



# BETHLEHEM STAR

---

## Pastor's Report - Year in Review

**Shared ministry** - There will be significant changes coming up in 2025 when we begin a trial of shared ministry with Bethlehem, Zion, Grace, and Czech Presbyterian. More details on what that will entail are after this report. A group of leaders from all four churches have been meeting the latter part of this year to make plans.

**Worship** – worship attendance has largely held its own this year and really over the last few years, although it's down from previous times. It continues to be vibrant. We continue to livestream worship services on YouTube and Facebook

**Education** – Virg led a book group on the book *Boundless Compassion* in the fall. During Lent we studied the Parables of Jesus.

## Service and Outreach

In January we did a Sip and Paint event at Davey Hall for people in the community and congregation. Janna was the instructor. We then took the event to Fallbrook Assisted Living and Memory Care.

We continued to stock our Little Free Pantry. The big addition this year was a quality produce stand for community use. It was well stocked by our gardeners – mainly Mike and Virg and Corey. Community members contributed some as well. It was well-used during the summer months. Both the pantry and the produce stand provide a good service to the Davey community. Virg applied for and got a grant to help finance the produce stand and pantry.

We budgeted for a grant program for people in the congregation or local community to apply to for various projects. We did not have any applicants, but we'll advertise it again after the first of the year

We provided scholarships for three kids connected to someone in the congregation to go to Carol Joy Holling Camp. Funds from the Potato Bake added to the fund.

A few of us participated in the Center for People Toyland. Their change in hours made it more difficult for folks who work to participate

**Pastoral Acts** – Delores Erickson died Feb. 3<sup>rd</sup>. A private family service was held.

**Basement Flooding** – a sewer backup caused significant damage to the basement. Our insurance company paid all but the deductible. We are still working to see if the City's insurance will cover that. Our insurance company has declined to renew our property coverage so we will need to talk about that at the annual meeting.

In Christ,

*Pastor Kris*

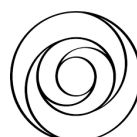
## Shared Ministry

Beginning in February, we will enter a trial period of shared ministry with Bethlehem, Zion, Grace, and Czech Presbyterian. The trial will go through the end of May, assuming there's no reason to stop it sooner. The recommendation made by the leadership group from all four congregations was that my time will increase from 60% full-time equivalent to 80%. The four churches will split that evenly. I will alternate Sunday worship, leading at Bethlehem and Zion the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays and Grace and Czech Pres the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>. We have a good list of lay people who will rotate covering the churches I'm not at. What that means for you is that you will have a lay preacher/worship leader on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays. The same lay person will preach at both churches so we can make the number of times manageable. It was recommended that the lay preachers be compensated \$100 plus mileage. I will meet with lay preachers monthly for some tips and education on preaching and to spend time discussing the upcoming texts for worship. I'm hoping we can use 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays to have a joint worship service at one of the churches. How we will manage special services – e.g. Christmas, Easter, Ash Wednesday, etc is yet to be determined.

We will likely also ask for volunteers to help with visitation, but we'll get the worship piece in place first.

This model of being church will be much closer to the model of the early church. Our four congregations are good candidates, because small churches have always had to adapt and do what needed done. But it will still take some getting used to, and it will require everyone's buy in. It's important that worship attendance doesn't lag on the days when I'm not leading. We are the church together, and that means finding ways to use everyone's gifts for the sake of the gospel. We have a solid group of lay preachers/worship leaders who are excited about the opportunities this will raise.

Please talk to me if you have questions or would like to know more about opportunities.



Christmas 2024 is over and 2025 is here. What does that mean in your life? Was Christmas full of presents and gift giving or are you just glad that pressure is over because that just wasn't part of it this year? Are you thankful for the time you had to spend with family or was that stressful due to distance, chaos, family drama, or estrangements? The one thing that the birth of Jesus taught us was that God loves us. John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life." 1 Peter 4:8 "Above all, maintain constant love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins." How do we do this when we often feel like we fall short and it's hard to love others who we feel wrong us? One way is with a Lovingkindness Meditation:

- Sit in a comfortable fashion, let your body rest and be relaxed. Take several deep breaths.
- Begin with yourself because without loving yourself, it is almost impossible to love others.
- Repeat these phrases:  
May I be filled with lovingkindness.  
May I be safe from inner and outer dangers.  
May I be well in body, mind, and spirit.  
May I be at peace and happy.
- Once you have that sense of love for yourself, you can choose someone in your life to pray for. It can be someone you truly love or someone you have a difficulty with, but want to still pray for them.
- Repeat the above phrases, inserting that person's name in place of the I.
- Expand to others as you wish.  
I will pray that you all have a Blessed and Loving 2025!!!!

## **A Note to Our Online Worship Community**

We have two livestream options to participate in worship—Facebook Live and YouTube. Facebook Live is on my phone and YouTube on my laptop.

I am planning to upgrade our laptop, and possibly the microphone, but sometimes our internet isn't quite good enough to do the livestream on YouTube. Sometimes I simply can't connect—if Davey gets fiberoptic some day, we'll be golden.

January 5th is our combined Epiphany Service at Grace Lutheran, Swedeburg. That may not be streamed, but if it is it will be Facebook only. I'm gone January 12, so that day for sure you will only be able to access the Facebook Live stream.

Even if you are not on Facebook, you should be able to watch since it's a public page. Both YouTube and Facebook Live can be accessed through the church webpage:

<https://www.bethlehemdavey.org/>

Worship is at 10:30 am Sundays, in person or online on either YouTube or Facebook. Links to the bulletin and YouTube channel and Facebook page can be found on our website:

<https://www.bethlehemdavey.org/worship-in-person-and-online>

### *Calendar*

- January 5** 10:30 am—Epiphany worship at Grace
- January 12** 10:30 am—Worship  
Council after worship
- January 19** **10:45 am**—Worship with Holy Communion  
(Note later start time—Zion annual meeting)
- January 26** 10:30 am—Worship

Pastor Kris will be gone January 2 through January 14. Pastor Dave Maloy will cover for emergencies – 402-306-3828. Virg is available for hospital visits or other pastoral care needs.



**Pastor Kris—402-499-4993**  
krisbo90@gmail.com

**Church Website—[bethlehemdavey.org](https://www.bethlehemdavey.org)**  
**[Bethlehem Lutheran Church - Davey](#)**

Council president—Charilie Brown—402-525-0040  
Council members—Virg Unverferth, Corey Carlson,  
Linda Sestak, Jerri Daugherty

### **January Helpers**

Lector—Jerri  
Usher—Open  
Communion Asst.—Theresa  
Altar Setup—Open  
Cleaning—Open