



# Bethel Blaze

JANUARY 2025

*Sharing Christ's love with a big heart*

## JOIN US FOR WORSHIP

### In Person

**Sunday Mornings:**  
8:30 am and 10:45 am

### 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



## ANNUAL MEETING PREVIEW

Tending to our organization each year helps ensure we act as a coordinated body of Christ. Martin Luther emphasized the importance of the good order of the church to ensure the proclamation of the gospel. Each January, as a congregation, we formally meet to consider everything from finances to the insights from committees and program staff.

### January 19 — Budget Meeting

*9:45 am in the Sanctuary*

To allow for a careful review of our finances, we offer a Budget Meeting the week before the Annual Meeting. Our wonderful treasurer, Barb Fowler, will present the 2024 numbers and the proposed budget for 2025.

### January 26 — Annual Meeting

*9:45 am in the Sanctuary*

As a congregation, we will receive 2024 reports and look together at the year ahead. Be physically present to vote on the 2025 budget, new council members, and to update the constitution!

#### *The umbrella of Mission & Justice*

There is energy and excitement as Mission & Justice has reimagined itself to enhance coordination and cohesiveness. In the new year, it will serve as an “umbrella” committee, and will draw its members from the leadership of our Creation Care, Reconciling In Christ (RIC), Homes for God's Children, and Anti-Racism Learning & Advocacy (ARLA) teams (as well as from potential new ministry teams that form around Hunger, Immigration, or Elder Care.)

#### *The Constitution Update*

A link to the electronic version is provided in the weekly email for your review, or if you prefer, hard copies are available at the welcome stations and the church office. Some of the update is simply language changes to align our verbiage with the ELCA and SEMN Synod requirements. (For instance, “Church Council” has been replaced by “congregation council” to match Synod wording.) Other changes recommended by Bethel's congregation council have a more significant impact, such as:

- **Including a president-elect position on the congregation council.** This person is intended to become the president after either 1 or 2 terms are served. This will give them a better understanding of Bethel's current work and allow for a smoother transition to being the council president.
- **Shortening the terms of all council positions from 3 to 2 years.** The hope is that this will make service on the congregation council more accessible. As before, a member of the congregational council may succeed oneself for up to 2 terms.



**Pastor Inger Hanson**  
(she/her)  
pastor.inger@  
bethelnorthfield.org  
(preferred for non-urgent  
communication)

**office**  
507-786-8875  
**cell**  
307-248-0438

**office hours**  
by appointment Mondays,  
Tuesdays, Wednesdays,  
and Thursdays

**days off**  
Friday & Saturday

## FIRESIDE REFLECTIONS

by Pastor Inger

Dear Bethel,

As I shared on the first Sunday after Christmas, a colleague (Rev. Mary Hansen-Joyce) once remarked that her most successful New Year's resolution was eons ago: to never make another New Year's resolution. Instead, she offered a New Year's prayer in the spirit of Anna & Simeon.

Eternal God, you have given us the answers to our prayers in the birth of Jesus.

Remind us every day of your own faithful resolutions as our loving Creator:

to bring light into our utter darkness,  
to grow love in our hardened hearts,  
and to redeem us through your enduring mercy.

Help us, through your Word made Flesh,

to be jubilant, fulfilled and hopeful,

because of who You are

and what You want for all the peoples of the world. Amen.

There is no rush to Lent this year; we have an extended Time after Epiphany to reflect on and get to know this God-with-us. I am grateful for this reminder and invitation that we have time, and to take time: for self, for family and friends and coworkers, for decisions, and especially for encountering God.

God's peace, Pastor Inger

## BEFRIENDERS

by Marci Groenewold

Befriender Ministry training devotes an entire session to the topic of "Grief." Grief is a "normal response to a great loss." Some degree of loss happens to everyone every day due to circumstances oftentimes beyond their control. Since loss affects each person differently depending upon the type and severity, sometimes we need more support than what a friend, pastor, or Befriender Minister can offer. The mixed emotions, time constraints and extended family concerns during and after the death of a loved one make bereavement a difficult human experience. Coming together, or retreating with others who are experiencing similar losses, can result in healing, relief, and comfort. Beginning Tuesday, January 14 and continuing every other week, Bethel is creating that space to come together.

