

Bethlehem
Covenant Church

STAR

October 2017, Issue 410

From the Lead Pastor Rev. Matt Kennedy

"How's it going?"

"Fine, thanks. How are you?"

"Fine."

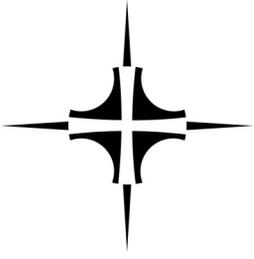
We all know these kinds of questions have become just shorthand greetings rather than invitations to conversation. In the midst of a busy morning we can often ask each other how we are without even slowing down to hear the answer. I wonder if we've lost something by asking, "how are you?" without expecting to stop and listen. My first year of seminary I had gone home for Thanksgiving weekend and on Thanksgiving morning received devastating news that a friend had passed away suddenly. That Monday morning when I returned to school a classmate asked me, "how was your weekend?" I decided to answer honestly, "it was awful." Without looking up from her book she said, "that's nice. How was the weather?"

Listening well is one of the best tools we have to help one another along through life's challenges. In telling our story and knowing we are being heard, a bond of love strengthens. Jesus told his followers the importance of hearing well (Matthew 13:15-16). The Apostle James told his congregation, "be quick to listen and slow to speak" (James 1:19). The Old Testament book of Proverbs says that to answer before listening is, "folly and shame" (18:3) but wise counsel from a friend, "brings joy to the heart" (27:9).

The most publically visible act of my own ministry is speaking: preaching the Word on Sundays or teaching in other settings. In less public ways my work involve listening as well. As I meet and visit with many of you outside of worship, I'm eager to hear your stories. In sharing both joys and sorrows we grow in both understanding and love. So I want to take this occasion to remind you that both Pastor Kari and I have an "open door" policy to meet with anyone who needs a listening ear. I keep daytime office hours on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and some Fridays; but I am also very willing to meet on an evening or a weekend as it suits your schedule (also, please feel free to call or text me on my cell phone, but you may need to dial a "1" first if you call from your home phone).

The pastoral staff are not the only options for a designated place for care and counsel. We have *Befrienders*, a ministry of lay-people trained and gifted for listening (contact me for more info). Additionally, we have the wider resources outside our congregation including local networks of professional counselors and spiritual directors.

One of our critical success factors in the coming years is deepening our sense of community in this congregation. There is no better way to grow in our love for one another than taking the time to tell our stories, and trust that we are heard. Thanks for listening.



From the Children's and Families Pastor

Rev. Kari Dubord

Sundays at Bethlehem!

Nursery

Nursery care is available for children birth-2 (turning 3) year olds for both services. For parents volunteering or in Sunday School, there is childcare available during the Sunday School hour too. Please consider volunteering to spend time with our smallest Bethlehem-ites.

Sunday School

PreK (3 by 9/1/17)-5th grade meet from 9:45am-10:45am. 4th and 5th graders will begin upstairs in their classroom. PreK-3rd grades start in the Fellowship Hall for a time of singing. PreK & K will go to their own classroom at 10am for an age level lesson, snack and play. 1st-3rd stay together for Bible memorization, large group story time, reflection and then break into smaller groups for snack and age level activities. For safety, please have an adult pick up children ages Prek-2nd grade.

Children's Church

Children age 3 (by 9/1/2017)- Kindergarten are invited to attend Children's Church during both services for a short Bible lesson and play time.

Worship Bags

Worship bags and children's Bibles are available during both services to help children engage in the worship service. Please help us keep the bags organized by removing all used pages at the end of the service and keeping items in the bag they started in. Thank you!

Praying for our children

As a church family, we believe that it is important to pray for one another. One way we do this is through a monthly gathering where a group from church meets to pray for the kids who have birthday's that month. Prayer requests are given by family members and we spend time praying for each child (birth-college). We would love to expand our number of prayer warriors. We meet from 9:30am-10:30am the 3rd Saturday of the month at the home of Jerry & Laurie Erickson. All are welcome. If you have any questions, please ask Pastor Kari, Jerry or Laurie Erickson.

Wonderful Wednesday Activities

Three choirs meet on Wednesday afternoons, and all are welcome to join. There will be no Wednesday activities on October 18th.

