

Bethel Blaze

November 2024

Sharing Christ's love with a big heart

JOIN US FOR WORSHIP

In Person

Sunday Mornings:
8:30 am and 10:45 am
in the sanctuary

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



SEEING GOD'S STORY IN NEW WAYS

Bethel commissioned Sicangu Lakota artist John Sterner to create a wood relief wall hanging that will help us continue to engage and move beyond our land acknowledgement statement. Sterner named the piece "Aikoyaka," a Lakota word for "connection" that refers to our interconnection with nature, with people both past and present, and most importantly, our connection with God.

This special work of art will be dedicated at the 8:30 am service on November 3—All Saints Sunday.

Bishop Hassanally of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod will be present for the occasion.

More about the Artist...

John Sterner is an accomplished mixed media artist. He has created pieces for many private and public entities, from congregations and school districts to the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum and the cities of Northfield and Mankato.

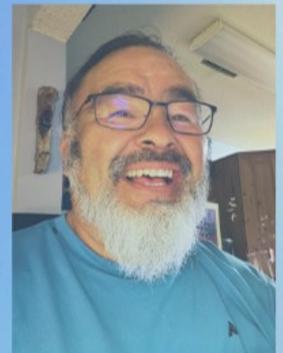
John's other vocation is teaching. His 30+ years as a teacher and wrestling coach have impacted not only students but community groups and organizations for whom he hosts presentations and workshops. John is a gregarious, hard-working, principled Christian man with whom we have been most fortunate to be collaborating with and learning from.

ALL ARE WELCOME

JOHN STERNER, COMMISSIONED SICANGU LAKOTA ARTIST FROM MARSHALL, MINNESOTA, WILL BE PRESENTING HIS PROCESS OF CREATING BETHEL'S NEW LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT RELIEF SCULPTURE TO THE BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH CONGREGATION BETWEEN SERVICES ON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2024. JOHN HAS TITLED THE ARTWORK AIKHOYAKA (AA EE KOY AH KA), WHICH MEANS CONNECTION.

9:45am November 3
BETHEL LUTHERAN
1321 North Ave
Northfield, MN

THE ARTWORK WILL BE DEDICATED AT THE 8:30AM MORNING WORSHIP, FOLLOWED BY JOHN'S REFLECTIONS FROM 9:45-10:30AM IN THE SANCTUARY. BETHEL'S NARTHEX GALLERY SHOW OF JOHN'S LEDGER ART WILL ALSO BE ON DISPLAY FROM NOV. 3 TO DEC. 8, 2024.



FIRESIDE REFLECTIONS



Pastor Ben Schori

(he/him)

pastor.ben@

bethelnorthfield.org
(preferred for non-urgent
communication)

office

507-786-8953

office hours

by appointment Mondays,
Tuesdays, Wednesdays,
and Thursdays

“Unprecedented.” It’s a word we’ve been hearing a lot more of in recent years. “An unprecedented pandemic. An unprecedented insurrection. An unprecedented election.” We have been, are, and will continue living in “unprecedented” times.

There are days, many days, I find myself feeling so over the “unprecedented.” Can I just get some more “precedented,” please? I long for a context that is less triggering, divisive, and draining, but I can feel powerless to actually do something that would make a difference. I feel like Frodo, the Hobbit, in the Lord of the Rings series when he grieves the challenging circumstances he finds himself in, weighed down by responsibility, fear, and uncertainty. “I wish it need not have happened in my time.” (Geeky Pastor Alert) And then I remember the wizard, Gandalf’s wise response: “So do I, and so do all who live to see such times. But that is not for them to decide. All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given us.”

And this enheartening wisdom from this fantasy story reminds me of another from Esther’s story in scripture. Esther is made queen in a time when her people are facing great peril (another “unprecedented” time), but she is overwhelmed, afraid, and uncertain of what she can and should do. And her cousin Mordecai responds to her uncertainty, “Who knows? Perhaps you have come to royal dignity for just such a time as this.”

In this “unprecedented” time, of election, division, and uncertainty, perhaps you have been called to “such a time as this.” In fact, I know you have. Not because you have been well equipped for it or that it has been, is, or will be easy. But because you have been called by a God that is constantly at work in the “unprecedented” bringing new life and hope out of death and the seemingly hopeless in Jesus Christ.

“All you have to decide is what to do with the time that is given you.”

