

# BETHANY LUTHERAN

## Connections

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You are Invited to Our Spring  
Free Community Dinner!

**Swing by Bethany on Sunday, May 23,  
from 4:00—6:00 PM**

for a home-style carry-out spaghetti dinner  
with some of your favorite sides.

Call the church office to request  
meal delivery.

Please call the church office to  
sign up to assist with preparing,  
serving, delivering, or cleaning up!  
No one can do it all, but we all can  
do part!

**All are Welcome!**



### We have a new Newsletter Format!

I'm sure by now you noticed that we have  
made a few changes to the monthly  
Connections Newsletter.

**These simple changes will save Bethany  
over \$60 per month in postage!**

We are always striving to be good stewards of  
the resources entrusted to us, so that all we do  
in word and action reflects the faith we share.

As with any change, there is some learning  
and refining to do, we welcome constructive  
feedback so that we  
can ensure we are  
meeting our members'  
needs to the best of  
our ability.  
Thank you!



A letter was sent out a  
few weeks ago  
requesting updated in-  
formation.

We respectfully ask you  
return the yellow form  
to the church, even if nothing has changed re-  
cently.

**We want to confirm addresses and phone num-  
bers, as well as birthdays and  
anniversaries! We want to be sure we accurately  
update records for adult children who may have  
moved out of the area, especially if they have  
since joined another faith  
community.**

**Every so often every church needs to update rec-**

You have been held in our daily prayers throughout this pandemic. Pastor Gloria has often called this pandemic the “Time of Impossible Choices”. We understand that schools, employers, families, ALL OF US, have been faced with many choices that had no “good” solution. I hope you trust that Bethany’s leadership has been working hard to make faithful choices throughout this pandemic.

As of April 25th, Juneau County has:

- Daily new infection rate of 16.6 per 100,000. The target for safe gatherings is under 10.
- Positive test rate is 6.7%. The safe level is less than 5%.
- Current vaccination rate is 35.2% received one dose, and 27.6% being fully vaccinated. This puts Juneau County in the high risk level. Cases are currently increasing. So, we will be monitoring these numbers carefully. You can keep an eye on Juneau County’s numbers at [covidactnow.org](https://covidactnow.org)

The most important actions you can take to influence our ability to worship in person is to continue wearing a mask when in public, limiting large public gatherings, and, of course, to be vaccinated and encourage others to be fully vaccinated as well.

**With that said, we are pleased to announce that Bethany’s Covid-19 Task Force has decided we will resume in-person worship at Bethany on May 16th!** Of course, we will continue to make choices based on the levels of community spread, and our plans will change as needed to ensure everyone’s safety. Watch the church website or call the church office if you have questions. 608-847-6690

Here’s what we need you to know as we prepare to resume in-person worship:

- Call the church office by Thursday to report how many people from your household will attend on Sunday. This will be a temporary process. It is very important that we know how many people to expect so that we can prepare adequately and so that we comply with state health guidelines of group gatherings being under 50% of room capacity.
- Doors to the church will open 10 minutes prior to service beginning. Please proceed directly to your seat. We want to avoid clustering in the narthex, as this increases risk of virus spread. Only members of the same household can sit together.
- Masks are required. If you have a medical condition that prevents you from wearing a mask, face shields are acceptable. A limited number will be available at the church.
- The sanctuary windows will be open. Please, dress for the weather. Bethany’s heating/cooling system circulates air. This type of system also circulates virus-carrying aerosols. To minimize risk, it is important to have cross-ventilation of fresh air when people are gathered together.
- Of course, it is important for everyone to stay home if you have tested positive, are experiencing

## Confirmation

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On Sunday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>, these youth will be confirmed through the Rite of Affirmation of Baptism. In other words, they will become fully active adult members of Bethany! Please, hold them in prayer as they cross this important milestone!

Taylor Bollig  
Mara Hansen

Josh Ellerman  
Danielle Knutson

Sophie Grzenia  
Preston Seebecker

The Affirmation of Baptism will be part of the regular May 2<sup>nd</sup> service will be live-streamed and can be viewed on the Bethany Lutheran Church – Mauston Facebook page or on the Bethany Mauston YouTube Channel. The video will remain available after the live event.

