Contest Rules 2026:

1. There is no cost to enter. One entry per family. Open to Bethlehem residents and/or Bethlehem Library cardholders.
2. Design, bake, construct and decorate a gingerbread house, structure or scene. Gingerbread "houses" can also be town buildings, barns, birdhouses, lighthouses, airplanes or any other imaginative dwellings.
3. Store bought houses or kits are not eligible.
4. All entries must be on a wooden or sturdy cardboard base. Styrofoam and other support materials are not permitted.
5. Entries must be constructed of gingerbread and icing, unwrapped candy (i.e. foil must be removed), cookies, pretzels, crackers, cereals, pasta and any other food item. Entire display except for the base must be made of **edible materials**.
6. Use Royal Icing only, as other frostings will turn rancid. Recipes for Gingerbread Dough and Royal Icing may be obtained at the library or online.
7. Please give your entry a special "Holiday Name" such as Winter Wonderland, A Star Wars Christmas or Santa's workshop, etc. Please do not attach your name to your gingerbread house. Entry forms may be run-off from our website, or you may fill out an entry form at the library when you drop off your house.

IMPORTANT DATES:

- Gingerbread creations due: Friday, December 11th
- Judging begins Saturday, December 12th and ends Friday, December 18th
- Winners announced on Saturday, December 19th
- Pick up Gingerbread creations by Thursday, December 31st. Entries not picked up by this time will be discarded.

Judging

1. Entries will be judged on originality, creativity, overall appearance, and adherence to contest rules.
2. Library visitors who vote for their favorite entry will select the People's Choice Winner. Each person may vote only once per day during the voting period.
3. Library Trustees and the Board of the Friends of Bethlehem Public Library will judge for the winning entry.
4. Judges decisions are final.

Bethlehem Public Library



GINGERBREAD HOUSE CONTEST

Official Entry Form

Contestant Information

Family Name: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Email address: _____

Architects:

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

How did you hear about this contest? _____

The Bethlehem Public Library reserves the right to photograph and use the photos of the entries and winners for advertising and promotional purposes without compensation. Entrants consent to use of the winner's name (s) for publicity/promotional purposes. Care will be taken with all entries and Bethlehem Public Library is not responsible for any damage to entries. By signing this form, I understand agree to abide by all the rules and stipulations listed above for the Bethlehem Public Library Gingerbread House Contest.

_____ _____

Signature Date

Title of Entry: _____

Gingerbread Dough Recipe

6 ¾ cups flour
1 tablespoon cinnamon
1 ½ teaspoons ginger
½ teaspoon salt
1 ½ cups light corn syrup*
1 ¼ cups packed light brown sugar*
1 cup margarine

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Stir the dry ingredients together in a large bowl. Combine light corn syrup, light brown sugar, and margarine in a 2-quart saucepan. Stir constantly over medium heat until margarine is melted.

Stir the liquid into the flour mixture. Mix well using hands to mix as dough becomes stiff. Chill the dough until it is easy to handle. Roll the dough out to a 1/8" thickness on parchment paper. Cut into the required shapes. Bake for 12 to 15 minutes or until golden brown. Check for air bubbles during baking and poke them with a sharp knife or a toothpick. When baking is done, slide the parchment with the hot cookies onto a large cooling rack. Make sure all pieces lie flat.

*NOTE: Dark corn syrup or dark brown sugar may be substituted and will result in darker dough.

Royal Icing Recipe

1 – Pound box powdered sugar
3 egg whites at room temperature
1/8 teaspoon cream of tartar

Sift the entire pound of sugar to remove all lumps. Place egg whites in mixer bowl. Add sugar and cream of tartar to whites while stirring. When all the sugar is incorporated, turn mixer on high and beat mixture until thick and very white. Mixture will hold a peak. This process should take 5 to 7 minutes. When finished, cover icing tightly with a damp cloth or plastic wrap as it dries very quickly and will form a crust. To tint icing, use a small amount of color at a time. Paste food colors will not change the consistency of the icing as liquid colorings will. You only need to add a small amount to make a pastel color. For a quarter cup of icing, dip the tip of a toothpick into the color and then into the icing. Stir well. If you desire more color, dip again, gradually. For strong colors such as red, royal blue, and dark purple, you will need 1/8 teaspoon to ¼ cup icing. Add more or less as you desire.

Commercial royal icing mixes and meringue powder (to replace egg whites) are available at stores like Michaels/Walmart