



# Bethel Blaze

September 2024

*Sharing Christ's love with a big heart*

## JOIN US FOR WORSHIP

### In Person

#### Sunday Mornings:

8:30 am and 10:45 am  
in the sanctuary  
beginning September 8

(8:30 am in the sanctuary &  
last 10:30 am outdoor service  
on the lawn September 1)

### Online

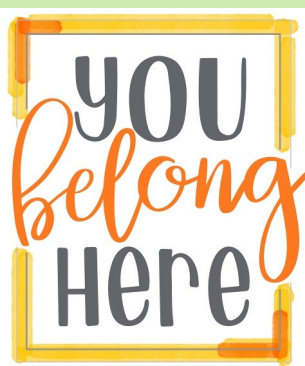
The 8:30 service is  
livestreamed  
on our YouTube channel.

Check our website  
for the link!  
You can also view the service  
at your convenience.

Past services are also available  
on Northfield's public  
television station channels  
180 & 187

No cable is required.  
There are four opportunities  
to watch:

Monday 2:00 pm  
Tuesday 1:30 pm  
Wednesday 7:00 pm  
Saturday 7:00 am



## HEARING GOD'S STORY A NEW WAY

*Bethel is moving to the Narrative Lectionary on September 8th. Greg Walter, a St. Olaf religion professor and member of Bethel's Worship & Arts planning team, shares some of his thoughts.*

Hearing of a new lectionary for our life together at Bethel brought cookbooks to my mind. My mother copied her recipes onto cards and shuffled them each week. Lectionaries not only give us readings from the Bible; they order them by season. The Narrative Lectionary will shape us in a new way in its readings of the Bible.

One of the strengths of our previous lectionary is that it presented us with a year of each of the Gospels: Mark, Matthew, and Luke, with frequent appearances from John. Building on this approach, the Narrative Lectionary will put the books of Genesis and Exodus in front of us this fall. It will also focus our attention: instead of three readings and a Psalm, we will hear a single reading.

I look forward to this focus but also to extended forays with lessons from Genesis, the Prophets, or the Psalms. To me, hearing lessons from the Old Testament will sustain and deepen our understanding of what the good news of Jesus Christ is.

If someone asked the first Christians, including Paul, what their Bible was, they'd point to those three things: books like Genesis called the Law (or Torah), the Writings (like the Psalms), and the Prophets. Who Jesus is and the God he shares with us to call our Father flourishes in the soil of the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings.

Having a cookbook that directs our attention to these recipes will foster our community with Jesus by hearing the story of the people of God and our inclusion among them. We can see how we include others by how we are so included! It will call us to wisdom



that we need which we ignore as folly, as the cross of Christ. It will draw us to the call to freedom promised to those in Egypt in the book of Exodus. We need all these readings from the Bible, and I look forward to how our following the Narrative Lectionary might help us hear them.

*Read Pastor Ben's message about the Narrative Lectionary on the next page! A special "Bethel presents" with the pastors will be offered between services on September 22 to share the vision and answer questions.*



## FIRESIDE REFLECTIONS



### Pastor Ben Schori

(he/him)

pastor.ben@

bethelnorthfield.org  
(preferred for non-urgent  
communication)

#### office

507-786-8953

#### office hours

by appointment Mondays,  
Tuesdays, Wednesdays,  
and Thursdays

Full transparency: I'm really excited to be starting the Narrative Lectionary this month because I've worked with it before, and I really like it. Mind you, I didn't always feel this way. When I started at my previous congregation, I had no personal experience with it and, to be honest, I was skeptical of it at first. *"Not have a gospel reading every Sunday to preach from? How am I supposed to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ without a reading, explicitly, about Jesus Christ?"* (Never mind that the Word of God that "took on flesh" in Christ Jesus was "in the beginning" and is present throughout scripture). Over the next six years I served at the congregation, however, my feelings toward the Narrative Lectionary changed to point that I now prefer it over the Revised Common Lectionary (the one Bethel and many other churches have followed for many years).

