



# BETHEL MESSENGER

Bethel Lutheran Church Newsletter

APRIL 2024

## FROM PASTOR MOLLY

Hello beloved Bethel members!

Since I got to ask some of you hard questions over this past Lenten season, I thought I would answer those questions for you all to learn more about me over the next months' newsletters. As you read the questions and my answers I encourage you to think about those questions yourself, and maybe next Lent you'd be willing to be interviewed.

### **Who is God to you?**

When I was little, God was my imaginary friend that was real. I grew up in the country, in an underground hill house (looked kind of like a Hobbit house), and I'd go outside to sing to, talk with, and play with God. I'd stand on top of our roof which stood above the treetops and listen to the wind blowing through the leaves of the hundreds of Ash trees my dad planted all over our acreage. The wind was the Holy Spirit playing and singing to me.

Now that I'm grown, I still love to go outside, working in my garden and yard, talking to God and listening to the Spirit move across the earth. God has always been with me. God is my friend, my sibling, my mom, my dad, and my spouse depending on the day and my need in that moment.

### **How do you connect with God outside of church?**

I essentially answered this question in the above answer. And since I tend to feel closest to God outside, I'll alter the question a little – how does church help me connect with God? Though being outside is where I feel closest to God, church is where I go to feel connected to a larger body. During Covid it was incredibly hard to be separated from church. I am an introvert and could easily become a hermit given the opportunity <grin>, but for the sake of my relationship with God, I need to go to church. It fills me spiritually to be with other people also in relationship with God, to be able to have deep conversations about how God is at work in our lives, or maybe doesn't always seem to be present in our lives, to be able to wonder together knowing there are no concrete answers to our questions, but we can still ponder and find hope in our wondering. When I lead a service I am just another member of the congregation, participating in the joy-filled worship of God, thinking about how I have seen God in each of you, seen God's love poured out into the world, and felt it poured out onto me.

### **How do you find rest in the midst of your everyday life?**

This is a harder question because I always feel the need to be busy. So, when I find moment of rest like sitting on the couch for a while reading a fun book, I end up feeling guilty knowing there are things that need to be done and so I quit reading. I have never been good at doing daily devotions or reading the Bible daily. It ends up just feeling like a chore that I have to remember rather than it being what it is meant to be – spiritually filling. But something I have found that I can do each week that being a pastor has allowed me to focus on, is my Spirit Art. Sitting and drawing or painting and thinking about the scripture text for the upcoming service gives me a moment of calm and peace in the midst of my busy weeks. This spring has felt particularly crazy with starting a new job, testing for my black belt in karate (which my final exam is April 20<sup>th</sup>!), and in general the normal life stuff of having three active children, a busy husband, a house and yard to care for, etc. I guess after answering this question I clearly need to work on finding more moments of rest in my everyday life <grin>.

Blessings to you all!  
Pastor Molly B. Wills

# MISSION & MINISTRIES

## Driving Away Hunger-MEFS Mobile Outreach

Designed to reduce transportation and mobility issues associated with food access in our communities. The MEFS 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=McLeod Emergency Food Shelf)**



### MEFS Mobile Outreach

When: Thursday

April 25

1:30 pm-3:00 pm

Where:

Bethel Lutheran Church parking lot

## MEFS is hosting a Community Meet & Greet

Wednesday, April 3, 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm, McLeod Food Shelf, 719 13th ST E, Glencoe, MN. Meet the new Executive Director, Carrie Lewis, Board members, and dedicated volunteers. Light refreshments will be served. Reminder—the March Campaign will still be going, please consider donating.



## Spring Luncheon & Mid-Minnesota Concert Band!

Join us Sunday, April 14, for a Spring Luncheon and the Mid-Minnesota Concert Band! The luncheon will be served from 11:30 am to 12:30 pm. Menu: pulled pork and BBQ sandwiches, assorted salads, chips, coffee, lemonade, and milk. The concert begins at 1:00 pm. Bethel member, Nicole Weisenburger, is a member of this cherished community ensemble that has been making music for decades. Founded in 1977, it stands as one of Minnesota's oldest and most enduring community bands. Bars and beverages will be served following the concert. A free will donation will be taken for each part of the event. The event is sponsored by the Bethel Women of the ELCA and supplemented by funds from a Thrivent Action Team Grant.



## Thank you!

Thank you for your generous donations for our Thankoffering, McLeod Em. Food Shelf March Campaign and the Celebration Bank to purchase a goat through ELCA Good Gifts! We thank you for bringing treats for fellowship following our church services and Lenten meals. Lenten meals wouldn't have been successful without all who prepared the meals, brought bars, served, and cleaned up. We give a huge thank you to Thrivent Financial for the action team cards used to cover our expenses. Last but not least, thank you to everyone who attended. We could not have done these projects without your support! *Bethel WELCA*

### Celebration Bank Update

The total amount from the Celebration Bank was \$70.07. We will not only be able to buy a goat from ELCA Good Gifts, but also two flocks of chicks! Thank you!



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

## Women of the ELCA Spring Gathering, April 20

The Crow River Conference WELCA Spring Gathering will be at Peace Lutheran Church in Cosmos. The cost is \$10 per person; give your fee to Diane H. or Jill D. to send in before April 20. Registration begins at 8:30 am, followed by music, devotions, a brief business meeting, and a speaker from Terebinth Refuge. Terebinth Refuge is a shelter for hope and healing. They provide a safe home for women victims of sex trafficking and exploitation. They provide short-term emergency shelter, long-term transitional housing and on-site services to help women attain their individual goals toward recovery and independence. The Gathering ends by approximately 11:30 am. (Bethel will host the fall gathering on September 28.) Questions? Contact Diane Horsman

## 2024 SW MN SWO Convention Women of the ELCA, May 4

Theme: "Be the Light", Verse: Ps 82:4, Hymn: "Christ, Be Our Light"  
The convention will begin with worship w/ holy communion at 9:00 am, Rev. Heather Culuris officiating. Guest Speaker: Aliyah Ewing, Terebinth Refuge. Registration: \$40, registration begins: 8:00 am. Convention closes: 4:00 pm

Saturday, May 4, 2024, Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, 301 N Lincoln ST, Redwood Falls, MN 56283. Questions? Contact Diane Horsman

## Garden plots available for rent!

We're expanding the garden and you're invited to join us! Each plot is approximately 180 sq. ft. and rent is \$20 for the season. Renters will be responsible for the care and upkeep of their plot, harvesting their goods, and helping with clean-up at the end of the season. If you want more details or want to reserve a plot, contact Emily Koehler, Pete Hallberg, or any other member of the Garden Committee.



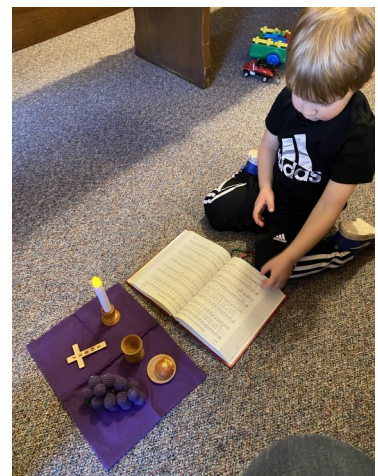
## Bethel Youth Bible Camp Fundraiser

Join us on Monday, April 8, from 4:00 pm-8:00 pm at Unhinged Pizza in Glencoe. Bring family, friends, neighbors and join us for food, fun, and fellowship while supporting our Bethel Youth! A percentage of all "buffet dinners" and all the tips will go to support the Bethel Youth Campers!



## Seeking photographers!

We are looking for people to take photos to add to our website, newsletters, etc. If you are able to capture a good one, email it to [bethelltheranlp@gmail.com](mailto:bethelltheranlp@gmail.com). **NOTE:** Take them horizontally if it's for the website.



playing with the "worship box"

# FAITH & FELLOWSHIP

## Happy Birthday!

- 6 Iris R.
- 9 Kaelyn S.
- 9 Eleanor G.
- 10 Charles S.
- 10 Myles A.
- 11 Stacy M.
- 11 Amy Z.
- 13 Dana S.
- 13 Ashlyn R.
- 17 Kim W.
- 19 Jeff R.
- 24 Olivia R.
- 25 Matt M.
- 25 Zander G.
- 25 Jameson H.
- 26 Jill D.
- 26 Hannah S.
- 28 Diane H.
- 30 Kim R.
- 30 Dick D. Jr.



## Celebrate your Baptism!



- 1 Heather H.
- 6 Victor G.
- 7 Beth S.
- 8 Eric A.
- 8 Ed E.
- 13 Jenna P.
- 15 Jill D.
- 16 Steve L.
- 16 Grady M.
- 20 Gary S.
- 23 James K.
- 25 Georgia G.
- 28 Erin K.

### Also this month:

- Katlin F., Peg R., &
- Jon K.

## Baptism of Millie Mae, March 17

Bethel welcomes our newest member of God's family. *Let the children come to me; Do not stop them, for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs.*  
Mark 10:14

## Thanksgiving & Remembrance for Steve Klobe, March 30

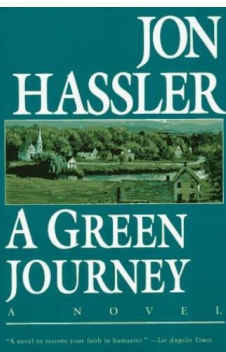
Please keep the Klobe family in your prayers. *For God so loved the world that He gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish but have eternal life."* John 3:16

## First Communion for Adderley, Beckett, & Myles, April 14

May you always live your faith with joy and sincerity. *Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."* John 6:35

## Bethel Book Club

April-A Green Journey by Jon Hassler



Agatha McGee is following a dream, though it might be late in the game. She's just retired from a career of teaching and travels to Ireland in search of the romance she never had time for. And along the way, she not only discovers people she would never have let herself know before, but learns through experience, at long last, that love is unpredictable, unstoppable, and never appears as we dream it will.

## Upcoming books

May-The Silent Patient

by Alex Michaelides

June-The Heaven & Earth Grocery

Store by James McBride

July-no meeting

August-An Immense World

by Ed Yong

# 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](http://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**.

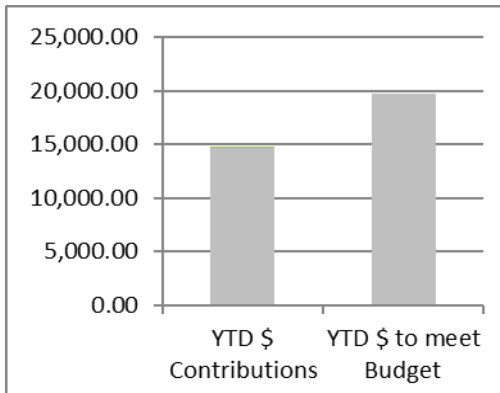
### 3. Bethel offering envelope

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](mailto:finsec@lpbethel.org).

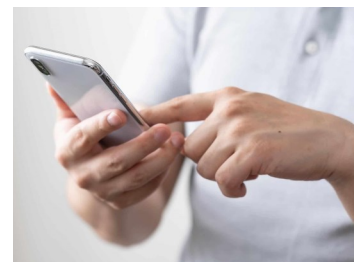
## “Noisy” offering

A second “Noisy” offering will be taken on the 4<sup>th</sup> 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!

<b>For the Month of Feb 2024</b>	
Weekly Av. Attendance	61
\$ Contributions	4,739.90
\$ to meet Budget	9,853.52
\$ Difference	-5,113.62
<b>For the Year 2024</b>	
YTD \$ Contributions	14,650.09
YTD \$ to meet Budget	19,707.04
YTD \$ Difference	-5,056.95



*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**

# APRIL 2024

SUN.	MON.	TUES.	WED.	THURS.	FRI.	SAT.
*Resplendor de Gloria-every Sunday @ 4p	1 (office closed) No Bible study (Pastor Molly on vacation thru 4/7)	2	3 (office hours) 6:30p WELCA mtg. 1-4:30p quilting 6:30p choir	4 (office hours)	5	6
7 (Rev. Bill Nelsen) 9a worship 10a Sunday school/ adult education	8 (office hours) 4p-8p camp fund-raiser at Unhinged Pizza, Glencoe 6:30p council mtg.	9	10 (office hours) 1-4:30p quilting 6:30 choir	11 (office hours)	12	13
14 9a worship w/1 <sup>st</sup> communion 10a Sunday school/ confirmation/adult education, 11:30a Spring Luncheon 1p Mid-MN Band	15 (office hours)	16	17 (office hours) 12:30p worship mtg. 1-4:30p quilting 6:30p choir 7:30p book club discussion	18 (office hours)	19	20
21 9a praise worship 10a Sunday school/ adult education	22 (office hours)  Earth Day	23	24 (office hours) 1-4:30p quilting 6:30p choir	25 (office hours) 1:30p-3p MEFS Mobile Outreach  newsletter deadline	26	27 9a cemetery clean-up
28 9a worship (noisy offering) 10a Sunday school/ confirmation 10:30a Bethel Breakfast	29 (office hours)	30	1 (office hours) 1-4:30p quilting 6:30p choir	2 (office hours)	3	4

- **Online Worship:** <https://www.facebook.com/lpbethel/live>
- **Worship CDs:** Contact the church office if you would like a weekly copy sent to you.
- **Bulletin Submissions Deadline:** Wednesday Noon | **Newsletter Deadline:** 25<sup>th</sup> of the month
- **Most up-to-date Calendar version:** Go to [www.lpbethel.org](http://www.lpbethel.org)
- **Church Directory:** 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 to view the directory online, if you would like a hard copy, and if your contact information changes!
- **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, MARCH 11, 2023

**Council Members Present:** President: Ron Foust; Secretary: Cathy Houg; Treasurer: Jill Duncan; Financial Secretary: Stacy Meyer; Finance Board: Mitch Overbye; Education Board: Emily Koehler; Trustee Board: Bryon Weisenburger; Pastor Molly Wills

**Call to Order:**

- The meeting was called to order at 6:00 by President Ron Foust followed by a prayer led by Pastor Wills.

**Council Business:**

- A **motion** was made by Cathy Houg and seconded by Bryon Weisenburger to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.
- Pastor Wills reported that she has visited homebound members in the last month. She attended the Youth Task Force meeting and social event this month. Lenten Services continue. First Communion will be on April 14, 2024, with three Bethel youth participating.

**Old Business:**

There was no old business.

**New Business:**

- A **motion** was made by Mitch Overbye and seconded by Bryon Weisenburger to allocate the Easter Brunch proceeds to McLeod Food Shelf. Motion carried. Easter Brunch will be held at 10:00 following worship. The Council signed up for food contributions.
- Pastor passed out articles for the Council to read regarding a stewardship campaign.
- A **motion** was made by Emily Koehler and seconded by Mitch Overbye to add Nicole Weisenburger to the Audit Committee for a 3-year term. Motion carried.
- Mitch Overbye reported that Resplendor de Gloria wishes to extend their annual agreement with Bethel; however, they would like to change their worship day from Saturday evening to Sunday evening. Since Bethel already has Sunday evening events scheduled, Mitch will talk to them about time flexibility/options.
- A **motion** was made by Bryon Weisenburger and seconded by Jill Duncan to purchase an advertisement in the 2024 Easter Special Church Section of the Herald Journal (all five of their newspapers) telling about our Easter services. The 2" X 3" advertisement is \$109. Motion carried.

**Secretary Minutes:**

A **motion** was made by Emily Koehler and seconded by Stacy Meyer to accept February's secretary's report. Motion carried.

**Treasurer Reports:**

A **motion** was made by Cathy Houg and seconded by Mitch Overbye to accept February's treasurer's report. Motion carried.

**Financial Secretary Report:**

A **motion** was made by Emily Koehler and seconded by Cathy Houg to accept February's financial secretary's report. Motion carried.

**Reports:**

• **Education Board:**

Confirmation has restarted. Bibles have been ordered to present to the third graders.

• **Finance Board:**

A motion was made by Ron Foust and seconded by Cathy Houg to keep approximately \$10,000 in the checking account, to keep approximately \$15,000 in the savings account, and to put the balance into two or three \$10,000 6-month CD's. Motion carried.

• **Trustees:**

The Trustees have received two estimates for painting the bell tower. They are also checking to see if a local painter is interested in submitting a bid. They are contacting sound system professionals to find someone to correct streaming issues (crackling) coming from the electric piano. The Trustees are also working to dispose of items in the garage that are not used or needed.

**Communications:**

- Pastor Molly will be on vacation April 2<sup>nd</sup> through April 7<sup>th</sup>. Pastor Bill Nelsen will be providing pulpit supply on April 7, 2024.
- Lori Dolezal, our custodian, will be retiring at the end of 2024. Trustees are considering options.

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

**The next regular Council meeting will be held on Monday, April 8, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted: Cathy Houg, Council Secretary

## Cemetery clean-up, April 27

A cemetery clean-up is scheduled for Saturday, April 27 at 9:00 am. Meet at the old Bergen Church Cemetery. We will go to the second cemetery after the first one is done.

The Cemetery Committee is looking for someone to mow both cemeteries this summer. Contact Jerry C. or Mary Lou T. for more information or if you are interested in the job.



### CONTACT US

Bethel Lutheran Church

77 Lincoln AVE N | PO Box 207

Lester Prairie, MN 55354

OFFICE 320-395-2125

[bethellutheranlp@gmail.com](mailto:bethellutheranlp@gmail.com)

**DON'T FORGET TO STAY CONNECTED!**

[www.lpbethel.org](http://www.lpbethel.org)

[www.facebook.com/lpbethel](https://www.facebook.com/lpbethel)

### PASTOR

Rev. Molly Wills

320-339-8169

[pastor@lpbethel.org](mailto: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.



Bethel Lutheran Church

P.O. Box 207

Lester Prairie, MN 55354

PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE