

# Bethel Blaze

June 2024

*Sharing Christ's love with a big heart*

## GATHER, GROW, GO: SUMMER BEGINS

### JOIN US FOR WORSHIP

#### In Person

#### Sunday Mornings:

8:30 am and 10:45 am\*

\*10:30 am

June 18th—August 27th

#### Online

The 8:30 service is  
livestreamed  
on our YouTube channel.

Check our website  
for the link!

You can also view the service  
at your convenience.

Past services are also available  
on Northfield's public  
television station channels  
180 & 187

No cable is required.

There are four opportunities  
to watch:

Monday 2:00 pm

Tuesday 1:30 pm

Wednesday 7:00 pm

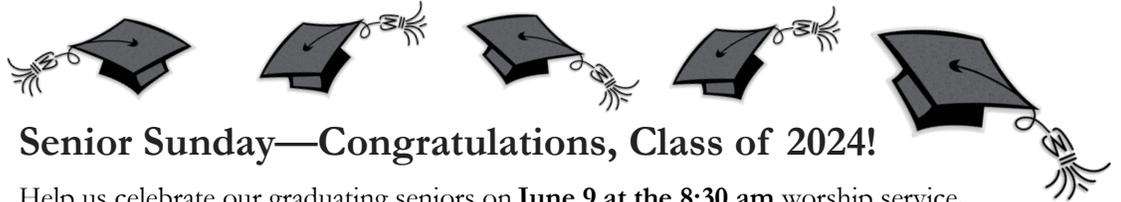
Saturday 7:00 am



### Pride in the Park!

June is Pride month! Celebrate the  
LGBTQIA+ community and the freedom  
to live fully into who God creates us to be  
by joining us for Pride in the Park,  
**Saturday, June 1, from noon to 4 pm.**

Be sure to look for the Bethel booth (hosted by our Reconciled in Christ (RIC) team)!



### Senior Sunday—Congratulations, Class of 2024!

Help us celebrate our graduating seniors on **June 9 at the 8:30 am** worship service.

