

BETHEL MESSENGER

Bethel Lutheran Church Newsletter

January, 2023

From the Vicar's desk

Psalm 8:1-4

New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition

O LORD, our Sovereign,

how majestic is your name in all the earth!

You have set your glory above the heavens.

Out of the mouths of babes and infants
you have founded a bulwark because of your foes,
to silence the enemy and the avenger.

When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars that you have established;
what are humans that you are mindful of them,
mortals that you care for them?

I hope this Christmas and New Year's season meets you and your loved ones with grace and peace. May your new year be blessed by the sovereign One who established the moon and the stars, and whose majesty is displayed in how Jesus, the Word made flesh, came to earth as a babe bringing us life, light and salvation.

Glad tidings we bring,

Interim Vicar Stefan Swanson





Mission & Ministries

GOD has a MINISTRY for You in this CHURCH and a MISSION for You in the WORLD.

Driving Away Hunger

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 other locations see the schedule on the bulletin board.



MEFS Mobile Outreach Bethel Lutheran

parking lot

Schedule:

Thurs., January 12

1:30 pm-3:00 pm

Nomination Committee

The Nomination Committee is seeking volunteers for open council and committee positions for 2023. If you are interested in serving contact one of the committee members.

Katie Anderson: 763-244-9182 or kipeten@gmail.com

Jenna Pariseau: 320-420-0531 or jenna.foust@gmail.com

Lloyd Wortz: 612-501-8770 or landcwortz@hotmail.com

Council openings

Finance Board (2 year-term)

Education Board (2 year-term)

Trustee Board (2 year-term)

Committee openings

Cemetery (2 year-term)

Mission Endowment (3 year-term)

Audit (3 year-term) council appointed

Nominating (1 year-term-need 5)

Synod Assembly reps. (1 male, 1 female)

(June 9-10, 2023 at Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter)

Bethel Quilting Group

The group meets the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month in the Fellowship Hall. 1:00 pm-4:30 pm-come and go as you wish. Quilts worked on are for baptized babies, graduates, GLLM Quilt auction, and Don't Cry I'm Here (homeless shelter).

Annual

Congregational

Meeting

Our annual meeting is scheduled for Sunday, January 22, 2023, following worship.

****Please make every effort to attend this important meeting for our congregation. ****



Online and paper registration is open for Green Lake Bible camp.

Register by **February 16** to secure the Early Bird Discount! For more information go to camp@gllm.org, call 320-796-2181, or pick up a brochure in the narthex.

From the Southwestern Minnesota Synod, ELCA



In a Far-Off Place, Jesus Comes

¹ In a far-off place, Jesus comes to earth.
Sheep and cattle grace the site.
As the angel songs begin,
like the whisper of the wind,
nature's hope awakes again,
Jesus comes.

² For the poor in heart, Jesus comes to earth.
Humble shepherds start the news.
For each homeless infant born,
for the meek and those who mourn,
for the weary and the worn,
Jesus comes.

³ In our deepest night, Jesus comes to earth:
Radiant star to light our way.
Summer's heat or winter's chill,
with a warm and loving will,
to a world that needs him still,
Jesus comes.

Text: Mary Louise Bringle, b. 1953

Music: Sally Ann Morris, b. 1952

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This has been a year when the Advent message of "Immanuel" - "God with us" - has been especially meaningful, powerful, in a gentle sort of way. We each can name the far-off places we've been, the fears, the losses, the roadblocks that suddenly appear, the continual pivoting to adapt to each new change, and the weariness of it all. In these moments, we often wonder where God is in the mix of it all. We feel we're too far-off from the reach of God, can't quite fathom that the Almighty God could be there in the messiness of life. Our lives.

And yet God is. In the story of Jesus' birth this promise is made known:

Jesus comes.

In this cold December, may you know that Jesus comes to you in your far-off place, wherever that may be.

May you know again that this Child, Jesus, was born for you, dear child of God.

May the good news of the World-made-flesh bring you joy and peace.

May the knowledge of the cross bring you comfort and strength.

May your heart be lifted up by song and prayer and sacrament.

May your eyes be opened to see the needs of our world.

And may you go to far-off places and bring acts of love.

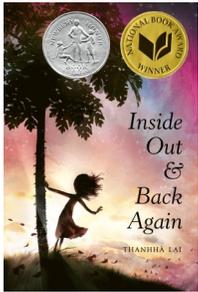
+ Wishing you and yours a blessed Christmas,

Rev. Dee Pederson

Bishop, Southwestern Minnesota Synod, ELCA

Faith & Fellowship

Bethel Book club



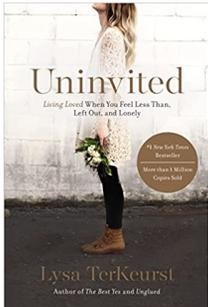
January: Inside Out and Back Again

by Thanhha Lai

Inspired by the author's childhood experience as a refugee—fleeing Vietnam after the fall of Saigon and immigrating to Alabama—this coming of age debut novel told in verse has been celebrated for its touching child's eye view of family and immigration. This moving story of one girl's year of change, dreams, grief, and healing received four

starred reviews, including one from Kirkus which proclaimed it "enlightening, poignant, and unexpectedly funny."

