



BETHEL MESSENGER

Bethel Lutheran Church Newsletter

JULY 2024

FROM PASTOR MOLLY

Hello my Beloved Bethel members!

I decided to take a break from answering the Lenten questions to do a little explaining about my decision to do spiritual practices instead of a regular sermon. I have had some feedback and realized I never really explained it fully in one go. I know for some, the spiritual practices might be frustrating and certainly not feel like a normal "church" thing to do. After attending the Festival of Homiletics in May, in which the sessions were all about preaching and self-care within preaching, I felt moved to bring spiritual practices into the service as a form of self-care for all of us within our relationship with God.

It started as a spur of the moment holy experiment. Since then, I have decided to continue doing spiritual practices once a month during the service. It will not necessarily be the same Sunday of every month. There are various reasons for my decision to continue them. As a pastor, it is my job to encourage spiritual growth and connection with God. Not everyone is as good as others at listening to sermons or receiving the same fulfillment, connection with God, and spiritual instruction from them. I want people to have the chance to experience multiple different ways to connect with God spiritually rather than just through listening to a sermon so that their faith can also grow and flourish.

Life these days is incredibly chaotic, and the spiritual practices during the services are a way for all members to have an intentional moment of stillness, at least once a month, to be in a relationship with God, that they are possibly not able to get at home. I know how incredibly hard it can be to force myself to take a moment to just breathe, to just pray, to just be in the midst of all the things that need to get done every day with the house, the family, the job, life. So spiritual practices are a chance for everyone to make an intentional effort to just be with God. The church has always been good at leading by example in worship except when it comes to spiritual practices. I hope we can change that.

The older generations have had a solid, widespread church as a foundation for faith, and a solid faith community. Unfortunately, in today's generation large denominations such as Lutherans, Catholics, Baptists, etc., have dwindling numbers as younger people (and some older ones too) search for a spiritual connection that they aren't finding in church either because it simply isn't done, or the "church" has hurt them. By incorporating spiritual practices into our worship we will be able to help our congregants and anyone who visits us or worships online be able to experience a new or stronger connection with God.

I hope this letter helps explain my purpose a little more, and even if you have a very healthy, strong way of maintaining your faith, I encourage you all to open yourselves to trying the practices during church, just to give yourself a chance to see how the Holy Spirit might move you.

I know the art is one that makes people nervous. It is not something we will do every month or every other month because I know not everyone is as comfortable with drawing. It is not about the art at all, but about meditating on the scripture simply in a different way. But again, I know not everyone is comfortable with it. My goal is to do a different spiritual practice each month. It will eventually circle back around to the art, but I'm hoping to have a variety of practices because I know that each person connects with God in a different way. As time goes on, maybe you will find one that really helps you feel connected with God to incorporate at home within your life outside of church.

I will still be doing a sermon three or four times a month (depending on the number of Sundays in the month). If you don't wish to do whatever the spiritual practice is for a certain Sunday then I'd suggest either reading the Bible or sitting in prayer during that time - to use it intentionally to just be with God in a way that is more comfortable to you.

I welcome the chance to sit down and talk with anyone about this or anything else!

Blessings to you all!

Pastor Molly

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

July 11 & 25

2:30 pm-4:00 pm

Where:

Bethel Lutheran
Church parking lot

Music Notes

"Mighty to Save", written by Ben Fielding and Reuben Morgan (Hillsong Music), is the song we have been familiarizing ourselves with this month. According to Ben Fielding, the lyrics emphasize the power of God to save. The line "For my God is mighty to save" draws on Zephaniah 3:17, which describes God as a mighty savior who is with us and will save us.

God's love for humanity is unchanging, and His grace is available to us, though it requires our response. Surrender is the response that puts Jesus in His rightful place in our lives, not as an add-on, but as Lord.

In the chorus, God's saving character and intent are connected with the great promise of Romans 10:9, that if we confess with our mouths that He is Lord (surrender), and believe in our hearts that Jesus conquered the grave, we will be saved.

Information gathered from *Song Story*: "Mighty to Save" by Ben Fielding

<https://worshipleader.com/worship-culture/mighty-to-save/>



Save the date!

VBS-August 5-7

Watch for more information to come! If you are interested in volunteering, contact Emily Koehler or Pete Hallberg.

Community Garden update

The garden grows with pumpkins, sweet corn, squash, cucumbers, tomatoes, peppers, potatoes, and onions! We could use help from volunteers to weed and eventually pick the produce. Contact Emily Koehler or Pete Hallberg if you are willing and able!



Prairie Days Burger Stand Volunteers

The Prairie Days committee has asked Bethel to cover a Burger Stand shift during Prairie Days [July 12-13]. We are looking for 6-8 people to work from 1:00-3:00 pm on Saturday, July 13, under the tent. If you would like to volunteer, contact Peggy Wick at sully72828@gmail.com or 612-499-0186.



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



Bethel will donate these four quilts for the 40th annual GLLM Quilt Auction, July 26-27, 2024.

Quilt Names—
(clock-wise from the bottom right-hand side)
"Falling Stars"
"Corrine's Garden Sampler"
"Night of Old"
"ShirtTails"



40th Annual Quilt Auction July 26-27



The Quilt Auction at Green Lake Bible Camp is celebrating 40 years this summer! The Quilt Auction has become a beloved tradition for Green Lake Lutheran Ministries and has grown into something so big and impactful for our ministry endeavors all year. This year's Quilt Auction is going to be BIG, and we look forward to welcoming you back! New this year is a Quilt Trunk Show. There will be a Paint-Your-Own Barn Quilt, a Beachfront Concert, a Makers Market, and more! See the bulletin board near the church offices for more details.

Spirit Ride & Stride



Experience the beauty of creation and the joy of fellowship. Spirit Ride & Stride-An Ordinary Time Retreat, August 15-19, 2024, Camp House, Participant Fee: \$95 adult/night, \$65 youth/night. Reconnect with your faith routines as summer nears the end and we prepare for the busyness of fall. Camp House staff invite you to a time of rest and renewal, with opportunities for worship, conversation, a warm sauna, a refreshing swim, great food, and fellowship in the lodge. Stay at camp, or venture out each day to explore all that the Arrowhead of Minnesota has offers.

Pop-Up Choir

This summer, we are exploring the idea of a "Pop-Up" choir on the second Sunday of each month. The plan is for anyone interested in singing in the choir to come to church at 8:15 on Sunday morning (July 14, and August 11), to rehearse a song with other music lovers, and then to sing the selection during worship that day. Individuals may participate once, twice, or three times, during the summer months. If you have questions, ask Emily Koehler or Jan Smith.

Celebration Bank

Bring your change (\$ bills) to worship, and tell us what you're celebrating! The Celebration Bank is raising funds for items on the Green Lake Lutheran Ministries' wish list! If you are a Thrivent member, you can also apply for a \$250 Thrivent Action Team Grant, and we could combine the grants and the Celebration Bank collection to purchase even more items for GLLM! If you need help applying for a grant, speak to Jan Smith, Judy Angvall, or Jill Duncan. If you apply on your own, please let them know.



FAITH & FELLOWSHIP



Happy Birthday!

7/3—Dave H.
7/4—Janice G.
7/16—Julie H.
7/18—Beckett S.
7/21—Jerry C.
7/22—Katie O.
7/22—Alex O.
7/23—Lennon S.
7/25—Corrine B.
7/25—Kathy E.
7/25—Dawn R.
7/28—Peggy W.



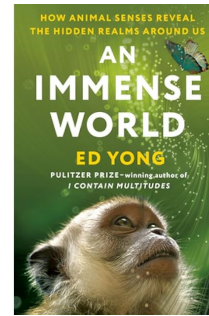
Celebrate your Baptism!

7/2—Alayna S.
7/9—Jacob D.
7/13—Dave H.
7/16—Grady M.
7/18—Jameson H.
7/22—Kayla W.
7/24—Sally K.
7/26—Hannah S.
Julie H.
Janice G.

Bethel Book Club

July—No meeting

August—*An Immense World*
by Ed Yong



The earth teems with sights and textures, sounds and vibrations, smells and tastes, and electric and magnetic fields. But every animal

is enclosed within its unique sensory bubble, perceiving but a tiny sliver of an immense world. This book immerses you in an unimaginable realm, offering a glimpse into the world through the eyes of other creatures.

