

# BETHEL MESSENGER

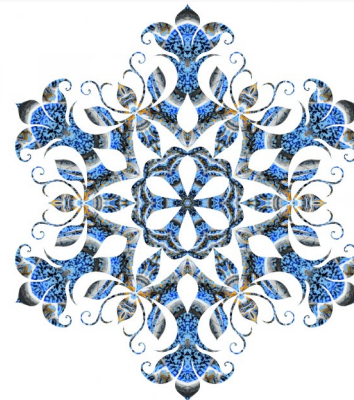
Bethel Lutheran Church Newsletter

January 2022

## From the pastor's desk

Psalm 137:1-3

By the rivers of Babylon—  
there we sat down and there we wept  
when we remembered Zion.  
On the willows there  
we hung up our harps.  
For there our captors  
asked us for songs,  
and our tormentors asked for mirth, saying,  
“Sing us one of the songs of Zion!”



Dear Siblings in Christ,

While I'm sure I had heard Psalm 137 read in church before high school, I became better acquainted with the words through Don Mclean's "Babylon." A simple song found on the same album that introduced the world to "American Pie." This haunting melody sung in a round has stuck with me for years. I was reintroduced to these striking words when listening to "On the Willows" from the Broadway musical *Godspell*. Both experiences with these words set to music have solidified this Psalm's place in my understanding of faith. This Psalm captures the lament of the Babylonian Exile in the starkest of terms, ending with a very violent and disturbing image that does not refrain from acknowledging deep anger and frustration.

2021 was not the reset to "normal" that many of us may have wanted or expected. This experience of an elongated pandemic was further marred with personal tragedies and moments of loss. Perhaps you two have wanted to hang up the harp and weep from time to time throughout the year.

What strikes me most about this Psalm is the very fact that it remains a song. While unable to "sing a song of Zion" in the moment of Exile, the people of Israel were able to continue in faith and hope long enough that this song could one day come to their lips and be written into our story of faith. Yes, it's a song of sadness, frustration, and anger. But it's this lament song also surrounded by Psalms of praise, joyous tunes exalting God for the beauty of creation, and the works of love and mercy God performs.

Now we have been able to sing amid this time. There have been wonderful moments of worship and community throughout this year, and I look forward to a time when our lament of the pandemic can also be sung in the past tense like Psalm 137 with the Exile. In January during the time of Epiphany and our annual meeting, we have great opportunities to look for the manifested presence of God in our midst, and seek the guiding light of Christ in our community. Let's keep the song going.

Blessings,  
Rev. Aaron Holmgren



## Mission and Ministries

The greatest among you will be your servant. Matthew 23:11

**Driving Away Hunger** is designed to reduce transportation and mobility issues associated with food access in our communities.

The Mobile Outreach winter distribution is pre-order only. The bus will be delivering pre-packed orders to designated stops in each city listed on the flyer [on Bethel's bulletin board.]

The bus will have some "emergency food for those new to the program/process as well as information about the Glencoe and Hutchinson sites for complete grocery options. Ordering options are available online at [www.mcleodemergencyfoodshel.org/mobile-outreach](http://www.mcleodemergencyfoodshel.org/mobile-outreach). Grocery orders for the upcoming month will also be available on the bus.



**Mobile Outreach**  
**Bethel Lutheran**  
**Church location**  
**schedule: Thursday**  
**1:30 pm-4:00 pm**  
 January 13  
 February 10  
 March 10  
 April 14

## Opportunity to serve in 2022!

In the Bible, the words servant and minister are synonyms, as are service and ministry. God has a ministry for you in this church and a mission for you in the world.

The following opportunities are available, please consider becoming involved in the new year!

### **Church Council**

*(The council meets on the second Monday of the month at 6:30 pm.)*

Finance Board (2 yr. term)

Education Board (2 yr. term)

### **Committees**

Cemetery Committee (2 yr. term)

Mission Endowment Committee (3 yr. term-need two people)

Audit Committee (3 yr. term)

Nomination Committee (1 yr. term-need five people)

Synod Assembly Representative (two days in early June-one female and one male-last year it was online)



### **Contact us if you have questions or you are interested!**

Jan kay\_peterson69@yahoo.com

Jill jillyd58@hotmail.com

Jeff jeffbreidenbach24@gmail.com

Emily emily.e.koehler@gmail.com

Tam tamfoust@gmail.com

## Anti-racist activity - January 2022

Isaiah 35:8

A highway shall be there,  
and it shall be called the Holy Way;  
the unclean shall not travel on it,  
but it shall be for God's people;  
no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.



