

BETHEL MESSENGER

August 2026 / Bethel Lutheran Church, ELCA

FROM THE PASTOR

I recently took a continuing education trip to Iona, Scotland, where I stayed at the Iona Abbey, which is part of the Iona Community. The specific program I went for was called "Holding On and Letting Go." I did this trip with my mom, who was diagnosed with the early stages of dementia in January. Visiting the Iona Community has been on her bucket list for years, so I was very excited to be able to go with her and learn things for Bethel as well. But as everyone who has a loved one grappling with memory loss knows, it is a long journey, and the topic of holding on and letting go hit very close to the heart. My mom and I had some hard moments and conversations as well as some wonderful moments and conversations. I was lucky to find kindred spirits in Iona to support me while I was supporting my mom so that we could both learn and have wonderful experiences.



This is a photo of the Iona Abbey, where we ate our meals, did chores, attended sessions, attended worship, and slept.

discussion and thoughts. I like the tradition and ability to have things memorized, especially because I have found that for those with dementia, as memory fades, they are still able to pray the Lord's Prayer by heart. But it's good for everyone to have things changed occasionally, to draw people's attention to the actual words they are saying, and the reason and the feeling behind those words. So, when things are changed, pay attention and truly think on the words and feelings.

Love,
Pastor Molly B. Wills



It rained almost every day while we were there, but people just went about their business and didn't stay indoors.



This is St Martin's cross; it's been standing there for 1200+ years.



Thistles seem to be the country flower. They were painted and etched all over.



A beautiful ocean view during a refreshingly sunny point in the day.



JUST
like
Me

digging in & growing deep

Vacation Bible School

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Lunch served
each day

All are
welcome

10 AM -
12:30 PM

August
2, 9, 16

Activities for
children and
adults

To register: 320-395-2125 or bethellutheranlp@gmail.com

MISSION AND MINISTRIES

“Serving one another demonstrates the grace of God in action.”—Oswald Smith

NEW ALTAR GUILD CHAIRPERSON(S) NEEDED

We are seeking a volunteer to serve as the Altar Chairperson. The role involves preparing the sanctuary for worship, including arranging the sacraments, filling oil altar candles, changing altar cloths, preparing for baptisms, ordering supplies, and coordinating assistance as needed. If you are interested in this position, contact Judy Angvall at 612-501-3233 as soon as possible so she can guide you through the process. Additionally, a sign-up sheet is available on the bulletin board for families or individuals who would like to volunteer for any Sunday. A sign-up rotation helps ensure that no one person is solely responsible every week, allowing us to continue having weekly communion.



BETHEL'S PRAIRIE DAYS PARADE FLOAT-Saturday, July 18



FEED MY STARVING CHILDREN

On Tuesday, July 21, a dedicated group of 18 Bethel volunteers made the trip to Chanhassen to serve at Feed My Starving Children. In just 90 minutes, our team helped pack 10,368 meals—enough to feed 28 children in Haiti for a whole year! A heartfelt thank you to everyone who generously donated their time and energy to make a real impact.



BETHEL QUILT AUCTION DONATION

Bethel's floral quilt in yellow and gray, donated to Water's Edge Ministries at Green Lake Bible Camp, was sold for \$300 at the live auction on Saturday, July 25. The auction raised over \$144,000.



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

FARE FOR ALL



Fare for All is coming up on Thursday, August 13, 3:30 p.m.-5:30 p.m., Oak Heights Covenant Church, 1398 S Grade RD SW, Hutchinson. This is a pop-up grocery store in our community that offers quality, nutritious, budget-friendly food packs featuring fresh fruits, vegetables, and frozen meats. No pre-orders necessary—just stop by and shop at the monthly event! Visit fareforall.org to learn more.

COMMON CUP FOOD DONATIONS

We are collecting applesauce cups and fruit cups to donate to Common Cup Ministry's Weekend Food Program for school children in need within McLeod County. Donations may be left in the Common Cup Corner basket in the narthex. (Members of Bethel also pack weekend bags for the students at the Lester Prairie school during the school year.) If you have questions about the program, donating, or are interested in volunteering to pack the bags, Jan Smith would love to visit with you!

MCLEOD EMERGENCY FOOD SHELF (MEFS) MOBILE OUTREACH



NEXT DISTRIBUTION DATES

Wednesday
August 5 & 19
Bethel's parking lot
2:30 PM

Driving Away Hunger aims to address transportation and mobility challenges related to food access in our communities. The 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!**

Orders must be placed before delivery dates. Orders are pre-packed by staff for on-site distribution. A limited number of walk-up portions or "emergency boxes" will be available at each delivery site. *The staff is not permitted to assist with carrying groceries home.*

Full grocery distributions are available once (1x) per month, per household. Check the Mobile Outreach schedule on Bethel's bulletin board or on our front door for distribution dates.

If you have any questions, call 320-864-2088 or email glencoe@mcleodemergencyfoodshelf.org

All sites are OPEN to the PUBLIC! Produce is available weekly. One visit per week across all sites: Hutchinson, Glencoe, and Mobile.

