

BETHEL MESSENGER

Bethel Lutheran Church Newsletter

May 2022

From the pastor's desk

We celebrate the Easter Season during the month of May! With Easter joy, we can read chapters 20-22 in the Gospel of John. The inspiring stories tell of Christ Jesus meeting people in their ordinary routines, after His resurrection. In John Chapter 21, we read how Christ Jesus met the disciples on the beach, after their exhausting hours at work, fishing without any success. He prays with them. He feeds them. He blesses the apostles and then, starting with Peter, sends them on a mission.

Three times, Jesus asked Peter "Do you love ME?" Three times, Peter says "Yes." Three times, Christ Jesus gives a command, a mission for Peter to accept. This mission is also our mission to accept, to obey Christ's command to love! Just as Christ Jesus breathed the Holy Spirit into the Apostles, so too Christ empowers us with the gifts of the Holy Spirit to be, to do, to go on this mission. What is the mission?



Jesus said, "Feed MY lambs. Tend MY sheep. Feed MY sheep."

John 21:15-17

Who are the "lambs" in our communities that Christ commands us to love and feed?

The "lambs" in my community are those I meet while working at a restaurant. They have an innocence about them, when it comes to the topics of faith, prayer, and the Bible. They ask me questions, with a genuine curiosity. "How can I be patient with customers?" "I don't know anything about prayer but I bet you do. Would you teach me how to pray?" Each question opens a way for me to "feed their souls" that are hungering for God's peace, calm, and hope that they can't find on TV, the newspaper, or in the world. The "lambs" can also be people who are new in a relationship with the Lord, waiting for us to invite them to learn about God's love and promises in the Bible, at worship, and in our daily lives.

Who are the "sheep" in our homes or lives that Christ directs us to tend to?

Sheep can be easily led one way or another. This is also true with children and adults. Jesus said, "I AM the Way, the Truth, the Life." Psalm 23 proclaims "The Lord is my Shepherd." These verses provide my husband and me with ways to love and tend to our children's physical, emotional and spiritual needs. In our parenting, we guide our children along Christ's way of faith, hope, and love. The guidance we offer now that they are in college is different than when they were toddlers and brought them to Sunday School and church. Now, we send prayers by email. We text with Bible verses during Final Exams week, to remind them that God's love and our love is with them always! Are you tending to the family and friends in your "flock" of sheep?

How do we love and feed the "sheep" in God's world as Christ commands us?

During the beginning of Covid, each day felt like it came with another change or a new restriction. I listened to people around the world share their fears, the stress of the unknown, the isolation, and the grief as things we took for granted were forever impacted. These responses were experienced whether someone had never gone to church or attended for 80 years! I asked the Lord how His lambs and sheep would continue being spiritually nourished. Our Risen Savior creatively led us in new ways to worship God, trust our Good Shepherd and "feed" on the Word of God! The Holy Spirit started a new mission for me, "Heading Home Ministries," where I now serve people by listening and praying as they travel on a "virtual" map in making end-of-life choices about their health, estate, and funeral plans. We "sheep" continue learning to live courageously with the Easter Hope, as we are heading to our Eternal home with God's amazing peace.

~Written by Pulpit Supply Pastor Melanie Lichtenberg



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 vehicle is stocked with shelf stable pantry items, fresh produce, frozen proteins, grains, dairy, and bakery treats. STOP & SHOP THE BUS at no cost to you! Please bring bags and a cart to carry food. Staff are not permitted to carry food inside residence. Full grocery distributions available (1) one visit per month, per household, across all distribution sites. Produce available weekly. Staff will accommodate anyone not able to safely enter the vehicle for shopping. Questions? Call 320-664-2088
For locations other than Bethel see the schedule on the bulletin board.