My preference comes down to two reasons: narrative arc and biblical literacy. This month, as in all four years of the Narrative Lectionary cycle, we'll start at the beginning of the Bible in the early chapters of Genesis. Then we'll move through the stories of Israel's early history, the exodus, the kings, prophets, exile, and return. Then from Christmas to Easter we'll make our way through one of the four gospels (it's Luke this year), and from Eastertide to Pentecost, the texts come from Acts and Paul's letters. Going through scripture in this way over a year, in my opinion, better creates a narrative arc experience that we as people naturally crave in our storytelling and story listening. Following an arc that builds upon itself over a year better helps us make meaning from these stories from scripture. This also helps us connect characters and themes across the books of the Bible and increase our biblical literacy, which opens the books and stories of the Bible even more to our own reading and interpretation.

For these reasons, and many more, I look forward to starting this journey in the Narrative Lectionary with all of you. See you in worship!

Peace & Blessings, Pastor Ben

## BEFRIENDERS

by Marci Groenewold

In Sweden it's called Fika (fee-kah). The word fika is derived from the Swedish *kaffi*, which is slang for coffee. Fika is a social "time-out" enjoyed in most Nordic countries. It involves taking time to connect with your friends, family, or colleagues while enjoying a cup of coffee or tea and something sweet. Generally, this ritual occurs twice a day: at 10:00 am and at 3:00 pm.

In the July/Aug issue of Gather, Pastor Meghan Aelabouni writes: "For Jesus, love for God and neighbor is the center of faith. More about action than emotion, this love is a commitment to seek other's well-being as fully as our own. We often call this attitude and behavior *compassion*."







When we listen to another's story, sometimes it's easy to judge another's thoughts or opinions based upon whether we agree or disagree. If we view those we disagree with as evil, we run the risk of seeing this person as an "enemy," no longer loved by God. When we adopt this attitude, we are no longer living in God's intended beloved community. However, when viewing an issue through the lens of compassion, conditions for learning, raising awareness, and a change of mind and heart can be created. For example, compassion can help create understanding when we take the time to understand someone directly affected by an issue. Compassion requires us to make a non-judgmental connection with another person.

At Bethel, Fika is enjoyed during coffee fellowship every week between worship services and often at a work meeting such as quilting, or a Bible Study. Fika is about connection with people. It's a time set aside to share coffee and sweet treats with imperfect people who are beloved by God and willing to listen.

*For more information regarding the BeFriender Ministry at Bethel, please contact the Bethel Office (507-786-6674).*

## EVERY WEEK

### CHURCH OFFICE HOURS 9 AM - 3 PM

SUNDAY		8:30 am	Worship/Livestream
		9:45 am	Coffee Fellowship <i>Bethel Presents ☺ Bible Deep Dive begins September 22</i>
		10:45 am *	Worship in the Sanctuary <i>(*September 1 is the last day for Outdoor Worship at 10:30 am)</i>
TUESDAY		9:45 am	Staff Meeting
WEDNESDAY *			<i>(* Please note Wednesday programming begins September 11)</i>
		3:30 pm	Limitless
		5:45 pm	<b>Bistro!</b> Join us in the Christian Life Center (CLC) for a fresh cooked meal and delightful fellowship. Suggested donation is \$5/person. Kid friendly SunButter or cheese sandwiches are available as alternatives.
		6:15 pm	Ring Forth Bell Choir
		7:00 pm	Confirmation & Hangtime
		7:00 pm	Church Choir
		8:05 pm	Brio Bell Choir
THURSDAY		8:30 am	<b>MOB (Men of Bethel)</b> A new year of Bible, film and book studies begins September 19 in Room 54 viewing and discussing the film <i>Philomena</i> . Judi Dench stars as Philomena Lee, a woman who conceives out of wedlock and gives up the boy for adoption. Nearly 50 years later, she meets Martin Sixsmith, a former BBC reporter looking for his next big story. Together, they embark on a journey to locate her long lost son. As the pieces of the puzzle come together, the unlikely travel companions form a comic and heartwarming friendship.
		9:30 am	<b>FAB (Faith and Books)</b> We're discussing the book <i>Braiding Sweetgrass</i> by Robin Kimmerer. Please join us for our rich discussions in the Youth Room.

