

BETHEL MESSENGER

Bethel Lutheran Church Newsletter

March 2023

From the Vicar's desk

Psalm 51:6-10 translation by Robert Alter

Look, you desired truth in what is hidden;
in what is concealed make wisdom known to me.

Purify me with a hyssop, that I be clean.

Wash me, that I be whiter than snow.

Let me hear gladness and joy,

let the bones that you crushed exult.

Avert Your face from my offences,
and all my misdeeds wipe away.

A pure heart create for me, God,
and a firm spirit renew within me.



Well I'll admit I didn't anticipate giving up Ash Wednesday for Lent. By the time this is published, I imagine folks will be shoveled out and the sun might even be shining again. And even without a chance to gather and have ashes imposed on our foreheads, it is never too late to remind ourselves that our God has lovingly formed us as good creations out of dust, and that one day we each will return to dust. Of course, Ash Wednesday is also an opportunity to remember our baptism, and that even in the midst of remembering the inevitability of death, we rejoice in the promise of new life and resurrection in Christ. And so as we begin this season of Lent, we adopt a spirit of repentance and ask our crucified and resurrected God to create within us clean hearts and new spirits.

I'd like to invite you to spend some time with Bethel over the 40 day journey of Lent. We'll be having Lenten meals at 5:15 pm every Wednesday in March, followed by a midweek service at 6:30 pm in the style of Taizé (an ecumenical Christian community in France). These services use simple, repetitive songs, visuals, scripture readings, and hold space for meditation. Whatever path you find yourself on during this Lenten journey, I hope you'll consider Bethel as a stop along the way.

In Christ,

Stefan Swanson
Interim Vicar



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., March 16
1:30 pm-3:00 pm

2023 MN FoodShare March Campaign

The McLeod Emergency Food Shelf is making preparation for the 2023 MN Foodshare March Campaign, and they need your help in making this a successful campaign!

From now until 1:00 pm on Monday, April 10, cash donations received will multiple by the generous donors of the Food Fund (organized by Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches.) The **formula for more** is based on McLeod Food Shelf's fundraising total and the number of people served in the past year. **The more we receive, the more we will have to give!**



The March Campaign continues to be essential in maintaining service and programming throughout the McLeod Food Shelf. Financial support donated during the 6-week collection period provides many meals for several months of the year. **Every donation remains local and is distributed right here in McLeod County!** The needs are great, since high food and fuel prices are taking their toll on even the strictest budgets.

They ask that you continue to pray for the agency and the many people they serve. The hunger, hurt, and struggle are very real!

***Bethel will take a special collection for the MN FoodShare March Campaign on Sunday, March 19. Please mark the memo of your check "Food Shelf." You may also mail your donation directly to the Hutchinson or Glencoe food shelf.**

Glencoe Business Office & Distribution Site: 719 13th ST E
Hutchinson Distribution Site: 498 Hwy 7 E

Bethel Quilting

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

Mission Assessment Team Updates

First of all, thank you to everyone who contributed to making the Kick-Off Potluck on February 5th a joyful time of fellowship by bringing dishes and by sharing your visions and dreams for Bethel. A typed copy of the responses that were recorded that morning will be made available to peruse in the Narthex.

Next steps—The team is now using the responses gathered at the Kick-Off Potluck to prepare for a series of focus groups and interviews to be conducted with Vicar Stefan. Following these focus groups and interviews, Vicar Stefan will compile a report that will be presented to the congregation at the completion of the Mission Assessment Process, and used by the Team to create a Ministry Site Profile as Bethel begins the search for a new Pastor.

Please continue to lift up the Mission Assessment Team in your prayers as they do this important work, and don't hesitate to reach out to Vicar with any questions you may have about the process.

Save The Date!—September 8-10, 2023

Women's Retreat at Medayto Lodge, Green Lake Bible Camp



Women's
Retreat
2022

Faith & Fellowship



March 1, 8, 15, 22, 29—

Lenten supper: 5:15-6:00 pm

Choir practice: 6:00 pm

Lenten worship service: 6:30 pm

Bethel Book club

MARCH: *Aftermath* by Terri Blackstock

Three best friends are rocking to the music of their favorite band—until an explosion rips through the venue. Later, the police stop army veteran and security systems expert Dustin Webb and discover a trunk full of incendiary devices in his car. How did they get there? Can attorney and childhood friend Jamie Powell discover who's framing Dustin—and why?

Discussion: Wednesday, March 15, 7:30 pm

APRIL: *Everything Isn't Terrible: Conquer Your Insecurities, Interrupt Your Anxiety, and Finally Calm Down* by Dr. Kathleen Smith—Licensed therapist and mental health writer Dr. Kathleen Smith offers a smart, practical antidote to our anxiety-ridden times. *Everything Isn't Terrible* is an informative and practical guide—featuring a healthy dose of humor—for people who want to become beacons of calmness in their families, at work, and in our anxious world. *Everything Isn't Terrible* will give anyone suffering from anxiety all the tools they need to finally...calm...down. Ultimately, living a calmer and less anxious life—one that isn't terrible—is possible, and with this book you'll learn how to do it.

