



## **Some Questions and Answers About Bethlehem Lutheran School**

### **What is the Mission of Bethlehem Lutheran School?**

Education for Today...Education for Eternity

### **How Is Bethlehem Different From the Public Schools?**

The major difference is that at Bethlehem everything is done from a Christian perspective. Religion is taught formally to each class. Our Christian philosophy influences everything that is taught, how it is taught, and how we deal with children, whether it be in or out of the classroom.

### **What Grades Are Offered at Bethlehem?**

Bethlehem offers a program for 3-year-old children (3 year old Kindergarten) through the 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

### **What Are the School Hours?**

Classes begin at 8:00 a.m. 3-year-old Kindergarten (3K) meets three mornings a week, Monday, Tuesday and Thursday dismissing at 11:20 a.m. 4-year-old Kindergarten (4K) meets four/five mornings a week, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday (optional), dismissing at 11:20 a.m. Dismissal for 5-year-old Kindergarten (5K) and grades 1-8 is at 3:10 p.m.

### **How Old Must a Child Be to Enter Kindergarten?**

A child who turns 3 before September 1, 2025 is eligible to enter 3K in the fall of 2025. A child should be 4 before September 1, 2025 to enter 4K. Children who turn 5 before September 1, 2025, are eligible for 5K. If a child's birthday is a few days after September 1, parents may wish to consult with the principal.

### **How is Spiritual Growth Nurtured in the Child?**

Our students are taught by Christian teachers who are dedicated to helping children and serve as role models, practicing their Christian faith in their daily lives and in their dealings with students and others.

We teach religion to each grade. In the lower grades, this includes Bible stories and Christian concepts (Jesus loves you, God made everything, etc.). By the upper grades, religious instruction becomes more focused on how Lutherans interpret the Bible. In addition to formal religion class, each grade has daily devotions and participates in our weekly chapel service in church.

### **What Secular Subjects Are Taught at Bethlehem?**

We teach the regular academic subjects: reading, math, language, spelling, handwriting, science, and social studies (which includes geography and history). We also teach Spanish, art, music, computers, and physical education.

### **Are There Any Special Classes Available for Students?**

We have a resource teacher who works with children who have special learning situations. We also offer 8<sup>th</sup> grade algebra for students who qualify. Bethlehem also enjoys the services of a speech therapist, teacher of children with learning disabilities, and a Title 1 teacher (who helps children with special reading problems and who otherwise meet government criteria for service).

### **How Does the Education at Bethlehem Compare With That in the Public Schools?**

Without taking anything away from the job done by the public schools, Bethlehem has high academic standards. We are known for the quality education given to our students. On the nationally standardized achievement test administered at Bethlehem our students score yearly in the upper 75% of students in the nation?

**How Big Are the Classes?**

Although Bethlehem does not have a maximum number of students for any of the grades, most classes generally stay under 18 students.

**Are the Teachers at Bethlehem Certified?**

All of our teachers are eligible to be certified to teach by the State of Wisconsin. All of our teachers have earned at least a bachelor's degree in education; a number of the teachers have earned a master's degree or are currently working on them.

**Does Bethlehem Have Technology?**

All students in the school have access to technology. All grades have either iPads or Chromebooks in their classrooms. In addition, grades four through eight have computer classes on Chromebooks. Students in the middle and upper grades have access to the Internet to do research for class projects. Filtering software helps protect the students against getting into undesirable Internet sites. Bethlehem also has interactive panels for classroom use. BLS also has added a 3-D printer and has several robotic options for STEM classes.

**Can Bethlehem Serve a Child That Has a Learning Disability or Some Other Special Need?**

A teacher of children with learning disabilities (LD) provides limited service in our school, as does a speech therapist. These teachers are provided by the public school district using federal money. In addition, we also have the services of a Title 1 teacher who works with eligible students to improve their reading skills.

While we certainly acknowledge that all children need to learn of the love of Christ, Bethlehem is not staffed or equipped to deal with those children who have severe learning or emotional problems. It is best for those children to be placed in special classes designed to meet their unique needs. To help us determine if we can be effective in working with a specific child, we may use the records of previously attended schools, testing, direct observation of the child, and parent consultation. Children entering Bethlehem are accepted on a provisional basis for approximately six weeks; at the end of this time, if we cannot help a child, a decision is made with the parents as to what can be done to best service the child's needs.

**How Are Parents Notified of Their Children's Progress?**

Report cards are created at the end of each quarter. In addition, mid-quarter reports are created for all grades. Bethlehem uses an online grading system where parents can view grades at any time. Teachers will also call or email if students are struggling during the week.

**What Extracurricular Activities Are Offered?**

We offer an athletic program for both boys and girls in grades 5 to 8. Volleyball (for girls) and basketball (for both boys and girls) are offered; we also participate in a major spring track meet. There is also Cross Country in the Fall. Both lower and upper grade children have the opportunity to sing in a children's choir and participate in concerts each year. We also have an art club, music festival, forensics program, a spelling bee, geography bee, and participate in a Scholastic Olympics program. Upper and lower grades alternate years in presenting a musical concert. Other activities may be scheduled if there is enough student interest and adult supervision.

