



Bethlehem
Evangelical Lutheran Church

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Elgin, IL 60120
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Crossings

SEPTEMBER 2026 NEWSLETTER

A SEASON OF CHANGE

*"If anyone is in **Christ**, they are a *new Creation*."* 2 Cor 5:17

Many years ago there was a set of Hershey Bar commercials featuring absurd workplace or everyday scenarios where unnecessary, unwanted changes were made, concluding with the tagline: "Change is bad. The Hershey bar unchanged since 1899." The campaign leaned heavily into nostalgia and consumer trust, positioning the chocolate bar as a comforting constant in a fast-paced world. It always rubbed me the wrong way.

Whether change is expected or not, it can be unsettling. It's normal to feel anxious and uncertain. **But change is NOT bad**, it just is. How we face change can make it good or bad.

Recently, another Bethlehem member and I were talking about just this, and all the changes that Bethlehem has faced since they first attended. They quipped that "Change happens. Whether we like it or not. If we keep our knees flexed, like a ball player, we are more likely to weather any change. If we get stiff neck, that's when the trouble starts."

Changes in life come in all shapes and sizes. **There's no way to live without change.** Seasons change. We have each changed tremendously since we were born – we no longer crawl, eat baby food or wail like toddlers. Each year we'd be in a new grade with new teachers until we graduated and began working. Or got married and moved, started families and seen bodily changes. Everything changes.

All change involves some level of loss, a leaving behind of something we've grown used to. And the experience of pain and loss we'd would rather do without. Transitioning away from familiar traditions triggers genuine grief. Yet it is during these moments where we can see the most growth. **Adapting to change is how we grow as human beings.** It's what makes life interesting. It's how we learn to trust.

(cont. p2)

Worship /Study Schedule

Worship Services: 9:30am

In person or on

Zoom/YouTubeLive

Call 1-312-626-6799

Meeting ID: 947 2112 9583

Password: 058733

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Bethlehem Meetings

Call 1-312-626-6799

Meeting: 852 4417 3785

Password: 387195

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God designed us to grow and change. The good news is that God goes ahead of, and with, us. Remember God is a God of new life, resurrection, wholeness and forgiveness. God offers grace when we fall and helps us get started anew. Change — the willingness to wrestle, the humility to reconsider, the flexibility to evolve — is the beating heart of a vibrant relationship with God.

Churches change too! And the reality is sometimes a church needs to change. Programs get stale. People grow older, different or leave. Or no longer want the same things or have the same gifts on hand. Neighborhoods are different. The world has changed.

What does not change is God's presence and love for us. What has not changed is that God is still calling Bethlehem to be his people and to serve our community for good. Yet we are at a different life cycle as individuals and a congregation then 10, 20, 50 years ago. The "old ways" were not wrong or a mistake; they were the exact vehicles God used for a previous season. We are in a season of considering what needs to be different or changed so that we can stay faithful to God and to our callings and mission.

Jesus says, "I am the resurrection and the life. He does not say, I will be the resurrection and the life, He says I am the resurrection and the life. A perfect present tense. Knowing Christ and the power of His resurrection is transformation in our daily lives.

I believe that the power of the resurrection is at work. Jesus is alive. And God is doing something new here. Can we trust God? Do we have the courage to be flexible? To lean into change rather than reject it? To be Christ's living body today?

Blessings, Pastor Dawn

PRAYER LIST

BLC members Bruce Carey & family, Alex & Judy Sorton, Kathra Naviaux, Shirley Pflederer, Karen Allen, Judy Drommerhausen, Peggy & Bob Graham, Shirley Harnish, Chris Hunsicker, Bill Jones, Kathie Larson, Linda Leitner, Patrick O'Riley, Ashley Ottaviano, Eugene Wilkening, Larry & Juanita Rorhssen, Sigrid Barker, Karen Dingel, Kathy Lehman, Mary Schalow Inez Tornblom.

For friends and relatives:

Cindy Kruth, Marian Dudek, Annette Antos, Katie Pizzitola, John Schafer, Marian Anderson, Ann & Bill Dice, Ed Fagre, Dennis Fagre, Kim Fiedler, Marlene Lamz, Greg Lunsford, Lynn Reuter, Kelly Quinn, Sandy Smart, Katie Sorton, Larry Beck

For our Church Council and all of us as we seek God's guidance and vision.

