



Bethany Connections October 2020

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BETHANY'S SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING

WHEN: SUNDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2020 10:30 A.M.

WHERE: AMERICAN LEGION HALL
1055 E STATE ST,
MAUSTON

WHAT'S ON THE AGENDA:
WE WILL BE ELECTING OUR LEADERSHIP FOR 2021!



PLEASE MAKE PLANS TO ATTEND!



Saturday, October 3rd 2:00 pm

We all know our pets are part of the family! In the Spirit of St Francis, join us for an outdoor—physically distanced service of blessing. Bring a chair, your pet (on a leash or in a carrier) or a photo, a mask, and a grateful heart!



Trunk or Treat

Saturday, October 31st

3:00—5:00 pm

A safe alternative to Trick or Treat!

Decorate your Trunk, put on a costume and drive over to Bethany! All treats need to be packaged. Consider options like: applesauce, crackers, raisins/craisins. Wear a mask and observe physical distancing. Contact the church so we know how many vehicles to expect. Bring your friends and neighbors to Trick or Treat! We hope to see you there!

Going God's Way

A Stewardship for All Season Update

In these unprecedented times, going God's way may be challenging, but it is a challenge that members of Bethany have met head on led by God, our great provider. This past year has seen our congregation accomplish many of the goals set in our Stewardship for all Seasons initiatives. It is utterly amazing what can be accomplished working together and trusting God to provide. While today we reflect on the goals we have met, it is also a time to begin planning to continue *Going God's Way* in the year to come.

Building Connections

Connections have never been more important than now when we are not able to physically worship together. Quality communication is the foundation of strong relationships. During this pandemic, Bethany has been able to improve online worship technology to provide a meaningful worship experience. This allows members to collectively worship wherever they are. Other technology updates have included initiation of online, upgraded website and the purchase of a new laptop computer for Pastor.

Develop Relationships Through Service

God calls us to serve others and Bethany chose to accomplish this by reaching out to the community. Bethany sent funds to the Mauston School district to help offset lunch costs for families in need. Members provided 5 boxes of diapers to Juneau County Family Resource Center and Early Head Start program. Although delayed due to the pandemic, Bethany started free community meals with a drive through community cookout in which over 150 people were served, and 18 home deliveries were made to Bethany seniors. Another drive through community meal will be provided on November 22nd.

Providing A Welcoming Space

The beauty of our church has been increased with the painting of the exterior of the building. This was accomplished through the generosity of members and the Foundation. Updates have been made to the Pastor's office and the main office. Painting of several areas of the interior church has been accomplished by generous congregational volunteers.

Thank you for your continued financial support! Thank you for your time and talents! Thank you for your prayers!! While we have accomplished much, there is much more to do. We strive to continue *Going God's Way* by taking these initiatives into the future. What does that mean? We will keep building connections, developing relationships through service, and providing a welcoming space for when we are able to return to worshipping together. This will take our members trusting in God to provide. It will take members giving of their time, financial support, and prayers to make Bethany live its mission statement. Yes, we live in challenging times and as a congregation, we have a choice. Let us choose wisely!

Stewardship Committee Members – Tim Benson, Sheri Benson, Kathy Marose, Jacquie Puent, Pastor Gloria Stubitsch, Jeri Shultis. Thank you to Jon Williams and Marie McDonough who are retiring from the committee.

Use whatever gift you have
received to serve others. 1 Peter 4:10



Sunday School

With the color of the tree leaves changing and the calendar indicating Fall is here, with school resuming, Sunday school will also resume. Sunday, October 4 will be the first day of Sunday school. Our plan is to hold online classes until our church resumes in person worship. We will have a recorded video alternating weeks with live Zoom video classes. The recorded videos can be watched whenever it is convenient for your family. The live Zoom meetings will be held at 9:00 a.m. on alternating Sundays. If you can't make it at that time, you will receive a link to the recording a few days later. Between these two formats, we will celebrate birthdays, sing songs, have offering, do story time, color, do art projects, and work on the Lord's Prayer.

Parents will pick up bags of materials once a month from the church, and will included snacks, art projects, activities, and song sheets. **For your child to participate in Sunday School, please call the church office at 608-847-6690 or email the church at bethluth2@frontier.com to receive the weekly email links to the recorded videos and Zoom meetings.** These will not be on Facebook live, so you must call to sign up and provide us with your email address so you can receive the links each week. We are doing this for the privacy and safety of our children. Only those who have the link will be able to see the videos. The Sunday School Committee and Pastor will be putting together the videos and Zoom meetings.