## Sunday School

Sunday School held their last two classes in April. We discussed the parable of the Good Samaritan and what it means to be a good neighbor. We asked, “What is something you can do this week to show kindness?” During our last Zoom class, we played some games and danced along to “Father Abraham”. From the picture below, you can see the adults had as much fun as the youth! As an end of year gift, students were given a framed word cloud picture with all their names and the themes we discussed throughout the year.

We also included coloring pages from our lessons in this newsletter. Enjoy!



### Calling all High School Graduates!

We will be celebrating your important milestone during our In-Person Worship Service on Sunday, May 30th at 9:30 AM.

Please plan to attend!

We will also be announcing Scholarship Award recipients.

(Deadline for application is May 1st.)

**Thank you to all the students who participated this year and all the parents and caring adults who made it a priority to engage in faith formation through the pandemic. Most of all, thank you to the teachers and leaders who were creative, passionate, and stayed positive through all the challenges of this year:**

**Cheryl Fenner, Teresa Ellerman, Tina Miles, and Dick Pirwitz,**

**We will celebrate their hard work this year with a simple gift presented during worship on May 16th.**

**Bethany's Faith Circle** would like to extend an invitation to women of the congregation to join us the **first Thursday of every month at 7:00pm at Bethany**. We all wear masks and maintain social distancing in the Fellowship Hall. Please direct any questions to RJ Rogers, 608-547-8169.

**Bethany's Grace Circle** is starting to meet again, **every third Monday of month at Bethany at 1:00 pm**. We wear masks and maintain social distancing in the Fellowship Hall. All women of the church are invited! Contact Molly Shultis with any questions or for more information, 608-548-6874

### **La Crosse Area Synod School of Theology**

Our second Spring course for 2021, **Care of God's People**, will take place on Thursdays, April 22— May 27. Fee is \$20. Register by contacting Melanie at [office@lacrosseareasynod.org](mailto:office@lacrosseareasynod.org)



### **Grace & Gigabytes: Preparing the Way for the Church's New Normal**

**Thursday, April 29, 6:30 PM**

In March 2020, less than one in ten churches live-streamed their worship services. In a matter of days, Christian leaders rapidly reinvented their ministries for a digital world. As we await the coming of a new normal and a return to in-person worship, we have an opportunity to re-imagine a new way of being church. In this Zoom Webinar, we will envision how to apply what we have learned in the past year towards the church's new normal, as we begin to construct our hybrid ministry playbook. All are Welcome—lay, ordained, young, and old! Free—No registration required. Find the link on the event page on the La Crosse Area Synod Facebook page.

### **La Crosse Area Synod WELCA—Save the Date**

Mark your calendar now for **July 31st** as Women of our Synod will gather at **Trinity Lutheran Church in Cashton** for worship, elections, an important program on the theme of racial justice, and lunch. The theme is "Just Love"

### **Just Love: A virtual preview**

Women of the ELCA staff and guests offer a taste of what's to come at the Gathering. Join other women of faith for a two-hour webinar, **Saturday, September 12, 1:00 PM**, for Bible Study, speakers, music, and more!

Register at: [womenoftheelca.org/new-triennial-event-page/a-virtual/preview-2](https://womenoftheelca.org/new-triennial-event-page/a-virtual/preview-2)

Leaders include: Rev. Angela T. Khabeb, Rachel Kurtz, Lisa Plorin, Janel Johnson-Momanyi, and Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton.

Check out the WELCA resources available at [resources.elca.org/Products-Women.html](https://resources.elca.org/Products-Women.html) and [Business.landsend.com/store/womenoftheelca/](https://Business.landsend.com/store/womenoftheelca/)

### **Tribute for Rev. Jim Arends**

The Synod Assembly Committee is putting together a special thank you for Jim Arends that will be shared during the upcoming virtual synod assembly. If you would like to create a short video "thank you" on behalf of yourself or Bethany, it would be greatly appreciated!

