal year were \$189,590 as compared to budgeted expenses of \$192,578. The main driver of the negative net income figure was smaller giving totals of \$17,423 in September, \$19,837 in October and \$25,422 in November. We need pledges and offerings of \$31,913 per month to be on budget. This amounts to \$7,365 per week.



Although giving was strong in December, it was not strong enough to push regular net income into positive territory. Please check your funds available and consider additional giving. Regular giving is most helpful for meeting monthly expenses, and this can be automated via [VANCO](#) or your bank's bill paying service.

Please consider this information and the church's ongoing financial needs as you complete your 2024 operating pledge in the next couple of weeks. We pray our pledge process enables Bethlehem to have a sound,

predictable financial basis as we all strive to be good stewards of the gifts God gave us. Thank you for your financial support of the ministries here at Bethlehem.

Bill Slover, Finance/Endowment Ministry

Service Sunday project - A reminder of this Sunday's February Service Sunday event at 9:00 a.m. serving [Laundry & More](#), a Lawrence-based organization that exists for families to wash their clothes and bedding for free. To see more of the impact Laundry & More provides, check out this [video](#). Laundry & More volunteers will join us for our laundry fair held in Fellowship Hall, where the Bethlehem Youth will have set up games, popcorn and treats. Monetary donations will be collected for Laundry & More (they spend about \$11 per family for coins in the laundry machines)-please consider **donating quarters, dollars, and checks made out to BLC (note Laundry & More in the memo line)**. In addition to **financial donations, we are collecting laundry detergent pods, waterless detergent sheets, dryer sheets, and clean heavy-duty garbage bags**. They are not collecting liquid detergent at this time.

Laundry & More also provides sandwiches to the 40-50 families they serve at each washing, and while the "fair fun" is happening in Fellowship Hall, volunteers will assemble sandwiches in the kitchen.

Save the Date for March 3 Service Sunday which will include a supplies drive for the [Indiana Prison Writer's Workshop](#) and a blood drive through Versiti.

Greetings from your **2024 Nominating Committee** – Katie Bredehoeft, John Jordan, Julie Smith, Josh Tatum, John Todd and MaryBeth Wott. We are seeking nominations for Church Council and Synod Representatives. If you have a name to suggest or you are interested, please contact MaryBeth Wott in person or at mbwott@att.net by February 13.

Sharing Books: reminder, date change for February due to Shrove Tuesday, Ash Wednesday and Valentine's Day. We will meet on **Monday, February 5 at 7pm** to discuss The Chocolatier by Jan Moran. Refreshments (chocolate, of course!)

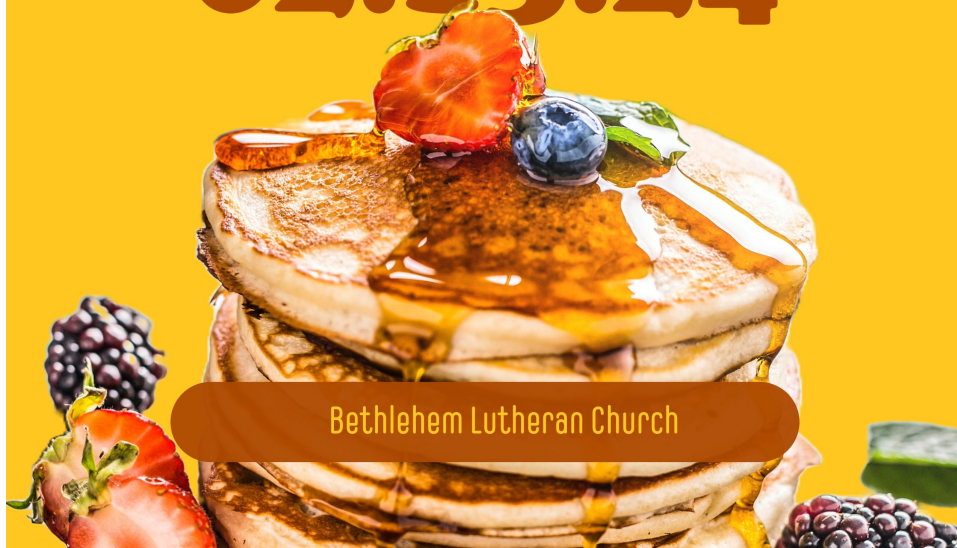
Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner

Fundraiser to support BLC Youth

6:30PM

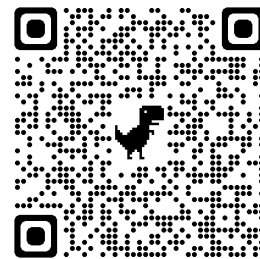
**All-you-can-eat
Pancakes
Sausage**

02.13.24



Stewardship Campaign needs

you! Thank you to all that have completed their pledge. Current pledges are under what we received last year. The Council and Finance Committee need pledges to plan our budget for the upcoming fiscal year.