- 3:45-4:15pm Cherub Choir (3 years-PreK)
 - 4:15-4:55pm Hosanna Choir (K-2nd grade)
 - 5:00-5:45pm Alleluia Choir (3rd grade and older)
- Bible Study & activities for kids in 3rd-6th grade will be available from 4:15-5:00pm in the Youth Room. Kids Prek-2nd grade will have a Bible lesson and activities from 5:00-5:45pm. Children will meet in the Youth Room for a short lesson, activities and sometimes a short movie. Parents are encouraged to join in the fun!

All families are invited to stay for our evening meal served in the Fellowship Hall from 5:45pm-6:30pm.

Upcoming Events

Watch for emails about upcoming parenting groups and communion workshop.

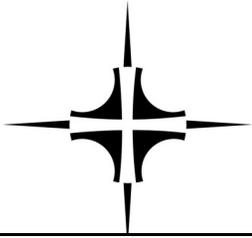
Wish List Items for Kids'

Service Projects

This fall, the kids at Bethlehem will be participating in a variety of service projects. We will be packing Thanksgiving bags for families at Union Gospel Mission, making bags of hope to deliver to people who may be homeless, preparing care packages for a variety of people, and more! If you would like to help us, here are some of the supplies we will be gathering for the projects:

*Bags of white rice, Cans of peas, Cans of whole kernel corn, Cans of green beans, Cans of cranberry sauce, Cans of yams/sweet potatoes, Box of stuffing, Box of instant potatoes, Box of cake or brownie mix, \$10 gift cards to grocery store (Cub or Aldi), Small water bottles, New white athletic socks, Gum, Pop Tarts, Granola Bars, Microwave popcorn, Bags of snack crackers or cookies.

Thank you in advance!



Sunday Preparations

Sign up to volunteer at: bethlehemcov.org/find/sign-up-to-help;

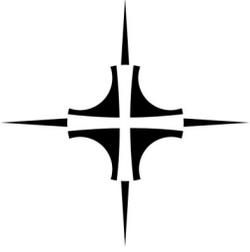
Or contact the office at office@bethlehemcov.org; 612.721.5768

*All blank spots are open for volunteers, as of September 27

	October 1	October 8	October 15	October 22	October 29
Themes to Prepare for Worship	Matthew 21:23-32	Matthew 21:33-46	Matthew 22:1-14	Matthew 22:15-22	John 8:31-36
Contemporary Service					
Greeter		All Church Retreat at Covenant Pines	Lowery Smit	Lowery Smith	Lowery Smith
Scripture Reader	Cindy Bergstrom		BJ Holty	Becky Ramgren	Anthony Laudon
Ushers x4	Todd and Christine O'Bert		Dave and Alicia Sylvester	Shanan Tolzin and Tim Lilla	Open
Children's Church	Mattias or Lori Frasch		Pastor Kari	Kara or Josh VerHage	Anthony or Kelly Laudon
Nursery Care x2	Kaarina Kotkavouri & Sophia Verdoorn		Kaarina Kotkavouri & Adela Dubord	Kaarina Kotkavouri & Miriam O'Bert	Kaarina Kotkavouri & Aubrey Laudon
Early Coffee Hour	Terri Stromberg		Kelly Piatt	Rhonda Isaacs	Karen Karpenko
Adult Sunday School	Reformation: Part II of V with Andy Reeher		Reformation: Part III of V with Andy Reeher	Reformation: Part IV of V with Andy Reeher	Reformation: Part V of V with Andy Reeher
Classic Service					
Greeter	Guido Kauls	Lowery Smith	Lowery Smith	Lowery Smith	Lowery Smith
Scripture Reader	Deb Shold	Paul Johnson	Sally Sundberg	Sue Holt	Linda Larson
Ushers x4	Howie Hinseth, Norm Morris and Jim & Shirley Norman	Howie Hinseth, Norm Morris and Jim & Shirley Norman	Howie Hinseth, Norm Morris and Jim & Shirley Norman	Howie Hinseth, Norm Morris and Jim & Shirley Norman	Howie Hinseth, Norm Morris and Jim & Shirley Norman
Nursery Care x2	Lina & Sonja Swanson	Open	Lina Swanson & Liz Camozzi	Lina Swanson & Sonja Swanson	Lina Swanson & Nicole Kennedy
Children's Church	Meghan Watkins	No CC	Pastor Kari	Chris Simon	Pastor Kari
Late Coffee Hour	Joan Peterson	Pat Koontz	Hiruit May	Katie Elden	Mary Ann Smith

