

BETHEL MESSENGER

Bethel Lutheran Church

November 2025

FROM THE PASTOR

Hello Beloved Children of God,

The end of the calendar year is fast approaching. The air is crisp, and fall has officially set in. Fall is my favorite time of the year. It's cold enough to bundle up in a long sleeve shirt and sweatshirt, to wear scarves and hats if desired, but not necessarily cold enough to have to layer upon layer upon layer to stay warm and survive. On the days the sun shines bright, it's rays dance through and over the brightly turning leaves. The wind blows chilly, pulling and picking up the leaves that have fallen and making them dance through the air and across the ground in a rustling rush. I can't help but feel joy and awe in the world God created for us to live within, take care of, and appreciate.

It's also the beginning of a time to settle in and hunker down. For some, that beginning might come as a disappointment because there will be no more days and nights spent on the boat, casting for fish, possibly drinking a beer, and hanging out with friends. No more long vacation trips to explore the world outside with family and friends. No more freedom from the rigid school schedule. No more garden work and fun watching the plants grow and thrive. For others, that beginning of settling down might be exciting. No more having to pack clothes and food, leave, come back, repeat. No more uncertainty of what this week will hold in terms of activities that need to be or want to be attended. No more yard work once all the leaves are dealt with as desired.

Maybe you feel one or the other or feel both at the same time. Wherever you fall in your feelings about the changing of the seasons, the changing of life, I encourage you each evening to take a moment to think of one good thing that you have experienced during the day, no matter how small a thing it may be. Take a moment to settle into that good thing, to settle into the feelings it evokes, to settle into the memories it brings. Settle into and take a moment of joy from it and remind yourself that you are a Child of God, beloved and blessed, no matter what life throws at you.

Love,
Pastor Molly B. Wills

ALL SAINTS SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2025

During our worship service, you will have the opportunity to honor and remember beloved family members and friends who have passed away by lighting a candle in their memory.

Additionally, we will recognize loved ones who have passed away in the past year since All Saints Day 2024; a sign-up sheet is in the narthex for you to write down their names.

We will be taking a second offering that day to support the Bethel Cemetery Fund.

REMINDER: DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME ENDS NOV. 2

CEMETERY OFFERING



MISSION AND MINISTRIES

COMMON CUP NEWS

WEEKEND FOOD PROGRAM

We are once again planning to pack weekend food bags for students in need at the Lester Prairie High School. In addition to packing, we would like to support the program by donating granola bars and protein bars to be included in the bags. (One of these items is placed in every bag that is packed.) If you wish to participate in this ministry, you may leave these items in the basket in the Common Cup Corner.

Currently, about 350 bags are packed weekly for the food program in McLeod County. (Children who qualify receive bags of food, sent home in their backpacks on Fridays, to have for the weekend and long school breaks discreetly and confidentially.)

If you have any questions about the program, would like to donate, or are interested in volunteering to pack the bags, Jan Smith would enjoy visiting with you.



COMMON CUP MINISTRY COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSE

You are invited to an Open House on Thursday, November 13th from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at Common Cup Ministries, 405 California St. NW, Hutchinson, MN 55350. Common Cup Ministries is celebrating 25 years serving McLeod County in the name of Christ **AND** is excited to share its new home. Tour the new space, meet the staff and the board, learn about the programs, and share in the light refreshments.

COMMON CUP COAT DRIVE

Thank you for your generous donations to the annual winter wear/coat drive sponsored by Common Cup Ministries.

The picture shows the annual coat distribution center at the United Methodist Church in Hutchinson on Wednesday morning, October 15, set up for families to shop for their needs.

A second distribution site was set up in Glencoe that same day. Over 500 coats were given out to very grateful McLeod County residents that day!

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

COMMON CUP...



THIS SPECIAL DAY IS APPROACHING: COMING TOGETHER IN SONG

Sunday, November 16, 2025, 3:00 p.m.-4:30 p.m.
Christ the King Lutheran Church, 1040 S Grade RD SW,
Hutchinson, MN 55350, USA

Join us for a special community concert celebrating the work of Common Cup Ministries in McLeod County! This free-will offering event supports Common Cup. Stay afterward to enjoy coffee and cookies with friends!