If you have questions, please contact Andrew Stutesman—Director of Communications and Marketing at First Lutheran Church in Onalaska. 608-783-2236

## Happy May Birthday to....

Elwood Syverson	5/1
Jacqueline Maki	5/2
David Kidd	5/3
Teresa Ellerman	5/3
Gloria Noe	5/4
Rebecca Colwell	5/4
Camron Cafferty	5/5
Russ Jones	5/6
Donna Morris	5/7
Austin Her	5/8
Brian Bell	5/10
Emily Reigard	5/10
Gavin Gray	5/10
Ian Fenner	5/10
Kim Pufahl	5/11
Brenda Bryant	5/13
Diane Huebner	5/14
Karen Olson	5/16
Jackson Preuss	5/16
Kathy Paul	5/19
Harlow Gierhart	5/21
Jane Madsen	5/22
Jeri Shultis	5/22
Gladys Radcliff	5/22
Michael King	5/22
Kathy Noe	5/23
James Droster	5/24
Dylan Dearth	5/24
Jerry Schroeder	5/26
Jeremy Olson	5/27
Rosella Barton	5/27
James Henry	5/28
Alexis Ramer	5/28
Rosemary Dellamuth	5/29
Avery Deitz	5/29
Lorrie Schultz	5/29

## Happy May Anniversary to.... 5



Joe & Pamela Bagnowski	5/5
Ron & Kathy Paul	5/6
Ron & Sue Engevold	5/13
Eric & Kathleen Ness	5/19
Ed & RJ Rogers	5/21
William & Teresa Voltz	5/31

*Please know that the office does not have every member's information. Please contact the office with corrections and updates.*

**Thank you for your understanding, patience, and help in keeping our records up to date!**



## In our prayers

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— John Griffin, Jimmy Hoilien, Bonnie Robinson, Phyllis Held, George Pierce, Meryle Henry, Tricia Demmin, Joe Griffin, The Dillin Family, Ken Plants, Bill Voltz, Ronald Miller, Tim Seebecker, Julie, the Vanderhoof Family, Donna Voltz, Tammy Brown, and Marcus Brown.

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

— For the family of Phyllis Griffin, after her unexpected death on April 16.

— For Bethany's Call Committee and the important work they are doing.

— For the La Crosse Area Synod's Bishop election process and the nominees:

- Rev. Meg Eiben Hoversten, Middle Coon Valley, Chaseburg, WI
- Rev. Elizabeth "Libby" Howe, Director for Evangelical Mission/Assistant to the Bishop, La Crosse Area Synod, WI
- Rev. Felix Malpica, Faith Lutheran, Janesville, WI
- Rev. Steve Meyer, Immanuel Lutheran, Caledonia, MN
- Rev. Rebecca Piper, Calvary Lutheran, Rapid City, SD
- Rev. Anna Sorenson, French Creek Lutheran, Ettrick, WI
- Rev. Becky Swanson, Advent Lutheran, Morton, IL

(To learn more about them, visit the Synod Bishop Election page to see photos, bio forms, and recorded interviews with each of the candidates.  
[lacrosseareasynod.org/2021bishopelection](http://lacrosseareasynod.org/2021bishopelection) )

Bethany's Prayer Chain Coordinator is Audrey Gierhart (847-4106).  
If you have an urgent prayer request, call her to share the request.  
Please contact the church office (847-6690) or Pastor Gloria (608-712-3510)  
with any Pastoral Care needs or requests.

Psalm 23 from the Inclusive Bible

They give me courage.  
You spread a table for me

YHWH, you are my shepherd -  
I want nothing more.

You let me lie down in green meadows;

You lead me beside restful waters:

You refresh my soul.

You guide me to lush pastures

For the sake of your Name.

Even if I'm surrounded by shadows of Death,

I fear no danger, for you are with me.

Your rod and your staff -

In the presence of my enemies,

And you anoint my head  
with oil -

My cup overflows!

Only goodness and love  
will follow me

All the days of my life,  
And I will dwell in your



## Council Highlights

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The Church Council did not hold a meeting in April. This summary report of Committee Activity is respectfully prepared and distributed by Kathy Marose, Congregation President on April 23, 2021

### **Treasurers Report submitted by Gary Gray**

The properties/finance team met on 4/6/21. All financial reports were approved.

