



BETHLEHEM STAR

NEWSLETTER OF BETHLEHEM EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
PEMBERVILLE, OHIO



Pastor's Message

By Pastor Tim Philabaum - December 2023

After a year of waiting, and now into an Advent of getting prepared, Christmas is just about here! Alleluia!

I love the changing of the seasons. I love the different celebrations and holidays in the Church Year. I love how each Sunday is just like a little Easter, taking us back to the Resurrection. I love how our life in the Church is organized to tell the whole story of God's love for us in Jesus!

But, Christmas. Wow! That Mary would accept the word of the Angel, receiving God's presence into her womb, even though she didn't have a husband; that the Almighty God, without boundary or beginning or end would lower God's very self into that womb, making Mary a new Tabernacle; that this Babe would be vulnerable, just like all other children; that farm animals, shepherds, and angels would come and worship; and that from far away wise people would bring gifts signifying Jesus' importance. Wow!

And that all of this has a key in John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that God gave God's only Son, that all who believe in Him would not perish, but have everlasting life." Wow!

Families get together, congregations fill up, music (already started) fills the airways, foods are prepared, and it's all JOY.

All because of Jesus. He is "the Reason for the Season." He is the One who then goes on to



purchase our salvation, at the price of His own blood, and the rise from the dead, as one day we too shall rise. Wow! It's awesome!

So, open your hearts to prayer this month, listen to the devotions, give thanks for the bountiful gifts, prepare your homes and your lives for His presence (which is all ready here), come to worship, and rejoice in the special gift of Jesus! Some of our December celebrations include:

On December 3, there will be a special visitor in worship. All the way from 1st Century Bethlehem the Innkeeper will come to share his memory of the first Christmas night, and to inspire us to live a Christ-like life.

That evening, beginning at 5:30pm the Eastwood community is invited to Bethlehem for a potluck supper, to meet the Melnyk family from Ukraine. Come, bring your friends, and experience this welcoming gift.

December 6 is the "saint" day for St. Nicholas. We remember the original Nick, who was a Bishop in the 300's in what is now Turkey. He was a patron of the poor and dedicated to the

truth of the Holy Trinity. Another "saint" in our calendar is martyr Lucy. She was killed for her faith in Italy, on December 13, 304AD. Known as Santa Lucia in the Scandinavian countries she reminds us of the light of Christ that comes in the midst of our darkness.

Sunday, December 17 the children of Bethlehem will share the good news of Jesus birth through their Christmas Program. Following the program all are invited to a time of fellowship and food, as well as the making of nativity sets for each household.

The communities of Pemberville and Luckey are joining for a combined "Blue Christmas" worship on Sunday, December 17, at 5:30, at Zion Lutheran Church, Luckey. This service is designed for those who are heart-sick, or have lost a loved one, or for whom the joy of Christmas falls short.

Because of the way the calendar falls this year, we will celebrate the 4th Sunday of Advent in the morning of December 24, at our normal 9am Worship service. Christmas Eve, with Scripture and Sermon, Holy Communion and Candlelight will be celebrated at both 6pm and 10pm Worship Services that night.

Bethlehem will join with the other Pemberville Churches to celebrate New Year's Eve with a combined worship service at Sonfire, beginning at 11am.

Table of Contents

Pastor's Message	Pg. 1
Holiday Worship Schedule ..	Pg. 1
Christmas Program Info	Pg. 2
Sunday School Dates.....	Pg.2
Memorials	Pg. 2
Treasure's Report	Pg. 2
Mission Honduras.....	Pg.3
Council Minutes.....	Pg.4
Bishop Reading.....	Pg.5
Mission Action.....	Pg.6
Food Pantry Needs	Pg.6
Praying.....	Pg.6
Serving in Worship.....	Pg.6
80+ Birthdays	Pg.6
Kid's Page	Pg.7
Calendar's.....	Pg.8

President

Lisa Kohlenberg

Vice-President

Luann Snyder

Treasurer

Renee Farmer

Secretary

Brenda Graham

220 Cedar Street

PO Box 344

Pemberville, OH 43450

419-287-4182

bethlehempemberville.org

Office Hours:

Mon. - Thurs.

