



Bethel Blaze

APRIL 2026

Sharing Christ's love with a big heart

JOIN US FOR WORSHIP

In Person

Sunday Morning:
8:30 am and 10:30 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



SUNDAYS IN EASTERTIDE

Easter isn't just one Sunday... but fifty days! Savor Easter joy with us on Sundays.

April 12

Pastor Ben will preach on John 20:19-31 (Thomas). Between services, learn about **Fly Fishing & Stream Preservation with Jim Holden, Eric Lundin, Mark Labenski, and Scott Nesbit**—setting the stage for the Bible's resurrection fishing story next Sunday!



Let's move with Easter joy! We believe in and celebrate the resurrection in and with our bodies, not just intellectually. An **informal Alleluia 5k** will start from the church at noon—join Pastor Inger and her dog Paolo on a tour of the Hauberg Woods course, or explore it on your own!

April 19

Pastor Phil will preach on John 21:1-19 (Jesus Appears to Seven Disciples). We will also **give thanks for our volunteers and bless quilts** for Lutheran World Relief!

Our **“Spring Into Action” Blood Drive** will be from **8:30 am—1:30 pm**. Click [here](#) to schedule a donation with sponsor code 4044, or call Memorial Blood Centers at 888-448-3253.



Between services, we'll hold a short **Congregational Meeting** to update the constitution. Bethel staff will also host a special **Volunteer Appreciation Fellowship** between services.

April 26

This Sunday, Bethel has an special opportunity to join the closing worship of **St. Olaf's Young Adult Faith & Climate Summit** at **10:30 am** at **Boe Memorial Chapel**. Experience worship where the church's next generation has a significant presence! Learn more about the Summit [here](#). We'll still offer our regular worship options at Bethel—

Pastor Ben will preach on Acts 9:1-19a (Paul's Conversion). Pastor Inger will preside at the first service, and then accompany a Bethel contingent to the special service at Boe.





Pastor Inger Hanson
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communication)

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office hours
by appointment Monday,
Tuesday, Wednesday,
and Thursday

days off
Friday & Saturday

FIRESIDE REFLECTIONS

from Pastor Inger

Dear Bethel,

I am always intrigued by how hymn lyrics frame the stories of scripture or articulate belief. They often make the profound succinct, and give me clarity. As I look forward to the Easter season, I've found promise and purpose in the third stanza of "Now All the Vault of Heaven Resounds":

Oh, fill us Lord, with dauntless love;
set heart and will on things above
that we conquer through your triumph;
grant grace sufficient for life's day
that by our lives we truly say:
"Christ has triumphed! He is living!"
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Fun fact: the hymn writer Paul Strodach was a parish pastor, the translator of several of Martin Luther's liturgical writings, and the author of several important works on the Lutheran Liturgy. It turns out I went to the same seminary (albeit 116 years later)!

The resurrection is God's triumph over death, and over the sin and evil that killed Jesus. It is also (to lean on theologian Wolfheart Pannenberg) confirmation that Jesus is who he said he was: chosen, the divine pre-existent Son, the Logos with God from all eternity. It is affirmation of Christ's teachings and example: love God; love one another.

The hymn declares the triumph, and also expresses how our everyday realities still need "Easter-ing." In daunting times, I need this prayer for dauntless love. For grace, so that witness to Christ is more than lip-service. I am also buoyed up by the plans and opportunities for April—from regular worship and Bible study to special events. I am sure God will keep filling us up, and granting the grace to make love tangible.

Easter blessings, Pastor Inger

EASTER OFFERING

by Clark Cary

EASTER IS COMING! Christ is risen and we proclaim Him as our Lord and King! Once again we have been blessed and we are to be a blessing to others here and around the world. **Bethel's Mission and Justice Committee has selected Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR) International as the recipient of a \$5,000 gift from our Easter Offering. LDR is the branch of the ELCA that responds to suffering as a result of wars, conflicts, and natural disasters in the USA and world-wide.** LDR is presently working in 56 countries around the world, helping people affected by global unrest, conflicts, homelessness, and trauma. Please read the recent letter sent to your home describing the needs of people in Lebanon, Jordan, and East Jerusalem, where LDR supports the local churches that are actively involved with people who will benefit from our gift. We welcome your gifts this Easter as we reach out in Jesus' name.