Please faithfully consider what you are able to pledge to Bethlehem, so we may continue our church and community programs. Use this QR code, the paper pledge cards (found in the hallway outside the church office OR [here](#), to complete a pledge. Thank you!!



Calling all bakers! The Youth are hosting a Dessert Auction during the Chili Cook Off on Sunday, February 18th to raise money for the National Youth Gathering this summer. Please bring your most scrumptious cakes, pies, or other confections to be auctioned off to the highest bidder. We need treats of all kinds and the more, the better. If you are able to contribute a dessert for the auction, please email Candice Tatum at ctatum@indylutheran.org or sign up on the bulletin board, and plan to bring your treat to church on the 18th. Storebought items are also welcome!

2024 Fellowship Plans January-March:

And oh so quickly, it is a new year. We return to our traditional 3rd Sunday get together on January 21 and March 17, with pitch-in brunches at 9am. Please be sure to mark your dishes with ingredients to help those with food allergies (gluten, nuts, dairy, sugar free, etc). February brings a twist. Instead of a 9am pitch-in brunch, the BLC chili Cook-off returns immediately *following* worship on February 18, details in separate article. Easter is on March 31 (a fifth Sunday) and we celebrate with a champagne reception following the Easter Vigil, and a continental brunch at 9am on Easter Sunday itself.

The Bethlehem Chili Cookoff Returns, February 18

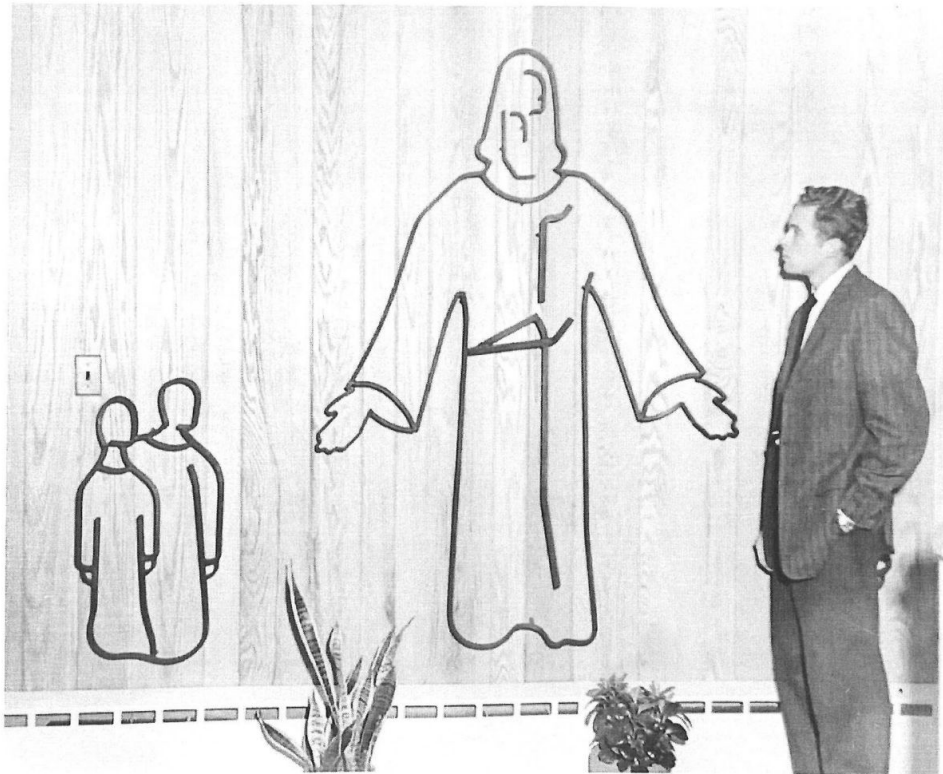
Calling all chili aficionados. Mark your calendar for lunch at Bethlehem, instead of a 9am brunch in February we will meet immediately following worship for our annual Chili cookoff and luncheon. In addition to chili, we will have slaw, cornbread, and beverages for everyone. There are three categories for those entering the cookoff: Traditional (red meat with tomatoes), White (no tomatoes), and Meatless (any style but must be vegetarian). And as always, GF, LF and sugar free options will be available.

