



THE BETHLEHEM STAR – November 2017



November is the month of falling colorful leaves and the national reminder to be thankful for all our blessings. God paints the dying leaves with reds and oranges before they fall to the ground lifeless. When we think of the beautiful colors God paints our lives with before we die—family, friends, satisfaction in work, rest and everything else—we are thankful. We know that like those leaves we one day will die and fall to the ground. We are thankful especially that in death our souls go home to be with our Heavenly Father. Our bodies await the day his Son, Jesus Christ, returns to raise them to new life.

I don't know how often we are consciously thankful to God for death and eagerly await it. But just as we trust that as the trees that have dropped their leaves will bring forth new buds and leaves in the spring, we will follow our deaths with new life in heaven. Now that is an eternal "spring" to look forward to!

On a different note, please keep Light of Life in your prayers as they call a new shepherd. They have called Pastor Jon Bergeman of Woodbridge, VA and are awaiting his answer. I will be serving as vacancy pastor with a once a month Sunday service with communion, video sermon at Bethlehem that first Sunday of the month beginning in December. I will spend Mondays at Light of Life for Bible studies and catechism classes.



Voters' Meeting Report from 10/15/17

- Membership: Ratified previous membership changes by the council.
- Pete Johnson and Cory Sulfridge were elected by unanimous vote to the church council. There currently is one position open on the council in 2018.
- Reports on the work of the various committees.
- Adopted Ministry Plan for 2018 of \$268,982, a decrease of 2% from 2017. This does not reflect less ministry but a more realistic expense analysis by the various committees. It will require a 3.7% increase in offerings over the current year.
- Approved roof repairs on the first building at a cost of \$15,623
- Approved pastor's 2018 parsonage allowance for the IRS at \$30,000
- Next council meeting is January, 2017. Date TBD



THANKSGIVING EVE WORSHIP, November 22, 2017, at 7:00pm. We will be gathering food goods the prior 3 Sundays in November to take to Third Phase.



We will be gathering things for Christmas stockings for 18 WELS military personnel during December. Brynn Meister is coordinating and will be sharing more detailed information.



Our first meetings to call a new pastor are February 3, 2018 and February 4, 2018. On Saturday the 3rd, District President Kolander will meet with the congregation to go over the information from the surveys and explain the calling process the next day. After service on Sunday the 4th, we will have a special voters' meeting to extend the call from a list Pres. Kolander will provide. All members are encouraged to attend on Saturday and invited to attend on Sunday when the voters extend the call. There will be no nominations taken from the floor at that time. If you have a name you would like considered, please speak with Pastor Ferch. I will forward the name to Pres. Kolander so that he may consider it for our list of candidates.

I am working on the details of retiring as Bethlehem's full time pastor. As soon as I have all the information, I will let the congregation know the date I will give to WELS, and options if we do not have a new pastor by that time.



Peace, Kokomo, invites our ladies to attend their "Advent Tea" on Saturday, November 18, 2017, 2:00-3:30pm. Devotion, fellowship and refreshments as we prepare for the birth of our Lord. Please RSVP by next Sunday, November 5th at 765-457-8888. Invitation is on the bulletin board in the narthex.

Pastor Ferch



The Little Town of Bethlehem Preschool has been filled with fabulous fall fun. We have sifted through corn kernels and gourds, investigated pumpkins, and imitated the fall leaves through music and movement. We invite you to check out our pictures on the church's TV screens and to take a stroll through our classrooms to see our latest activities and art projects. Mark your calendars for our annual Christmas Program at 9am on December 20th.

We welcome donations of heavy-duty plastic toys, such as outdoor play houses and climbers, doll houses, farms, kitchen sets, large trucks, as well as Halloween costumes and dress-up clothes, and paper plates and paper lunch bags for art projects. Please contact Alicia Campbell with any questions.

Mrs. Campbell