



# **The Bethesda Beacon**

*Monthly Newsletter of Bethesda Evangelical Lutheran Church, Carlton MN*  
February 2023

God's  
*love*  
endures  
**FOREVER.**

Psalms 136:1

## In This Month's Beacon:

\*Pastor Seth's Beacon Article

\*Financial Update

\*Member News

\*Committee Updates

\*And More



*This month is the first in a set of three articles on three big questions – belonging, identity, and purpose - that we face as we go through transitions in life. Youth and young adults in particular are dealing with these questions all the time – both because they are facing them for the first time, and because they experience transition almost constantly.*

### **Belonging**

Here's an interesting thought experiment: When in your life have you felt the most joyful or contented?

Perhaps your mind went to a particular group of people: maybe a group of friends who you spent time with, or family members who have known you your whole life. For these people, it's almost like it doesn't matter when or where we see them, we know we belong with them and can be ourselves around them.

Or maybe your mind went to a place: perhaps a longtime home, or a place of peace or excitement. Some of you might be thinking of an ice fishing shack or hunting stand; others, the home you grew up in or the place you raised a family. In these spaces, we find joy and contentedness just by being there, and it's only made more special when others share that space with us.

What do these answers have in common? I think they make us feel joyful or contented because they make us feel like we belong.

For me, my mind harkens back to my time in campus ministry. This isn't always the case, but the Lutheran church at my college in North Carolina had a dedicated space for college students, with had space to study, eat, or hang out. And even though the spring break service trips were fun and the worship services were meaningful, what made the place special for me was the fact that I could spend so much time with other people who knew me. It was a place to belong.

Belonging is perhaps the biggest questions that young people face; when we find a place to belong, our other questions are much easier to answer. But it's hard for and for youth to find that place. Teams or clubs or bands can offer that for a season, but then they must find it again somewhere else. Family is often the first place we belong, but teenagers also are pushing the limits and trying to find their own place in the world as a burgeoning independent adult.

The bad news is that nationwide we are failing to help young people find places to belong. Rates of loneliness have increased every year since 2012 (and this is true for almost every age group, not just for teenagers). And about 20 percent of teens report that they don't have even one adult that they can rely on or go to.

But there's good news for us, too, and we find it in the gospel: we belong to Jesus. And because we

belong to Jesus, we also belong to each other.

Yes, church is often messy. Yes, it's not always exciting for teenagers or adults. But at our best, for teenagers and adults alike, we can be a place to belong.

Here's two things to remember:

1. Whether you're a parent, a grandparent, or a young person yourself, remember that the question of belonging is always bubbling under the surface. Help youth ask the right question and find places to belong.
2. Belonging matters, no matter what stage of life we're in.

This month, I pray that you know that you belong – body, heart, and soul – with Jesus!

*-Pastor Seth Wynands*

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### **2023 Members of Bethesda Church Council**

Deb Davis

JoAnn Gustafson

Debby Johnson

Jeannette Korpela

Renee Kesty

Jen Goad

Jason Goad

*\*If you have items that you wish to be addressed by council, contact a member of the Executive Committee, who sets the council agenda. You can keep up to date with church business by viewing the Council Meeting Minutes on the rotating bulletin board or view them on our website*

**God's Work our Hands - on going - year round** -- Consider hemming precut diaper squares, and onesies. Located on the table in the narthex.

We have 2 office desks in the basement and 2 pianos to get rid of. Talk to Lynn or call the office if you are interested. Thank you.

For weather related cancellations of Sunday worship service please tune in to WKLK or KBJR. We will also post the information on Facebook and make phone calls to notify everyone.

**Save the Date:** Bethesda Meatball Supper March 18<sup>th</sup>. Time to be determined. We are looking for volunteers to cook, peel, set up, clean up, serving, ticket sales, advertising. If you would like to help please see Deb Davis or Renae House. Look for sign up sheets in the Narthex coming soon.  
Thank you.



Please prayerfully consider Volunteering to assist at the Easter Service on April 9<sup>th</sup> for the 8:00am service.

**LayMinistry Assistants Needed:**

Acolytes, Crucifix Holder, Ushers, A Lector, 2 Greeters, 2 Communion Assistants (Intinction) & 2 Counters.

