

Pastor's Ponderings:

He comforts us every time we have trouble, so when others have trouble, we can comfort them with the same comfort God gives us. 2 Corinthians 1:4

I met a friend in Prairie for lunch recently. His wife was a student at Wartburg Seminary while I was there and we had the good fortune of serving near one another in congregations in southwest Wisconsin. We even travelled to Germany together on a study trip marking the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation of which Luther and others, were key players. Steve and Yvonne were 'good people.' What that means to me is they were folks who lived an honorable life. They were hard-working, fun to spend time with and loved our Lord. Their faith shaped their very being.

It's difficult for me to write about Steve and Yvonne because Steve lives on after his dear wife, my friend, died. I can't speak of them both in the present tense or the past, so forgive me if I jump between the two tenses.

My friend, Yvonne retired in January of 2024 after faithfully serving as a pastor for over twenty years. She was a solid pastor whom I trusted fully. Yvonne and Steve had just settled into an apartment near their daughter and Yvonne's mother when a diagnosis of cancer was made. Yvonne went to an appointment for a consultation and was immediately scheduled for brain surgery. Yvonne's remaining months were to be few and on Christmas day she passed into eternal life. Knowing our loved ones who have left this life are with our Lord is a balm on our grief. Our loved ones are finally, like we anticipate being someday, experiencing the fullness of life that God intends for God's people...salvation!

Life here on this side of eternity comes with many surprises and thankfully some of those surprises bring pure joy but we all know the harder times when we are in the valley of the shadow of death. Relationships end. Jobs are lost. Good health turns to ill health. Accidents happen. Bombs are dropped.

There is much in our national news that captures our attention leaving us feeling unsettled. After my lunch with Steve I went to Wal-mart, something I don't do often because I don't like to shop, but on that day I was shopping and in no hurry to get out of the store. While looking for an air freshener (to put on the window AC unit cooling our farm house), I paused wondering what it was like to be one of the 40,000 plus service members we have in the Middle East.

I was patiently wandering the aisles of Wal-mart and from what I heard on the news, one of our military bases was under attack. I took a deep breath and continued on my way to find the desired item.

It's strange to go about one's business as if everything is 'ok' when there are so many people struggling to simply survive, but we carry on when relationships end and jobs are lost and our health waivers and bombs drop. We carry on – we are able to carry on- because our creating, redeeming and sustaining God is our hope. Being people of hope we have courage to persist. Being people of faith we look out for our neighbors and help them persist in their times of sorrow and celebrate times of joy. We are a people of hope. We are a people of good courage and I thank God to be on this journey with you as I serve as your pastor.

Lori
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Pator Lori, Steve and Yvonne from
our time in Germany.



Ordinary Blessing

For the Nation

It is easy to forget how young we are, still a great experiment,
neighbors bound by ideals and yet so often disjointed without
them.

The progress and backlash
can make us dizzy with hope and fear,
for this is not organized or linear work,
still becoming.

We ride the rhythms of our country's better angels and deep-
est shame, so much striving in vain since we do not re-
member every member or confess with our whole heart.

And so we keep breathing and labor through these contrac-
tions of civilization- shouting in pain pushing on instinct des-
perate to meet the one we are still making, to hear her cry out
alive and free.

By Meta Herrick Carlson

volunteer opportunity

A summer program "Tigerhawk Meals"

Began June 2nd here at Bethel Presbyterian Church

- Volunteers are needed to hand out the sack-type "Grab and Go" lunches to the kids, 11:30 - 12:00 a.m. The meals are packed fresh each day, we start at 10:30, so your time commitment for a day is about one and one half to 2 hours.
- You may help out as much or as little as your schedule allows.
- We have been serving about 160 meals each day.

Contact Donna Blue 563-412-8477 for more information.



On July 13 there will be an Ice Cream and Homemade Pie Social from 1 to 4 pm at the Lima Church. Free Will offering.



Open Hands Food Pantry Stats:

The total number of households served in May was 173, made up of 351 individuals. We served 10,588 lbs of food. 45 households received food stamps.



All are invited to sing in the choir for the Worship in the Park on July 6, directed by Leslie Poppen. We'll meet at 8:30 (at the park) to practice beforehand. Music will be provided. We'll be singing the hymn, This Is My Song (*Finlandia*).

EXTENDED TABLE OFFERING

The gifts you bring to the Extended Table offering that are received on Communion Sunday are now supporting the Open Hands Food Pantry in West Union.

