



BETHEL MESSENGER

Bethel Lutheran Church Newsletter

April 2025



FROM PASTOR MOLLY

Hello Beloved Children of God!

It's April already! And Easter is very late this year. During our Lenten season, we have been listening to other's faith journeys and introspectively thinking about our own faith journeys. Lent always seems like a solemn time, yet journeys through the wilderness aren't always necessarily full of danger, darkness, and pain. Lent is a time of hope, looking forward to the earth awakening from its long winter rest into the new growth of spring, looking forward to the news that Jesus is no longer in the tomb, but has arisen! So, let's take a moment to find some joy during this Lenten season. I have two stories that have stuck with me, even though they don't seem particularly important. I found them entertaining when I heard them, but the value they have for me isn't really in the stories themselves, it's in the memories of the storytellers, and how each has affected my life and my faith.

My first story: My husband and I like to take our kids on tent camping trips each summer. On one particular trip, our campsite was a little jaunt from the restroom building which was decent sized with about four individual stalls within each bathroom. We were starting to cook our dinner over the fire, and our oldest said he was going to make a trip to the bathroom. About 5 minutes later he came back and very excitedly started saying, "Oh man, guys, I gotta tell you this story!" At which point we all stopped what we were doing to look at him and hear what he had to say. He continued, "I went to the bathroom, and when I went in, there was a guy in there..." We all kept looking at him. The seconds ticked by and by, until I finally said, "Okay? And did something happen with the guy?" Our son gave us this look like we were crazy and had completely missed something very important. He said, "No, that was the story!" <grin>

My second story: I was in college and went to visit my grandma, who was in her late 80's. She lived alone, in the country, on an old, no longer running farm. She and I were sitting in her kitchen at her round, oak table, enjoying a hot mug of tea and eating kringla she'd pulled from her freezer. She had this habit of chewing on a toothpick after she'd eaten, and at the moment she had a toothpick sticking out of her pursed mouth. For the life of me I don't recall what we were talking about that led up to what she next told me, but this I'll always remember. As she played with the toothpick in her mouth and I munched on my kringla, she proceeded to say, "When I was a little girl we had to go to the bathroom outside in the outhouse. When I was, oh about 4 or 5, I'd say, I got it into my head to wonder what would happen if I put newspaper over the hole before I sat down and did my business. So, I found some newspaper and tried it." She paused, continuing to chew on her toothpick, the corners of her pursed mouth curling up into a tiny smile. I looked at her, probably with some horror and amusement on my face, and though I assumed I knew the answer asked, "What happened?" She gave a low, little chortle and then pulled the toothpick from her mouth and grinned at me, "Well of course the pee didn't go through the newspaper! It ran right off it and down my legs. It went right into my stockings and shoes. Oo, mother was not happy with me!" <grin>

Take a moment to think about the memories you hold within your heart and ponder why those memories are so important and bring forth the feelings they do.

Love,
Pastor Molly B. Wills

MISSION & MINISTRIES

Driving Away Hunger-MEFS Mobile Outreach

Driving Away Hunger is 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, dairy, grains, and bakery treats. STOP & SHOP THE BUS at no cost to you! All sites are open to the public!

Orders must be placed prior to delivery dates and are pre-packed during the winter months. A limited number of walk-up portions will be available at each delivery site. The staff will accommodate anyone not able to safely enter the vehicle for shopping. The staff are not permitted to carry food inside a residence.

Full grocery distributions are available once (1X) per month, per household. One visit per week is allowed across all sites. Schedule changes are announced at www.mcleodemergencyfoodshelf.org and on Facebook @ McLeod Food Shelf. Follow us! Questions? Call 320-864-2088!

SPREAD THE WORD! The BUS comes to Bethel every month!



MEFS Mobile Outreach

WINTER SCHEDULE

WHEN: THURSDAY

APRIL 10

1:30 pm-3:00 pm

WHERE:

Bethel Lutheran Church parking lot

TO ORDER ONLINE &

STAY UP-TO-DATE



WELCA Lenten Project



During Lent, WELCA is collecting items for Personal Care Kits for Lutheran World Relief. We ask that you bring a specific item to each mid-week Lenten worship service. Donations will be accepted anytime during Lent. We ask that all items are new and in good condition.

April 2: Two or three bath-size bars of soap equaling 8-9 oz., any brand, in original packaging

April 9: One lightweight bath-size towel (between 20"x 40" and 52"x 27", dark color recommended)

Easter Flowers

The sign-up sheet for ordering Easter flowers is now available on the bulletin board. Please sign up and indicate your preferred flower type and designation by April 13. These flowers will be displayed in the sanctuary on Easter Sunday and can be taken home afterward. Make checks payable to Bethel Lutheran Church and give them to Judy Angvall. If you prefer to bring your own flowers, but please indicate this on the sign-up sheet along with your designation. Thank you!