The sign-up sheets will be on the table in the Narthex beginning **March 4<sup>th</sup>**. If you have any questions, contact Pat Durkee, 384-3645. Thank you for your willingness to serve.



Please consider bringing a Lilly/Plant for Our Easter Flower Garden "In Memory of" or "In Honor of" a Loved One to help adorn our Sanctuary on Easter. ***Please have your plant at the Church by 11 am on Friday, April 8th.*** Let's fill the Sanctuary with lots of beautiful plants to add to the beauty of Christ's Resurrection!! ***Please let the office know by April 3rd*** if you will be bringing a plant so your Loved One(s) will be acknowledged on Easter morning. Thank you. Pat Durkee

<b>Financial Update</b>			
Year to date as of 12/30/2022			
	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Over/(Under) Budget</b>
Envelope giving	104622.00	115000.00	(10378.00)
Non-pledged income	26961.28	4900.00	22061.28
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	131583.28	119900.00	11683.28
Salaries/Compensation	96759.42	97913.64	(1154.22)
General Office Expenses	7996.87	7899.00	97.87
Utilities	12211.89	9680.00	2531.89
Other Expenses	1952.78	590.00	(1362.78)
Benevolence Expenses	1036.33	1150.00	(113.67)
Evangelism Expenses	0.00	0.00	0.00
Property Expenses	2355.07	830.00	1525.07
Social Ministry	324.00	325.00	(1.00)
Worship Expenses	5713.85	7250.00	(1536.15)
CYFM Expenses	3337.71	2955.00	382.71
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	131687.92	128592.64	3095.28
<b>Net operating income</b>	(104.64)	(8692.64)	8588.00
Non-pledged income includes Loose offering, Special Services, Meatball supper, Sunday School, Interest Income, etc.			
Memorial money is not included in any of the figures above.			

Thank you to everyone who helped at our dear friend Jane's funeral. From setting up the Fellowship Hall the night before, cooking, baking, prep work, serving and all the clean-up. Especially washing all those dishes! Our congregation is a wonderful blessing! ~Funeral Committee

**Social Ministry**



Social Ministry will be hosting coffee in support of Adult Teen Challenge on February 12<sup>th</sup>.

Social Ministry served coffee on Sunday January 15<sup>th</sup> and collected \$184 for Wycliffe. Thank you!

**Social Ministry** will be continuing the collection of jackets, hats, mittens, etc. as well as hygiene products; shampoo, toothpaste, personal care products for the Damiano Center. They will also be collecting larger backpacks and suitcases with wheels. Please bring gently used items. There is a box for each in the Fellowship Hall.



*“Live simply....so others may simply live.”*

Please continue to donate to the Salvation Army, our local food shelf, on Carlton Ave. in Cloquet. *For the month of February our collection focus will be canned soup, stew and canned meats; tuna, chicken, etc.* Monetary donations are also *greatly* appreciated as a donation like this can purchase much more with the resources the Salvation Army has access to. Thank you.

## Worship

**Ash Wednesday Service** will be held at River’s Edge Presbyterian Church on February 22<sup>nd</sup> @ 5:30pm  
**Mid-Week Lenten Services** begin March 1<sup>st</sup> @ 6pm.

## February Worship Assistants

If you are unable to be here for the date that you are scheduled, please try to find a replacement. Thank you!

*We are in need of people to usher. If you are able there will be a sign-up sheet outside the Sanctuary.*

### **Greeters**

2/5 Debby Johnson  
2/12 JoAnn Gustafson  
2/19 Marv & Pat Durkee  
2/26 Lori Bunge

### **Ushers**

2/5 Sharon Bragge  
2/12 Debby Johnson  
2/19  
2/26 Terry & Sue Coady

### **Lector**

2/5 Cheryl Ankrum  
2/12 Ginny Korte Castle  
2/19 Karin Towslee  
2/26 Linda Newlon  
1/29 Pat Durkee

### **Acolyte**

2/5 Anna Bong  
2/12 Alex  
2/19 Mason Haley  
2/26 Ailie Gustafson

### **Communion Assistants**

2/5 Daryl & Linda Bong & Anna  
2/12 Andrea Wynands & Alex  
2/19 Jason & Jen Goad & Mason  
2/26 JoAnn Gustafson & Ailie

### **Counters**

2/5  
2/12 Mary Saarela & Chris Mitchell  
2/19 Linda Newlon & Gladys Sievert  
2/26 Lori Bunge & Lynn Beatty

**FEBRUARY 2023 SCHEDULE  
FOR J.A.M./ MESSAGE**

\*\*\*February 5<sup>th</sup> – Jesus and Me –  
J.A.M.