**MEFS MOBILE OUTREACH
BUS WEDNESDAY, DEC. 3**
STOP AND SHOP THE BUS IN
BETHEL'S PARKING LOT!
2:30 PM – 4:15 PM

To **receive** your food box by
DECEMBER 3rd, **place** your
order by **NOVEMBER 12th**.

THRIVENT PRESENTATION

Thrivent team members will visit Bethel on Sunday, November 9. They will give a 15-minute presentation on the programs Thrivent offers. They will have a table set up in the narthex during coffee hour to answer questions.

DRIVING AWAY HUNGER!

Driving Away Hunger aims to address transportation and mobility issues related to food access in our communities.

Full grocery distributions are available once a month per household. You may visit the other distribution sites once per week. All sites are open to the public. Follow us on Facebook <http://facebook.com/McLeodFoodShelf>. If you have any questions, please visit our website.

The bus will continue to stop at Bethel's parking lot, but please note that the day, time, and frequency have changed for the winter. The bus will now come once a month on the first Wednesday, from 2:30 p.m. to 4:15 p.m. Additionally, orders must be placed in advance by completing a form and submitting it before the deadline. You can fill out the form online at our website www.mcleodemergencyfoodshelf.org or pick up a copy from the church office.

CONFIRMATION & REFORMATION SUNDAY

October 26, 2025

Congratulations on your confirmation, Alexander and Max! May you continue to grow in faith and be a guiding light to others. A Celebration Reception, hosted by Bethel WELCA, followed the service. We also celebrated Reformation Day by remembering Martin Luther's boldness and conviction, and we continue to celebrate the good news of salvation by grace alone.



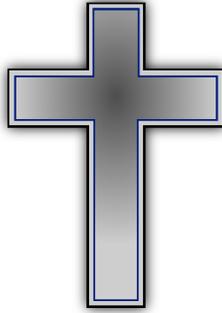
FAITH AND FELLOWSHIP

BETHEL OFFERS LEARNING OPTIONS TO PROVIDE VARIOUS WAYS TO DEEPEN YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.

WEEKLY SUNDAY SCHOOL & CHRISTMAS PROGRAM PRACTICE

Join us weekly for Sunday school classes after worship for children pre-school through 6th grade.

Christmas program practice is starting! If you have any questions, please get in touch with Stacy M., Jan S., or Nicole K.



INTERGENERATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL WITH PASTOR MOLLY

following worship

All ages are welcome to attend!

November 2 & 16 December 7 & 14
January 4 & 11 February 1 & 8
March 8 & 22 April 19
May 3 & 10

BETHEL BOOK CLUB NOVEMBER

Outcasts United: A Refugee Team, an American Town by Warren St. John

The extraordinary tale of a refugee youth soccer team and the transformation of a small American town.

The young adult version of the book is available in the church library.

The adult version is also available from other sources. Reading either one will serve our purposes for discussion.

DECEMBER

Prodigal Summer by B. Kingsolver

A novel set in rural Appalachia that intertwines three distinct stories over a single summer, focusing on the characters' personal relationships and their intricate connections to the natural world.

Discussions are on the third Wednesday of the month at 7:30 p.m.

CELEBRATING BIRTHDAYS and BAPTISMS

BIRTHDAYS

- 1 STEVE L.
- 1 DEAN S.
- 2 LACHLYNN S.
- 3 GARY S.
- 7 JEFF W.
- 9 SAM R.
- 14 JEREMY R.
- 17 MAX P.
- 28 ADDERLY H.
- 29 COLTON H.

BAPTISMS

- 2 JAN S.
- 8 DICK K.
- 19 KATHY E.
- 22 DANA S.
- 22 CHERYL S.
- 23 ZANDER G.
- 23 ALEX W.
- 26 CONNOR M.
- MIA S.