Bethel Women's Retreat

You are invited to join in the fellowship and fun! If you haven't before, now is the time! Friday-Sunday, September 13-15, 2024, Meydato Lodge at Green Lake Bible Camp in Spicer, MN. The retreat is open to Bethel women of all ages and their invited friends, relatives, and neighbors. The cost is \$75 for the weekend and covers lodging, meals, and programming.

New in 2024! Saturday only, for \$50, covers two meals and programming. Scholarships (full or partial) are available. The deadline to register is August 25. See the display in the narthex for more details of this exciting weekend!



Fellowship by the Fire MARK YOUR CALENDAR!



Fellowship by the Fire Continues on Wednesdays, July 24, and August 21. The evening will begin at 6:00 pm, outside by the fire pit. WELCA will supply hotdogs

and buns. Please bring a dish to share for the meal, your lawn chair, a favorite game, and your friends!

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 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**.

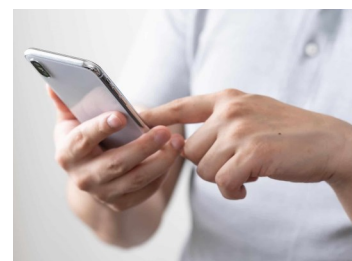
3. Bethel offering envelope

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!

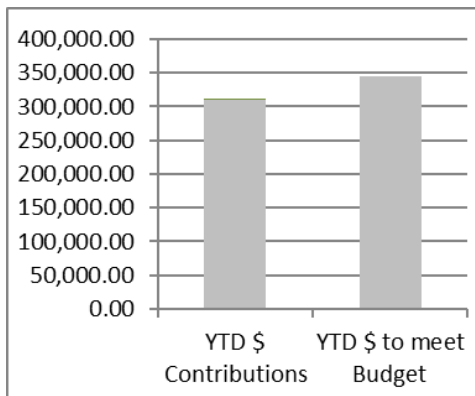
Simply Giving offers convenience for you and much needed donation consistency for our congregation!



To GIVE Text the dollar amount to **866-298-7547**



For the Month of May 2024	
Weekly Av. Attendance	54
\$ Contributions	7,347.40
\$ to meet Budget	9,853.52
\$ Difference	-2,506.12
For the Year 2024	
YTD \$ Contributions	44,363.90
YTD \$ to meet Budget	49,267.60
YTD \$ Difference	-4,903.40



Bethel's Financial Update

JULY 2024

SUN.	MON.	TUES.	WED.	THURS.	FRI.	SAT.
*drop change in the celebration bank this month! (goal: donate GLLM wish list items)	1	2	3 BULLETIN DEADLINE: NOON WEDNESDAYS	4 INDEPENDENCE DAY	5	6
7 (Pent 7) 9a worship 10a fellowship 4p Resplandor de Gloria	8 (office hours) 1:30p Bible study	9	10 (office hours) 12:30p worship & music mtg. 1-4:30p quilting bp WELCA mtg.	11 2:30p-4p MEFS Mobile Outreach	12 PRAIRIE DAYS	13 PRAIRIE DAYS 1-3p Bethel burger stand shift
14 (Pent 8) 9a worship 10a fellowship 4p Resplandor de Gloria	15 (office hours) 1:30p Bible study bp council mtg.	16	17 (office hours) 12:30p worship committee mtg. 1-4:30p quilting	18	19	20
21 (Pent 9) 9a praise outdoor worship 10a fellowship 4p Resplandor de Gloria	22 (office hours) 1:30p Bible study	23	24 (office hours) 1-4:30p quilting bp Fellowship by the Fire	25 2:30p-4p MEFS Mobile Outreach NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	26	27
28 (Pent 10) 9a worship w/noisy offering-camperships 10:30a Bethel BF 4p Resplandor de Gloria	29 (office hours) 1:30p Bible study	30	31 (office hours) 1-4:30p quilting	1	2	3

- **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:** 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 the directory online, if you would like a hard copy, and if your contact information changes!
- **Seeking volunteers of all ages!** Check out the table in the narthex! Sign up for a month or be a substitute! No experience necessary! Questions? Contact the chairperson listed.