Our line of credit loan balance is now down to \$57,333.16.

We received a couple larger donations in March that are annual donations.

We have been approved for year two of the PPP grant, in the amount of \$18,424.15

I can do monthly draws on this total using our monthly gross payroll and about 25% of the payroll total can be used, in addition, for utilities. I will report next month what we received in April for our March draw. This will be a tremendous help again.

We approved the following to be paid in April:

Line of credit, \$800 building, \$150 parking lot and \$225 professional services.

Missions; ELCA La Crosse Synod \$175, Lutheran Social Services \$100, and Food Pantry Mauston \$50.

### **Executive Committee submitted by Kathy Marose**

The executive committee has been working in conjunction with the task force planning for return to in person worship.

An Easter card with Holy Week schedule was sent to Bethany's members and friends on behalf of Bethany to offer greetings and the assurance of the resurrection. This card and postage were made possible through a generous member donation.

Interim Bishop Chris Boerger and Assistant Bishop Libby Howe visited with the executive committee while Interim Bishop Chris was in Wisconsin (he lives in Washington State) to review how Bethany is doing. They offered continued support and encouragement during this time of Covid and the call process. They reminded the committee that the Synod and ELCA have many resources to help our congregation continue to do its work.

### **Faith Development Committee report from Teresa Ellerman**

#### Confirmation

The Affirmation of Baptism service will be Sunday, May 2nd, at 9:30 am. Students can have up to six guests including their parents.

We have six students being Confirmed - Taylor Bollig, Josh Ellerman, Sophie Grzenia, Mara Hansen, Danielle Knutson, and Preston Seebecker

#### Sunday school

Last week of Sunday School will be a Zoom on this Sunday (April 18<sup>th</sup>)

Thankful for the teamwork by Cheryl, Tina and Pastor during this Sunday school year – it really was a team effort!

### **Finance and Property Committee submitted by Norma Miller**

1. Phone/internet carrier - It was previously decided to switch to Mediacom. Small snag in making this change – Frontier required \$140 (prorated) to let us out of our contract early.

Mediacom willing to postpone install a little as we make this contract adjustment with Frontier.

2. Church locks project – a. Completion target – July 1, 2021. b. Executive Committee drafted a policy, which was approved by this committee. Will be presented to Council for adoption. c. By May 10th all staff and any members participating on a committee or Council who find it necessary to have an access code or key to any part of the building, please contact the church office. – This notice will be placed in the next newsletter.

3. Property line with Stonefield – We have already cleaned out our side of the area. Stonefield Manager satisfied with the work we've done. We approved their work plan to remove all brush and scrub trees, leaving just the large trees. Stonefield plans to keep the old fenceposts as markers. They plan to begin work on this in April.

4. There has been positive feedback from staff about the new church management software (Tithe.ly).

5. Norma Miller will be stepping down from Finance & Properties Committee and therefore Council as well, by May 14, 2021. Recommendations for her replacement on this committee would be appreciated. Linda Bohnert is resigning from the committee effective April 11, 2021.

#### **Hospitality Committee Report submitted by Ruth Marose**

Hospitality worked with Pastor to host "Lunch with Pastor" on Wednesday, April 7<sup>th</sup>. This was a catered lunch for any member that wished to sign up with a limit of 10 members to maintain social distancing. 10 members plus Pastor attended and enjoyed lunch and fellowship.

The committee continues to work with the Stewardship committee to coordinate the free community meals. The next meal will be Sunday, May 23<sup>rd</sup> and consist of spaghetti.

Due to the pandemic, fellowship hour in which the confirmation students are traditionally honored will not take place. In lieu of fellowship, a special treat will be given to confirmands to take home with them following their confirmation service on May 2<sup>nd</sup>.

#### **Worship Committee April 2021 submitted by Jacquie Puent**

Readers have been lined by Karen Fritz through June.

Diane and Linda selected hymns for upcoming worship.

Jacquie is working with the task force working on the return to in person worship plan. Worship Committee will meet to work on protocols for communion and options for music during worship.

