

BETHANY LUTHERAN

Newsletter

September

A NOTE FROM PASTOR:

Summer is almost over, the seasons have moved us once again into a time of transition. Soon the children will go back to school and the harvest will come in.

It is difficult to believe that I have now been serving Bethany for almost a year. Last year at this time I was very busy packing my things into boxes, saying hello to you and goodbye to my last congregation, onboarding at Lutheran Social Services, and doing all the other things associated with transition. Transition times for pastors and congregations can be difficult and stressful and I appreciate everything that all of you did to try to make my transition go well.

A lot of things have been happening at Bethany Lutheran Church since I arrived. When I got back here, our congregation had already started to reimagine and revitalize ministries that had gone dormant during the pandemic. It has been wonderful to get to come alongside both leadership and 'worker bees' in this place during this special time of reawakening. There are also other things that Bethany started doing during the pandemic, like broadcasting worship services, that I believe will continue to happen in the future.

It seems to me that Bethany is emerging from the pandemic changed in some important ways but also with a stronger sense of what we value as a congregation. When I listen to you talk about what this time has been like, I again and again hear what people missed during the pandemic more than anything else was the ability to 'be there' for and with one another. It is true, one of the most important things a local church is, is a place where Christ followers can gather together intergenerationally to fellowship with, serve, and support one another.

Some more transition and revitalization is in the works here at Bethany as we continue to recover from the pandemic. Any time anything changes, it can be difficult, worrisome, and stressful for some of us. I encourage you to give new things a chance, even if you might not like them at first. As things continue to grow, change back, or emerge in new ways know this...together we do have a sense of what is valuable and important. We have not missed the lessons about the value and importance of one another that the pandemic has taught us.

God Bless, Pastor Joan

Celebrating 10 Years - September 10th

The ELCA will be celebrating the 10th anniversary of a project called "God's work. Our hands." This Sunday has been set aside for congregations throughout the ELCA to reach out in service to others. Bethany will be celebrating this Sunday by reaching out to our companion synod in Peru. A free will offering breakfast will be served following worship and the special congregational meeting, with the proceeds going to benefit the efforts of the IL-P, the church recog-

nized as a LaCrosse Area Synod companion in our walk with Christ. Come join us for breakfast and find out about the mission work being done in Peru to share the gospel with the people there. Breakfast will include egg bake as well as some delicious Peruvian bake goods. This effort is an easy way for Bethany to show its support for the mission work of the ELCA. Join us in the celebration by coming to breakfast and learn how our church can reach out and do God's work with our hands beyond even our own country borders. If you would like to help prepare or serve this meal, contact Kathy Marose at 608-343-4381.



August Finance and Property Meeting

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- The Committee approved mission support of \$500 to the LaCrosse Synod/ELCA, \$85 to Lutheran Social Services and \$85 to the Mauston Food Pantry.
- The landscaping project has been completed. We are still watering the new seeding and added some more grass seed to the area.
- The Garage sale and food stand went extremely well. Several stories were shared that indicated how much the community appreciated the event. Thank you, to all those individuals that donated and helped out with the event.
- The committee is still seeking additional vendors for the sound system before moving forward with that project.
- We have contacted a local contractor regarding the asbestos removal in the basement. This should be the final step in getting the water problems fixed and upgrading the basement.
- The next F & P Meeting will be on Tuesday, September 12th, at 5:30 pm.

August 2023 Council Highlights

- The La Crosse Area Synod's mission is to cultivate life-giving relationships rooted in God's love. For 2023, they have paired congregations as a tool to strengthen the relationships within the synod. We are paired with Our Savior's in West Salem. There will be opportunities for you to be involved in some joint ventures.
- September 10th is the 10th anniversary of God's Work – Our Hands, which celebrates our service to the community. Our focus will be raising funds for our companion synod in Peru. We are exploring having a brunch that Sunday after worship with some Peruvian and American food.
- Sunday school has 3 high school students who have volunteered.
- The Prayerground project is exploring ideas and creating their plans.
- The next drive thru dinner is Sunday, August 27th 4:00 to 6:00 pm. Brats and hot dogs are on the menu.
- The garage/bake/brat/hot dog sale earned over \$4,400. It was a great community outreach with some wonderful stories. Thank you to all who donated items and volunteered.
- 96 school kits have been assembled for Lutheran World Relief.