HOLIDAY DINNER THEATER AT GREEN LAKE BIBLE CAMP

Join us on Sunday, December 14, for a performance at 12:30 p.m. We have reserved a table for 8 Bethel members to enjoy an evening of theater and music along with a delicious four-course buffet meal! If you'd like to join us this year, tickets are \$100 per person. Proceeds will support the GLLM Annual Fund, ensuring fun, safe, and quality Christ-centered camping and retreat opportunities for people of all ages. **To order tickets, please speak with Jill Duncan by November 2.**

NOVEMBER

NOVEMBER						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1 All Saints Day
2 9a All Saints worship (2 nd offering for cemetery fund) 10a Sunday school & Intergenerational Sunday school (DST ends)	3 Pastor Molly's vacation	4 6:30p WELCA mtg.	5 office hours 11:30a Bible study 1p-4p quilting 6:30p choir	6	7	8 A.M. Girl Scout mtg.
9 9a worship 10a Thrivent Q & A 10a Sunday school	10 office hours 5p worship & music mtg. 6p council mtg.	11 Veteran's Day	12 No Bible study 1p-4p quilting 6p choir	13	14	15
16 9a praise service 10a Sunday school & Intergenerational Sunday school	17	18	19 office hours 11:30a Bible study 1p-4p quilting 6:30p choir	20 Pastor Molly's vacation 11/20-11/24	21	22
23 Christ the King 9a worship (Pr. Margo Martens) 10a WELCA Pie Social 10a Sunday school	24	25	26 office hours 11:30a Bible study 1p-4p quilting 6:30p choir	27 Thanksgiving	28	29
30 1 Advent 9a worship 10a Sunday school 10:20a Bethel Breakfast at Longhorn's	<i>Dec. 1 Pastor Molly's vacation</i>	2	3 office hours 11:30a Bible study 1p-4p quilting 6p Advent worship 6:30p choir	4	5	6

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES, OCTOBER 13, 2025

Council Members Present: President: Dave Gohl, Vice President: Peggy Wick, Secretary: Julie Hanson, Treasurer: Jill Duncan, Financial Secretary: Stacy Meyer, Finance Board: Mitch Overbye & Sara Jepsen, Education Board: Pete Hallberg & Katie Radtke, Trustee Board: Jeff Hanson & Bryon Weisenburger.

Call To Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by President Dave Gohl, followed by an opening prayer.

Council Business: A **motion** was made by Bryon Weisenburger and seconded by Mitch Overbye to approve the agenda.

Motion carried.

Pastor Molly:

- Led Bible studies
- Visited our homebound
- Attended a pastor's conference meeting, and we renewed our ordination vows with Bishop Dee.
- Attended a First Call Gathering meeting in St. Peter that focused on Leadership Under Pressure.
- Led the monthly worship meeting through email for this month, which worked okay.
- Intergenerational Sunday School has been going well and has been fun.
- Attended Harvest Festival, it was a lot of fun! Though the yellow jackets were not.
- Attended the Youth Task Force committee meeting, and I volunteered Bethel to host the Youth Task Force Social on January 14th. We have hosted the past two Januarys, but if that is not a good month, please let me know, and I can choose a different month next year. There are usually extra months to host if Bethel would like to host more than one.
- Spoke with some of the quilters about the Youth Task Force Social and asked for their help and input. My idea for an activity is to have the kids write their worries on strips of cloth with a Sharpie. We will sew these strips together and drape them over the cross in front of the sanctuary to symbolize Jesus taking on their burdens. We usually have food at the YTF Social, so I'm considering a cocoa bar again this year, but I am open to other ideas. We will need volunteers to help with set-up, serving, talking to the youth, take-down, and sewing. If you can help, please let me know.
- Led a graveside funeral for a non-member in one of our cemeteries on Sept. 28th at 11:30 AM.
- Attended the Fall Theological in Spicer, MN, October 5th-7th.
- Equipping Congregations Day is Nov. 8, 2025, and the theme is Rooted in Faith.

Old Business: Parking Lot: Balance as of 10-11-2025 is \$522.00

New Business:

- Thrivent Presentation: Two Thrivent representatives gave their presentation to the council. They shared opportunities and programs available within Thrivent. A Thrivent presentation to the congregation will be on November 9th.
- Bethel Endowment: The Endowment Committee met on October 6th. Their presentation to the congregation will be on October 12th.
- Safety First: Bryon Weisenburger and Jeff Hanson will meet with the Lester Prairie Police Department to develop safety measures for the church in case an emergency arises.