Personal Care Kit

- 1)** Two or three bath-size bars of soap, any brand, original packaging
- 2)** One lightweight bath-size towel, dark color
- 3)** One adult-size toothbrush, original packaging
- 4)** One sturdy comb, remove packaging
- 5)** One metal nail clippers, remove packaging, attached file optional

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

Lent schedule

Wednesday, April 2: Lenten Meal from 5:00 p.m. -6:15 p.m., Serving soup, homemade bread (by Leon Krone), and bars. Holden Evening Prayer at 6:30 p.m. Faith Story: Ashlyn & Olivia

Wednesday, April 9: Lenten Meal from 5:00 pm-6:15 pm., Serving sliders and bars. Holden Evening Prayer at 6:30 p.m. Faith Story: Jean H.

Holy Week schedule

Palm Sunday, April 13: worship at 9:00 a.m.

Maundy Thursday, April 17: Foot Washing (optional) and Agape Meal beginning at 6:30 p.m.

Good Friday, April 18: worship at 6:30 p.m.

Easter Sunday, April 20: worship at 9:00 a.m.

Brunch at 10:00 a.m. will be hosted by the Church Council. All proceeds will go to the Bethel Parking Lot fund.



Maundy Thursday Foot Washing

Walking in sandals on the roads of Israel in the first century made washing feet very important before a communal meal. People ate while reclining at low tables, so their feet were in plain sight. Usually, foot washing was the job of the lowest servants. However, during the Last Supper, Jesus performed this humble task by washing his disciples' feet (John 13:1-17). This act has special meaning in three ways.

1. **For Jesus**, it was a beautiful display of his humility and servanthood in forgiving sinners, setting an example for us all to follow.
2. **For the disciples**, having their feet washed showed a contrast to their own attitudes at the time.
3. **For us**, washing feet symbolizes how we should treat one another, reminding us of our roles in the body of Christ.

We encourage you to wear sandals (or regular shoes) on Maundy Thursday and participate in washing each other's feet as you arrive, followed by sharing an Agape Meal.

Maundy Thursday Agape Meal

An Agape meal is a Christian gathering that emphasizes fellowship, community, and sharing. It is rooted in the communal meals of the early church and reflects the spirit of "agape," which signifies selfless, unconditional, and sacrificial love.

I give you a new commandment, that you love one another.

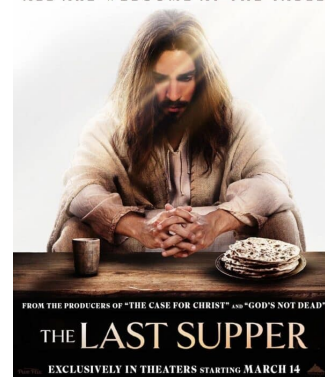
Just as I have loved you, you should also love one another.

—John 13:34



We are looking for several people to bring a pot of soup for our **Agape Meal on Maundy Thursday, April 17**. A sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board by the offices.

ALL ARE WELCOME AT THE TABLE



The Chosen: The Last Supper coming to Waconia Theater

Part One: March 27 through April 3

Part Two: April 3 through April 10

Part Three: April 10 through April 17

Showtime: 6:00 p.m. We encourage you to attend and invite others along!

FAITH & FELLOWSHIP



Birthdays

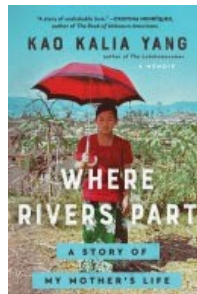
6 Iris R.
9 Kaelyn S.
9 Eleanor G.
10 Charles S.
10 Myles A.
11 Stacy M.
11 Amy Z.
13 Dana S.
13 Ashlyn R.
17 Kim W.
19 Jeff R.
24 Olivia R.
25 Matt M.
25 Zander G.
25 Jameson H.
26 Jill D.
26 Hannah S.
28 Diane H.
30 Dick D. Jr.



Baptism

Birthdays

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.
25 Georgia G.
28 Erin K.



Bethel Book club

Where Rivers Part: A Story of my Mother's Life

by Kao Kalia Yang

A mesmerizing and hauntingly beautiful memoir about a Hmong family's epic journey to safety told from the perspective of the author's incredible mother who survived, and helped her family escape, against all odds.