9:00am - 2:00pm

9:00 am- 12:pm Friday

If you need to update your contact information including if you have a

PO Box, please call the office

or email

office@bethlehempemberville.org

Holiday Worship Schedule

Christmas Eve- 9am

Christmas Eve-6pm

Christmas Eve-10pm

Community Worship December 31st @ Sonfire- 11am

Children's Christmas Program

December 17, 2023

Fellowship Hall

Fellowship Activity: Soup and Sandwich
Lunch Create a Graham Cracker Nativity Scene



SUNDAY SCHOOL IMPORTANT DATES

December 17: Children's Christmas Program

*during the church service with fellowship following

December 24: No Sunday School for Pre K – Grade 8

December 31: No Sunday School for Pre K- Grade 8

January 7: Faith and Family Fellowship Sunday

*Join our Pre K – Grade 8 students in their Sunday School classes and see what they are learning



In Loving Memory

IN MEMORY OF JACK EISENHOUR

Joan Slebos
Ken Sieving
M/M Steve Rife
Carolyn Borcharding
Karen Young
Kay Burrell
Ruth Ann Duty
Charles Kokomoor
Pemberville Condo Assn.
D Coffield
M/M Roger Kohlenberg
M/M Ray Kohlenberg
M/M Jim Witker
Ruth Walters
M/M Rick Walters
M/M Ken Gerwin
Linda Rinderkenectt
M/M Nigel Davies
M/M Jim Sharp
M/M Gordon Bowman
M/M Tom Rahe
M/M Dennis Layman



Ruth Peters
Alice Coy
M/M Jerry Baumer
M/M Vic Schuerman
Pastor Jim & Chris Budke
M/M Arlyn Witker
M/M Jim Lowry
M/M Jeff Bourdo
Donna Alexander
M/M Jay Rader
Dennis Henline
Larry Avers
Karol Heckman
M/M Rodger Burtchin
M/M Tom Amos
Ruth Phillips
M/M Bob Frobose
M/M Roger Hansen
Jan & Mark Hoodlebrink
Mark Alexander
M/M Dale Fahle
M/M Denny Guyer
Renee Farmer



M/M Bob Bruning
M/M Jeff Graber
Doris Melcher
Ruth Kruse
M/M Gary Cline
Becky Graber
Evelyn Gerwin
M/M Keith Avers
M/M Mike Godfrey
M/M Robert Overmyer
Ken Brueggemeier
M/M Terry Nigh
M/M Scott Samson
William Vaughan Company
M/M Ron Diener
Evelyn Hagemeyer
M/M Philip Bortel
Millie Dierker
M/M Robert Bruggemeier
M/M Steven Porth
Barb Bushman
Mr. Donald Beaverson

