



# BETHEL MESSENGER

Bethel Lutheran Church Newsletter

MAY 2024

## FROM PASTOR MOLLY

Hello beloved Bethel members!

The saga of questions and answers continues. As you read the questions and my answers I encourage you to think about those questions yourself, and maybe next Lent you'd be willing to be interviewed!

### **Where do you find joy in your everyday life?**

I find joy in the big and little things. It's easy to be overwhelmed by everything in life. Sometimes – and I do mean just sometimes – when I'm feeling incredibly overwhelmed, stressed out, and easily angered – I stop myself and take a deep breath and just look around me. If I'm outside I sit down and just enjoy the wind blowing through the trees and across my face, listening to the birds sing, dogs bark, and cars drive by. If I'm inside I sit and shut my eyes and just breathe, listening to the silence and focusing on calming my body. In those moments I find quiet joy in the noise of nature outside or the quiet stillness inside. But sometimes I don't manage to make myself stop and find joy because there is no quiet stillness because kids are there laughing, screaming, whatever and there is too much to get done. If I can manage it in those moments of complete, noisy chaos with the kids, I just watch them, and try to find the humor in a teen having a teen moment, or joy in the fact that the siblings are all getting along and having fun, laughing together. There are so many things to be frustrated, angry, and stressed about every day, but there are also small joys and I try to notice them when I can because those are the moments worth living for.

### **When you are faced with something difficult to do – how do you approach it?**

This one is hard. It really just depends on what the difficult thing is. If it involves another person I try to be honest, open, and caring, though sometimes I have to take some time to myself to center myself and calm down before I can be open and caring with another. If it doesn't involve another person, then I tend to use a rip off the band aid approach. Better to just get whatever it is over with as quickly and efficiently as possible.

### **What does it mean to you to be human?**

It means God created me to be emotional, to love and care for God, creation, and one another. It means that there will be difficult days, when nothing seems to go right, and I feel like I have failed in everything I've tried. It means there will be wonderful days, when everything goes perfectly, and I feel like everything has been orchestrated by a master hand. It means days of feeling alone and forgotten, and days of feeling loved and seen. It means that I am both a saint and a sinner. It means that I own nothing, and God owns everything, that I am just taking care of everything God has given me, as a steward – taking care of the income I receive wisely, investing some of it, donating some of it, spending some of it; taking care of my children, husband, parents, siblings, and all the people who have entered my life by loving them, showing them kindness, forgiving them when they wrong me, and doing my best not to wrong them; taking care of the world around me by picking up litter, letting the wild stay wild, being as energy efficient as I can be – all this while knowing that I'm inevitably going to misuse the income I receive at some point – investing in the wrong thing, not donating enough, spending too much; knowing that I'm inevitably going to wrong the people I'm meant to care for at some point even if it's unintentionally; knowing that I'm going to hurt the world I'm meant to protect at some point all because I'm an emotional being, I'm both a saint and a sinner.

Blessings to you all!

Pastor Molly B. Wills

# 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

May 16 & 30

2:30 pm-4:00 pm

Where:

Bethel Lutheran  
Church parking lot

## Sunday morning worship in the country!

WHAT: Outdoor Worship Service & Potluck Picnic

WHERE: Bergen Lutheran Church site

WHEN: Sunday, June 30, 10:00 am

Join us in the country for worship, potluck, and fellowship! Bring lawn chairs and games, and a dish to share. We hope to see you there! This worship service will be the only one on this day and note the time change.

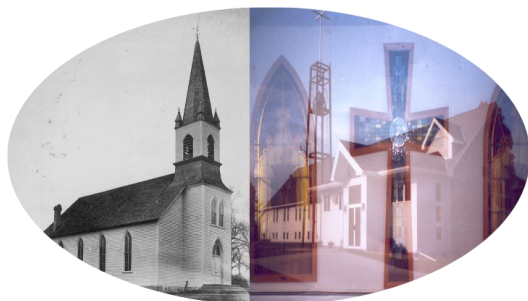
### DIRECTIONS:

Go south of Lester Prairie on County Road 1. At the first curve, turn left on Babcock Ave. After two miles, the road turns to gravel and becomes Bergen Road. Continue south on Bergen Road, approximately 3 1/2 miles, and you will come to an intersection. The church site is on the right-hand side of the intersection.