First Communion

A First Communion class will be offered for first graders and older children whose parents feel they are ready and want to learn. The class will take place on Sunday, April 27, following the service. We will celebrate their First Communion on Sunday, May 4. Questions can be directed to Pastor Molly.

WELCA Paint Factory event

Ladies 15 years and up, please join us for a private event at the Paint Factory in Hutchinson on Monday, April 21, at 6:30 p.m. You do not need to be a member of Bethel to participate. The cost is \$35. Please make your checks payable to Bethel WELCA and give them to Jill Duncan by April 1. Supplies included are a 16 x 20 canvas, paint, an easel, brushes, and apron, and an instructor. Thanks to a Thrivent Action Team grant and WELCA for making this fun outing available. (regular fee is \$40)

WELCA Crow River Gathering-April 26

"Rejoicing in the Lord Always" 8:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m. Brunch, SW MN Synod Youth Band, brief business mtg. Sign up on the bulletin board. \$12 registration fee to Jill Duncan by April 13.

2025 Synodical Women's Organization

Convention-May 3

Theme-"I Love to Tell the Story"

Theme Verse: Joel 1:3

Theme Hymn: *I Love to Tell the Story*

Opening worship & Holy Communion,

Bishop Dee Pederson officiating

Keynote Speaker: Rev. Nancy Hansen

\$25 registration fee.

If you have questions about either event, speak to Diane Horsman.

FINANCIAL CORNER

4 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 Fin. Sec. 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 on the wall in the narthex. 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 Meyer, at 320-395-2869 or finsec@lpbethel.org.

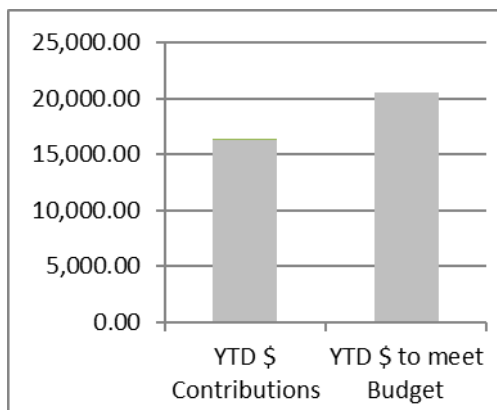


4. Online Giving scan QR code



Financial update

For the Month of Feb 2025	
Weekly Av. Attendance	53
\$ Contributions	7,171.40
\$ to meet Budget	10,262.01
\$ Difference	-3,090.61
For the Year 2025	
YTD \$ Contributions	16,256.80
YTD \$ to meet Budget	20,524.02
YTD \$ Difference	-4,267.22




"Noisy" offering 4th Sunday of the month

The "Noisy" offering can will be located just outside of the sanctuary for you to 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! The proceeds go toward Bethel Youth Camperships for Green Lake Bible Camp.



APRIL

SUN.	MON.	TUES.	WED.	THURS.	FRI.	SAT.
*4p RESPLANDOR de GLORIA ON SUNDAYS	*BULLETIN SUBMISSIONS DUE ON WEDNESDAYS @ NOON	1 (Pastor's vacation through April 7)	2 (office hours) 5p-6:15p meal 5:45p choir practice 6:30p Holden Evening Prayer	3	4	5
6 (Pastor Susan) 9a worship 10:15a Sun. school, BLTs	7 (office hours) 6:30p WELCA mtg.	8	9 (office hours) 12:30p W & M mtg. 5p-6:15p meal 5:45p choir practice 6:30p Holden Evening Prayer	10 1:30p-3p MEFS Mobile Outreach REMEMBER TO PRE-ORDER!	11	12
13 Palm Sunday 9a worship 10:15a Sun school, confirmation class	14 (office hours) 6p council mtg.	15	16 (office hours) 6:30p choir practice 7:30p book club	17 Maundy Thursday 6:30p Agape Meal	18 Good Friday 6:30p worship	19
20 Easter Sunday 9a worship 10a brunch	21 (office closed) [6:30p WELCA Paint Factory event, Hutchinson]	22	23 (office hours) 1:30p Bible study 6:30p choir practice	24	25 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	26 [8:30a-11:30a WELCA Crow River Gathering, Cokato] 9a cemetery clean up
27 9a Praise worship w/ noisy offering 10:15a Sun. school, confirmation class 10:30a Bethel BK	28 (office hours)	29	30 (office hours) 6:30p choir practice	1	2	3

- Looking ahead: **2025 High School Graduate Blessing-Sunday, May 11: Congratulations, Logan Meyer and Oliver Anderson!** 
- 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.
- Has your contact information changed? **Please, inform the church office of any changes to your contact information to ensure accuracy in the Congregational Directory.**

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH | COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES | MONDAY, MARCH 10, 2025

Council Members Present: President: Dave Gohl, Vice President: Peggy Wick, Secretary: Julie Hanson, Treasurer: Jill Duncan, Finance Board: Sara Jepsen, Ed Board: Pete Hallberg and Katie Radtke, Trustee Board: Jeff Hanson and Bryon Weisenburger.

