



BETHEL MESSENGER

Bethel Lutheran Church Newsletter

AUGUST 2024

FROM PASTOR MOLLY

Hello beloved Bethel members!

The saga of questions and answers continues after the break in July. Remember as you read I encourage you to think about these questions for yourself! They are a great use for journaling. And just a forewarning the questions for this month end up taking you down darker, emotionally turbulent roads. So, let's begin...

What is it like to be you right now?

Well, at this moment as I write, to be me feels like a storm raging inside and outside me, with wind rushing every which way, leaves and branches getting ripped off of trees, and rain swirling and pelting, beating and bruising. Some days are just terrible, horrible, no good, very bad days – to quote a children's book. And yet, even as the storm rages, I sit at my table and look out my window and see the wonderful sunlight filtering through the trees, creating beautiful shadow and light play over my garden and I feel held in a moment of peace and calm.

When you are afraid, angry, or feeling down on yourself what do you do to feel better?

Generally, in those moments I write letters to God. To cry and rage in my writing, asking all the questions that when boiled down become just one big WHY? And after I've released all the rage, the pain, and the frustration on God, and I am feeling emotionally drained, I will ask God for help in my letter, I will pray for peace, for comfort, and love. Then I'll finish my letter, shut my journal, and just sit either with my eyes closed or looking outside listening to music or I physically go outside and just sit, listening to the sound of nature surrounding me, finding some calm, peace, and comfort in the emotionally drained feeling, knowing God has taken it all and is there with me.

When you are feeling overwhelmed or like life just keeps throwing curveballs at you, what do you do to cope with the stress?

Again, I'll write a letter to God. Or I'll paint on a big canvas, because there is something very cathartic in painting on a big canvas, watching the colors cover up the stark white, creating something crazy, chaotic, and abstract or real, watching the image come to life under my hands. I always end up praying, telling God about my life, my day, finding peace in the midst of the chaos. Other times I go outside - gardening, ripping up weeds, turning over our compost pile, inspecting interesting bugs or birds, collecting and burning branches littering our yard, and taking some time for just myself, enjoying God's creation around me.

In the midst of *your* busy, chaotic summers, I hope you all are finding moments of peace, of calm, to talk to God, to feel God's presence, and to remember that you are a beloved child. Each of you is an incredibly and wonderfully made person that God made especially to live in this amazing world. You are special, you are loved, and you belong – remind yourself of that in those moments of stress, the moments of doubt, anger, and pain – you are God's beloved child always, and God will never abandon you.

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

August 15 & 29
2:30 pm-4:00 pm

Where:

Bethel Lutheran
Church parking lot

Dive into the "River of Life" Intergenerational VBS



August 5-7, 5:00-8:00 pm

There will be engaging activities, enriching lessons, and a free meal every night! Volunteers are needed to help make this event a success! *Because this event is intergenerational, you do not need a background check to volunteer.* Look for the sign-up sheets for food donations and volunteering. Scan the posted flyer or go to <http://tinyurl.com/VBS2024BethelLP> to register. Questions can be directed to Emily Koehler or Pete Hallberg.

School Kit List

- 1) four 70-sheet notebooks, wide or college-ruled, 8 x 10 1/2 paper (no loose-leaf paper)
- 2) one 30 cm ruler (or a ruler with centimeters on one side and inches on the other)
- 3) one pencil sharpener
- 4) one 2 1/2" pink eraser
- 5) one blunt-point scissors (Fiskars brand)
- 6) five ballpoint pens, blue or black ink (no gel ink)
- 7) one box of 24 crayons (Crayola brand)
- 8) five unsharpened #2 pencils with erasers

Preparation for back-to-school kits collection



It's time to start shopping the school supply sales! Bethel WELCA will again have a school supplies collection for Lutheran World Relief to distribute to children worldwide soon. We anticipate using a Thrivent grant to purchase school bags and supplemental supplies.

Crow River Habitat for Humanity volunteers needed!

Volunteers are needed for two projects taking place in McLeod County. Construction site volunteers-no experience necessary, meal donors for a crew of approximately 7 people or monetary donations, which can be made at <https://www.crhfh.org/donate/> or mailed to Crow River Habitat for Humanity, 1020 Highway 7 W, Suite A, Hutchinson, MN 55350. For more information see the poster on the bulletin board or email kelly@crhfh.org or call 320-587-8868 .



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

Spirit Ride & Stride

Experience the beauty of creation and the joy of fellowship. Spirit Ride & Stride-An Ordinary Time Retreat, August 15-19, 2024, Camp House, Participant Fee: \$95 adult/night, \$65 youth/night Reconnect with your faith routines as summer nears the end and we prepare for the busyness of fall. Camp House staff invite you to a time of rest and renewal, with opportunities for worship, conversation, a warm sauna, a refreshing swim, great food, and fellowship in the lodge. Stay at camp, or venture out each day to explore all that the Arrowhead of Minnesota has offers.

National Night Out

Join your community for the annual National Night Out on Tuesday, August 6, from 5:00-7:00 pm. This is an event that promotes police-community partnerships, neighborhood camaraderie and safer communities. Bethel will be serving treats at Downtown Square Park on Central Ave. (VBS plans to take part in this event.)



Pop-Up Choir

Are you interested in singing in the choir? Meet at 8:15 am, in the sanctuary, on Sunday, August 11, to rehearse the song selected for that day.



Celebration Bank

Bring your change [or bills] to worship, and tell us what you're celebrating! We are raising funds to purchase items on the GLLM wish list!

Prairie Days 2024 Bethel Burger Stand Volunteers

Front row: Lachlynn, Pastor Molly, Jean, Carolyn, Cathy
Back row: Diane, Jeff, Carol, Nicole, Jan, Peggy, Lloyd



FAITH & FELLOWSHIP



Happy Birthday!

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

Celebrate your Baptism!

8/8 Felicity G.
8/9 Kyla H.
8/16 Sarah R.
8/16 Corrine B.
8/19 Jerry C.
8/19 Nancy P.
8/30 Katie A.
8/31 Alexa L.
Jeff H.

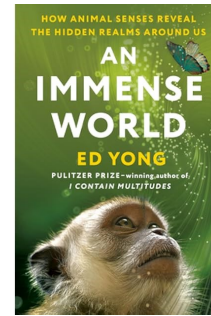


Bethel Book Club

August-An Immense World

by Ed Yong

Discussion date: 8/21, 7 pm



The earth teems with sights, textures, sounds and vibrations, smells, tastes, electric and magnetic fields. But every animal is enclosed

within its unique sensory bubble, perceiving but a tiny sliver of an immense world. This book immerses you in an unimaginable realm, offering a glimpse into the world through the eyes of other creatures.

Fellowship by the Fire



The last Fellowship by the Fire will be Wednesday, August 21 beginning at 6:00 pm, around the fire pit. WELCA will supply hotdogs and buns. Please bring a dish to

share, lawn chair or blanket, a lawn game (optional), and your friends!

Bethel Women's Retreat

You are invited to join in the fellowship and fun!
If you haven't before, now is the time!

Friday-Sunday, September 13-15, 2024, Medayto Lodge at Green Lake Bible Camp in Spicer, MN. The retreat is for Bethel women of all ages, and their invited friends, relatives, and neighbors. The cost is \$75 for the full weekend, which covers lodging, meals, and programming. New for 2024—Saturday only for \$50, which covers two meals and programming. Scholarships (full or partial) are available. The deadline to register is August 25. See the display in the narthex for more details of this exciting weekend!



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

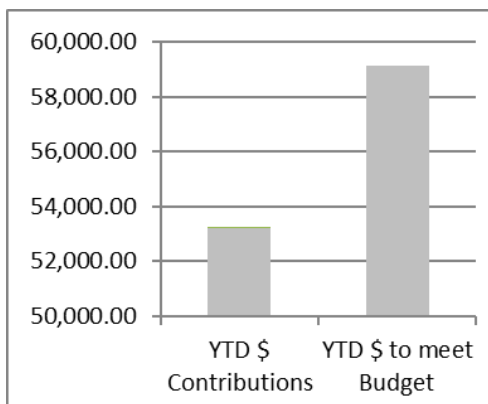
scan here



"Noisy"
offering every
4th Sunday of
the month

The "Noisy" offering can will be located at the back 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 Summer Camperships for Green Lake Bible Camp.

For the Month of June 2024	
Weekly Av. Attendance	46
\$ Contributions	8,854.40
\$ to meet Budget	9,853.52
\$ Difference	-999.12
For the Year 2024	
YTD \$ Contributions	53,218.30
YTD \$ to meet Budget	59,121.12
YTD \$ Difference	-5,902.82



