

May is the month when creation bursts forth with color proclaiming new life that we await each spring and rain that has fallen accompanied by warmer temperatures have combined to convince us that a new season is ready to be enjoyed. I've waited for tulips, daffodils and hyacinths to pop up in their beds on the farm, have celebrated those that have appeared and wondered what happened to those that haven't. A Bartzella Peony with its yellow flowers will be missed.

May is also the start of the wedding season where love is in the air, high school graduation ceremonies and the weekend that kicks off summer with the arrival of Memorial Day. I was honored, as a United States Navy chaplain, to offer a prayer on Memorial Day in Chicago as we honored Gold Star Families. Rahm Emanuel and Jim Cornelison sitting with me on the dais. This is a special memory but the more ordinary celebrations here at home are as meaningful as members of the American Legion honor not only the war dead but others who have served in the armed forces who have gone on to the Church Triumphant. Names are read and guns fired offering a solemn salute as those gathered we are reminded of sacrifices made.

Each Memorial Day, I remember my dad's only sibling, Donald Harold Wilson, a nineteen-year-old gunner in the US Air Force who died on October 31, 1952 in Korea. The plane he was on went down in the South China Sea but Donald miraculously pulled the only two surviving members of the crew from the aircraft before failing to emerge himself.

Life has moments that only our faith in a loving God can help us navigate. A favorite collection of writings that I have found helpful is from a small book called Bless All Who Serve: Sources of Hope, Courage and Faith for Military Personnel and Their Families. May the words of these writings bring you close to our Lord and may this relationship be bread for the journey.

Memorial Day Prayer

Spirit of Life whom we have called by many names in thanksgiving and in anguish-

Bless the poets and those who mourn. Send peace for the soldiers who did not make wars but whose lives were consumed by them.

Let the strong trees grow above graves far from home. Breathe through the arms of their branches. The earth will swallow your tears while the dead sing

"No more, never again, remember me.

For the wounded ones, and those who received them back, let there be someone ready when the memories come when the scars pull and the buried metal moves and forgiveness for those of us who were not there for our ignorance. And in us, veterans in a forest of a thousand fallen promises, let new leaves of protest grow on our stumps.

Give us courage to answer the cry of humanity's pain, and with our bare hands, out of full hearts, with all our intelligence, let us create the peace.

-Barbara Pescan, minister

Prayer

Pray without ceasing. -1Thessalonians 5:17

My mother, devout in her faith, prayed without ceasing for decades. First thing in the morning and last thing in the evening, she would lift up her family, friends, neighborhood, nation, and world to God. She walked through the world always recognizing God's presence and thanking God for the many blessings in her life and in others' lives. I was always comforted knowing that she prayed for me and others-without ceasing.

Years after her death, I went through a challenging time and experienced great suffering. My heart and spirit sank deeply, and I wished I could turn to mother for her prayers. The only prayer I could utter myself was "Help." Eventually, I remembered an experience I had while traveling in Greece years earlier. At dinner, my host family would pray for the local monks. They explained that they prayed for the monks because the monks were praying for them and for all people. Ceaseless prayer is at the heart of monastic life. It serves as a reminder that all the monks do is focused on the presence of God.

This memory was an answer to my prayer. I felt heartened by the monks' ceaseless prayers. I knew again that someone, even if it was someone I would never know, was praying for me. My heart and spirit rose, And I offered the only prayer possible: "Thank you."

Sometimes prayer is just that simple- "help" and "thank you." An answer always comes. It may or may not be the answer we want. Whatever the answer, may we continue to practice surrendering our will to God's, recalling the words of the fourteenth-century German philosopher Meister Eckhart: "If the only prayer you ever say in your entire life is thank you, it will be enough."

May it be so.

-Cynthia L. G. Kane, Navy Chaplain

Noisy Bucket offering for April was \$60.67.

It will be collected again May 31st.

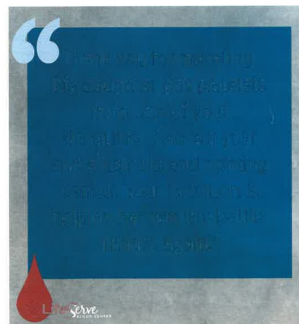
Thank you for your contributions to this ministry.



Find us on:
facebook®



WEST UNION COMMUNITY BLOOD DRIVE



Wednesday, May 6th
12:30 PM - 5:30 PM

Bethel Presbyterian Church
1000 N. 1st St. W. Union, MO 64485



volunteer opportunity

A summer program "Tigerhawk Meals"

Begins June 1st 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-a-half to 2 hours.
- You may help out as much or as little as your schedule allows.

Contact Julie Aanes, Mission Team, for more information.



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, May 3, 2026, are: gluten free products, dish soaps, shampoo, granulated sugar, oatmeal, rice krispies.

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!

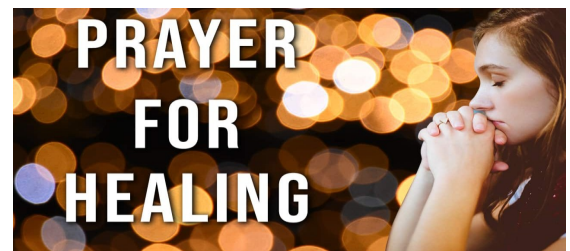
MAY 1	Lucas Johansen
MAY 3	Brenda Tope
MAY 13	Kirk Jacobsen
MAY 16	Lily Johansen
MAY 17	Kirk & Dawn Jacobsen (A)
MAY 19	Corey Moser
MAY 21	Joleen Garvin
	Kyle & Bailey Brandt (A)



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 Durscher, Sarah Updegraff Murray, Kirk Bruso, Rose Marie Knight (Julie Larson's mom), Darwin Schrage, Mike Schroyer.