BLC Council **HAPPENINGS**

- Council voted to fund the radon mitigation of CDC classrooms after receiving more input from CDC director and board. Mitigation to happen in December 2026 with CDC closing for 3 days. CDC cost utilities, staff cost and tuition loss. Cost for BLC \$13,740.20
- Working to re-establish working committees/teams. Need involvement.
- Planning a Neighborhood Pet Blessing October 3, 2026
- Testing an Intergenerational Sunday School - September 20
- Voted to use a contemporary music service as we seek to fill position of contemporary music leader
- Second Saturday being reestablished. To kick-off in Jan 2027.
- Repair/ repaint of railings and Narthex approved. Complete by end of Aug 2026.
- Planning to host a CPR/AED training at BLC. Working with Red Cross to host.
- Confirmation photo directory (Thank Paul) will be tethered to wall.

Regularly scheduled council meetings are on the second Wednesday of the month at 7:30pm. Visitors are welcome and encouraged.

BETHLEHEM'S GENERAL OPERATING FUND

Action report: our giving dollar amounts for June and YTD.

2026	Jul 2026	YTD Actual	YTD Budget
Receipts to Gen. Oper. Fund	\$17,544.20	\$125,909.93	\$124,383.00
Expenses	\$19,320.98	\$146,946.67	\$153,013.00
Total Receipts less Expenses	\$(1,776.78)	(\$21,036.74)	(\$28,630.00)

2026-2027 CHURCH COUNCIL

Regularly scheduled council meetings are on the second Wednesday of the month at 7pm.

Cate Murschel	224-622-7423
Jennifer Luna	224-678-3428
Sean Edwards	847-695-2868
Marilyn House	847-567-0281
Marti Jernberg	847-337-0903
Sherry Liske	847-857-0363
Patrick O'Riley	847-802-2110
Don Samuelson	630-965-7479
Pastor Dawn Roucka, ex officio	331-335-0489

Thank you for remembering your church with your offerings as we head into summer. The General Operating Fund remains in the black because of the 2025 carryover.

In 2025 we paid off the Renovation loan, so any donations to Renovations or Property Trust will go into the Property Trust Fund for future planned major expenses to our church that aren't covered by the budget.

Stuff to Know

GROUP MEETINGS

Craft Circle - Monday, Sept 14 in the Red Room at 12p

Worship at The Vines -

Wednesday Sept 16 at 1:15pm

Church Council - Weds. Sept 16 at 7:00pm in the Red Room

Rebecca Circle - Monday, Sept 21 at 1pm in the Red Room

Worship at The Woodlands -

Wednesday, Sept 23 at 10:15am

Soup Kitchen - Friday, Sept 25 4pm-7pm at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church

Happy birthday!

03 - Zain Irani

03 - Nathaniel Sensor

05- Bill Jones

05 - Eugene Willkening

09 - Ted Sensor

11 - Donna Anderson

13- Shirley Harnish

14 - Karen Heimberg

16 - Hayden Jernberg

24- Jan Jones

27 - Sue McIntyre

ALTAR FLOWERS



Mark a special day and beautify the church by signing up to purchase altar flowers for Sunday Service.

Cost is \$15 for 2 bouquets for our vases or \$36 for two arrangements from Town and Country Florist

Order in honor of or in memory of a family member. Contact the office for Sundays that are available.

Pastor Dawn's Office Hours

Come visit with me! Or let's have coffee somewhere sometime.

Best times for connecting are:

Mondays - Noon - 4 PM

Tuesdays - 2PM - 5PM

Wednesdays - Noon - 4PM

(2nd Wedstimes vary please call)

Thursdays - 2PM-5PM

Fridays - Pastor's Day off

Other days & times are available by appointment, please do not hesitate to call the office or my cell- 331-335-0489. In emergencies, always please call or text.

Pastor Dawn

BIBLE STUDY

Join us on Tuesdays. Peg leads the study in the Chapel at 10 a.m. It is available on Zoom.



ZOOM COMMUNION CUPS

If you need more, please contact Cindy in the church office at 847-741-8434

How often do our 3 year olds get to laugh , create and share stories with our 98 year olds?

Our New Intergenerational



Faith Across the Seasons

When: 10:45 - 11:45 AM

Sunday September 20 - Oct 25

Where: The Red Room

Who: Ages 3 to 98+ (**All are welcome!**)

**Come share your wisdom, hear new perspectives, and discover what
"Faith Across the Seasons" looks like.**

We are launching a unique, 6-week Sunday School experiment designed for absolutely everyone!

Whether you are in PreK or "big" school, juggling a career, or enjoying retirement, your presence is vital to our church family.

Over six weeks, we will gather for 60 minutes each Sunday to share a light snack, explore how God calls us at every stage of life, take a fresh look at our sacred spaces, and pass down favorite faith traditions.

No dense lectures or tests—just meaningful conversations, easy games, and hands-on activities that bridge the generations.