Call To Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:01 P.M. by President Dave Gohl followed with prayer by Pastor Molly Wills.

Council Business:

A **motion** was made by Sara Jepsen and seconded by Bryon Weisenburger to approve the agenda. Motion carried. A **motion** was made by Sara Jepsen and seconded by Jill Duncan to approve the secretary minutes from February. Motion carried.

Pastor Molly:

- Visited our homebound.
- Led Bible study.
- Attended the Youth Task Force social at city hall.
- Attended a meeting with the Lester Prairie Pastors.
- Attended the Crow River Conference Assembly.
- Attended her monthly First Call Cohort meeting in Buffalo.
- Kicked off Lent with our Ash Wednesday service having youth do the distribution of ashes.
- Still looking for two people to tell their faith stories.
- Taking vacation March 23rd-26th and March 31st-April 7th.

Old Business:

1. Audit Committee review reported no abnormalities. Suggestion was made to have a job description for the audit and look into ELCA guidelines for the audit report.
2. Cleaning hours of the church and wages were discussed along with Blue Jean Sunday.

New Business:

- Rescheduled a meeting with Thrivent Representative.
- A **motion** was made by Sara Jepsen and seconded by Bryon Weisenburger to have an ad placed for Easter service in the local paper (which covers five papers) Motion carried. Radio advertising is optional.
- Switched Savings account to checking account with debit card account.
- Internet was discussed. At the moment Century Link is the provider. Metronet is in town. Bryon Weisenburger is to check into cost comparisons between the two companies along with a new router.

Treasurer Reports:

- A **motion** was made by Sara Jepsen and seconded by Pete Hallberg to approve the treasurer report. Motion carried.

Financial Secretary Report:

- A **motion** was made by Sara Jepsen and seconded by Pete Hallberg to approve the financial report. Motion carried.

Board Reporting:

- Education: Katie Radtke and Pete Hallberg to research/ find approved material for Vacation Bible School. Also to have VBS as intergenerational and to contact anyone who would be interested in helping.
- Finance: \$3125.00 for the parking lot has been raised thus far. The committee is to discuss additional ways and possibilities to raise funds for the parking lot.
- Trustees: Two new fire extinguishers have been installed at the stairway balcony. The parking lot gauge (mock-up) is in the Narthex. Streaming issue for the internet is in the works to resolve. The slide curtain is to be replaced with cork board. Solar panels for the church sign by the county road need attention for proper illumination. Tried to remedy the floor squeak on the altar at the podium.

Communications:

- Easter Sunday worship service April 20th is at 9:00 A.M. with brunch to follow at 10:00 A.M. Sara Jepsen is chairperson for the brunch. Brunch is being served by the council. Free will offerings will be accepted.
- Stewardship program update: Out of 100 envelopes that were mailed out, only 23 cards came back.

The meeting closed with round table prayers and the Lord's Prayer.

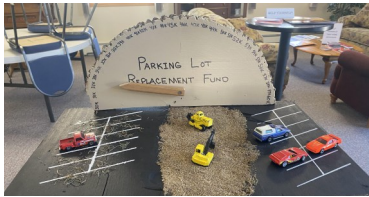
Respectfully submitted by Secretary Julie Hanson

Next Scheduled Meeting Date: **Monday, April 14, 2025 Time: 6:00 P.M.**

Cemetery clean up, Saturday, April 26

Please come to help rake and clean up debris in our cemeteries. We will start cleaning up at the old Bergen Church site and cemetery at 9:00 a.m. **Many hands make light work!**

Bethel Church Parking Lot Update



The fundraiser for the church parking lot rebuilding project is now underway, with the goal of raising \$30,000, in addition to

the \$30,000 allocated from church funds. We hope to complete the project in early fall. Please consider donating to this much-needed project completion. A mock-up of the parking lot is displayed in the narthex to track our donation progress. **Thank you for your support!**

CONTACT US

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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PASTOR

Rev. Molly Wills
320-339-8169

pastor@lpbethel.org

DON'T FORGET TO STAY CONNECTED!

www.lpbethel.org

www.facebook.com/lpbethel

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