



Bethlehem Star

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November 2019

**Bethlehem Lutheran Church**

**Glen Arbor, Michigan**

**Monthly Meditation**

The changing of the seasons often evokes internal feelings. Spring brings hope of the new life that follows the sleepy cold of winter. Summer finds us celebrating fun in the sun and rejoicing in the glories of summer days in God's creation. Autumn brings the nostalgia of nestling in front of the fireplace and enjoying the beauty of God's colorful design. As late fall settles in, however, we are reminded that the cold winds of winter are around the corner and death is coming to those beautiful plants and green leaves which we relished for their beauty.



the coming Babylonian conquest and exile of the nation. Things don't get much worse than to hear that your land will be conquered and you will be taken into slavery. But immediately following, God's love rushes in with the next chapter which begins, "Comfort, Comfort, my people." It is in this chapter that we hear the promise of God's enduring Word – both in His Holy Word in which He comes to us and "in the Word made flesh" who came to us wrapped in human flesh and "lying in a manger" on His way to the cross for us.

Let the seasons come and go. Celebrate their beauty and know that they remind us that no matter what this world holds - "The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God endures forever [40:6]."

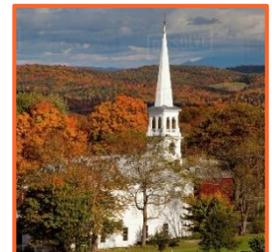
The changing seasons –yes, even the pristine beauty of a coming winter – are also a physical reminder of God's Word. Isaiah wrote, "The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God endures forever [40:6]." He wrote these words to an unrepentant people – His chosen children in ancient Israel many years ago. But, they also give us hope in a world broken by sin!

God called the great prophet, Isaiah, to prophesy to the people of Israel three basic themes which include: (1) the prophecy of Condemnation because God's people had rejected Him, (2) Confiscation by enemy invaders, and (3) Consolation with the promise of a Messiah and deliverer for all of His people of every age. Chapter 39 declares

***"Come, Ye Thankful People, Come"***

On Sunday, November 24, BLC will observe Thanksgiving in our worship service.

You are encouraged to bring non-perishable items for the Food Pantry as part of your thank offering.



Although Thanksgiving is not a formal church festival, let us come together to thank God for His great goodness – most especially in the gift of His Son!



## Minor Change in Communion Practice Receiving the Wine

In order to make Communion easier for visitors, to provide more time for our own members to meditate while at the Lord's Table, and to make it easier for distributing the common cup; the Elders and Pastor are initiating the following beginning on Sunday, November 17<sup>th</sup>.

- 1) You will be ushered to the Communion Rail as always and invited to kneel by the pastor.
- 2) Pastor will give everyone the host.
- 3) After the entire table has received the host, the Elder will begin to offer the individual cup followed immediately by the pastor with the chalice. **CHANGE:** Please wait for the pastor to speak the Words of Distribution to you before drinking the wine.

## Trick-or-Treating

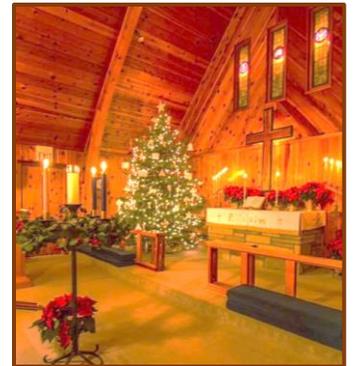
On October 27<sup>th</sup>, BLC participated in the Glen Arbor Community Trick-or-Treating activities. Approximately 300 children and their parents were treated to sacks filled with goodies. In addition; cider, donuts, and games were available. We ran out of treats at 2:30PM!

(Photo Courtesy of Cindy Rosiek)



## Christmas Tree Donation

Because of the early use of the Christmas tree and safety issues that accompany a live tree, Council voted to purchase an artificial tree for use in church.



Additional support was offered in that many who put up the tree are getting older and that it is becoming more difficult to accomplish this joyful task.

In response to this action, Holli and Rich Anderson have donated a 12-foot pre-lit Christmas tree "In honor of our grandchildren Mack and Kealee Andersen (Kealee entered heaven in 2016)." What a gracious gift and loving way to celebrate the birth of the Babe of Bethlehem.