GOD'S WORK; OUR HANDS

**SERVICE FOR ALL GENERATIONS
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13TH 9:30 - 11:30 AM**

We will gather in the sanctuary at 9:30 AM for a brief opening worship, including breaking open scripture and bread together. We will then break into five different intergenerational service stations.

There is a job for every age and ability level!

**Build Blessing Bags
Sanctuary plus Deep Clean
Care Cards for HomeBound**

**Grounds & Garden Clean-up
CDC Staff Support Kits**

Can't make it in person? You can still participate online! Join our livestreamed opening worship at 9:30 AM, participate in our digital prayer wall, or assemble care items from your living room.

Snacks will be served when serving starts. Please sign up in the narthex or let us know online **by September 6** so we can finalize our supply and food counts. Bring your energy, your family, and a heart ready to serve!



When you take a weekend away, or if you worship online, you can easily support BLC's ministry by using the QR code to give. We thank you for any gifts and support! Blessings.

EDUCATION IDEAS – Survey available at BLC to help us get an idea of our growth for mission aspect.

How ready are we to continue our growth in Jesus? And what are the best ways you want/ can do that?

Ideas might include things like *an adult confirmation class (open to all) or a Bible study on current events or workshop on planning for living our best life even as we age.*

SAVE THE DATE!

Watch for a Special day of PET BLESSING on Saturday, Oct. 3 from 9 - 11 AM. (St. Francis of Assisi Day). It will be an opportunity to invite and meet the neighborhood and their pets. Plan to bring your pet or a picture of your furry friend.



Installation of Metro-Chicago Synod Bishop

The Reverend Erik Christiansen was elected Bishop of the Synod Synod at the MCS Assembly. He will be installed on **Saturday, Sept. 19**, 3 p.m., at St. James Cathedral in downtown Chicago. ELCA Bishop Yehiel Curry will preach and preside. ALL ARE WELCOME. Go on Synod website to register by Sept 1.



Instant
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**IF YOU STILL HAVEN'T
SIGNED IN, PLEASE LET
US HELP YOU!**

**TALK TO BILL
LUNDSFORD OR SEAN
EDWARDS TO GET YOU
STARTED**

2026 CROP Hunger Walk Action

Thanks to all who donated items for the kits. We made up 14 plus kits. THANKS BETHLEHEM!



CROP Hunger Walk (& Bike Ride) to be held on Sunday, September 27 at 2 PM beginning and ending at the Gail Borden Library. To register go to:
<http://www.crophungerwalk.org/elginil>
SUPPORT OUR LOCAL WALKERS!

See Cindy for a donation/registration envelope. Come join the fun and the gracious endeavor of helping others.

Habitat for Humanity Joyful Hope Partnership September 2026 Update

Joyful Hope Partnership is building its next house located at 67 Genessee in Elgin – Foundation was dug.

- Volunteer Build Opportunities
 There are still plenty of opportunities!
 Volunteers can sign up as an individual's (please put "New Hope" in the "Group Name" field):
1. Visit <https://volunteerup.com/Login.asp?w=i&o=175>
 2. If you've never logged in, please select "I Am A New Volunteer".
 3. Fill out the registration form, and select New Hope Partnership as your group/team.

FALL FOOD DRIVE

The Service Committee will be collecting food items from Sunday, September 20th until Sunday, October 18th, 2026, for the pantries at All People's Interfaith Food Pantry and the Elgin Community Crisis Center.

Non-perishable items needed are - Canned meat, canned chicken, canned beef stew, canned vegetables, tuna, pasta, pasta sauce, tomato sauce, beans & rice. Peanut Butter and Jelly are always favorites.

Also needed: Bar soap, laundry soap, paper towels, toothbrushes, toothpaste, shampoo, deodorant, Kleenex and toilet paper.

Please place your food items in the Box provided in Narthex!

Teams and Committees

COMMITTEES - RESTABLISHED

To help Bethlehem better collaborate and create the church we want to see, Council is recommending the re-establishment of teams/committees. **WE NEED YOU!**

Get involved with Worship, Christian Ed, or Christian Care Team.
Talk to a Council Member or Pastor Dawn today!
Or see a job description on website!



To produce the Crossings each month. Someone is needed to cut and paste articles, pictures and information into a Canva (this) template. Training will be offered. Interested???? Talk to Cindy or Pastor

BE HEARD - Share ideas with your Council. Attend a meeting!

NEWS and Articles for the NEXT CROSSINGS due to Church Office via email: churchoffice@blcelgin.org by Friday, Sept 23.