Mobile Outreach
Bethel Lutheran
Church location
77 Lincoln AVE N, LP
Schedule: Thursday,
1:30 pm-3:00 pm
MAY 12 & 26

Green Lake Lutheran Ministries Bible Camp

**Stargazers | completed grades 7-9 | June 12-16, June 19-23,
June 26-30, July 10-14, July 17-21, July 24-28**

Stargazers offers late night games that have you sneaking through the woods with your cabin mates, hammocking overnight under the stars, a high-adventure program, and a later start to your day so you can sleep in. Come for a week of building friendships, faith conversations and memories you won't forget anytime soon! More info.

www.gllm.org/summer-camp

Family Camp North | Camp House | June 26-30

Located near all the North Shore has to offer, Camp House is a peaceful place for you and your family to spend quality time together. Stay at Camp House all week to enjoy programming and free time, or take day trips to your favorite places like Gooseberry & Tettegouche State Parks. More info. www.gllm.org/family-camp

High School Up North | for HS students | June 19-23, June 26-30

(completed grades 9-12) Reignite your faith with an unplugged week of faith exploration, outdoor adventures and intentional time together. When you come Up North, you'll have the opportunity to take in the North Shore, build community, and see God's love at work in new ways. Come as a group or join the group here, we'll do all the fun camp stuff and even journey off site for new adventures together. More info. www.gllm.org/summer-camp

Bethel Women's Retreat | Medayto Lodge | September 16-18

Plan to join in the fellowship and fun! More info. contact Jill D.

May Baptism Days



5/2 Vaydah R.
5/3 Charles S.
5/8 Bryon W.
5/17 Jeff R.
5/19 Logan M.
5/24 Diane H.
5/25 Pete H.
5/27 Oliver A.

May Birthdays



5/5 Owen C.
5/7 Tony S.
5/15 Felicity G.
5/17 Grace A.
5/18 Bobbi K.
5/19 Georgia G.
5/21 Kayla W.
5/22 Sally K.
5/25 Roger M.
5/28 Lois S.
5/28 Hailee C.

Southwestern Minnesota Online Synod Assembly



*"For we are God's servants, Working together,
you are God's field, God's building." - 1 Corinthians 3:9*

Our congregation has the opportunity to send **TWO** voting representatives to our 2022 SW MN Online Synod Assembly, held in one day! The Assembly will begin at **9:00 am, Saturday, June 11** with opening worship, brought to you live via Zoom from Christ Chapel at Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, MN. On the agenda will be Biblical teachings with Rev. Rachel Wrenn, important synod business, Churchwide updates from Rev. Phil Hirsch, celebrations, and a new opportunity for each congregation to join in the fun! The day will likely end around 6:00 pm.

Bethel still has **ONE SPOT OPEN!** You will be able to join in on your electronic device at home! It is important that our congregation has a voice and vote at the assembly. If you are interested please contact Bethel's office at bethellutheranlp@gmail.com. Registration fees will be paid by Bethel.

Our synod constitution mandates that one-half of the members of the Synod Assembly shall constitute a quorum. This means that the "Synod Assembly" is not simply the number of people who register and show up. Quorum is based on this Synod's potential number of voting members. If there are not 361 voting members in attendance, the Assembly cannot perform its business. At this time, there are 161 voting members registered for the Synod Assembly. -SW MN Synod News-April 29, 2022

Bishop NM Myaka elected Presiding Bishop of the ELCSA



People across the Southwestern Minnesota Synod have been holding in prayer our friends in the South Eastern Diocese in Southern Africa as it deals with overwhelming flooding in recent weeks. At the same time, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa (ELCSA) has gathered in assembly and elected a new presiding bishop-someone many in our synod know well!

The good news is that Bishop NM Myaka, bishop of the South Eastern Diocese, was just elected to serve as Presiding Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa.

Each of the 65 synods of the ELCA is partnered with a Companion Synod somewhere in the world. The Southwestern Minnesota Synod is connected to our friends in the South Eastern Diocese in Southern Africa. In that church body, a diocese corresponds to a synod here, and a circuit corresponds to a conference. ELCSA includes 4 diocese. The South Eastern Diocese happens to have 10 circuits, just as our synod includes 10 conferences.

Bishop Myaka has served as dean of the Umngeni Circuit and was recently elected to serve as bishop of the South Eastern Diocese. The Umngeni Circuit has related to the Crow River Conference, so Bp. Myaka has especially close ties with congregations in this conference, and across our entire synod. We will continue to hold in prayer our friends in the South Eastern Diocese, both as they continue to recover from flooding and now move to elect a new bishop in the coming weeks.

-SW MN Synod News-April 29, 2022

President's Corner

You're probably thinking what's next in line for calling a new pastor? Honestly, there are **SEVEN** steps in the CALL process for any congregation, let's take a moment to identify the process.