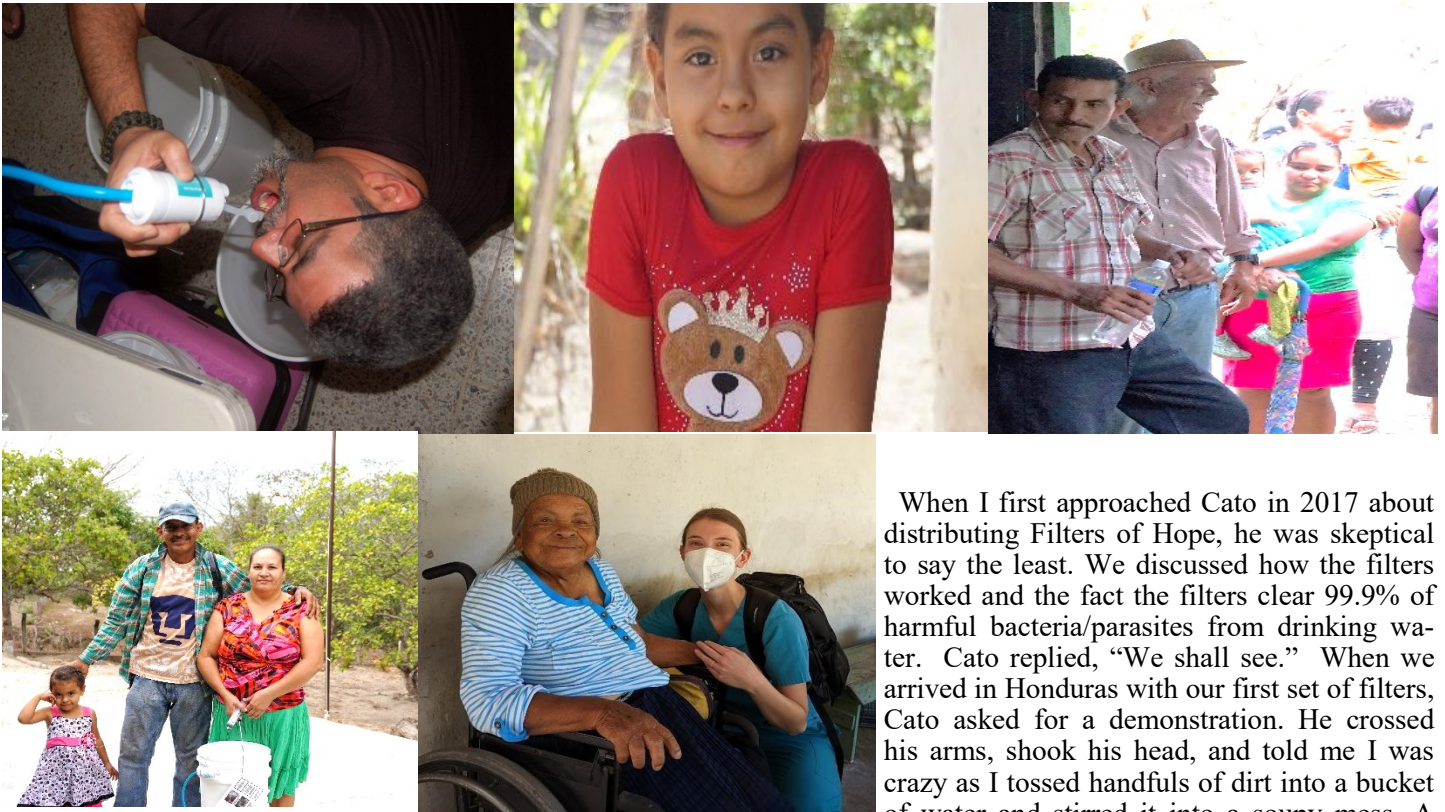
BY THE NUMBERS

From Jane Kohlenberg, Financial Secretary

September, 2023	Beg. Balance	Deposits	Expenses	End Balance
Operating	\$410,110.97	\$28,560.93	\$19,445.85	\$419,226.05
Recon Adjustment	\$2,583.19			\$2,583.19
Memorial	\$-6,383.35	\$2,745.00	\$400.00	\$-4,038.35
Benevolence	\$8,262.12	\$2,192.00	\$6,439.00	\$4,015.12
Outreach	\$36,949.79	\$8,157.72	\$5,325.04	\$39,782.47
Pass Through	\$190,590.95			\$190,590.95
Totals	\$642,113.67	\$41,655.65	\$31,609.89	\$652,159.43

