



Mission Statement
Sharing God's Love Wherever
We May Be

February 2025

**A Member Congregation of the Evangelical
 Lutheran Church in America**

BETHESDA NEWS is a monthly publication of
 Bethesda Lutheran Church, Jewell, IA

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Annual Meeting Day Chili and Soup Cookoff

Thank you to everyone that brought chili/soup on Sunday!
 We had an amazing turnout! 14 chili/soups were brought in.

The winners were as follows:

Lisa Peterson in first place
 Sheri Muller in second place
 Monica Sogard as Kid's Choice

Thanks again everyone!

Board of Evangelism/Stewardship

Contract Pastor: Rev. Jonathan Dolan
For pastoral needs: Deacon roster:
Pat Melchert: 515-451-0389
Richard Heeren: 515-231-2886
Sergio Gomez Roaro: 515-310-2096
Josh Hilfiker: 515-460-3637

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Donna Busch, Admin. Assist.
Lisa Peterson, Custodian
Julie Lutjen, Accompanist
Confirmation Students Sound and Technical Team

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Congregation Officers:
Jeff Scott, President
Vacant, Vice-Pres.
Sherri Hove, Treasurer
Sheri Muller, Secretary

TO REQUEST PASTORAL CARE IN THE COMING MONTHS:

CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE AT

515-827-5148 or

CALL A DEACON

RICH HEEREN	515-520-7867	SERGIO GOMEZ	515-310-2096
PAT MELCHERT	515-451-0389	JOSH HILFIKER	515-460-3637

Upcoming:

Feb 9th: Confirmation
 students re-enactment of
 the Gospel lesson

Bethesda Lutheran Church Council Meeting Minutes 18 December 2024, 7:30 pm

Present: Jeff Scott, Jen Nibe, Rich Heeren, Karen Culpepper, Sheri Muller, Lori Petersen, Hans Koehn, Marcia Wheeler, Donna Busch

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm by President Jeff Scott. Devotions were led by Jeff Scott.

Approval of Agenda Hans Koehn moved to approve the agenda; Lori Petersen seconded, and the agenda was approved unanimously.

Approval of Minutes of the November Meeting Karen Culpepper moved to approve the minutes of the November meeting; Hans Koehn seconded, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Financial/Treasurer's Report Karen Culpepper gave the Treasurer's Report. As of the end of November the general fund is \$8,343.90, and total assets are \$118,842.87. At the end of December any money left in the general fund needs to be transferred to the contingency fund, as the general fund has to be zeroed out. Jen Nibe moved to approve the Treasurer's Report; Karen Culpepper seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Pastor's Report N/A

Old Business

Narcan Narcan will be stored in the kitchen cupboard, in Donna's office, and Lisa Petersen will have one.

Other Signage Signage will be displayed regarding aid with social issues such as addiction, mental health, and other family services available in Hamilton County or Ames.

Call Committee No report at this time.

Nominating Committee Rich Heeren reported on the activities of the Nominating Committee. They are still working to fill the slate of candidates.

(continued next column)

(minutes continued) **New Business**

Candidacy Committee Report Donna Busch reported on the Synod Candidacy Committee meeting that was held on Friday, December 6 in Waverly. One candidate was approved to join the ELCA roster. Two candidates were approved for internships: one for one year, and the other for two. Planning for the 2025 retreat was undertaken. Donna appreciates the opportunity to serve on the Candidacy Committee.

Bethany Life Bethany Life reached out to Bethesda about volunteering to push wheelchairs on Sunday mornings for Chapel. Rich will take the volunteer opportunity to the confirmation students so see which month they would like to volunteer for. Additional groups will be asked to volunteer for the other Sundays in the month.

Budget and Monetary Committee Karen updated the council on the activities of the Budget and Monetary Committee. Bethesda is looking at a shortfall again this year. The council discussed several topics related to the overall budget. Rich Heeren volunteered to ask Justin Deppe about how renting out the parsonage could affect non-profit status and tax exemption, i.e. property taxes, rental income, etc.

