



BETHEL MESSENGER

Bethel Lutheran Church Newsletter

May 2025

FROM PASTOR MOLLY

Hello Beloved Children of God!

This month I have a contemplative poem I've written while meditating on this Easter season.

What does it mean to experience God?

Breathe in. Feel the air fill
your lungs. Is it cold? It is hot?
Does it flow in easily? Or is it a trickle?
A labored effort to feel that
gift of the Holy Spirit? That gift of life?
A gift freely, lovingly given.

Focus your eyes. See the light and dark
Play with each other, balancing
one another, in a dance
of shadows and radiance.
Do they fight with each other?
Is it a battle? Can we ever truly have one
without the other?

Open your ears. Hear your soft breath in
And out. Is there blood
pounding in your ears?
Is there wind
blowing through the leaves?
Is there traffic
rushing, crashing by?
Is there yelling, shouting, screaming,
Laughing, crying, sighing?
How is God speaking
in and through the sounds
and the silence?

Pay heed to your emotions and the feeling
In your body.
Is there a weight? Pressing, crushing
Extinguishing?
Is there a lightness? Freeing, joy-filled,
wonderful?
Is there despair
or is there hope?
How are you experiencing God
in this moment?

May God's face shine upon each of you as spring blooms around you,
Pastor Molly B. Wills

MISSION & MINISTRIES

Driving Away Hunger-MEFS Mobile Outreach

Driving Away Hunger aims to address transportation and mobility issues related to food access in our communities. Our Mobile Outreach vehicle is stocked with shelf-stable pantry items, fresh produce, frozen proteins, dairy, grains, and bakery goods. Please remember to place your orders before the delivery dates, as all will be pre-packed during the winter months. A limited number of walk-up portions will be available at each delivery site. Our staff will assist anyone who is unable to safely enter the vehicle for shopping. However, staff members are not allowed to carry food inside a residence. Full grocery distributions are available once a month per household, and you may visit different distributions sites once per week. All sites are open to the public. Go to www.mcleodemergencyfoodshelf.org for schedule change announcements. Don't forget to follow us on Facebook <http://facebook.com/McLeodFoodShelf>. If you have any questions, please call 320-864-2088!

STOP & SHOP THE BUS AT NO COST TO YOU!

WELCA Easter Project

During the Easter season, WELCA will facilitate a collection of specific food items to donate to the McLeod County Common Cup Ministry. We encourage you to bring **applesauce (cups or pouches), instant breakfast bottles, juice boxes, and fruit cups** and place them in the collection containers in the narthex. These items support the Weekend Food Program, which assists McLeod County families in need. Children who qualify for the program receive a bag of food at the end of each week to take home, helping to supplement their meals over the weekend when they are not in school and unable to benefit from school lunches and breakfasts. Since November, several Bethel members have been packing and delivering these food bags to the Lester Prairie school for local students. Check out the display in the narthex to learn more about this program.



2025 High School Graduate Blessing—Sunday, May 11th
Way to go graduates Logan M. & Oliver A.!

"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."
Psalms 119:105



MEFS Mobile Outreach SUMMER SCHEDULE

WHEN: THURSDAY
MAY 15 & 29

2:00 p.m. to 3:45 p.m.

WHERE:

**Bethel Lutheran
Church parking lot**

TO ORDER ONLINE &

STAY UP-TO-DATE

SCAN HERE:



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

Global Health Ministries donation

Our Bethel WELCA group applied for a Leading With Heart grant from our Synodical Women's Organization. We purchased items for 10 Hospice Kits for Global Health Ministries.

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

Keynote Speaker: Rev. Nancy Hansen

\$25 registration fee. If you have questions about the event, speak to Diane Horsman.



Scan here to
access the
Church Parking
Lot Fund.



Bethel Church Parking Lot Fundraiser

We are raising funds to rebuild the parking lot. Our goal is to raise \$30,000, in addition to the \$30,000 already allocated from church funds. We aim to complete this project in September. Please consider donating to this much needed project. You can scan the QR code to access the online Parking Lot Fund, or you may place your donation in the offering plate. If you choose to donate by check or cash, please indicate that your contribution is for the parking lot. A mock-up of the parking lot is displayed in the narthex to help track our progress. Thank you for your support!



Bethel New Member Class

We're excited to announce that we'll be having a new member class on Sunday, May 18, right after worship! If you're interested in joining the Bethel family, please reach out to Pastor Molly. We can't wait to welcome you!