Mission Honduras

By Darla Boyk and the Mission Honduras team



When I first approached Cato in 2017 about distributing Filters of Hope, he was skeptical to say the least. We discussed how the filters worked and the fact the filters clear 99.9% of harmful bacteria/parasites from drinking water. Cato replied, “We shall see.” When we arrived in Honduras with our first set of filters, Cato asked for a demonstration. He crossed his arms, shook his head, and told me I was crazy as I tossed handfuls of dirt into a bucket of water and stirred it into a soupy mess. A

few seconds later, he watched in amazement as crystal clear water flowed from the outlet of the filter. Cato grabbed the filter, took a long drink of water, and said “now we find out if your filters really work”. A grinning Cato returned several hours later and told me to pack up a filter since we were going to Valle Arriba that afternoon. Cato was so impressed with the filters he wanted to show the filters to the members of the Valle Arriba health council prior to our distribution that week. This time, it was Cato throwing handfuls of dirt in the bucket and members of the health council that gasped in surprise as the clean water began to flow from the filter. Eugenio, a member of the health council, offered to help us during our distribution that week. Since then, Eugenio, his wife, and their daughter have attended all our checkups in Valle Arriba and have helped with the checkups. Last year, he agreed to be our village advocate and regularly checks up on the filters in his village. Eugenio and his family are extremely thankful for your gift of clean water.

This year, Matt Meyer, Jen Schuerman, Tresa Witker, Karen Schultz, Pastor Tim, Eric Corns, Anne Markowski, Colin Swearingen, Ted Lee, Aarin Eagleston, and I will be in Honduras January 19th-January 30th. We will once again partner with the Amigo de San Carlos (Tacoma) medical brigade for filter checkups, data collection, and filter distributions. We are finalizing our budget, finishing logistics such as Honduran import forms, ordering filters and buckets, and working with our team in Honduras to determine schedules and sites for distributions. I will be posting updates during our brigade on our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/blcmissonhonduras> and on Instagram at https://www.instagram.com/mission_honduras/. If you would like to donate to our mission, please make your check payable to Mission Honduras-Bethlehem and mail to the church office or use the church online donation portal. Use the dropdown box to designate Honduras. All funding is used to purchase and distribute filters.

Thank you to all those who have donated to our brigade, helped make (and eat!) one hundred seven dozen buckeyes, and joined us for the With This Light documentary. If you were unable to see the documentary, it is available for rent on streaming platforms such as Amazon Prime, You-Tube, Vimeo, and Apple Plus TV.

In closing, it is truly amazing that our community has provided over 7500 people in rural Honduras with access to clean water. Thank you. Please keep Mission Honduras (and the other ministries of our congregation) in your prayers. Please let me know if you have questions.

Sincerely,

Darla

419-575-0078 or missionhonduras.bethlehem@gmail.com

NOVEMBER COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS



Positive things happening inside the church

1. Make it Take it craft attendance
2. Amount of activity in the Church
3. Honduras activities and attendance for the Honduras documentary
4. Ukraine family response
5. Women's service at Bethlehem last weekend

Reports of Offices:

Pastor's report reviewed and on St. Patrick's day the Bishop will be at Bethlehem to Give the sermon

Treasurer's report: Reviewed with correction noted to the Radio Broadcast dollar Amount noted.

Trustee Report- money returned from the escrow fund from sale of Parsonage.

Discussion held regarding purchase of preschool gifts for the students.

Committee Reports:

Transition team-

Accomplished Synod list and currently re-focusing on the focus points.

Leadership is the next focus area. Upcoming workshop- "Healthy Congregation Series"

With a workshop scheduled in January, 2024. There will be a cost to the workshop.

Motion made to approve Leadership workshop cost from the Program Ministry made by Pastor Philabaum with second by Renee Farmer- Motion Carries

Next Focus point will be "The Future". Strategic Planning is focusing on the forming of New committees. Discussion included setting goals and what the vision will be in Five years. Will discuss with Bishop what strategic planners Synod has utilized.

Discussed Intentional Fellowship - After the Christmas program on December 17th,

There will be an activity of building a Graham Cracker Nativity Scene and then a Soup and sandwich luncheon.

Long Range Planning Committee-

Discussed how to Facilitate Spiritual Growth- For Advent children's service, the children will be given Advent Chains to build

Pastor Tim Philabaum will be doing Devotionals again.