Secretary Minutes: A **motion** was made by Pete Hallberg and seconded by Bryon Weisenburger to approve the previous month's secretary minutes. **Motion carried.**

Treasurer Report:

- Discussion of general giving: We need to continue communicating with the congregation about giving. The amount we need to meet the budget is listed in the bulletin each Sunday. We should consider not using the bank loan unless another necessity arises. Also, the treasurer will meet with the finance board about the 2026 budget. A **motion** was made by Pete Hallberg and seconded by Sara Jepsen to approve the treasurer's report. **Motion carried.**

Financial Secretary Report:

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

Board Reporting:

- Education Board: Some concerns about intergenerational studies were shared; the material may not be age-appropriate for some. Need to explore changes for appropriate age material for two separate age groups.
- Finance: Budget season is upon us. Compensation for Pastor Molly for next year. The Sunday group, Resplendor de Gloria, gave a nice donation to the parking lot.
- Trustees: Jeff Hanson will meet with Mark Ginsbach from Excel Energy on Thursday, October 16th, to walk through the church and conduct an energy audit. The trustees will watch the south side of the parking lot for water runoff. The upstairs toilets have the correct flushing pressure. The downstairs bathroom changing tables are being installed.

A **motion** was made by Jill Duncan and seconded by Bryon Weisenburger to close the meeting. **Motion carried.**

The Gospel of the Day was read by Dave Gohl, followed by the Lord's Prayer.

Next scheduled meeting date: Monday, November 10th, 6:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by Secretary Julie Hanson

GIVING PAGE

3 WAYS TO MAKE GIVING EASIER!

1. VANCO ONLINE

Discover the simplicity of giving with Vanco Online, our user-friendly eGiving tool! You can make one-time gifts or set up recurring donations to ensure your support continues. Visit our church website at www.lpbethel.org and click the “Give” button or scan the QR code to get started.

HOW TO USE VANCO ONLINE:

- 1. Select Your Funds and Amount**—Choose your fund and click “Donate.” Select your donation amount and frequency, then proceed to payment.
 - 2. Enter Payment Method**—Enter your credit card, debit card, or checking account information. You can save your payment information for future donations by creating a free account. (From your Vanco account, you can review your giving history, manage recurring donations, or update payment information.)
 - 3. Complete Donation**—Review your gift and click “Submit.”
- How to Have Automatic eGiving Set Up for You: Simply complete an authorization form (forms are on the wall in the Narthex) and place it in the Financial Secretary’s mailbox.

2. TEXT + GIVE

Donate easily and quickly by texting! Text giving is fast and flexible. You can give right away, set up a weekly donation, or respond to special requests—all in just a few seconds. To register, use your phone; it’s simple! You can also set up recurring donations. To donate, just text the dollar amount to **866-298-7547**.

3. BETHEL OFFERING ENVELOPE

We encourage you to fill out an envelope and include your assigned envelope number from your church mailbox. You can mail it to Bethel Lutheran Church, PO Box 207, Lester Prairie, MN 55354, or simply place it in the offering plate during service. **If you have any questions, please contact our Financial Secretary, Stacy, at 320-395-2869 or finsec@lpbethel.org.**

SCAN THE QR CODE TO GET STARTED



NOISY OFFERING

On the 4th Sunday of the month, look for the tin can! All proceeds support Bethel Youth Camperships for Green Lake Bible Camp.

MID (2ND SUNDAY) OCTOBER 2025

\$ CONTRIBUTIONS: 2,751.00
\$ TO MEET BUDGET: 10,262.01
\$ DIFFERENCE: -7,511.01
WEEKLY AVERAGE ATTENDANCE: 52

FOR THE YEAR 2025

YTD \$ CONTRIBUTIONS: 83,947.19
YTD \$ TO MEET BUDGET: 102,620.10
YTD \$ DIFFERENCE: -18,672.01

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.

www.facebook.com/lpbethel
www.lpbethel.org

CONNECTED!
DON'T FORGET TO STAY

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320-339-8169

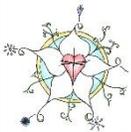
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PLACE
STAMP
HERE