

BETHEL NOTES



**Lower Sun River Lutherans gathered for
Vacation Bible School
September 1948**

Sunday, June 21st
Life-Long Faith Formation

DEUTERONOMY 6:1-7
PSALM: 119:97-105
2 PETER 3:17-18
MATTHEW 7:24-28

Serving this Sunday

ACCOMPANIST

CONNIE TITCOMB

VOCALS

DAVE SCHOLTEN

LAY ASSISTANT

JOHN BLANK

USHERS

TAMI GROSENICK

PROJECTIONIST

DINA DAVIS

TECH

COLTER MCCARTY

ADAM EKLIN

GREG GROSENICK

COUNTERS

PAM DOUGHERTY

DONNA VINNEDGE

This Sunday's in-person Worship will also be live streamed from Bethel Lutheran Church at 9:30 am. Live stream link and bulletin at bethelmt.org.

We lift up Guiding Principle *Life-Long Faith Formation*.

Join us **Wednesday, June 24th** from 5:30 - 7:30 pm for an ice cream social for Pastor Steve and Kaye. We will have an opportunity to visit and share our gratitude for 16 years of comfort, celebration, guidance, leadership and love.

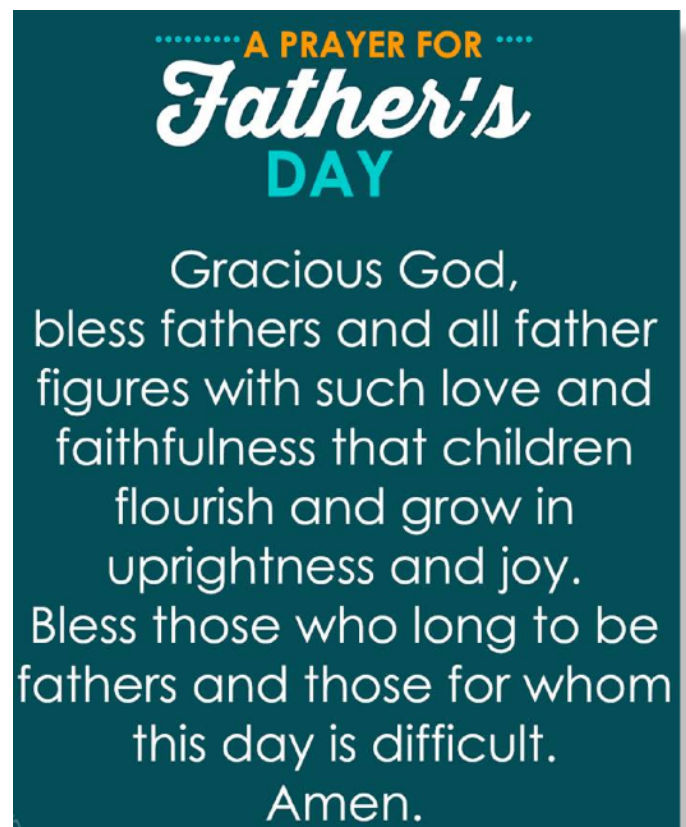
Please read the Reopening Guidelines on page 7. Masks are required.

OFFICE HOURS: MONDAY THROUGH THURSDAY 9:00 AM TO 2:30 PM CLOSED FRIDAY

OFFICE TELEPHONE: (406) 761-1543 WEBSITE: WWW.BETHELMT.ORG EMAIL: 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 completes her treatments 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** especially during this pandemic and the increased need of the peoples.
- ♦ 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 and support for **Jeremy Hawks** as he prepares for surgery.
- ♦ Prayers for safety and support for **Eric Poser**, Connie Titcomb's nephew as he is deployed overseas.
- ♦ Prayers for God's presence, healing & grace for **Bob Norbie** as he continues treatment for bladder cancer.
- ♦ Prayers of support and good health for **RN's Katie and Kelsey**, daughters of Grant and Janet Smith.
- ♦ Prayers of healing, strength and support for **Rita Johnson (LaRae Veitch's sister)** as she continues treatment for pancreatic cancer.
- ♦ Prayers for God's healing for **Holly Lode**, daughter of Bernice Johnson, as she is hospitalized, recovering from a recent surgery.
- ♦ Prayers for God's comfort and consolation for **LaRae Veitch and her family** as they mourn the passing of her husband Bob.
- ♦ Prayers for healing for **Steve Young** (brother of Sue Hesse) as he undergoes back surgery and his recovery journey.
- ♦ Prayers for God's comfort and consolation for the **family of Glen Roush** (friend of Sandy Pepos) as they mourn his death.
- ♦ Prayers of comfort and support **Jean Humphrey** as she is under the care of Hospice.
- ♦ Prayers of comfort for **LaRae Veitch** and her family as they mourn the death of her husband, Bob and father-in-law, Bob Jr.
- ♦ Prayers of healing for **Cindy Brattain** as she recovers from a heart procedure this past week.