Scout update- The scouts will be postponing the Adventure Fee for 2024. Scouts will be having A scrap metal collection at the Baseball Field on Saturday, 11/18/23.

Approval of Committee reports made by Renee Farmer with second by Josh Gerwin- Motion Carries

Old Business:

Ukraine update:

The Melnyk family is adjusting to their new location. The family was taken To the Immigration Office in Detroit for additional paperwork. The father of the Family has gotten his driver's license. Their son is attending Eastwood school And has made friends. There will be a potluck gathering to "Meet the Melnyk Family" on Sunday, December 3, 2023 in the Fellowship Hall.

Nominating Committee-

There are 2 members running for Deacon

Vice President position candidate

Elder candidate

Trustee candidates

Secretary candidate

Will continue to need more Deacons next year.

Motion to allocate funds out of the Outreach Fund for a local family in need made by Pastor Tim Philabaum with second by Russ Eby- Motion Carries.

Adjournment and Lord's Prayer

Next Council Meeting will be Thursday, December 21, 2023



FROM BISHOP DANIEL BEAUDOIN



November 15, 2023
2023 Year End Ask

“I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert,” Isaiah 43:19



2023 is the Year of Story, and some of the best stories from across Northwest Ohio have their genesis in the **Imagining Renewal Microgrants** initiative. Why are Microgrants so important?

Microgrants encourage God’s people to dream new dreams. **Microgrants** seed mission and ministry beyond the four walls of our parishes. **Microgrants** help us connect with what God is already up to in the community.

And as Pastor Stacy Lauer-Scovanner shares in the story below, Microgrants are renewing communities by bringing the Kingdom of God out of the abstract and into our daily lives.

After

Covid, our congregation struggled with the same thing as many of you. People were busier in different ways and weren’t connecting with each other and the church like they used to.

We started talking with new community leaders—coaches, the owner of the yoga studio, people walking through the coffee shop. Everyone had the same concern, that people were feeling lonely and that there was a sense of gloom overshadowing things.

Along with the owner of the yoga studio, we applied for (and received!) a microgrant. We hoped to help bring people together, even if it was outside of our walls. We gathered for worship at the beach each week and planned an activity that would interest different groups of people. One week we walked and talked, another time we kayaked, another time did yoga, another time we went for a swim in the lake. Each week someone new joined in, and they often came back the next week. We worshiped simply, ate dinner together, laughed and sometimes cried. This was a year ago, and we continued with beach worship this summer.

Thanks to the grant, we found community together. We also found joy in being outside! The grant stretched us to inviting the community into our Giving Garden where we grow produce to donate to local food pantries. Trucks and trucks full of produce leave each week of the summer, given away to those who need it most.

With such success at the park worship from the grant, we were inspired to invite the soccer team to help in the garden. One boy said he didn’t know corn grew like that on the plant. Another boy said that he never thought about God creating actual food for us to eat—creation had been a completely abstract idea for him until that time. Kids worked alongside adults, relationships formed even more, and deep and meaningful discussion took place as the youth asked questions and learned from those who had been serving in the garden for years.

These microgrants make a difference. The one we received helped us dream, and the dreaming then continued beyond what we had even imagined. We went from lacking community to being a renewed community through activities, worship, and then expanding on a service project we were already doing. Thank you for supporting dreams, as together we serve our God and proclaim God’s love to the world!

I invite you to come and enter the story and join Pastor Stacy and myself by making a generous donation to Imagining Renewal Microgrants. Our goal is to raise \$100,000 to fully fund new Microgrant initiatives. Together, we can and do make a difference in Christ’s name.

To give text NWOS to 73256 or click the link below!





Happening This Month: December

December Mission Action Project:

Community Food Pantry

The Community Food Pantry is available on Tuesday's the first two weeks of the month and Monday/Tuesday/Wednesday the last two weeks of the month from, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., the last two Saturday's of the month from 8-11 a.m. (excluding holidays & the last Saturday of October) for Eastwood community residents in need of food.