October Birthdays

3	Stig Benson	7	Nancy Lindquist	17	Haven Bates	28	Elizabeth Fong
	Elena Piatt	9	Maxwell Frasch	18	Sarah Howland		Madison Zieper
	Elsa Piatt		Leah Chileen	19	Larry Johnson		Deb Shold
4	Bodil Enderton	10	Kevin Dubord	20	Alyssa Isaacs	29	Jerry Erickson
5	Bill Hunstock	12	Mary Simmons	23	Ted Larsen		Jeff Elden
	Joyce Hanson	13	Bob Sjoberg	24	Ethan Laudon	30	Linnea McKernan
6	Ruth Johnson	15	Adam Sokolski	25	Micah Laudon	31	Jim Norman
	Bella may		Cathy Paige	27	Ruth Dahlgren		



Youth Ministry News

Interim Youth Director Lars Markson

Hello to my new friends and family at Bethlehem Covenant Church. Lars Markson here, if we have not had the chance to meet I am the new Interim Director of Youth Ministries here at BCC. I am writing this article on a hot Thursday afternoon, and it has been 9 days since I first set foot in my cozy "office" up in the youth room. The past 9 days have been a whirlwind. I have made calendars, lessons, newsletter, met tons of new people, cleaned out the dirty corners of the youth room, read some great books, help set up chairs, and I have been trying to figure out what it means to serve the youth of the church on a daily basis.

All these crazy things I have been doing led up to the first night of Youth group yesterday. It was a long day at the office for me, but I could not have had more fun! Being able to finally see God's plan come to life before my eyes was incredible. I hope that the kids had as much fun as I did, because I have not been that sweaty from floor hockey in a while. My charge for the students yesterday was to make youth group what *they* wanted it to be, to have their ideas fill the walls of the youth room. I told them that I want to be a facilitator of fun and community between the youth of the church, and that I am excited to hear their hopes for how awesome it could be in this A-frame shaped room.

So, I guess, I can take this opportunity now to apologize in advance for all the times this year that the Youth group will be too loud, too crazy, break a window, spill Mountain Dew on the carpets, leave nerf darts in the sanctuary, (just kidding, we won't do those last 3 things) or have too much fun in general. Right now, I am filled with excitement and optimism for this smart, funny, and joyful rag-tag group of kids and all our adventures that we will have this year. I expect a lot of late nights, belly laughs, trivia games, heart-felt conversations, sporting events, band concerts, retreat weekends, crazy events, and loud music.

Have you ever wanted to get involved, but did not know how you could? Well, let me tell you what you can do! If you are interested in volunteering for Sunday School, events or retreats I would be more than happy to get your information and see how you can help in that way. I would also love it if you took time to keep the youth of the church in your prayers. Prayer is simple, powerful, and always welcome. Speaking from experience, one of the things that made a big impact in my life was having adults taking interest in me and investing in my life. Invite a kid to McDonald's or to go to a sports game, or just to watch a movie. Having older people that kids can talk to and hang out with is one of the easiest and most impactful ways to foster community and friendship. Get involved and show God's love in that way!

Well, that is enough rambling for me this time. I hope you'll excuse my writing style and possible grammatical errors (composition was not my strong suit). I am honored to be a part of this church and all you wonderful people. In the words of "Bill" S. Preston Esq. and "Ted" Theodore Logan, "Be excellent to each other and party on, dudes!"

Jr. High and Sr. High MEA Retreat!

Don't forget to sign up for the Junior and/or Senior High Retreat at Covenant Pines! October 18–20 for Junior High, and 20-22 Senior High.



All Church Retreat at Covenant Pines Bible Camp! October 6-8

Packing lists and directions
are available in the Narthex.

Calling All Advent Devotional Writers!

The season of Advent seems a long way off, but part of the preparation for it is the compilation of entries for the Advent Devotional booklet. We need writers for the 30+ entries for each day of the season of Advent.

Sign ups will begin on Sunday, October 8th and continue on the 15th and 22nd. The deadline to submit the entries is Sunday, October 29th. If anyone is interested in writing an entry, but unable to be present for the sign ups, please contact Deb Shold by phone 612-729-4598 or email djshold@usfamily.net to obtain the texts for the date you choose.