**When – Sunday School will begin
Sunday, October 4**

**How – Online with recorded videos &
Zoom meetings—alternating weeks**

**Next steps – call the church or email
to receive the weekly email links and
to schedule a time to pick up the
materials for October**



With Sunday School interrupted and cut short in the Spring due to Covid-19, we hadn't wrapped up the year yet. In September, we celebrated students who had outstanding attendance for the 2019-2020 year. We mailed a certificate and a cross to place on their "Outstanding Attendance Award Plaque".



These students had outstanding attendance:

Avi Bohnert	Aubrey Ellerman	Riley Rotzoll
Brielle Bohnert	Talia Hansen	
Emalee Bohnert	Ella Rotzoll	

Congratulations on your commitment!

We once again thank our dedicated teachers who give so selflessly of their time to teach our kids for the 2019-2020 year. Thanks to Journey Malacina, Jacob Muchenberger, Ian Flint, Dawson Dearth, Nelson Brandt, and Tina Miles. A \$10 Culvers gift card was mailed to each of these teachers in September.

Submitted by the Sunday School Committee (Linda Bohnert, Teresa Ellerman, Tina Miles, and Cheryl Fenner)

CONFIRMATION

There will be a Parent-Student meeting in the Fellowship Hall on Wednesday, October 7th, at 7 pm. We will socially distance and masks are required. We will talk about classes and agree on other specifics. We request at least one parent and the student attend.

We are planning on holding the Confirmation service on Sunday, October 24th. Since we will still be worshipping online at that time, we will record the service with the students who completed Confirmation last spring and their families present and incorporate the rite into our Sunday online worship for extended family members and the Bethany community.

Covid-19 and Bethany

Over the last few weeks, Bethany members have been wondering why we continue to worship exclusively online. So, we've decided to dedicate some time and space to sharing what we are hearing from reliable sources of science-based community health professionals as well as the guidance we are receiving from our La Crosse Area Synod Office.

First, on September 22, 2020 Bishop Jim Arends released this statement to all pastors, deacons, and lay leaders and the congregations they serve:

While the bishop does not make decisions about reopening buildings for any congregation, I do make recommendations based on the knowledge I have from public health officials. Then church councils and pastors make decisions and determine the terms under which they will gather.

The ongoing pandemic requires that we continually reevaluate what are best practices for our congregations. Every time your council meets, it is important to revisit the conversation because the situation keeps changing. While it is tempting to make decisions based on what others are doing, I urge you to make decisions based on care and concern for the most vulnerable among you and to heed the best informed science you can. Remember that most of our congregations' worshiping members would fall into one or more "high risk" categories.

The state of Wisconsin is second only to North Dakota in its rise of Covid- 19 case numbers right now, and La Crosse County has the highest per capita rate in the country. Therefore, it is NOT recommended to meet in person at all right now. If people must meet in person, it should be outside, in very small groups, for under 30 minutes, with masks on and staying at least 6 feet apart. Being inside dramatically increases the risk of spreading the virus.

'Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take to thought what is noble in the sight of all. If it is possible, so far as it

depends on you, live peaceably with all.' Romans 12:16-18

Thank you for the ways you continue to follow Jesus and the compassion and kindness you show to one another.

Bishop Arends

You can access the most current information and recommendations from the La Crosse Area Synod through their website: <https://www.lacrosseareasynod.org/>

Similarly, the Wisconsin Council of Churches updated their recommendations on September 21, 2020. Their update begins:

With eight Wisconsin cities occupying positions on a list of the twenty US cities with the fastest rising numbers of COVID cases as of mid-September, we continue to urge caution in gathering the church in physical locations. **At this time, we do not advise gathering indoors. Outdoor events are much safer than indoors. Online options are preferred.**

For the full statement visit wischurches.org/2020/09/23/returning-to-church-an-early-fall-update

There are a few good places to find more local information.

1. Juneau County provides local statistics daily at:

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/local.htm>

You can also find a copy of Governor Evers Emergency Order, including the full policy regarding wearing face masks, and information about upcoming free community testing sites for Covid-19.