\*\*\*February 12<sup>th</sup> - message with  
Pastor Seth

\*\*\*February 19<sup>th</sup> - Jesus and Me -  
J.A.M.

\*\*\*February 26<sup>th</sup> – message with  
Pastor Seth

**Beacon Information – February  
2023**

Adult education classes continue with Bible study on Friday's at 11:00 and Book/Article study the last Tuesday of the month at 5:30. We are also looking to hold a Bible study class in early 2023.

We are looking at some material from Spark house Digital or Christian book for Bible lessons for the kids on Sunday for J.A.M. – Jesus and Me.

Pastor Seth is looking at spring to hold something on Mental Health/Suicide training.

Holy Communion class was held on January 29<sup>th</sup>.

We passed out Bibles to Crosby Moench and Oliver Soukkala on Sunday, January 8<sup>th</sup> to start their 3<sup>rd</sup> grade bible class. The classes will be held on Wednesday, January 11<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM.

Confirmation class for 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> graders has been moving along. They had to cancel some classes on Wednesday night due to weather. Stephanie and Pastor Seth will continue with classes on January 11<sup>th</sup>.

Cardia Deo will be held on March 18, 2023, in Grand Rapids. This is for kids grades 9-12. Bethesda could possibly have 6 possible kids going. Stephanie would be available to be a chaperone for the event. The cost for the event is \$30.00 for early bird registration which ends on March 4, 2023 then goes up to \$40.00 late registration after March 4, 2023. It was suggested to stay one or two nights in a hotel to discuss the events. Wendy will send out proposals to the families to see what they would like to do.

The stewardship challenge is for grades 10-12<sup>th</sup>. We could possibly have 5 kids attending. There would be 3 possibly from Bethesda and 2 from Rivers Edge. We will be requesting \$100.00 from Memorial and Endowment plus ask for sponsorship from the congregation.

The Synod night is scheduled for February 15, 2023. Pastor Seth will be inviting Elim, Salem, Zion Lutheran and Our Saviors Lutheran.

19 Christmas cards were sent to the kids ages pre-K through the 6<sup>th</sup> grade.

We had approx. 6 youth and approx. 8 adults deliver Christmas cards and gifts to the residents at Interfaith Care Center and Carlton Place. We also delivered crosses to Pineview Apartments.

Lenten faith partner plan will start on February 26, 2023.

Ideas for youth outings are Duluth Playhouse (winter or spring), zoo, aquarium, and the New Wine Musical.

Our next CYFED meeting will be held on Thursday, February 2, 2023, at 2:00 PM in the library. All are welcome to attend.

### Member News



#### **Celebrating February Baptismal Birthdays**

Carol Beckstrom, Johanna

Bernu, Karter Davis, Kenzie Davis, Kenley Olson, Marilyn Michog, Anna Kiehl, Trent Olson, Wayne Olson, Lori Bunge, Jordan Thompson, Alena Wallin, Logan Beckstrom, Cora Ostby, Brad Nygren, Gregory Emerson, Randy Schmitz, Michelle Schleret, Amber Kantonen, Virginia Erikson, Brock House, Linnea Harris, Brianna Despot, Aurora Graves, Jaxon Graves, Madison Graves, Alice Kloepfer, Floyd Aubol, Katie Pille, Ambrielle Mazzitello, Amy Mattson, Jennifer Redowl, Deborah Johnson, Carol Chalberg, Keith Isakson & Rebecca House.



Our deepest sympathy & prayers to NanyLee Olsen & Paula Olsen. Their sister-in-law and aunt Margery Dahl passed away on December 31<sup>st</sup>. To Joyce Cerny & family. Her sister-in-law Deone Cerny passed away January 20<sup>th</sup>. To Gordy & Lil Davis & family. Lil's brother Kenneth Bayliss passed away on January 16<sup>th</sup>. To the family and friends of Jane Joki. Jane, who was a member of Bethesda, passed away on January 6<sup>th</sup>. God comfort and strengthen our hearts in hope in the resurrection through Christ.