Bethel's
Financial
Update

AUGUST 2024

SUN.	MON.	TUES.	WED.	THURS.	FRI.	SAT.
*drop change in the celebration bank this month! (goal: donate GLLM wish list items)	THE CHURCH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED LABOR DAY 9/2		BULLETIN DEADLINE: NOON WEDNESDAYS NEWSLETTER DEADLINE: FOR SEPT/OCT 9/11	1	2	3
4 (Pent 11) 9a worship 10a fellowship 4p Resplandor de Gloria	5 (office closed) NO Bible study 5-8p RIVER OF LIFE VBS-all are welcome!	6 1:30p Bible study; 5-7p National Night Out/Bethel treats 5-8p VBS-all are welcome!	7 (office hours) 12:30p worship & music mtg. 1-4:30p quilting 5-8p VBS-all are welcome!	8	9	10
11 (Pent 12) 9a worship w/pop-up choir 10a fellowship 4p Resplandor de Gloria	12 (office hours) 1:30p Bible study 6p council mtg.	13 (Pastor Molly vacation 13-23)	14 (office closed) 1-4:30p quilting	15 2:30p-4p MEFS Mobile Outreach	16	17
18 (Pent 13) (Pastor Susan E.) 9a worship 10a fellowship 4p Resplandor de Gloria	19 (office closed) NO Bible study	20	21 (office closed) 1-4:30p quilting 6p Fellowship by the Fire 7p book club	22	23	24
25 (Pent 14) 9a praise outdoor worship/noisy offering-camperships 10a fellowship 10:30a Bethel BF 4p Resplandor de Gloria	26 (office hours) 1:30p Bible study	27	28 (office hours) 1-4:30p quilting	29 2:30p-4p MEFS Mobile Outreach	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 for a month or be a substitute! No experience necessary! Questions? Contact the chairperson listed.

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH | COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES | MONDAY, JULY 15, 2024

Council Members Present: President: Ron Foust; Secretary: Cathy Houg; Treasurer: Jill Duncan; Financial Secretary: Stacy Meyer; Finance Board: Mitch Overbye and Sara Jepsen; Education Board: Pete Hallberg and Emily Koehler; Trustee Board: Dave Gohl; Pastor Molly Wills

Call to Order:

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

Council Business:

- A **motion** was made by Emily Koehler and seconded by Mitch Overbye to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.
- Pastor Wills reported that worship at the Bergen site was well attended. Bethel members worked at the Prairie Days Burger Stand. She has visited homebound and hospitalized members. Monday Bible Study Group continues. Spiritual practices have begun during worship once a month. She has attended a first-call meeting. Pastor has been working on updating the church's website by completing the "Contact Us" section so people can send prayer requests and other concerns and by adding the QR Code for giving online.

Old Business:

- The church credit card recommendation was tabled as the Finance Board coordinates choosing and activating a card.
- By consensus, a photo directory was tabled until there was more interest.
- A Child Protection Policy Clarification and Checklist was presented and explained by the Education Board. They will be editing the policy, if needed, as it is implemented.
- Church Council members are asked to review their respective job descriptions, noting any changes that are needed. The Executive Board will then be reviewing and updating these job descriptions in the fall.

New Business:

- There was no New Business.

Secretary Minutes:

- A **motion** was made by Ron Foust and seconded by Pete Hallberg to accept June's secretary's report. Motion carried.

Treasurer Reports:

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

Financial Secretary Report:

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

Reports:

Education Board:

- Vacation Bible School will be held on August 5, 6 and 7, 2024, from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m.
- They have been working on writing and implementing the Child Protection Policy.

Finance Board:

- The Finance Board will be working to complete work on obtaining a credit card for the church.

Trustees:

- The Trustees are in contact with Certa Pro Painters as to scheduling the sandblasting, undercoating (rust prohibitor) and painting of the bell tower.

Communications:

- The Executive Board and Pastor Molly will be reviewing and updating the Bethel's Constitution and Bi-laws this fall.
- Pastor Molly will be on vacation August 13 – 23, 2024. Pastor Susan will be "on call" for emergencies and will be serving as pulpit supply on August 18, 2024.

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

The next regular Council meeting will be held on Monday, August 12, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted: Cathy Houg, Council Secretary



NATIONAL LUTHERAN CHOIR

Join the NLC for the 39th season, *Healing: A Sacred Story*, to explore five dimensions of wholeness and wellness and to see featured collaborations with guest artists such as Cantus, Brian Newhouse, and more. "We are called to practice acts of healing in this world.", said Artistic Director Jennaya Robinson, "Choral music is the vehicle through which all people can find a sense of belonging and enliven their faith." Season passes, tickets, and more are available at NLCA.com.

CONTACT US

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Lester Prairie, MN 55354

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bethellutheranlp@gmail.com

DON'T FORGET TO STAY CONNECTED!

www.lpbethel.org

www.facebook.com/lpbethel

PASTOR

Rev. Molly Wills

320-339-8169

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