Discussion: Wednesday, January 18, 7:30 pm (note time change)



February: Uninvited: Living Loved When You Feel Less Than, Left Out, and Lonely

by Lysa TerKeurst
Do you ever feel left out, lonely, or less than? Today, learn the secret of belonging which will help you keep rejections in perspective and be better equipped to foster healthy connections in your relationships.

Discussion: Wednesday, February 15, 7:30 pm

Family Game Night

Sunday, January 8, 2023, 5:00 pm-8:00 pm, Fellowship Hall. We will begin the evening with a potluck supper with games to follow, ending the night with Bingo and prizes! Please bring your favorite hot dish or salad to share and your favorite game! All ages are welcome!

Monday Coffee hour with Vicar Stefan

You're invited to join Stefan on Monday mornings at church from 8:30 am-9:30 am for coffee hour. We will discuss the sermon from the Sunday prior and then spend some time listening to and reflecting on the Gospel text for the coming Sunday.

The Chosen video series

Season 2 begins on January 15, 2023. Join us from 6:00 pm-7:30 pm on Sundays as we view *The Chosen*, an acclaimed video series that brings to life the Biblical gospel story. A time for reflection, discussion, and refreshments will follow the video. Sponsors of this event are WELCA with an Action Team Grant from Thrivent.

January Birthday Blessings

Shirley W. (3)

Arla H. (10)

Lloyd W. (10)

Oliver A. (10)

Tom G. (15)

Robert H. (19)

Emily K. (19)

Cheryl S. (19)

Jean H. (20)

Logan M. (20)

Cathy H. (23)

Alexa L. (23)

Evie K. (24)

Emillie F. (30)



January Baptism Days

Tom G. (1)

Ron F. (6)

Dean S. (12)

Sam R. (17)

Lloyd W. (21)

Connor R. (22)

Lachlynn S. (24)

Riley C. (26)

Dave A. (28)

Emillie F. (30)

Jean H. (31)

Max P. (31)



Financial Corner

Noisy offering

A second “Noisy offering” will be taken on the 4th Sunday of the month toward our Youth Summer Camperships at Green Lake Bible Camp. On your way out of the sanctuary, drop your loose change into the metal can with a clang! Although paper bills and checks won’t have the same “noisy” effect, they will be accepted and appreciated!



Three 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 the Financial Secretary church mailbox.

Simply Giving offers convenience for you and much needed donation consistency for our congregation!

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**.

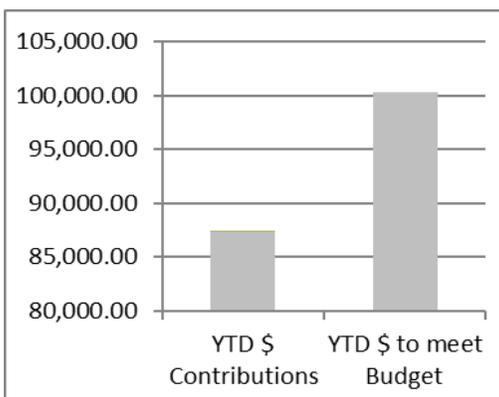
To Give text the dollar amount to **866-298-7547**

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 or place in the offering plate. Any further questions can be directed to the Financial Secretary, Stacy M. at 320-395-2869 or finsec@lpbethel.org.



For the Month of Nov 2022	
Weekly Av. Attendance	49
\$ Contributions	7,656.40
\$ to meet Budget	9,119.33
\$ Difference	-1,462.93
For the Year 2022	
YTD \$ Contributions	87,286.36
YTD \$ to meet Budget	100,312.63
YTD \$ Difference	-13,026.27



Annual Financial Reports are due **JANUARY 5**.
Email to: bethellutheranlp@gmail.com

January 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 (Name of Jesus) (No Sunday school & confirmation)	2 (office closed) (No coffee hour)	3	4 (No WELCA mtg.) 6:30p choir	5 financial annual reports due	6 (Epiphany of Our Lord)	7 6p Resplandor de Gloria
8 (Baptism of Our Lord) 9a worship 10:15a Sunday school & confirmation 5-8p game night	9 (office open) 8:30-9:30a coffee w/Stefan 6:30p council mtg.	10	11 (office open) 1:30-4p quilting 4p worship & music meeting 6:30p choir	12 (office open) 1:30-3p mobile Outreach-MEFS	13	14 6p Resplandor de Gloria
15 (2 Epiphany) 9a worship 10:15a Sunday school & confirmation 6p The Chosen-season 2 begins	16 (office open) 8:30-9:30a coffee w/Stefan	17	18 (office open) 6:30p choir 7:30p book club discussion	19 (office open)	20	21 6p Resplandor de Gloria
22 (3 Epiphany) 9a worship/ annual meeting (No Sunday school & confirmation) 6p The Chosen	23 (office open) 8:30-9:30a coffee w/Stefan	24	25 (office open) 1:30-4p quilting 6:30p choir newsletter Deadline	26 (office open)	27	28 6p Resplandor de Gloria
29 (4 Epiphany) 9a worship (noisy offering) 10:15a Sunday school & confirmation 6p The Chosen	30 (office open) 8:30-9:30a coffee w/Stefan	31	1 (office open) 6:30p choir 7:30 WELCA mtg.	2 (office open)	3	4 6p Resplandor de Gloria

