

# Bethesda Life-Line

Worship Services

**Bethesda now has a YouTube channel!  
Please check out our previous week's  
services at:**

<https://www.youtube.com/c/bethesdalutheranchurchmalmomn>, as well as on our Facebook page.



### **Bethesda Mission Statement:**

We will **LIVE** and **SERVE** through **FAITH**  
we will **ACT** with **LOVE** and **KINDNESS**  
we will **GIVE** hope and **SUPPORT** to all

**January Sunday Worship** YouTube or  
Facebook

### Upcoming Events

**Weekly bulletins and links to our services  
available at <http://blcmalmo.org/>**

### UPCOMING DATES

- Jan. 1 Happy New Year
- Jan. 31 In-person Worship & Annual Meeting
- Feb. 17 Ash Wednesday

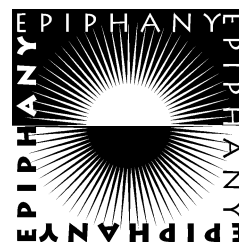


The New Year is our opportunity to refresh our relationship with the One who says, "See, I am making all things new" (Revelation 21:5, NRSV).



### Annual Meeting

The date and time for our Annual Congregational Meeting will be Sunday, January 31, 2021. We will have an in-person service that day starting at 10:00 a.m. with meeting follow service.



### Epiphany

Though overshadowed by falling so soon after Christmas, Epiphany is one of the three major Christian celebrations along with Christmas and Easter. It is always celebrated on January 6th and commemorates the presentation of the infant Jesus to the Magi or the three wise men.

Epiphany is celebrated annually in Christian churches on January 6. The word "epiphany" comes from a Greek word meaning "manifestation" or "showing forth." Its focus is on the legendary arrival of the Magi (three wise men) after the birth of Christ. They followed the light of a star to find the Light of the World.

The wise men were not Jews but Gentiles, which shows that Christ came not only for Jews but for all other people on Earth. Thus, all of us who are Gentile Christians are in the lineage of the Magi, the first Gentiles who came to Christ.



### **From the Pastor**

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! Whatever joys and (lots and lots of) challenges this past year may have brought, we remember that in the celebration of Christ's birth, we have also been given the promise of a new birth as well. In Christ, as Paul writes, we are a new creation! Let us begin this new year in hope that God's new creation will flourish in us and throughout the world. Yours in Christ,

Pastor James Muske



### **We are Never Alone**

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton  
Presiding Bishop of the Evangelical  
Lutheran Church in America

The room was spare and dimly lit.

We sat on folding chairs in a circle—young Honduran women and some of us from the ELCA. We had come to Honduras to observe the work of AMMPARO (Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities). This is the ELCA's strategy to help youth who have been forced to flee their home countries because of violence, abuse, extortion by gangs and extreme poverty. Amparo is the Spanish word for shelter or refuge.

In this case, AMMPARO partnered with the Lutheran World Federation and the Mennonites to resettle returned migrants— those who had tried to seek asylum in the United States but had failed or had been denied and deported back to Honduras.

One by one they told us their stories of fear and desperation. Not a one undertook the long and dangerous trek north on a whim. They told us about the abuse they had suffered, about family members who had been killed by gangs, about the inability to make a living because of the extortion by organized crime. They talked about the bitter sadness of leaving home and family, and the uncertainty of the future.

I remember one young woman in particular. She was pregnant when she tried to migrate to the United States. She had the baby somewhere along the way. She was far from home, mostly alone and desperately wanted her mother to be with her. None of this is what she had hoped for when she was growing up.

Circumstances beyond her control had forced her into this new and strange existence. She and her baby were now back in Honduras—but not at home. Home was too dangerous.

Remember last Christmas? Remember all of the preparations, the travel to be with family? Remember the holy beauty of the Christmas Eve liturgy and receiving Christ's grace and forgiveness at his table? The shopping and Christmas caroling? The in-person gatherings? All that has changed.

The pandemic hasn't forced us from our homes but into our homes, sheltering in place, isolated. Not together, but physically distanced. Not gathered with family and friends, but forced apart because of the threat of infection. Forced by circumstances beyond our control into this strange existence. Oh, there will be Christmas carols piped into grocery stores and other essential services, but they will be painful reminders of how life used to be.

We are reminded of the experience of the exiles in Babylon: "By the rivers of Babylon—there we sat down and there we wept when we remembered Zion. On the willows there we hung up our harps. For there our captives asked us for songs, and our tormentors asked for mirth, saying, 'Sing us one of the songs of Zion!' How could we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land" (Psalm 137)?

I told the young Honduran woman about another young woman who was forced to leave home because of a government decree. She, too, was pregnant and made a long and difficult journey. She, too, was far from home and without her mother when the baby came. She had to find shelter wherever she could. This wasn't what she had hoped for when she was growing up. Circumstances beyond her control had forced her into this new existence.

That young woman was Mary and the child was Jesus. Precisely in our distress, in our dislocation, the Lord shows up. Emmanuel—God with us—makes his home in the very places we find foreign or isolating. The young Honduran woman, and all of us, can find hope because of the birth of Mary's child. There is no God-forsaken place and we are never alone— not in hospital rooms, or sheltering in place, or Zoom calls or on dangerous roads.

Many of us will not be physically home for Christmas, but we are truly home in Christ.



## Bethesda Lutheran Church of Malmo

Minutes of December 21, 2020 Council Meeting

In attendance: Judie Birk, Mary Braun, Cheryl Malotky, Dorothy Munding, Pastor James Muske, Dennis Hennesey and Sherry Whipple

The meeting was called to order by council vice president Dennis Hennesey.

Pastor James gave opening Devotions.

### Secretary's Report:

Motion was made to accept the minutes of the November meeting by Mary Braun, seconded by Cheryl Malotky, and passed.

### Treasurer's Report:

Financial view and current month activity for November was presented by Mary Braun. Mary said incoming contributions are low, but thankfully we had the interest from the Edward Jones account to use this past month. Motion was made by Sherry Whipple to accept the treasurer's report, seconded by Cheryl Malotky and passed.

Pastor's Report –November to December 21, 2020  
Busy, busy, busy yet again with planning, recording, and editing videos for worship. Continued thanks to the Praise Band for their musical gifts. Also, gratitude to my family for helping provide music this month as well.

We were also grateful to be able to record music with John Koziol again this year. I feel his fee was well worth it, as we were able to not only record for the Lessons & Carols service, but for Christmas Eve and the first Sunday in January.

Confirmation classes continue to be going as well as can be expected over Zoom.

Still reaching out over the phone to members, but thankfully, with Darlene's help, a calling circle has been organized and have been busy calling.

The intention is for me to lead the funeral service for George Smith down near Albert Lea on January 9, 2021 for immediate family only. My hope is to record that service so it may be shared with our congregation and others.

Since that will require extra travel time and editing time, I have asked Terry Frovik to record a sermon for the Sunday, January 10 worship service to take a

little off my plate.

Also grateful for Cheryl and Mary Vukelich (and Mary Braun, of course), for helping organize and offering to help form online social opportunities. Still trying to manage some self care in the midst of all the challenges. Hope to take a little time off the week after Christmas, but still trying how to figure out how a longer vacation would work.

### Old Business

- Annual Meeting — we cannot postpone the meeting per the synod. So, we need a minimum of 25 people to attend a meeting for a quorum. What format do we want to do for this? Council discussed options and decided that we will have the annual meeting along with a worship service. Mary made a motion to move the annual meeting to January 31st following an in-person worship service. Motion was seconded by Sherry Whipple and passed. All state guidelines for in person meetings will be followed (masks, six feet distancing, etc.).
- Annual Giving — we're down about \$9,500 for the past four months. We do have some people sending in their donations. Mary is still providing ways of giving via the newsletter, Facebook, and our website. We need an appeal for donations. If this continues, we may need to tighten our budget, and this should be discussed at the annual meeting.

### New Business

- Election for church council — we have some people in mind.
- C10.08 Constitution Amendment (remote meeting) — this is something we need to talk about at the annual meeting so our congregation can do remote meetings. It needs to be added to our constitution.
- Contributions to the synod for 2021. Dennis has the paperwork and will give to Mary. We typically give 6% of our general offerings.

Motion was made to adjourn by Mary Braun, seconded by Sherry Whipple, and passed.

The council closed with the Lord's Prayer.

The next council meeting will be Jan. 18 at 10 am.

Respectfully submitted by Judie Birk, council secretary.

## 2020 TREASURER'S REPORT

<u>General Fund</u>	<u>NOVEMBER</u>	<u>YTD*</u>
Income Actual	\$11,296	\$32,378
Income Budgeted	\$12,942	\$38,826
Expense Actual	\$9,994	\$33,071
Expense Budgeted	\$13,234	\$39,702
Over/(Short)	\$1,302	(\$693)

\*Abridged Year (From Sept-Dec 2020)



### Christmas Calling Ministry

A huge thank you to the people who were callers for this ministry: Carol Bakken, Char Berg, Karen Carron, Darlene Christensen, Gloria Christensen, Shirley Gosselin, Ruth Hamman, Jessica Lagerstrom, Carolyn Morris, Cleo O'Brien, Sue Samuelson, Sue Stebbins, Wally Swenson, Mary Vukelich. They called members and friends of Bethesda just to check in with them and to update them on upcoming events.

We hope to continue this ministry to connect with members on a monthly basis. If you would be able to help by calling even one or two people a month contact Darlene Christensen or the office.



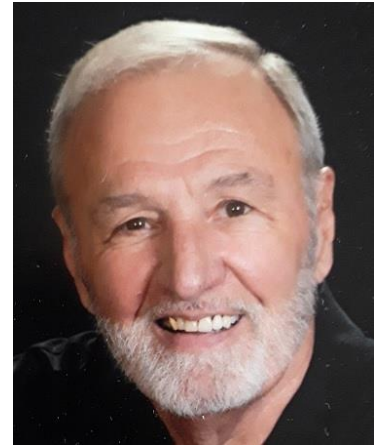
### Operation Christmas Child

Thirty-one shoeboxes were able to be assembled and sent to needy children around the world thanks to some left over supplies from last year and a donation for shipping.

**BETHESDA QUILTERS** need donations of clean used mattress pads and blankets to make Lutheran World Relief quilts. Please leave in the Fellowship Hall by the Quilter's Door. Many Thanks.

**PRAYER SHAWLS** - A big thank you to all who have been knitting and crocheting Prayer Shawls. Because of this our supply has been replenished and there are prayer shawls available in the narthex & in the nurse's office in case you know someone who would benefit from receiving one.

We mourn the passing of our friend, council president, and brother in Christ, George Smith, on December 9th, 2020. May we, as we have these past weeks, continue to surround Patti and George's family in prayer. May we also, as we mourn, give thanks for having been blessed to know him in this life. We are grateful for the love that he shared among us, and now may he rest with all the saints, welcomed and embraced in the loving arms of God.




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*The sister of Arty Heins passed away on December 13, 2020. Prayers for Arty and her family.*

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Richard (Dick) Noterman passed away this past week. He was known as the bicycle man who stayed in his motorhome in Malmo during the summer. He biked up to the church to play cards. The card players will miss him.

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### TIRED OF ISOLATING? LET'S BEAT THE COVID CABIN FEVER!



Join me on Tuesday, January 5th at 10:00 am for a virtual "Zoom" coffee and conversation hour. Zoom is a very user friendly computer application and I can provide technical assistance. We will continue to meet every other Tuesday if interest continues.

Please email me if you are interested so I can email you a Zoom invite. If you have additional questions, please let me know. Cheryl Malotky [clmalotky@gmail.com](mailto:clmalotky@gmail.com). 952 412-6108

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**Women's Devotion:** Monday, January 11th, 9:00am, in the Fellowship Hall. Discussions based on the Gather Magazine. Mask-up and bring your own beverage.

**Parish Nurse Notes by  
Darlene Christensen**

**Are You Nice or Kind?**

Have you ever thought about the difference between being nice and being kind? I think most of us consider ourselves to be nice, at least most of the time, but are we kind?

Nice is defined as being pleasant, agreeable and delightful. Being kind is an action word and defined as having, showing or proceeding from benevolence. It means not only caring about people, but also showing it through your actions. Being kind means looking for ways to help others often by going out of your way to help them. As we leave 2020 and look with hope to 2021 may we all aspire to be kind and not just nice.



**Camp Onomia  
Employment  
Opportunities**

**SUMMER STAFF**

Are you a college student looking for an awesome summer experience? You have come to the right place, at Camp Onomia we offer a full summer of fun, laughter and memories. You will experience a summer of faith filled community in a small group atmosphere as you share your faith leading activities and program for all ages!

**MAKE YOUR SUMMER COUNT**

Get ready for the best summer of your life! You will get the opportunity to work with a team of exciting, motivated and faith filled peers to provide a life-changing experience for kids of all ages. You will lead games and engage kids in Bible Studies, campfires, worships, canoeing, swimming and much more! What is God calling you to do today?

**STAFF POSITIONS**

Most of our summer staff are cabin counselors. This is a residential camp setting, so you live with a cabin group of 6-8 kids and lead them in organized activities from morning till sleep time. Some of our counselors also have Lifeguard certification to help on the waterfront in the afternoons. Explore our summer program descriptions to get a sense of daily life at camp.

**SUPPORT POSITIONS**

Support staff enable the counselors to do their best. Depending upon the year, we also hire:  
-Program Coordinators  
-Kitchen Assistants  
-Grounds Crew  
We hire for the summer term which normally runs Memorial Day through the second week of August.

<https://www.camponomia.org/employment>  
Call us! 320-532-3767

**A Vow for the New Year**

Making plans for your life in the New Year? Could it be that God already has a plan for you and is patiently waiting for you to make that plan a reality?

When one considers how everything seems to have a purpose in nature (atoms, genes, plants, animals, etc.), it makes sense to believe that each of us has a purpose as well. On the other hand, if all of creation seems to have just happened without any reason, then this means our minds and spirits must have no reason or purpose as well. How can we trust them?


But believers trust that there is a great Intelligence that brought everything into existence.

There is a Mind and a Heart at the center of all creation. If that's the case, then life can only make sense when we seek what the Creator has in mind for us.

Jesus, who knew the Mind and Heart of God better than anyone who ever lived on Earth, once said to the erring Peter: "You are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things" (Mark 8:33, NRSV).

Setting our minds on human things can get us into trouble. That's why it often seems we live in a crazy mixed-up world. How can life ever be fulfilling, without the purpose God has for that life?

To set one's mind on divine things leads us to consider the one vow we should take seriously for the New Year. Your will, Lord. Your will and nothing else.

**Women of the ELCA**  **WELCA MEETING**  
on Wednesday, January 20 to discuss distribution of benevolence monies taken in from the No-Bazaar Bazaar. Mask up, bring your own beverage, and Social Distancing enforced.

# Activities & Events

January 2021

If anyone is unable to fulfill an assignment below, please find your own substitute or notify the coordinator

Ushers by Skip & Lynn Hansen



Altar Care by Dianne Jones

January.....Linda Southworth and Winnie Zahradka

February.... Elsa and Chuck Carlson

March..... Shirley Gosselin and Gina Rosa

April..... Lynne Meidlinger and Sylvia Tapelt

Recycling -

Greeters  Lynne Meidlinger



Jan. 16 Elsa & Chuck Carlson  
 Jan. 19 Lynn & Skip Hansen  
 Jan. 25 Ruth & Ted Jaszczak



Jan.	1	Dennis Bistodeau
Jan.	1	Hunter Westerlund
Jan.	3	Ardis Kendall
Jan.	8	Wallace Swenson
Jan.	8	Patricia Kullberg
Jan.	9	Alanna Tibbetts
Jan.	11	Savannah Elliott
Jan.	12	Joan Halvorson
Jan.	14	Michael Lofgren
Jan.	15	Mason Modrow
Jan.	16	Gloria Christensen
Jan.	16	Corrine Becker
Jan.	18	Darlene Christensen
Jan.	19	Shirley Moe
Jan.	19	Carol Bakken
Jan.	20	Audrey Bistodeau
Jan.	21	Keith Kellen
Jan.	23	Will Petersen
Jan.	24	Patti Honnold
Jan.	24	Dave Stueven
Jan.	26	Bruce Gingerich
Jan.	26	Joanne Stueven
Jan.	27	Samantha Rae Lebens
Jan.	28	Richard Seifert
Jan.	28	Del Jones
Jan.	28	Kristin Penoyer
Jan.	28	Kristine Kral
Jan.	29	Winnie Zahradka
Jan.	29	Janet Tousignant
Jan.	29	Larry Liljenquist
Jan.	31	Katherine Larson
Jan.	31	Susan Darmer



# January 2021

## Bethesda Calendar of Events



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 <i>Happy New Year</i>	2
3 <i>Facebook or YouTube service</i>	4 <i>7:00 p.m AA &amp; Alanon mg</i>	5 <i>10:00 Zoom coffee hour</i>	6	7	8	9
10 <i>Facebook or YouTube service</i>	11 <i>9:00 Women's Devotional Bible study 7:00 p.m AA &amp; Alanon mg</i>	12	13	14	15	15
17 <i>Facebook or YouTube service</i>	18 <i>10:00 Council meeting  7:00 p.m AA &amp; Alanon mg</i>	19 <i>10:00 Zoom coffee hour</i>	20 <i>9-4 WIC  9:30 WELCA  Newline Deadline</i>	21	22	23
24 <i>Facebook or YouTube service</i>	25 <i>7:00 p.m AA &amp; Alanon mg</i>	26	27	28	29	30
31 <i>10:00 IN person worship service  11:00 Annual Meeting</i>						

Bethesda Lutheran Church of Malmo  
21590 State Highway 47  
Isle, MN 56342

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Aitkin, MN 56431

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



## The *Lifeline* Mission

We will **LIVE** and **SERVE** through **FAITH**  
we will **ACT** with **LOVE** and **KINDNESS**  
we will **GIVE** hope and **SUPPORT** to all



### Bethesda Telephone Directory

Church	<a href="mailto:blcmalmo@gmail.com">blcmalmo@gmail.com</a>	(320) 684-2123
Fax		(320)-684-2836
Toll Free		(877) 684-2123
Church Web site		<a href="http://blcmalmo.org">blcmalmo.org</a>
Facebook page		Bethesda Lutheran Church of Malmo
Pastor	James A. Muske	(320) 684-2123
Council President	Dennis Hennessy	(651) 247-2283
Vice President		
Parish Nurse	Darlene Christensen	(320) 279-0097
Parish Nurse	Kathy Berland	(218) 838-6181

**To share articles and/or information, mail to:**

**Sue Stebbins, *Lifeline* Editor**  
**c/o Bethesda Lutheran Church**  
**Email address: [blnews@juno.com](mailto:blnews@juno.com)**

All articles due on or before the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month