## THIS MONTH

SEPT 1	<i>Last Sunday of 10:30 am Outdoor Worship</i>	SEPT 12	7:00 pm	Bethel Vision Seekers @ Imminent Brewing		
SEPT 2	<i>Church Office closed for Labor Day</i>	SEPT 15		<i>Rally Day</i>		
SEPT 4	6:00 pm	H.S. Seniors Red Barn Meeting	SEPT 17	12:00 pm	Lydia Circle	
SEPT 5	10:45 am	OWLs (Older, Wiser Lutherans)		6:30 pm	Church Council Meeting	
	2:00 pm	Judy Dirks Celebration of Life		SEPT 18	4:30 pm	Homes for God's Children
SEPT 9	7:00 pm	Creation Care Committee		7:00 pm	Confirmation Orientation (Grades 6-9th)	
SEPT 10		9:00 am	Quilting Group	SEPT 19	7:00 pm	RIC Committee
SEPT 11	12:30 pm	Mission & Justice	SEPT 22		<i>First Day of Sunday School</i>	
	4:00 pm	Congregational Life	SEPT 24		9:00 am	Quilting Group
	7:00 pm	Confirmation Orientation (Grade 10)	SEPT 25	7:00 pm	H.S. Summer Trip Meeting	
SEPT 12	9:30 am	Cannon River Clergy Gathering	SEPT 29	12:00 pm	Senior Stepping Stone Retreat #1	
	5:00 pm	Personnel Committee				
	6:30 pm	Endowment Committee				
	7:00 pm	Finance Committee				

## FAITH FORMATION AT BETHEL...

### Nursery



After a low-key summer, we are ready to bring on the school year!! We look forward to seeing old and new faces and hearing about all of our little friends' summer adventures with their families.

**8:00 am — noon on Sunday mornings**

Our Sunday mornings are packed full of exciting projects, meaningful stories, crazy games, silly songs, tasty snacks, and fantastic friendships! Our motto in the nursery is "Sundays are the FUN day of the week!"

**3:00 pm — 8:00 pm on Wednesdays\* (\*beginning September 11)**

Take advantage of the many volunteer opportunities available at Bethel on Wednesdays while your little one enjoys time playing with other children in the nursery. Volunteer at Limitless! Help prepare and set up for Bistro! Join the Church Choir! Become a small group leader for a Confirmation class! The possibilities are endless!

### Children's Ministry

#### Key Dates for Sunday School

- **Rally Day — September 15** Discover your Sunday School classroom with a scavenger hunt and then celebrate the new year with food, face painting, a bounce house and more at our Rally Fest in between services.
- **Sunday School** for Ages 3—Grade 5 begins **September 22** at 9:45 am .  
3 year olds - Grade 1 meet in the East Pod for opening music;  
Grades 2-5 open with games and music in the Center Pod.
- **2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Parent/Child "Exploring the Bible" Classes — September 22 & 29** from 9:55 am — 10:30 am. Join Brenda in Room 44 and help your 2<sup>nd</sup> grader explore the brand-new Bible that will be presented to them on September 15.



**Brenda Rabbe (she/her)**  
**Director of Children's Ministries**  
 507-786-8878  
 childrensministry@bethelnorthfield

#### Wednesday Wonderings

- **Limitless** (ages K-Grade 5) begins **September 11**. Bethel provides buses from the area elementary school for our after-noon programming. It's not too late to register your child or join our volunteer team! See Bethel's website to register.
- **Bistro** community meals are on Wednesday evenings at 5:45 pm. Suggested donation is \$5/person. Kid-friendly SunButter or cheese sandwiches are available as alternatives.

#### Special Retreat for 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> Graders

Parents & 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> Graders...you are invited to a Parent/Child Retreat on **Sunday, September 29** from noon—2pm. We'll have pizza, games, discussion, learning, and fun. Watch the weekly Children's Ministry e-Newsletters for registration info. Sibling care will be available. Pastor Ben and Brenda hope to see you there!

