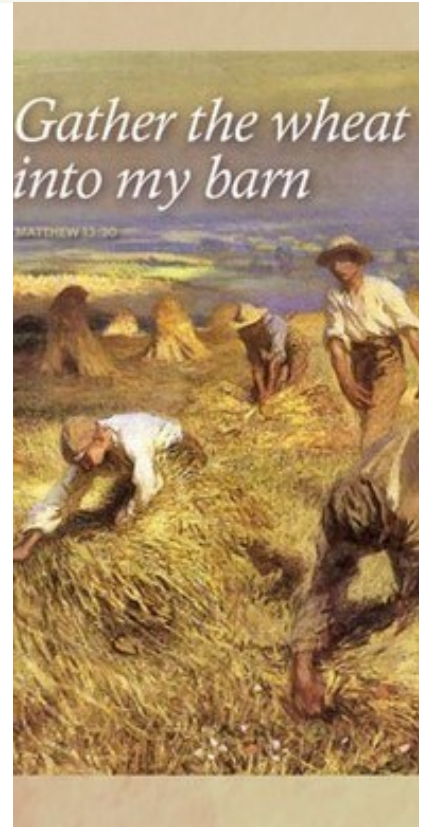


Bethel Notes



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Sunday, July 23, 2023

8th Sunday after Pentecost

It is an age-old question: why is there evil in the world? In the parable of the wheat and the weeds Jesus suggests that both grow together until the harvest. With Paul, we long for the day that all creation will be set free from bondage and suffering. Having both weeds and wheat within us, we humbly place our hope in the promises of God, and from the Lord's table we go forth to bear the fruit of justice and mercy.

First Reading: Isaiah 44:6-8

Psalm 86:11-17

Second Reading: Romans 8:12-25

Gospel: Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

Serving This Sunday

Musicians:

Mary Seim, piano

Lay Assistant:

Walt Nuessle

Usher:

Mary Gernaat

Tech:

Adam Elkin

Children's Church:

Allison Marr

Julia Elkin

Counters:

Tim Lightbourne

Laurie Turner

Hospitality:

Sandy Pepos

**Join us Sunday 9:30 AM
in person or online at
bethelmt.org**

THIS SUNDAY AT BETHEL...

We celebrate the **8th Sunday after Pentecost.**

Thank you all for a wonderful week at VBS! Our program would not exist without the support of this wonderful congregation.



Requesting Your Prayers

- ✝ Prayers of healing for **Melody Skogley** as she continues to recover after surgery.
- ✝ Prayers of healing and support for **Earl Terwilliger** as he is recovers from medical procedure for his heart.
- ✝ Prayers of healing for **Holly Lode**, *daughter of Bernice Johnson*, who has developed pneumonia after shoulder surgery.
- ✝ Prayers of healing and strength for **Matt, Dena Wagner-Fossen's brother-in-law** managing adverse reactions to medication after surgery.
- ✝ Prayers of healing for **Cathy Rankin**, *Jeanne Rankin's sister-in-law*, as she begins treatment for stage 1 breast cancer.
- ✝ Prayers of healing for **Thelma Seyfert** as continues to regain her health after a fall.
- ✝ Prayers of healing for **Kristin**, *Bobbie Bowen's daughter*, as she is manages a cancer diagnosis.
- ✝ Prayers of healing for **John Korpela** as he continues with chemotherapy.
- ✝ Prayers of support for **Don and Kathi Bisgard** as they manage medical care for Don.
- ✝ Prayers of healing for **Dick Seim** continues to work on regaining strength.
- ✝ Prayers of support for **Caleb Pottratz** who is struggling with depression.
- ✝ Prayers of healing for **Lynn Klaasen**, *sister of Jan Robitaille*, receiving treatment for cancer.
- ✝ Prayers of healing for **Lindy Coon**, *sister of former Bethel member Laura (Wandke) Overturf*, as she continues to slowly make progress as she recovers at home from a serious injury after a fall.
- ✝ Prayers of healing for **Abby Bisgard-Clegg**, *daughter of Don and Kathi Bisgard*, continues to manage health issues, but feeling and doing very well.
- ✝ Prayers of healing for **Alex Bostic** as he continues to manage his health.
- ✝ Prayers of healing for **Linda O'Connor**, friend of *LaRae Veitch*, as she undergoes treatment for breast cancer.
- ✝ Prayers of healing for **Travis Cushman** as he continues treatment for cancer.
- ✝ Prayers of strength in leadership for **Gustavo Driau**, Regional Representative of South America.
- ✝ Prayers of healing for **Ed Pottratz** as he continues cancer treatment.

WHERE DOES THE MONEY GO?

A portion of the operating budget of Bethel (and every other ELCA church) goes to fund the work and mission of its Synod. Last year 7.5% of Bethel's budget was up streamed to the Montana Synod. Why is this money sent to the Synod? What does this money do? What is this money for?

