



BETHEL MESSENGER

Bethel Lutheran Church Newsletter

June 2023

From the Vicar's desk

Psalm 104:31-34 (translation Robert Alter)

May the Lord's glory be forever,
 may the Lord rejoice in His works,
Who but looks down to earth, and it trembles,
 but touches the mountains – they smoke.
Let me sing to the Lord while I live,
 let me hymn to my God while I breathe.
Let my speech be sweet unto Him.
 As for me, I rejoice in the Lord.

Blessings to all on this Memorial Day weekend. With beautiful weather upon us and an extended weekend for many, I pray that celebrations are fun, safe, and include a moment of remembering those who gave their lives for these freedoms we enjoy. May we honor their memory by continuing to pursue a society wherever greater freedom and justice can be enjoyed by all.

Two of my favorite services of the church year take place in late May – Ascension Sunday and Pentecost, when we hear stories of the disciples grappling with major transitions in their community, with Jesus no longer walking the earth with them, and the chaotic coming of the Holy Spirit among the disciples. With these events, Jesus' followers courageously set out into a new world full of uncertainty and danger, equipped only with an unshakeable experience of Christ still present with them, and rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

In our lives, summer also tends to be a season of launching into the world – a time of visiting friends and family, travelling, and maybe even some vacation or staycation. Wherever this summer takes each of us, we can know that we bring with us this experience of the Spirit in our lives – the Spirit who tends to keep us on our toes, surprising us with God's presence and love, and sending us out to share this love in the world around us.

And don't forget, your inaugural summer adventure might include spending some time with Bethel out in the country on Sunday, June 4th at 10:00am for a service and potluck. We'll celebrate Holy Trinity Sunday in the glory of God's creation at the Bergen Church Site, in the shadow of a gorgeous old oak tree. I hope you'll join us for this holy time.

Walking forward in the Spirit,

Stefan Swanson
Interim Vicar

Mission & Ministries

Community Garden

We have started our community garden in the empty lot by the church! If you are interested in joining the committee or have ideas to share, please contact Emily Koehler at 605-661-5717 or emily.e.koehler@gmail.com.



Many Hands Make Light Work!

The church cleaning job list is up! If you are willing and able to help spring clean the church, please sign up in the Narthex to complete a job on the list at your convenience. Thank you!



Call Committee

Per our constitution, C13.05, a CALL COMMITTEE will consist of (8) members: (3) from the council, (3) from the congregation, (1) youth member, (1) WELCA member.

Pastor Naomi Mahler, Synod Representative, will help us navigate the process of calling of a new pastor. The Congregational Mission Assessment report, presented on May 21, 2023, will be our template moving forward in this process.

Please prayerfully consider this important role as a Call Committee member. Contact Ron Foust, Council President, at 612-201-2351 for questions or interest in serving on the Call Committee.



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

When:

Thurs., June 15 & 29
1:30 pm-3:00 pm

Where:

Bethel Lutheran
Church parking lot

Bethel volunteers for Burger Stand

Mark your calendars for Prairie Days Friday, July 14 & Saturday, July 15, 2023. Bethel Lutheran Church has signed up to cover a shift at the Burger Stand from 1:00-3:00 pm on Saturday, July 15. If you are willing and able to volunteer please contact Ron Foust at 612-201-2351.



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

Quilting Ministry



Lois & Chuck

Sunday, May 14, Mother's Day, was also the "Blessing of the Quilts" Sunday. Lois Severson made 34 of the quilts with the help of her son, Chuck. He has cut the material into squares for the quilts for years. Lois then sews them together to create warm quilts for those in need. She can't remember how long she has been making quilts, but she started with the Bethel Quilting group several years ago (See photos below of some past quilters). Seven years ago, Lois began sewing the quilts in her home. Her sewing machine is always set up and ready to sew! You will always find a quilt top in the making nearby. Lois and Chuck have worked together on 79 quilts since October 2022! That averages ten quilts per month! What a team!

Thank you, Lois and Chuck, for the endless hours you put into making these quilts for those who need them. Ten quilts were delivered to the Marie Sandvik Center in Minneapolis, and they received them with gratefulness. The other 24 are on their way to Sharing and Caring Hands (Mary's Place), also in Minneapolis.

The Bethel Quilting group (Deo Gloria Guild) has also been busy working on several quilts for those in need, GLLM Quilt Auction, and for Bethel's baptisms and graduates. Thank you for your creativity and dedication to this ministry!



Blessing of the Quilts Sunday, May 14, 2023



Lois & Mary Lou



Iris & Corrine



Roxanne & Arla

Happy Birthday!



- 6/3 Katie R.
- 6/4 Sarah R.
- 6/11 Maggie K.
- 6/12 Jacob D.
- 6/14 Avery B.
- 6/15 Jim M.
- 6/16 Alek H.
- 6/20 Matt P.

Remember your Baptism!

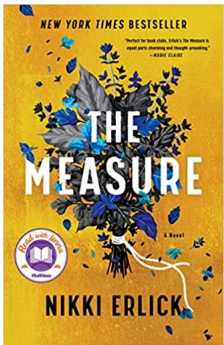


- 6/10 Dick D.
- 6/11 Bruce Y.
- 6/16 Stacy M.
- 6/18 Matt M.
- 6/22 Kim W.
- 6/23 Lois S.
- 6/27 Roger M.
- 6/30 Maggie K.

Faith & Fellowship

Bethel Book club

July: The Measure by Nikki Erlick



Discussion date: Wed., July 19, 7:30 pm

Enchanting and deeply uplifting, *The Measure* is a sweeping, ambitious, and invigorating story about family, friendship, hope, and destiny that encourages us to live life to the fullest.

**No Book club meeting in June*

August: United States of Grace by Lenny Duncan

Bergen Lutheran Church Site Worship

Join us for a special worship service on Sunday, June 4, 2023, at the Bergen Lutheran Church site in the country. Worship will begin at 10:00 am followed by a potluck picnic. Bring your lawn chairs, a dish to share, and lawn games if you have them. Tableware and a beverage will be provided.

Directions:

Go south of Lester Prairie on County Road 1, at the first curve turn left on Babcock Ave. After two miles the road turns to gravel and becomes Bergen Road. Continue south on Bergen Road approximately 3 1/2 miles and you will come to an intersection. The church site is located on the right-hand side of the intersection.

Fellowship Around the Fire

Wednesday, June 28, July 26, and August 23

Join us at 6:30 pm around our beautiful fire pit for hot dogs, chips, and beverages. You are welcome to bring a side dish to share. Vicar Stefan will provide a brief devotion. We are looking for a guitar player to accompany some singing from the contemporary song binder. If you are willing, contact the office!

Coffee hour with Vicar Stefan

Coffee hour continues on Monday mornings at church from 8:30 am-9:30 am for June and July. 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.

Women's Retreat meeting

There will be a retreat planning meeting at church on Tuesday, June 6, at 6:30 pm. If you have ideas and interest in helping with the planning process, we welcome your presence! The retreat is scheduled for September 8-10 at Green Lake Bible Camp, Medayto Lodge, Spicer, MN.



Financial Corner

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 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).

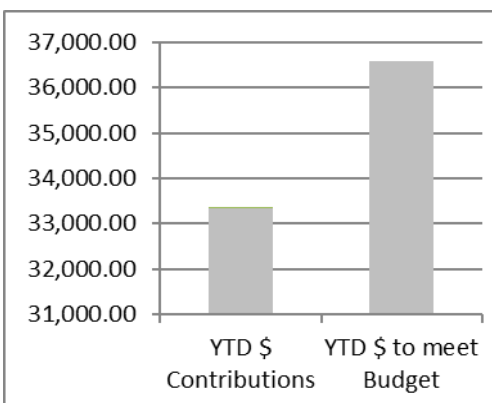
3. Bethel offering envelope

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.

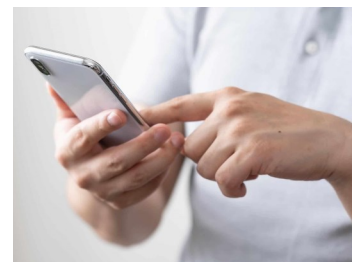
“Noisy” offering

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 April 2023	
Weekly Av. Attendance	58
\$ Contributions	11,065.40
\$ to meet Budget	9,141.22
\$ Difference	1,924.18
For the Year 2023	
YTD \$ Contributions	33,325.09
YTD \$ to meet Budget	36,594.88
YTD \$ Difference	-3,269.79



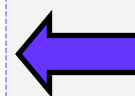
Simply Giving offers convenience for you and much needed donation consistency for our congregation!



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



Bethel's Financial Update



JUNE 2023

SUN.	MON.	TUES.	WED.	THURS.	FRI.	SAT.
				1	2	3 6p Resplandor de Gloria
4 (The Holy Trinity) 10a worship & potluck at Bergen Church site	5 (office open) 8:30-9:30a coffee w/Stefan	6	7 (office open)	8 (office open)	9 Synod Assembly	10 Synod Assembly 6p Resplandor de Gloria
11 (Pent 2) 9a worship (baptism)	12 (office open) 8:30-9:30a coffee w/Stefan 6:30p council meeting	13	14 (office open) 1-4:30p quilting 4p worship & music mtg.	15 (office open) 1:30-3p mobile outreach-MEFS	16	17 6p Resplandor de Gloria
18 (Pent 3) 9a worship Father's Day	19 (office open) 8:30-9:30a coffee w/Stefan Juneteenth	20	21 (office open) First Day of Summer	22 (office open)	23	24 6p Resplandor de Gloria
25 (Pent 4) 9a worship (noisy offering) newsletter deadline	26 (office open) 8:30-9:30a coffee w/Stefan	27	28 (office open) 1-4:30p quilting 6:30p Fellowship Around the Fire	29 (office open) 1:30-3p mobile outreach-MEFS	30	1 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:** 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. Contact the church office if you would like a hard copy.
- **Seeking volunteers of all ages!** Check out the bulletin board outside the church office. Sign up for a month or be a substitute! No experience necessary! Questions? Contact the chairperson.

Bethel Lutheran Church–Council Meeting Minutes-Monday, May 8, 2023

Council Members Present: President: Ron Foust; 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 and Bryon Weisenburger; Vicar Stefan Swanson

Call to Order and Opening Prayer: The meeting was called to order by President Ron Foust at 6:30 p.m. Vicar Swanson opened the meeting with prayer.

Council Business:

- A **motion** was made by Cathy Houg and seconded by Mitch Overbye to accept the agenda as presented. Motion carried.
- Vicar Swanson reported that, in the last month, three Mission Assessment Focus Groups met. The summary report of the focus groups is nearly complete. It will be shared with the Assessment Team soon and then the congregation on May 21, 2023. Vicar attended a First Call Education opportunity at Gustavus Adolphus. He made a visit to a member of the congregation who is unable to attend worship.

Old Business:

- A **motion** was made by Mitch Overbye and seconded by Sara Jepsen to extend the agreement with Resplendor de Gloria at the same fee. Motion carried.
- A job description for the Audit Committee members is in progress by the Finance Board.

New Business:

- A presentation was given by Emily Koehler about the starting of a community garden in the lot west of the church. A **motion** was made by Ron Foust and seconded by Brian Duncan to initiate a committee to begin planning this project with \$250 from the Outreach Fund as seed money. Motion carried.

Secretary Minutes: A **motion** was made by Sara Jepsen and seconded by Stacy Meyer to accept April's secretary's report. Motion carried.

Treasurer Reports: A **motion** was made by Cathy Houg and seconded by Bryon Weisenburger to accept April's treasurer's report. Motion carried.

Financial Secretary Report: A **motion** was made by Mitch Overbye and seconded by Sara Jepsen to accept April's financial secretary's report.

Board Reports:

- **Education Board:** The last day of confirmation and Sunday School will be May 21, 2023. There will be a Pizza Tip Night on May 22, 2023. The Sunday School will sing on Mother's Day.
- **Finance Board:** The agreement with Resplendor de Gloria is in place.
- **Trustees:** A cleanup day is being planned. A sign-up sheet is in the Narthex to complete a variety of spring projects. **Roof update:** An additional insurance claim will be placed to cover the hail damaged downspouts and gutters per the roofing contractor. A **motion** was made by Sara Jepsen and seconded by Pete Hallberg to use money from the Equipment Replacement Fund to cover any further expense not covered by insurance in replacing the remaining gutters and downspouts not to exceed \$2000 per the quote from the roofing contractor. Shingle replacement work, gutters, and downspouts will be coordinated together once everything is resolved with the insurance company. Motion carried.

Communications:

- Congregational Mission Assessment/Ministry Site Profile Committee Members: Jean Hallberg, Jan Smith, Mary Lou Teubert, Emily Koehler, Lloyd Wortz, Jeff Hanson, Carl Overbye, Connor Meyer. The final report from the focus groups will be presented on **May 21, 2023**, after the Sunday Worship Service.
- Bethel will be serving at the Prairie Days' Burger Stand on Saturday, July 15, 2023, from 1-3 p.m. Ron Foust, Nicole Weisenburger, Mitch Overbye, Sara Jepsen, Bryon Weisenburger, Cathy Houg, and Carolyn Barr have volunteered to help. More volunteers would be nice.
- **Organ Update:** The down payment check has been sent and contract signed. The Organ Committee will coordinate the installation date and training session.
- **CALL COMMITTEE:** Per our constitution, C13.05, a CALL COMMITTEE will consist of (8) members: (3) from the Council, (3) from the congregation, (1) youth member, WELCA member. Please prayerfully consider this important function and role. Ron Foust will contact Pastor Naomi Mahler, Synod representative to help us navigate the process. **The Congregational Mission Assessment** report presented on May 21, 2023, will be the template moving forward. Contact Ron Foust, Council President, for questions and/or **interest in serving** on the CALL COMMITTEE.

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

The next regular Council meeting will be held on Monday, July 10, 2023, at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted: Cathy Houg, Council Secretary

Cemetery clean-up crew



Thank you to all who came out to help clean up our cemeteries! -Cemetery Committee
Pictured: Judy, Ron, Neil, Curt G., Bryon, Mona, Roger, Jerry, Diane, Nicole, Mary Lou, Georgia, Victor, Lennon, Beth, and Lachlynn
Not pictured: Jean H. and Dave. H.

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