

Looking Ahead at BLC

Throughout this year of 100th Anniversary celebrations, we have heard wonderful stories about the Bethlehem community and the ways that this church has faithfully shared the good news of Jesus. We have heard from former pastors and other leaders, viewed pictures, opened time capsules, shared remembrances and been able to see the changes that have taken place over the decades. One thing we've noticed again and again is Bethlehem's lasting impact! Thanks be to God!

Our year of celebrations have clarified that ***Building Lasting Community that follows Jesus*** is the work that lies before us. In a world where the ways of making connections and building community happens differently than they once did, and familiarity and comfort with the church is not a given, **Building Lasting Community** will look differently going forward than it has in the past.

There's a lot we don't know about what our future will look like, but here's what we do know:

- We will continue to operate in virtual and in-person spaces and will need to find ways to straddle these different environments.
- We will need to communicate more effectively with people who are used to accessing information and making connections through social media and online sources.
- We will need to be increasingly entrepreneurial and experimental to find ways to connect and build relationships with people.
- We will need to continue creating real and meaningful partnerships with faith communities and organizations beyond our walls in order to have a lasting impact in the world.
- We will need to expand the traditional ways of providing financial support for our ministries.

Over the past year, we have been reminded that Bethlehem's future of **Building Lasting Community** is a vision rooted in our past, while also responsive to a changed environment in which we are called to be church. God's love made known in Jesus has carried us through all that has been, and God's love made known in Jesus has the breadth and length, height and depth to sustain us through all that is to come!