The Montana Synod is made up of more than 120 churches spread out over 390,000 square miles across Montana and northern Wyoming. The Synod includes 173 pastors, 12 Deacons, 134 Lay Pastoral Associates, and 30,700 baptized members. The Synod works to **connect**, **equip**, and **serve** these people and their communities.

As people of faith, we know we are part of a body and community. A body works best when all its members are connected. A key role of the Synod staff, Council, and volunteers is **Connecting** the churches and pastors and members with one another and toward a common mission. We can do more together than we can apart. We are church together in supporting one another in bringing God's love to Montana, northern Wyoming,

and the world. The Synod acts as a bridge between the pastors and churches, as well as a bridge to the ELCA churchwide (the administrative body encompassing 65 Synods and 10,000 ELCA churches in the US) and the larger world through our relationships with companion Synods in Bolivia and the Cape Orange Diocese in Africa. Last year, 37% of the Synod's budget was up streamed to the work and mission of the ELCA churchwide.

The stated vision of the Montana Synod is "**Equipping** for the Ministry of the Gospel". More than one-third of the Synod's budget focuses on providing tools, skills, "equipment" for pastors, LPA's, and others to carry out the work of God's church. This equipment includes leadership training, the LPA program, coaching, educational opportunities, and technological support, as well as the Northern Rockies Institute of Theology (NRIT).

The money we send to the Montana Synod is also used in **Serving** our communities, our state, and the world. The Synod provides funds to help with campus ministries at MSU and UM, Freedom in Christ Prison Ministry, the Rocky Boy ministry, PLTS and Luther Seminaries, Disaster Relief, and others. The work and ministries of the Montana Synod allow us to be God's people in so many more places and ways than we could ever be on our own.

So, where does the money go? It goes to **connect**, **equip**, and **serve**. As the current Montana Synod treasurer, I would like to thank all of you at Bethel for your continuing generosity in support of the Synod. Because of you people are being equipped for ministry across this state, the church is connected across this country, and lives are changed across this world.

Gratefully,

Dave Scholten

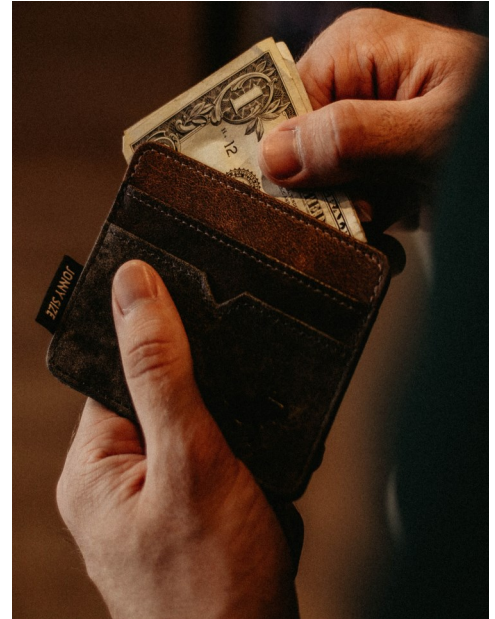


Photo by [Allef Vinicius](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Vacation Bible School

Thank You Bethel

See next week's Bethel Notes for pictures from our week!



If you are looking for a way to get involved in ministries at Bethel and you love working with children, Bethel has a wonderful opportunity for you! Prayerfully consider volunteering for our Logos Youth Ministry. We are in need of youth teachers ages Pre K—Kinder through 6th grade, kitchen help, rec/game leaders.

We are extremely flexible to match you with the amount of time and talents that you have to help with this ministry. You can team teach, volunteer once a month, or any variation you can think of.

LOGOs Year starts mid September and ends mid April. We take a few weeks off around Christmas.

This is a fun way to be involved with Bethel. If you want more information or would like to volunteer, talk with Pastor Jessie or Tami Grosenick. We NEED You!!!

Worship Techs Needed

Do you love working with technology? Then we would love you to join our Sunday Worship team and become a Worship Tech. Our Techs run our live stream and in-person worship on Sunday mornings and for special services at Bethel.

This a paid position at Bethel.

If you are interested and would like to see a full job description. Contact Tami in the Bethel Office or email bethelgf.church@gmail.com and we will send you a copy of the job description. There is an urgent need to train in qualified people as our primary Worship Tech, Adam Elkin, will be leaving for college in the fall. If you are interested or know someone who would be, reach out today!!

Let Us Hear YOUR 'View From The Pew'

In the new year we are started a new segment to the Bethel Notes. We have had a few brave souls who have shared their stories. We want to hear from YOU!! We have listed the topics below to choose from. Each article should be no more than 500 words. Each article will be due on Wednesday of each week.

- July – God and the great outdoors
- August – Embarrassing church stories
- September – My biggest struggle with my faith
- October – Forgiveness, letting things go
- November – What I am truly thankful for
- December – My favorite traditions of church and Christmas

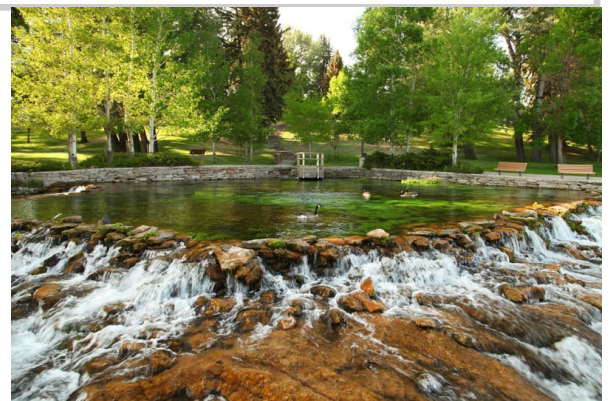


If you see a topic you would like to share your thoughts about, just email Tami in the Bethel office bethelgf.church@gmail.com or call her at 406-761-1543.

A View From the Pew ... Finding God In Great Falls



View of Black Eagle Falls from River's Edge Trail



Giant Springs State Park



Gibson Park

One doesn't even have to leave the city to find God's beauty all around!

GOSPEL MESSAGE

July 23, 2023

A Righteous Harvest

One of the lessons of history is that when humans try to do the weeding, things end badly. Whenever we try to divide the world into good guys and bad guys, people get hurt. Everyone winds up being a bad guy to somebody, and you can do anything to the bad guys. You can lie about them. You can hurt them. You can hurt other people on your way to getting the bad guys, and that's regrettable. But it's okay to sacrifice some of the good guys in order to get the bad guys, right?

But the kingdom of heaven is not like the farmer who pulled up half of the wheat seedlings while going after the weeds. The kingdom of heaven is more like Jesus, who was so unwilling to cause harm to others that he died instead. Instead of pulling up the weeds and casting them into the fire, Jesus went into the fire himself.

Therefore, the harvest is fruitful beyond imagining, because the harvest is Jesus himself! Jesus bears the fruit of righteousness, reconciliation, and peace. He will gather all people into his care, and they will not be troubled by sickness, or violence, or hatred, or death. This will happen, not because Jesus will destroy all enemies, but because Jesus, by his death, will transform enemies into friends.

The weeds and the wheat are still growing in this world. Although Jesus has already done all that is needed for the final harvest, all of us growing here on this earth still need the help of our neighbors. Just as the farmer in the story instructed his servants to care for the wheat until it was time for the harvest, so God calls us to actively work with Jesus to make things better for people right here and right now.

From sundaysandseasons.com.
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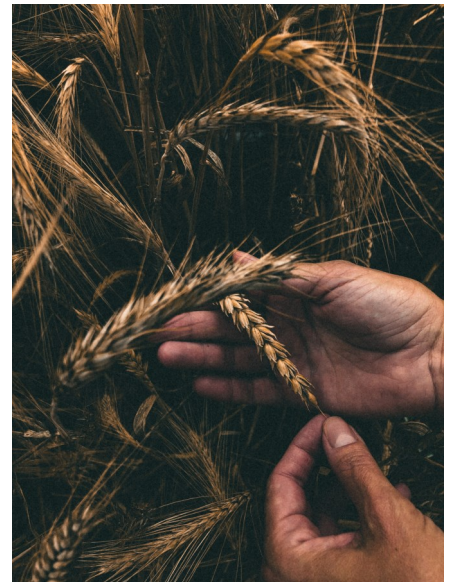


Photo by [Nadiia Vynar](https://unsplash.com/@nadiia) on [Unsplash](https://unsplash.com)



**ADOPT
A
CHAIR**
donate today!
**\$75.00 PER
CHAIR**

Suggested donation amount.
Make checks payable to Bethel with
Chair drive on the memo line, online at
bethelmt.org/onlinegiving/Adopt-A-Chair
or scan the QR code below.
taking donations until August 1, 2023

Just for *YOUTH*

This Week...

Collect ideas to tell stories about God's Love.