Fellowship and Youth Ministries Collide during

Lent: Lenten Soup and Salad suppers return, but with a twist. Fellowship is partnering with our Youth Ministry to help raise funds for

their activities, including mission trips. This year the theme is the Big Easy brought to you in three parts. Part one, mark your calendar for supper on February 13th with a Shrove Tuesday, Mardis Gras themed all-you-can eat pancake and sausage supper (ice cream sundaes for dessert). Your chefs and table staff are our youth. Then part 2, on Wednesdays for the following 5 weeks (nothing on Ash Wednesday) are Soup and Salad Suppers at 6pm. Each week will feature a different New Orleans' style soup, a friendly Midwestern soup, salads, breads and beverages. We will always have GF, LF and sugar free options. How can you help? Instead of eating out, set aside your Wednesdays to enjoy a taste of the Big Easy and bring your wallets to support our youth programs. Dinner is served starting at 6pm with Wednesday Lenten prayer service at 7pm. Lastly, (post-Easter) a Yats-style dinner, including beignets. Watch for details.

Pastor Don Elder's Sermons: Eric Elder, grandson of the beloved Reverend Elder, has gifted Bethlehem with a bound copy of Pastor's Elder's sermons from 1949 to 1953. If you would like to peruse this snapshot of history, we've placed them in the lounge on the bookshelves with other BLC items.



David Elder, Pastor Elder's son & Eric's father, with the sculpture he created for Bethlehem, circa late 1950's.

More volunteers are needed:

*Communion preparers are needed for March and April. Please contact Beverly Emmons 317.414.5634 if you have questions.

*Communion Assistants are needed to distribute communion during the 10:30 service. If you can help, please let the office@indylutheran.com know.



Stephen Ministry provides a Biblical solution to caring for people who are hurting. Galatians 6:2 says, "Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ." 1 Thessalonians 5:11 says, "Therefore encourage one another and build each other up." Stephen Ministry helps congregations put these verses into action. Laypeople are trained to provide emotional and spiritual care and support to both congregation members and non-members alike. A foundational part of their training is learning to listen to care receivers as they share painful feelings. Stephen Ministers may at times help people carry some of the most difficult feelings they will ever bear. In addition to listening, they learn and use many other skills, such as processing feelings and maintaining boundaries. Stephen Ministry caring relationships can last for a few weeks, a few months to one or two years, depending on the circumstances. Men are matched with men, and women are matched with women. Stephen Ministers generally meet once a week with their care receivers for about an hour. The meeting time and frequency is flexible and is arranged between the Care Giver and Care Receiver. Brochures are available on the Stephen Ministry Bulletin Board!

For more information about Stephen Ministry and becoming a Stephen Minister contact

[Pastor Ken Ranos](#), [Abbi Todd](#), 253.905.3148, or [Shari Watts](#), 317.753.7323 for a confidential conversation.



Liturgical Shields

In 1945, Pastor Don Elder created two shields decorated with liturgical symbols--one for the Epiphany of Our Lord, and one for Reformation Sunday. He organized an Ecclesiastical Arts Group in 1949 and proposed decorating the entire ceiling of the sanctuary with similar shields to represent every Sunday, Principal Festival, and Lesser Festival celebrated in the church year at that time. Pastor Elder designed two series of shields (essentially the church year twice), 130 shields in total, and the EAG painted them, completing the project in 1952.

The shields don't always correspond to particular lectionary readings of the day, but they do draw on the themes for the seasons and incorporate symbols related to them. Each series runs from the top row to the bottom, from the front of the nave to the back.

These shields correspond to the Sundays and festival days of January this year in the South series:

4 February 2024: Fifth Sunday after Epiphany — "Faith", green

This symbol of a cross formed by four intersecting arms, with the upper three of equal length and the lower twice that length is known as the "crux immissce" or Latin cross. The instrument of Christ's death is used by religious bodies whose doctrine includes a confession of Jesus Christ and his atoning death.

11 February 2024: (Sixth Sunday after Epiphany - see note) — "Hope", green

The anchor has long symbolized Christian hope. It originated in the catacombs of the early church. The imagery comes from Hebrews 6:19, "Which hope we have as an anchor to the souls sure and steadfast."

(In the current liturgical calendar, the Transfiguration of Our Lord is celebrated on the last Sunday after Epiphany, which falls anywhere from four to nine weeks after Epiphany, depending on the date of the Resurrection of Our Lord. The shields were designed according to the calendar in use at the time, which designated 6 August as the Transfiguration of Our Lord and designated the last three Sundays before Ash Wednesday as Septuagesima Sunday, Sexagesima Sunday, and Quinquagesima Sunday as a "pre-Lent" season of their own. For this reason, the shields and the calendar don't line up well this time of year.)