*A six-session extended retreat for anyone grieving the loss of a relative or friend*

### Grief and Loss Support Group

facilitated by spiritual director Barb Holm and Pastor Phil









2:00—3:30 pm @ Bethel January 14 & 28, February 11 & 25, and March 11 & 25

This support group will be a "closed group" after the second session. Those attending will come with the expectation they will be able to attend each session. Participants can expect to have their stories and concerns held in confidentiality. All judgments will be set aside. Each person's experience will be received with warmth, support and God's loving presence. The group size will be limited to 12 participants. The registration deadline is Friday, January 10. To sign up please call the church office or contact Pastor Phil.




Other Upcoming Befriender opportunities: Our winter 8-week Befriender Ministry Training begins Thursday, February 6. Classes meet at St Dominic rectory from 6:30-8:30 pm. Please consider becoming a Befriender Minister. Contact Marci Groenewold (507-649-3160) or the Bethel Office (507-786-6674) for more information.

**EVERY WEEK**

**CHURCH OFFICE HOURS 9 AM - 3 PM**

SUNDAY		8:30 am	Worship/Livestream
		9:45 am	Coffee Fellowship & Education Hour
		10:45 am	Worship
MONDAY		6:30 pm	Resonance (Adult Bell Choir)
		12:00 pm	Bible Text Study @ The Vault
TUESDAY		9:45 am	Staff Meeting
WEDNESDAY		3:30 pm	Limitless
		5:45 pm	<b>Bistro!</b> Join us for a fresh cooked meal and fellowship. Suggested donation is \$5/person. Kid friendly SunButter or cheese sandwiches are available as alternatives.
		6:15 pm	Ring Forth Bell Choir
		6:30 pm	Confirmation J-Term (January 8, 15, and 29)
		7:00 pm	Hangtime
		8:05 pm	Church Choir Brio Bell Choir
THURSDAY		8:30 am	<b>MoB (Men of Bethel)</b> Rev. Gene Broughton is leading the final session of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's book, <i>The Cost of Discipleship</i> . The next study book is TBD.
		9:30 am	<b>FaB (Faith and Books)</b> We are reading Rev. Jacqui Lewis' <i>Fierce Love</i> . Join us for rich discussions in the Youth Room. Contact lanareich@yahoo.com to be added to the email list.
FRIDAY		9:30 am	<b>WoW (Women of the Word)</b> Bible study via zoom

**THIS MONTH**

JAN 2	10:45 am	OWLs (Older Wiser Lutherans)	JAN 14	5:15 pm	Personnel Committee	
	7:00 pm	Vision Seekers @ Ettlin's Ranchero, 4452 40th St W, Webster, MN 55088		6:30 pm	Church Council	
JAN 6	7:00 pm	Creation Care	JAN 18	9:00 am	Senior Quilting Day	
	7:00 pm	RIC (Reconciling In Christ)	JAN 19	9:45 am	Budget Meeting	
JAN 7		9:00 am	Quilting Group	1:00 pm	Bethel @ Benedictine Chapel	
JAN 8	12:30 pm	Mission and Justice	JAN 21		9:00 am	Quilting Group
	4:30 pm	Congregational Life		9:30 am	ARLA (Anti-Racism Learning & Advocacy) on zoom	
JAN 9	7:00 pm	Finance Committee		12:00 pm	Lydia Circle	
JAN 12	1:00 pm	Mentor Bowling	JAN 22	6:30 pm	All Youth <i>Romans &amp; Christians</i> (J-term edition) @ St. John's	
JAN 13	3:00 pm	Monthly Movie "Elephant Man"	JAN 26	9:45 am	Annual Meeting	
JAN 14	2:00 pm	Grief Support Group	JAN 28	2:00 pm	Grief Support Group	
		Library Committee				

## FAITH FORMATION AT BETHEL



A staffed nursery for little ones is available  
8:15 am—noon on Sunday mornings  
and Wednesdays 3:15—8:00 pm

### Children's Ministry

#### Sunday School for 3 year olds—5th Grade

is offered in various classrooms —Please ask if you need help finding yours!

#### Kids' Worship Option for K—5 at 10:45 am service

After the children's homily, children may join Brenda in the Center Pod for kid-accessible parts of worship and lesson-enriching games or crafts. Rejoin worship for communion.