Schedule changes are announced at:

www.mcleodemergencyfoodshelf.org

and www.facebook.com/McLeodFoodShelf. Follow us!

Scan here to place
your next order



IMPORTANT CHANGES IN THE THRIVENT CHOICE PROGRAM

ALL Thrivent members now receive Choice Dollars annually, not just those with certain policy types. Those Dollars are available in **FULL** at the beginning of each year—**2026 Choice Dollars are available to direct NOW!** All Dollars must be directed by the end of the calendar year, December 31, rather than the former March 31 date. We encourage all Thrivent members to visit your online account **SOON** and consider directing your Thrivent Choice Dollars to Bethel Lutheran Church! Thank you!

SAVE THE DATE!

September 11-13—Women's Retreat at Medayto Lodge on Green Lake, Spicer, MN

September 20—10:00 a.m.-Noon, Join us for Bethel's Annual Harvest Festival!

Invite your friends and family!

FAITH AND FELLOWSHIP

"The whole being of any Christian is faith and love.
Faith brings the person to God; love brings the person to people." —Martin Luther

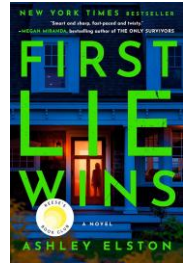
JOIN US FOR 2026 NATIONAL NIGHT OUT—TUESDAY, AUGUST 4

Bethel members will be handing out frozen treats at Downtown Square Park!

BETHEL BOOK CLUB—AUGUST *First Lie Wins* by Ashley Elston

Evie Porter has everything a nice, Southern girl could want: a perfect, doting boyfriend, a house with a white picket fence and a garden, a fancy group of friends. The only catch: Evie Porter doesn't exist. **Discussion date: Wednesday, August 19, 6:30 p.m.**

MOSAIC NIGHT= GREAT NIGHT—Monday, July 27



HAPPY BAPTISM!

8 Felicity G.
9 Kyla H.
16 Sarah R.
16 Corrine B.
19 Jerry C.
19 Nancy P.
20 Andrew F.
30 Katie A.
Jeff H.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

2 Daved A.
2 Mark D.
5 Katie A.
5 Andria C.
8 Nancy P.
9 Brantley G.
10 Bruce Y.
13 Linda D.
14 Kim J.
16 Mike R.
20 Drake P.
21 Tyler H.
24 Dick K.
24 Jeff H.
25 Kathy K.
25 Marilyn P.
25 Connor M.

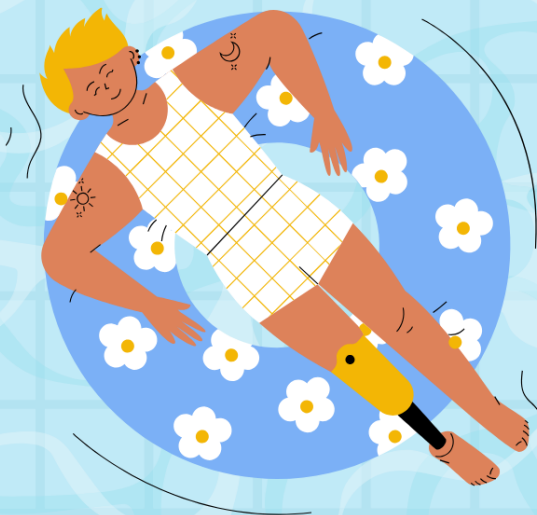


POOLSIDE PLATES

**Free meals for any kids
under age 16 in Lester Prairie**

- Food provided by Hollywood Catering
- Meals served at the Picnic Shelter at the 2nd Avenue Park, Lester Prairie
- Serving 12-1pm or until gone!

JUNE 10TH
JULY 15TH
AUGUST 19TH



SPONSORED BY:

- Bethel Lutheran Church of Lester Prairie Endowment Grant
- Lester Prairie Youth Task Force
- Lester Prairie Lions
- St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Lester Prairie
- St. Paul's Sandwich Ministry- Lester Prairie

Any questions please contact:
Terri Helland- terrihelland@gmail.com

AUGUST 2026

[illegible]

Bulletin Submission Deadline: Wednesday Noon | **Newsletter Deadline:** 25th of the month

Online Worship: <http://www.facebook.com/lpbethel/live> | Online Calendar: www.lpbethel.org

Church Directory: www.lpbethel.org To access the Directory, click Contact us, Member Directory, and enter the password. If you need the password to view the directory, would like a hard copy (some copies are available in the narthex), or if your contact information has changed, please contact the church office.

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES, JULY 13, 2026

Council Members Present: President: Dave Gohl, Vice President: Jean Hallberg, Secretary: Julie Hanson, Treasurer: Jill Duncan, Financial Secretary: Stacy Meyer, Finance Board: Sara Jepsen & Peggy Wick, Education Board: Katie Radtke and Jan Smith, Trustee Board: Jeff Hanson & Bryon Weisenburger, and Pastor Molly.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:02 P.M. by President Dave Gohl, followed by an opening prayer by Pastor Molly.