A Blessed Easter to all!



Lutheran
Disaster Response

EVERY WEEK

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS 9 AM - 3 PM

SUNDAY		8:30 am	Worship/Livestream
		9:40 am	Coffee Fellowship & Education
		10:30 am	Worship & Sunday School
MONDAY		12:00 pm	Bible Text Study at The Vault
		6:30 pm	Resonance (Adult Bell Choir)
TUESDAY		9:45 am	Staff Meeting
WEDNESDAY		3:30 pm	Limitless
		5:45 pm	Bistro
		6:15 pm	Ring Forth Bell Choir
		7:00 pm	Church Choir Rehearsal & Hangtime
		8:05 pm	Brio Bell Choir
THURSDAY		8:30 am	MoB (Men of Bethel) will be discussing Kaethe Schwehn's <i>The Gospel of Salome</i> this month. We will not meet April 2 because of Holy Week.
		9:30 am	FaB (Faith and Books) is reading <i>A is for Alabaster</i> by Anna Carter Florence. Join us for rich discussions in the Youth Room. Contact lanareich@yahoo.com .
FRIDAY		9:15 am	WoW (Women of the Word) Bible study via Zoom

HOLY WEEK

April 2—Maundy Thursday
11:00 am Worship
7:00 pm Worship / Livestream

April 3—Good Friday
11:00 am Worship
7:00 pm Worship / Livestream & Church Choir sings

April 5—Easter Sunday
8:00 am Worship
9:30 am Worship / Livestream
11:00 am Worship

THIS MONTH

APR 4	9:00 am	Worship & Arts Action Team	APR 17	11:00 am	Service for Kurt Lehmkuhl <i>(Visitation at 10:00 am)</i>
APR 7	6:30 pm	Book Discussion with Kaethe Schwehn	APR 19	Volunteer Appreciation & Quilt Blessing	
APR 8	5:00 pm	Congregational Life		8:30 am	Bethel Blood Drive
	5:20 pm	Garage Sale Planning		9:40 am	Special Congregational Meeting: Constitution Update
APR 9	10:30 am	Projects with Purpose		11:45 am	CYF Retreat
	2:00 pm	Monthly Movie: <i>Cool Hand Luke</i>		1:00 pm	Bethel at Benedictine Chapel
	5:45 pm	Active Befriender Ministry Support	APR 20	7:00 pm	Endowment
	7:00 pm	Finance	APR 21	3:30 pm	ARLA Monthly event
	7:00 pm	Vision Seekers at Loon Liquor		5:00 pm	Personnel Committee
APR 11	8:30 am	Spring Ministry Summit		6:30 pm	Church Council
	9:00 am	Senior Quilting Day	APR 23	10:30 am	Projects with Purpose
APR 14	 9:00 am	Quilting Group	APR 25	Youth Climate Summit	
	3:00 pm	Lydia Circle Fellowship	APR 26	10:30 am	Special Climate Service at Boe Memorial Chapel
APR 15	4:30 PM	Homes for God's Children	APR 28	 9:00 am	Quilting Group
APR 16	10:00 am	Parkview Fellowship			

FAITH FORMATION AT BETHEL

The Nursery is open 8:15 am—11:45 am on Sunday
and 5:45 pm—7:00 pm on Wednesday

providing a safe and caring environment
for our youngest ones (birth to pre-K)

Children's Ministry

Save the date! Vacation Bible School will be Monday, August 3 through Thursday, August 6. VBS is a little later this year, as Bethel and St John's (along with Northfield UMC) are partnering with Good Earth Village staff to lead our kids who have completed Kindergarten—5th grade in a week of ALL DAY fun and faith building. A morning option will also be made available for Preschool age kids. More details and registration will be coming soon.