1) The Current Pastor Resigns:

- Pastor Aaron has resigned and will be moving over to a new congregation at Salem Lutheran in West St Paul.
- We had a farewell service and celebration on Sunday, April 24th, honoring Pastor Aaron's 5 ½ years of MINISTRY pastor leadership.

2) Beginning the Interim:

- For the months of May and June, we have secured Pulpit Supply pastors for Sunday morning worship services. Pastor Melanie Lichtenberg and Pastor Donna Olsen have so graciously agreed to lead our congregation.
- Pastor Jeff Engholm at Trinity Lutheran, Watertown will provide emergency pastoral needs. Office manager at Trinity: Robyn Behrens, # 952-955-1891, email: trintyoffice@trin.org
Or during BETHEL office hours, please contact Tamie, our church secretary at 320-395-2125, email: bethellutheranlp@gmail.com
After hours, (urgent only) Jeff's cell #320-212-0976, email: jengholm@trin.org
- In the next few weeks, the Executive committee at Bethel will begin the process of securing a long-term interim pastor with the intent to have that person in place beginning early July.

3) Mission Assessment:

- Synod staff helps Bethel understand the call process and the **Ministry Site Profile (MSP)**.
- A Mission Assessment is begun to develop a picture of how GOD is at work in and through this congregation – past, present, and future. Often a team is appointed to work with the interim pastor to conduct this assessment.
- The assessment report is approved by the congregational council and presented to the congregation.
- Work on the MSP begins based on the assessment report.
- When finished, the MSP is approved by the congregational council and submitted to the synod.

4) Complete the MSP and form the CALL COMMITTEE:

- A Call Committee is formed, following the process of the congregation's constitution. At this point, please prayerfully consider being an active member of the Call Committee. We will be announcing this sometime in the forthcoming months.
- The Call Committee develops interview questions and a strategy.

5) Considering Pastor Candidates

- Synod staff presents candidates to the Call Committee for consideration.
- The goal of the Call Committee is to represent the congregation as it searches for a pastor who can lead into the future God has in mind for Bethel Lutheran.
- What do the congregation and the new pastor expect of each other, searching for a partner in ministry that is best for Bethel?

6) Extending the Call:

- The Call Committee recommends a candidate to the council, who will present the name to the congregation for a vote.
- A congregational meeting is scheduled for voting on the candidate.
- Bid farewell to the interim pastor that has served us in this capacity most likely for several months.

7) Welcoming our NEW PASTOR:

- Once the call has been accepted, an installation date is set with the synod office.
- Welcome our NEW PASTOR with open arms.

President's Corner, continued

In summary of the process, it will take several months to enhance the best opportunity and vision of Bethel. Only GOD knows the real steps, and it is the Holy Spirit involved in the process – really. We need to work together, embrace the procedure, great things will happen, I'm sure of that.

Thank you for supporting the mission of Bethel to share the good news of the Gospel within and outside our church. We are called by God to be stewards of the Gospel. To continue to enhance our mission, our expenses continue to evolve, and your continued monetary contribution support will help BETHEL reach that goal. Our monthly expenses to meet the approved budget is set at \$9,119. Through March our cumulative 2022 contributions total at \$ 27,010, compared to budget to date of \$27,358. We are very close to being currently right on, but a bit short of \$ 348.

2 Cor 9: 7-8 *Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work.*

God Bless,
Ron Foust, Council President

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 under Give. Return completed applications to: Stacy Meyer, 1012 Bluestem LN, Lester Prairie, MN 55354 or the Financial Secretary church 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.



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

May 2022



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 9a worship (Pastor Melanie) 10a Sunday school	2	3	4	5	6	7 6p Remanente Escogido USA
8 9a worship (Pastor Donna) 10a Sunday school Mother's Day	9 6:30p council meeting	10	11	12 1:30-4p MEFS Mobile Outreach	13	14 6p Remanente Escogido USA
15 9a worship (Pastor Donna) 10a Sunday school	16	17	18 5:30p worship & music meeting	19	20	21 6p Remanente Escogido USA
22 9a worship (grad. blessing) (Pastor Donna) 10a Sun. school, grad. reception	23	24	25 Newsletter deadline	26 Ascension of Our Lord 1:30-4p MEFS Mobile Outreach	27	28 6p Remanente Escogido USA
29 9a worship (Pastor Donna)	30 Memorial Day	31	1	2	3	4 6p Remanente Escogido USA