Stoney Brook – Kate Ewing, Kathy Meyer
Good Samaritan Center – Peggi Pape
Eastern Star Decorah – Doyle Gorden
Maple Crest – Tex Heyer
Copper Creek – Sandy Schnor



Sewing Circle will meet on Thursday May 14th and May 28nd at 9:30 until 3:00



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

LAYLEADERS

- 03 Julie Aanes
- 10 Stephen Barthenhagen
- 17 Dawn Jacobsen
- 24 Gregg Kleppe
- 31 Martha Bartenhagen

POWER POINT

- 03 Dave Aanes
- 10 Mark Bostrom
- 17 Corey Moser
- 24 Karen Schmitz
- 31 Stephen Bartenhagen

FELLOWSHIP TREATS

- 03 Julie Aanes
- 10 Lee Johansen
- 17 Dawn Jacobsen
- 24
- 31 Martha Bartenhagen

COMMUNION

Communion will be served on Sunday, May 3 . Julie Aanes and Carrie Lee will be servers.



God, help us to pray without ceasing, just as we remember that someone is praying for our comfort, healing, and wholeness. May we always be called to extend a caring hand and to accept the one extended to us.



Diaconate received their quarterly offering April 12th. \$235.00 was received. We appreciate your generous support of our mission within Bethel Church.

Diaconate will meet
May 11th at 9:30.
Pat Baumler will be hosting.



Session Roster Bethel Presbyterian Church 2026

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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!*

Methodist/Bethel Easter Egg Hunt April 4th.

Dear Bethel Presbyterian and WU Methodist friends,

We would like to offer a heartfelt **THANK YOU** for the wonderful fellowship everyone experienced during the Season of Lent. Special thanks go to all those who prepared the food and those who took a turn in leading the Devotion Study each week. It was definitely a time of meaningful reflection. We also want to Thank Pastor Mee and Pastor Lori for leading worship on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday.

And finally, an additional **THANK YOU** to everyone for helping with the Easter Egg Hunt! It takes a lot of time to stuff 4000 eggs and then scatter them on the ground for the kiddos. It only a few minutes for the kiddos to pick them up - but isn't it **SO FUN** to watch them in action. This type of outreach ministry is just another way to show God's Love right here in our own community.

It makes it even more special when we can share in the joy together as brothers and sisters in Christ!

The "Season of Lent" Planning Team







All women of the church are cordially invited to the
John Knox Presbyterian Women 2026 Spring Gathering
9:30 a.m. - Saturday, May 2
Hosted by Community Presbyterian Church PW
106 S. Reynolds St., Postville, Iowa

"But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be provided for you." - Matthew 6:33



Our program will be presented by Midwest Mission Bible Training Center, a long-term and faith-based recovery program located in Cresco, Iowa. We will collect donations of "essentials" for the Mission ... toilet paper, paper towels, napkins, trash bags, laundry soap, dish soap, shower gel, deodorant, or pantry shelf staples (canned goods, pasta, cooking oil, etc.).

Our day will also include Dedication of the Birthday Offering and a service of communion worship.

The Postville church is wheelchair accessible and has an elevator. Lunch cost is \$8. To assist the with planning, **please RSVP by Friday, April 24** by calling or texting 563-419-7371 or email ripleyjb56@gmail.com. (Indicate if you have any dietary restrictions.) **A Zoom option will be available for those unable to join us in person; include your email address to request the link.**



Session took the following action at their meeting on 19 April 2026:

- Opened with devotion and prayer led by Dawn Jacobsen;
- Shared with each other our Joys and Concerns;
- Approved minutes from Session's meeting on 22 March 2026;
- Received Treasurer's Report for March 2026;
- Approved a request for use of building by Northeast Iowa Quilt Guild for 02 March, 06 April, and 04 May 2027 from 1:00 to 10:00 p.m.
- Approved donating \$160 to Fayette County Emergency Management's Community Safety Net program in support of 10 children receiving educational materials;
- Heard updated information on the Ecumenical Worship service on 05 July 2026 with Methodist and Zion Lutheran (host) churches;
- Heard updates on filling the pulpit during Pastor Lori's vacations on 28 June (Stacie Nadeen-Carlsen) and 02 August (Tom Buresh);
- Approved moving communion in August to the second Sunday;
- Heard reports on the Palm Sunday breakfast and the Easter Egg hunt, both of which went very well;
- Heard reminders about the NAMI presentation on 22 April and End-of-Life workshop on 29 April and encouragement to spread the word about both events;
- Heard safety tests on the elevator have been completed;
- Discussed the grant application and heard the selection committee has met and they are evaluating all applications;
- Discussed installing new carpet and painting the nursery room;
- Approved presenting Amy Murphy with a gift certificate on Administrative Assistant's Day;



May 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 PW Spring Gathering
3 Worship 10:00w/the Lord's Supper Fellowship	4	5	6	7	8	9
10 Worship 10:00 Fellowship Mothers Day	11 9:30 Diaconate	12	13	14 Sewing Circle 9:30-3 Ascension of the Lord	15	16
17 Worship 10:00 Fellowship Session Meets	18	19 Lori-Boundaries Training	20	21 Women's Bible Study 10:00 Stoney Brook	22	23
24 Worship 10:00 Fellowship Day of Pentecost	25 Memorial Day	26	27	28 Sewing Circle 9:30-3	29	30
31 Worship 10:00 Fellowship Trinity Sunday						

Bethel Presbyterian Church
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