Youth Ministry

Seniors! Our final quilting day is April 11 from 9:00 am – 4:00 pm! If you have not yet turned in your quilting packets, please do so asap. Your final senior retreat , for students and parents, will be held Sunday, May 3 from noon – 2:30 pm. Please register here: <https://bethelnorthfield.breezechms.com/form/dc64721158>

Mentors and 9th grade students – please remember to worship together once in the month of April. The final mentor event will be April 26 (please note the date change) from noon – 2:30 pm. Students, please register here: <https://bethelnorthfield.breezechms.com/form/123da158>

If you ordered plants from the **Youth Plant Fundraiser**, they will be delivered on Mother's Day Weekend. Please reach out to Kristi if there is an issue with delivering that weekend.

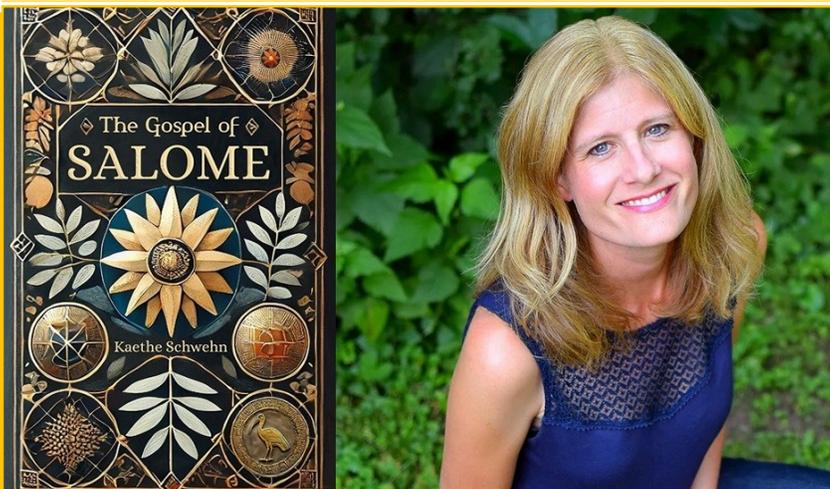
Lastly, our final **Youth Sunday** of the year is on April 26 during first service only. Please reach out to Kristi if you can help!

ARLA EVENT

Tuesday, April 21
3:30—4:30 pm in the Youth Room

Join us this month as Rose Turnacliff talks about Bethel's support of the College TORCH program. Bethel has been a faithful TORCH supporter since 2018 when Pastor Becca joined with other local churches in this new adventure of adding college students to the TORCH program. Beth Berry, a local school administrator who had an early vision for TORCH, a TORCH student, and a current TORCH supervisor will also be present to give a brief history of TORCH in the Northfield Middle School and High School and how TORCH functions today. Please join us! Everyone is welcome.

AN INVITATION FROM FAB



FaB (Faith and Books) will be hosting a stimulating discussion, open to all, of Bethel member Kaethe Schwehn's historical novel, *The Gospel of Salome*, **Tuesday, April 7 at 6:30 pm.**

The Gospel of Salome is a retelling of Biblical events set against the roiling backdrop of the Alexandrian riots, an examination of ideology and motherhood, and a poignant argument for love and equality in today's world as well as in its own context. At a Sunday presentation in February, Kaethe spoke about her novel's setting in 38 CE and parallels to today. At this event, she will lead

us in a conversation focused on the book itself. We invite you to get your copy of the book, read it, and then plan to join author Kaethe for a lively and enriching evening! Everyone is welcome! Please plan to come!

REV. ALAN STOREY IN NORTHFIELD

APRIL 22 NORTHFIELD YOUTH GATHERING WITH ALAN STOREY
6:30pm at Emmaus Church

Local church area youth are invited to gather for an evening of conversation with Rev. Alan Storey—a South African activist, preacher and story-teller. Considering what is on the hearts and minds of young people, Alan will help us to reflect on what it means to be a young person of faith in these uncertain times.