The extended table offering items requested for Communion Sunday, July 6, 2025, are: soups. Please leave your donations at Bethel on another Sunday.

Thanks so much for your offerings to support Bethel's mission to reach out in our community!

This is one simple way we can share with those in need. We are called to be generous as God has been overwhelmingly generous to us!



CELEBRATIONS

Congratulations to our Bethel family members as they celebrate birthdays and anniversaries this month!

JULY 1 Randy & Mary Ruroden (A)
JULY 2 Tom Buresh
JULY 5 Galen Smith
JULY 18 Dean & Teri Brockway (A)
JULY 19 Ann Bruso
JULY 22 Sue Updegraff
JULY 23 Dave & Julie Aanes (A)
Lee & Linda Johansen (A)
JULY 24 Linda Johansen
JULY 25 Robin Bostrom
JULY 29 Dave & Kelli Lau (A)



Members and friends of Bethel who seek healing and wholeness in their lives are kept in prayer.

Together we are remembering: Cathy Bemiss, Teri Brockway, Don & Janice Durscher, Sarah Updegraff Murray, Kirk Bruso, and Eberling family on McCoy's birth.

Good Samaritan Center - Peggi Pape

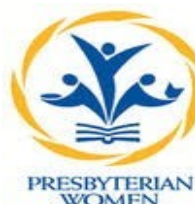
Stoney Brook - Kate Ewing, Kathy Meyer

Eastern Star Decorah - Doyle Gorden

Ossian Care Center - Cindy Barness



Sewing Circle will meet on Thursday, July 24, at 9:30 until 3:00.



Committed to
nurturing faith,
supporting mission,
working for justice,
and building community.

LAYLEADERS

- 06 Worship in the Park
- 13 Stephen Bartenhagen
- 20 Julie Aanes
- 27 Robin Bostrom

Power Point

- 06 Worship in the Park
- 13 Dawn Jacobsen
- 20 Martha Bartenhagen
- 27 Robin Bostrom

FELLOWSHIP TREATS

- 06 Worship in the Park
- 13 Julie Larson
- 20
- 27 Robin Bostrom

COMMUNION

Communion will be served on Sunday, July 6 at Worship in the Park .



"Diaconate will receive their quarterly offering following worship on Sunday, July 13th. We appreciate your generous support of our mission.

Diaconate will meet
July 14th at 9:30.
Dave Aanes will be hosting.



Noisy Bucket offering for May was \$472.73. It was received for Jordan & Zach Eberling. Their baby, McCoy, was born prematurely & is in the NICCU in Rochester.

It will be collected again July 27th.

Thank you for your contributions to this ministry.



WORSHIP IN THE PARK

West Union Recreation Center

July 6, 2025 at 9:30 a.m..

This ecumenical service includes Zion Lutheran , Bethel Presbyterian, and United Methodist churches. The service includes communion. Undesignated offering will be donated to Open Hands Food Pantry. In case of bad weather the service will be held at West Union United Methodist Church. Join us for a meaningful worship service followed by fellowship.



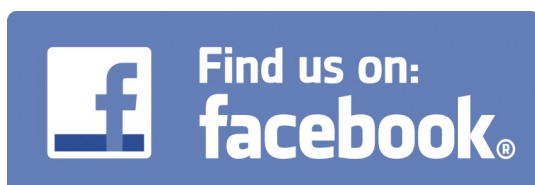
Our VISION—

*Our Vision is for this Body of Christ to be a Community of Faith called...
Bethel—A **people** and a place where God is made known!*



Session took the following action at their 08 June meeting:

- Opened with devotion and prayer led by Mark Bostrom;
- Shared with each other our Joys and Concerns;
- Approved minutes from Session meeting on 27 April 2025;
- Received Treasurer's Reports for April 2025;
- Approved using Bethel's share of Pentecost offerings in 2024 and 2025 for TigerHawk Summer Meal Program as needed;
- Heard from Pastor Kleppe about attending Synod School in late July 2025. Worship team will ask Ann Bruso to speak on her mission trip to Africa at worship on 27 July in lieu of the sermon;
- Received a request for 10 dozen cookies to serve at Worship in the Park on 06 July;
- Heard the "TigerHawk Summer Meal Program" served 705 meals during its first week of operation;
- Heard Noisy Bucket funds of \$500 will be provided to the Eberling family for baby McCoy;
- Heard from Pastor Kleppe about the Women's Bible Study meetings which are going very well;
- Discussed renewal of domain name for website bethelpresbyterianwu.org;
- Discussed the condition of bricks on the bell tower and rubber liner on the roof. An expert review of their condition will be requested;
- Discussed sending out a survey of members regarding their thoughts on repair or removal of bell tower;
- Heard Building and Grounds team's plans for repair of basement flooring and replacement of carpet. The work should be completed by 01 August 2025;
- Approved Bethel being responsible for repair of basement flooring and cost of pest-extermination treatments – cost of carpet is being donated by a church member;
- Heard from Celebration Fund team regarding plans to convert money market accounts to savings accounts due to low interest rate on money markets and lower fee structure on savings accounts;
- Heard NFV scholarships were awarded at Dollars for Scholars' Awards Night;
- The meeting was closed with prayer led by Rev. Kleppe.





