

Bethel Blaze

April 2025

Sharing Christ's love with a big heart

JOIN US FOR WORSHIP

In Person

Sunday Mornings:
8:30 and 10:45 am

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



ALLELUIA! AV PHASE 1 FULLY FUNDED



Bravo, Bethel! We reached our goal of raising \$66,000 to update the sanctuary sound system. Auferworld is now building custom speakers, and in early May we will be enjoying new speakers, a new wireless mic system, and Bluetooth enabled hearing assistance. These will all work in tandem to remove the dead zones currently experienced, broaden the range of sound frequencies available, and pair with the personal devices of individuals with hearing loss. Functional elements from our current sound system will find new life augmenting our summer outdoor worship experience. This comprehensive update will allow members and visitors to participate fully in worship without missing a beat. Thank you for your generosity!

Faith comes from hearing... Romans 10:17

HOLY WEEK HIGHLIGHTS

April 13 — Palm Sunday Pancake & Picture Breakfast



Hosanna! Congregational Life is hosting a special Palm Sunday Pancake Breakfast on Sunday, April 13. Breakfast will be served 9:30—10:30 am in the Christian Life Center (CLC). Menu: pancakes with special toppings, yogurt parfaits, sausage, and fruit. In addition, come see if your picture is in Breeze and if not, have your picture taken so we can help match names with faces and get to know each other better. Kids are invited to join in the feast before their Easter Egg Hunt. Note there is no adult education on this Sunday so we all can gather for this fantastic fellowship event!



April 17 — Maundy Thursday 11 am & 7 pm

April 18 — Good Friday 11 am & 7 pm

April 19 — Easter Vigil @ St. Olaf Boe Memorial Chapel 8 pm

April 20 — Easter Sunday 8 am, 9:30 am & 11 am

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

days off
Friday & Saturday

We started Lent on Ash Wednesday, with Jesus “set(ing) his face to go to Jerusalem,” beginning his journey to the cross. Each week of this season, we have set our sights on the processional cross as it moved closer to the altar, following Jesus on his journey of sacrificial love, service, and forgiveness; examining how we might die to ourselves to better live for Christ. This Sunday, April 6, the fifth and final Sunday in Lent, we arrive with Jesus at this journey’s end before we transition into the sacred time of the church year known as Holy Week. With this being Bethel’s first year on the Narrative Lectionary, there will be some powerful new additions to our worship services focused on immersing ourselves even deeper into the story from the Gospel of Luke.

- † On Palm/Passion Sunday, the order of the service will follow the story of the Passion, with the story of Jesus’ last days being dramatically read by multiple readers.
- † Maundy Thursday worship will focus on Luke’s account of the Last Supper and Jesus instituting the Sacrament of Holy Communion. The service “pauses” with the reading of Psalm 22, resuming on Good Friday.
- † Good Friday focuses us anew on the Passion. This time, the visuals of extinguishing light and the cross, and the sounds of sacred, reflective hymns, will take central focus. The choir will offer anthems before we fall silent for Holy Saturday.
- † The Three Days concludes with joyful praise and thanksgiving, as we celebrate the good news of Christ’s resurrection on Easter Sunday morning!

I am so looking forward to journeying through this Holy Week experience with all of you. Peace & Blessings, Pastor Ben

BEFRIENDERS

by Marci Groenewold

During the season of Lent, a lot of emphasis is placed on forgiveness. Forgiveness is a choice. It is an intentional decision to let go of resentment and anger and help release us from the control of the person that harmed us. Our faith dictates that we are not to harbor ill will or wish that person harm. Forgiveness helps move us forward from hurt and bitterness.

However, as author Gary Chapman points out, there are several things that forgiveness does not do. **Forgiveness does not destroy our memory.** After we forgive, memories of the hurt or offense will remain. We must not allow the memory to control our behavior, but nor do we need to feel guilty for remembering.

Forgiveness does not remove all painful emotions. We don’t ask for the emotions of hurt, anger, disappointment, fear or frustration, but we can refuse to let them dictate our behavior.

Forgiveness does not restore trust. Forgiveness merely opens the door for the possibility that trust can be restored. If the offending person chooses to be trustworthy, the path to trust is possible.

Forgiveness does not always lead to restoration. Sometimes restoration is not wise or possible. Restoration is not the same as forgiveness. The word restoration means “to bring back to harmony.” This requires the work of naming and understanding what caused the break in the relationship and finding new ways of relating to each other.

While forgiveness can release us from the grip of anger, bitterness, and the desire for revenge, it is helpful to remember that forgiveness is not the end of the road. It is only the beginning of repairing a fractured relationship. However, the benefits of inner peace, better health, and satisfying relationships makes the effort worthwhile.

