BLC Newsletter – September 2026

Weekend Schedule

- Saturdays: class 3:00; worship 4:00
- Sundays: worship 9:00; Bible Class & Sunday School 10:30

Missionary Update

PRAY FOR *Hannah Potantus* who will be serving as an Academic Support Specialist in Tanzania, beginning in January 2027. In her role as an academic support specialist, Hannah will support local missionary families through her work as a homeschool teacher for missionary children. She supports the regional communication team through her written work, composing articles to help increase awareness and support for the work being done on the mission field throughout Africa. She is also helping to develop a bachelor's level writing lab at the local seminary, where women are trained as deaconesses and men study to become evangelists and pastors.

If you'd like to learn how to support Hannah, please see the half-sheet forms on the bulletin board in the Narthex; or click this link: https://files.lcms.org/dl/f/potantus-prayer-card

Note: The Bethlehem Leadership Team approved the setting aside of mission funds each month to support Hannah's missionary work.

Church Picnic – 9/27 *Noon!*

Provided: Hamburgers, hot dogs, beverages.

Bring: Food to share, lawn chair, friend.

Signup: attendance slip; *signup **once**!*

Help: Cleaning up the pavilion, setting up at 10:30 (getting the grill out and cleaned up, setting up tables, etc.), and cleaning up after. To help: Contact Linda H (call/text 216-534-2704). *Thanks!*

Grief Share

Bethlehem's Fall session dates are 9/1 – 12/15. Our **Grief Share** support group is a safe place where people understand the difficult emotions of grief. During this 13-week cycle, you'll discover what to expect in the days ahead and what's "normal" in grief. Since there are no orderly stages of grief, you'll learn helpful ways of coping with grief while gaining support each step of the way. To ask questions / register, contact Norma: 216-406-4871

Are The Worship Areas in Many Traditional Churches Built to Look Like an Upside-Down Ark – As One Looks at the Ceiling?

Yes. In many traditional churches, the worship space—especially the **nave**—was deliberately designed so that the ceiling or roof structure resembles the **inside of an inverted ship or ark**.

The word **"nave"** comes through Latin *navis*, meaning **"ship."** It is related to words such as *naval* and *navigation*. The central area where the congregation gathers came to be called the nave partly because of this ship imagery.

The symbolism is commonly understood along these lines: **The Church is like a ship carrying God's people safely through the troubled waters of this world toward their eternal home.**

That imagery naturally recalls **Noah's ark**. Just as God preserved Noah and his family through the waters of the Flood, the Church was traditionally pictured as an ark in which God's people are carried through this world. Early Christian writers also connected Noah's ark and the Flood with **Baptism**, following 1 Peter 3:20–21.

There is also biblical ship imagery involving Jesus and His disciples—for example, Christ calming the storm while His disciples are together in the boat (Mark 4:35–41). That became a natural picture of **Christ preserving His Church amid the storms of the world**.

In some traditional churches, particularly those with **wooden barrel-vaulted or timber ceilings**, if you imagine turning the building upside down, the ceiling looks remarkably like the **hull of a wooden ship**. Beams can resemble the ribs of a vessel, with the ridge of the roof resembling its keel.

However, **not every traditional church with a vaulted ceiling was intentionally designed to represent Noah's ark.** Some of the resemblance results from architectural and structural methods. The Christian symbolism of the **nave as a ship**, though, is very old and well established.

For a Lutheran church, that imagery can become even richer when you think of the congregation sitting in the **nave**, facing the **altar and cross**—the people of God are not simply aboard a ship; **Christ and His saving work are the destination and center toward which the whole worship space points.**

Other Bible Classes

Sisters of Light – First and Third Wed. at 1:00

- Location: Acts Room
- Teacher: Rhonda: 330-260-5194

Living the Lutheran Lectionary – Thursdays at 10

- Location: Timothy Room / Zoom
- Topic: Studying the upcoming lectionary Scripture readings
- Teacher: Harold: 440-454-2139

Men's Group – First Saturdays at 9 AM

- Location: Timothy Room
- Breakfast: 9:00; Study: 9:15
- Teacher: Dr. G: 216-374-5973

Dr. Giessler – Off Site Bible Classes:

- **Second and Fourth Mondays** – Panera, Rocky River: 7 PM
- **Second and Fourth Thursdays** – Christ Lutheran, Cleveland: 1:00

Youth Confirmation Preparation – Mostly Mondays at 7 PM

Weather permitting – watch for a church text!

Food and Fire Events

Watch for a possible event in October – weather permitting. We eat in our pavilion, then use our grounds for a fire and/or outdoor activities – *everyone is invited!* Want to sponsor one? See the main bulletin board for guidance.

Stay Close to Jesus!

- **Pray for those in need**. *If you have a prayer request*, text, or call Kathy G: 440-785-3802
- **Reach those who are lost** – by giving them one of our many resources, praying for them, and inviting them.
- **Grow through our website**: www.BLC7500.com – many sermons, studies, and brochures are available.
- **Listen to The Lutheran Hour**: Sundays at 6:30 AM on WTAM 1100; Sundays at 8:00 AM on WHKW 1220
- **Watch Worship Anew** – *A Lutheran Service for shut-ins*: Sundays at 11:30 AM: Cox: 12; Direct TV: 67, 377; Dish: 47; Spectrum: 47

Stephen Ministry

What is a Stephen Minister? SM's are congregation members trained to provide one-to-one care to those experiencing a difficult time in life, such as grief, divorce, job loss, chronic illness, or terminal illness.

If you have a need **and** we have a Stephen Minister available, you could greatly benefit! Find out more: Contact Norma: 216-406-4871

Choir-Made-Easy – Join Us!

Contact Harold: 440-454-2139; weselohduh@gmail.com

- ✓ Receive the hymn and melody for the first Sunday of each month via email.
- ✓ Practice on your own.
- ✓ Meet at the organ on the first Sunday of each month at 8:45.
- ✓ Sing during that service.

Prayer Multiplier

We could use prayer warriors! Prayers are sent by text message. **Would you like to be added to the list?** Call or text Kathy G. 440-785-3802

Parking Lot Church

Not feeling well? LISTEN FROM YOUR CAR! Pick up everything needed – just inside our main entrance, then tune your radio to **FM 89.9**. For all the details, read the special insert in each parking lot church service folder.

Supporting the Lord's Work in and through Bethlehem Parma

Ways to Give

- **Online**: You can donate online through our Bethlehem PayPal account. go to www.BLC7500.com and click on the "Donate" button. **Thanks!**
- **Personal Banking**: Most banks have a free bill payer service.
- **IRA**: If you own an individual retirement account (IRA) and are at least 70½ years old, you can support the Lord's work by directing a **tax-free distribution** to Bethlehem.

September *Physical* Birthdays

9/3 Noah Hlavacek
9/8 Lynne Gellings
9/10 Edmund Kissinger
9/10 Enzo Velotta
9/11 Brooklyn Hlavacek
9/12 Greg Slepko
9/15 Olive Jasulevich
9/15 Matt Potantus
9/16 Adam Dennison
9/20 Tracy Liddy
9/20 Matt Samarin
9/20 Nevin Sherepita
9/24 Michael Tischler Jr.
9/27 Christl Kissinger
9/27 Tammy Shust
9/27 Michael Taylor
9/29 Sherrie Dennison
9/30 Linda Hinkle

September *Spiritual* Birthdays

9/4 Michael Tischler Sr.
9/5 Cedrick Hilliker Sr.
9/6 Andrew Sherepita
9/8 Robert Green
9/9 Carole Gellings
9/9 Addison Kovachic
9/9 Brooklyn Kovachic
9/9 Madelyn Musil
9/12 Molly Liddy
9/12 Linda Carlson
9/16 Gerry Ventura
9/17 Justin Liddy
9/18 Tracy Crites
9/19 Stacey Jasulevich
9/20 Helga Bartel
9/22 Brooklyn Hlavacek
9/22 Noah Hlavacek
9/22 Miyu Yu-Hsin Liao

September *Wedding* Anniversaries

9/8 Larry and *Gwynne Haslem (36th)
9/9 Mike and Sue Coufalik (55th)
9/12 Greg and Cindy Slepko (39th)
9/16 John and Helga Haller (65th)
9/28 Greg & Tami Taylor (41st)
9/30 James and *Victoria Ford (59th)

Upcoming Newsletter Deadlines

⇨ Wed., **September 23** at Noon
⇨ Wed., **October 21** at Noon

Bethlehem Parma; www.BLC7500.com