

# BETHEL NOTES



*Sunday, May 17th*

## Readings

### Sixth Sunday of Easter

ACTS 17:22-31

1 PETER 3:13-22

JOHN 14:15-21

Members, guests and friends of Bethel Lutheran Church:

Pastor Steve and the Church Council are excited to share with you that we will be re-convening for worship this Sunday, May 17th for those who wish to attend in Bethel's sanctuary. We are limiting the attendance to 65 for whom we can safely seat (6 feet of physical distancing) in the sanctuary. We are requiring masks for all who plan to come and will provide ones, if you do not have one bring with you. We will not be sharing holy communion this Sunday, but will let you know ahead of the next time we will.

We will continue to offer the live stream of our worship for those who are not ready to gather. As always the bulletin is posted on our website along with the link to the service. We have also posted the guidelines for returning to worship in detail in this newsletter and online.

Pastor Steve will be posting an instructional video tomorrow on our website to give you a visual of what the set up in the sanctuary looks like and what to expect.

Blessings to all.

**This Sunday's Worship** is a live worship from Bethel Lutheran Church and will also be live-streamed at [bethelmt.org](http://bethelmt.org) and bulletin online at [bethelmt.org](http://bethelmt.org).

**Please read the Reopening Guidelines on page 6. Masks are required.**

OFFICE HOURS: MONDAY THROUGH THURSDAY 8:00 AM TO 1:30 PM CLOSED FRIDAY

OFFICE TELEPHONE:

(406) 761-1543

WEBSITE:

[WWW.BETHELMT.ORG](http://WWW.BETHELMT.ORG)

EMAIL: [BETHELGF.CHURCH@GMAIL.COM](mailto:BETHELGF.CHURCH@GMAIL.COM)



- ✦ Prayers for **Faith Crouch** (granddaughter of Bernice Johnson) who is awaiting a double lung transplant.
- ✦ Prayers of healing **Ed Pottratz** as he continues cancer treatment.
- ✦ Prayers of healing for **Lee Klette**, son of Russ & Cheryl.
- ✦ Continued prayers for **Angela Mart** (daughter-in-law of Jane Mart) as she finishes treatment for breast cancer.
- ✦ Prayers for God's presence and healing for **Linda Juvik** (sister of Sandy Bechard) as she continues treatment for cancer.
- ✦ Prayers for the **Peoples of Boliva** as they transition into new leadership within the country and prayers for **Pastor Presidente German and the IELB**.
- ✦ Prayers for healing and strength for **Katie Madsen**, niece of Doug Sexe and granddaughter of Arlene Sexe as she is undergoing treatment for breast cancer.
- ✦ Prayers of healing for **Jane Mart** as she continues to recover at home.
- ✦ Prayers of healing and support for **Jeremy Hawks** as he prepares for surgery.
- ✦ Prayers of healing for **Ann Tuomi** as she continues to recover from surgery.
- ✦ Prayers for safety and support for **Eric Poser**, Connie Titcomb's nephew as he is deployed overseas.
- ✦ Prayers of healing and God's presence for **Chad Erickson** and family as they await results of medical testing.
- ✦ Prayers for God's presence, healing & grace for **Bob Norbie** as he undergoes treatment for bladder cancer.
- ✦ Prayers of healing for **Bob Walker**, brother of Colleen Walker-Nelson.
- ✦ Prayers of support and good health for all as we move into phase 1 of reopening Montana, especially those in nursing homes, patients in hospitals, health care works, first responders, and others who working the front lines to fight this pandemic.
- ✦ Prayers of strength and support for our **GFPS staff and students** as they finish out the school year with online learning. Are hearts are with our 2020 High School Seniors and college graduates as well as the 8th grade, 6th grade, and kindergarten classes that have reached a milestone in their education and are unable to participate in the year-end events.
- ✦ Prayers of strength and protection for those **students that GFPS have not been able to reach** since the school closure. Pray they are getting the food and shelter they need.
- ✦ Prayers for God's comfort for **Trudy (Earl) Terwilliger and their family** as they grieve the death of her brother, Mark Dillard.
- ✦ Prayers of healing, strength and support for **Rita Johnson (LaRae Veitch's sister)** as she begins her treatment for pancreatic cancer.
- ✦ Prayers for God's consoling presence for Sandy Bechard's sister (**Linda Juvik**) and her family as the mourn the death of her brother-in-law's (Linda's husband) death.
- ✦ Prayers of healing for **Allan Ost**, son of Dale and Leona as he recovers at home from outpatient surgery.
- ✦ Prayer of comfort for **Sonja Baumgardner as she and her family** grieve the death of her niece Sandy Goodpastor.
- ✦ Prayers of healing for **Mike Seyfert**, nephew of Don and Thelma Seyfert as he begins cancer treatment.
- ✦ Prayers for God's presence for consolation and comfort for **Katie & Steve Hurin ( parents Jerry & Patty Kain)** as they mourn the death of their **Lincoln Andrew Hurin**.
- ✦ Prayers for God's presence and peace for the **mother of Melinda Pike**, as she recovers aortic valve replacement surgery tomorrow in Alaska.