#### **Mission Committee April 2021**

The Mission Committee is working to support hunger relief through the food pantry and the Synod Farm Project.

### **Re-Keying the Church**

**This summer we will re-key the building for security reasons, it hasn't been done for many years. Contact the office at 608-847-6690 if you need a key or the code for entry on the kitchen door so that we know how many to make.**

## Financial Updates

BLC Line of Credit Balance as of 3/31/2021  
 Parking Lot: \$21,772.16  
 Professional Services \$26,488.00  
 Repairs & Updates \$9,703.00  
 Total: \$57,333.16



Generosity

Giving	Cash/Check	Online	Total
March 15, 2021	\$4,388.00	\$1,438.58	\$5,826.58
March 31, 2021	\$14,149.00	\$626.43	\$14,775.43

Gen Fund	March 2021 Actual	2021 YTD Actual	March 2021 Budget	2021 YTD Budget
Receipts	\$19,545.35	\$39,289.33	\$12,500.00	\$37,500.00
Disbursements	\$9,911.61	\$36,145.83	\$16,475.75	\$50,527.25

## Sugar Creek

Sugar Creek is now accepting registrations for all their summer programs! There truly is a program for youth with all kinds of interests! New this year is Elevated! - a program in which youth explore the bluffs and valleys of Sugar Creek during the day, and strap up their hammocks to sleep at night. Night Camp is a new Middle School program. These night owls will learn about God's nighttime creation, enjoy epic midnight campfires, and more! Of course all your favorite programs are back, too!

Family Camp dates for this year are: July 5-8, Aug. 8-11, and Aug. 12-15.

Sugar Creek now offers payment options based on ability to pay, and Bethany has funds available to off-set costs to families. For more information or to sign up, visit: [www.sugarcreekbiblecamp.org](http://www.sugarcreekbiblecamp.org)



Has your contact information changed?  
 Be sure to let us know!  
 (608) 847-6690—  
[bethanymaustonelca@gmail.com](mailto:bethanymaustonelca@gmail.com)

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.

## A pastoral word on the verdict of George Floyd's murder trial

4/20/2021 5:50:00 PM

The trial of Derek Chauvin, the former Minnesota police officer charged with the killing of George Floyd, has riveted our national attention these past weeks, and now a verdict has been reached. Together with people around the world, we have anticipated the jury's decision with troubled hearts. As members of the community of Jesus, we affirm that "if one member suffers, all suffer together with it" (1 Corinthians 12:26, NRSV).

No jury verdict can erase the pain of the Floyd family, and we share our condolences and pray for ongoing comfort in their suffering and for all whose lives have been touched by this tragedy. As people of the cross, we believe in the hope of the resurrection. Yet we cannot rush to Easter Sunday without reflecting on the oppression of Good Friday.

The murder of George Floyd is one of the many examples of the ongoing abuse of police authority. The extrajudicial killings of Brown and Black bodies must stop.

We recommit ourselves as a church to continue to fight against the sin of racism and to hold accountable unjust systems and structures that perpetuate injustices, including our own. In the words of Martin Luther King Jr: "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly." The work of confronting these injustices is long overdue.

Let us together in our congregations and communities discern how we are being called in this moment to live out our baptismal promise to serve all people and strive for justice and peace.

For further discussion, you can read the following sections from ELCA social statements and policy:

***The Church and Criminal Justice: Hearing the Cries***, [elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Criminal-Justice](https://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Criminal-Justice) (pages 9 and 13).

***Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture***, [elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Race-Ethnicity-and-Culture](https://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Race-Ethnicity-and-Culture) (pages 4 and 5).

***Declaration of the ELCA to People of African Descent, Slavery Apology Explanation.pdf*** (page 2).

In Christ,

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton  
Presiding Bishop  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God is transformative potential,  
always with and within us -  
this is a resurrection promise.

God is the practice of imagination,  
luring through futures more desirable.

God is a collective yearning for what liberates  
calling the faithful to nurture the seed of Easter,  
to bring justice into full bloom.

God is all that sustains  
the ones who grow weary in labors of love;  
God is all that troubles  
those who cling to what destroys.

