

Bethesda Butler Lutheran Parish  
PO Box 426  
Bristol, SD 57219

DECEMBER

2023

H O P E  
P E A C E  
*Love Joy*

Kristi Anderson, SAM 605-265-0297

kristi\_anderson@outlook.com

Bethesda-Butler Church Office 605-492-3123

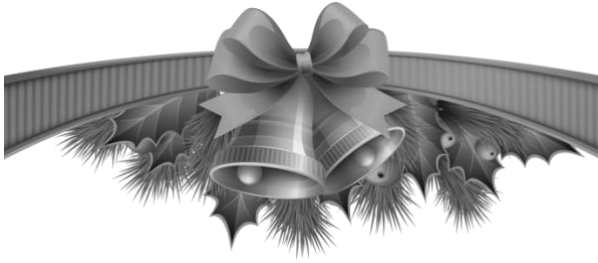
Parish Email ~ [bethesdabutler@nvc.net](mailto:bethesdabutler@nvc.net)

Parish Website ~

[www.bethesdabutler.com](http://www.bethesdabutler.com)

PO Box 426 Bristol, SD 57219





## LUTHER LEAGUE

Luther League met on November 15th with 6 members present. We completed tying two Lutheran World Relief quilts. Members approved the following Christmas gifts: \$250 to the Ronald McDonald House and \$250 to the Christmas Sack Project through the SD Prison Chaplain's Association. Thank you to Kay Espeland for her guidance in assembling the quilts. Students caught on quickly and enjoyed it immensely.

**The next Luther League meeting will be attending the movie, *Journey to Bethlehem*, showing in Webster the weekend of Dec. 8-10. We will decide which evening soon and get the word out. Please join us if you are in grades 6-12! Luther League will pay for the tickets.**

Wednesday School needs cases of small bottles of water for when classes resume after Christmas break. Donations can be left in the west room.

**BETHESDA WELCA**  
invites all women to the  
**CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON**

**Wednesday, December 6<sup>th</sup> at  
noon**  
Program to follow



### December 3

Isaiah 64:1-9  
Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19  
I Corin. 1:3-9  
Mark 13:24-27

### December 10

Isaiah 40:1-11  
Psalm 85:1,2,8-13  
2 Peter 3:8-15a  
Mark 1:1-8

### December 17

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11  
Psalm 126  
I Thess. 5:16-24  
John 1:6-8, 19-28

### December 24

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16  
Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26  
Romans 16:25-27  
Luke 2:1-14[15-20]

### December 25

Isaiah 62:6-12  
Psalm 97  
Titus 3:4-7  
Luke 2:[1-7]8-20

### December 31

Isaiah 61:10-62:3  
Psalm 148  
Galatians 4:4-7  
Luke 2:22-40



Our next worship visit is scheduled for Wednesday, June 5<sup>th</sup>. Plan on being at the prison from 1:15 to about 3:45. You can go to the St. Dysmas website to print off the paperwork, or Kristi can get it to you. Paperwork must be cleared three weeks before visiting; it is best to complete it early. (any time after the new year) We will be collecting yarn to deliver.

### HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Linda Anderson!

Linda turns 80 on December 9th.  
Birthday blessings may be sent to:  
519 Lancelot Drive, Aberdeen, SD.



# Holiday Schedule

**Christmas Eve Communion Worship Service will be 4pm at Bethesda**

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**Christmas Day Communion Worship Service will be 9am at Butler**

Both services will be livestreamed on Facebook and available on the church's YouTube channel and website.



Please let Kristi know as soon as possible if you would like her to shop for your poinsettia.

Please keep in mind that the bulletin insert listing "in memory and honor of" will be printed the afternoon of December 20<sup>th</sup>.

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**Bergen Live Nativity  
Saturday, December 23rd  
Clint and Kelly Brandlee farm  
7:00 PM**



## WEDNESDAY SCHOOL NEWS

### December Meal Serving Schedule

**December 6** – Cullen & Taylor Salter  
**December 13** – Eric & Darcie Moody  
**December 20** – Travis & Angela Antonsen

**December 17<sup>th</sup>** – Wednesday School Christmas Program during the Bethesda church service.

**December 20<sup>th</sup>** – Christmas program performed at Sun Dial with BINGO at the church afterwards. Anyone is welcome to join us for BINGO. We will finish up about 6:45 – 7:00 this evening.

**December 27<sup>th</sup>** – No Wednesday School or Confirmation.  
 Wednesday School will resume on **January 17<sup>th</sup>**.

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If you or anyone you know is willing to provide Special Music for either of our Christmas services, please let Kristi know by December 20<sup>th</sup>.

We are taking donations of BINGO prizes for our Christmas BINGO on December 20<sup>th</sup> after performing at Sun Dial. Anyone is welcome to join us! Come and spend some time with our youth; it is good for the soul! Prizes can be left in labeled box in narthex.