Peace & Blessings, Pastor Ben

BEFRIENDERS

by Marci Groenewold

For over 25 years, the BeFriender Ministry Coordinator Team has trained dozens of Bethelites to become BeFriender ministers—a “formal extension of the pastoral ministry of Bethel Lutheran Church.” BeFrienders choose to use their skills in a way that works best for them. They regularly visit members, send cards and write notes of encouragement to various members. When a parishioner would like additional support, they are confidentially paired with a BeFriender. Each pair works out the exact form the relationship takes, determining their own schedules and visits.

The impact of this program goes far beyond supporting individuals and the pastors in their work. BeFriender listening skills strengthen relationships among our families, coworkers, and friends. In our community, a BeFriender minister’s intentional support of Northfield’s TORCH (Tackling Obstacles, Raising College Hope) program allows fellow Bethelites opportunities to provide care packages filled with encouraging gifts to 10 of 613 students who otherwise might never finish high school. In 2023, 100% of TORCH seniors graduated on time. At the state level, one BeFriender minister joins “Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense” at the capitol to advocate for an end to gun violence. Might you have a heart for this ministry too?

BeFriender training will be offered for 8 consecutive weeks beginning February 6, 2025.

Classes will be held in the lower level of the rectory at St Dominic from 6:30-8:30 pm.

Please consider becoming a Bethel BeFriender minister.

Life is filled with uncertainty and change. Change can be exhilarating, scary or downright maddening. For some, change can’t come fast enough for others change seems overwhelming. BeFriender ministers can provide a listening presence with those experiencing the growth that comes with change. To quote Wayne Dyer: “If you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change.”

For more information regarding the BeFriender Ministry at Bethel, please contact the Bethel Office (507-786-6674).

EVERY WEEK

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS 9 AM - 3 PM

SUNDAY		8:30 am	Worship/Livestream
		9:45 am	Coffee Fellowship
		10:45 am	Worship in the Sanctuary
MONDAY		6:30 pm	Resonance (Adult Bell Choir)
TUESDAY		9:45 am	Staff Meeting
WEDNESDAY		3:30 pm	Limitless
		5:45 pm	Bistro! Join us in the Christian Life Center (CLC) for a fresh cooked meal and delightful fellowship. Suggested donation is \$5/person. Kid friendly SunButter or cheese sandwiches are available as alternatives.
		6:15 pm	Ring Forth Bell Choir
		7:00 pm	Confirmation & Hangtime
		7:00 pm	Church Choir
		8:05 pm	Brio Bell Choir
THURSDAY		8:30 am	MOB (Men of Bethel)
		9:30 am	FAB (Faith and Books) We're discussing the book <i>Braiding Sweetgrass</i> by Robin Kimmerer. Please join us for rich discussions in the Youth Room.

THIS MONTH

NOV 2		3:15 pm	St. Olaf Bell Choir Kids' Concert	NOV 13	12:30 pm	Mission & Justice	
NOV 3		12:00 pm	6th Grade Circle of Saints Retreat with Parents		4:30 pm	Congregational Life	
NOV 5			<i>Election Day</i>		6:30 pm	J-TERM Orientation @ St. John's (6th - 9th Grade Confirmation)	
NOV 7		10:45 am	OWLs (Older Wiser Lutherans)	NOV 14	5:00 pm	Personnel Committee	
		7:00 pm	Bethel Vision Seekers @ Fielder's Choice (2300 Gleason, Northfield)	NOV 17	1:00 pm	Benedictine Chapel	
		7:00 pm	Finance Committee	NOV 19	9:30 am	ARLA (Anti-Racism Learning & Advocacy)	
NOV 9		10:00 am	Visitation for Merle Burmeister		1:00 pm	Lydia Circle	
		11:00 am	Celebration of Life Service for Merle Burmeister with Reception		6:30 pm	Church Council	
NOV 10		8:30 am	Blood Drive	NOV 20	4:30 pm	Homes For God's Children	
NOV 11		7:00 pm	Creation Care	NOV 26		9:00 am	Quilting Group
NOV 12		9:00 am	Quilting Group	NOV 27	6:30 pm	<i>Thanksgiving Eve Service @ St. Peter's</i>	

FAITH FORMATION AT BETHEL...

Nursery

Our Sunday mornings are packed full of exciting projects, meaningful stories, crazy games, silly songs, tasty snacks, and fantastic friendships! On Wednesdays, little ones can play in the nursery while parents take advantage of volunteer opportunities like singing in the choir, helping with Bistro, or being a small group leader for confirmation.