Board Reports

Education Jen Nibe reported that the Christmas Program went extremely well.

Deacons Rich Heeren reported that Confirmation has been going well. The Confirmation group went to Timberland to deliver cookies and sing carols.

Evangelism/Stewardship No report

Worship No report

Trustees N/A

Youth Rally day will be August 24th.

The next Council meeting will be held on Sunday, January 5 after church. Lori Petersen moved to adjourn the meeting; Karen Culpepper seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned with the Lord's Prayer at 8:44 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Sheri Muller

The call committee has been formed and is working diligently. The Bethesda Constitution calls for demography diversity for the call committee, representing both male and female and a range of ages. These are the members of the Bethesda Lutheran Church Call Committee:

Hans Koehn
Sheri Muller
Marilyn Schlafke
Rob Thelen
Amber Widick
Eudene Lund



From the Constitution of Bethesda Lutheran Church, 2024

C13.05. When a vacancy occurs in a position for which this congregation calls a minister, a **Call Committee** of six (6) voting members shall be elected by the congregation council. Term of office will terminate upon installation of the newly called minister.

C13.05.01. Call Committee shall:

- Elect a chairperson who will be the primary contact with the Synod office, congregation council and the congregation.*
- Represent a cross-section of the congregation (by age, gender, etc.)*
- Seek to determine the needs of the congregation before the selection process begins.*
- Interview perspective candidate(s) and make a recommendation of a pastor for congregation's consideration.*
- The chair of the call committee shall notify prospective candidate of congregation's decision.*
- Keep synod, congregation council, and congregation informed of progress.*

Attendance

In-Person Attendance		Facebook and cable television	
12/24	108	Weekly Average Viewership – livestream and recorded: 205	Channel 14: We continue to appreciate the service of Stratford cable broadcasting the Worship Service each Monday and Tuesday at 3-pm at no charge.
12/29	55		
01/05	88		
01/07	29 - Timberland		
01/12	83		
01/19	61		
01/26	86		

Fund Balances to-date: January 27, 2025

Fund Name	2025 Budget (only applies to General Fund)	Needed per week to meet budget-GF	Needed @ 4 weeks to meet budget-GF	Actual received 51 weeks 2024	Disbursements to-date	To-date Transfers from Contingency Fund	Fund Balances
General Fund	\$186,911.72	\$3,594.46	\$14,377.82	\$13,050.87	\$5,627.22		\$ 7,423.65
Sunday School	NA	NA	NA	\$83.53	\$79.95		\$ 7,054.64
Youth & Family	NA	NA	NA	\$100.00	-0-		\$21,186.76
Designated Missions	NA	NA	NA	\$259.50	\$9-0-98.50		\$ 7,693.29
Undesignated Missions	NA	NA	NA	\$65.00			\$ 2,961.13
Discretionary Fund	NA	NA	NA	\$948.00	\$275.00		\$ 1,850.36
Capital Improvements	NA	NA	NA	\$500.00	-0-		\$ 7,300.02
Gifts and Memorials	NA	NA	NA	\$25.61	\$323.26		\$12,195.29
Contingency Fund	NA	NA	NA	-0-	-0-		\$67,016.52
Endowment Fund*	NA	NA	NA	-0-	-0-		-0-*

*Funds managed offsite

Note: This is for everyone's information and is: **General Fund ONLY**

General Fund	Income	Transferred from Contingency Fund	Disbursements	Fund Balance at end of month
January Only	NA		NA	NA
February Only				
March Only				
April Only				
May Only				
June Only				
July Only				
August Only				
September Only				
October Only				
November Only				
December Only				



True love

Many of us celebrate Valentine's Day in both fun and serious ways. Children exchange treats and humorous cards with classmates and friends; some bring home handmade cards for the adults in their lives. Romantic partners may go out to eat and present each other flowers, chocolate, a fancy card — maybe even an engagement ring! As playful as Valentine's Day can be, it's also a great time to remember the serious side of love, as indicated by these quotes:

- "When you love someone, you love the whole person as he or she is, and not as you would like them to be." —Leo Tolstoy
- "You don't love someone because they're perfect; you love them in spite of the fact that they're not." —Jodi Picoult
- "Love ... is quiet understanding, mutual confidence, sharing and forgiving. ... It settles for less than perfection and makes allowances for human weaknesses." —Ann Landers

We can do the difficult work of true love — actions, not just feelings — only because God loved us first. He did (and does) so despite our imperfection, and in Jesus, God shows us how to share true love with others.

This Valentine's Day, if you don't remember any other profound quotes, hold this one in your heart:

"We love because God first loved us."
—1 John 4:19 (NCV)

FEBRUARY 2025 – From LSI

February reminds us of love. Love for the Lord, love for our partners, and love for friends and family. We offer you this story of the power of love between a mother and daughter.

"Without Amy's support, I would still be an addict, and I wouldn't be where I am today," said Michelle, an LSI client.

Michelle was struggling with substance abuse, legal issues, and mental health issues when she found LSI therapist Amy Davis back in 2021.

"God helps us in ways we don't always want him to," said Michelle. "When the coronavirus pandemic hit, I lost my job. The unemployment lines were long at the time, so we went several months without a paycheck, so I decided to get creative with my finances. I started selling drugs and was later arrested with a large quantity of drugs. They came in, took my kid, and I went to jail. After that, I was referred to work with Amy at LSI."

Michelle and Amy worked through Michelle's childhood trauma, processing the significant losses in her life due to drug overdose and death. Amy helped Michelle work on building a positive support system, a list of future goals, and a relationship with her daughter, Rachel.

"Rachel and I had a lot of problems when we entered therapy because I was a drug addict, and there was a lot of broken trust between us," said Michelle. "LSI therapists helped us rebuild that trust and helped show her the progress I had made when she couldn't see it herself."

Rachel, in therapy as well, has been seeing LSI Therapist Chelsea Zaragoza since 2019. In addition to one-on-one therapy sessions with their respective therapists, Michelle and Rachel also do family therapy sessions with Amy and Chelsea. These sessions help the mother and daughter have time set aside to talk about issues they are having in a healthy, productive way.

"Michelle has had a lot of struggles, loss, and a lot of people who didn't believe in her, and her daughter was one of them," said Amy Davis, LSI Therapist. "We have worked hard doing family and individual therapy to bring those two back together, and it has worked. Where they are now, I don't think I've seen a mother-daughter relationship as healthy as the two of them are."

Today, Michelle has her daughter back in her home, she is thriving as a general manager at a coffee shop, and she is going to school for substance abuse counseling. She just received her one-year sobriety chip, and she has a good support system.

"To see how far Michelle has come since I met her is truly remarkable," said Amy. "She built the ladder, and she climbed out."

"I was a mess when I first came to LSI," said Michelle. "Now, I'm sober, in college, have a high-paying job, and have my daughter back. Amy believed in me when no one else did, not even myself. She gave me hope."

Our Mission: Lutheran Services in Iowa responds to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service. LSI is an affiliated social ministry partner of the Iowa congregations of the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) and a member of LSA (Lutheran Services in America). We proudly serve people of all ages, abilities, religions, sexes, gender identities, national origins, ethnicities, races, and sexual orientations. Learn more at LSIowa.org and Facebook.com/LSI.Iowa.



*Proud Partner of
Food Bank of
Iowa*

The Lord's Cupboard

The Lord's Cupboard Food Pantry is open each Monday of the month from 5:00 to 6:30 pm. Additionally, the Lord's Cupboard is open the *first Monday* of each month from 1:00 to 2:00 pm. If you know someone in need of food assistance, please let them know of the availability of The Lord's Cupboard. If you have questions, please talk with Karla Alanis Palomo (515) 310-0151 or the church office.