# Words from the Bishop: Let Us Pray

“The congregation that **prays** together, grows together.” When you read this bit of wisdom and think of your congregation or ministry, what do you feel? Anxious? Afraid? Ho-hum? Excited? In her book *Thrive: Spiritual Habits of Transforming Congregations*, Montana theologian Ruth A. Fletcher lifts up **Prayer** as the first habit practiced by healthy congregations. And I think that’s true for a healthy ministry and a healthy synod as well. “Prayer connects [people] to the power and presence of the Spirit that resides and among them,” she writes. **Prayer**, especially today, is a crucial way that Christians enter into the living, healing, empowering presence of God.

But perhaps for this very reason, **prayer** also frightens us. We worry that we’re not saying the right words or speaking to God in the proper way. We feel awkward because we just don’t know what to say and we aren’t sure God is listening anyway. We fear giving up control and want to avoid the “let go, let God” that **prayer** requires.



And yet **prayer** is a wonderful gift from God. **Prayer** is a proven anxiety reducer, fear calmer, and relationship-with-God creator. **Prayer** frees us to rest in God without having to fix anything. **Prayer** inspires spiritual growth and empowers us to be God’s hands and voice in the world. **Prayer** does “work”...just not always in the way we think it should. It doesn’t solve our problems like a magic spell; but it does open us up to the power of God who transforms our lives –the good, the bad, and the down-right nutty – in amazing ways.

So, as we journey together through this time of discernment and transition into what it means to be Church during and post-Covid19, I call on the people of God in the Montana Synod to **PRAY**. **Pray**, as Paul suggests “without ceasing.” (1 Thess 5:17) You might ask, what shall I pray for? Try this

list for starters...**Pray for** yourself first, then your congregation, then the Synod and the ELCA. **Pray for** an open heart and mind. **Pray for** wisdom and guidance. **Pray for** eyes to see God working in the world around you. **Pray for** ears to hear God’s gospel proclaiming. **Pray for** humility and a positive attitude. **Pray for** the ability to trust, hope and love God first, then each other and yourself. **Pray for** neighbors, family, and friends. **Pray for** strangers, the “different,” and yes, even enemies. (Why?! Cuz Jesus says so! Mt 5:44) **Pray that** “God’s will be done,” not “my will be done,” in our lives on earth, and in heaven. **Pray that** God’s Spirit may come among us and breathe new life into Christ’s Church so that each member of its community may courageously fulfill God’s purpose in their corner of the world.

And how might you **pray**? Well, that’s finally between you and God. But here are some suggestions:

1. **Pray** with listening ears and an open heart so that you may discern the Spirit’s presence in your life apart from all the other voices.

2. Start with the **prayers** you know like the Lord’s Prayer or prayers that are readily at hand, like the Psalms (they are called “God’s Prayerbook” for a reason).

3. **Imagination prayer**: imagine with all of your senses that you are at a scene in the Bible such as Jesus praying in Gethsemane (Luke 22:39-46) or Paul writing a letter to one of his congregations (Philippians 1:1-8). Then ask what the Spirit is saying to you as you immerse yourself in this scene.



**4.Centering prayer:** sit in complete silence with your eyes closed, breathe slowly and regularly, and focus on a word/phrase to invite God's Spirit into your midst.

**5.Contemplative prayer:** focus on something in God's creation, breathe regularly and slowly, and allow it to reveal God's purpose for you and the Church.

**6.Divine reading prayer:** very slowly read through a Bible passage three times, the first time for understanding the passage, the second time listening for a word or phrase that speaks to your life, the third time listening for how that phrase might guide your/our actions.

**7.Moving prayer:** pray while walking, exercising, or moving around in some way so that your body is kept busy while your spirit opens itself to God. (Ex. Labyrinth)

**8.Conversational prayer:** talk to God, Jesus, and/or the Spirit like you're sharing with your closest friend. Go the distance and talk out loud. If you're afraid of funny looks, put your cell phone to your ear...nobody will know the difference!

These are just a few ideas. There are infinite ways to **pray** and there is no one right way. God doesn't really care how we do it, just that we do it. And our congregations, ministries and the Synod need it! So please **pray**...and experience the power of the Holy Spirit transforming us in exciting ways.