#### Upcoming Dates:

January 5 — Sunday School Resumes

January 8 — Limitless Resumes

January 22 — No Limitless

January 26 — Limitless kids sing during 10:45 service

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

### Youth Ministry

#### J-Term on Spiritual Practices

6<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> graders are once again taking a break from their regular confirmation classes and partnering with other local churches this January for an exciting **J-Term**. A variety of classes are being offered: Exploring Our Faith Through Art, Learn to Knit, Inside Out 2, Yoga, Movement & Faith, and Learning to Bake. These classes will meet on **January 8, 15 and 29 at 6:30 pm**—note the earlier start time.

There is no school on **January 22** so **all youth** are invited to join us for a J-Term edition of **Romans and Christians** and pizza at St. Johns! Join us from **4:00-6:00 pm**. 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade students are invited to play as the Romans! Never played before? No worries, we will teach you!

#### Other Important Dates:

**January 12** — 9<sup>th</sup> Grade and **Mentor Bowling from 1:00 – 3:00 pm** at Flahtery Lanes. 9<sup>th</sup> graders, please register here:  
<https://bethelnorthfield.breezechms.com/form/f3cb623312>

**January 15** — 8<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> graders, **Christikon and Flathead registration is due**. For information on all 3 trips check out the youth ministry page at: <https://www.bethelnorthfield.org/ministries/youth-ministries>

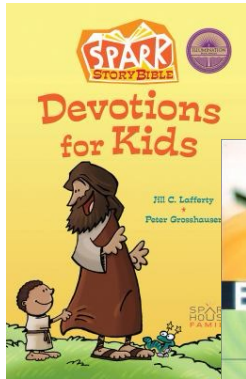
— **Senior Quilt packets are also due!** Please turn them in to the front office or give them to Kristi.

**January 18** — **Senior Quilting Day from 9:00 am – 4:00 pm** in the CLC. Graduating seniors, family members, experienced quilters and newbies are invited to join us as we prepare 20 quilts to celebrate these young people. A second quilting day will be February 1.

**January 26** — **Youth Sunday!** Please email Kristi if you want to usher, read or serve communion at either service.

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

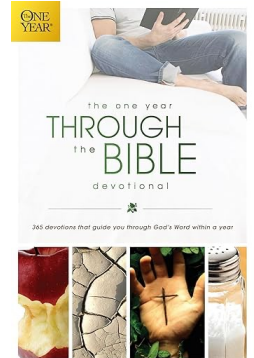
## IN THE LIBRARY...



Devotionals are a wonderful way to start the new year. Devotionals provide a time for daily prayer, meditation, and quiet reflection. They help us reach places of encouragement and help us worship God with enthusiasm and love.



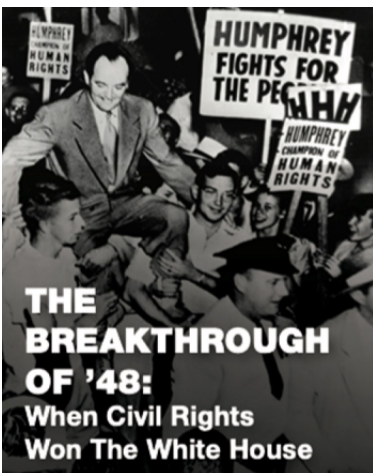
Our Bethel Library has many devotionals available for you to check-out for the year. There is at least one for every age group. They can be found on the “Blaze” display this month or in section 242 at any time of the year. Pictured are some samples on our shelves!



## MISSION & JUSTICE FAIR

A fair is coming to Bethel! **Sunday, January 12** will feature a whole variety of our own mission outreach teams hosting tables with information, an activity or game, and small treats. Come to learn more than you know about what these teams are up to and how you could help while having some fun! All ages welcome during the education time between services in the narthex and the CLC areas.

## ANTI-RACISM LEARNING & ADVOCACY OPPORTUNITY



Happy New Year from Bethel ARLA allies! Even if you have never attended an ARLA get-together, start the new year by joining us on **Tuesday, January 21, at 9:30 am on zoom**. No strings or responsibilities attached.

