



Pastor Kris—402-499-4993

krisbo90@gmail.com

Church Website—[bethlehemdavey.org](http://bethlehemdavey.org)

Council president—Jeff Atkinson—402-432-6212

Council members—Mike Unverferth, Judy Hornung ,  
Jerri Daugherty, Curtis Olson, Gabe Allen



[Bethlehem Lutheran Church - Davey](http://Bethlehem Lutheran Church - Davey)

Our Little Free Pantry is in need of gift cards. \$20 gifts cards can be purchased, or cash donations made. Instructions are in the bulletin.



Bethlehem Lutheran Church  
PO Box 96  
Davey, NE 68336

***The Year in Review***

**Annual Meeting—Sunday January 31 at 11:30—in person or via Zoom.**

My January newsletter article is always my annual pastor’s report – the year in review. Like we say about everything this year, this one will be like no other before it and hopefully no other after it. But we’ve all learned some things from this year and we need to embrace even the painful lessons as we look to the future. We can’t just dust ourselves off and say “well I’m glad 2020 is over” without taking to heart some of the things this year has taught as, as a people and as a church.

It helps me to categorize my report, and even though the year was very different, that still seems a helpful way to organize it. In each category I’ll talk about some of the things we’ve learned and what we will likely carry into the future. But this is all with a bit of a hedge – the predictability of the future is an illusion. One of the most important things we can carry with us from this year is the ability and willingness to be flexible and nimbler. That has been true for the church for a long time – it just took the pandemic to force us to see it.

**Pastoral Acts**

New member by Affirmation of Baptism – Melanie Miller January 12

**Worship**

After years of pastors and church leaders across denominations talking about needing to make better use of the internet, the pandemic hit in March and we all had to learn Zoom, Facebook Live, and YouTube in a week. Zoom for us has been a Godsend. It’s enabled us to maintain some sense of community connection online, even for folks who only have a landline. I think this has reduced the pressure some congregations have felt to get back to in person worship and helped us keep the most vulnerable safer.

Even when things have returned to normal, we will continue with some sort of online offering. The church now owns a laptop and before we return to in person worship we’ll purchase a webcam and if we need to, USB microphone to improve video and audio quality for online worship. Both can be pretty inexpensive.

With the new sound system, we may be able to connect directly into the laptop with that. But that is yet to be learned about.

Right now we are livestreaming our Zoom worship directly to YouTube Live. That means people can either participate via Zoom as they have been, or they can watch the worship service in pretty much real time on YouTube. YouTube isn’t interactive but is probably a better outreach tool for “visitors” who might prefer anonymity.

During nice weather, we had the in person option of outdoor communion services. Covid numbers have declined recently, and if that trend at least stays stable. I would like to offer some type of in person transitional services starting probably in February. We'd be in the building, but the service would be 20 minutes or so—and masks required. The return to more normal in person worship will depend on risk rankings by public health officials and the vaccine timeline. .

I'm not sure whether to put my report on my Wednesday Facebook Live Midweek Moments under worship or faith formation, but I've done those most weeks since the pandemic began and will likely continue to do so. I typically get 100 views, + or -, whatever that might mean. It's a better outreach tool than anything else I've stumbled on.

### **Offline Community**

Although Zoom and other online options have been great for us, and the great majority of the congregation have been able to participate, not everyone can. I do send mailings out every week to help the offline community stay connected at least in some way.

### **Adult Faith Formation**

Before the pandemic, there was a group of folks from Bethlehem and Zion meeting to discuss faith and current events. We had a Bible study in the fall of 2019. Several Bethlehem folks have participated in an online Anti-racism book group with a fairly diverse group. This has been pretty amazing and you are all invited to take part.

Adult faith formation will be another thing that will likely be changed forever because of the pandemic. My two focus areas will continue to be spirituality practices and the intersection of faith and politics. But most of what we do will likely be a combination of in person and online. Being able to offer it online I think should open up some options for people who haven't traditionally been involved.

### **Children and Youth**

Churches pretty much across the board have found ministry to children and youth to be the most difficult to maintain during the pandemic. We're no exception. And honestly, we were struggling with youth group before the pandemic. I don't have answers here. I did send out materials for families to use during Advent to facilitate learning at home.

Connor and Carlos helped out with Zion's Sunday school "program," a reading of the Christmas story put together by Carol and Megan at Zion. They all did a fantastic job!

### **Serving and Giving**

Some of our usual volunteer activities haven't been able to happen as local organizations are limiting outside volunteers due to Covid. We have installed a Little Free Pantry to help folks in town who are struggling to keep enough food on hand. Grocery gift cards seem to be the most helpful things.

We have not been able to do worship at the Nursing Home because of Covid. Church giving has been down a bit. We are doing OK but if you've missed getting your offering in, consider bringing it to the annual meeting if you plan to attend in person.

## ***Calendar***

<b>January 3</b>	10:00 am—Worship on Zoom with Holy Communion
<b>January 10</b>	10:00 am—Zoom Worship
<b>January 17</b>	10:00 am—Worship on Zoom, Holy Communion
<b>January 23</b>	10:00 am—Council meeting via Zoom. If you would like to attend, let Pr. Kris know to receive link
<b>January 24</b>	10:00 am—Zoom worship
<b>January 31</b>	10:00 am—Zoom worship 11:30—Annual meeting. Both in person and Zoom options available. If you attend in person we ask that you wear a mask.

### **Church offerings can continue to be mailed to:**

Mike Unverferth  
2800 W. Branched Oak Rd.  
Raymond, NE 68428

Both churches also have an online giving option through tithe.ly. The easiest option is to download the tithe.ly app on a mobile device. Then just search for either church. You can also give from a laptop or PC – go to this link and instead of downloading app, click on "give online."

<https://get.tithe.ly/download-tithely-app>



Here is the **log in information** for worship at **10:00 am**

Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81665346843?pwd=dkhXWGs4REh4QnA3Um5mQ05GOUJJQT09>  
Phone—1 312 626 6799  
Meeting ID: 816 6534 6843  
Passcode: 787545