## Celebration Bank

The Celebration Bank will return in June, July, and August! Our goal is \$100 to purchase an item(s) from the GLLM wish list!



## Women's Retreat

Planning is starting for the 2024 Women's Retreat at Green Lake Bible Camp. Join us for a planning meeting on Thursday, May 16, at 6:30 pm. Bring your ideas and help us plan this incredible event!

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

## Hymn Notes

In the article "History of Hymns: Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service" by Sarah Bilaye-Benibo, the following information gives insight into the thoughts of Albert F. Bayly who wrote the text for this hymn. "Lord, Whose Love Through Humble Service" consists of four stanzas that describe the servant leadership of Christ, while prayerfully encouraging others to follow his example. The first stanza focuses solely on the work of Christ who "did not come to be served, but to serve and to give life as a ransom for man." (Mark 10:45, NIV). In the second stanza, by repeating the word *still*, Bayly emphasizes the present reality of marginalized people. He petitions the Holy Spirit to do the work of Christ and heal them; then he puts the onus on us. The third stanza asks God to *grant us vision*, so that we're able to see the burdens of the weak. In the fourth stanza Bayly closes by calling out the recipients of our service: "the child, the youth, [and] the aged." He implies that the function of worship is an act that leads people out of the four walls of the church. Being the hands and feet of Jesus, we are all empowered and mandated to love, hope, restore to health, have goodwill, comfort, counsel, aid, and give peace.

—Hymn of the Day, Sunday, May 5, 2024

<https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/articles/history-of-hymns-lord-whose-love-through-humble-service>

## 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 (June 9, July 14, and/or 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.

## Garden plots available for rent!

We're expanding the garden, and you're invited to join us! Each plot is approximately 180 sq. ft., and rent is \$20 for the season. Renters will be responsible for the care and upkeep of their plots, harvesting their goods, and helping with clean-up at the end of the season. If you want more details or want to reserve a plot, contact Emily Koehler, Pete Hallberg, or any other member of the Garden Committee.

## 2024 SW MN SWO

### Convention WELCA

### Saturday, May 4

Theme: "Be the Light"

Verse: Psalm 82:4

Hymn: "Christ, Be Our Light"

The convention will begin with worship w/ holy communion at 9:00 am, with Rev. Heather Culuris officiating. Guest Speaker: Aliyah Ewing, Terebinth Refugee. Registration: \$40, 8:00 am-4:00 pm, Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, 301 N Lincoln ST, Redwood Falls, MN 56283. Questions? Contact Diane Horsman



Three Bethel youth receive Bibles!

AVERY, KAELYN, & BECKETT

But he answered, 'It is written, "One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God."'



# FAITH & FELLOWSHIP

## Happy Birthday!

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.



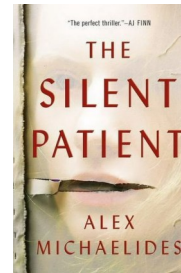
## Celebrate your Baptism!



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.

## Bethel Book Club

May-*The Silent Patient*  
by Alex Michaelides



A shocking psychological thriller of a woman's act of violence against her husband—and the therapist obsessed with uncovering her motive.

## Upcoming books

June-*The Heaven & Earth Grocery Store* by James McBride  
July-no meeting  
August-*An Immense World*  
by Ed Yong

## Fellowship by the Fire

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Fellowship by the Fire will return once a month this summer on Wednesdays, June 26, July 24, & 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!



## Looking Ahead: June Bible Study for Women



**WHAT:** WELCA sponsored Women's Bible Study next month!

**DATES:** Wednesdays in June (June 5, 12, 19, 26)

**TIME:** 7:00-8:00 pm

**PLACE:** We will meet at the fire pit in the church yard for the first gathering.

**FOCUS:** We will explore the scriptures, share personal experiences, and encourage each other in fellowship.

*Please feel free to bring a friend!*

If you are interested or have questions, ask Jan Smith. (Also, let her know if you need child care during that time.)