Prior to this month’s meeting, please listen to the 52 minute radio program “The Breakthrough of ’48: When Civil Rights Won the White House” here: [mprnews.org10/21/24](http://mprnews.org10/21/24). This is not only history; it is relevant to life in the U.S. today. Come and discuss with us! To get on the Zoom contact list, call Paula Mathison (612-702-2496, [pamathiso@yahoo.com](mailto:pamathiso@yahoo.com)) or Connie DeGrote (507-581-0240, [cgdegrote@gmail.com](mailto:cgdegrote@gmail.com)).

If you have any ideas for advocating for justice, please let us know.

## SAVE THE DATE—WOMEN’S RETREAT

*To all Bethel Women:*

Mark your calendars for **Thursday, March 13, 2025** for a **day retreat (9 am to 4 pm)** at **Mt. Olivet Retreat Center**. The topic is Loss - the big as well as small losses in life that are painful. Mt. Olivet is a safe space for you to share your stories and consider what the Lenten season has to say about our losses.

The Mt. Olivet Retreat Center provides plenty of snacks, a delicious lunch, and a peaceful environment for rest and renewal. More information will be shared in the weeks ahead and registration begins in early February.

For more information, contact Dottie Hammer, [djhammer.81@gmail.com](mailto:djhammer.81@gmail.com) or Pam Santerre [pamrsanterre@gmail.com](mailto:pamrsanterre@gmail.com).



# BETHEL BRIGHT LIGHTS



*Bethel's Christmas cactus—a gift in honor of Edith Lysne—is over 50 years old! Meanwhile, Pastor Inger's Christmas tree took refuge from her puppy in the welcome area, and many of you honored loved ones with poinsettias for the sanctuary. Thank you to Lois Cary and Marilyn Kuehl for the extra plant tending!*



*Lizbeth's baked goods taste as awesome as they look.*

*We also celebrated the conclusion of our two year sponsorship of a family seeking asylum.*

*What a blessing Bethel was able to be to the Ramirez family! What a blessing they are to us!*

*Thank you to the many, many volunteers and donors who made this possible. Glory be to God!*



*Christmas visits with some folk who can't come to Bethel in person. Lenore Kaste (on her Dec 18 birthday!) and Avis Petterson send their greetings.*







*Breaking news from Bethlehem! Thank you to these very talented casts, Brenda, and all the parent volunteers for a joyful Sunday exploring the Christmas story. And as always, the music of Advent and Christmas stirred and supported us. Thank you to Megan, Pete, Jill, Cindy and all the musicians who lend their talents to our worship services—voices, bells, trumpets, horns, flutes and strings (pictured or not!)*

## FINANCIAL NOTES from Barb Fowler, Finance Officer

Financial information:

	November	YTD
Revenue	\$ 69,704	\$846,508
Expenses	69,396	869,128
Total	\$ 308	\$ (22,620)

In my monthly messages to you this year, my goal was to not only keep you informed of how Bethel was doing financially but also to remind you of how crucial you and your donations are to the ministry that is Bethel. While the size of our budget is a bit overwhelming, what it represents is the key: worship, learning, serving, community. You have your own list. No matter how the numbers come out on December 31, we have had a successful year sharing God's love.

Please attend the Budget meeting on January 19 and the Annual meeting on January 26. You may discover a new way to learn and serve at Bethel.



**Bethel Lutheran Church**  
**1321 North Avenue**  
**Northfield, MN 55057**



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[www.facebook.com/bethellutheran](https://www.facebook.com/bethellutheran)

Email: [bethel@bethelnorthfield.org](mailto:bethel@bethelnorthfield.org)



Return Service Requested



**YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!**

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.



**HOMES FOR GOD'S CHILDREN 2025**

***CAC Crisis Housing***

The CAC has units it uses as emergency, short term housing for those who are suddenly homeless. When more permanent housing is found, the CAC invites the individuals to take some of the household items with them (linens, pillows, cleaning materials and the like) since they have absolutely nothing to stock their new housing with. To aid the CAC, the Homes for God's Children Committee has decided that the project for 2025 will be to obtain and restock some of the crisis units with these items as they turn over.

Please visit the display in the narthex if you would consider signing up to volunteer with the restocking. We will be notifying the congregation when the need for more materials arises as well as what materials are need or if we need financial support.



Community Action Center