

*Happy
New
Year*

The Covenant Connections *Bethlehem / St. Martin*

JANUARY 2023



The first step in communicating our faith with others is having clarity about what it is that we have to share. And most of the time, the simplest, most engaging, and most powerful thing we can share is a story. Sharing the stories of our experiences of God communicates not only that God is active in our lives, but can help others to recognize God's presence in their own lives. Through Epiphany, we'll be helping each other recognize the presence of God in our lives by sharing our stories.

Milford Apetz and I will start us off.

One of the blessings of being a pastor is that I get to visit folks. I get to bring my own greetings, bring greetings from the congregation, and bring the bread and wine that bears God's presence. As I enter Milford's room, he is asleep, which is common for visits in care facilities, but a first for but a first for him. It is sad to see his continued decline. I wake him with a "hello" asking if he's up for a visit, and I at first receive a "no." I tell him I brought communion, and he wakes up further, recognizes me, and his eyes and smile communicate clearly what he has lost the ability to articulate verbally.

He attempts to verbalize, but I am not able to make out what he is saying. I finally make out a "thank you." I talk a little bit about Christmas, and how God comes to us as a savior, both to fix this world that we are in, and eventually to save us from it as he takes us to our heavenly home (a theme we have talked about in the past). He becomes even more lucid and affirms our common witness. But then his mumbling gets quieter, and his eyes close, and I wonder if my visit will end shortly.

But then, I hear a repeated "thank you." And even though his eyes are closed, his face begins -to express the gratitude of the now-better-articulated "thank you's." As he had often done in the past, Milford is leading us in prayer. His sense of gratitude and his deep faith are evident, even as most of the particular words he wishes to use continue to escape him.

If I was in bed with a body that was failing, and a comprehending mind hamstrung by communication challenges, I'm not sure gratitude would be my most prominent emotion. But visiting Milford has always been an uplifting experience for me. He is a grateful and faithful man who speaks easily of God's presence. I'm the professional minister, but my visits with him are chances for me to sit at the knee of an evangelist.

I make out maybe a tenth of Milford's prayer of thanksgiving, but I notice when his cadence changes a little, and I notice his eyes are now open, and I make out "you's" that are directed not to God but to me. His prayer had ended and he was now proclaiming a blessing upon me.

I take out the bread and wine and we hear again of how Jesus continues to come to us, entering into our places of discomfort and frustration and wonder and hope, giving us what we need to save us from our sinful selves. Milford takes it as the life-giving sustenance that it is; perhaps not necessarily wanting more time here on earth, but eagerly taking in the life that eternally comes from God. We say the Lord's Prayer together, our voices in unison even if the words are articulated differently.

We try to chat a little more, and we pray again, and I must go. For holy ground is not a place to stay, but a place from which to be empowered and sent out. God, through Milford, empowered me yet again to venture out to engage our community Christ's love.

And I trust that God will continue to find ways to empower you, too. This Epiphany season, let us share our stories! In doing so, we help others recognize and see in their own lives the presence of God.

Pastor Korey



OUR CHURCH FAMILY

MISSION & FELLOWSHIP

BLC REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR PROJECT

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO HAS CONTRIBUTED TO OUR REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR. PLEASE BRING THE FOOD COLLECTED DOWN TO THE FELLOWSHIP HALL, TO THE TABLE IN THE BACK. WE WILL CONTINUE TO COLLECT FOOD UNTIL JANUARY 8.



ALTAR FLOWERS

ALTAR FLOWERS CAN BE ORDERED THROUGH THE SMLC CHURCH OFFICE OR CAN BE BROUGHT INTO CHURCH ON SUNDAYS AND THE ALTAR GUILD PERSON WILL PUT THEM IN THE ALTAR CONTAINERS.

AFTERWARD, YOU CAN EITHER TAKE THE FLOWERS HOME OR BRING THEM TO HOME-BOUND

PARISHIONERS.

FLOWERS ORDERED THROUGH
KITTLEBURGER

FLORIST BY THE CHURCH SECRETARY HAVE A
MINIMUM COST OF \$40.00.



BIBLE STUDY "EXPRESS"

The Wednesday Evening "Bible Study Express" at the Finstad's will be back meeting again in January. We continue to watch "The Chosen" together and discuss it. Join us anytime! If you can't join us, you can still watch it at: <https://www.angel.com/watch/the-chosen>



MAD HATTERS

Yes, we provided over 500 hats for the Christmas stocking program in 2022. And now we need to get started on hats for 2023. We have yarn available for those of you who knit and crochet, and fleece for those who prefer to sew hats. You can stop by St. Martin on Saturday morning, Jan 14, to pick up yarn or fleece, or stay and join others who are making hats. Everyone is welcome. (We meet at the same time the Sew and Sew quilters are in the Fellowship Hall, so you can also get to see some amazing quilting projects while you are there.)

Mary Lou



OUR CHURCH FAMILY



Council Notes

SMLC COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

SMLC

December 14, 2022

Pastor Report

Mission Focus still needs some time to be worked on

Would like some volunteers to share a “God Wink” during our service on Sundays

Treasurer

Still operating in the red but that amount is getting smaller each month

Outreach

Had a great turnout for food at the Santa Evening

Many donations keep coming in

Christian Education

Hard to plan as number of attendees change each Sunday

Would like a few more volunteers to help teach

Old Business

Addressed the security issue from the survey handed out – will ask ushers to monitor the parking lot during service

Would like to assemble a team to work on Mission Focus

New Business

Staff Christmas gifts will be the same as last year

Next SMLC/BLC Joint Council Meeting is Wednesday, 1/11/2023
at 6:30pm @ BLC.



OUR CHURCH FAMILY

REMEMBER IN PRAYER



At Bethlehem...

Anya Peterson, Sally Steinmiller, Jan Mohrman, Carl Bardo, Harry Weidman, Sarah Frick, Gary Steinmiller, June Borkhuis, Ken Francis, Finnegan O'Grady, Gary Ayers, John Heckle, Shirley Bauer, Shirley Jennejohn, Lin Maier (Shirley Bauer's sister), Kay Heckle, Nancy Smith, Bev Steele, Cecilia Anderson (Shirley Bauer's mother).

We also pray for those in the military and their families: Javier Alagarin and Anthony Grimshaw.



At St. Martin...

Family & friends of Doris Laubscher, Kevin & Debbie French, Tracy Bryce (daughter of Dan & Debora Bartlett), Dolores Hess, Dan Bartlett, Milford Apetz, Jeanette Lockwood, Jim Matteson, Nate Baker (Godson of Jim & Mary Lou Alexander), Aidan Weingartner (Kris Weingartner's grandnephew), Pastor Ron Willman and his wife, Barbara, Harry Hilbert Jr. (son of Harry and Becky Hilbert),

Caurie (daughter-in-law of Becky Hilbert), Karin Ewanow, James Simmons, and people serving in the military, especially Bryan. Also, all Law Enforcement Officers, especially Scott, Eric, Josh, Eric and Eric.

Calling hours for Doris will be Thursday, January 5th from 4-6pm at Willard Scott Funeral Home.



If you would like names added or removed from the prayer list, please contact your church office.



OUR CHURCH FAMILY



Bethlehem January Birthdays

Alison Finstad	Jan 4
Ken Francis	Jan 11
Harry Weidman	Jan 11
Jan Mohrman	Jan 15
Nancy Bardo	Jan 16
Larry Leisten	Jan 23
Jim Brigden	Jan 23
Al Neels	Jan 26
Greg Francis	Jan 30

SMLC January Birthdays

Emmet Moore	Jan 1
Alison Finstad	Jan 3
Josh Haffen	Jan 4
Michaela Stoller	Jan 14
Mike Geier	Jan 25
Catherine Tesoriero	Jan 26
Laverne Vandewall	Jan 31

Happy Anniversary!



Bethlehem January Anniversaries

Jason & Kathy Leisten	Jan 7
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SMLC January Anniversaries

None to Report	
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St. Martin Lutheran Church



813 Bay Road
Webster, New York 14580
Phone: 585.671.1899

Email : stmartinwebster@gmail.com

JANUARY WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

	SUNDAY JANUARY 1	SUNDAY JANUARY 8	SUNDAY JANUARY 15	SUNDAY JANUARY 22	SUNDAY JANUARY 29
LECTOR	Paul Haffen	Doug Gomez	Amie Kulak	Kris Weingartner	Ed Currier
ASSISTING MINISTER	Karen Kunzer	Sharon Haffen	Mary Lou Alexander	Mary Lou Alexander	Sharon Haffen
ORGANIST	Mary Ann Peters	Mary Ann Peters	Mary Ann Peters	Mary Ann Peters	Mary Ann Peters
GREETERS	Cindy Gomez	Harry & Becky Hilbert	Pat Knapp	Cindi Smith	Cindi Bouchard
ALTAR GUILD	Nancy Elder	Nancy Elder	Nancy Elder	Nancy Elder	Nancy Elder
SUNDAY SCHOOL					
COUNTERS	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD





January 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 8:45am BLC Worship /Sun.School 10:30am SMLC Worship/Sun.School 6:30pm Confirma- tion @ SMLC	2	3	4 11:30am Prayer First 6-7pm Bible Study @ Finstad 's	5 8am Men's Group	6	7
8 8:45am BLC Worship /Sun.School 10:30am SMLC Worship /Sun.School	9	10	11 11:30am Prayer First 6-7pm Bible Study @ Finstad 's 6:30pm Joint Council Meeting @ BLC	12 8am Men's Group	13	14 9-12pm Mad Hatters
15 8:45am BLC Worship 10:30am SMLC Worship 6:30pm Confirma- tion @ SMLC	16	17	18 11:30am Prayer First 6-7pm Bible Study @ Finstad 's	19 8am Men's Group	20	21
22 8:45am BLC Worship/Sun.School 10:30am SMLC Worship /Sun.School	23	24	25 11:30am Prayer First 6-7pm Bible Study @ Finstad 's	26 8am Men's Group	27	28
29 8:45am BLC Worship /Sun.School 10:30am SMLC Worship/Sun.School 6:30pm Confirma- tion @ SMLC	30	31				



OUR CHURCH FAMILY



SMLC Directory

Pastor.....Korey Finstad
Director of Music Mary Ann Peters

Church Council

President.....Karen Kunzer
Vice President Christian Kulak
Secretary Debbie Lester
Treasurer / Finance..... Paul Haffen
Outreach..... Carol Geier
Activities Kris Weingartner
Christian Education..... Cindi Bouchard
Member-at-Large..... Mary Lou Alexander
Evangelism.....Pat Knapp
Worship and Music Anne Mitchell

BLC Directory

Pastor..... Korey Finstad
Director of Music Dr. Evelyn Lam Brothers

Church Council

President Sandy Borkhuis
Vice President Dick Howard
Secretary Laurie Brooks
Property Al Neels
Faith Formation.....
Congregational Life. Nancy Smith
Finance Sarah Frick
Treasurer..... Mindy Zajac
Worship Ministries
Outreach Ministry Laurie Brigden



Forgot your checkbook? Give to St. Martin online here
or use the Link below:



[Click on Link Here](#)

You are encouraged to respond to God's gift to us by giving back
to the mission and ministry instituted by Jesus. Financial offerings
are needed to support our congregation's work!



OUR CHURCH FAMILY

St. Martin Evangelical Lutheran Church

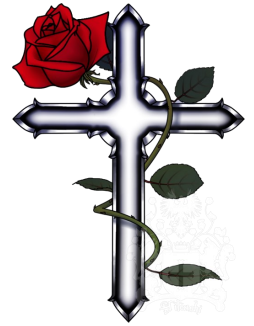
813 Bay Road

Webster, NY 14580

Bethlehem Lutheran Church

1767 Plank Road

Webster, NY 14580



Cell phone: 585-402-8451

Email: rev.Korey@gmail.com

Pastor Korey's Contact Info

Lay Readers	Nancy Currier
Altar Guild	Nancy Elder
Ushers	Doug Gomez
Coffee Hr.	Jeff & Mary Ann Peters
Greeters	Nancy Currier
Assisting Ministers	Sharon Haffen



ARTICLES FOR THE **FEBRUARY**
COVENANT CONNECTIONS ARE KINDLY
ACCEPTED BY **JANUARY 15TH** TO OUR
SECRETARY, NANCY NESBITT AT
STMARTINWEBSTER@GMAIL.COM.

Laurie Brooks

Bethlehem Lutheran Church Office

1767 Plank Rd, Webster, NY 145805

585.872.1425

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Nancy Nesbitt

St. Martin Lutheran Church Office

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**Office Hours 10a-2p Tuesday, Wednesday,
Thursday**

St. Martin Lutheran Church

813 Bay Road

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www.stmartinwebster.org

stmartinwebster@gmail.com

Worship 10:30^{am}

Office Hours: Tues, Wed, & Thurs., 10^{am} - 2:00^{pm}



Bethlehem Lutheran Church

1767 Plank Road

Webster, New York 14580

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www.bethlehemplutheranchurch.org

Worship: 8:45^{am}

