

Bethel Blaze

May 2025

Sharing Christ's love with a big heart

JOIN US FOR WORSHIP

In Person

Sunday Mornings:
8:30 am and 10:45 am

Online:

The 8:30 am 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 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



THE GIFT OF THE GARAGE SALE: REDUCE & REPURPOSE

It's almost here! Maybe you're looking forward to decluttering your home. Maybe you want to share your passion for baking. Maybe you really enjoy the fun and sense of community when you're part of the team making it all happen.

2025 BETHEL GARAGE SALE

Friday, May 16, 7:00 am – 6:00 pm and
Saturday, May 17, 8:00 am – noon
\$5 Bag Sale Saturday 10:00 am – noon

There are several ways to contribute to the 2025 Bethel Garage Sale.

Please donate!

In-kind donation drop-off dates for Bethel members are Monday, May 12 through Wednesday, May 14 from 9:00 am until 7:00 pm each day. In-kind donations in clean, gently used condition are appreciated. Items not accepted include mattresses, TVs, VCRs, outdated electronics, cribs, car seats, exercise equipment, and large, artificial Christmas trees. Donations will not be accepted on Thursday, May 15. Please contact Don Pavek (612-685-3207) for transportation of furniture or larger items for donation.

Please bake!

The Bethel Garage Sale will again feature a bake sale! Please drop off labeled baked goods for the sale on Thursday, May 15 from 9:00 am until 3:00 pm. Individually-wrapped items along with cookies and bars packaged in groups of eight are appreciated.

Please volunteer!

Numerous volunteer opportunities will be available Sunday, May 11 through Saturday, May 17. Volunteers are appreciated in all areas. Please join the fun and sign up using your email invitation on Breeze or at the Among the Ministries table on Sunday, May 4. Walk-in volunteers are also welcome!

New for 2025... our Bethel Garage Sale Social is moving from Friday evening to Thursday evening. Please join us on Thursday, May 15 at 5:00 pm for dinner and fellowship at the Northfield Golf Club. More details will follow.

We are looking forward to another successful Bethel Garage Sale,
and we can't wait to see you there!

FIRESIDE REFLECTIONS

by Pastor Inger



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 Mondays,
Tuesdays, Wednesdays,
and Thursdays

days off
Friday & Saturday

Dear Bethel,

The “tide” of Eastertide, Merriam-Webster tells me, comes from the Old English *tīd*, meaning time, period, era. Still, I love the association with an incoming ocean tide: the ongoing movement, the waves coming up the shore a little farther each time: I think about God’s love relentlessly rolling in. I like the togetherness: “a rising tide lifts all ships,” - so different from the winner-loser language of the newspaper headlines today.

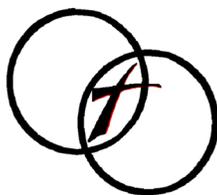
In this busy and battered world, I need Easter to keep coming – to wash over me again, to wake me up, to restore my wonder and will when they are flagging. So I am grateful for this season of 50 days, and I am grateful that throughout the year, every Sunday is a mini-Easter, celebrating the resurrection. However, Eastertide is not escape from the challenges of life. I am excited for how the Narrative Lectionary will move us quickly into Acts and the Letters of Paul. After all, none of the gospel accounts give much detail after the resurrection accounts: Matthew and Mark give a few verses (if any); Luke and John offer a half a chapter. God’s word urges us on: the early church plunged into figuring out what faith in the risen Christ looked like, just as we do in our context.

At the World Youth Day in 2023, Pope Francis gave these words of encouragement: "I want to tell you: carry on, keep riding the waves of love, of charity. Be 'surfers' of love!" May we help each other catch the waves this Eastertide, and carry God’s love to those who need it most.

In Christ, Pastor Inger

BEFRIENDERS

by Marci Groenewold



Bethel has had a BeFriender ministry for over 25 years. During this time dozens of Bethel members have completed a 20-hour training based on the ministry’s foundation principles: God is present, caring not curing, nonjudgmental presence, and active listening. This year, we commissioned five newly trained BeFrienders alongside eleven other active BeFrienders available to serve. The BeFriender logo shows a cross in the middle of two intersecting circles, reminding us that God is present when BeFrienders visit their listening partner and a sacred space is created between them.