Bishop Laurie



## EVENTS AT BETHEL

There are a few upcoming events that some may be wondering how/when they will take place. If you have questions about a specific event, please email the church at [bethelgf.church@gmail.com](mailto:bethelgf.church@gmail.com) or call 761-1543 and we will do our best to answer your questions if a new date has been selected.

**Online meetings** Men's Breakfast Electric City Bible and Hope Circle are all meeting on Zoom.

**Confirmation** has been reschedule to June 7th worship service 9:30 am.

**Family Promise** Host week May 17th - 24th. Will host offsite.

**Close Knit** on hold.

## *A Prayer for Inner Strength*

*Dear God,*

Please give me the strength to endure this situation, and to find the blessings and lessons that it contains.

Please give me the endurance to continue ahead.

Please guide my thoughts, words and actions, so that I walk your path of peace and love.

*Amen*



## BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS MAY 12, 2020

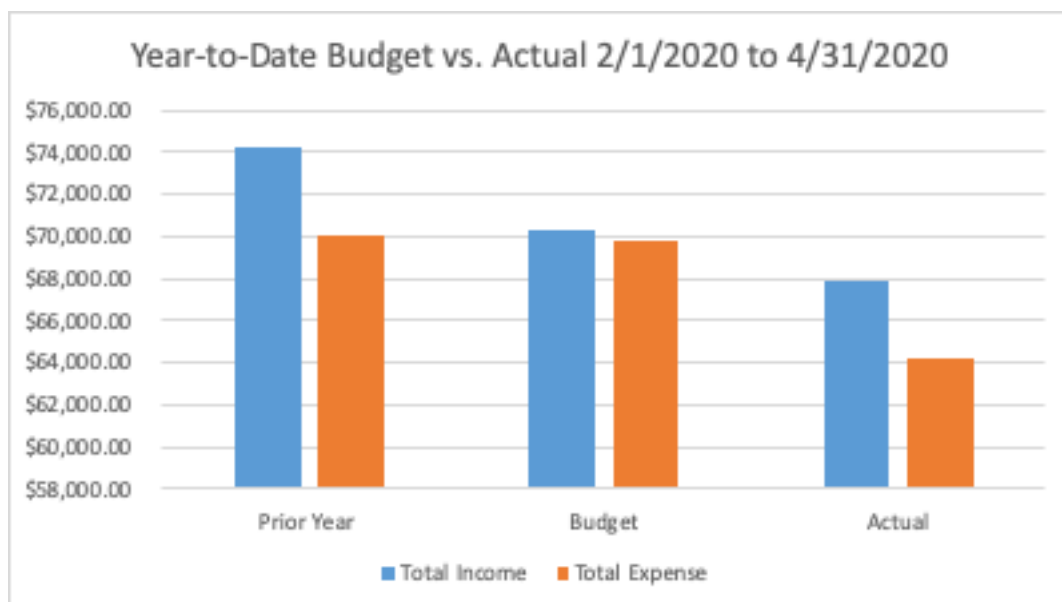
Bethel Lutheran Council met with a zoom conference at 6:30 pm. Here are some highlights of that meeting:

- Council voted to make pay a \$30,000 payment on our building note. We are very blessed to be able to make this generous payment towards our building note!
- Our janitor, Ed Murphy, after 8 years of service, has decided to end his employment at Bethel. We are so very grateful for all of his hard work and service over the years and we wish him well. We will look into hiring a new staff person to fill this position.
- The IELB, our companion synod in Bolivia is in need of help with food. The Synod has set a goal to raise \$3500 by the end of May. The council voted to have Bethel Lutheran Church donate \$500 beyond the congregational giving to the Bolivian Hunger.
- We also discussed some guidelines for reconvening public worship.
- Bishop Jungling joined us to talk about Pastor Steve's retirement, and inform us about an interim pastor and the plans for moving ahead with the call process. The Synod is there to support us. The Bishop did a wonderful job of reassuring us that we are not alone! Pastor Trina Johnston has been asked to serve as our interim pastor, the council will meet with her and, if both parties are willing, Trina will be put under contract for service

To view the April 2020 minutes in their entirety, please go to [April 2020 minutes](#).