- Online Worship: <https://www.facebook.com/lpbethel/live> or <https://www.lpbethel.org/worship/watch-Sunday-livestream/>
- Worship CDs: Contact the church office if you would like a weekly copy 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
- Church Directory: **Contact the church office if your contact information has changed** or for a hard copy. Go to www.lpbethel.org, *Contact Us*, *Member Directory*, then enter the password. Contact the church office if you need the password to view online.
- Seeking volunteers of all ages! Sign up on the bulletin board outside the church office. Sign up for a month or be a substitute! Questions? Contact the church office.

Bethel Lutheran Church-Council Meeting Minutes-Monday, December 12, 2022

Council Members Present: President: Ron Foust; Secretary: Cathy Houg; Vice President: Peggy Wick; Treasurer: Matt Krull; Financial Secretary: Stacy Meyer; Education Board: Pete Hallberg; Trustee Board: Brian Duncan; Vicar Stefan Swanson

The meeting was called to order, and Vicar Stefan Swanson led us in prayer.

Council Business:

*A **motion** was made by Cathy Houg and seconded by Brian Duncan to accept the agenda as presented. Motion passed.

*Vicar Stefan gave his report for the last month. He is working on plans for upcoming Advent and Christmas services. Four new members were welcomed to the congregation.

Vicar attended a continuous growth session at Gustavus Adolphus. He visited Iris Rognli.

Old Business:

- 1) The Finance Board is continuing year-end consultations with employees.
- 2) Three disbursements have been made from the Covid Assistant Fund. A **motion** was made by Cathy Houg and seconded by Pete Hallberg to disburse the remaining amount of \$4350.00 as follows: 25% to the Pastor's Emergency fund; 25% towards camperships; and 50% to the Equipment Replacement Fund. Motion carried.

New Business:

- 1) A **motion** was made by Pete Hallberg and seconded by Peggy Wick to hold the Bethel Congregational Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 22, 2023, after worship. Motion carried.
- 2) The 2023 preliminary budget is in the process of being completed.

Secretary Minutes:

A **motion** was made by Ron Foust and seconded by Pete Hallberg to accept November's secretary's report. Motion carried.

Treasurer Reports:

A **motion** was made by Stacy Meyer and seconded by Pete Hallberg to accept November's treasurer's report. Motion carried. A **motion** was made by Ron Foust and seconded by Brian Duncan that money amounts in the checking account over \$10,000.00 should be transferred into general savings. Motion carried.

Financial Secretary Report:

A **motion** was made by Cathy Houg and seconded by Matt Krull to accept November's financial secretary's report. Motion carried.

Reports:

1) Education Board:

Noisy offerings continue after worship on the last Sunday of each month. Sunday School continues. The children sang on November 11, 2022, during worship service. The Unhinged Pizza event was successful.

2) Finance Board:

Work continues on the budget and meeting with employees.

3) Trustees:

General maintenance needs have been completed. Brian Duncan led a discussion about replacing the old stove in the kitchen. The council encouraged the trustees to speak to the kitchen committee and to gather ideas, information, and numbers in guiding any recommendations to replace the large old stove. They should then bring the recommendations to the council.

Communications:

- 1) The members of the Congregational Mission Assessment/ Ministry Site Profile Committee are: Jean Hallberg, Jan Smith, Mary Lou Teubert, Emily Koehler, Lloyd Wortz, and Jeff Hanson. One youth member is also needed to serve on this committee.
- 2) The Executive Committee will review the Strategic Visioning Document after the Jan. 9, 2023, meeting.
- 3) Annual Reports are due to Tamie Foust by Dec. 15, 2022. Financial reports are due by Jan. 5, 2023.
- 4) Vicar Swanson continues to research stewardship programs.
- 5) The nominating committee is in the process of finding members to fill open positions.

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

The next regular Council meeting will be held on Monday, January 9, 2023, at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted: Cathy Houg, Council Secretary

Merry Christmas



AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Contact us

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Lester Prairie, MN 55354

Office

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Interim Vicar Stefan Swanson

320-434-7113

pastor@lpbethel.org

Mission Statement

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.

Visit us on the web! www.lpbethel.org

www.facebook.com/lpbethel

Bethel Lutheran Church

P.O. Box 207

Lester Prairie, MN 55354



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