## Ramp Handrail Donated



Thanks to a generous donation, the second ramp handrail has been donated to BLC. Thanks to this anonymous donor life just became easier for those whose mobility is restricted. Thank you!

## CHURCH VOTERS' MEETING



The Annual Meeting including the election of officers and budget will be held on Sunday, November 10<sup>th</sup> following Fellowship.

## THE TEACUP TEA

On September 24<sup>th</sup>, Mary Martha entertained 45 women from the community for tea and entertainment. The members dedicated much time and love into making the event a success. From the delicate finger sandwiches, the inviting decorations, and the tea and luscious desserts, no detail was overlooked.

Entertainment consisted of women sharing sentimental stories of their own teacups or teapots and the delightful singing Tea Pot Quartet!



## Compassion Ministry First Anniversary



It has been one year since we decided to "Abide in my love" through the BLC's Compassion Ministry. What a marvelous opportunity this has been as teams of two go and visit those whose ability to join us for worship is limited.

The visited members are thrilled to be remembered as they laugh and reminisce together. The visitors equally benefit as they bring Christ's love to the homebound. (One visit even contained a shrimp dinner!) All this we do for "the least of these my brothers" because Christ first loved us!

## CHURCH CALENDAR



November 03 - Daylight Savings Time Ends  
("Fall Back")

November 03 - All Saints Day Observance

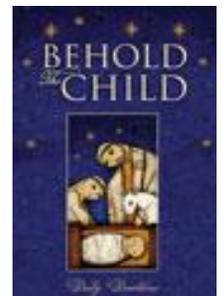
November 10 - Annual Meeting of the Voters

November 24 - Thanksgiving Worship Service

December 01 - Advent Begins

## Advent Devotional

*Behold the Child*, this year's devotional, will be available for you to pick up beginning Nov. 17<sup>th</sup>. Let this powerful devotional help you to reflect on the joyous Advent news that Christ came in human flesh, comes in Word and Sacrament, and rejoice in knowing that He will come again!



(Photos courtesy of Chris Nettleton)

## The Rite of Confirmation



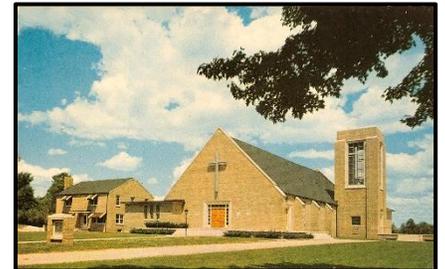
saints of God.

Sophia is the daughter of Nick and Kari McCreedy and granddaughter of Pastor Loeschke. Travis is the grandson of Mike and Dianna Sheridan. "Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you life as your victor's crown [Rev. 2:10]."

### Pastor Matro Accepts Call to Trinity-Sturgis

Before and after his service to Immanuel-Leland, Pastor Larry Matro served as a missionary to Papua New Guinea. Earlier this summer, the Matros returned to their home in Suttons Bay and waited for the Holy Spirit to place them in their next mission field.

Pastor and Tina are in the process of packing and moving to Sturgis, Michigan where Pastor will serve at Trinity Lutheran Church. Trinity reports having 540 baptized members and 215 worship in attendance each weekend on average. Doug and Sherry Slessman are former members of this parish. May God bless Pastor and Tina on their journey and in his ministry to the saints at Trinity.



### Missionary Mahlburg Returns to Sri Lanka



After living in Sri Lanka for two years, it was a blessing to return to the US this summer to tell you about the mission work and life in Sri Lanka. It was a wonderful reminder to us that so many people are involved in this mission work. The Lord works through your prayers and financial support to bring the Gospel to Sri Lanka. This is not my work. This is the Lord's work. Just as the Lord worked through the church in Antioch to send out Paul and Barnabas, so you have sent me to Sri Lanka. This is a humbling and sacred calling. Thank you for your partnership. I apologize for not being able to reconnect with all of you. I only had a limited time in the US. You are important to us and

this work. I will make every effort to connect with you when we return for a visit in two years. For now, I am thankful to return to the mission work here in Sri Lanka.



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