14 February 2024: Ash Wednesday — "Cross and Chalice", purple

This symbolizes the agony of Christ with specific reference to Christ's cup of suffering, as recorded in Luke 22:42

18 February 2024: First Sunday in Lent — "The Scourges", purple

A pillar and scourges in saltire are a symbol of Christ's trial and condemnation.

25 February 2024: Second Sunday in Lent — "Betrayal", purple

A purse with thirty pieces of silver above is symbolic of Judas's betrayal of Christ.

Liturgical Festivals for which there are no shields:

2 February 2024: Presentation of Our Lord

11 February 2024: Transfiguration of Our Lord

--- Excerpts expand on the work of Sheryl D. Vanderstel, historian, in "Christianity and Community: A History of Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 1923-1990".

Ask The Pastor

Got questions about religion, Christianity, faith, church history, theology, worship, etc.? Send your questions to [Pastor Ken](#) and you'll find your answer featured in the weekly e-Blaze newsletter!



BLC Members: Walter Bartz, Roger Gregory, Bob Keck, Ken McCune, John Pitts, Todd Rainer

Family of members: Kim & Mark B., Chris Burke, Steve Clark, Rick Graverson, Betty Griffis, Eric Hanson, Sam Hazlett, Adam Hege, Kurt Hofbauer, Julie Hudson, Deby Koss, Heather Patrick, Rich Scaer, David Schmidt, Robin Serafin, Steve Smith, Barry Storlie, Abby Strittmatter, Trieu family

Friends of members: Kristin Colber-Baker, Jeannie & Marvin Galbreath, Becky Halcomb, Stacey Keaffaber, Rosie Kepple, Judy Kreger, Lori, George L., Deda M., Jenny & Amelia Morris, Brooke Feister O'Brien, Jason Peters, Werner Reicken, Jane & Jim Reinhart, Linda Ruisz, Wayne Russell, Jon Skarie, Edwin Stephenson, Judy Williams, Wendy

[Let us know](#) if you'd like to add/remove someone.

Upcoming Birthdays

2/2 Melissa Pritchard
2/4 Bill Brown
2/5 Alicia Aaholm, Ben Vurva,
Travis Wilson
2/6 Michael Pritchard, Gunnar
Queck
2/8 Elliot Levine

Upcoming Anniversaries

2/3 Kimberly & Darryl White

What's happening this week?

TODAY, February 1, 2024

6:30 pm Worship & Music Committee Meeting

FRIDAY

12:00 pm Men's Bible Study

SATURDAY

SUNDAY, February 4, 2024

7:30 am Holy Communion (Spoken)

9:00 am Service Project: Laundry Fair

10:30 am Holy Communion (Live & Streamed - YouTube)

MONDAY

7:00 pm Women's Sharing Books

TUESDAY

7:00 pm Stephen Ministry Mtg (BLC)

WEDNESDAY

9:00 am Wednesday Walk (Crown Hill)

12:00 pm e-Blaze submission deadline

6:30 pm Evening Prayer

7:00 pm Wednesday Books

7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal

NEXT THURSDAY, February 8, 2024

10:00 am e-Blaze arrives

[Church Calendar:](#)

Serving This Sunday (Feb. 4th)

Lector - Traci Rodgers

Acolyte - Phoebe Tatum

Communion Asst. - *needed*

Children's Sermon - Sarah Evans

Usher - Marty Benson

A/V - Nancy Slover

Communion Setup - K. Rodman &
B. Grable

Counters - N. Slover & J.

Scharbrough

Flower Delivery - *needed*

Serving Next Sunday (Feb. 11th)

Lector - Norma Crabiel

Acolyte - Zeke Bredehoeft

Communion Asst. - *needed*

Children's Sermon - Juanita Keck

Usher - Rick Roberts

A/V - Nancy Slover

Communion Setup - K. Rodman &
B. Grable

Counters - N. Slover & J.

Scharbrough

Flower Delivery - *needed*

If you can help with any of these upcoming services please contact the [office!](#)

Worship With Us

Sunday in-person prayer at 10:30 am

[Click here](#) for 10:30 am Live-Stream

Wednesday Evening in-person prayer at 6:30 pm

[Click here](#) for 6:30 pm Live-Stream

[Click here](#) to access BLC's Youtube channel

Got something to add to the e-Blaze? The deadline to [submit articles](#) is every Wednesday at noon!



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