#### Coffee Serving Schedule

**February 5<sup>th</sup>** -Ginny's Group

**February 12<sup>th</sup>** – Social

Ministry~Adult/Teen Challenge

**February 19<sup>th</sup>** –Pat's Group

**February 26<sup>th</sup>** – Cary's Group

#### Synod Reflections

"New Year's Reflection"

By Deacon Colleen Bernu

*“Thus says the Lord, who makes a way in the sea, a path in the mighty waters, who brings out chariot and horse, army and warrior; they lie down, they cannot rise, they are extinguished, quenched like a wick: Do not remember the former things, or*

*consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. The wild animals will honor me, the jackals and the ostriches; for I give water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert, to give drink to my chosen people, the people whom I formed for myself so that they might declare my praise.” (Isaiah 43:16-21)*

Traditionally, Ojibwe people don't report age in years. Instead, we share the number of winters that we've experienced. Winter creates harsh environments, and in the old days, not everyone would greet spring as a result. So, regardless of the month in which you were born, your life was measured by winters.

In our traditional stories, winter is personified as a fierce, old warrior who tends to ignore the big picture, focusing primarily on personal desire and selfish outcome. He creates an environment that promotes solitude. His breath changes our landscape so that travel is difficult, extended time outdoors can be dangerous, and food sources are scarce. In response, Ojibwe gather together through storytelling, pausing, renewing

communal identity, and reflecting on what it means to be Anishinaabeg, the people, living in this time and this place. Winter, thus, inadvertently creates a thin space, a place where the distance between the physical and spiritual worlds collapses and we exist more balanced in both our realities - our physical, human self and our spiritual self - in order for us to better hear the voice and invitation of God.

Through Isaiah, God speaks to the Israelites, demanding that they pause in order to renew their communal identity, reminding them of their history, and inviting them to reflect on what it means to be a people who have committed to walk intimately with God. In these words, God reminds us that God is ever present and always working. Because God has created this world, God has tended to it and will continue to do so into the future - our invitation is to recognize God at work, embrace the possibilities this creates, and partner with God in a way so that others can see God at work, too.

Twenty-five times we are assured through our stories of faith that God is about to do a new thing (eleven times through the prophets; three times through the Psalms and Lamentations; eight



times in the letters/epistles, and twice in Revelations). In the midst of all that is our lived experiences, it's good to be reminded that God is with us, preparing something new. Like winter, we sometimes become narrow focused and live our lives individually under our own terms. Yet, God again and again reminds us of God's promises of renewal and rebirth, so that when they present themselves, we are ready and willing to partner with God to bring these new things to life. May we take this winter season as an opportunity to prepare ourselves for spring. May we embrace this season of change and uncertainty, confident that God is with us ready and able to do a new thing in our midst. May we never forget that we are a community in partnership with God; we are never alone. Happy New Year, my siblings in Christ. I am excited to see what God will do in and through you in 2023.

### Our Daily Bread Ministries

#### **Lost, Found, Joy**

*Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.* Luke 15: 6

“They call me ‘the ringmaster.’ So far this year I’ve found 167 lost rings.”

During a walk on the beach with my wife, Cari, we struck up a conversation with an older man who was using a metal detector to scan an area just below the surf line. “Sometimes rings have names on them,” he explained, “and I love seeing their owners’ faces when I return them. I post online and check to see if anyone contacted lost and found. I’ve found rings missing for years.” When we mentioned that I enjoy metal detecting as well but didn’t do it frequently, his parting words were, “You never know unless you go!” We find another kind of “search and rescue” in Luke 15. Jesus was criticized for caring about people who were far from God (vv. 1–2). In reply, He told three stories about things that were lost and then found—a sheep, a coin, and a son. The man who finds the lost sheep “joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me’ ” (vv. 5–6). All the stories are ultimately about finding lost people for Christ, and the joy that comes as they’re found in Him.

Jesus came “to seek and to save the lost” (19:10), and He calls us to follow Him in loving people back to God (see Matthew 28:19). The joy of seeing others turn to Him awaits. We’ll never know unless we go.