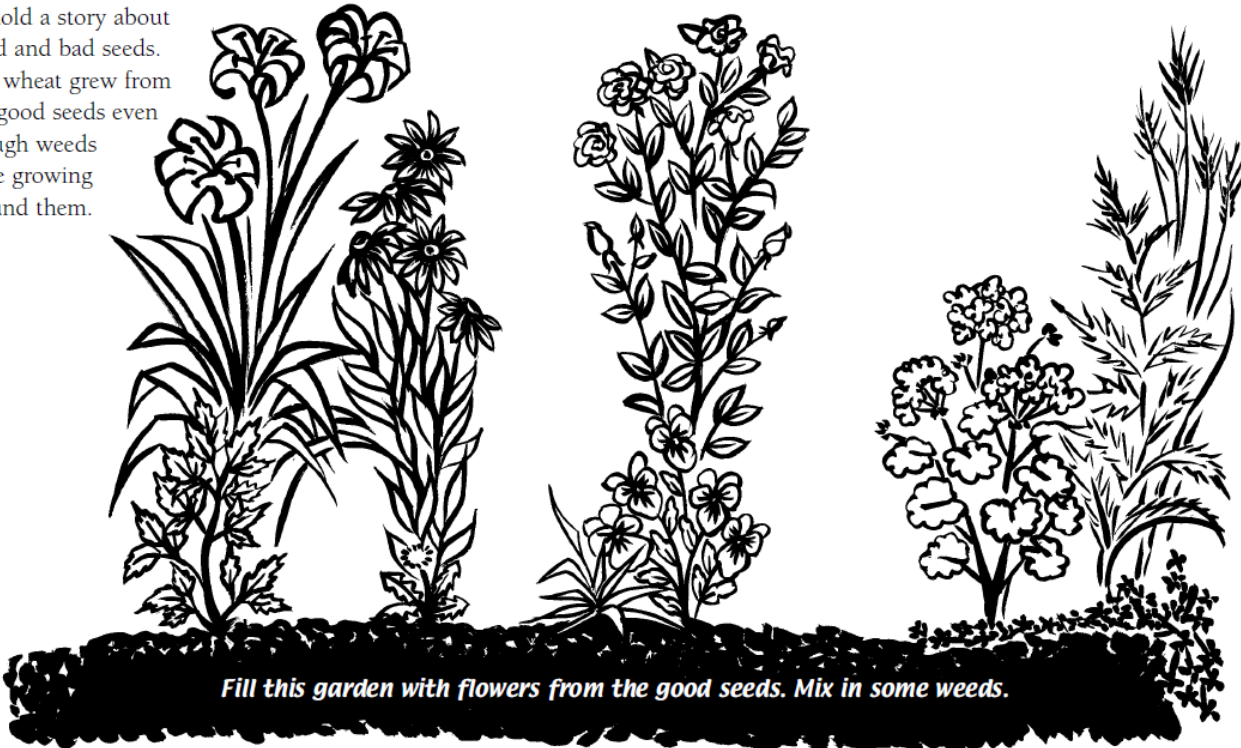
The seeds and the weeds

Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

Jesus knew there were good and bad things in the world.

He told a story about good and bad seeds.

The wheat grew from the good seeds even though weeds were growing around them.

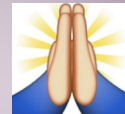


Fill this garden with flowers from the good seeds. Mix in some weeds.

What's your story?

Turn on your imagination. Look around you. What familiar thing do you see that you could use to make a story?

Draw or write your story here.



***Dear God, help me grow
like good seeds.
Amen***

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Tuesday 7/25

- Electric City Bible Study, Zoom meeting 7:00 am

Wednesday 7/26

- Bible Study on Zoom 10:00 am

Friday 7/28

- Bethel office is closed.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday 7/30

- Worship led by Pastor Jessie in-person and live stream 9:30 am.

Tuesday 8/1

- Electric City Bible Study, Zoom meeting 7:00 am

Wednesday 8/2

- Bible Study on Zoom 10:00 am

Thursday 8/3

- Exec Board Zoom meeting 5:30 pm

Friday 8/4

- Bethel office is closed.
- Aitz Chaim Friday worship 6:00 pm

Fellowship Ministries

Electric City Bible Study—online

What a great way to connect with one another! Join our bible study via Zoom, Tuesday mornings at 7:00 am. Contact Laurie Turner at lolli51gus@icloud.com for a link to join the meeting.

Men's Breakfast Meets in-person

Join us for a fun and engaging conversation, and insightful discussion of each week's lectionary texts as we meet in the Fellowship Hall Tuesday mornings at 7:00 am. Contact Dave Scholten at dscholten@dlsconsulting.net for more information.

ON HOLD UNTIL SEPTEMBER

Hope Circle—in person

This group meets once a month usually on Thursday evenings. Bible study and fellowship are celebrated with this group of ladies. Contact Terry Korpela to be on the group email for meetings and prayer requests terry.korpela@gmail.com.

On hold until the fall.

Weekly Text Study with Pastor Jessie-online

Wednesdays, 10:00 am via Zoom, Pastor Jessie will be leading discussion on the text readings for the upcoming Sunday. Dig deeper in the interpretation of the readings and discuss ways they give us guidance in our daily lives. If you would like to join this meeting, email bethelgf.pastor@gmail.com to be added to the mailing list.



**FEED YOUR FAITH
TO STARVE YOUR DOUBTS**