Pastor's Article: Belief Statement

God calls us to a lifelong journey of Christian discipleship and we invite all to join us

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH GUIDING PRINCIPLE: LIFE-LONG FAITH FORMATION

"But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

(2 Peter 3:18a) Deepening our faith strengthens our discipleship. Ours is a congregation that believes God calls us to be life-long learners. So we plan for opportunities to strengthen our relationship with God and invite all to participate.

It is in Bethel's DNA to be a congregation which practices life-long faith formation. In the Fall of 1946, a collaborative effort was launched by the ladies of the First English Lutheran Church and a parish worker for the Augustana Lutheran Church to survey the Lower Sun River Area of Great Falls. The survey led to the discovery that a lot of young families were making the Lower Sun River area their home. That led to the organization of a Sunday School which was led by pastor, seminary intern and lay leaders from First English Lutheran who met at the Russell school. Seventy-one years ago a Vacation Bible School began and eventually the Lower Sun River Lutheran Church (which was renamed Bethel in March of 1951) was started and the rest is history. Faith formation or Christian education is indispensable in the life and ministry of the church. Bethel's beginnings bear witness to the vital role of faith formation in the love of Christ, for the sake of the community and the world.



In the last four weeks, I have officiated at the baptisms of two children and one teen and there are three more baptisms scheduled to take place before I retire. What a joy to celebrate the gift of new life in Christ and the beginning of what will be a life-long faith journey. When we are united to Christ's death and resurrection in the waters of baptism, we are initiated into Body of Christ, also known as the church. The Church is God's gift for our spiritual nourishment and growth, and for service in the ministry of Jesus Christ. The Church is God's instrument of grace where faith is deepened and nurtured and where discipleship is strengthened. From the Evangelical Lutheran Worship, *Service of Holy Baptism*, we read these words, "Living with Christ and in the communion of saints, we grow in faith, love, and obedience to the will of God."

The first reading chosen for this Sunday is from the book of Deuteronomy. In this reading we learn that the Lord God of Israel is the one and only God to be at the center of the people of Israel's lives. God calls for their and our undivided loyalty to Godself. *"Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might."* From these verses is the prayer of the Hebrew people called the *Shema*. The word *Shema* is the Hebrew word which translates, "hear." From one generation to the next, they were to pray this creed at least twice a day and to love the Lord in word and deed. *"Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise up."* God's plan was that faith was to be formed in the hearts and lives of all of God's children. The great reformer,

continued on next page

Dr. Martin Luther, was asked to write a catechism for parents to be able to teach their children the basics of the Christian faith. Many of us have had the experience of having to memorize and to recite before God, family and church, Luther's Small Catechism. It was a requirement of those who were to be confirmed in the Lutheran expression of the Christian faith. Faith formation takes place in many different ways. My parents and the church (Sunday School teachers, pastors, seminary professors) were the most prominent teachers and influencers in my faith journey. Who were yours? Who are yours, today?

Faith formation continues for youth at Bethel through the ministry of Logos. It continues for adults in small groups which meet weekly in a variety of locations and from the comfort of our homes and on-line because of the pandemic. Faith formation takes place through the ministry of

Northern Rockies Institute of Theology, and the Lay Pastoral Associate Programs of the Montana Synod. Faith formation happens in worship and following worship when adult forums are offered. It takes place in Vacation Bible Schools which are offered every Summer, except for this one, unfortunately.

I encourage us all to stay curious. To read scripture, to study, to pray and to wrestle with the questions of faith lived out all life long and in the context of community. All of us are invited take part in opportunities offered to us so that we will continue to "...grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." 2 Peter 3:18a For the sake of loving and blessing the world.