- Online Worship: <https://www.facebook.com/lpbethel/live> or <https://www.lpbethel.org/worship/watch-Sunday-livestream/>
- Worship CDs: Contact Tamie @ bethellutheranlp@gmail.com or 320-395-212 to have it sent to you.
- Bulletin Submissions Deadline: Wednesday at noon | Newsletter Deadline: 25th of the month
- Most up-to-date calendar version: Go to www.lpbethel.org. *Contact Us, Member Directory*, then enter the password. Contact the church office if you need the password.
- 2022 Church Directory: Let Tamie know if you would like a hard copy or sign up in the narthex.
- Seeking volunteers of all ages! Sign up on the bulletin board outside the church office or go to www.lpbethel.org, click on *Worship*, and then click *Worship Volunteer Sign-up!* Sign up for a month or be a substitute! Questions? Contact the church office.
- Congratulations, 2022 HS Graduate Alexander Wick! Alex will graduate from Glencoe Silver Lake High School on Friday, June 3! Join us May 22 during worship as we bless Alex and then celebrate with treats!

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH – Council Meeting Minutes-Monday, April 13, 2022

Council Members Present: President: Ron Foust; Vice President: Peggy Wick; Secretary: Cathy Houg; Finance Board: Mitch Overbye; Education Board: Steve Klobe and Pete Hallberg; Trustee Board: Daved Anderson and Brian Duncan

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

Opening Prayer: Pastor Holmgren opened the meeting with prayer.

Council Business:

1. A **motion** was made by Steve Klobe and seconded by Daved Anderson to approve the agenda. Motion carried.
2. **Pastor's Report:** Since our last meeting Pastor has had one funeral and two baptisms. He will be visiting shut-ins and giving communion in the next two weeks. Lenten services have been completed. The Psalm to Song portion of worship went well.

Old Business:

1. A **motion** was made by Cathy Houg and seconded by Mitch Overbye to accept the audit report as presented by the 2021 Audit Committee. Motion carried.
2. The Grinnell Mutual Insurance Company inspection forms have been completed and mailed back to the company with the items of concern corrected.
3. Easter Breakfast will be served at 9:00 a.m. on Easter Sunday, April 17, 2022. Set up begins at 7:30 a.m. Sign-up for contributions to the breakfast was completed.

New Business:

1. Pastor Steven Cook, Southwest Minnesota Synod, attended the meeting and discussed with the Council the seven steps in the call process.
2. A **motion** was made by Steve Klobe and seconded by Pete Hallberg to accept the offer made by the insurer's insurance company (\$2750.) as payment for the damaged portion of the fence at the (South) cemetery. Motion carried.
3. The Finance Board will be working with Remanente Escogido USA to extend the annual agreement for use of our church building.

Secretary Minutes:

A **motion** was made by Ron Foust and seconded by Brian Duncan to accept the March secretary's report. Motion carried.

Treasurer Report:

A **motion** was made by Steve Klobe and seconded by Daved Anderson to accept the March treasurer's report as written. Motion carried.

Financial Secretary Report:

A motion was made by Pete Hallberg and seconded by Daved Anderson to accept the March financial secretary's report as written. Motion carried.

Reports:

1. **Education Board:**
The Education Board has been discussing options for intergenerational Christian Education and how to best implement this into our educational opportunities.
2. **Finance Board:**
The audit is completed. The Finance Board will be meeting with Pastor Holmgren to conclude the church's contractual responsibilities.
3. **Trustees:**
There will be a spring clean up day in May.

Communications:

1. There will be Church Council meetings in June and August (second Monday of each month).
2. Pulpit Supply Pastors have been secured for Sunday morning worship services for May and June.

The meeting closed with Round Table Prayers and the Lord's Prayer.

The next regular Council meeting will be held on Monday, May 9, 2022, at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted: Cathy Houg, Council Secretary



*-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**

-May Memory verse

**“Let no one despise
your youth, but set the
believers an example
in speech and
conduct, in love,
in faith, in purity.”**

-1 Timothy 4:12

Contact Us

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PO Box 207
Lester Prairie, MN 55354

Office
320-395-2125
bethellutheranlp@gmail.com

Visit us on the web!
www.lpbethel.org
www.facebook.com/lpbethel

*Happy Mother's Day
Sunday, May 8, 2022*



Bethel Lutheran Church
P.O. Box 207
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PLACE
STAMP
HERE