The Lord's Cupboard's location: Jewell, PO Box 330, 439 Main Street, Jewell 50130-0330.

Phone: 515-827-5148

Are you interested in volunteering your time with the Lord's Cupboard? More volunteers are needed and we would be very glad to accept your help. Please contact Karla @ 515-310-0151 ; or Sue @ 515-290-3000; or Donna @ 515-460-1688; or leave a message at the church office for a return call @ 515-827-5148.

These are some Lord's Cupboard usage statistics. (See the table below.) The numbers have held somewhat steady over the last three years. Except for the very end of 2024, usage increased. I think it may have been precipitated by the change in the vouchers given out. The Lord's Cupboard decided to make Jewell Market vouchers a specific dollar amount instead of a 'list of food' items they had to buy. This way they can get chocolate milk instead of white or different meats instead of hamburger and hot dogs. For the Lord's Cupboard it will make budgeting for the vouchers easier. With the 'list' of food vouchers people spent anywhere from \$30 to \$60 per month. But now they have \$45 (with a few limitations) to spend at Jewell Market.

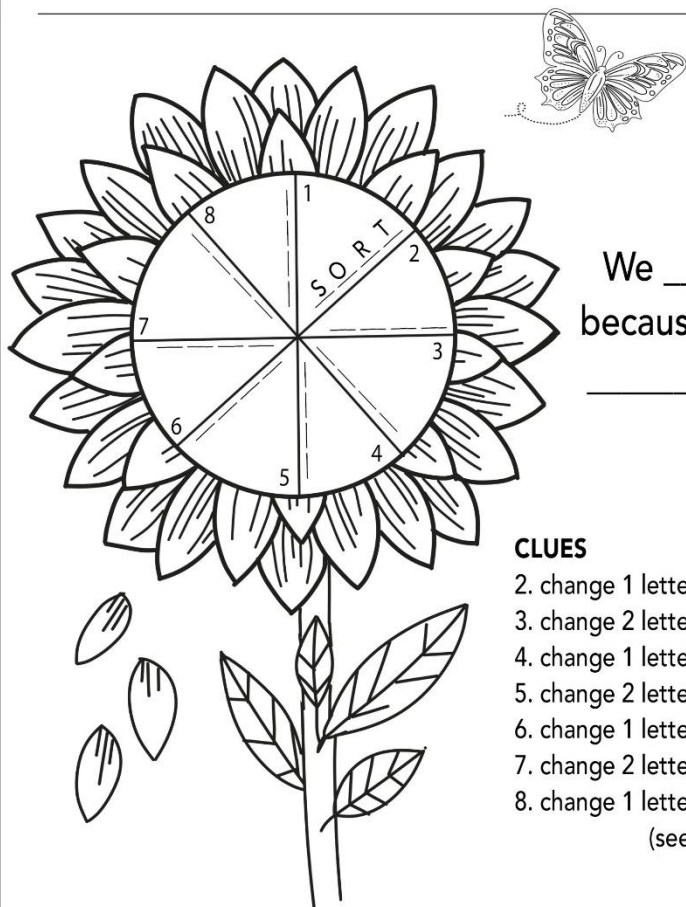
Month	2024					2023					2022				
	# Households	# People	0-18	9-59	60+	# Households	# People	0-18	9-59	60+	# Households	# People	0-18	9-59	60+
December	81	249	94	122	33	57	168	68	65	35	48	136	48	64	24
November	61	167	60	80	27	52	138	48	61	29	52	141	41	66	34
October	47	145	53	71	21	49	128	43	55	30	54	139	44	66	29
September	45	135	49	72	14	46	106	28	49	29	41	108	30	55	23
August	58	187	71	92	24	41	103	36	43	24	54	144	52	64	28
July	48	130	42	63	25	55	133	44	52	37	49	137	55	59	23
June	43	121	38	59	24	53	143	50	62	31	50	136	45	68	23
May	38	95	32	44	19	53	134	42	64	28	44	118	44	51	23
April	42	131	39	50	42	42	110	33	50	27	42	118	44	51	23
March	53	140	40	71	29	49	128	37	66	25	42	124	37	62	25
February	43	108	34	52	22	49	125	44	53	28	37	103	38	47	18
January	38	111	40	48	23	47	124	40	58	26	35	95	26	43	26
	597	1719	592	824	303	593	1540	513	678	349	548	1499	504	696	299