Pastor Steve

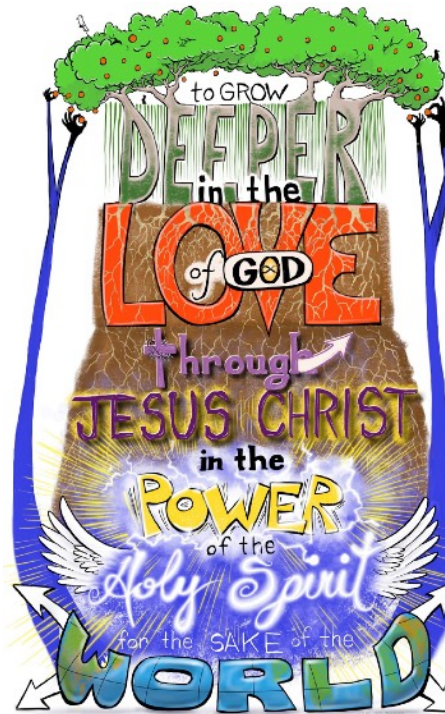


Image courtesy of ELCA Pastor and artist Steve Thomason

Bethel Lutheran Church Council Meeting Highlights June 9, 2020

Bethel Lutheran Council met in the Fellowship Hall.

Here are some highlights of that meeting:

- Dena lead devotions from Canoeing the Mountains. When approaching uncharted territory, adaptation is everything. This book is speaking to all of us in uncharted territory.
- Tami obtained a bid for the painting from The Uptown Optimists. They will paint the additional handicapped parking spots in the next few weeks when they paint Beef O'Brady's.
- President Doug gave an update on the Guy Schmidt estate. Council voted to use the funds to improve our technology.
- Council is looking to fill the part-time custodian position.
- The Jewish community has asked when they can start meeting at Bethel again. Doug will reach out to the Jewish Community and Boy Scouts to explain our need for extra cleaning to follow the mandated cleaning guidelines.
- Pastor Steve's send-off date has been set for Wednesday, June 24th from 5:30 to 7:30 at Bethel. More information will be coming!
- Finally, the Council continues to move forward with the contractual arrangement with our Interim Pastor Trina Johnsten.

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

When a Pastor Retires

The relationship between pastor and congregation is a special one. A pastor is called to preach, teach and administer the sacraments, but often the connections made go beyond the professional role and become deeply personal. To be sure, it is a gift for a pastor to be involved in the lives of the people they serve. Over time these relationships develop and parishioners become friends. The line between pastor and friend becomes blurred. It becomes difficult, when the time comes and the call has ended, to assume a different role in the lives of these friends.

When a pastor leaves a congregation, members may feel they have lost a trusted friend. Like the eternal presence of God, the presence of God's ministers takes on an aura of permanence, and members are surprised and hurt. It is extremely difficult to shift roles. The pastor ceases to be the pastor and a friend, and becomes friend only; members cease being one's flock and friends, and become friends only. Relationships must be redefined apart from the ecclesiastical roles. The pain of such change only compounds the sense of mutual loss and grief.

Another aspect of this change in relationship and the expectations which

accompany it is whether Pastor Steve and Kaye will retain their membership and continue to gather with the congregation for worship and involvement in Bethel's ministries. The ELCA's guidelines for retired pastors of Word and Sacrament states that "a retired pastor should not remain a member of the congregation served at the time of retirement. This is to prevent divided loyalties in the congregation and pressures on either the former, interim or future pastors. Transferring one's membership to another congregation allows the successor pastor to assume pastoral leadership more readily. It also provides an opportunity for the retired pastor to enter fully into the life of a different congregation with clarity about the pastor's retired role. A retired minister of Word and Sacrament is no longer pastor of a congregation and therefore must discontinue the functions of the pastoral office in any congregation previously served unless specifically authorized to do so. Ministers of Word and Sacrament must respect the integrity of the ministry of congregations which they do not serve as well as the authority of the current pastors of such congregations."

I do intend to abide by these guidelines, and pray that God's grace be sufficient for us all in this time of change and transition. During the remaining weeks as your pastor, I hope that we will be able to find ways to celebrate ministry, share our goodbyes and give thanks to God for the many blessings shared in our life together.

The following paragraphs are from a document of the ELCA on Pastoral Ethics When Leaving a Call and Guidelines for Congregational Membership. The following draws heavily upon an Alban Institute publication by Edward A. White—Saying Goodbye: A Time of Growth for Congregations and Pastors—a helpful resource for those wishing to review this topic further.



Welcome to our New Members



Welcome new members Gordon and Karen Lord.