A fundamental BeFriender principle: “God is present.” For more information regarding the BeFriender Ministry at Bethel, please contact Marci Groenewold (507-649-3160), Knight Stanley (612-877-0893), Karen Mader (507-301-4368) or the Bethel Office (507-786-6674).

EVERY WEEK

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS 9 AM - 3 PM

SUNDAY		8:30 am	Worship (also available via livestream)
		9:45 am	Coffee Fellowship & Education Opportunities
		10:45 am	Worship
MONDAY		12:00 pm	Bible Text Study @ The Vault
		6:30 pm	Resonance (Adult Bell Choir)
TUESDAY		9:45 am	Staff Meeting
WEDNESDAY		3:30 pm	Limitless
		6:15 pm	Ring Forth Bell Choir
		7:00 pm	Hangtime
		7:00 pm	Church Choir Rehearsal
THURSDAY		8:05 pm	Brio Bell Choir
		8:30 am	MoB (Men of Bethel) will finish our winter/spring season with C.S. Lewis' <i>The Four Loves</i> , a treatise on the four classic Greek words for love: <i>storge</i> —affections, <i>philia</i> —friendship, <i>eros</i> —romantic love, and <i>agape</i> —charity or unconditional love. Beginning with the premise that God is love, Lewis explores these four emotions and how they are related.
		9:30 am	FaB (Faith and Books) We will finish <i>On the Brink of Everything</i> by Parker Palmer on April 10 and begin <i>Field Notes for the Wilderness: Practices for an Evolving Faith</i> by Sarah Bessey on April 17. Email lanareich@yahoo.com to be placed on the email list for our discussions.
FRIDAY		9:30 am	WoW (Women of the Word) via zoom

April 2 & 9

11:30 am Lenten Midday Worship & Soup Lunch
5:30 pm Soup Supper
& Lenten Evening Prayer (Joyous Light)



April 16 No Bistro—Holy Week
April 23 & 30 5:45 pm Bistro

THIS MONTH

APR 3		10:45 am	OWLs (Older Wiser Lutherans)	APR 13		PALM SUNDAY	
		3:30 pm	Garage Sale Planning			Pancake Breakfast at 9:45 am!	
		7:00 pm	Vision Seekers (Castle Rock Bar & Grill, 27998 Chippendale Ave (MN Hwy 3))		APR 15	12:00 pm	Lydia Circle
			3:30 pm	ARLA Sacred Sites Sharing			
APR 5		8:30 am	Spring Ministry Summit	APR 17		MAUNDY THURSDAY WORSHIP 11 am & 7 pm (livestream)	
APR 8		9:00 am	Quilting Group	APR 18		GOOD FRIDAY WORSHIP 11 am & 7 pm (livestream)	
		2:00 pm	Library				
APR 9		5:00 pm	Congregational Life	APR 19	8:00 pm	<i>Easter Vigil</i> (St. Olaf)	
		7:00 pm	6th Grade Connections Party				
APR 10		3:00 pm	Monthly Movie: "East of Eden"	APR 20		EASTER SUNDAY SERVICES 8 am, 9:30 am, & 11 am	
		6:00 pm	Befriender Ministry Support				
		6:30 pm	Mission & Justice	APR 22		9:00 am	Quilting Group
		7:00 pm	Finance			5:15 pm	Personnel
						6:30 pm	Church Council

FAITH FORMATION AT BETHEL

A staffed nursery for little ones is available
8:15 am—noon on Sunday mornings
and Wednesdays 3:15—8:00 pm

Children's Ministry

Upcoming Dates:



April 13 — Easter Egg and Story Event 10:10-10:30 am
Holy Communion Retreat
April 17 — Holy Communion Celebration
April 20 — No Sunday School



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

Palm Sunday Festivities:

Palm Processional: calling kids of all ages! Please meet in the Narthex before each service to bring extra joy to our service with a palm branch processional.

Families, please finish your pancake breakfast in time to join us at 10:10AM in the Center Pod for an **Easter Egg and Story Event** on Palm Sunday. We will explore all of Holy Week together and celebrate the sweet Good News with a bit of candy.

Holy Communion Education is taking on a new format...one designed for the whole family. When your oldest child is in 5th grade (or in upper elementary and asking about communion), we invite your family to join us on Palm Sunday for a Holy Communion Retreat. This will be held from **noon—3pm** at Bethel, led by Pastor Ben and Brenda. Our education and exploration of Holy Communion will be further celebrated and recognized in our Maundy Thursday 7 pm service.

Youth Ministry

Hangtime continues this spring for all 10 – 12 graders from 7:00—8:00 pm every Wednesday night! If you haven't joined us before, now is a great time to check it out!

Seniors! Please remember to fill out the form for Senior Sunday found here:

<https://bethelnorthfield.breezechms.com/form/503ce136>

The final **6th Grade Connections** is on April 9. Join us for the end of the year party!

Mentors and 9th grade students – please remember to worship together once in the month of April.

The final mentor event will be May 4 from noon – 2:30. Students, please register here:

<https://bethelnorthfield.breezechms.com/form/123da158>

If parents are looking for a little help this Easter, our little “bunnies” are there for you! Bethel Youth will buy, stuff, and hide eggs in your yard to raise funds for summer trips. Go to the Easter Egg Fundraiser website for more info:

<https://www.bethelnorthfield.org/pages/easter-egg-fundraiser>

If you ordered plants from the **Youth Plant Fundraiser**, they will be delivered on Mother's Day Weekend. Please reach out to Kristi if there is an issue with delivering that weekend. Thank you for supporting our youth trips!

Youth Sunday is on April 27. If you are interested in helping, please reach out to Kristi.

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

FAITH FORMATION AT BETHEL CONTINUED...

Adult Education

April 6 — Money & the Mission of the Church

How does pastoral leadership together with congregational leadership create a positive and healthy environment so a community of Jesus followers can talk about money and the mission of the church?

In this presentation, Pastor Aune will share what he has learned over 35 years of pastoral leadership about money and the mission of the church. He will talk about both practical and biblical values that shaped his ideas and experiences around matters of money, stewardship and mission.

April 27 — Small World: the Beauty—and Necessity—of Insects

The beauty of nature surrounds us every day, but much of it we fail to notice and, in fact, are unable even to see: the world of insects. Through his macro photographs, Gerry Hoekstra will introduce us to the amazing beauty and intricate design of insects. He will also help us to consider the threats to them and why we should care.



MONTHLY MOVIE

April 10 — Thursday 3 pm



Based on John Steinbeck's epic novel, venomous rivalry between brothers parallels the biblical story of Cain and Abel. However, family and friendship help to prevent disaster by guiding the family to the realization that mankind can be flawed but redemption can be found.

SACRED SITES SHARING WITH ARLA

April 15 — Tuesday 3:30 pm

Please join ARLA (Anti-Racism Learning and Advocacy) on Tuesday, April 15 in the Youth Room, from 3:30-4:30 pm, for a "Sacred Sites Sharing." Last June, 12 Bethel folks were part of a Sacred Sites tour in the south metro, led by Pastor Jim Bear of the Mohican nation. At the sites, powerful, impactful stories were shared. Now the group would like to share with you what impacted them and what has stayed with them — mainly with stories, but also with pictures. All ages are welcome to join. Please come.

ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY CLEAN UP



April 26 — Saturday 9 am

Please join the Adopt-a-Highway cleanup crew on Saturday, April 26 at 9 am, for the spring cleanup of our 1.6 mile section of Highway 3 N. and County Rd. 86. Meet at the Bethel parking lot at 9 am for carpooling to our site. Please bring gloves. Bags and safety vests will be provided. The work is easy when we do it together! The Creation Care Team welcomes anyone over age 12. Plan on 1 1/2 hours of your time. Hope to see you there!

MARCH BRIGHT LIGHTS

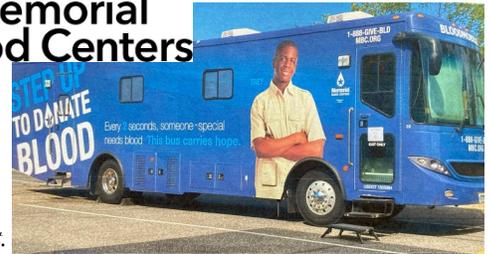


The youth reminded us of Bible stories about feeding the hungry and encouraged us to be heroes of generosity through the March Food Drive. As of March 27, Bethel has raised \$12,390.



Memorial Blood Centers

Another way to be a hero... Memorial Blood Centers give thanks to Bethel for hosting our 24th blood drive that impacted the lives of 100-110 people by collecting 35 units of blood in March. Thank you for your self-sacrificial giving of blood poured out for others this Lent.



7th graders translated the Lord's Prayer into emojis at a special retreat.



The willow tree, symbolizing mourning and renewal, was the image used at the Loss in Lent Bethel Women's Retreat at Mt. Olivet Retreat Center. Pam Santerre and Dottie Hammer led us through an uplifting day as we shared experiences of loss in our lives. Attendees expressed gratitude to the Endowment Fund for helping make the retreat affordable. It was a gorgeous day to experience God's peace and grace in fellowship with such beloved, compassionate and fearless women.