The purpose of pastoral care and the BeFriender ministry is not to “fix” people. Rather, supported by the BeFriender’s listening without judgement and with extreme confidentiality, the listening partner finds their own path in their own time. One-to-one matches make it possible for assigned ministers to spend significant time and develop deep trust with their listening partners. This individualized care provides higher support than the pastors can provide with their visits.

Both the BeFriender and the listening partner grow and are changed by their relationship. Active BeFrienders attend monthly meetings to support and learn from each other. Confidentiality is maintained: matches are never shared with the group, and any names are changed to “Mary” and “Joseph” when necessary.

“Be” Friending is not “Do” Friending. There is no need for BeFrienders to do anything. Spending time with another by offering a listening presence is enough. Listening partners are allowed to share their joys and sorrows without fear of interruption or disapproval. Listening to the same story over and over is allowed. Held in a form of love called listening, a heart heals in its own time and way.

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		1:30 pm	Bible Text Study @ The Vault (note new time for May & June!)
		6:30 pm	Adult/Resonance Bell Choir (through May 12)
TUESDAY		9:45 am	Staff Meeting
WEDNESDAY		7:00 pm	Church Choir Rehearsal (through May 14)
THURSDAY		8:30 am	MoB (Men of Bethel) is reading and discussing selected texts from the gospel of Luke, with an ear for what they are saying to Christians in the USA in 2025.
		9:30 am	FaB (Faith and Books), our women's book group, is reading <i>Field Notes for the Wilderness</i> by Sarah Bessey. Our rich discussions are held weekly in the Youth Room. Please email Lana Reich at lanareich@yahoo.com if you would like to be added to the FaB email list.
FRIDAY		9:30 am	WoW (Women of the Word) via zoom

THIS MONTH

MAY 1	10:45 am	OWLs (Older Wiser Lutherans)
	5:00 pm	Worship & Arts Planning
	7:00 pm	Vision Seekers (Chapel Brewing in Dundas, MN)
MAY 4	9:45 am	TORCH Packaging
	12:00 pm	Mentor Service Project
MAY 5	5:00 pm	Worship & Arts Action Team
MAY 6	 9:00 am	Quilting Group
MAY 7	3:30 pm	Last Limitless
	4:45 pm	Immigration Team
	5:00 pm	Congregational Life
	6:30 pm	Last Hangtime
MAY 8	3:00 pm	Bethel Movie "Sweetland"
	6:00 pm	BeFriender Ministry
	7:00 pm	Finance
	7:00 pm	RIC (Reconciling in Christ)
MAY 9	3:15 pm	Flower Plant Delivery
MAY 10	8:30 am	Flower Plant Delivery
MAY 11	9:35 am	Last Day of Sunday School & Bethel U

GARAGE SALE SET UP
 Monday, May 12—Wednesday, May 14
 9:00 am – 7:00 pm

BAKE SALE DROP OFF
 Thursday, May 15 9:00 am—3:00 pm

MAY 13	2:00 pm	Library
MAY 16 & 17		BETHEL GARAGE SALE (see front page for details)
MAY 18	8:30 am	NEW MEMBER WELCOME Spring Music Festival
	1:00 pm	Bethel @ Benedictine Chapel
	2:00 pm	5th Grade Celebration
MAY 19	7:00 pm	Creation Care
MAY 20	12:00 pm	Lydia Circle
	5:15 pm	Personnel
	 6:30 pm	Church Council
MAY 21	4:30 pm	Homes for God's Children
MAY 25		<i>Summer Worship Schedule & Outdoor Worship Begins</i>
MAY 26		Memorial Day—Church Offices Closed
MAY 27	 9:00 am	Quilting Group

FAITH FORMATION AT BETHEL

A staffed nursery for little ones is available
8:00 am—noon on Sunday mornings (year round)
and Wednesdays 3:00—5:45 pm (through May 8)

Children's Ministry

Upcoming Dates:

May 7 — Last day of Limitless
 May 11 — Last day of Sunday School
 June 9—12 — VBS for kids entering K-3

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

Thank you for a great year of Limitless!

It is fun to see the children Growing in God's Love (this year's Art Project theme, brought to reality with Elizabeth Christensen's help) ... and sharing that love with others (like through our cheerful Easter decorations for our Northfield Retirement Community neighbors!)