**Grace Albright**

*TBA*

**Ethan Arndt**

*Luther College*

**Sam Boardman**

*University of Wisconsin Madison*

**Maddie Bussmann**

*Concordia College Moorhead*

**Greta Christopherson**

*Concordia College Moorhead*

**Tianna Foster**

*University of St. Thomas*

**Ty Frank**

*Owner of Frank's Moving*

**Joe Grant**

*St. Olaf College*

**Luke Paul Guggisberg**

*MSU Mankato*

**Emily Haefner**

*Gustavus Adolphus College*

**Josie Hauck**

*Rotary Denmark / St. Olaf College*

**Jackson Hessian**

*University of Minnesota Twin Cities*

**Gabriel Thomas Heinritz**

*University of Wisconsin River Falls*

**Lauren Holz**

*University of North Dakota*

**Sebastian Jenkinson**

*South Central College*

**Inga Johnson**

*University of Montana*

**Aubrey Mann**

*University of Arizona*

**Tegan Mellgren**

*St. John's University*

**Luke Middlebrooks**

*gap year*

**Eva Ness**

*University of Wisconsin Madison*

**Alyson Panettiere**

*University of Wisconsin Madison*

**Kyan Rauk**

*South Dakota State University*

**Aaron Reisetter**

*TBA*

**Ingrid Rustad**

*St. Olaf College*

**Carter Sommer**

*TBA*

**Carsten Matthew Walter**

*Grinnell College*

**Camden Waters**

*Lawrence University*



**Pastor Inger Hanson**  
(she/her)  
pastor.inger@bethelnorthfield.org  
(preferred for non-urgent communication)

**office**  
507-786-8875  
**cell**  
307-248-0438

**office hours**  
by appointment Tuesdays,  
Wednesdays, and Thursdays

**days off**  
Mondays & Saturday

## PASTORAL REFLECTIONS

from Pastor Inger

*“The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning.”*

We will hear these verses from Lamentations 3:22-23a on the fourth Sunday in June, but they already speak to me as summer begins. While I’ve always been a morning person, my “every morning” has a particular shape these days. The ceaseless energy of my six month old German Shorthaired Pointer puppy, Paolo Sarpi, means heading to the Dundas dog park at 6:30 am, rain or shine. There is an informal dog walking community that I find marvelous in its ordinariness – the teasing between owners who have been meeting up daily for years, the welcome for those who come less frequently or just once. Though there are pauses to pick up after the dogs or referee stick ownership, life in all its fullness is shared: joys, challenges and sorrows; training tips, commiseration, and celebration. And I love how even though we come every day (often twice a day), Paolo points me anew (literally) to the wonder of God’s creation: the finches and robins, the glories of long grass and even the mud pit.

After a morning at the dog park, my eyes more easily focus on the wonders and mercies at Bethel, rain or shine. I experience God’s love flowing through the constants: A talented staff. Dedicated committees. Traditions like youth trips. Parishioners willing to share the joys, challenges and sorrows. And yet Bethel is never boring – there’s always something new even in the “ordinary time” of the liturgical year. Last year, we were calling a new associate pastor. This year, we’re rearranging our welcome area and preparing for sanctuary artwork by an Indigenous artist.

This June, may you too be blessed with the equivalent of dog park experiences, that help you see the world through open eyes (that see what needs to be picked up or refereed) but also give you a lens of trust and gratitude.

## BEFRIENDERS

by Marci Groenewold



BeFriender visits often involve those listed in the prayers of the church. We visit to let them know we care and they are not alone in their struggles. As a formal extension of the pastoral ministry of Bethel Lutheran Church, we come as ambassadors of Christ knowing we can’t fix or solve anything. We come to share the load, making it easier to carry.

The primary focus of a BeFriender visit is on the person being visited. First, and foremost, a BeFriender listens. This allows the other person to talk about their situation using their own words and timeline. Silence is allowed. It may be that their life experience has deconstructed their faith and they long to have it back. We know God works through our prayers and God is present when we pray. How, then, does God work through our prayers? How does prayer fit in a BeFriender visit?

Prayer changes us and prompts us to respond. Each week members of the military and those in long term treatment or care are listed in the bulletin. Other members in acute care and those bereaved are read aloud. The complete list is found in the Wednesday “This Week @ Bethel” email. These Bethel folk have asked for our prayers which, in turn, can lead us to action. When we send a card or text, make a phone call, drop off a meal or mow a lawn we are letting this person know someone cares about them and that they are not alone in the journey.

As the story goes, a little boy was patiently praying with his Sunday School teacher. When he finally heard her say “Amen”, he exclaimed “Alright! Let’s do something!” Prayer prompts us to act. Blessings from Bethel’s Befrienders.

*A fundamental BeFriender principle: “God is Present.” For more information regarding the BeFriender Ministry at Bethel, please contact Marci Groenewold (507-649-3160) or the Bethel Office (507-786-6674).*

# EVERY WEEK

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS 8 AM - 3 PM

|          |   |           |   |
|----------|---|-----------|---|
| SUNDAY   |  | 8:30 am   | Worship/Livestream  |
|          |   | 9:45 am   | Coffee Fellowship   |
|          |   | 10:30 am* | Worship (* Summer Schedule through September 1)   |
|          |   | Evening   | Bethel Softball June 2 @ Babcock at 8:10 pm playing Life 21<br>June 9 @ Babcock at 8:10 pm playing Methodist<br>June 16 @ Sechler 1 at 8:10 pm playing St. Dominic Johnnys<br>June 23 @ Babcock at 7:05 pm playing Canvas<br>June 30 @ Babcock at 7:05 pm playing UCC |
| TUESDAY  |   | 9:45 am   | Staff Meeting   |
| THURSDAY |   | 9:30 am   | FaB (Faith and Books) We will be reading and discussing Trish Harrison's <i>Prayer in the Night</i> each week in the Bethel Youth Room. Join us as we begin this new book! Contact lanareich@yahoo.com to be added to the FaB email list.                             |