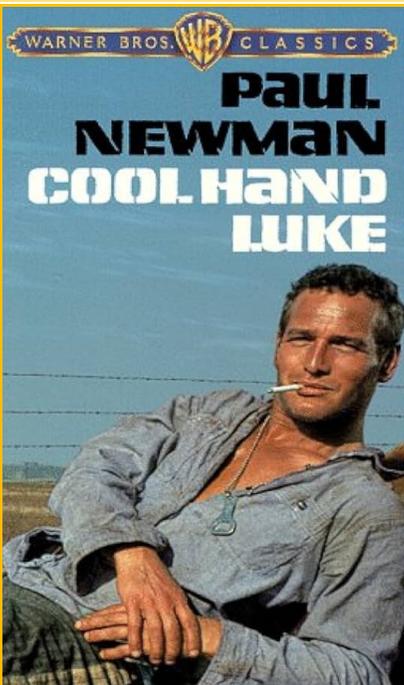
APRIL 23 CALLED AS COMMUNITY IN FRACTURED TIMES
6:30pm: Gathering for music and light snacks; 6:45pm event at St. John's

Recent events in our community have revealed fractures in our lives together and also demonstrated the depth and breadth of our care for our neighbors. Each of us lives from a theology of what we value and believe. What can stories from resistance movements in this country and in South Africa teach us about the calls to continued courage and healing in this present moment? Prompted by questions from Northfield community members, Rev. Alan Storey will engage with us in conversation about how we might live into our commitments to community wholeness. Free and open to the public.

APRIL 24-25 NORTHFIELD MANNA & MERCY RETREAT

Rev. Alan Storey takes a fresh look at scripture through the interpretive lens of Jesus’ life, death and resurrection and God’s overall call for each one of us to partner with God in mending this fractured world. The hope is that this retreat will help our interpretations and use of the scriptures to be truly liberating and life-enabling for all of creation. Open to all. Sliding fee scale. Cost includes dinner at 5:15pm on Friday, and lunch on Saturday. Childcare will be provided for those who need it. [Registration required.](#)

MONTHLY MOVIE



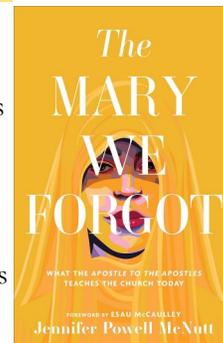
Thursday, April 9 at 2:00 pm

Join us as we watch the classic film, *Cool Hand Luke*, a 1967 prison drama starring Paul Newman and George Kennedy.

IN THE LIBRARY...

In *The Mary We Forgot*, award-winning church historian and theologian Jennifer Powell McNutt unpacks scripture and history to reveal the real Mary Magdalene: the first apostle of the good news and a model of discipleship for both men and women today.

Mary Magdalene's life was transformed when she was healed by Christ and joined his ministry, following him from Galilee to Jerusalem. The Gospels teach that she was also a witness at the cross and the first one sent by Christ to preach his resurrection. Yet her story is often confused, scandalized, and undervalued by the church.



BETHEL BLOOD DRIVE

It’s time to spring into action. Every time you come in to give blood, your donation saves up to three people. That’s three more people who get to enjoy their spring, plant their favorite flowers, and watch them grow the rest of the year with the people that they love. You could be the reason that all of this is possible!

Cultivate a Habit of Giving and Watch it Grow in your Community!

Sunday, April 19

8:30 am - 1:30 pm

 **Memorial Blood Centers**

BETHEL BRIGHT LIGHTS



A very special thank you to Sarah Swan McDonald who blessed us with her incredible harp music during Lent. She played beautiful music before and after the Wednesday night services. The time for meditation, prayer and basking in the beauty of this sacred music was invaluable to so many of us. Thank you Sarah for all of the time both in preparing and in playing at the services. We would also like to thank Eric, Sarah's dedicated "roadie," for his help in moving this beautiful harp and supporting Sarah in her sharing. What an amazing time to for all of us to draw closer to God!

Not pictured: this Lent, we also had powerful preaching and presentations from Lutheran Social Service of MN and Global Refuge. Thank you to the teams that organized these visits!



Palm Sunday was marked by joyful worship and a delicious Pancake Breakfast at Bethel...



...kids helped in worship, learned the stories of Holy Week and Easter through the fun of an egg hunt, and incorporated their palms into art!

...and in the afternoon, Bethel folk marched and joined 10,000+ Christians for an ecumenical worship service at the capitol to center our call to love the neighbor and to reject Christian nationalism and authoritarianism.