THE LOVE CYCLE

In 1 John 4, God instructs us to love other people. Where does our love come from?

Directions: Starting at #1 and going clockwise, solve each clue to create a new four-letter word. Then write the eighth word in both blanks below to complete 1 John 4:19, NIV.



We _____
because [God] first
_____d us.

1 John 4:19, NIV

CLUES

2. change 1 letter: a tent to play in
3. change 2 letters: a crease in paper
4. change 1 letter: a precious metal
5. change 2 letters: a beautiful dress
6. change 1 letter: opposite of up
7. change 2 letters: a type of bird
8. change 1 letter: God is this
(see 1 John 4:16).



What you need:

- Colored felt
- Scrap paper
- Permanent marker
- Scissors
- String
- Essential oils
(rose, lavender, etc.)

What you do:

1. Draw a flower shape on paper and cut it out.
2. Place the flower template on felt and draw around it with the marker.
3. Cut out the felt flower. Then cut a small slit or hole through it.
4. Cut 8 inches of string. Thread it through the felt flower and tie to form a loop for hanging.
5. To the felt, add 3 to 5 drops of essential oil. This air freshener will last about 2 weeks.
6. Revive the scent, as needed, by adding a few drops of essential oil.





Board of Deacons –

Board of Education –

Board of Evangelism/Stewardship –

RIVERSIDE CAMPER CODES FOR 2025

25BethJ - for full week camp

25BJA – for Alpha Camp

Board of Trustees –

Board of Worship – We did not meet in January.

Board of Youth –

DO YOU KNOW?

From the Constitution and Bylaws of Bethesda Lutheran Church, these are responsibilities of the Board of Youth. As space allows, future Bethesda News will highlight other Boards.

*C14.01.05. The **Board of Youth** shall consist of a minimum of three (3) voting members elected at an annual meeting for a term of two (2) years. No member shall be eligible for more than two (2) consecutive terms. The Board of Youth shall:*

- Develop an effective teaching ministry which includes the training of teachers and leaders.*
- Report its activities to the annual meeting of the congregation and at such other times as the congregation may decide.*
- Plan and coordinate events and activities that will enhance the spiritual growth of the youth, grades 7-12, including securing youth advisors and determining curriculum.*
- Be responsible for securing a youth director/youth minister/youth team member, should such a person be employed by Bethesda.*
- Encourage youth to share their talents during worship services.*
- Plan fundraising events for mission trips and other activities.*
- Facilitate in finding parents and other adults to drive, chaperone, provide food, etc. for youth group activities.*
- Communicate to parents and the congregation what is happening with the youth and their growth in Christ.*



The Lunch Wagon – Jewell Residents

- **Do you need assistance with meals?**
- **Do you live in Jewell?**
- **Are you homebound?**
- **Are you recovering at home?**

If you answered yes to any of these questions, you can contact:

**Susan Lund at
515-290-3000 or
Sarah Freeman at
515-291-1528**

- **Lunches will be delivered Monday through Friday between 11:30 to 12:15.**
- **The cost of the lunch is \$5.00 per meal.**
- **Lunches will be prepared in Jewell by:**
- **JEWELL MARKET: Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs and**
- **THE MALIBU: Fri.**
- **Lunches will NOT be delivered on holidays.**

Bethesda Lutheran Church Council Meeting Minutes 5 January 2025, 10:15 am

Present: Jeff Scott, Jen Nibe, Rich Heeren, Karen Culpepper, Sheri Muller, Lisa Peterson, Nicole Ferguson, Hans Koehnk, Marcia Wheeler, Dan Nibe

The meeting was called to order at 10:23 am by President Jeff Scott. Devotions were led by Jeff Scott.