Worship on the third Sunday in Lent was special with the parables "in surround sound" from three different ensembles: *Lost Sheep* - "You Will Be Found" from *Dear Evan Hansen*



Lost Coin - "God Lights a Lamp"



Lost Son - "Far, Far Away / I Will Arise"



IN THE LIBRARY...



"... from expected death comes unexpected new life!" The Gospel of Matthew does not shy away from the realities of struggle, suffering, doubt, and death. Yet, from the first names in the genealogy to the last words spoken by Jesus, this Gospel testifies to the promise that from expected death comes unexpected new life. Through the actions of Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and Bathsheba, we experience the expectation of death and the promise of unexpected new life. In the birth story of Jesus, Joseph suspects Mary of committing adultery. It is this dilemma that is the focus of the narrative. If he reveals her pregnancy, she could be killed. If he conceals her pregnancy, he will be going against the law of the Lord. What is a righteous man to do? In Joseph's dilemma, this experience of expected death, the Gospel of Matthew proclaims the promise of unexpected new life. The promise of unexpected new life is a theme that continues throughout Matthew's Gospel in the life and ministry of Jesus. The call of his disciples is a call from death to new life. The teaching of Jesus focuses on the experience of death and the promise of new life. In both healing and curing, Jesus brings unexpected new life to those who face death. But it is the death and resurrection of Jesus that is the

climax of unexpected new life in the Gospel of Matthew. Even as Jesus experiences a most horrific and humiliating death in the crucifixion, death and the grave do not have the final say. In bearing witness to Jesus' resurrection, the Gospel of Matthew proclaims the magnificent promise of unexpected new life. Matthew J. Marohl invites you in these pages to read the Gospel of Matthew in a new way, from a fresh perspective. Integrating insights from the study of Mediterranean anthropology, Marohl makes the cultural world of the Gospel come alive, so that as you read Matthew again (or perhaps for the first time) you will certainly experience the powerful promise that from expected death comes unexpected new life!

HOMES FOR GOD'S CHILDREN: CRISIS HOUSING 2025

Success! Members of the committee completed the first restocking of a crisis housing unit. It went smoothly thanks to the generosity of the congregation in providing us with a complete inventory. Now that the committee members have experience in the process, we will be contacting others who have volunteered to help when future restocks are needed. A call for additional supplies will not be necessary until after another crisis unit has to be set up, which will likely occur in April. Thank you again for your enthusiastic support of people in need.



FINANCIAL NOTES from Barb Fowler, Treasurer

YTD February 2025

Income \$132,961
Expense \$161,406
Net Total - \$28,445

It is early in the year but the Finance Committee is keeping a close watch on the revenues. January and February offering income was down by 22% over budget. We ask that each of you review your own giving plan. Is your plan to give weekly, monthly or quarterly? Have you reached those giving goals for the quarter ending March 31? It is so easy to fall behind.

Bethel is counting on you to supply the revenues to meet all of our expenses. Thank you for making this a priority in your budget.

Members of the Finance Committee: Heidi McCormick, Lee Runzheimer, Lois Stratmoen, Blair Fowler, Trustee, Andrew Jorgenson, Steward, Paula Mathison, President, and Pastor Inger, ex-officio



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Northfield, MN 55057



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Web: www.bethelnorthfield.org

www.facebook.com/bethellutheran

Email: bethel@bethelnorthfield.org



Return Service Requested



YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!

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.



INFORMAL ALLELUIA 5K FUN RUN/WALK

Sunday, April 27 after second service

Bethel's willingness to experiment with a *moving* worship (pun intended) on the second Sunday of Easter these past three years has been such a joy. We built on the joy and fellowship of the Holy Humor tradition, and emphasized that celebrating and believing in the resurrection is not just in our heads, but something we live out in and with our bodies. We raised funds for Global Refuge (formerly Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service) and our neighbors in Viking Terrace. This year, a new course was going to take us to Hauberg Woods and help us ponder what resurrection might mean for all of creation (Romans 8:18-23).

We were excited for a late Easter and warmer temperatures! Alas, the later date this year also meant our stalwart members of Congregational Life, who have served as course marshals and fellowship décor specialists, had travel plans. Chris Bussmann and the Kitchen Committee, who worked so hard to make sure that the fish taco fellowship was delicious (and had a non-fish option too!) also needed a break, and while willing to serve as consultants, were also out of town. We didn't want the Alleluia 5k to be more work than fun, so Bethel is not offering the alternative worship experience this year. 2028, 2030, and 2038 will have late Easters as well—we'll see if the timing is right in the future.

Let's still move with Easter joy! After the second service on April 27, join Pastor Inger and her dog Paolo on a tour of the Hauberg Woods course, or explore it on your own.