Guest Speaker:
Please join me on Sunday, July 27th during the 10:00 church service to hear about my life-changing mission trip to Nairobi, Kenya working side-by-side teachers in the Mathare Slums. Listen to the daily challenges they face and their deep faith they share with their students and community.
Kirk and I are excited to visit West Union and see many Bethel friends while we are there.

See you in July! Blessings, Ann Bruso



Congratulations Nate and Marissa on the birth of baby Charlotte!





CWS
Church World Service

KIDS KITS

previously known as SCHOOL KITS

This year the Mission Team with assistance from the Sewing Circle will be making and filling Kids Kits for Church World Service. If you choose not to shop for the school supplies or wish to help with shipping and handling costs, you may make a monetary contribution to PW. The school supplies may be placed in the narthex or in the dining room in labeled collection boxes. Our sincere thanks for your support of this mission project.

Needed supplies for the Kids Kits:

Packages of 12 colored pencils Two-pocket folders Glue sticks 70 page wide-ruled spiral-bound notebooks - 3 needed for each kit Optional: Handmade or store bought pencil pouches

Donations will be accepted until Sunday, August 10th.

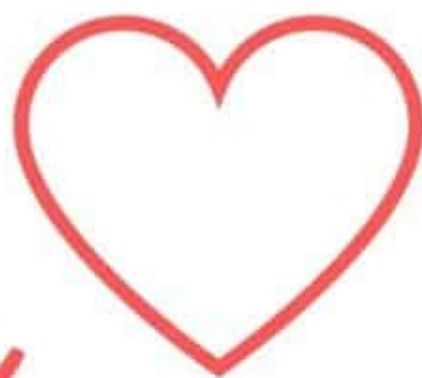
Please only buy the items that have been listed as we have several items left over from previous years. Make no additions or substitutions as they cannot be used for these kits.



Thank you Darwin Schrage for your ministry in music! God blessed you with a wonderful gift!

Bible Reading Plan about

God's Love



Day 1: Zephaniah 3:17

Day 2: Jeremiah 31:3

Day 3: Psalm 63:3

Day 4: Psalm 36:7

Day 5: Psalm 86:5

Day 6: Jeremiah 29:11-13

Day 7: Isaiah 54:10

Day 8: John 3:16

Day 9: John 15:9-10

Day 10: 1 John 3:1

Day 11: 1 John 4:16-19

Day 12: Romans 5:6-8

Day 13: Romans 8:38-39

Day 14: Ephesians 3:14-19

Day 15: Leviticus 19:18

Day 16: Proverbs 17:17

Day 17: Matthew 23:37-39

Day 18: 1 Peter 3:8-9

Day 19: 1 Peter 4:8-9

Day 20: John 15:12-13

Day 21: 1 Corinth. 13:4-7

Day 22: 1 John 3:16-17

Day 23: 1 John 3:18

Day 24: Matthew 5:43-48

Day 25: Galatians 5:13-14

Day 26: Ephesians 5:1-2

Day 27: Galatians 6:2

Day 28: Romans 12:9-13

Day 29: Romans 12:14-16

Day 30: Hebrews 13:1-2



July 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3 Pastor Lori at Good Sam	4 Independence Day	5
6 Worship in the park 9:30	7	8	9	10	11	12
13 Worship 10:00 w/Diaconate offering Fellowship Session Meeting	14 9:30 Diaconate	15	16	17 Women's Bible Study 10:00 Stoney Brook	18	19
20 Worship 10:00 Fellowship	21	22	23	24 Sewing Circle 9:30-3	25	26
27 Worship 10:00 w/ Noisy Bucket/Ann Bruso speaks Fellowship	28	29	30	31		

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