Outreach Section

One of the ways we aim to "Do Justice and Love Mercy" at Bethlehem is to learn about the many organizations already at work in our community to make it a better place. In the coming year you'll find this section of the STAR will spotlight various ministry partners and ways we can connect with them in including the Twin Cities Union Gospel Mission, Sheridan Story, Ace in the City, Community Emergency Services, and many others. You'll also find literature about our local partners in the atrium.

November STAR

The November STAR deadline is October 22.

Wonderful Wednesday Schedule

Wonderful Wednesday is a great time of fellowship in our church! The meal begins at 5:45, just after kids choirs and before the adult choir, confirmation and senior high meet. The upcoming Wonderful Wednesday meal schedule is as follows:

- October 4—Dragon City, Serving Group D
- October 11—Youth Group Choice
- October 18—MEA Week, No WW
- October 25—Pulled Pork Sandwiches, Serving Group A

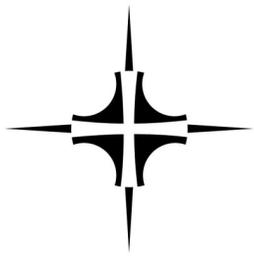
There is a suggested donation of \$5 per person/\$20 per family for each Wonderful Wednesday meal. Credit card payments can be made by contacting the office at 612.721.5768 or via email at office@bethlehemcov.org. Payments for a month (or longer!) are also accepted.

Lowery and Mary Ann Smith's Updated Address

Lowery and Mary Ann Smith's updated address is 740 Mississippi River Blvd S., #20 E, St. Paul, MN , 55116.

Bennie Frykman Thank You

Many thanks for all the cards and best wishes for my 90 1/4 birthday! Bethlehem worship, events and especially friends through the years have been so important in my life and I feel deep gratitude to God for you all.



Bethlehem Bulletin Board

Save The Date For Lucia Fest—Saturday, December 9



It's time to put our LUCIA FEST on your calendar. Once again we will share the joy of Christmas with our neighbors, friends and families. Ticket order blanks will be available after worship on Sunday, Oc-

tober 22nd and should be returned with payment on or after Sunday, October 29th.

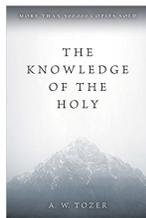
Each household/family will be limited to purchase enough for one table or 9 people. In recent years, the waiting list has grown to over 50 people and it is the goal to make sure this is an outreach event for everyone.

If additional tickets are needed, the church office will take reservations beginning November 6th but those tickets will not be processed until payment is received. If you or your child will be participating in the program or serving in the dining room or kitchen, you do not need a ticket. If you would like to sit at a seating, please plan on buying a ticket.

The November STAR and weekly bulletins will have additional information as to when rehearsals begin. The tomtar and dancers will rehearse after the children's sermon at the 8:45 service. In past years we have welcomed the participation of "alumni" singing and serving in various ways. We again invite you to join us—even in donating cookies!

While you have your calendar out, please circle Friday, December 8th at 9:00 am. We need the help of everyone to prepare for our Saturday celebration. It is a fun day of fellowship as we observe the transformation—but we do take time for coffee and goodies and to be caroled to by the Child Care children.

Small Groups Begin October 15th!



Make new friends, deepen existing relationships, challenge your mind, and grow your faith. Bethlehem's reading/discussion groups meet twice/year, fall and spring, for six-week stretches. The groups are newly-formed each semester and are open to everyone.

This fall our book is *The Knowledge of the Holy*, by A.W. Tozer, a mid-20th-century Christian classic that addresses the question What is God like? Chapter One opens with the enticing words, "What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us."

His language may now be outdated, but Tozer's ideas lose none of their meatiness; every sentence gives the reader something big to chew on. So come join the banquet! Beginning September 24, you can sign up in the Atrium for the small group of your choice. You will be asked to read approximately three pages/day, 20 pages/week, so that you can participate in a time of informal discussion with your group.

There are four different groups meeting Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays, and each group will meet once a week, for six weeks.

- Week I: Oct 15-21
- Week II: Oct 22-28
- Week III: Oct 29-Nov 4
- Week IV: Nov 5-11
- Week V: Nov 12-18
- NO GROUPS NOV 19-25 (Thanksgiving)
- Week VI: Nov 26-Dec 2

Books will be available for purchase in the Atrium, and via e-book on Google Play and Audible.