Throughout the past month, we have heard the cry of the prophets to make way for the Lord. As I reflected on "The Way" of Christ, I remembered when I had heard about Isaiah and I-35. The highway that runs through the heart of the Twin Cities has a strange place for some who see it as divinely placed. This verse from Isaiah 35 (I-35 get it?) that references a "Holy Way" is the backbone for this odd subset of prophecy seekers. Unfortunately, the history of this highway is similar to many in our country's roadways as planned, developed, and built. Learning this often untold history demonstrates how historically Black communities were neglected or ignored in public planning. If we are honestly working to prepare a Just Highway for the Lord, learning these stories help us all understand what happened and what could be done to repair the damages. Fox 9 has a great piece on this history for us to watch and read for this month's anti-racist activity.

<https://www.fox9.com/news/how-the-construction-of-i-35w-tore-apart-black-communities-in-minneapolis>

**The Bethel Lutheran Church Annual Meeting** is scheduled for January 30, 2022, immediately following our worship service. We encourage all congregation members to attend!

**Annual Church Council, Committee and Financial reports are due NOW.** Please email your report to [bethellutheranlp@gmail.com](mailto:bethellutheranlp@gmail.com) as a Word document if possible. Thank you!

# Bethel Book Club

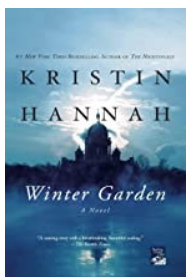
## **January-Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teaching of Plants by Robin Wall Kimmerer**



**Discussion: Wednesday, January 19, 6:30 pm at church**

As a botanist, Robin Wall Kimmerer has been trained to ask questions of nature with the tools of science. As a member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, she embraces the notion that plants and animals are our oldest teachers. In *Braiding Sweetgrass*, Kimmerer brings these two lenses of knowledge together to take us on "a journey that is every bit as mythic as it is scientific, as sacred as it is historical, as clever as it is wise" (Elizabeth Gilbert).

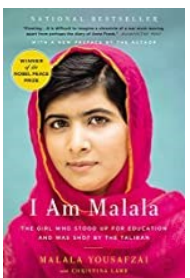
## **February-Winter Garden by Kristin Hannah**



**Discussion: Wednesday, February 16, 6:30 pm at church**

Mesmerizing from the first page to the last, Kristin Hannah's *Winter Garden* is one woman's sweeping, heartbreaking story of love, loss, and redemption. At once an epic love story set in World War II Russia and an intimate portrait of contemporary mothers and daughters poised at the crossroads of their lives, it explores the heartbreak of war, the cost of survival and the ultimate triumph of the human spirit. It is a novel that will haunt the reader long after the last page is turned.

## **March-I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and was Shot by the Taliban by Christina Lamb and Malala Yousafzai**



**Discussion: Wednesday, March 16, 6:30 pm at church**

"I come from a country that was created at midnight. When I almost died it was just after midday."

When the Taliban took control of the Swat Valley in Pakistan, one girl spoke out. Malala Yousafzai refused to be silenced and fought for her right to an education.

On Tuesday, October 9, 2012, when she was fifteen, she almost paid the ultimate price. She was shot in the head at point-blank range while riding the bus home from school, and few expected

her to survive.

Instead, Malala's miraculous recovery has taken her on an extraordinary journey from a remote valley in northern Pakistan to the halls of the United Nations in New York. At sixteen, she became a global symbol of peaceful protest and the youngest nominee ever for the Nobel Peace Prize.

*I AM MALALA* is the remarkable tale of a family uprooted by global terrorism, of the fight for girls' education, of a father who, himself a school owner, championed and encouraged his daughter to write and attend school, and of brave parents who have a fierce love for their daughter in a society that prizes sons. *I AM MALALA* will make you believe in the power of one person's voice to inspire change in the world.