# THIS MONTH

|              |   |                     |   |
|--------------|---|---------------------|---|
| JUNE 1       |    | noon—4:00 pm        | Pride in the Park   |
| JUNE 3       |   | 5:00 pm             | Worship & Arts  |
| JUNE 6       |   | 10:45 am            | OWLs (Older Wiser Lutherans) A monthly Bible study with fellowship  |
| JUNE 9       |  | 8:30 am             | Senior Sunday We celebrate our 2024 high school graduates at the first service.   |
| JUNE 10 - 13 |   | 9:00 am             | Vacation Bible School hosted @ St. John's   |
| JUNE 11      |  | 9:00 am             | Quilting Group  |
|              |  | 5:00 pm<br>—7:00 pm | Starfish 2 / Habitat for Humanity House Tour & Ice Cream Social<br>2007 Hidden Valley Rd (near the Maple Trail Apartments.) Learn about this new initiative renovating existing homes in Northfield for affordable ownership. |
| JUNE 12      |   | 12:30 pm<br>5:15 pm | Mission & Justice<br>Congregational Life  |
| JUNE 13      |   | 5:00 pm<br>7:00 pm  | Personnel Committee<br>Finance Committee  |
| JUNE 14      |   | 7:00 pm             | Vision Seekers Men gather for fellowship! This month's gathering will be at Memorial Park Field (214 First St. S, Dundas) in the VIP booth to watch the Dundas Dukes play the Minnetonka Monarchs.                            |
| JUNE 18      |   | 12:00 pm<br>6:30 pm | Lydia Circle<br>Church Council  |
| JUNE 19      |   | 4:30 pm<br>7:30 pm  | Homes for God's Children<br>VBS After Dark for 6th—12th graders   |
| JUNE 23      |   | 6:00 pm             | 8th Grade Service Trip—Duluth Serve Boldly<br>Good Earth Village Northfield Week  |
| JUNE 25      |  | 9:00 am             | Quilting Group  |

## FAITH FORMATION IN THE SUMMER



### Vacation Bible School

It's a summer tradition! This year our joint VBS is hosted at St. John's. Scan to register, or click the link on the website.

### Youth Ministry

**8th Grade Service Trip - Duluth!** Five students and three adult leaders will be heading to Duluth June 23—28. Many of us have experienced Duluth's beauty, but we often don't see the challenges the area also holds, such as homelessness and food scarcity. This year, Lutheran ministry partner Serve Boldly will help us learn more about these challenges and how God is at work in this beautiful community. We will be listening to the stories of residents and working with local organizations. Plus, we plan to have a little fun along the way. Please pray for our young people and the Duluth community!



### IN THE LIBRARY...



In her latest work, Sister Joan Chittister, a rabble-rousing force of nature for social justice and fervent proponent of personal faith and spiritual fulfillment draws on the wisdom of prophets, both ancient and modern, to help us confront the societal forces that oppress and silence the sacred voices among us. Pairing scriptural insights with narratives of the truth-tellers before us, Sister Joan offers a compelling vision for readers to combat complacency and propel themselves toward creating a world of justice, freedom, peace, and empowerment. For the weary, the cranky, and the fearful, this energizing message invites us to participate in a vision for a world greater than the one we find ourselves in today. This is spirituality in action; this is practical and powerful activism for our times.

### A staffed nursery for little ones is available 8:00 am—noon on Sunday mornings

Our new Nursery Coordinator, Sierra Hansen, will begin mid-summer with a new baby in tow! Our regular nursery staff will keep things running smoothly until Sierra starts.

June 10-13 (Monday-Thursday)  
9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.  
For kids entering K - Grade 3, Fall 2024  
\$15/child; \$30/family  
At St. John's Lutheran Church

Register by scanning the QR Code



SCAN ME

Hosted by Bethel, St. John's & St. Peter's Lutheran Churches



### Children & Youth Camp

Kids from the Northfield ELCA congregations are heading to Good Earth Village June 23 — 28. Bethel has eleven kids attending! Pastor Ben will be also be present for the first two days. Please pray for our campers as they explore God in creation, grow faith in community, and engage the world as followers of Jesus.