The Community Food Pantry is housed here at Bethlehem.

We accept non-perishable food items such as canned fruits and vegetables, boxed potatoes and meals, cereal, condensed or chunky style soups, tuna fish, canned meats, crackers, noodles, canned pastas, condiments (ketchup, mustard, etc.), peanut butter, jellies/jams. We also accept kleenex, toilet paper, paper towels, household cleaners, laundry detergent, fabric softener and basic personal items (soap, deodorant, shampoo, conditioner, toothbrushes and toothpaste).

Food for the pantry can be left in the Mission Action Room (111) any time. The bins are right inside the door on a table.

Cash donations are also accepted. Thank you!

Food Pantry Needs Your Help

Please help the Food Pantry stock these needed items in

December:

- **Crackers (any kind)**
- **Ketchup or Mustard**
- **Applesauce**
- **Toilet Paper**
- **Tooth Paste or Toothbrush**

The Food Pantry always accepts non-perishable food items such as canned fruits and vegetables, boxed potatoes cereal and soups. They also accept facial tissues, toilet paper, paper towels, household cleaners, laundry detergent, fabric softener and basic personal items (soap, deodorant, toothbrushes, toothpaste, shampoo and conditioner).

Food for the pantry can be left in the Mission Action Room (111) any time. The bins are located right inside the door on a table.

Monetary donations are always welcomed so that the pantry can restock items as needed.

The Food Pantry is available every Tuesday from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., as well as the second and last Saturday of the month from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. (excluding holidays) for Eastwood community residents in need of food.



Serving this month in Worship and Beyond

Altar Flowers

Joanne Busdeker

Altar Guild

Nancy Rife

Office Window

Nancy Rife

Service Org (Funerals)

Joanne Busdeker

Joan Slebos

Help Members Celebrate Their 80+ Birthday!

Celebrate this joyous occasion with the members below by sending a card or give a greeting!

- ◆ 12/2 Joyce Brinker
- ◆ 12/3 Joan Slebos
- ◆ 12/8 Eileen Schuerman
- ◆ 12/9 Jane Nowlin
- ◆ 12/19 Mary Kuhlman
- ◆ 12/25 Vic Schuerman
- ◆ 12/26 Darla Rahe
- ◆ 12/30 Judy Haas
- ◆ 12/30 Ken Sieving

If your 80+ birthday is not included here, please contact the office at 419-287-4182 so we can update our records.



Praying...

FOR HEALING AND HOPE

Judy Hass, Donna Schuerman, Henry Sundermeier, Evelyn Hagemeyer, Justin Werner, Linda Black, David Moenter & Curtis Dodd

For the Grieving

Gene Haas, Camden Paul Edward Henline, Josh Flipse, Norma Hall and Jack Eisenhower

FOR OUR BISHOPS

Elizabeth Eaton and Daniel Beaudoin

FOR OUR MISSION PARTNERS

Sociedad Amigos de los Ninos Honduras, Missions International (Haiti), Redeemer Church, Operation Christmas Child

FOR LOCAL MISSIONS

Snack Pack Program, Good Samaritan Fund, Community Food Pantry, Habitat for Humanity, The Linen Closet, Grace's Place, Bethlehem Lutheran Preschool & Extended Care, WCOAA Senior Care, Cub Scout Pack 344, Scouts BSA Troops 344 and 9344

FOR ALL YOUTH

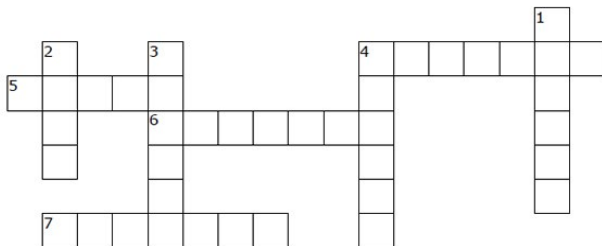
FOR OUR MILITARY MEN & WOMEN

KIDS ACTIVITIES

Ready for the Christ of Christmas

In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." Matthew 3:1 (NIV)