**Christmas Sweet Sale  
Bethesda Lutheran Church  
basement  
Saturday, December 2nd  
9:30 am – 2:30 pm**

Bethesda members are asked to bring at least 2 dozen sweets to be sold.

All treats must be pre-packaged in zip lock bags. The guidelines for packaging are:

Cookies/Bars	6 per bag	or	12 per bag
Candy	3 pieces per bag	or	6 per bag
Donuts	12 per bag		
Lefse	5 rounds		
Sweet breads	individually		

**Please leave your sweets in Bethesda's kitchen on Friday, December 1, between 8 am and 4 pm.** Pricing will be done by the WELCA officers.

This fund raiser is an important source of income used for missions not only locally but internationally; it also contributes to the expenses of the church. This is an opportunity for you to support not only our purpose but to purchase Christmas goodies for you or others.

For anyone who does not or cannot bake, monetary donations are very much appreciated.



### BETHESDA WELCA

Bethesda WELCA met on Nov. 8, 2023, at 1:30 pm with 7 members attending. Carol Raap opened with devotions from Ezekial 36:26-27. God is telling his people that He will take away their heart of stone and give them a new heart and a new mind. The program skit, *Heart Transplant*, was presented by Carol Raap, Sharon Johnson and Bonnie Anderson. A thank offering meditation was read. The business meeting opened with reading the Purpose Statement. Secretary's and treasurer's reports were read and approved. Planning was done for the Sweet Sale on Dec. 2. The Food Pantry will be the mission project for November and December. New gloves & hats can be left at local banks. End of year disbursements were decided, and the shut-ins list was discussed. The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer. Dessert was served by Kay Espeland.  
Secretary, Kathryn Bury

# DECEMBER 2023



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			*There will be Communion at Butler on Christmas Day.		1 Bethesda members, leave your sweets in the church kitchen 8 am – 4 pm.	2 9am Butler WELCA 9:30 am -2:00 pm Bethesda Christmas Sweet Sale
1st Sunday of Advent (blue) 3 <b>9 am Hanging of the Greens Service at Bethesda</b> Birthday Bank Offering	4	5	<b>Noon</b> – Bethesda WELCA Potluck <b>1 – 6</b> Office Hours <b>5:10-6:30</b> Wed. School & Confirmation	7	8 	9
2nd Sunday of Advent 10 <b>9 am Worship at Butler</b>	11	12	13 <b>10-4</b> Office Hours <b>5:10-6:30</b> Wed. School & Confirmation <b>6:30</b> -Bethesda Council	14 	15	16
3rd Sunday of Advent 17 <b>9 am Worship at Bethesda with Wednesday School Christmas Program</b>	18 Newsletter items due to email or office	19	20 <b>2-4</b> Office Hours <b>5:10</b> – Meal followed by program at Sun Dial and BINGO at the church	21 <b>10-2</b> Office Hours 2:00 Sun Dial Service	22 	23 Bergen Live Nativity Clint & Kelly Brandlee farm 7:00 PM
4th Sunday of Advent 24 <b>4 PM Communion Worship at Bethesda</b> <b>31 – 9 am Butler Worship</b> (white) – First Sunday of Christmas	25 <b>9:00 Worship at Butler</b>	26 	27 No Wednesday School or Confirmation	28 <b>10-4</b> Office hours	29	30

**DECEMBER BETHESDA WORSHIP ASSISTANTS**

	<b>Ushers</b>	<b>Readers</b>	<b>Organist</b>
12/3	<b>Marshall and Lloyd</b>		<b>Gail</b>
12/10	At Butler		
12/17	<b>Remi and Jaxon</b>		<b>Kathryn</b>
12/24	<b>Jon A.</b>	<b>Robin</b>	<b>Gail</b>
12/25	At Butler		
12/31	At Butler		
<b>Altar Guild:</b> Vickie Zimmerman, Mavis McKane			
<b>Deacon:</b> Karin Bartell			

**Ways to Give to Bethesda Lutheran Church**

at the church service  
 mail to PO Box 426 Bristol, SD 57219  
 mail to the church treasurer  
 Tithe.ly app

**DECEMBER BUTLER WORSHIP ASSISTANTS**

	<b>Usher</b>	<b>Reader</b>
12/3	At Bethesda	
12/10	<b>Gerry</b>	<b>Karter</b>
12/17	At Bethesda	
12/24	At Bethesda	
12/25	<b>Gerry</b>	<b>Kolton</b>
12/31	<b>Gerry</b>	<b>Julie</b>

**Ways to Give to Butler Lutheran Church**

at the church service  
 mail to the church treasurer



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**Please get your 2023 donations to your church treasurer by December 31<sup>st</sup>.**  
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**Thank you to Kathryn Bury for sponsoring newsletter postage this month!**

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If you would like to sponsor a newsletter postage in 2024, contact Jill Hansmeier. The cost is \$66.00.