### Youth Ministry

#### Key Dates for the Class of 2025

- **Senior Meeting @ the Red Barn — September 4** from 6:00—7:30 pm. Students and Parents kickoff the year with socializing, fun and pizza. If you plan to attend and have not yet registered, please reach out to Kristi via email or text.
- **Quilt Packets** If you are not able to join us at the Red Barn, please pick up your quilt packet at church!
- **Senior Retreat — September 29** noon—2 pm (Students only)

**Wednesdays**

- **10<sup>th</sup> Grade Confirmation Orientation — September 11** — 7:00 pm Students and Parents are invited to hear about the last few months of the journey towards Confirmation.
- **6<sup>th</sup>–9<sup>th</sup> Grade Confirmation Orientation — September 18** — 7:00 pm Students and Parents are invited to learn about the 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Connections and Confirmation program this year and pick up a schedule! *If you have not yet registered for 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Connections or Confirmation, you can find the link on the Bethel website.*
- **Hangtime** starts **October 2** 7:00 pm (11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> Grades; 10<sup>th</sup> Graders invited to join mid-October) Pizza! Games! Snacks! Bethel Ball! Hangtime is open to all 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> graders and friends!

**Summer Trip Meetings**

- **High School Trip Meeting – September 25** – 7:00 pm (Students and Parents)
- **9<sup>th</sup> Grade Christikon Meeting** – October 2 – 6:30 pm (Students and Parents)
- **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Trip Meeting** – TBA



**Kristi Larson (she/her)**  
**Director of Youth Ministries**  
 651-230-6057 (cell/text)  
 youth@bethelnorthfield.org

## OPPORTUNITIES

### ARLA (Anti-Racism Learning & Advocacy): Get Out the Vote!

If you are interested in helping to register people to vote on **September 14** or other dates, please contact Connie DeGrote (507-581-0240) or Paula Mathison (612-702-2496). On Monday, **September 16**, we will write letters to people to encourage them to vote in the November election. Join us at The Vault on Highway 3 from 9:30—11:30 am or for as long as you can stay. Bring pens and stamps. We have the names and addresses.



### Rally Sunday is September 15! Build Your Own Oatmeal & Yogurt Breakfast

Reconnect over a “build your own” breakfast in the CLC sponsored by the Congregational Life committee. Forge new friendships by signing up for ACTSS!

#### ACTSS: Adults Coming Together for Soup and Socializing

Join in fellowship and a simple soup supper three times a year with a small groups of 4-8 people. Registration forms are in the narthex; sign up by Sunday, **September 22** in order to participate.



### IN THE LIBRARY...

#### *The Masterpiece* by Francine Rivers

A New York Times bestselling author gives us an unexpected and redemptive love story, reminding us that mercy can shape even the most broken among us into an imperfect yet stunning masterpiece.

A successful LA artist, Roman Velasco appears to have everything he could want: money, women, and fame. Only his newly hired personal assistant, Grace Moore, knows how little he truly has. The demons of Roman’s past seem to echo through the halls of his empty mansion. He secretly wrestles with those demons by tagging buildings as the Bird, a notorious but unidentified graffiti artist, an alter ego that could destroy his career and land him in prison.

Like Roman, Grace is wrestling with ghosts and secrets of her own. After a disastrous marriage threw her life off course, she vowed to never let love steal her dreams again. But as she gets to know the enigmatic man behind the reputation, it’s as if the jagged pieces of both of their pasts slowly begin to fit together . . . until something so unexpected happens that it changes the course of their relationship and both their lives forever.



# BETHEL BRIGHT LIGHTS



10<sup>th</sup> graders experienced the heights of Christikon while Pastor Inger and Jan Stably joined other Northfield Lutherans at Holden Village!



August is "Season of Creation" at Bethel. Each week, the Creation Care Committee helped us think about different aspects of God's creation particularly in our Minnesota context: lakes, prairies & fields, birds, and humans.

Congregational Life cosponsored an eco-friendly outing. Folks carpooled, biked, and walked before gathering for fellowship at Chapel Brewing.



The final Sunday was also the first annual "God's Work, Our Hands" Sunday in Northfield! We teamed up with St. John's & St. Peter's to put our faith into action with various service projects.



## ENDOWMENT FUND PLANS NEXT DISTRIBUTION FOR 2025

The Bethel Endowment Committee is pleased to announce it will be accepting grant proposals for its 2025 Endowment distribution. **The Committee will accept proposals starting September 15 and ending November 15** and is excited to build on the great results from the 2024 distribution process.

- Applications will be made available at the East Welcome Station and on the Bethel website starting in September. Please submit completed applications to the church office, attention Endowment Committee.
- The proposal should focus on one of the three Endowment designations – Outreach Ministries, General Missions of Bethel, or Education.