Summer 2025 Vacation Bible School!

Register now for VBS! This is a joint effort with Bethel, St. John's, and Emmaus, with St. John's hosting. We're going to *Road Trip with God* June 9 – 12, 2025 from 9 – 11 am. See Bethel's website or the Children's Ministry Newsletter to register.

Youth Ministry

Mentors and 9th grade students – The last mentor event will be May 4 from noon – 2:30 pm. Students, please register here: <https://bethelnorthfield.breezechms.com/form/123da158>

Hangtime! 10th -12th grade students! May 7 will be the last Hangtime for the program year! There is NO Bistro on May 7. To make sure that we get in as much playtime as possible, we will meet from 6:30 – 8:00 pm. We will start up again in early October!

Senior Hangtime Celebration! All 10-12 grade students are invited to Kristi's house to celebrate our seniors on Wednesday, May 14 from 6:00 – 8:00 pm. Sophomores and juniors please bring soda or food to share. Hamburgers and hotdogs will be provided! Check your emails for the address and more information.

Seniors! Please remember to fill out the form for Senior Sunday by May 12! The form can be found here: <https://bethelnorthfield.breezechms.com/form/503ce136>

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.

Graduation Sunday is June 1! We will be blessing our graduates at the 8:30 am worship. Join us as we honor these great young men and women.

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

LIFELONG LEARNING

Adult Education

May 4 — Indigenous Women: Messages of Healing and Justice

Rev. Dr. Kelly Sherman-Conroy will be with us once again, preaching and teaching, on the eve of the national recognition day for Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women. A member of the Oglala Sioux Tribe, Dr. Kelly is an Associate Pastor at All Nations Indian Church in Minneapolis. With her doctorate in Systematic Theology [Indigenous Theology] from Luther Seminary, she teaches as an Assistant Professor of Theology at St. Olaf College and an Adjunct Professor at Augsburg University. In addition, Dr. Kelly is a traveling theologian bringing teaching, messages of healing and justice, spiritual connection and advocacy for meaningful change to people nationally and internationally.

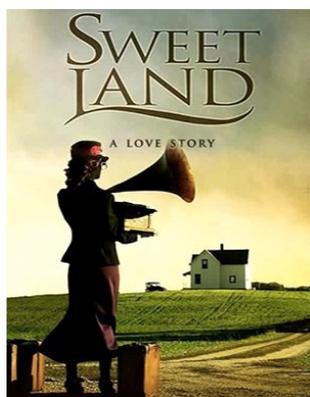


The MMIW Movement is one that advocates for an end to violence toward Indigenous women and seeks to raise awareness about the high rates of murders and disappearances of Indigenous peoples. Advocacy for the right to safety, accountability and justice through law enforcement is also a priority. We honor the Native-led nonprofit organizations committed to change and we seek to support them.

May 11— Lutheran Social Service Spotlight *(rescheduled from March)*



Lutheran Social Service (LSS) is a deeply trusted ministry partner, touching many parishioners' lives. Financial support of LSS has been part of Bethel's operating budget for many years. Rev. Amanda Simons is LSS in Minnesota's Director of Church Partnerships and Engagement. She worshipped with us (and preached!) in the summer of 2023. You may also remember that out of 165 congregations in the Southeastern Minnesota Synod, Bethel was the recipient of LSS in MN's 2023 Servant of Christ Award for our synod! We are thrilled to welcome Rev. Amanda back to the pulpit, and to have the education hour between services to learn about the opportunities and challenges LSS faces today.



MONTHLY MOVIE

May 8—Thursday 3 pm

Inge, a feisty German mail-order bride arrives in Minnesota to marry Olaf, a Norwegian immigrant farmer. They fall in love despite the town's disapproval, but in a post-WWI, anti-German climate both the town's Lutheran minister and the county clerk refuse to marry them. Finally, Inge proves herself, and *Sweet Land* tells the multi-generational story of social acceptance and land ownership in the Midwest.

BETHEL BRIGHT LIGHTS



Bethel children and youth in **community** (6th graders & friends; birthday festivities for one of Bethel's amazing AV techs Nathan Hoekstra, and Henry Schoenbauer placing a Limitless birdfeeder), celebrating Palm Sunday, **learning** about holy communion and serving in key **worship** roles on Maundy Thursday: living into our Bethel values!



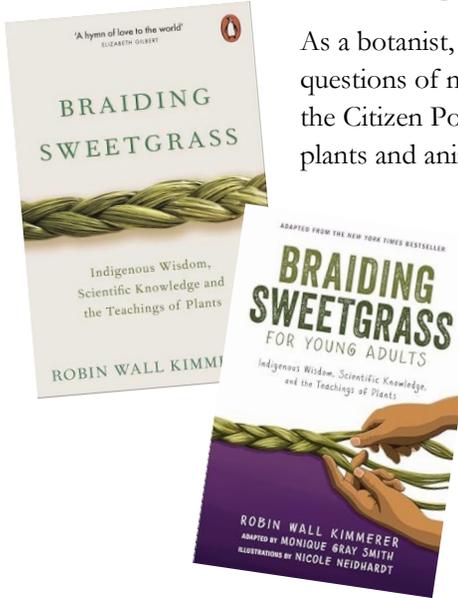
Bethel adults have big hearts too! Pastor Inger got to see Tim Larsen in action (high school coaching shot put and discus for 40+ years!) and caught a glimpse of Scott Broughton and other Bethel athletes as well. Easter chalk art by artist extraordinaire July Jenkinson once again blessed people as they arrived for worship, and musicians helped lift each service Easter morning.

Share
Christ's
Love with a
BIG HEART



IN THE LIBRARY...

Braiding Sweetgrass



As a botanist, Robin Wall Kimmerer has been trained to ask questions of nature with the tools of science. As a member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, she embraces the notion that plants and animals are our oldest teachers.

In *Braiding Sweetgrass*, Kimmerer brings these lenses of knowledge together to show that awakening a wider ecological consciousness requires acknowledging and celebrating our reciprocal relationship with the rest of the living world. Only when we can hear the languages of other beings are we capable of understanding the earth's generosity, and learning to give our own gifts in return.



Both the Young Adult version and the original book are available for check-out.



Easter joy continues!

All creation was singing on the informal Alleluia 5k Fun Run/Walk to Hauberg Woods: goslings, turtles, muskrats (as well as the trees and birds!) and four dogs.



FINANCIAL NOTES

from Barb Fowler, Treasurer

Operating Budget	
January—March 2025	
Revenue	\$189,900
Expenses	-251,004
Total	(61,104)

Bethel, you are amazing! Since the beginning of the year, we have finished raising the \$66,000 needed to improve the audio in the sanctuary and raised \$15,846 for the Northfield Food Shelf, plus donating to the Global Refuge fund through our Easter Offering. Thank you so much!

Now we need to turn our efforts to the operating budget. As of March 31, we were \$61,104 in deficit. This is an alarming amount and we must work together to get our revenue in balance. Yes, Bethel is fortunate to have an operating reserve that we can use in the short term, but it is your offerings that will cover our annual expenses. If we wait too long, it will be difficult if not impossible to catch-up. Your generosity is a blessing to Bethel.

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)



Bethel Lutheran Church
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Northfield, MN 55057



Phone: 507-786-6674

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.



Thank You!

With sadness but immense gratitude for the many ways she has blessed and supported staff and congregation, the Personnel Committee received Lois Cary's resignation as Office Assistant, Sunday Morning Worship Support & Wednesday Limitless Assistant, effective May 19, 2025. She will see us through the busiest events of May—the Garage Sale and our New Member / Music Festival Sunday—and then will enjoy having more free time. Be sure to say “thank you” as we celebrate Lois alongside our new members during the May 18 fellowship hour.



THANK YOU, LOIS!

Moving forward, Bethel's Office Hours will be Monday – Thursday 9 am – 3 pm.

This schedule will still serve our visitors and ministry needs, while being sensitive to budget constraints. Know that staff and groups can still use the building on Fridays! Just connect with the Office Manager as you would for a late afternoon or evening meeting to have the doors unlocked, and take responsibility for turning off lights and ensuring the doors lock behind you when you leave. On Sundays, we expect parishioners to lean in and assist staff in problem-solving any issues that arise, and find our own ways to imitate Lois' cheerful spirit of service. Thank you for helping us be good stewards!