# 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 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](http://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**.

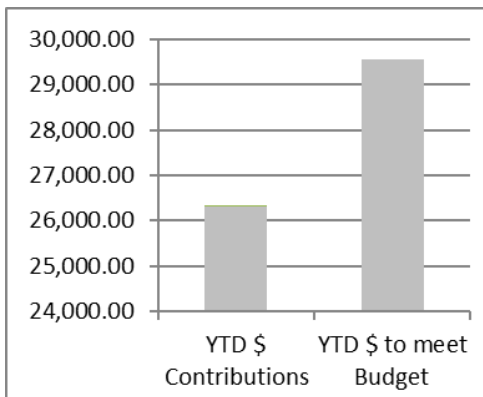
### 3. Bethel offering envelope

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](mailto:finsec@lpbethel.org).

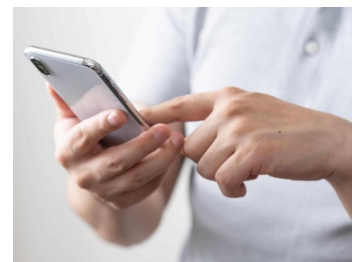
## “Noisy” offering

A second “Noisy” offering will be taken on the 4<sup>th</sup> 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!

For the Month of March 2024	
Weekly Av. Attendance	71
\$ Contributions	11,653.40
\$ to meet Budget	9,853.52
\$ Difference	1,799.88
For the Year 2024	
YTD \$ Contributions	26,303.49
YTD \$ to meet Budget	29,560.56
YTD \$ Difference	-3,257.07



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



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



**Bethel's Financial Update**

# MAY 2024

SUN.	MON.	TUES.	WED.	THURS.	FRI.	SAT.
4p* Resplandor de Gloria-every Sunday			1 (office hours) 1-4:30p quilting 6:30p choir 7:30p WELCA mtg. May Day	2 (office hours)	3	4
5 9a worship 10a Sunday school/ adult education, 4p*	6 (office hours) 1:30p Bible study 6p council mtg.	7	8 (office hours) 1-4:30p quilting 2p worship mtg. 6:30 choir	9 (office hours)	10	11
12 9a worship w/ graduates 10a Sun. school/ conf. class/adult ed., grad. reception, 4p* Mother's Day	13 (office hours) No Bible study (Pr. Molly @ Festival of Homiletics all week)	14	15 (office hours) 1-4:30p quilting 6:30p choir 7:30p book club discussion	16 (office hours) 2:30p-4p MEFS Mobile Outreach 6:30p Women's Retreat mtg.	17	18 Carl O. graduation party noon-5p
19 Day of Pentecost 9a praise worship 10a Sunday school/ adult education, 4p*	20 (office hours) 1:30p Bible study	21	22 (office hours) 12:30p worship mtg. 1-4:30p quilting 6:30p choir	23 (office hours)	24	25  newsletter deadline
26 9a worship w/noisy offering for campers 10:30a Bethel BF, 4p*	27 (office closed) No Bible study  Memorial Day	28	29 (office hours) 1-4:30p quilting 6:30p choir	30 (office hours) 2:30p-4p MEFS Mobile Outreach	31	1

- **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:** 25<sup>th</sup> of the month
- **Most up-to-date Calendar version:** Go to [www.lpbethel.org](http://www.lpbethel.org)
- **Church Directory:** Go to [www.lpbethel.org](http://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 bulletin board outside the church office. Sign up for a month or be a substitute! No experience necessary! Questions? Contact the chairperson.

# BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH | COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES | MONDAY, APRIL 8, 2023

**Council Members Present:** President: Ron Foust; Vice President: Peggy Wick; Secretary: Cathy Houg; Treasurer: Jill Duncan; Finance Board: Sara Jepsen; Education Board: Pete Hallberg; Trustee Board: Dave Gohl; Pr. Molly Wills

## **Call to Order:**

- The meeting was called to order at 6:00 by President Ron Foust followed a prayer led by Pastor Molly.