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH | COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES | MONDAY, MAY 6, 2024

Council Members Present: President: Ron Foust; Vice President: Peggy Wick; Secretary: Cathy Houg; Financial Secretary: Stacy Meyer; Finance Board: Mitch Overbye and Sara Jepsen; Education Board: Pete Hallberg; Trustee Board: Bryon Weisenburger; Pastor Molly Wills

Call to Order:

- The meeting was called to order at 6:01 by President Ron Foust followed by an opening prayer led by Pastor Wills.

Council Business:

- A **motion** was made by Cathy Houg and seconded by Sara Jepsen to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.
- In the last month, Pastor Wills has visited the members who are shut-in. She attended a Homiletics Festival in Pittsburgh, PA, and also attended the Synod Assembly. Confirmation has ended by meeting with the confirmands' parents. Baccalaureate Service was held with all graduates in attendance.

Old Business:

- The Finance Board presented a church credit card policy, which would allow the church secretary access to efficient and alternative means of payment for approved expenses. A **motion** was made by Peggy Wick and seconded by Pete Hallberg to accept the Bethel Lutheran Church Credit Card Policy. Motion carried.
- Discussion about a photo directory was tabled until next month.

New Business:

- A **motion** was made by Bryon Weisenburger and seconded by Mitch Overbye to move July's Church Council Meeting date to July 15, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. Motion carried.
- President Foust requested that each Church Council member look over their particular job description (found in their binder) for any updates or additions that are needed to define their job. Last done in 2018, these updates will then be reviewed by the Executive Board for acceptance.

Secretary Minutes:

- A **motion** was made by Sara Jepsen and seconded by Bryon Weisenburger to accept May's secretary's report. Motion carried.

Treasurer Reports:

- A **motion** was made by Cathy Houg and seconded by Peggy Wick to accept May's treasurer's report. Motion carried.

Financial Secretary Report:

- A **motion** was made by Mitch Overbye and seconded by Bryon Weisenburger to accept May's financial secretary's report. Motion carried.

Reports:

Education Board:

The Education Board is discussing the dates of Vacation Bible School. Anyone who is working with or around children of the church needs to get a background check. Please contact Tamie Foust for information. This background check process will require a \$20 donation.

Finance Board:

A yearly check-in with Resplendor de Gloria has been completed. They are happy with the church's accommodations and their time slot. In the past month, the Finance Board has completed the church's credit card policy. (adopted under Old Business)

Trustees:

The Trustees will be in contact with CertaPro Painter to schedule a time to paint the bell tower. The goal of raising \$8000 has nearly been met. The mats and desk that were available are now gone.

Communications:

- We will again work at the Burger Stand for Prairie Days. A team of 6-8 people are needed for the 1-3 p.m. time slot on July 13, 2024. Peggy Wick will recruit and coordinate the team.
- This fall the Constitution and Bylaws will be reviewed by the Executive Board and Pastor Molly to see if any changes need to be considered. If so, the Board will report back to the Church Council, and the changes will then be presented to the congregation at the Congregational Annual Meeting.

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

The next regular Council meeting will be held on Monday, July 15, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted: Cathy Houg, Council Secretary

Children and Youth Volunteers

Bethel's Child and Youth Policy requires anyone volunteering with and around children to have a background check every five years. There is also an online Child and Safety Training requirement (approx. 30 minutes) to complete, and we are asking for a donation of \$20 to cover expenses. If you plan to volunteer, contact the church office for more information.

Bell Tower Campaign

We raised \$8,045.00 (\$45.00 more than our goal)! Thank you to all who so generously donated to accomplish this!

2B Continued Support Groups

Suicide Loss Support Group meets on the 2nd Monday of the month at the Glencoe 2B Continued office. Peer Support for Mental Health meets weekly on Tuesdays at the Glencoe 2B Continued office. To join a support group, email info@2Bcontinued.org or call 320-864-4673.

CONTACT US

Bethel Lutheran Church

77 Lincoln AVE N | PO Box 207

Lester Prairie, MN 55354

OFFICE 320-395-2125

bethellutheranlp@gmail.com

DON'T FORGET TO STAY CONNECTED!

www.lpbethel.org

www.facebook.com/lpbethel

PASTOR

Rev. Molly Wills

320-339-8169

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