



Bethel Lutheran Church

264 Wilson Street • Thunder Bay, Ontario • P7B 1M9 • Phone: 807.344.8322
Pastor: Reverend Jamie Bosma • Web: www.BethelLutheran.ca

October 25, 2015

To the Lutheran Churches in the United States,

Greetings to you from Thunder Bay, Ontario Canada in Christ Jesus, our Lord!

It is with a heavy heart that I write to you. Our congregation, Bethel, is the oldest Lutheran church in Thunder Bay, spanning the ages of some 117 years. She is the mother Lutheran church in town. Our congregation has weathered many a storm in her day (for the sake of the Gospel). That we are still here, sounding the peace of Christ each week (and sometimes twice a week) is due solely to the grace of God.

Yet, we are now at a crossroads. At our latest council meeting this October, it was reported that we have enough funds for *only two more months of ministry*. That means that following the New Year of 2016 (should we receive no outside assistance) our doors will be closed for good. No more will the Gospel be heralded from this pulpit, no more will repentant sinners kneel before the altar in this place to hear that guilt cancelling word of absolution and to receive the life giving Body and Blood of Christ. It leaves us all filled with deep sorrow.

Brothers and sisters in Christ, the mission field is not just across seas. The mission field is in the States, in your hometowns. The mission field is here in Canada. The Gospel light of Christ shines forth from Bethel into this city, into this sin-darkened field. Good things continue to happen here. Our gracious and merciful Lord continues to call and gather into His flock. Often, He does so one or two at a time, but that is one or two more people we didn't have before – one or two more people who have heard the Gospel, believed it, and are saved.

We are not a large congregation, but we are a faithful congregation. We gather regularly and often in the presence of our Lord in order to receive from His Hand what alone saves. Our cry goes out to our Good Shepherd, in our time of want. Our cry goes out to you, to intercede with your prayers and generosity. **With deep humility and urgency, we ask that you please consider supporting our church with a one-time or monthly gift.** Donations can be made via check to the address above, or by credit card at www.bethellutheran.ca/support/. Any amount is an encouragement and a blessing. Thank you for whatever assistance you might be able to provide to help this struggling little flock continue to receive the Word and the Sacraments in this place for a while longer!

*O Lord, let this Your little flock, Your name alone confessing,
Continue in Your loving care, True unity possessing.
Your sacraments, O Lord, and Your saving Word to us, Lord, pure retain,
Grant that they may remain our only strength and comfort. (LSB 647 st.2)*

In Christ,

Sam Niemi
Chairman of Bethel Lutheran, on behalf of the Council and congregation



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