Council Business:

A **motion** was made by Bryon Weisenburger and seconded by Jean Hallberg to approve the agenda. **Motion carried.**

Pastor Molly:

- Did a home visitation.
- Led weekly Bible Study.
- Updated the bi-weekly "Bethel Happenings & Celebrations" hanging in the bathrooms.
- Reminder: Bethel will be hosting the Crow River Conference Annual meeting on Feb. 21st at 2:00 P.M. We will need volunteers to make snacks (cookies, bars, coffee, water, etc.) and serve.
- Led monthly worship meeting – **REMINDER:** Outdoor services will be this Sunday, July 19th & **Sunday, Aug. 16th. Bring lawn chairs/blankets!**
- Took a Continuing Education trip June 23rd to July 5th to the Iona community in Scotland. We spent time exploring some creative and participative ways to worship. I brought back some interesting liturgy wording I'll throw in now and again. I've ordered a hymnal that is being published in December. Some of the songs I've already shared with Jan Smith, and I hope we can look through this more once it arrives and find more songs to share with the congregation.

New Business:

1. Garden Shed: Emily Koehler proposed the thought/idea of having a garden shed on church property. Discussion was had in relation to insurance, security factor, pricing, and delivery. Sara Jepsen to check with the insurance company. Bryon Weisenburger to check with the City of Lester Prairie regarding placing this structure.
2. Council Retreat: The retreat will be one full day (Saturday, October 10th) 9:00 A.M to 5:00 P.M. to share new ideas. Two groups have been assembled and assigned their "homework". Mission & vision statements, strategic planning goals, ground rules, etc.

Old Business: No old business to report.

Secretary Minutes:

- A **motion** was made by Sara Jepsen and seconded by Jan Smith to approve the previous month's secretary minutes. **Motion carried.**

Financial Secretary Report:

- A **motion** was made by Peggy Wick and seconded by Jan Smith to approve the previous month's financial secretary's report. **Motion carried.**

Treasurer's Report:

- Three CDs matured July 10th. These were alternated for their renewal dates. Two are still in place as collateral for a loan if we need to use them. The bank is working on a cash management platform and online banking system that suits Bethel's needs. A **motion** was made by Stacey Meyer and seconded by Sara Jepsen to approve the Treasurer's report.

Board Reporting:

1. Education: Vacation Bible School August 2nd, 9th & 16th. Sign-up sheets are up in the Narthex. Curriculum is laid out for volunteers. Just a reminder - VBS is for families. Look in the church bulletin for updates. Advertising will be done with posters, Facebook, and at Pool Side Plates (free swim). Sunday School needs two teachers to split the ages up.
2. Finance: Sara Jepsen reported having a real estate manager come and appraise Bethel's lot for a dollar value. Discussed budget cuts and fundraising. We need a subcommittee to create fundraising.
3. Trustee: Jeff Hanson reported that a garden hose is hooked up to the dehumidifier and leads to the mechanical room. Underground wiring has been completed, and solar panels are in position on the Bethel sign by the county road. Also had to glue a few letters back on the sign. A small mini raised garden bed was built for the float. Thank you to those who helped! Bryon Weisenburger reported that he installed a battery-operated doorbell with a chime. For assistance, ring the bell when the door is locked.

A **motion** was made by Sara Jepsen and seconded by Bryon Weisenburger to close the meeting. **Motion carried**
The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer and Closing Benediction by President Dave Gohl.

Respectfully submitted by Secretary Julie Hanson

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

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 below 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: 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, text the dollar amount to [866-298-7547](tel: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.**

BETHEL WISH LIST

The council has compiled a list of items for our church and congregation, including both wishes and needs.

1. **Riding lawn mower:**
pre-owned (\$2,000-\$4,000)
new-\$13,000- \$18,000)
2. **Security camera system:**
(\$1,200-\$5,000)

Items donated so far—doorbell, paper shredder, battery-operated weed whip, and two restroom paper towel dispensers

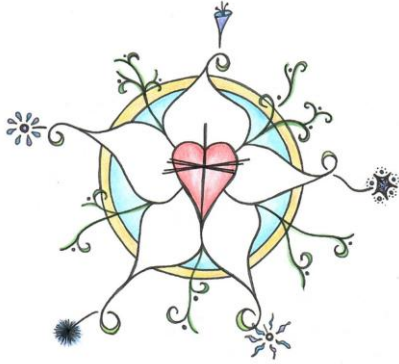
Please keep in mind that any donations for these items should be in addition to your regular contributions that help us maintain our budget. Your support is greatly appreciated, and donations can be made anonymously. For more information, please feel free to contact any member of the Executive Board.



Financial giving is one piece of stewardship, but your time is just as valuable. An hour helping with a meal, showing up to a work day, or sitting with someone who is lonely — that is stewardship too.

Scan here
to give.





BETHEL'S 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.

CONTACT US

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BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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PLACE
STAMP
HERE

Recipient Name
Street Address
City, ST ZIP Code