Gordon hails from Nebraska and moved to Great Falls when the Bureau of Reclamation flooded the area where his family lived. He attended Ranchers Camp which was a non-denominational Christian faith ministry.

Karen lived in Two Dot Montana where her family settled. She attended church in Harlowton and was confirmed at Zion Lutheran Church in Lewistown.

Between them they have 5 children and they met at a dance at the West Side Vets here in Great Falls.

They continue to enjoy Montana beauty on their ranch outside of Ulm.

They were introduced to Bethel by Sue Hesse who invited Karen to Close Knit and we are so very blessed to welcome them to our church family.

Not all heroes wear capes. Some make face masks.



Many people in developing countries don't have the option of social distancing or frequent handwashing to slow the spread of COVID-19. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention now says cloth face masks, along with hand washing and social distancing may help reduce transmission.

We need your help to sew cloth face masks to help us reach men, women and children in vulnerable communities.

After all, Lutheran World Relief was founded 75 years ago to help neighbors around the globe who were suffering during World War II. What will be our generation's legacy during this time of crisis?

If you would like to make masks please click the link below for more information or talk with Tami Grosenick in the Bethel Office and she will help you.

<https://lwr.org/masks>

Congratulations Bob and Marj

On a 60 year adventure from Kuwait to MT.
So glad you found a home here at Bethel.



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 the only entrance into the Church. The west side entrance through the TLC Daycare will remain locked.
- Masks will be **required** and we have some available.
- A table is at the front doors with hand sanitizer, masks, tissues and an offering plate. Ushers will be there to assist with masks and help people find seats.
- Physical distancing of 4 feet will be observed.
- 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 kitchen, Fellowship Hall and back office hall doors will be closed.
- Hospitality area will be closed.
- 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.

CONGRATULATIONS
ALLIE OLSEN,
CMR GRADUATE 2020

Allie graduated May 29, 2020 from CMR High School. She plans to attend Utah University to study elementary education and will also play volleyball for the Utes!




**JOIN US FOR NIGHT WITHOUT A BED
 for Family Promise Great Falls**

One local organization is working to raise awareness of the impact caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and how it affects families experiencing homelessness. On Saturday, June 20th, Family Promise of Great Falls is taking part in the first-ever "Night Without A Bed", a nationwide Facebook event highlighting what it really feels like to experience sleeping without a bed.

To raise awareness, participants are taking to the Internet, and you're invited to join them! Put up a tent in your backyard. Make a fort in your living room. Wrap up in blankets on the sofa or in a sleeping bag on the floor. Give up your comfortable bed for one night and share the experience with friends and family. Post photos of your Night Without A Bed on social media, use the hashtag #NightWithoutABed, and you'll be entered in a random drawing for a \$50 gift card from SMOKED. American Barbecue.

To learn more or to donate to **Family Promise** [click here.](#)

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 and give her an email or cell number and she will send you a link to the meeting.



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



Calendar Of Events

Friday 6/19

- Celebration of Holy Baptism for Dasper Ratcliff, son of Dasper Ratcliff Sr & Kynsee Fossen, grandson of Pam & Jim Purdy.

Tuesday 6/23:

- Electric City Bible Study Zoom meeting at 6:30 am.
- Men's Breakfast Zoom meeting 7:00 am

Wednesday 6/24:

- Celebration of Holy Baptism for Oakley Barnes, son of John & Becki Barnes.
- Ice Cream Social retirement celebration for Pastor Steve and Kaye 5:30 -7:30 pm

Friday 6/26:

- Bethel Office is closed

Saturday 6/27:

- Celebration of Holy Baptism for Teagan Brattain, daughter of Danial & Amanda Brattain, granddaughter of Cindy Brattain, and great grand daughter of Pat Berkley and Clara Bangert

Sunday 6/28

- Pastor Steve's worship service at Bethel two services 8:30 am and 11:00 am, we will offer communion at both services.
- First Communion for Austin & Kolton Kupfner, son's of Kent & Laura Kupfner.

Upcoming Events

Tuesday 6/30:

- Pastor Steve's last day at Bethel
- Electric City Bible Study Zoom meeting at 6:30 am.
- Men's Breakfast Zoom meeting 7:00 am

Friday 7/3:

- Bethel Office is closed

Saturday 7/4:

- Happy Independence Day!!!

Sunday 7/5

- World Hunger Sunday
- We welcome Bishop who will be Laurie Jungling will be preaching