Approval of Agenda *Lisa Petersen moved to approve the agenda; Karen Culpepper seconded, and the agenda was approved unanimously.*

Approval of Minutes of the December Meeting *Lisa Peterson moved to approve the minutes of the December meeting; Jen Nibe seconded, and the minutes were approved unanimously.*

Financial/Treasurer's Report Karen Culpepper gave the Treasurer's Report. As of the end of December the general fund balance is \$19,443.01 and total assets are \$130,644.84. *Hans Koehnk moved to approve the Treasurer's Report; Lisa Peterson seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. Hans Koehnk moved to transfer the balance of the General Fund to the Contingency Fund to zero out the General Fund; Lisa Peterson seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.*

Pastor's Report N/A

Old Business

Narcan Narcan will be stored in the kitchen cupboard, in Donna's office, and Lisa Peterson will have one.

Other Signage Signage will be displayed regarding aid with social issues such as addiction, mental health, and other family services available in Hamilton County or Ames.

Bethany Life Bethany Life reached out to Bethesda about volunteering to push wheelchairs on Sunday mornings for Chapel. Bethesda will be pushing wheelchairs on the 1st and 5th Sunday of March.

(continued next column)

(minutes continued) New Business Nominating Committee

A few questions were raised about term limits for board members. Changes to the language in the Constitution regarding term limits were voted on at the 2024 Annual Meeting, and these changes will be ratified at the 2025 meeting. Board members who wish to extend their terms may place a request for an extension with the Church Council. Clarification on which board positions are open will be communicated to the Nominating Committee.

Annual Meeting Board reports are due on January 13.
Budget and Monetary Committee

Dan Nibe presented the proposed budget of \$186,911.72 for 2025. The proposed budget includes the following the assumptions: donations are equal to the 3-year average, a new pastor will be in place by May 1, and there will be no wage increases for the staff in 2025. Budget trends over the past 6 years were also discussed. Revenues have been down approximately 4% per year since 2019 which is feeding into projected budget shortfalls that the Contingency Fund will no longer be able to cover. The committee asks the Council to put effort and prayers towards increasing membership and finding additional revenue streams. *Jen Nibe moved to approve the budget of \$186,911.72 as presented; Hans Koehnk seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.*

Board Reports

Education No report

Deacons Rich Heeren reported that he has contacted Justin Deppe, but he has not heard anything back yet.

Evangelism/Stewardship Nicole Ferguson reported that gifts were collected and distributed to twenty-five families (68 kids). The chili cookoff will be at the annual meeting on January 25.

Worship No report

Trustees No report

Youth No report

The next Council meeting will be held on Sunday, February 2 after church. *Lisa Peterson moved to adjourn the meeting; Hans Koehnk seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.*

The meeting was adjourned with the Lord's Prayer at 12:29 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Sheri Muller

Tuesday Together Time at Bethesda Lutheran Church

Tuesday Together Time is for the community.

The community is invited to "Tuesday Together Time" each Tuesday at noon at Bethesda Lutheran Church.

Bring a potluck dish to share with others. All tableware is provided. Don't have food prepared, please come! There is always plenty and, if you desire, a container is provided for you to put a little donation in to go toward Global Good Gifts.

Offerings being held for Global Good Gifts total \$508.00 at this time.

Prize winners in January included...

Monica Sogard, Roma Miller, Sylvia Steffen, Carol Stearns, Jeff Scott, Dick Steffen, Darrel Stearns, and Sharon Teig.

