

PASTOR'S PAGE

To the Saints at Bethany:

"If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come."
(2 Cor 5:17)

Ready or not, yet another calendar is coming down and a new one going up. I was thinking about the passage above as I contemplated another New Year's Day. As the years go on every passing year might seem less "new." Another ball drop in Times Square, another load of confetti, and another verse of "Auld Lang Syne" -- we've seen it all before, many times. This calls to mind what King Solomon wrote in Ecclesiastes: "What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun" (Ecc 1:9).

At the time Solomon wrote that, it was true. But subsequently, something new has happened under the sun. A man who died walked out of the grave, never to die again. The risen Lord Jesus once appeared to John the Evangelist and said "Behold, I am making all things new" (Rev 21:5). Because Christ is risen, it's not just New Year's Day that brings something new, but newness of life is an ongoing reality for all who belong to Him. In the catechism, Luther writes about what it means to be baptized into Christ: "It indicates that the Old Adam in us should by daily contrition and repentance be drowned and die with all sins and evil desires, and that a new man should daily emerge and arise to live before God in righteousness and purity forever."

Every day is not only New Year's Day for us, but New Life Day! As we worship through the month of January, we will continue to see how we live the new life in Christ. We will contemplate some of the important events of Jesus' life, we will see how He joins His life to ours, and we will celebrate the new life we have in Him!

Here is a schedule of worship themes in January (all times Sunday at 10 a.m.):

- January 4: The Epiphany of our Lord: "Singing Camels of Sheba" (Isaiah 60:1-6)
- January 11: The Baptism of our Lord: "The Spirit-Marked Servant" (Isaiah 42:1-9)
- January 18: The Confession of St. Peter: "Charging the Gates of Hell" (Mark 8:27-35)
- January 25: Sanctity of Human Life Sunday: "Wonderfully Made" (Isaiah 49:1-7)

New Year's (and New Life's) Blessings,
Pastor Azor

2026 BOARD MEMBERS

President: Andy Fibiger
Vice President: Todd Matte
Council Secretary: Lisa Willadsen
Board of Elders: Shua Yang, Gerry Luebke, Lee Gumm, Steve Hazen
Board of Trustees: Dan Fibiger, David Hasler
Board of Finance: Bob Wuerzberger, David Meyer
Board of Education: Dori Matte, Gina Fibiger, Megan Fibiger
Financial Secretary: Mary Ann Fibiger
Treasurer: Tim Fibiger



**Meet our
Board
Members**

Thank you to all who serve Bethany!

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

1-8: Audrey Nikisch
1-10: John Willadsen
1-11: Kandice Brooks
1-16: Brianna Meyer



1-21: Brian Walesh
1-24: Mary Madden
1-29: Zakary Willadsen
Emma Giertz

January Anniversaries

1-24: Tim & Megan Fibiger



Blessings to all that are celebrating this month!

If we missed a member's birthday or anniversary, please contact the church office, and let us know.

NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings! As I write this message, I'm reflecting on the wonderful Christmas program that the Sunday school put on recently. It was so heartwarming to see all the children participating in a celebration of the birth of Jesus and sharing that message. I especially enjoyed the Cigelske children sharing their musical talent during the service. Everyone did a wonderful job! Thanks to all who participated and helped with the program.

For those of you who heard Pastor's sermon on hospitality the other week, I just had to follow up on that and share some great feedback I've received from our recent visitors and those who know them. As many of you have seen, ever since Pastor Azor started preaching here, we've had a lot of visitors come to see him. Gina and I met with one of them on Saturday and she told us how everyone made her feel so welcome the minute she walked into the church. She said she immediately knew this was where she wanted to worship and will soon become a member. Another visitor said she felt like part of the congregation before she even made it to her pew! It makes me so happy to hear this feedback and knowing that our members are sharing the love of Christ with our visitors! Keep up the great work!

By the time you receive this, Christmas will likely be over, so I hope you all had a blessed Christmas and enjoyed time with family and friends. I wish you all a safe and happy new year. Great things are happening at our church. Get involved and let's keep the momentum going into 2026!

Yours in Christ,
Andy Fibiger



CHURCH CANCELLATION ANNOUNCEMENTS

In the case of bad weather this winter, please check TODAY'S TMJ4 TV station for church cancellations. You can also go online to tmj4.com or 620WTMJ on the radio. Any cancellations will also be announced on Facebook as well as our church website www.bethanylutherankohler.org

JANUARY/FEBRUARY CHARITY OF THE MONTH – Orphan Grain Train

During the months of January and February, all money collected from your “Designated Offerings” contribution envelopes will go to **Orphan Grain Train**. Orphan Grain Train is a Christian volunteer network that shares personal and material resources with needy people in America and around the world. Grain Train volunteers gather donations of clothing, medical supplies, food, Christian literature, and other aid to meet real needs. For more information, visit their website at www.ogt.org

CHARITIES OF THE MONTH FOR 2025

January/February – Orphan Grain Train

March/April – Lutheran Bible Translators

May/June - Vernacular Video Mission International (VMMI)

July/August – Lutheran Deaf Mission Society

September/October - Good News Jail and Prison Ministry

November/December - Lutheran World Relief

**CHARITY
OF THE
MONTH**

To give to these charities, you can use your “Designated Offering” contribution envelopes.

Thank you for supporting these missions.

FLOWER CALENDAR

The 2026 flower calendar is up on the bulletin board in the lower narthex. If you'd like to purchase a flower arrangement in celebration of an event or in memory or in honor of a loved one, sign up on the date you'd like, and Gina will contact you when the date approaches. The cost of an arrangement is \$30, and you can take your flowers home with you to enjoy after the Sunday church service.