Save the Date and Start the Planning

Bethany will again sponsor Trunk or Treat in our parking lot. This year's event will be Sunday, October 29th, from 3:00-5:00 pm. Start planning your trunk and plan to join in on the fun.

Bethany Sale (Garage/Bake/Brat/Hot Dog Sale)

Thank you just doesn't seem like enough. We had such a good turnout for our Bethany Sale. Everything from donations to volunteers, behind the scene folks, computer and office personnel, family, friends, bakers, grill masters, and neighbors, everyone pitched in to make it a success. After the sale, the remaining items were delivered out to the community, hoping to reach still more folks. Together we raised \$4,407.35. Thank you everybody, job well done! Lori O'Dell

Lutheran World Relief School Kits

Thank you to everyone that donated money, supplies, and time for the Lutheran World Relief School Kits!! We have assembled 96 kits, which will be shipped off in September.

Fellowship Hour

A new sign-up sheet is posted on the kiosk for the Sunday fellowship coffee. This only requires someone to make coffee (recipe posted in kitchen) and a cookie (store bought or homemade) or bar to accompany it. Thank you for your help to continue to make this available.

Congregation Meeting Sunday, September 10th

There will be a Congregation Meeting Sunday, September 10th, after worship in the sanctuary to consider authorizing the expenditure of up to \$25,000 on a contract to remove asbestos from the old Sunday school wing in the basement, and up to \$40,000 for a new audio system in the sanctuary.

Faith Circle 2023-2024

Faith Circle will begin a new book study on September 7th at 7:00 pm at church. New members are always welcome! We generally meet at 7:00 pm on the first Thursday of the month. From September through May we will be reading *Forgiving What You Can't Forget* by Lysa Terkeurst. In addition to participating in our book study, members of Faith Circle spearhead the collection of materials for LWR School Kits and may sponsor or participate in other church events, such as a soup supper during Lent. If you have questions about Faith Circle, feel free to contact our chairperson, Wendy McGuire, at 608-547-7035.

Who Are You?

I once worked with a man who was told by his Polish parents "Always remember, don't shame the family!" We would say it often at work half seriously/half-jokingly.

You are:

A person created by God in Christ,
Empowered by the Holy Spirit,

Called and Sent to bear witness to God's creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in the world.

You are a member of the family of Christ.
Don't shame the family. ~~Dick Pirwitz

And Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me . . . "

Matthew 19: v. 14

You may have heard talk about Bethany adding a "Prayground" to our church, but may not know exactly what it is all about.

In short, a Prayground is an open area near the front of the sanctuary specifically set aside for young children (ages one through eight) to be during the church service.

The purpose of the Prayground is to provide a comfortable space for children to help them feel part of the service; and just as importantly, feel part of the Bethany family.

Worshiping together, regardless of age, gender, race, physical needs, or sexual orientation, is the cornerstone of a loving Christian church. Unfortunately, young children are often left out of that equation.

While there are legitimate questions about distractions and noise from the Prayground during the service, those issues will be addressed. For example; parents are responsible for their children's behavior and will sit near them, there will be no noisy toys, and activities are to be of a quiet nature.

While this a departure from what we consider a "traditional worship space", it is nonetheless, a trend among churches across the United States and the world. With an ever-changing landscape in which church participation is decreasing at alarming rates, change is inevitable, especially if we want to remain a viable, vibrant church.

While adding a Prayground is no assurance for an increase in attendance or membership, it is an attempt to be sensitive and intentional in encouraging young families and their children to feel welcome in Bethany Lutheran Church.

More information about the Prayground will be forthcoming, and if you have any questions, please let Pastor Joan know.



Happy September birthday to....

Alyssa Holzberger	09/01
Russell Emery Jr.	09/02
Anna Johnson	09/03
Ashley Tabbert	09/03
Jessica Kastner-Cox	09/04
Atley Pufahl	09/05
Taylor Bollig	09/06
Bowdyn Pokorney	09/06
Danielle Knutson	09/07
Sadie Tabbert	09/08
Reece Gray	09/10
Anne Miles	09/11
Shane Schiller	09/12
Lindsi Hagen	09/14
Michael Voltz	09/14
Pamela Bagnowski	09/14
Tanya Kennedy	09/15
Mary Pirwitz	09/15
Jim Muchenberger	09/15
Nancy Williams	09/18
Madeline Kennedy	09/20
Ed Rogers Jr.	09/20
Ally Fenner	09/21
Barbara Handrich	09/22
Joshua Bell	09/22
Marge Hoffmann	09/23
Ruth Pfaff	09/24
Carol Purvis	09/25
Aubrey McCluskey	09/26
Linda Bohnert	09/27
Paul Huebner	09/28
Robert Allen	09/30
Joseph Bagnowski	09/30
Susan Midthun	09/30
Tina Miles	09/30



Happy September anniver- sary to...