Contact Information

Telephone 612-721-2290
Website www.bethlehemkids.org
Email bethlehemchildcare@yahoo.com



From the Childcare Director

Jill Ravensborg

Our school year has started out wonderfully. The children are busy practicing how to make friends, join others in play, to ask someone to join their play, and discovering how nice it is to have more than one friend. Some are working on using their voice to tell how they feel when confronted with something they wish were different. As we get to know these lovely little people we are excited at the opportunity to work with their families to come up with a plan to move the child along in developmentally appropriate ways.

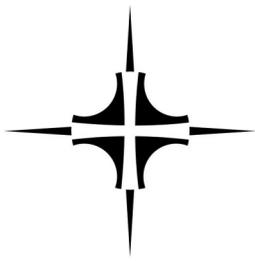
Between 1:00 and 3:00 Fellowship Hall is a quiet zone. You'll find 40 children who are quietly napping or at least *most are quietly* resting on their cots. After rest/nap time these children are split into two groups and do activities based on a study the afternoon teachers have planned. On most days, there are only a handful of children who do not rest and as the year moves along we'll see more and more of those almost Kindergarten children who no longer need to rest each day. Most days that will be fine, but, of course, there will be those days where we all now a short little rest of the brain would have been beneficial.

The school age classes are another incredible group ranging in grades K - 5. This year has brought us full enrollment with 48 students who come after school throughout the week, 41 each afternoon! The staff have reported that everything has started out so smoothly again this year. The children are all getting to know the routines, they are kind to each other, and invite new people to join in their play, friendships continue to grow and new friendships are just beginning. This year there are five Release Days between mid-October, and the beginning of November. The staff are planning fun field trips for the children to participate in while they are here at BCCC for those Release Days: possibilities are going to Fort Snelling, bowling, down to the Mississippi River, and an orienteering excursion.

On September 26 BCCC will host an Ice Cream Social for our families. We are hopeful that this year the weather will be pleasant so we can hold our social outside and let the families join their children in exploring the play area. It is much easier for families to move and mingle outside. It can be tricky estimating how many buckets of ice cream we'll go through with the 95 families that could potentially come. We welcome people from church to attend as well, it could be a nice way to begin relationships with some of the childcare families. The social is from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m.

As always, thank you for support and prayers.

Jill Ravensborg and the BCCC Staff



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Bethlehem Covenant—Minneapolis



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BethlehemCovenant



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office@bethlehemcov.org

Bethlehem Covenant Church Staff:

- Rev. Matt Kennedy, Lead Pastor
- Rev. Kari Dubord, Pastor of Children and Families
- Paul Compton, Interim Director of Worship
- Lars Markson, Interim Director of Youth Ministries
- Kelly Piatt and Terri Stromberg, Office Staff
- Dr. Dennis Port, Adult Choir Director
- Cindy Bergstrom, Children’s Choir Director
- Dianne Jelle, Organist/Pianist
- Jill Ravensborg, Childcare Director

Weekly at Bethlehem

SUNDAY	9:00 am	Contemporary Worship—Except October 8 for All-Church Retreat
	9:45 am	Coffee and Conversation—Except October 8 for All-Church Retreat
	10:00 am	Sunday School—Except October 8 for All-Church Retreat
	10:30 am	Classic Worship
	12:15 pm	Coffee and Conversation
MONDAY	9:30 am	Yoga for Seniors
	7:00 pm	Community Activities Evening
TUESDAY	8:00 am	Breakfast at Bakers Square for 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month
	9:00 am	Properties Work Day at Church
	6:30 pm	Gathering for Prayer
WEDNESDAY	10:00 am	Women’s Bible Study
	12:30 pm	Staff Meeting
	3:45 pm	Cherub Choir (3–5 year olds) - Except October 18 for MEA
	4:15 pm	Hosanna Choir (K–2 grade) with activity for grades 3-5—Except October 18 for MEA
	5:00 pm	Alleluia Choir (3rd grade and up) with a K-2 activity to 5:45 pm—Except October 18 for MEA
	5:45 pm	Wonderful Wednesday Meal for all—Except October 18-Except October 18 for MEA
	6:30 pm	Confirmation in Youth Room—Except October 18 for MEA
	6:30 pm	Senior High—Except October 18 for MEA
6:45 pm	Adult Choir	
THURSDAY	10:00 am	Bible Encounter
FRIDAY	6:30 am	Men’s Breakfast and Bible Study (Gospel of Luke)
	9:00 am	Walk and Coffee at Mall of America