Discussion date: Wednesday, April 19, 7:30 pm

Coffee hour with Vicar Stefan



You're invited to join Vicar Stefan for coffee on Monday mornings at church from 8:30 am-9:30 am. 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



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. *Everyone is welcome to attend at any time!* (You can stream missed episodes or view them on your phone app.)

Happy Birthday!

- 6 Heather H.
- 8 Victor G.
- 9 Jenna P.
- 15 Beth S.
- 16 Erin K.
- 17 Pete H.
- 17 Grady M.
- 20 Peg R.
- 21 Carl O.
- 23 Devon G.
- 24 Kyla H.
- 26 James K.
- 31 Bryon W.



Remember your Baptism



- 1 Sara R.
- 3 Judy A.
- 3 Jim M.
- 6 Grace A.
- 7 Derrick D.
- 9 Dave H.
- 10 Arla H.
- 11 Cameron B.
- 15 Lisa K.
- 18 Carol W.
- 20 Cathy H.
- 27 Krissa L.
- 27 Eric K.
- 27 Brantley G.

Financial Corner

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 needed 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.

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](tel:866-298-7547).

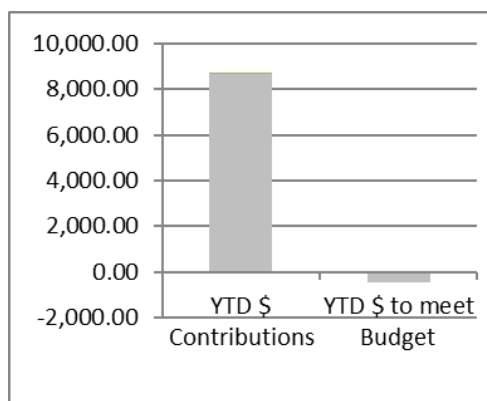
3. Bethel offering envelope

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.

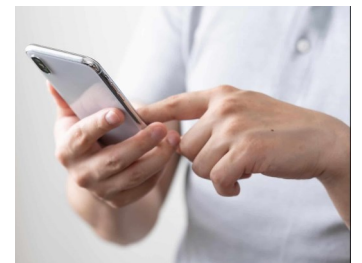
Noisy offering

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!

For the Month of Jan 2023	
Weekly Av. Attendance	54
\$ Contributions	8,664.12
\$ to meet Budget	9,141.22
\$ Difference	-477.10
For the Year 2023	
YTD \$ Contributions	8,664.12
YTD \$ to meet Budget	-477.10
YTD \$ Difference	-477.10



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



To Give text the dollar amount to [866-298-7547](tel:866-298-7547)



Bethel
Financial
Update

March 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 (office open) 5:15p Lenten supper 6p choir 6:30p Lenten service	2	3	4 6p Resplendor de Gloria
5 (2 Lent) 9a worship 10a congregational organ mtg. 10:15a SS & conf. 6p The Chosen	6 (office open) 8:30-9:30a coffee w/Stefan	7 6:30p WELCA mtg.	8 (office open) 1-4:30p quilting 5:15p Lenten supper 6p choir 6:30p Lenten service	9 (office open)	10	11 6p Resplendor de Gloria
12 (3 Lent) 9a worship 10:15a SS & conf. 6p The Chosen Daylight Saving Time begins	13 (office open) 8:30-9:30a coffee w/Stefan 6:30p council mtg.	14	15 (office open) 4p worship mtg. 5:15p Lenten supper; 6p choir 6:30p Lenten service; 7:30p book discussion	16 (office open) 1:30-3p mobile outreach-MEFS	17 <i>St. Patrick's Day</i>	18 6p Resplendor de Gloria
19 (4 Lent) 9a worship/ offering for MEFS 10:15a SS & conf. 6p The Chosen	20 (office open) 8:30-9:30a coffee w/Stefan <i>First day of Spring!</i>	21	22 (office open) 1-4:30p quilting 5:15p Lenten supper 6p choir 6:30p Lenten service	23 (office open)	24	25 6p Resplendor de Gloria <i>newsletter deadline</i>
26 (5 Lent) 9a worship (noisy offering) 10:15a SS & conf. 6p The Chosen	27 (office open) 8:30-9:30a coffee w/Stefan	28	29 (office open) 5:15p Lenten supper 6p choir 6:30p Lenten service	30 (office open)	31	1 6p Resplendor 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: 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-**it has recently changed. The sign-up sheet for a hard copy of the new directory is in the Narthex.**
- Seeking volunteers of all ages! Sign up on the bulletin board outside the church office. Sign up for a month or be a substitute! No experience necessary! Contact the individual chairperson if you have questions.
- Congregational meeting: The meeting will follow the worship service on **Sunday, March 5.** This meeting is in regard to the purchase of a new organ for the sanctuary.