Jerry & Lis Schroeder	09/01
Karen & Larry Fritz	09/03
Christopher & Mindy Flint	09/07
David & Terry Broske	09/08
Dustan & Jessica Vodvarka	09/12
Jon & Nancy Williams	09/12
Tim & Dawn Seebecker	09/14
Mike & Barb Klein	09/14
Rodney & Jennifer Pink	09/14
Nichole & Zach Preuss	09/14
Paul & Deb Zaidel	09/20
Brian & Rebecca Colwell	09/28

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!
608-847-6690



In Our Prayers

~~~ Judy DuBord, Louie Voltz, Peter Komay, Sharen Wittrock, Cindy Preuss, Alan Peterson, Shawn Nemitz, Steven Potter, the Dillin family, David Dellamuth, Duane Weisenhaus, Elwood Syverson, Lois Olson, Randy Mullenberg, Ken Plants, Donna Christensen, Dennis Stark, and those who suffer with war and disaster.

Please call the church office, 608-847-6690, if you know of someone who needs to be added to our prayer list or with any Pastoral Care needs/requests. This list is different than our prayer chain.

Bethany's Prayer Chain Coordinator is Audrey Gierhart (608-847-4106).  
If you have an urgent prayer request, call her to share the request.

**\*\*\*Unless otherwise noted, all worship services will be in-person at 9:30 a.m. and streamed on Facebook with the recording available later.\*\*\***

### Worship Reminders

#### September 3 Worship Service

Lector & Communion Assistant: Lis Schroeder  
Usher Captain: Roger Dutzle

#### September 10 Worship Service \*\*\*Congregation Meeting and Special Breakfast following service\*\*\*

Lector: Aubrey McCluskey  
Communion Assistant: Ed Rogers  
Usher Captain: David Kidd

#### September 17 Worship Service

Lector: Kathy Noe  
Communion Assistant: Karen Fritz  
Usher Captain: Bill Potter

#### September 24 Worship Service

Lector & Communion Assistant: Rosemary Dellamuth  
Usher Captains: Jeri Shultis and Harold Seebecker

#### September Altar Guild: Jerry & Lis Schroeder





| <b>*** Giving</b>                           | <b>Cash/Check</b> |
|---------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>July 2, 2023</b>                         | \$3,486.00        |
| <b>July 9, 2023</b>                         | \$1,215.00        |
| <b>July 16, 2023</b>                        | \$2,256.00        |
| <b>July 23, 2023</b>                        | \$2,241.00        |
| <b>July 30, 2023</b>                        | \$1,358.00        |
| <b>** Online Giving Total for July 2023</b> | \$2,655.49        |

\*\*\* The chart above reflects the financial counts each week from the offering and money that's been sent in and online donations to include: designated funds (Building, Memorial, flowers, etc) and special projects (Ukraine, Mercy Ships, Farm, Toys for Joy, etc).

\*\* Online donations will be reported once a month due to posting issues. Near the end/beginning of the month the weekly amounts were not always accurate.

\* The below receipts reflect money available for operating budget AFTER deducting designated giving.

| <b>Gen Fund</b>      | <b>July 2023 Actual</b> | <b>July 2023 Budget</b> | <b>July YTD Actual</b> | <b>July YTD Budget</b> |
|----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>* Receipts</b>    | \$12,215.52             | \$13,083.00             | \$98,083.25            | \$91,581.00            |
| <b>Disbursements</b> | \$13,474.42             | \$14,965.00             | \$94,448.67            | \$108,218.00           |

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.

**Church Office Hours**

The church office is open **Monday – Thursday from 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.** Messages left on the church voicemail are only checked during office hours. For urgent messages and emergencies, contact Pastor Joan at 920-226-0453 or Dick Pirwitz, council president, at 608-548-5982. If not immediately available, they will answer as soon as possible.

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