Thank You for Supporting our Sunday School Christmas Program!

The Sunday School Christmas Program “Come to Bethlehem and See!” was a beautiful retelling of Jesus’ birth told by our Sunday School children at Bethany.

Thank you to all who made it possible: Board of Education Dori Matte and Megan Fibiger; Sunday School Superintendent Gina Fibiger; Director, organist, and pianist

Sara Cigelske; Guitarist Andy Fibiger; Costume Coordinators Donna Gauthier, Kristi Luecke, and Gina Fibiger; Props Helpers Kelly Meyer, Gina Fibiger; Lunch Providers for the practice Gina Fibiger, Megan Fibiger, Donna Gauthier; Coffee Fellowship, Matte Family; Assembling of Gift Bags, Dori Matte; and Helper of our Youngest Children, Kalia Yang.

Thank you to the parents and grandparents of our Sunday School students for bringing them to Sunday School and the practice and for helping them learn their lines. Thank you to the congregation for coming to the service, expressing kind words, and donating money for the items in the gift bags for the kids.

Have a blessed Christmas and New Year!

In Christ,

The Sunday School Staff and Board of Education



GROWING IN OUR FAITH IN SUNDAY SCHOOL

(God says), "And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise." Deuteronomy 6: 6-7



You are invited to join us for Sunday School in the new year starting January 4! Sunday School is for all children ages 3K-8th grade, and we meet from 8:45-9:45 in the church basement.

Our Lord commands us to teach our children about his Word, the Bible. One way to do that is to bring your children and grandchildren to Sunday School! We have been growing in our relationship with our Lord and Savior and as we have been learning more about him.

We will continue to have fun in the new year while we learn about Jesus and our Christian faith! We will have music, crafts, games, and Bible lessons. The younger kids will have some playtime, and the older kids will have important discussion time to help them in their faith.

We will also work to prepare some musical presentations using the kids' bells, singing, and maybe chimes for a church service in February, Palm Sunday in March, and a church service in May. We will also have a fun celebration in May! If you are unable to participate in church presentations, we still would like you to come to Sunday School, as we will be spending the majority of our time on other regular activities.

There is lots to look forward to in the new year for Sunday School! We care about you, and we hope you can join us if you are not already!

We are also looking at starting a High School Bible Study in the new year! More details will come soon. You are also invited to join us for the adult Bible Study on Sundays before church as well!

In Our Savior's Name,

Ms. Sara, Ms. Megan, Ms. Gina, Ms. Dori, and Pastor Azor



CELEBRATE 10 YEARS OF BLESSINGS FOR SHEBOYGAN COUNTY HISPANIC MINISTRY!

Sheboygan County Hispanic Outreach will celebrate its **10th Anniversary on Sunday, January 18, 2026, at 12:30 p.m.** Join us for a special **bilingual worship service** at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Sheboygan with guest preacher **Rev. Dr. Nathan Meador, President of the South Wisconsin District**, followed by a joyful **potluck fellowship**.

Come and give thanks for all that God has done over the past decade, celebrate our unity in Christ, and look forward with hope to the years of mission ahead.

Everyone is welcome! Bring your family and a dish to share.

THOSE SERVING IN GOD'S HOUSE THE MONTH OF JANUARY 2026

Sunday, January 4

10:00 a.m.

w/Holy Communion

Elder:	Lee Gumm
Ushers:	Ken Thompson, Bob Kuehlmann
Acolyte:	Zak Cigelske
Altar Guild:	Lynn Luebke
Scripture Reader:	Sharon Werner
Door Locker:	Diane Marotz
Streaming:	Steve Perry

Sunday, January 11

10:00 a.m.

w/Holy Communion

Elder:	Shua Yang
Ushers:	Fibigers
Acolyte:	Ezra Cigelske
Altar Guild:	Sue Prange
Scripture Reader:	Lee Gumm
Door Locker:	Ken Thompson
Streaming:	Brianna Meyer

Sunday, January 18

10:00 a.m.

w/Holy Communion

Elder:	Gerry Luebke
Ushers:	Steve & Diane Marotz
Acolyte:	Jocelyn Meyer
Altar Guild:	Shirley Ottman
Scripture Reader:	Mary Ann Fibiger
Door Locker:	Andy Fibiger
Streaming:	Kal Cigelske

Sunday, January 25

10:00 a.m.

w/Holy Communion

Elder:	Steve Hazen
Ushers:	Todd & Dori Matte
Acolyte:	Steen Willadsen
Altar Guild:	Barb Gumm
Scripture Reader:	Kal Cigelske
Door Locker:	Dan Fibiger
Streaming:	Andy Fibiger

January 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4 8:45am Sunday School & Bible Study 10am Worship w/HC	5	6 10:30am Bible Study 6pm Elder Meeting	7 3:30pm Bible Foundations	8 7:15pm Dartball (home)	9	10
11 8:45am Sunday School & Bible Study 10am Worship w/HC	12	13 10:30am Bible Study 6:15pm Board of Finance 7pm Church Council	14 3:30pm Bible Foundations	15 7:15pm Dartball (away)	16	17
18 8:45am Sunday School & Bible Study 10am Worship w/HC	19	20 10:30am Bible Study	21 3:30pm Bible Foundations	22 7:15pm Dartball (away)	23	24
25 8:45am Sunday School & Bible Study 10am Worship w/HC	26	27 10:30am Bible Study	28 3:30pm Bible Foundations	29	30	31