## January Baptism Days



- 1 Tom G.
- 2 Judi L.
- 6 Ron F.
- 12 Dean S.
- 17 Sam R.
- 21 Lloyd W.
- 22 Connor R.
- 24 Lachlynn S.
- 26 Riley C.
- 28 Dave A.
- 30 Emillie F.
- 31 Jean H.

## January Birthdays

- 3 Shirley W.
- 10 Arla H.
- 10 Lloyd W.
- 10 Oliver A.
- 15 Tom G.
- 18 Clinton H.
- 19 Sonny T.
- 19 Robert H.
- 19 Emily K.
- 19 Cheryl S.
- 20 Jean H.
- 20 Tim D.
- 20 Logan M.
- 22 Aaron H.
- 23 Cathy H.
- 23 Alexa L.
- 24 Evie K.
- 30 Emillie F.



# January 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						<b>1</b> 6p Remanente Escogido USA  New Year's Eve New Year's Day
<b>2</b> 9a worship NO Sunday school	<b>3</b> 8:30a-9a Dwelling in the Word (Zoom)	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> 4:15p Bible study (Zoom)	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> 6p Remanente Escogido USA
<b>9</b> 9a worship 10a Sunday school 10:15a confirmation class	<b>10</b> 8:30a-9a Dwelling in the Word (Zoom) 6:30p council meeting	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> 4:15p Bible study (Zoom)	<b>13</b> 1:30-4p MEFS Mobile Outreach	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> 6p Remanente Escogido USA
<b>16</b> 9a worship (contemporary) 10a Sunday school	<b>17</b> 8:30a-9a Dwelling in the Word (Zoom)	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> 4:15p Bible study (Zoom) 6:30p book club	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> 6p Remanente Escogido USA
<b>23</b> 9a worship 10a Sunday school 10:15a conf. class 9a worship Annual mtg. 30 following	<b>24</b> 8:30a-9a Dwelling in the Word (Zoom) 31	<b>25</b> Newsletter Deadline	<b>26</b> 4:15p Bible study (Zoom)	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> 6p Remanente Escogido USA

- **Worship 9:00 am**, (Masks are required for unvaccinated people and strongly recommended for vaccinated people, masks are required to attend Sunday school.)
- **Online worship:** <https://www.facebook.com/lpbethel/live> or <https://www.lpbethel.org/worship/watch-Sunday-livestream/>
- **Worship CDs** are available. (Contact the church office if you would like one sent to you.)
- **Bulletin submissions are due by noon on Wednesdays. Newsletter deadline is the 25th of the month.**
- For the **most up-to-date calendar version** go to [www.lpbethel.org](http://www.lpbethel.org), Contact Us, Member Directory, then enter the password. (Contact the church office if you need the password.)
- **Seeking volunteers!** Sign up on the bulletin board outside the church office or go to [www.lpbethel.org](http://www.lpbethel.org), click on *Worship*, and then click *Worship Volunteer Sign-up!* Sign up for a month or be a substitute! Experienced volunteers will be glad to help!



## Bethel camping weekend

Join us for a camping weekend June 24-26, 2022, at Baylor Park! The cost for the weekend is \$68.00. Reservations are required soon! Contact Jill Duncan at 320-420-6284 if you would like to join in the fun!

## 3 convenient ways to give

### 1. Simply Giving

Use *Simply Giving* for making regular offerings—contributions are debited automatically from your checking or savings account. **Simply Giving offers convenience for you and much need donation consistency for our congregation.** No more checks or envelopes! And, when travel, illness or other circumstances prevent you from attending services, this program will allow your offerings to continue on an uninterrupted basis. Contact the church office for an application or go online at [www.lpbethel.org](http://www.lpbethel.org) under Give. Return completed applications to: Stacy Meyer, 1012 Bluestem LN, Lester Prairie, MN 55354 or the Fin. Sec. mailbox.

### 2. Text + Give

Give in seconds with a text message. Text giving is fast, easy and versatile. Give in the moment, make your weekly offering or respond to special appeals—all in a matter of seconds. Easy card registration on your phone. Option to make your gifts recurring. To give, text the dollar amount to **866-298-7547**.