Based on Matthew 3:1-12



ACROSS

4. One who speaks for God, or tells what will happen in the future
5. The sounds that are made when people speak or sing
6. To get ready for something that is going to happen
7. What John did to people in the Jordan River

DOWN

1. An area where there is little rain and not many plants
2. The man who preached that Jesus was coming
3. To be sorry for something bad you have done and make a change
4. To deliver a sermon

VOICE	PREPARE	DESERT	PROPHET
REPENT	JOHN	PREACH	BAPTIZE

Star Light, Star Bright

"Are you the Messiah we've been expecting, or should we keep looking for someone else?" Matthew 11:3 (NLT)

The Activity is based on Matthew 11:2-11



From the words provided for each clue, enter the letter of the word which best matches the clue in the blank.

- ___ To be unable to hear
A. blind B. see C. deaf D. dead
- ___ To move along by putting one foot in front of the other
A. crawl B. see C. walk D. swim
- ___ Something that is pleasant or enjoyable
A. prison B. pain C. lame D. good
- ___ To know what is around you by using your eyes
A. see B. hear C. talk D. walk
- ___ Not alive
A. blind B. dead C. lame D. deaf
- ___ Information or reports about recent events
A. good B. deaf C. prison D. news
- ___ A place where criminals are forced to live as a punishment
A. prison B. school C. home D. palace
- ___ Unable to walk correctly because of injury to the legs or feet
A. blind B. deaf C. lame D. dead
- ___ To receive sound using your ears
A. hear B. see C. walk D. talk
- ___ To be unable to see
A. hear B. poor C. blind D. walk



God
with
Us



DECEMBER

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3 9:00 am Worship In-person and on Facebook/YouTube 10:15 am Sunday School Adult Bible Study 11:30 am Worship broadcast on 99.1 FM	4 7:00 pm Yoga 7:30 pm Dart Ball	5 11:00 am - 2:00 pm Food Pantry open	6 6:15 pm Bell Choir 7:30 pm Choir	7	8	9 8:00 - 11:00 am Food Pantry open
10 9:00 am Worship In-person and on Facebook/YouTube 10:15 am Sunday School Adult Bible Study 11:30 am Worship broadcast on 99.1 FM	11 7:00 pm Yoga 7:00 pm Priscilla Circle 7:30 pm Dart Ball	12 11:00 am - 2:00 pm Food Pantry open	13 6:15 pm Bell Choir 7:30 pm Choir 6-8:30 pm Cub Scout Meeting	14 6:00-7:00 pm Girl Scout Meeting	15	16
17 9:00 am Worship In-person and on Facebook/YouTube 10:15 am Sunday School Adult Bible Study 11:30 am Worship broadcast on 99.1 FM	18 7:00 pm Yoga 7:30 pm Dart Ball	19 11:00 am - 2:00 pm Food Pantry open	20 6:15 pm Bell Choir 7:30 pm Choir 6:00-7:00 pm Girl Scout Meeting	21 7:00 pm Council Meeting	22	23
24 9:00 am Worship In-person and on Facebook/YouTube 11:30 am Worship broadcast on 99.1 FM Christmas Eve Worship 6:00 pm 10:00 pm	25 Christmas Day Office Closed	26 11:00 am - 2:00 pm Food Pantry open Office Closed	27 Office Closed	28 Office Closed	29 Office Closed	30

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
PO Box 344
Pemberville, OH 43450

*Return service requested
Dated material. Do not delay*

A large stained glass window depicting the Last Supper serves as the background for the lower half of the page. It shows Jesus seated at a table with his twelve apostles, with various items like bread, wine, and a chalice visible on the table. The colors are rich and varied, typical of traditional stained glass art.

Worship

9:00 AM

**In person in the sanctuary and
streaming on Facebook and YouTube**

11:30

Broadcast on 99.1 FM