- |                       |                        |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Dec 1 Rylee Huwe      | Dec 19 Waylon Nolte    |
| Dec 2 Cody Sass       | Dec 23 Drake Shoemaker |
| Dec 3 Dane Horter     | Dec 25 Amanda Dylla    |
| Dec 7 Daisy Rumpza    | Dec 26 Nolan Snaza     |
| Dec 9 Linda Anderson  | Dec 27 Butch Flattum   |
| Dec 13 Layla Nolte    | Dec 29 Morgan Bartell  |
| Dec 13 Sue Lone       | Dec 29 Emily Raap      |
| Dec 15 Zane Hubsch    | Dec 31 Julaine Busch   |
| Dec 18 Jill Hansmeier | Dec 31 Sandra Shepherd |
| Dec 19 Rachel Bahr    |                        |

**Joy Ranch** will host a traditional, magical, candlelight **Christmas Eve Service**. Holy Communion will be offered, and the theme will be "A Silent Night on the Prairie."

The service will begin at **11 PM**.

**We apologize if we missed your birthday. Please let us know and we will include it on our list for next year. Birthday Blessings to you!**



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

While I enjoy buying gifts for those I love and appreciate, I saw a quote recently from one of my favorite Christian authors, Susie Larson. "To buy gifts for the rich is, well fine, but to buy a gift for someone that can't repay is sacred. Think you are not rich? If you have a home, heat, food, and something to wear, you are rich in the eyes of many in the world. This quote has stuck with me and made me rethink my gifting practices in the future, with the exception of books and food.

You may be familiar with the adage that we spend the first half of our lives collecting things and the last half getting rid of those same things. A recent news program reported that we wear each piece of our clothing an average of 7 times. (No doubt we all have something hanging in our closets with the tag still attached.) Think of the gadgets and gizmos aplenty for newborns today, and then ponder Baby Jesus born in a manger with next to nothing. Confusing "need" with "want" is easily done in our times, especially when there are endless ads for ways to make our lives easier or completion of a task faster. Guilty!

While money can't buy happiness, it can provide a meal, a coat, heat, a simple Christmas sack, shelter in a safe place, gifts the impoverished, imprisoned, and homeless count as luxuries. Any gift, no matter how big or small, makes a difference to someone in need.

We can love, appreciate, and celebrate those special people in our lives with our presence, our time, our help, compliments, hugs, "I love you", and handwritten notes. Perhaps the material gift could be paid forward to someone that is waiting for a much-needed blessing.

When it comes to Christmas and kiddos, there is an unadulterated joy in watching them open their gifts. Good advice to follow is something to wear, something they need, something they want, and something to read. The wearing and the needing item usually are combined for my grandson. Again, it is not the size or expense of the gift. Joy is found in a mini-monster truck as much as the motorized model to drive around the yard.

Case in point - my mom has had a footstool, which contains some of my 52-year-old brother's baby toys with very few added in over the years. Two generations have run to that footstool in glee upon every visit. They have no clue how old some of the toys are and they don't care, but the joy is evident on their faces as they dig in and go about playing with imagination.

The price of the greatest gift we have and will ever receive was dear. Dwell in and focus on the gift of the newborn king this holiday season by wrapping a few less presents for your tree and gifting extra blessings to those in need.

Have a joyous Christmas! Kristi







South Dakota Synod  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

## Fall/Winter 2023 Newsletter Inserts

### From the Bishop's Desk

Dear SD Synod,

Grace and peace to you in the name of the Holy Trinity!

I would like to begin by extending a heartfelt 'thank you' to you. Your generosity has allowed a group of five individuals to be guests in our companion synod in Cameroon. The EELC celebrated its centennial this year. What began as the "Sudan Mission" a hundred years ago are now two church bodies, one in Cameroon and one in the Central African Republic.

Please, know that the group would be delighted if your congregation would like to hear about the rich ministry that happens in the EELC as well as how we can partner and learn from each other. Feel free to reach out to Rev. Dr. Aaron Matson in the synod office to schedule any one of the group members to share in conversation with your context.

One of the many treasured memories I bring home with me is the deep and abiding joyful almost childlike faith I came to experience in the church in Cameroon. The untamed dancing and singing from memory were contagious, even for an introvert like me. Throughout my entire time in Cameroon, I was reminded that when we entertain and welcome the stranger, we might just as well entertain angels and God's provision is written all over our lives, if we open our eyes and hearts to the possibilities.