### 3. Bethel offering envelope

Offering envelopes are available-contact the church office if you would like offering envelopes mailed to you. We ask that you completely fill out the front of the envelope, including your assigned envelope number-contact the office if you have forgotten your number, and mail it to Bethel Lutheran Church, PO Box 207, Lester Prairie, MN 55354. Any further questions can be directed to the Financial Secretary, Stacy Meyer at 320-395-2869 or [finsec@lpbethel.org](mailto:finsec@lpbethel.org).



*For if the eagerness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has—not according to what one does not have.*  
2 Corinthians 8:12



## BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH – Council Meeting Minutes–Monday, December 13, 2021

**Council Members Present:** President: Ron Foust; Secretary: Cathy Houg; Treasurer: Matt Krull; **Financial Secretary: Stacy Meyer; Finance Board: Nancy Krull; Finance Board: Lloyd Wortz**

**Call to Order: President Ron Foust called the meeting to order.**

**Opening Prayer: Pastor Aaron Holmgren opened the meeting with prayer.**

### **Council Business:**

**A motion was made by Nancy Krull and seconded by Stacy Meyer to approve the agenda. Motion carried.**

### **Old Business:**

1. The Strategic Visioning Document has been reviewed by the Executive Committee. Overall, even with the impact of the pandemic, Bethel is meeting most of its goals.
2. Communication was received regarding the Boy Scouts of America bankruptcy and procedures for making claims. A **motion** was made by Nancy Krull and seconded by Stacy Meyer to follow the advice of the attorney. Motion carried.
3. The Finance Board has completed a year's end consultation with employees.
4. A **motion** was made by Cathy Houg and seconded by Nancy Krull to extend the payout date of the Covid Assistance Fund for another 6 months. Motion carried.
5. A preliminary report from the Nominating Committee indicates they are continuing to find candidates to fill vacant positions.

### **New Business:**

1. A motion was made by Matt Krull and seconded by Nancy Krull that extra monies from the Johnson fire pit project (\$94) be given to WELCA for serving the meal at the funeral of Loren Johnson. Motion carried.
2. A motion was made by Cathy Houg and seconded by Nancy Krull to hold Bethel's Congregational Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 30, 2022, following Sunday worship. Motion carried.
3. The 2022 preliminary budget proposal was presented and discussed.

### **Secretary Minutes:**

A **motion** was made by Ron Foust and seconded by Nancy Krull to accept the secretary's report as written. Motion carried.

### **Treasurer Reports:**

A motion was made by Lloyd Wortz and seconded by Cathy Houg to accept the treasurer's report as written. Motion carried.

### **Financial Secretary Report:**

A **motion** was made by Lloyd Wortz and seconded by Nancy Krull to accept the report as written. The end of year statements will come out in January.

#### **Reports:**

1. **Education Board:**  
No report given.
2. **Finance Board:**  
No report.
3. **Trustees:**  
No report given.

### **Communications:**

1. Annual Reports are due to Tamie Foust, church secretary, by December 15. **URGENT!**
2. Endowment grant proposals are due by the end of the year. Proposal presentation will be at the annual meeting. Pastor was asked to remind the congregation to take advantage of the endowment grants and turn in proposals.

A **motion** was made by Ron Foust and seconded by Cathy Houg to adjourn. Motion carried. The meeting closed with Round Table Prayers and the Lord's Prayer.

**The next regular Council meeting will be held on Monday, January 10, 2022, at 6:30 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted: Cathy Houg, Council Secretary

## Contact Us

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**Visit us on the web!**  
[www.lpbethel.org](http://www.lpbethel.org)  
[www.facebook.com/lpbethel](http://www.facebook.com/lpbethel)

### *-Mission Statement of Bethel Lutheran Church*

*Vibrantly open to the spirit, Bethel Lutheran Church  
seeks to serve God and its neighbors  
by joyfully living into the good news of Jesus Christ.*

Bethel Lutheran Church  
P.O. Box 207  
Lester Prairie, MN 55354



PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE