



The STAR of Bethlehem



Bethlehem Lutheran Church
An LCMS Congregation

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Redacted Website Edition

July 2026

THE ELDERS'



A Message from Your Elders: Christ Continues to Serve His Church

As we continue through this season of pastoral vacancy, we have already witnessed an important truth: the ministry of Christ among His people continues. While transitions can bring uncertainty, our Lord has continued to gather us around His Word and Sacraments. We were blessed to welcome Pastor John Rickert this past Sunday and to receive the Lord's Supper together. What a wonderful reminder that the true strength of the Church is not found in any one individual, but in Christ Himself, who faithfully serves His people through His means of grace.

We are also thankful for the strong participation in our recent Voters' Assembly. Your attendance, prayers, and willingness to be involved demonstrate the love and commitment that exist within our congregation. As we move forward, we encourage every member to remain engaged in the life of the church. Continue to attend worship services faithfully, participate in Bible study, and support one another in Christian fellowship. In doing so, we bear witness to the unity that Christ creates among His people.

Please continue to remember our Call Committee in your daily prayers. Pray that God would grant wisdom, patience, and discernment as they carry out this important work. Pray also for the pastor whom the Lord is preparing, that He would guide his steps according to His perfect timing and will.

As Luther wrote in *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God*, "And though this world with devils filled should threaten to undo us, we will not fear, for God hath willed His truth to triumph through us." We move forward with confidence, knowing that the Lord who has sustained His Church throughout the centuries will continue to sustain Bethlehem Lutheran Church.

"Be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain." — 1 Corinthians 15:58

Blessings,

The Elders

All items for the newsletter are to be submitted to Debbie C., editor, no later than the 23rd of the month and, upon approval, may be edited for space or clarity.
Early submissions are appreciated.

The STAR of Bethlehem newsletter is published monthly. The website and large print versions have been modified. The LCMS triple-cross logo is used with permission. All rights reserved.

Lutheran Resources

LCMS- Free to be Faithful
www.lcms.org/socialissues/freetobefaitful

Lutheran Center for Religious Liberty
www.LCRLFreedom.org

Lutheran Hour Ministries
<https://www.lhm.org/>

The Lutheran Witness
<https://witness.lcms.org/>

Southeastern District, LCMS
<https://se.lcms.org/>

Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod
www.lcms.org/

Concordia Publishing House
www.cph.org/

International Lutheran Council
www.ILCouncil.org

[FROM THE EDITOR:]

This edition is a few days later than normal so the June 28 Annual Picnic photographs could be included. Please note numerous directory updates on the announcements page. The activity pages will return next month if life goes according to plan.

CHURCH COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

Debbie C., Recording Secretary

Thanks for the great turn out for the June 14 Voters' Assembly! Contact me if you did not receive your copy of the Minutes via email (or file folder for the few who require printed copies. Thanks, Helga!)

Our next council meeting is after the service on July 12.

Many thanks to all who are volunteering in various ways!



CALL COMMITTEE UPDATE

Joel C., President & Head Elder

I have received confirmation that our Congregational Profile and nominations have been received by the District. Now we wait for them to return a Call List. In the meantime, the Call Committee will be working on interview questions of potential candidates. If you have any questions that you may have for the interview process, please let us know.

Our next scheduled meeting is July 26.

JULY STEWARDSHIP MESSAGE

Mark Z., BLC Stewardship Director

My thoughts for this month's Stewardship Note are "semi-inspired" by the June 16 message in *Portals of Prayer*. By the way, if you are not aware, copies of these quarterly collections are available (free of charge) and can be found in our narthex in both regular and large print versions. If you do not use this resource in your daily devotions yet, please give it a try. I am continually amazed how often the daily message hits home.

Now, on to the June 16 topic, "Pressing On." I believe all of us strive to be the best persons we can be, even when sometimes it can be for selfish or personal reasons. When we fall short, we need to remember to confess our shortcomings and open our hearts to God's continual forgiveness. Paraphrasing what Paul says in Phillippians 3:12 – 16, that although he is not yet perfect, he "presses on" because God made him His own.

As we go through our daily lives, we often work toward a goal or start a project that bogs down or weighs heavy on our minds. We can disappoint ourselves in our thoughts, words, and actions, but if we "press on", asking for God's help, our efforts can be rewarded, at least, in the personal satisfaction we did our best.

Let me try to tie my ramblings to being a good Christian steward. Everything we have is a gift from God. Psalm 136: 1 says "Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good. His love endures forever" (NIV, International Bible Society). Good stewardship to me is giving our time, talents and treasures back to God in total thanks for all He has done for us with no expectations of acknowledgements or accolades. Human nature can make that difficult for us, but we must remind ourselves who's really in charge.

Let us continue to "press on" with prayer and patience, giving of our time, talents and treasures as we navigate the LCMS call process;

Remember, WE'VE GOT THIS, WITH GOD'S HELP!



BLC CELEBRATES!

BIRTHDAYS

Louise Z
Ron W
Willow R
Kathy S
Jonathan H
Joan R
Nancy M
Marie O



ANNIVERSARIES

Dean & Rebecca S
Dillon and Hannah G
Robert & Michelle C
Joel & Carolina C

Contact Debbie C. to add your special occasions or to make corrections.

