

BETHLEHEM

LUTHERAN CHURCH

Held in Grace...Belong, Believe, Befriend



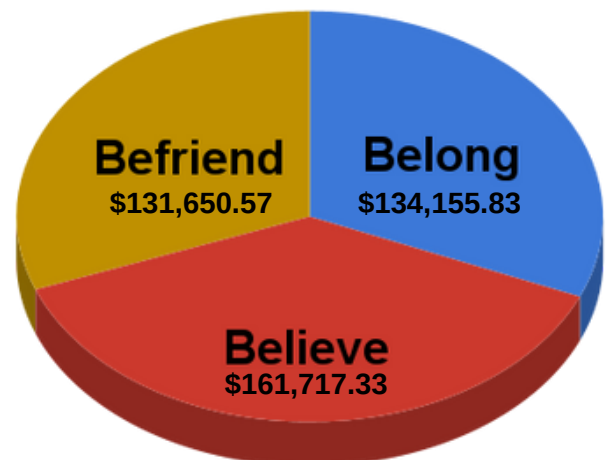
2023 NARRATIVE BUDGET

Bethlehem Lutheran Church: Held in Grace... Belong, Believe, Befriend

Through the next few pages, you will witness how this mission statement shapes how we use the stewardship of the good gifts given to us by God to strengthen our congregation, community, and world. Our budget tells the story of Bethlehem, one rooted in our Lutheran faith and the grace of God. Bethlehem's budget is told through three pillars of our mission: Belong, Believe, and Befriend. These pillars support the mission of each of our boards: Education, Evangelism/Fellowship, Ministry, Parish Planning, Properties, Stewardship, Worship, and Youth Ministry. Each board has budget items that are reflected in each of these pillars. Together, along with your gifts, we give honor to God through the good works of our hands and hearts. As you reflect on the ways you would like to continue to support this mission through your time, talents, and treasure, we hope this narrative budget gives you a glimpse into how God is working through Bethlehem Lutheran Church.



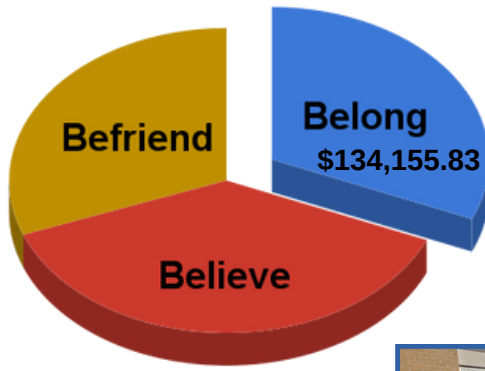
Total Budget for 2023:
\$427,523.73



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Belong

Building Maintenance
and Cleaning
Cab Rides to Church
Supplies
ELCA Synod and
Churchwide Support
Confirmation
Decorations
Insurance
Janitors
Treasurer
Taxes
Copyrights
Postage
Zoom



At Bethlehem Lutheran, belonging to this faith community means feeling included and being welcoming to all who enter our building. Belonging is rooted in caring for our members, our building, and our neighborhood. You belong, whether you worship from home or the sanctuary.

This fall we hosted our first annual Neighborhood Block Party! Hosted in our parking lot, we invited our neighbors to join us for an afternoon of music, face painting, games, and a grill out. Members walked a three block radius of the church with door hanger invitations, and we spent a beautiful day with over 100 BLC members and neighbors. All of the food was donated by BLC members to kick off "Stewardship September". Bethlehem began as a "neighborhood church", and we continue to live into that call in the Jefferson neighborhood.



Not long after, we confirmed four 10th graders. We believe that the faith of each of our young people is worth the cost and effort of a good confirmation program and joyous celebration of their affirmation of baptism at the end of a 2 year journey. This class was our "Covid Class" having gone through most of their confirmation classes in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic. And yet, here they stand, confessing their faith and being reminded of the promise of God's love for each of them.

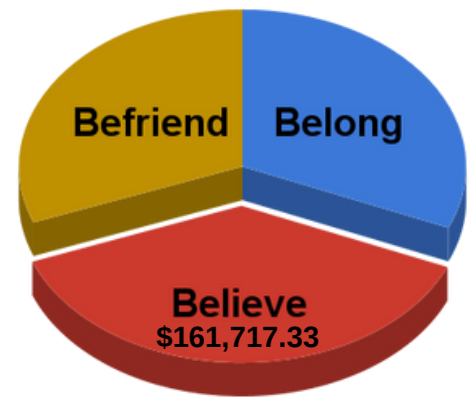
Outside the Offering Plate

Who thinks about their church as they garage sale shop? Cathy Hanson does! Cathy has a passion and an eye for decorating, even making some decorations herself from pieces she finds. Not only does she help the Worship board with seasonal decorations, but she makes sure our building has a welcoming feel all year round!



Believe

Pastors' Salaries and Benefits
Education Curriculum
Youth Events & Retreats
Senior, Youth, and Bell Choir
Consecration Sunday
Church Repair
Mission Sunday
Vacation Bible School
Lutheran College Scholarships
Youth Directors
Worship Accompanists



At Bethlehem, our beliefs are reflected in the ways we use your offering gifts and the organizations we support. One of the strongest ways we can live deeper into our belief in Jesus Christ and the mission He calls us to in this world is what we do with the gifts we've been given.