Ordinary Time Invitation



Imagine starting your day with a refreshing jump in the lake, followed by a warm sauna. Picture gathering for meals with friends and family, enjoying leisurely coffee breaks without any rush, and having opportunities for learning and creativity. Experience worship that fosters connections with God and others, and take time to rest, surrounded by the soothing sounds of nature. You can make this vision a reality by joining us for Ordinary Time at Camp House, happening from June 14 to July 18. Come when you can, and stay for as long as you like!

gllm.org/ordinary-time

FAITH & FELLOWSHIP



Birthdays

5/7 Tony S.

5/10 Sara J.

5/15 Felicity G.

5/17 Grace A.

5/19 Georgia G.

5/21 Kayla W.

5/22 Sally K.

5/25 Roger M.

5/28 Lois S.



Baptism

Birthdays

5/2 Vaydah R.

5/3 Charles S.

5/8 Bryon W.

5/17 Jeff R.

5/19 Logan M.

5/24 Diane H.

5/25 Pete H.

5/27 Oliver A.

First Communion

This month we celebrate First Communion for Avery, Evie, Grant, Kaelyn, Lachlynn, Lennon, Livie, & Mia.

"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with your free Spirit."

Psalm 51:10-12

BLTs learn quilt tying

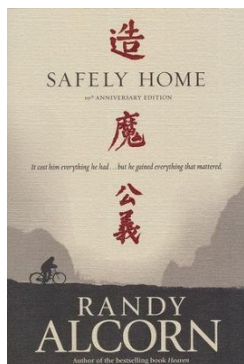


All are welcome to join us for quilting on Wednesdays from 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. There are several tasks for all levels of expertise!

Bethel Book club—May

Safely Home by Randy Alcorn

Is this the day I die? Wonders Li Quan



as he endures persecution for his faith. Half a world away his college roommate, businessman Ben Fielding, steps on the plane to China. Reunited after 20 years, both men face decisions that will determine their destinies—

and the fates of their nations and the world. Discussion date: Wednesday, May 21, 7:00 p.m.

Bethel Book club—June

Gunflint Falling: Blowdown in the Boundary Waters by Cary J. Griffith

FINANCIAL CORNER

4 convenient ways to give

1. Simply Giving

Use *Simply Giving* for your regular contributions—donations will be automatically deducted from your checking or savings account. **This program provides convenience for you and ensures that our congregation receives consistent support!** Say goodbye to checks and envelopes! If travel, illness or other circumstances prevent you from attending services, *Simply Giving* allows your donations to continue without interruption. To get started contact the church office for an application or visit us online at www.lpbethel.org under the “Give” section. Please return completed applications to the Financial Secretary’s mailbox at the church.

2. Text + Give

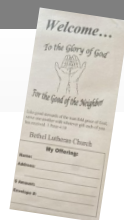
Make a contribution in seconds with a text message! Text giving is quick, easy, and flexible. Whether you want to give right away, make your weekly offering, or respond to special appeals, you can do it all in just a few seconds. Registration using your phone is simple, and you have the option to set up recurring gifts. To donate, just text the dollar amount to **866-298-7547**.

3. Bethel Offering Envelope

Offering envelopes are available on the wall in the narthex. Please fill out the front of your envelope, including your assigned envelope number (which can be found on your church mailbox label). You can either mail it to Bethel Lutheran Church, PO Box 207, Lester Prairie, MN 55354, or place in the offering plate.

4. Online Giving: Please scan the QR code for contributions to the General fund and the Parking Lot.

If you have any questions, please contact the Financial Secretary, Stacy Meyer, at 320-395-2869 or finsec@lpbethel.org.



Noisy Offering

On the 4th Sunday of every month, there is a collection located just outside the sanctuary where you can drop your loose change into a metal can with a satisfying clang! While paper bills and checks may not make the same loud noise, they are also accepted and greatly appreciated. The proceeds will go toward Bethel Youth Camperships for Green Lake Bible Camp.