2. The Harvard Global Health Institute and Brown School of Public Health run : <https://globalepidemics.org/key-metrics-for-covid-suppression/>

This site provides Covid Risk Levels for each county in the United States. Hover over a county for detailed information on cases. Risk levels are based on daily cases per 100,000 population. As of Saturday, September 26, the seven day average of new cases per 100,000 in population is 27.8. (cont. page 13)

Bethany Lutheran Church
 701 Grove Street Mauston, WI 53948
 Phone: (608) 847-6690
 E-mail Office: bethluth2@frontier.com
 Web address: www.bethanymauston.com



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
Online Worship Services are posted to our Facebook account and Website. You can find services at: http://www.facebook.com/Bethany.Lutheran.Mauston/ or www.bethanymauston.com To have service information mailed to you, contact the church office.				1 7:00 PM F Circle at C
4 Pentecost 18 Recorded Sunday School	5 Bible & Coffee 8:00 AM	6 Property & Finance 5:30 PM	7 Confirmation Student & Parent Meeting 7:00 PM	8 Council M 6:30
11 Pentecost 19 Zoom Sunday School 9:00 AM	12 Bible & Coffee 8:00 AM Stewardship for All Seasons 6:30 PM	13 Worship Committee 6:00 PM	14 Confirmation 6:30 PM	15
18 Pentecost 20 Recorded SS Semi-Annual Meeting 10:30 AM	19 Bible & Coffee 8:00 AM (Pastor's Fall	20 Conference)	21 Confirmation 6:30 PM	22
25 Reformation Day Zoom SS 9:00 AM	26 Bible & Coffee 8:00 AM	27	28 Confirmation 6:30 PM	29

Interim Pastor Gloria Stubitsch
 E-mail Pastor: gstubitsch@gmail.com
 Pastor's Cell: 608-712-3510
 Office Hours: 10am—2pm Mon.—Thurs.
 or by appointment

Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Worship at Church	2	3 Pet Blessing Service 2:00 PM
Parish Meeting 7:30 PM	9	10 Lutheran World Relief Quilt and Kit In-Gathering
	16	17 Synod Hunger Workshop 2:00 PM
	23	24
	30	31 Trunk or Treat 3:00-5:00 PM

Bethany continues to worship online due to the Covid-19 health emergency.

October 4 — Pentecost 18

Isaiah 5:1-7
 Psalm 80:7-15
 Philippians 3:4b-14
 Matthew 21:33-46
Reader: Dick Pirwitz

October 11 — Pentecost 19

Isaiah 25:1-9
 Psalm 23
 Philippians 4:1-9
 Matthew 22:1-14
Reader: Ed Rogers

October 18 — Pentecost 20

Isaiah 45:1-7
 Psalm 96:1-9 [10-13]
 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10
 Matthew 22:15-22
Reader: Molly Shultis

October 25 — Reformation

Jeremiah 31:31-34
 Psalm 46
 Romans 3:19-28
 John 8:31-36
Reader: Jeri Shultis





Some September birthdays were not printed in the last newsletter. We apologize for this error, and wish you a very happy belated birthday!

Happy September Birthday to....

Barbara Handrich	9/22
Joshua Bell	9/22
Ronald Engevoid	9/23
Marge Hoffmann	9/23
Mila Levenhagen	9/23
Ruth Pfaff	9/24
Erika Kielstrup	9/24
Carol Purvis	9/24
Aubrey McCluskey	9/26
Linda Bohnert	9/27
Paul Huebner	9/28
Malena Anderson	9/29
Robert Allen	9/30
Joseph Bagnowski	9/30
Susan Midthun	9/30

Happy October Birthday to....

Deanna Rose	10/3
Derek Fenner	10/3
Vaughn Wilberg	10/3
Troy Hansen	10/4
Cynthia Preuss	10/6
Greta Anderson	10/6
Amanda Staniger	10/9
Bill Langer	10/9
Tim Benson	10/11
Lois Olson	10/11
Leanna Hagen	10/12
Amy Behling	10/13
Nicole Nava	10/14
Stephanie Minard	10/15
Melanie Gray	10/15
Madree Rotzoll	10/15
Mark Dahlke	10/17
Alan Abrahamson, Jr.	10/17
Dan Anderson	10/17
Eva Ragan	10/18
Paul Merk	10/19
Grayson Tomany	10/19
Ian McIntire	10/20
Sarah Schiller	10/20
Barb Klein	10/22
Gabriel Morse	10/23
Amie Heinrich	10/26
Norah Serstad	10/27
Blake Nelson	10/28
Lisa Hansen	10/30
Don Bollig	10/30

**Happy October
Anniversary to....**

- Josh & Madree Rotzoll 10/3
- Melanie & Jeff Gray 10/5
- Vaughn & Laura Wilbert 10/6
- Greg & Norma Smith 10/8
- Roger & Pat Dutzle 10/13
- David & Kathy Kidd 10/15
- Brian & Karen Bell 10/17
- Alex & Courtney Tomany 10/17
- Paul & Jacqueline Maki 10/19
- Amanda & Charles Staniger 10/24
- Dan & Alyssa Holzberger 10/29

*We apologize for any errors.
Please contact the church office
with corrections or additions.
608-847-6690*

Thank you!

“Pastor Gloria & Bethany Lutheran Church, thank you for the donation of diapers to our organization! We appreciate it as well as the families we serve. Sincerely, Juneau County Family Resource Center Staff”

Thanks to your generosity, we were able to provide 5 large boxes of diapers and pull ups for them to provide to families in need, in response to their report that they had been out of some sizes for over a year! Thank you, Bethany!



In our prayers

— Sandy Wardwell, Bonnie Robinson, Phyllis Held, George Pierce, Meryle Henry, Tricia Demmin, Joe Griffin, The Dillin Family, Ken Plants, Bill Voltz, Bill Coller, Ronald Miller, Tim Seebecker, Janice Seebecker, Frank Shircel, Julie, Leona Clark, the Vanderhoof Family, Debbie Benson, Helen Kulas, Jessica Vodvarka, and Paul Kielstrup.

— Major Kyle Pokorney, Samantha Madsen, Ben Murphy, Spence Dallman, Kevin Berg, Mitchell Brown, and all who serve their country.

Bethany's Prayer Chain Coordinator is Audrey Gierhart (847-4106). If you have an urgent prayer request, you can call her to share the request.



La Crosse Area Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

September 18, 2020

Dear Friends in the La Crosse Area Synod,

We are living in interesting times. I am glad I have been sharing them with you. It is empowering and hopeful to witness what Christ is doing through us as congregations and as synod in the midst of this pandemic. You continue to ensure that the Word of God is proclaimed to our members, to our neighbors and to the world. You continue to feed the hungry, connect with the lonely, protect the most vulnerable among us, and witness for justice. Thank you for what you do in the name of Jesus.

It is my honor to continue to serve with you beyond my two terms in office. I appreciate the opportunity to be a part of our transition to ministry in an epidemic and divided world. I am thankful that I can aim us toward ministry together with our next called bishop. But it is now time for a change.

Since we began postponing and finally cancelled the 2020 La Crosse Area Synod Assembly, I have been discerning with family, friends, colleagues, and our Presiding Bishop. I have prayed. Through much wise council and with a sense of peace I am announcing that I will retire as Bishop of the La Crosse Area and as a called pastor in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America on December 31, 2020. I choose to do so for the wellbeing of the synod and for my health and life as husband, father, grandfather, and one with enough years to follow some wisdom.

Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton has already begun a search for an interim bishop to serve starting January 1, 2021, until a newly elected bishop can be installed. I will be available to the interim bishop for consultation. Between now and December 31, I will continue my bishop's duties with full focus and will begin guiding the synod's work toward the transitions to come.

I will be forever grateful for the honor of serving as your bishop. The relationships, the ministry, and the opportunities have been blessing after blessing after blessing. Thank you for your partnership over the past twelve years. Thank you for understanding it is my time to retire. Thank you for your prayers for Lynn's and my future.

Praying peace and blessings for you all,

Rev. James A. Arends, Bishop

(cont. from pg. 7) This is Covid-Risk Level Red. The recommendation for virus containment at 25+ is Stay at Home Orders. We know this will not happen in Wisconsin or Juneau County at this time. However, this is one piece of information guiding Bethany's choices. To reach Green Level, we need to reach less than 1 case per 100,000 people and be able to sustain that level for two weeks.

Each Wednesday by 2:00 PM, the Wisconsin Department of Health updates their "Covid-19 Case Indicators" for the previous two weeks. You can find that here: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/local.htm>

Each week, you can find how many new cases have been diagnosed in the previous two weeks. They also report the Burden, which is how many people per 100,000 in population have been diagnosed. In other words, how densely spread the virus is. They also report whether the trajectory is rising, falling, or stable. Finally, they assign an activity level of high, moderately high, moderate, or low.

For example, on September 23rd, Juneau County's numbers were: 82 diagnosed, which is 304.7 per 100,000 in the last two weeks, with a rising trajectory. Which means Juneau County is at High Activity Level.

To consider gathering in person for worship, Juneau County has to sustain Low Activity Level for two weeks. To reach Low Activity Level, the Case Rate per 100,000 is less than or equal to 10 with a shrinking or stable trajectory.

Until we are able to reach and sustain Low Risk Level by one of these metrics, it simply is not safe for Bethany to gather indoors for worship. This summer, we had planned some outside events but members expressed concern about the heat and lack of shade in our parking lot. So, it was decided to focus on improving our online worship opportunities.

We all eagerly await being able to worship together in our building. Until we can do that safely, we will continue to worship online. We continue to be Christ's church in new ways and to care for the most vulnerable among us.



Council Updates Wednesday, September 8 2020

Pastor's Report: Pastor reported that Covid-19 numbers are not improving for Juneau County at this time. Public Health experts are cautioning that projects are not good as we look to fall and winter. Pastor named VBS and SAS cookout as successful experiments in adapting ministry to this challenging time. Pastor named her concerns about a lack of engagement from many Bethany members during this spring and summer. Pastor reported that recent worship survey to congregation revealed that members are interested in small group opportunities and are expressing a desire for connection and a sense of community. Council members reported that disengagement has been a problem at Bethany for a very long time. Pastor and Council President encouraged Council members to explore creative ways to engage members in bible study, acts of service, shared interest groups, etc. Council encouraged to see Pastor as a resource, not the sole initiator and leader of these groups and events.

Treasurer's Report

Total Line of Credit balance: \$84,483.16. Bethany received final Payroll Protection Plan Payment of \$1,880.69. Total amount received: \$18,423.15
Total income year to day, including PPP, is \$103,066.01. Total expenses is \$131,304.78. This leaves a deficit of \$28,238.77. Unbudgeted expense of \$40,057.99 is the cause of this deficit.

Old Business

Bethany continues to follow guidance of state and county health departments and Wisconsin Council of Churches guidance for churches. Masks are required when meeting in the church, per state mask order.

Staying the course with online worship until Juneau County meets benchmarks for low risk.



winston churchill

Giving	Cash/Check	Online	Total
Aug. 14, 2020	\$3,985.00	\$1,060.55	\$5,045.55
Aug. 28, 2020	\$3,985.00	\$388.39	\$4,373.39

	August 2020 Actual	2020 YTD Actual	Aug. 2020 Budget	2020 YTD Budget
Total Receipts	\$9,180.49	\$130,066.01	\$13,000.00	\$121,000.00
Total Disbursements	\$3,012.85	\$131,304.78	\$16,691.28	\$131,708.04

Stewardship for All Seasons Drive-Thru Community Cookout was a great success! 150 people were served, with a good mix of member and community participation. 18 home deliveries were made to Bethany members. Feedback has been very positive. SAS Team plans to hold another dinner later this fall. All expenses for the Cookout were covered by private donors. No Bethany funds were spent on the event.

New Business

Charlotte Lyman has donated a number of afghans and prayer shawls to Bethany. They are available for those who would benefit from or like one. If anyone has a Quilt Rack they are not using, Bethany would like to display them in the Narthex for members to share with those experiencing difficult times. Contact the church office if you have one to donate.

Further conversation and emphasis on creating a sense of community through small group opportunities.

Committee Reports

Executive

Planning for a safe semi-annual meeting. Committees encouraged to participate in Trunk or Treat.

Finance and Property

Annual budget requests are in Council mailboxes. Deadline for requests is October 1. \$8,800.00 will be paid on Line of Credit balance.

Mission

Plans are underway to for a food drive to address hunger in our community.

Thank you!



Family Camp at Sugar Creek

Family Camp has been a popular get-a-way! Call to sign up today!

Join us

October 16-18

Register online

www.sugarcreekbiblecamp.org

FALL HUNGER LEADERS WORKSHOP

Saturday, October 17th, 10-11:30 am

The workshop will be held via Zoom. (Computer or Phone access)

Topics include: Advent Resources, Family Farm Project, Hunger Grants, and updates on how the Pandemic has Affected World Hunger.



Please register with the Synod Office.
office@lacrosseareasynd.org
 or 608-788-5000

Did you know?

In 2020 Bethany paid over \$700 for offering envelopes! We have over 200 boxes of envelopes that were not used. Some of you will be assigned a new number in 2021. By modifying how we assign numbers, Bethany will save over \$500! And we will have a new design!

Bethany Lutheran Church
701 Grove Street
Mauston, WI 53948

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MAUSTON WI 53948

Return service requested

We at Bethany Lutheran Church, Mauston, seek to build unity by instilling hope through:

ENGAGING

all generations in the practices and teaching of Jesus,

WELCOMING

each other,

REACHING OUT

to our greater community.



701 Grove Street Mauston, Wisconsin * 608-847-6690 * www.bethanymauston.com