This summer, Josh Vangsness headed up our Vacation Bible School: Tree of Healing. Not only did he build a tree that reached the ceiling of the chapel, but led 21 kids and 11 volunteers in 4 days of VBS fun! Bethlehem's new Youth Director Brigham joined in on the fun, leading the games and making sure the kids left most days soaked! Bethlehem's VBS is always free for those who attend, and is open to members, neighbors, and friends alike.

Bethlehem's Lutheran College Scholarship Program continues to adapt to changing times by showing flexibility in the awarding of scholarship dollars to members to encourage on-going Christian education among our younger members. While colleges are offering flexibility and extending degree lengths for

students, our scholarships follow along, reminding our college aged members of the love and support from their congregation.

Bethlehem has been blessed with a rich tradition of music, and as we have emerged from the Covid pandemic, we give thanks for the leadership of our Senior Choir, under the director of Dale Lammi and their accompanist, Alvina Deyle. Practicing weekly, the choir brings a mix of new pieces and old favorites to our Sunday mornings together. Whether they are few or many, our Senior Choir offers beautiful music to God in our worship together.



Outside the Offering Plate

What is the best way to conclude our first Family Pajama Christmas service? With 72 home made cinnamon and caramels rolls, made by Aimee Martinez and her best friend Melissa! God has entrusted each of us with gifts so we may be blessed and bless others, and we are thankful that Aimee shares her gifts with us!



Befriend

Secretary
Office Supplies
Utilities

Website and Advertising

Care Notes

Snow Removal

Local Benevolences

Media Coordinator

Worship Technicians

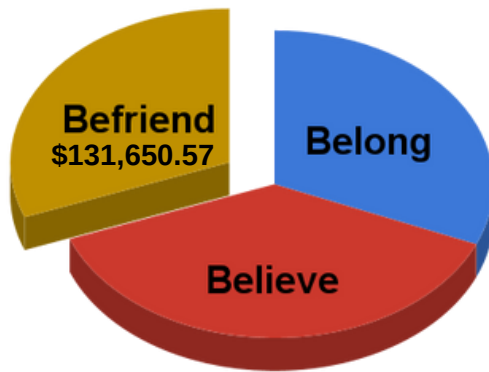
Fellowship Events

Youth Transportation

Hospice Support

EaND Bible Camps

Misionary Support



At Bethlehem, outreach outside of our membership and church community is deeply important to who we are as church, together. While we have built \$21,800 of Benevolences built into our budget, benefitting both our local and world-wide neighbors, we also host many special offerings and fundraisers throughout the year.

One of the ways we befriend our neighbors is supporting local ministries already doing some amazing work in our communities. We joined Pr. Jessica Miller and the people at The Neighborhood Church to serve in Pop-Up Food pantries and then brought our Youth Water Games and Messy Games to their lawn this summer! We also continue to support the Crossroads Campus Ministry at NDSU and Pastor Kim, who not only accompanies college students in their spiritual wellbeing, but also makes sure they have safe people to lean on when family is far away. Park River Bible Camp hosted 6 of our young people and Pastor Lexy this summer for their "PRBC on the Go", a week of service to our synod and time spent together in a loving and affirming community.

Years ago, Bethlehem members started our "Emergency Fund", a fund available for anyone who may be in need of some help, members or not. In 2022, over \$7000 has been distributed from this fund to help our neighbors in need. On top of that,

our members also keep us well stocked with grocery and gas gift cards, along with ready to eat, nonperishable food available on our food shelf to distribute to community members who visit our church in times of need.

Not all befriending happens outside of our property. One of the ways that Bethlehem works to make sure all feel welcomed is making sure that our building is accessible, especially in the winter! Snow clearing and removal means that we're not only able to park safely and get in our building for worship and activities, but that we're also being good neighbors.



Outside the Offering Plate

What is the main staple of any Lutheran Church? Coffee and Donuts between worship! Each Sunday, Jim Anderson makes sure we have both, usually beating the pastor to church to make sure the coffee is going in time for the early group. Don't try to get your own coffee, though, he'll make sure to pour it, bring it to your seat, and make sure your cup is never empty!



So what's next?

Our Funeral Coordinator Sandi Hannestad said it best, "Even as our congregation continues to age, our members consistently step to the plate to meet the needs of Bethlehem through cheerful giving of their time and talent whether it be at the luncheons that are held for families and friends of those who have passed away, undying dedication to quilting, support of our youth, care of church property, coffee and fellowship after services, making coffee for 35+ years, cheerfully loading and unloading the dishwasher time and time again, keeping our pantry and gift card "bank" stocked - the list goes on and on." We have been entrusted with so much by our loving God, now it is our turn to share it! 2023 will be the year of asking, "Who is our neighbor, and how are we called to love them?"



Ways you can support Bethlehem's mission:

Mail in or drop off envelope

Bethlehem Lutheran at 613 16th St S, Fargo ND 58103

Simply Giving

Contact Sonja in the office (701-235-6522) for a form

Bill Pay through your bank

Check your online banking for instructions how

Donate page on the website

Go to blcfargo.org or scan here



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