### Summer Events for Middle School Students (including rising 6th graders)

We have some fun planned for you this summer with other local churches! Mark your calendars for the following events and sign up to join us this June!

**June 20 – Feed My Starving Children**  
We will gather at Bethel Lutheran at 4 pm with a packed dinner. After packing food and eating dinner at a local park we will return back to Bethel at 8 pm. Please sign up with the following link: <https://bethelnorthfield.breezechms.com/form/9b688663>

**July 24 – Apple Valley Aquatics Center**

**August 21 – Romans & Christians**

## IN THE WORKS

### Welcome Area

Bethel prides itself on the welcome we extend both to our “community within” (parishioners of all ages) and to the “community beyond” (the neighbors and visitors who come by for assistance or join us for worship). One of the more visible ways we extend that welcome is in our reception area outside of the administrative wing.

# WELCOME

With our current arrangement, volunteers often greet visitors and provide support to the office manager and ministry staff. However, there are some drawbacks... sometimes the volunteers are hidden by the desk and even take folks by surprise. There are security issues with having a computer at the desk. And while support is very helpful in busy times, our amazing volunteers are underutilized when it’s quiet. When volunteers are unavailable, the empty desk is not welcoming.



So this summer, we are rearranging! We will provide more seating, and an information table (removing the “barrier” the current desk forms.) The current desk will be put to use in the library! The hope is that the space will be more welcoming when volunteers are not available. It also has the potential to serve as a small group space for confirmation, Bible studies, and more! The entrance to the administrative wing will also be modified with a “Dutch door” to give more security options to staff.

### Sanctuary Art to draw us beyond our Land Acknowledgement Statement

Alongside words and music, visual art plays a significant role in our faith practice – focusing our attention, engaging and inspiring us in fresh ways, or prompting further reflections. To reflect the spirit of our new Land Acknowledgement Statement and help us engage with Indigenous neighbors in our faith practice, a wood relief art piece has been commissioned from a Native American artist. This is the second significant art commission Bethel has undertaken... the mosaic cross celebrating our Welcome Statement was placed at the east entrance of the church in 2021. Two of Bethel’s very active committees, Mission & Justice and Worship & Arts, with Council’s approval, are spearheading the project.

We found an incredibly talented artist! When we first started brainstorming, then council-member Chris Bussmann highly recommended John Sterner, an artist whom he had connected with for educational programming in Farmington. John is a Sicangu Lakota from Marshall, Minnesota. John has other connections to Bethel. He consulted with Mac Gimse when creating “Wanbli Mitakuye Oyasin / Eagle Relatives,” the 15-foot tall steel eagle sculpture that flies next to Northfield’s Highway 3 as part of the city’s land acknowledgement. He also knows the Schlieff family! John and his wife are members of a Lutheran congregation. He is an art teacher, coach, painter, illustrator and sculptor who has created works of art currently displayed in many municipalities and also church settings: Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Minneapolis commissioned a bronze baptismal font. More extensive biographical information on John is available on the brochure table in the narthex, and a video will be available on Bethel’s website.



*continued on page 7*

# BETHEL BRIGHT LIGHTS



*Garage sale volunteers savored comradery and fellowship on well-deserved breaks.*



*"They came!"  
Volunteers  
delighted in seeing all  
their hard work  
engaged.*

*9 day old  
Clara Nystuen was  
our youngest shopper  
and added to the joy  
of the sale.*



*Over 100 quilts were made this past year...  
30 were already given to the Community Action Center;  
70 were blessed in worship for Lutheran World Relief*



*Lots of Bethel smiles to celebrate Kitty Runzbeimer  
and Sandy Reiman's birthdays*



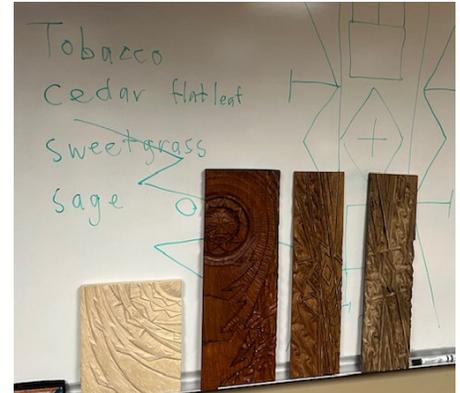
## SANCTUARY ART



*Continued from page 5.* Upon seeing John’s initial renderings (his “ledger” art), the excitement of the joint committees was palpable. That excitement only grew with further communication and in-person meetings. John’s passion, creative vision and ability to communicate his ideas convinced us that he will produce meaningful work to reflect Bethel’s vision, and we gave him the green light to begin. The wood relief wall sculpture will bridge Christian and Native American symbolism reflecting our interconnected vision of God, nature and creation. The plan is for the work to be ready for installation on the west sanctuary entrance wall in September, with a formal dedication by October 2024.

While the project cost (\$14,000) is significant, the complexity and artwork size (about 4’ x 10’) justifies our financial investment. Already, over \$9,000 has been donated by interested committee and congregation members. We need an additional \$5,000 by early summer to meet our goal. You can give by writing a check to Bethel Lutheran with “Indigenous Art” on the memo line, or through the church website (under “Giving,” scroll to “Indigenous Art” for your one-time gift by credit card or bank withdrawal.)

We are so excited for how this piece will visually nurture and nuance our faith for years to come, and keep us mindful of the ongoing work of being in relationship with Indigenous people. We hope for a generous response from YOU, members of a congregation with a broad vision and a BIG HEART.



*Committee members got to see examples and learn about carving techniques, staining, and symbolism, and give feedback on Sterner’s preliminary design ideas.*

*- Karna Hauck on behalf of Worship & Arts & Kirsten Scott on behalf of Mission & Justice*

## FINANCIAL NOTES from Barb Fowler, Treasurer

|          | <u>APRIL 2024</u> | <u>YTD (END OF APRIL 2024)</u> |
|----------|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| Revenue  | \$93,238          | \$316,740                      |
| Expenses | \$79,810          | \$328,670                      |
| Total    | \$13,428          | (\$11,930)                     |

April revenues exceeded expenses by \$13K which lowered the deficit from \$25K to \$12K. While still in a deficit at April 30, this is a positive step and definitely good news.

With the June Blaze, we enter into the three summer months when giving often decreases; but the work (and expenses) of the church continues. Scheduling the amount and dates of your giving is easy using the online giving tool in Breeze. If that is not your thing, please post a note now on your paper or electronic calendar to make your summer donation to Bethel. Let’s enter September with positive financials! Thank you and have a great summer.

*Members of the Finance Committee: Lee Runzheimer, Brian Haefner, Andrew Jorgenson, Heidi McCormick, Lois Stratmoen, Blair Fowler, Trustee, Joel Leer, Steward, Bill Hoekstra, President, Pastor Inger, ex-officio, and Barb Fowler, Finance Officer.*



**Bethel Lutheran Church**  
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**Northfield, MN 55057**



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

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Return Service Requested



**Bethel Lutheran Church**  
**Shares Christ's Love with a Big Heart**

We celebrate all people as children of God. We unconditionally welcome diversity of age, race, citizenship, ethnicity, cultural identity, sexual orientation, gender identity, ability, education, relationship status, family structure, and life challenges. Your diversity and uniqueness are valued. Your questions and your doubts have a home here. You, your spouse, partner, children, family, and friends are welcome to be full participants in the life of our church.

**YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!**



**WELCOME NEW MEMBERS**



*Paul & Annette Godtland*



*Kimlion, Jessica, & Makenzie Bastyr*



*Mike & Linda Zolnosky, Becky & Ron Nystuen*



*Toby, Teddy, Kelli & Josie Hoskins*



*Mary & Don Kolb*



*Ryan Schmatz, Carla Hopper & Amelia*



*Sayaka Yamada*

Not pictured:  
 Abyssa Ozman &  
 Collin, Isaac, Lexie  
 Mike, Zoey & Jaxson Reddy