8:00 am — noon on Sunday mornings

3:00 — 8:00 pm on Wednesdays

Pray-ground

The Pray-ground was back for Reformation Sunday and will also be available on All Saints. This is a designated place where young children can experience worship through age-appropriate materials like themed activities and children's Bibles. Such a space helps children bridge from the nursery to being part of the Sunday assembly. We encourage parents to sit close by and for children to rejoin their families before communion.



Children's Ministry

Upcoming Dates

- **November 10 — Share, Save, Spend Parent-Child Class** for K & Grade 1 families
- **November 10— K—Grade 3 Limitless kids will be singing!**
- **November 27—No Limitless (Thanksgiving Break)**

Share, Save Spend Parent-Child Class

Kindergarten and Grade 1 Families join Pam Vig and Brenda Rabbe in this Thrivent-based exploration of faith and finances. Class will begin immediately after Sunday School opening music on November 10.

“Singing Shenanigans” in Worship!

Kindergarten-Grade 3 Limitless kids will share a musical offering with the congregation at both services on November 10.

Brenda Rabbe (she/her)
Director of Children's Ministries
 507-786-8878
childrensministry@bethelnorthfield

Youth Ministry

Key Dates & Reminders

- **Mentors and 9th Graders!** Please remember to meet one time **this month**.
- **6th Grade Circle of Saints Retreat—November 3** from **noon—2:30 pm** for students and parents.

Kristi Larson (she/her)
Director of Youth Ministries
 651-230-6057 (cell/text)
youth@bethelnorthfield.org



- **Confirmation & 6th Grade Connections J-Term Kick Off—
November 13 @ St. John's**

Parents are invited to join students hear from Dr. Steve Thomason (aka the Art Pastor). His mission is to use art to create resources that help people grow deeper in God's love— learn more at <https://www.stevethomason.net> Pastor Thomason will talk about how he uses art as a spiritual practice and then guide us through an art exercise. No artistic experience needed!

- **Youth Sunday is November 24.** Connect with Kristi to help with reading, ushering, or serving communion.
- **NO 6th Grade Connections, Confirmation or Hangtime on November 27** due to Thanksgiving.
Enjoy your time off!

OPPORTUNITIES

Meals On Wheels

Bethel's annual three weeks of delivering Meals on Wheels starts on November 11. This is a service ministry that Bethel has helped support for many years. Bethel will be responsible for delivering meals from **Nov. 11, 2024 through Nov. 29, 2024**. Comprehensive delivery instructions are provided.

Invitations have been sent to members who have signed up for meals on wheels in Breeze. If you haven't received an email invitation and would like to volunteer, please contact Pam Santerre at 651-335-3465.

For more information, go to <https://www.northfieldhospital.org/meals-wheels>.

Thank you for ALL that you give, especially the gift of your time to feed our neighbors!



Blood Drive

from Karen Mader

Bethel will host Memorial Blood Centers mobile donor bus on **Sunday, November 10 from 8:30 am to 1:30 pm**. There is a nationwide shortage of blood products due to a shrinking donor pool and many disasters. Of course, there are everyday needs for surgical patients, cancer patients, volume depleted premature babies who need O Negative blood products, and so many others. Donating blood is an incredible gift to others and our bodies know to manufacture more blood cells after we donate. If you are unable to donate blood, help recruit new donors. There are 33 Whole Blood appointments and 5 Double Red appointments available during our 5 hour blood drive. I signed up! Have you?



Three Ways to Schedule Your Donation:

1. Visit www.mbc.org/searchdrives and enter sponsor code 4044
2. Call Memorial Blood Centers @ 888-448-3253
3. Scan the QR code on the signs posted at church

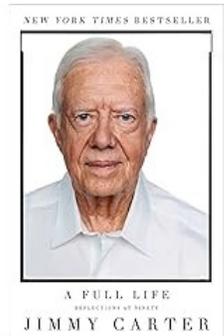
IN THE LIBRARY...

A Full Life: Reflections on Ninety

In his major *New York Times* bestseller, Jimmy Carter looks back from ninety years of age and “reveals private thoughts and recollections over a fascinating career as businessman, politician, evangelist, and humanitarian” (Booklist).

At ninety, Jimmy Carter reflects on his public and private life with a frankness that is disarming. He adds detail and emotion about his youth in rural Georgia that he described in his magnificent *An Hour Before Daylight*. He writes about racism and the isolation of the Carters. He describes the brutality of the hazing regimen at Annapolis, and how he nearly lost his life twice serving on submarines and his amazing interview with Admiral Rickover. He describes the profound influence his mother had on him, and how he admired his father even though he didn't emulate him. He admits that he decided to quit the Navy and later enter politics without consulting his wife, Rosalynn, and how appalled he is in retrospect.

In his “warm and detailed memoir” (Los Angeles Times), Carter tells what he is proud of and what he might do differently. He discusses his regret at losing his re-election, but how he and Rosalynn pushed on and made a new life and second and third rewarding careers. He is frank about the presidents who have succeeded him, world leaders, and his passions for the causes he cares most about, particularly the condition of women and the deprived people of the developing world.



BETHEL BRIGHT LIGHTS



October means Pet Blessings To Go and Confirmation joy.



Many Bethel members donated homemade cookies, school supplies, mini decorative pumpkins, snacks, notes and cash to be distributed to Northfield TORCH students this fall.



Worship highlights included bell choir performances and a tent in the sanctuary to highlight God's response to King David wanting to build God a temple and how God "camps" among us.



In a special Kids' Worship (offered at the 10:45 service), kids built their own house of worship just like Solomon! They talked with Brenda about how God may not actually be closer to us, but we may be more aware of God's presence in certain places. In Youth Sabbath (offered between services), youth learned how to make origami churches from Sayaka Yamazaki.

Members like Alice Burmeister and Judy Code quietly care for Bethel's grounds and have also pitched in to help neighbors when gardening upkeep has been too much.



ENDOWMENT FUND GRANT APPLICATIONS DUE NOVEMBER 15

The Bethel Endowment Committee **will accept proposals through November 15.**

- Applications are available at the East Welcome Station and on the Bethel website. Please submit completed applications to the church office, attention Endowment Committee.
- The proposal should focus on one of the three Endowment designations – Outreach Ministries, General Missions of Bethel, or Education.

Winning proposals will be announced in January, and disbursements will be made early 2025. Reach out with any questions: *Ryan Blumhoefer (Chair), Mari Aylin, Steve Engle, Kevin Fink, John Larson, Joel Leer, Heidi Muller Peterson, and Rose Turnacliiff.*

MAKING A DIFFERENCE WITH TORCH



TORCH stands for Tackling Obstacles and Raising College Hopes. The mission of TORCH is to support and empower students in graduating from high school and pursuing future goals, with an intentional focus on partnering with Northfield’s students of color, youth from low income families, and first-generation college attendees.

This year’s fall care packages (including homemade cookies, school supplies, cash, and more!) went to six students that are studying through Riverland College here in Northfield with the Community College Collaborative. They take classes both in person and online, from Earth Science to Ethics to English! We also delivered a box to St. Olaf for the first time in a few years, and mailed packages to Michigan, Minneapolis and Rochester. Most of the students are either first or second year students. One student is in their 4th year and another will graduate in January after a semester abroad this fall! Although the pandemic was very difficult for our TORCH college students, more are returning to classes these past couple of years. Donations to the Bethel TORCH fund are appreciated—it is helpful to have money in the account so that when it is time to do the mailings the cash for students can be requested and the postage is covered. This year this ministry costs about \$700—when more is received, it is carried forward for future years. Thank you to everyone who has been supporting TORCH students! If you want to support TORCH students, here is an invitation to do so! Thanks for all you give!

FINANCIAL NOTES from Barb Fowler, Treasurer

Financial information:

	September	YTD
Revenue	\$ 59,810	\$659,612
Expenses	72,580	693,176
Total	\$ (12,769)	\$ (33,564)

As of September 30, our operating budget deficit has risen to \$33,564. As you are reading this, we are compiling the results from October. They will be included in the financial snapshot in your weekly bulletin when they are available.

At this writing, we know we will need to cover expenses from October through December plus this deficit for an estimated total of \$275K or \$92K per month. Last year our offerings averaged \$103K per month for these three months and in 2022 the average was \$93K. So, historical giving shows that we have the capacity and the will to meet our giving needs. Thank you for doing your part.

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 / Treasurer



Bethel Lutheran Church
1321 North Avenue
Northfield, MN 55057



Phone: 507-786-6674

Web: www.bethelnorthfield.org

www.facebook.com/bethellutheran

Email: bethel@bethelnorthfield.org



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!

New members help a congregation take seriously “always being made new” by God. Make sure to connect with these special folk who joined Bethel on Reformation Sunday!



*Megan Schoup with Ciervina and Deilianna (Anoren not pictured)
 (Ben is a pastor in another denomination so will remain a “friend” of the congregation)*



Sharon Prescher



Marne Prescher



*Erik & Angela Eliason
 with Haakon and Ollie*