Finally, please, know that I recognize that times for many faith communities are challenging, but hear the affirmation that in the midst of our challenges are opportunities for God to shine and work among us in mighty ways. I invite you to trust the first line of the Apostle's Creed that "I believe in God the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth." No matter how hard times will get, God will not forsake or forget us. That's a promise we can respond to with great joy.

Journeying in Christ with you,  
Rev. Constanze Hagmaier  
Bishop of the SD Synod

## FYI: Updates to the Call Process Webpage

If you have been to the Call Process page on the SD Synod Website this fall, you may have noticed a change. In the past we have had the "Congregations in Transition" section immediately accessible. This portion of the page is still viewable, but now password protected. If you would like to see the "Congregations in Transition" section, simply visit [www.sdsynod.org](http://www.sdsynod.org), click on the upper right-hand corner of the webpage that says "call process." Once on the page, scroll down to the bottom and you will see this line:

"To receive the password to view the page, please fill out [this form](#)."

Click on "this form" and it will take you to a **short** form. After filling the form, you will receive a password that will give you access to the "Congregations in Transition" that will remain the same until the password changes (about once every 3 months). When it changes, simply fill out the form again and receive the new password to access the page, which is updated weekly.

Please continue to pray for and remember our congregations in transition.

Rev. Renee Splichal Larson  
Associate to the Bishop for Candidacy,  
Congregation, and Rostered Minister  
Accompaniment

## You Are Not Alone

I am writing this very early this morning, October 26, 2023. I was awoken early with a message from our daughter that said, "we are safe, no school, sheltering in place." I immediately went to a news source and found out the mass shooting in Maine was in a neighboring town to where our daughter and her family live. Needless to say, my sleep was over for the night. My heart and prayers go out to the families that find themselves in a place they never wanted to be, but I know that Jesus is with them.

As saddened as I am from this senseless shooting, there is something just as senseless going on in this country and yet it's only mentioned in small town papers obituary section. I am referring to the large

I am referring to the large number of farm suicides. In the USA, two farmers die by suicide every day! Think about that for a moment and let that sink in, two farmers die by suicide every day! Now take a look at the churches you worship in and ask yourselves, are any of the people gathered here this morning headed that direction? Staggering thought, isn't it?

I invite you to be aware of the people in the pews and let them know that they are not alone in their struggles and that help is available. With the rising costs of farm inputs that I am hearing about for next year, we may find ourselves and our congregations caught up in this statistic. Please provide resources for everyone, such as the 988 the national suicide hotline and also local resources. Our farmers and ranchers need to know that we as the brothers and sisters of Christ care about them and want them around! The Synod staff have resources too and are walking with you.

Blessings,

Pastor Alan Blankenfeld

Rural Ministry Liaison

### **3.5 Reasons to Consider a Special Year-End Gift**

Year-end giving is a great way to support your church or favorite ministry, and an opportunity to make a real difference in the lives of those who need it most. Here are some reasons to think about a special gift as a part of your Christmas generosity:

1. **Meet Budgetary Needs**: Year-end gifts play a vital role in helping churches meet their financial goals by closing budget gaps and ensuring the mission and ministry of the church continue. Financial contributions cover essential expenses, including staff salaries, building maintenance, utilities, and outreach programs. Insufficient funds make it difficult to meet these basic needs.
2. **Celebrate Achievements**: A year-end gift can be made to recognize and express appreciation for the hard work of volunteers and staff members who have dedicated their time and energy to the church throughout the year.
3. **Build Financial Stability**: Your generosity can help your church or favorite ministry to build financial stability by creating a reserve fund to provide resources during lean times or fund a new mission project.

## **Cameroon Fun Facts**

( shared by Bishop Constanze)

\*Rice is eaten often, imported from China.

\*The seminary owns 3 computers and gets 4 days of electricity. The computers are shared between 70 students and staff.

\*Special fabric is designed for any special church event. This is a limited print, and Bishop was gifted with a generous amount of this to bring home.

\*Huge growth is taking place in the church in Cameroon.

\*It is custom to greet visitors by laying down fabric and dancing. The bishop was asked to introduce her “entourage” most places she went.

\*No new literature has been added to their library since 2006. This was previously funded by the Lutheran World Federation and is no longer.

\*They are working to update and inform what items should/shouldn't be sent that are useful. They do not want anything sent that can be purchased locally. They often receive medical equipment that does not work.

\*The language of Cameroon is French, Fulani, and English.

\*Close to \$52,000 was raised for the roof project with each roof costing about \$8,000.

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### **Bethesda Financial Report as of November 23, 2023**

Receipts \$52,928.88

Disbursements \$59,282.82

Prayerfully consider making an extra end of the year contribution if you are able to help cover the increase in the church's expenses.

Please have your final gifts to Treasurer Jill Hansmeier by December 31<sup>st</sup> to receive credit for 2023.