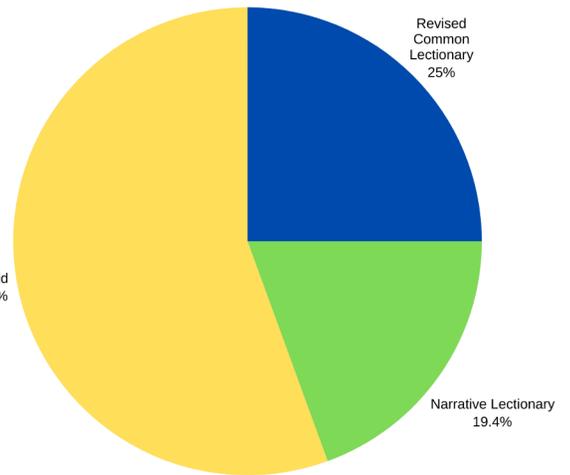
LECTIONARY REFLECTION SURVEY RESPONSE

In February and March, parishioners were encouraged to reflect on the approach to scripture on Sunday offered by the Revised Common Lectionary (used prior to Fall 2023) and by the Narrative Lectionary (used the past two years), and to express a preference on how we move forward.

What lectionary would most help you grow in faith in the years ahead?

- A. Revised Common Lectionary
- B. Narrative Lectionary
- C. Hybrid (RCL in the summer; perhaps in Advent)

36 responses were received—thank you! Both lectionaries are clearly appreciated. 9 hoped to return to the Revised Common Lectionary (25%). 7 hoped to continue on the Narrative Lectionary (20%). 20 were intrigued by a hybrid option (55%)—using the Revised Common Lectionary in the summer (and perhaps in Advent).



The pastors and Director of Worship & Arts discussed the responses with the Worship & Arts Planning Team, and will move forward with the hybrid option for the next two years (allowing us to complete a full cycle of the program year Narrative Lectionary). We will strive to give careful attention to feast days and the liturgical seasons even as we lean into the strengths of this lectionary.

FINANCIAL NOTES from Barb Fowler, Financial Officer

Financial information:

January & February

Revenues \$125,694

Expenses \$143,801

Total \$ (18,107)

It is early in the fiscal year, so no alarms that we are showing a deficit. Your continual generous giving to the operating budget is greatly appreciated. Easter Blessings to each of you.

Members of the Finance Committee: Barb Fowler, *Financial Officer*; Greg Bussler; Heidi McCormick; Lee Runzheimer; Blair Fowler, *Trustee*; Andrew Jorgenson, *Steward*; Paula Mathison, *President*; and Pastor Inger, *ex-officio*.



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Return Service Requested

BETHEL GARAGE SALE IN MAY

Please join us for our annual church garage sale, where gently loved items find new homes, homemade treats bring smiles, and every purchase supports our church and community outreach!

PLEASE DONATE!

Donation drop-off dates for Bethel members are Monday, May 11, through Wednesday, May 13, from 9:00 am to 7:00 pm each day. Donations in clean, gently used condition are appreciated. Items not accepted include mattresses, TVs, VCRs, outdated electronics, cribs, car seats, exercise machines, and large artificial Christmas trees. Donations will not be accepted on Thursday, May 14. Please contact Don Pavek (612-685-3207) for transportation of furniture or larger items. Our Bethel members are very generous with donations, so once again, items from individuals outside Bethel are not requested.

PLEASE VOLUNTEER!

Numerous volunteers are needed Sunday, May 10, through Saturday, May 16. We are especially looking for cashiers, a lead in the linen area, and a lead in the jewelry area. Please sign up using your email invitation on Breeze or at the Among the Ministries table April 12 and May 3. Walk-in volunteers are also welcome!

More details on baked goods and our Garage Sale Social will be in the May newsletter.

Thank you for sharing your time, talents, and treasures. Your involvement in the Bethel Garage Sale makes all the difference.

Please join us!

2026 BETHEL GARAGE SALE

**Friday, May 15, 7:00 am – 6:00 pm and
Saturday, May 16, 8:00 am – noon**

\$5 Bag Sale Saturday 10:00 am – noon