CALLED HOME TO CHRIST PATSY L.



August 18, 1931 – June 3, 2026

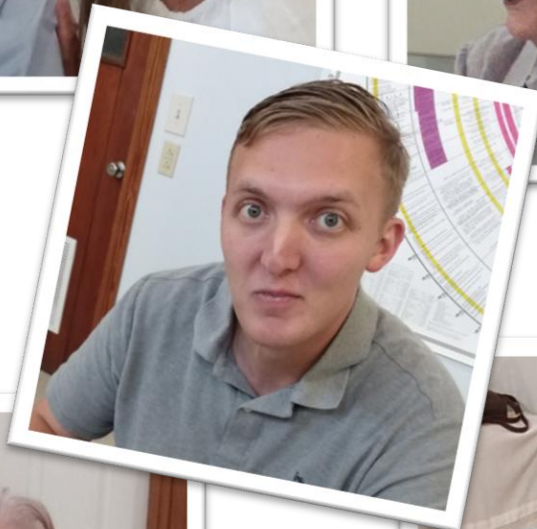
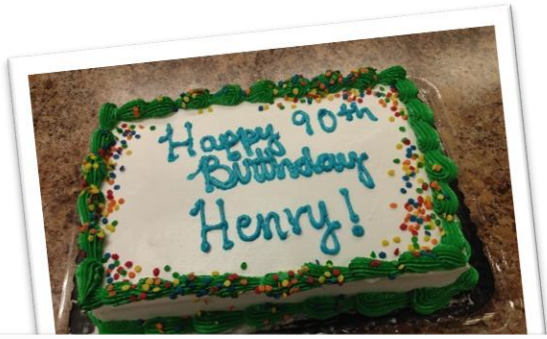
June 14 WELCOME SAVANNAH!



JUNE 14 POTLUCK

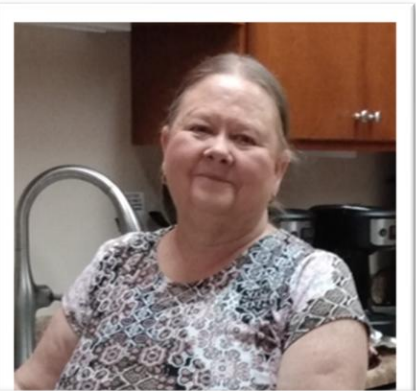
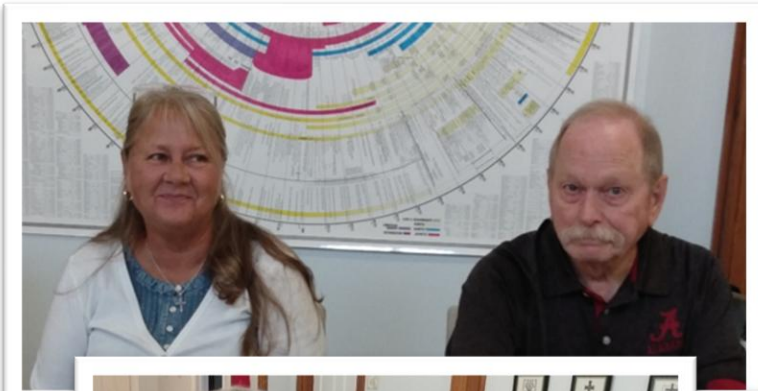


On June 21 we celebrated
HENRY's 90TH BIRTHDAY



JUNE 28 ANNUAL PICNIC





ANNOUNCEMENTS

DIRECTORY UPDATES

ACTS COLLECTION – CANNED SOUP

FELLOWSHIP

- Tuesday, July 21, 5:00 p.m., **Taco night at BLC**. Stay tuned for details. (In lieu of a dining out.)
- **Potluck**, July 26, after the service. Tentative plan is **sandwiches and sundaes**. Stay tuned for details.

BLC CLASSIFIEDS



To place a classified ad in the *Star*, submit the information to me by noon on the 23rd of the month.

Use your church directory for contact information

~DC

SERVICES OFFERED:

Dana A. (in his "semi-retirement") now is providing residential painting services, available to members and non-members alike. He offers great work at an affordable price, with MANY references available. Services include trim, ceilings, and cabinets.

FOR SALE:

Queen-size Oak Bed - \$250, OBO

Excellent condition. Includes headboard, footboard, & metal frame. Mattress and boxspring NOT included. Buyer to disassemble and transport.



FREE:

“Mock Canopy” Accommodates double- or queen-sized headboard. Can be used as curtain.

July 2026

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH AIKEN, SC

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
28	29	30	1	2	3	4
			7pm Bible Study			
5 9am Bible Study 10:30 Service	6	7 10am Women's Bible Study	8 7pm Bible Study	9	10	11 Independence Day
12 9am Bible Study 10:30 Service Council Meeting	13	14 10am Women's Bible Study	15 7pm Bible Study	16	17	18
19 9am Bible Study 10:30 Service	20	21 10am Women's Bible Study 5pm Dining In, Tacos	22 7pm Bible Study	23	24	25
26 9am Bible Study 10:30 Service Sandwiches & Sundaes 3pm Call Committee	27	28 10am Women's Bible Study	29 7pm Bible Study	30	31	1
2	3	Notes	ACTS: Canned Soup			