Winning proposals will be announced in January of 2025, and the award disbursements will be made early 2025. More than one proposal will be selected to receive the 2025 distribution, which will total \$15,000. For example, one proposal may be awarded \$2000, a second \$5000 and a third \$8000. The Bethel Endowment Committee will be sharing more about the proposal process throughout the fall. If you have questions, please reach out to an Endowment Committee member.

*The Bethel Endowment Committee: Ryan Blumhoefer (Chair), Mari Aylin, Steve Engle, Kevin Fink, John Larson, Joel Leer, Heidi Muller Peterson, and Rose Turnacliiff*

## SANCTUARY ART UPDATE

Our Bethel members have stepped up to help fund the large wood relief carving by Indigenous artist John Sterner that will adorn the back wall of our sanctuary. Bethel’s Worship & Arts and Mission & Justice Committees are thrilled to announce that the nearly \$14,000 goal has almost been reached. **Donations are still being accepted from those who wish to join this opportunity to fund this exciting project** (Give online through Bethel’s website or a check with Indigenous Art in the memo). While the art piece will likely be completed in early fall, plans are to install it on November 2 with dedication on Sunday, November 3. The artist will be present at worship that day and will be featured at *Bethel Presents* in the sanctuary between services. Save the date for a very special All Saints Sunday celebration!

## FINANCIAL NOTES from Barb Fowler, Treasurer

Financial information:

	July	YTD	
Revenue	\$ 87,876	\$ 535,926	
Expenses	68,223	551,572	
Total	\$ 19,653	\$(15,647)	(June deficit was \$35,300)

### Positive July Financials!

July revenue was higher than budget and expenses were lower than budget which resulted in a net positive of \$20K! Thank you to all. As you can see, we are still in a YTD deficit and moving into some expensive months with increased programing. Please give generously so that we can continue our positive results.

### 2025 Budget

The Finance Committee is beginning to put together the operating budget for 2025. Committees, staff, and individuals are encouraged to begin thinking about programs and associated costs for 2025. Ideas, requests, and questions may be directed to Barb Fowler, Treasurer, at [barbfowler50@gmail.com](mailto:barbfowler50@gmail.com)

*Members of the Finance Committee: Lee Runzheimer, Brian Haefner, Andrew Jorgenson, Heidi McCormick, Lois Stratmoen, Blair Fowler / Trustee, Joel Leer / Steward, Bill Hoekstra / President, Pastor Inger / ex-officio, and Barb Fowler / Treasurer*



**Bethel Lutheran Church**  
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Return Service Requested



**Bethel Lutheran Church**  
**Shares Christ's Love with a Big Heart**

We celebrate all people as children of God. We unconditionally welcome diversity of age, race, citizenship, ethnicity, cultural identity, sexual orientation, gender identity, ability, education, relationship status, family structure, and life challenges. Your diversity and uniqueness are valued. Your questions and your doubts have a home here. You, your spouse, partner, children, family, and friends are welcome to be full participants in the life of our church.

**YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!**



Share  
Christ's  
Love with a  
**BIG HEART**

**BANANAS FOR BISTRO!**

## Menus & More!

We have been excitedly planning for another great year of Bistro! We have an updated website for everything Bistro: menus, dates, the sign up to volunteer, and more are all located at the following link:

<https://sites.google.com/isd192.org/2024-2025/menus>

## Seeking Additional Bistro Volunteers

If you have never volunteered for Bistro in the past and are interested, we would be so glad to have you! Simply click on the link below and complete the form. You will then be added to a list that will receive future communications via Breeze from which you can sign up for specific dates and shifts: <https://bethelnorthfield.breezechms.com/form/15da1a>  
We will be using our Breeze church management system for ease of use and auto-generated email reminders for those who sign up to volunteer at specific Bistro evenings.

## The Kitchen Needs Your Clean Containers

The Kitchen is in need of additional clean used plastic containers and lids for use after large food events. At this time, we only need larger containers such as those used for sour cream, yogurt, and ice cream that are **32 ounces or larger**. Your previous efforts have helped us drastically reduce the use of plastic food storage bags, which often end up in landfills. Clean containers with lids can be dropped off in the church kitchen.