**Does Bethlehem Have a Special Dress Code?**

Proper and sensible dress that is neat, clean, and modest is expected. Specific dress requirements are included in the current *Parent Handbook*.

**Is Bus Transportation Provided?**

Bus service is provided free of charge for students living on the far south side of Sheboygan by Prigge Bus Service. Children living anywhere may also ride the Sheboygan Metro buses, for which there is a charge. Parents of children living in some other districts are offered transportation contracts by the School District in which the student resides.

**Does Bethlehem Offer a Hot Lunch Program?**

Bethlehem prepares hot lunches in its own kitchen. Hot lunches include milk. Free and reduced-price meals are available for eligible families. Milk is available for purchase for those students who bring their lunch from home, and as part of a snack for kindergarten children.

**Is Childcare Provided?**

Bethlehem has an Extended Care program offering childcare throughout the day. Extended Care is open for children ages 3 & 4 all day. This will allow children to be in class three or four days a week and still have a place to go when their class doesn't meet. For students in grades 5K to 8<sup>th</sup> before the school day care goes from 7:00 – 8:00 a.m., and again after dismissal, from 3:10 until 5:30 p.m. The extended Care program does charge a fee for students to participate in the program. There is a fee per hour for this service.

**Are Other Services Available?**

Each class has a scheduled weekly time in our library. The library is staffed by volunteers.

Each class takes one or more field trips during the school year. Grade 7, together with 7<sup>th</sup> graders from other Lutheran schools in the area, participates in an Outdoor Education program in fall at a camp in the area. Grade 8 takes a two-day trip to Chicago in the spring.

Students in grades 5-8 have the ability to pick an "elective" each quarter that is held on Wednesday afternoons. These are classes that expose students to a wide variety of subjects that are not normally covered in the daily curriculum.

Instrumental music lessons are available for students in grades 5-8 for an additional charge.

**What Does It Cost to Send a Child to Bethlehem for the 2025-26 School Year?**

Tuition pays for only a small part of the student's education at Bethlehem. The cost to educate a child is over \$9,600 per year. The congregation on average helps cover over 75% of the educational costs. Our tuition rates are very low to help families afford a quality Christian education. When you think of the hourly rate, a family pays less than \$4.00 per hour while their child(ren) are in class or about \$24.00 a day for education and care.

There is an annual registration fee payable when the enrollment application is submitted (for new students) or in March (for returning students); registration varies from \$200 to \$220 per child. We also charge tuition for both members of Bethlehem and nonmembers; tuition varies from \$1,560 (for a 3-year old kindergarten child from a Bethlehem member family) to \$4,070 per child (for a nonmember child in grades 5K-8). These fees vary depending on the grade and the number of children attending Bethlehem. For the fees for a specific situation, parents should contact the school office. In addition to the registration fees and tuition, there are several small one-time fees payable each school year at registration.

**When Must I Pay the Tuition and Fees?**

Payment of the nonrefundable registration fee is required at the time of enrollment.

There are several options available for paying tuition for both members of Bethlehem congregation and nonmembers. Parents may choose to pay tuition in full at registration time in August, or pay in ten equal monthly installments (Aug. through May). Other payment plans may be worked out between the parents and the principal.

**What If I Want to Send My Child to Bethlehem But I Really Cannot Afford It?**

We offer a program whereby you can use a percentage of what you spend at various grocery stores, department stores, and other establishments in Sheboygan and elsewhere as a credit towards your tuition. Relatives, friends, and neighbors may also make purchases and have the credit apply to your family. Some families have been able to pay for virtually their entire tuition bill through this program. Parents may also use this program to "bank" credit if their children are too young to start school or if their children will be attending Lutheran High School. For more information on this program, parents are urged to contact the school office.

Families may also apply for financial aid. We have been blessed to have an endowment created to help families cover parts of their children's education while they are attending Bethlehem Lutheran School. An online application must be filled out for this program.

**Wisconsin Parental Choice Program (WPCP)**

Bethlehem Lutheran School will be participating in the Wisconsin Parental Choice Program for the upcoming 2025-2026 school year. The Wisconsin Parental Choice Program (WPCP) provides children throughout the state with a full tuition voucher to attend the private or religious school of their choice.

Bethlehem will be accepting applications in grades 4K to 8th for parents who wish to enroll their children at the school through the WPCP. Student applications for the WPCP can be submitted online from February 3- April 17, 2025 at <https://apps4.dpi.wi.gov/Choice-Programs/student-application> . There is also a link that can be found on our website.

The program currently is limited to those families with incomes below 220% of the federal poverty level. So what does that number look like? Your adjusted gross income (AGI) (Line 38 on Federal Income tax form 1040) would need to be at or below the levels listed below for the size of your family:

Family Size	Single Family	Married Family
2	\$44,968	
3	\$56,804	\$63,804
4	\$68,640	\$75,640
5	\$80,476	\$87,476
6	\$92,312	\$99,312

For each additional member add \$11,836