Bethel Lutheran Church-Council Meeting Minutes-Monday, February 13, 2023

Council Members Present: Vice President: Peg Wick; Secretary: Cathy Houg; Treasurer: Matt Krull; Financial Secretary: Stacy Meyer; Finance Board: Mitch Overbye and Sara Jepsen; Education Board: Pete Hallberg and Emily Koehler; Trustee Board: Brian Duncan

Call to Order and Opening Prayer:

The meeting was called to order by Vice President, Peg Wick. Vicar Swanson led us in prayer.

Council Business:

*A motion was made by Cathy Houg and seconded by Mitch Overbye to accept the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

*Vicar Stefan Swanson reported that the Mission Assessment Team has been meeting and facilitated a potluck on Sunday, February 5, 2023, with 50-60 in attendance. Following the potluck attendees broke into groups in order to discuss our visions for the future of our church. Ash Wednesday is February 22, 2023. WELCA will serve a supper before the service. Vicar has met with the worship committee and made 3 visitations this past week. The Annual Report of the ELCA is being prepared by Tamie Foust and Vicar Swanson.

Old Business:

There was no old business.

New Business:

1. Newly elected Council Members were welcomed by Vice President Wick and were encouraged to check our binders for our specific job description.
2. The Audit Committee, Amanda Latzig and Jenna Pariseau, in coordination with the Finance Board, will complete the 2022 audit review this month.
3. As recommended by the Kitchen Committee, a motion was made by Pete Hallberg and seconded by Stacy Meyer to sell some "not needed" kitchen items to Bethel members. Money from the sales will go into the Kitchen Fund. Motion carried.
4. Church Council Meetings have been set for the second Monday of the month at 6:30 P.M.—March 13, April 10, May 8, July 10, Sept. 11, Oct. 9, Nov. 13, Dec. 8, and Jan 8, 2024. At this time no meetings are scheduled for June and August.
5. A motion was made by Brian Duncan and seconded by Emily Koehler to set a congregational meeting to approve the purchase of an Allen Organ Model C-6 from Allen Organ Company at \$15,740 which includes installation, delivery, and training. Motion carried. A motion was made by Sara Jepsen and seconded by Pete Hallberg to call a congregational meeting for March 5, 2023. Vicar will announce the meeting on Sunday, February 19 and 26, 2023. Tamie will send out a congregational email announcing the meeting. Motion carried.
6. The Council members will serve an Easter Breakfast following the Easter Sunday Worship Service. Sign up for food donations will be at the March meeting.

Secretary Minutes:

A motion was made by Stacy Meyer and seconded by Peg Wick to accept January's secretary's report. Motion carried.

Treasurer Reports:

A motion was made by Cathy Houg and seconded by Sara Jepsen to accept January's treasurer's reports. Motion carried.

Financial Secretary Report:

A motion was made by Sara Jepsen and seconded by Emily Koehler to accept January's financial secretary's report. Motion carried.

Reports:

1. Education Board:

There was no report.

2. Finance Board:

The Audit Committee will be meeting. Organ committee looked at organ options.

3. Trustees:

*The trustees are looking into replacing the old kitchen stove. *Brian will be obtaining new quotes for roof replacement. Our insurance policy is a replacement policy, so the roof will be covered.

Communications:

A reminder that the Mission Assessment/MSP team consists of: Jean Hallberg, Mary Lou Teubert, Emily Koehler, Lloyd Wortz, Jeff Hanson, Carl Overbye and Connor Meyer. Thank you to the team for their service.

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

The next regular Council meeting will be held on Monday, March 13, 2023, at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted: Cathy Houg, Council Secretary

The National Lutheran Choir's 2023 Tour

We invite you to go on a journey with the National Lutheran Choir and artistic director, David Cherwien, in the Choir's final tour under Dr. Cherwien's celebrated leadership. This eclectic and optimistic program will share sacred choral music that speaks to the cycles of our days and the cycle of faith in our lives. Throughout the program, the NLC's performance will be punctuated by opportunities for all to share hymns sung together. People of faith as well as people who love great music will all find a place in this journey with the NLC.

2023 Tour Schedule:

- March 25: Rochester, MN (Bethel Lutheran Church)
- March 26: Lincoln, NE (First-Plymouth Congregational Church)
- March 27: Sioux Falls, SD (First Lutheran Church)

If you don't live in one of the cities we're visiting, don't worry! Follow the NLC tour virtually via social media and tune into the livestream of the March 25th performance in Lincoln at www.abendmusik.org/livestream (7:00pm Central Time).

Contact us

Bethel Lutheran Church

77 Lincoln AVE N
PO Box 207
Lester Prairie, MN 55354

Office

320-395-2125
bethellutheranlp@gmail.com

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



PLACE
STAMP
HERE