## **Council Business:**

- A **motion** was made by Sara Jepsen and seconded by Cathy Houg to approve the agenda with one addition under new business. Motion carried.
- Pastor Molly Wills reported that she will be attending the Festival of Homiletics on Monday, May 13, 2024. She attended the Youth Task Force planning meeting and the Youth Social at City Hall. Feedback on the Lenten Services and Maundy Thursday Service has been positive. She is working on a funeral packet to hand out to families with information and guidelines to follow when a loved one passes.

## **Old Business:**

- The Easter Brunch served by the Church Council served 90-100 people with \$375 raised for McLeod County Foodshelf.
- A motion was made by Sara Jepsen and seconded by Pete Hallberg extending the agreement with Resplendor de Gloria to rent Bethel Church for their worship on Sundays from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Motion carried. "The Chosen" group will explore options into working around this schedule.

## **New Business:**

- After some discussion, a stewardship campaign was tabled until next meeting.
- Stove replacements were discussed. Pete Hallberg will work with the WELCA group/Kitchen Committee to bring a recommendation to the Church Council for approval.

## **Secretary Minutes:**

- A **motion** was made by Jill Duncan and seconded by Ron Foust to accept March's secretary's report. Motion carried.

## **Treasurer Reports:**

- A **motion** was made by Sara Jepsen and seconded by Pete Hallberg to accept March's treasurer's report. Motion carried.

## **Financial Secretary Report:**

- A **motion** was made by Sara Jepsen and seconded by Cathy Houg to accept March's financial secretary's report. Motion carried.

## **Reports:**

### **1) Education Board:**

- A motion was made by Sara Jepsen and seconded by Cathy Houg to purchase a child protection Ministry Mobilizer Bundle for \$149. Motion carried. This company facilitates background screening and child safety training. Each person will need to pay a nominal fee to receive training.
- Three young people will receive first communion on Sunday, April 14, 2024.
- The third graders' Bibles have been received, but a date for presentation is still pending.

### **2) Finance Board:**

- There was no business from Finance Board.

### **3) Trustees:**

- Water that leaked into the basement Sunday School room was cleaned up. Because of concern about mold, the Trustees will get an appraisal to assess damage and provide suggestions for remediation. The Council agreed that the Sunday School class should be moved out of that room and into the room across the hall (Steve Klobe's old Sunday School room.)
- The Trustees are getting quotes to repaint the bell tower.
- Security and Sound from St. Bonifacius has checked and hopefully corrected the distortion in the sound system during live streaming.

## **Communications:**

- The Trustees will set a date for Spring Clean-Up and provide a congregational sign-up sheet.
- Cemetery Clean-Up is April 27, 2024, with people meeting at the original cemetery.
- On April 14, 2024, the Mid Minnesota Band will perform at Bethel Lutheran preceded by a luncheon from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
- The next Church Council meeting was changed from May 13 to May 6, 2024.

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

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

Respectfully submitted: Cathy Houg, Council Secretary

## Church spring cleaning jobs posted

A list of spring cleaning jobs for the church is in the narthex. Please sign up for a job(s) to complete at your convenience. Everyone's help is greatly appreciated! Many hands make light work!



## Cemetery lawn mowing job

The Cemetery Committee is looking for someone to mow both cemeteries this summer. This is a paid position. Contact Jerry C. or Mary Lou T. for more information or if you are interested in the job.

## CONTACT US

### Bethel Lutheran Church

77 Lincoln AVE N | PO Box 207

Lester Prairie, MN 55354

OFFICE 320-395-2125

[bethellutheranlp@gmail.com](mailto:bethellutheranlp@gmail.com)

## DON'T FORGET TO STAY CONNECTED!

[www.lpbethel.org](http://www.lpbethel.org)

[www.facebook.com/lpbethel](https://www.facebook.com/lpbethel)

### PASTOR

Rev. Molly Wills

320-339-8169

[pastor@lpbethel.org](mailto: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