FINANCIAL UPDATE THROUGH APRIL 13

\$ Contributions: 1,456.00
\$ To Meet Budget: 10,262.01
\$ Difference: -8,806.01
Weekly Average Attendance: 64

FOR THE YEAR 2025

YTD \$ Contributions: 26,701.79
YTD \$ To Meet Budget: 41,048.04
YTD \$ Difference: -14,346.25

MAY

SUN.	MON.	TUES.	WED.	THURS.	FRI.	SAT.
*4p RESPLANDOR de GLORIA ON SUNDAYS			*BULLETIN SUBMISSIONS DUE ON WEDNESDAYS @ NOON	1	2	3
4 9a Praise worship w/ First Communion & Star Wars Christ Play; 10a Sun. school, Earth Day clean-up BLTs; *4p		6	7 (office hours)* 11:30a Bible study 1-4:30p Quilting 6:30p choir practice	8	9	10
11 9a worship w/ Graduate Blessing 10:15a Sun school, last day confirmation class; *4p MOTHER'S DAY	12 (office hours) Pastor Molly @ Festival of Homiletics, Atlanta, GA 5/12 to 5/15	13 6:30p WELCA mtg.	14 (office hours)* No Bible study 1-4:30p Quilting 6:30p choir practice	15 2p-3:45p MEFS Mobile Outreach, Bethel parking lot- REMEMBER TO PRE-ORDER!	16	17
18 9a Praise worship 10a New Member class 10a last day Sunday school; BLTs *4p	19 (office hours) 5p W & M mtg. bp council mtg.	20	21 (office hours)* 11:30p Bible study 1-4:30p Quilting 6:30p choir practice 7:30p book club	22	23	24
25 9a worship 10:30a Bethel BK NEWSLETTER DEADLINE *4p	26 (office closed) MEMORIAL DAY	27	28 (office hours)* 11:30a Bible study 1-4:30p Quilting 6:30p choir practice	29 2p-3:45p MEFS Mobile Outreach, Bethel parking lot- REMEMBER TO PRE-ORDER!	30	31

- **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 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, APRIL 14, 2025

Council Members Present: President: Dave Gohl, Secretary: Julie Hanson, Treasurer: Jill Duncan, Financial Secretary: Stacy Meyer, Finance Board: Mitch Overbye and Sara Jepsen, Education 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.**

- **Pastor Molly:** Visited our homebound.
- Organized speakers for Wednesday Lenten services.
- Planned Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Services along with our May 4th service.
- Attended a First Call Pastor meeting.
- Attended our Crow River Conference meeting for those who help youth. There is a free 2B Continued Youth mental health first aid and training meeting on May 5th from 9:00 A.M to 3:30 P.M. at Gethsemane Lutheran Church in Dassel, MN. For registration information, look on the bulletin board.
- Attended Iris's 95th birthday party.

Old Business:

- Easter brunch last year served approximately 100. This year we need more food so we don't run out. More egg bakes, French toast and muffins will be provided.
- Finance committee on Stewardship funds reported that about one half of the pledge cards have been returned. Members need to be informed and or refreshed about the options of giving to the church.
- Cleaning crew: needs to make a new list of duties and or job description.
- Internet service: There have been over 300 views of our service a week.
- Internet provider: There is a need for faster internet. The quality would be better for streaming. A quote was presented from Metro Net for a three-year contract at \$126.55 plus cable installation. At this time Century Link is the provider at \$249.00. A **motion** was made by Sara Jepsen and seconded by Bryon Weisenburger to approve Metro Net to be the provider. **Motion carried.**

New Business:

- Paper shredding: Paper shredding available in Lester Prairie on April 19th. At this time there is not enough time to go through all that needs to be shredded. The alternative would be to take the paper to Hutchinson Recycling as they shred paper there also.
- Parking lot: There are three \$10,000.00 CD's at 1st Community Bank in Lester Prairie. These can be borrowed against them for a line of credit. Donations go back in to pay back the CD's. A **motion** was made by Sara Jepsen and seconded by Pete Hallberg to approve the line of credit. **Motion carried.**
- Spiritual Practices: Pastor Molly has provided spiritual practices. Discussed whether to continue or not. Exercising options at this time.
- Next council meeting changed to May 19th at 6:00 P.M.

Secretary Minutes:

- A **motion** was made by Bryon Weisenburger and seconded by Stacy Meyer to approve the secretary minutes from March. **Motion carried.**

Treasurer Report:

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

Financial Secretary Report:

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

Board Reporting:

- Education: Still in the process for gathering material (s) to share for Vacation Bible Study.
- Finance: Met with 1st Community Bank with cash flow discussion for the parking lot.
- Trustees: Cork board installation in the Narthex in process and almost complete. Materials for the solar panels for the church sign by the county road will be installed in May. Windows will be checked so they won't feel stuck when trying to open.

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

Respectfully submitted by Secretary Julie Hanson

Next Scheduled Meeting Date: **Monday, May 19, 2025 Time: 6:00 P.M.**

Thank you volunteers!



Thank you to those who came out on a beautiful Saturday morning to help rake, trim, and pull weeds at the cemeteries and the old Bergen Church site. —the Cemetery Committee

CONTACT US

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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