*Submitted by Marilyn Carlson, Bethel Church Council Secretary*

	Prior Year	Budget	Actual
<b>Total Income</b>	\$74,295.86	\$70,350.00	\$67,909.28
<b>Total Expense</b>	\$70,093.82	\$69,786.00	\$64,264.24
<b>Net</b>	\$4,202.04	\$564.00	\$3,645.04



## Bethel Lutheran Church Church Council Reopening Guidelines

***We will still be offering a live stream of the service  
for those who wish to worship from home.***

### **Guidelines:**

- Front doors will be propped open and only entrance into the Church
- Masks will be **required** and we have some available to parishioners.
- A table is at the front doors with hand sanitizer, masks and tissues for your use. Ushers will be there to assist with masks and help people find seats.
- Physical distancing of 6 feet will be observed.
- Holy communion will be offered at a later date. We will be announcing prior to Sunday worship when we resume.
- Windows and doors will be opened to increase air circulation.
- Signs on the restroom doors should be used to indicate if you are in the bathroom in an effort to keep the 6 feet physical distance.
- The Gathering Place doors will be closed and sign posted as well as west side doors will remain locked to prevent cross contamination to the TLC Daycare.
- The kitchen, Fellowship Hall and back office hall doors will be closed.
- Hospitality area will be closed.
- An offering tray is set up as you enter Bethel and will not be passed during the offering plates.
- We will pass the peace in a no-contact fashion.
- Sanctuary will be cleaned with disinfect cleaner after each Sunday worship service.

Please consider the following **before you return to worship:**

- Have you traveled outside the U.S. in the past 30 days?
- Have you been in close contact with anyone who has traveled outside the U.S. in the past 30 days?
- Have you been in close contact with anyone with flu-like symptoms in the past 30 days?
- Have you had any of these symptoms:
  - Fever over 100.4
  - Persistent cough
  - Shortness of breath
  - Sudden loss of taste or smell

**If you answered YES to any of these questions, please do not enter and contact your health care provider.**

# Our Companions in Bolivia--Who is my neighbor?

Covid-19 is reminding us that we are all connected across the globe, for better or for worse. Congregations in the Montana Synod are working hard to find ways to continue to care for our neighbors--through food banks, homeless shelters, children's programs, distribution of masks. The congregations of the Bolivian Evangelical Lutheran Church, one of our companion synods, are also finding ways to serve their neighbors. But they need help. Bolivia is the poorest country in Latin America, and our churches there are made up of the poorest of the poor. Yet even in their own time of need, they are sharing with their neighbors.

The IELB has contacted the Montana Synod and requested our assistance in helping them feed their neighbors and provide other Covid-19-related assistance. Bishop Laurie Jungling asked me to head up the effort to raise \$3500 for our companions in Bolivia.

It would be great if we could make this a Pentecost offering, using the month of May to collect funds. Please remember our fellow Christians in Bolivia and give generously.

We are taking lead from the Montana Synod and ask you to do one of these 4 things:

- Pray for the people of Bolivia
- Consider a personal or family gift
- Bethel is will be considering a congregational gift at our next Council meeting on May 12th.
- Share this request with others you know who have a heart for these neighbors

Make checks payable to "Bethel Lutheran Church", with "Bolivia Hunger" on the memo line. Mail your donation to Bethel or drop it in the offering trays when we gather for worship on May 17th.

Gracias!

On behalf of Pastor Jessica Crist and Bishop Laurie Jungling

Pastor Presidente German shared the following pictures from the Lake and Viacha Districts in Bolivia.



## Family Promise

The week beginning May 17th is Bethel's host week for Family Promise. We have one family in the program and they are currently staying at a rental property that has been donated as temporary housing until the pandemic guidelines are lifted. We have provided a \$200.00 gift card for the family to purchase groceries for the week. Our LDS support church is also providing meals and gift card for them. The gift card was purchased using the Family Promise fund at Bethel. If you wish to donate to that fund you can do so anytime by noting Family Promise in the memo line of your check or online.



## Electric City BIBLE Study On - Line!

What a great way to connect with one another! Join the Electric City Bible Study on a Zoom conference Tuesday morning at 6:30 am. If you are interested in joining email Laurie Turner at [lolli51gus@icloud.com](mailto:lolli51gus@icloud.com) and give her an email or cell number and she will send you a link to the meeting.



Wishing everyone a happy day!

Sonja Blue

## MEN'S BREAKFAST

Join us for fun and engaging conversation, and insightful discussion of this week's Lectionary texts as we meet through a social distancing approved Zoom video call each Tuesday morning from 7:00 – 8:00 am. Breakfast recipes and ideas will be provided. If you are interested in more information or would like to be added to the call invitation list, click on the email link below and type "breakfast" into the subject line (and then of course press send).



[dscholten@dlsconsulting.net](mailto:dscholten@dlsconsulting.net)



### Please mark your calendars for these FLBC sponsored events date changes:

**May 22-25- Memorial Day Weekend Work Retreat-** rescheduled for Labor Day weekend: September 4-7; our regular Labor Day family camp program will happen the same weekend.

**June 11-13- Women's Retreat,** rescheduled for September 11-13; Pastor Miriam Schmidt will still serve as our retreat leader. June 12th- Partners Luncheon- rescheduled for October 10th. Luncheon will take place just prior to the annual meeting- we hope you will stay and enjoy the meeting!