Standing in Prayer and Solidarity WITH OUR IMMIGRANT NIEGBORS

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 2 AT 12 PM
KANE COUNTY JUDICIAL CENTER

37W777 ROUTE 38, ST CHARLES, IL

An interfaith prayer gathering in support of our immigrant nieghbors amid rising ICE activit.

ALL ARE WELCOME - every faith, every neighbor.

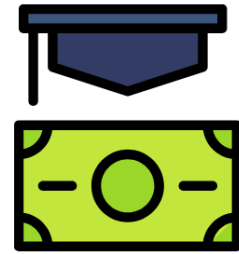
Joy of Serving at Worship

**Readers, Greeters/Ushers,
Communion assistants, Assisting
Ministers and Coffee hour host(s).**

Please sign up on the sheets on the board in the Narthex by the stairs. If you would like to serve, call the church office by Wednesday to sign up. Cindy
847-814-3249

Congratulations to Emma Anderson

Verna E. Carlson Memorial Scholarship Recipient



Congratulations! The Memorials Committee awarded Emma a \$600 scholarship . She is attending Xavier University and will graduate in December 2027 with a major in Elementary Education.

Emma's application statement included her reasons for pursuing further education is below:

The kids. If my statement was boiled down to 2 words, although they're niche, those would be them. With each year of working and life in general that I gain under my belt, it becomes more and more clear as to why I'm getting an education in the exact field that I am.

After 4 summers/years of working with underserved kids and gaining classroom experience, it's more apparent than ever as to why I'm so called to working with kids. Getting a degree in education doesn't just mean I'm looking forward to having my own classroom one day, but to me it means I'll get the chance to be THAT person for handfuls of kids that come through my room. Whether that be someone they feel safe and comforted around, or the teacher that pushes them to be the best student they can be academically, I cannot wait to have that opportunity and reflect that onto them.

Furthering my education and completing this next year and a half of university is not only a requirement for my degree, but quite frankly something I'm looking forward to now more than ever. This upcoming year, I'll be in classrooms at least one day a week and getting all of the teaching methods nailed down.

I'm sure some days will be tiring and repetitive, but the experience itself is bringing me that much further to being the teacher I'd always hoped for growing up. Yes, there's going to be a degree with my name on it at the end of all of this, but more importantly it'll finally be my turn to be there for all of my future students.

*Members to be prayed for

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH September 2026



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
6 Anne-Marie Rozsa 8:30am Beth Voices 9:30am Worship 10:30 Coffee Hour	7* Simon Rozsa LABOR DAY	1* Guadalupe Rodriguez 10:30 Bible Study 7:00 pm Scout Troop #9111 7:00 pm - WH RChurch- Red Room	2* Joyce Ross 9:30am - 2 pm CASA - Legal Aid - RR	3* Cathy Rothstein 6:30pm Finance & Exec Meeting on Zoom	4* Dawn Roucka	5* Ken Roucka
13* Jorge Sanchez 8:30am Beth Voices 9:30am Worship God's Work; Our Hands Coffee Hour 11:30 am - 4 pm - RChurch	14* Abby Sensor 12:00pm Craft Circle in the Red Room	8* Brian Samuelson 10:30 Bible Study 7:00 pm Scout Troop #9111	9* Don Samuelson 1:15pm Worship at The Vines 7:00pm Church Council Meeting	10* Ruth Samuelson	11* Fernanda Sanchez	12* Bernie Sanchez 8am - 3 pm RR Casa workshop 10am Hamilton Wings - Chapel
20* Elaine Shroder 8:30am Beth Voices 9:30am Worship 10:40 Sunday School for All / Coffee Hour 11:30 am - 4 pm - RChurch	21* David Shroder 1:00 pm Rebecca Circle - Red Room	15* Nate Sensor 10:30 Bible Study 7:00 pm Scout Troop #9111	16* Ted Sensor 10:30am Worship at T9:30am - 2 pm CASA - Legal Aid he Woodlands	17* Deb Sensor 7:00 CDC Board Meeting on Zoom	18* Heather Seyller Thomas	19* Elyssa Shroder 9am - 3 pm WH Casa Mental Health Symposium
27* Colton Thomas 8:30am Beth Voices 9:30am Worship 10:40 Sunday School for All / Coffee Hour 11:30 am - 4 pm - RChurch	28* Owen Thomas	22* Jennifer Shroder 10:30 Bible Study 7:00 pm Scout Troop #9111	23* James Sitz Crossings articles due to church office	24* Alex Sorton	25* Judy Sorton 4:00 Soup Kitchen - Holy Trinity Church	26* Katie Spets
		29* Inez Tornblom 10:30 Bible Study 7:00 pm Scout Troop #9111	30* Jose Villagomez			