**By James Banks**

## Reflect & Pray

**What joy have you seen when people turn to God? How will you point others to Jesus' love today?**

*Thank You, Jesus, for finding and loving me! Please send me in Your joy to another who needs You today.*

## Scripture Insight

Tax collectors were seen as betraying their people by colluding with the Roman government. Many tax collectors abused their role by taking more money than required for taxes and keeping the surplus for themselves (Luke 3: 12-13). Scholars aren't sure what specifically caused people to be labeled "sinners" (15: 1), but these persons too would have been excluded from the religious community.

Luke portrays these social and religious outcasts sympathetically. Tax collectors came to John the Baptist eager to know how to repent (3: 12). Jesus called Levi the tax collector to follow Him, and Levi immediately did, then hosted a banquet for Him (5: 27-30). A woman the Pharisees described as a sinner (7:39) is praised by Christ for her faith (v. 50). Luke argued that those who know they're sinners are most likely to hear and follow Jesus (5: 31-32; 15: 1). Monica LaRose



## Upcoming VLM Events:

Elementary Camper Rejuve  
Friday February 24<sup>th</sup> 7pm-Saturday  
February 25<sup>th</sup> 6pm.

Camp Hiawatha

**Ages:** Elementary grades (3-6)

**Cost:** \$65/camper (\$20 non-refundable deposit due with registration)

Camper Rejuves are a great way to get back to camp during the school year, or to check out camp for the upcoming summer! You'll get your camp fix on this 23 hour overnight - games, campfire, songs, friends, learning, and of course, great camp food.

**Space for these retreats is limited so we encourage you to register early.** Registration begins at 7:00 PM on Friday and the program ends following supper on Saturday (about 6:00 PM). More information will be sent to all registered campers.

**Summer 2023 Registration is Open!**

To register go to:

[www.vlmcamps.org/registration](http://www.vlmcamps.org/registration), email [vlm@vlmcamps.org](mailto:vlm@vlmcamps.org) or call our Duluth office at our

**new number 218-481-9080**

# February 2023

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1 <b>10am</b> Office Staff Meeting	2 <b>1pm</b> Jam Group <b>5:30pm</b> Children, Youth, Family & Ed. Meeting	3 <b>11am</b> Bible Study	4
5 <b>8:30am</b> Worship Jesus and Me (J.A.M) <b>9:45am</b> Coffee/Fellowship <b>10am</b> Holy Communion Class	6	7 <b>9am</b> Making Mats for the Homeless <b>6pm</b> Serenity Seekers	8 <b>10am</b> Office Staff Meeting	9	10 <b>11am</b> Bible Study	11
12 Social Ministry~Adult/Teen Challenge <b>8:30am</b> Worship/Children's Message <b>9:45am</b> Coffee/Fellowship <b>10am</b> Holy Communion Class <b>3pm</b> Interfaith Worship Service @ IFCC	13	14 Valentine's Day <b>9am</b> Making Homeless Mats <b>6pm</b> Serenity Seekers	15 <b>Beacon Deadline</b> <b>10am</b> Office Staff Meeting <b>6pm</b> Synod Night w/Catherine Anderson	16 <b>1pm</b> Jam Group <b>5:30pm</b> Ladies of Kaleva Meeting	17 <b>11am</b> Bible Study	18
19 <b>8:30am</b> Worship Jesus and Me (J.A.M) <b>9:45am</b> Coffee/Fellowship <b>10am</b> Holy Communion Class	20 President's Day	21 <b>9am</b> Making Mats for the Homeless <b>4pm</b> Worship Committee Meeting <b>5:30pm</b> Council Meeting <b>6pm</b> Serenity Seekers	22 <b>10am</b> Office Staff Meeting <b>5:30pm</b> Ash Wednesday Service @ River's Edge Presbyterian <b>6:30pm</b> 7 <sup>th</sup> -10 <sup>th</sup> Grade Lenten Faith Partner Meeting	23	24 <b>11am</b> Bible Study	25 First Communion Family Retreat Time: TBD
26 <b>8:30am</b> Worship/Children's Message First Communion <b>9:45am</b> Coffee/Fellowship	27	28 <b>9am</b> Making Mats for the Homeless <b>6pm</b> Serenity Seekers				

Bethesda Lutheran Church  
204 5<sup>th</sup> Street  
P.O. Box 210  
Carlton, MN 55718



Sunday Worship

**8:30am**

*In House*

*And Online*

*You can also view the Beacon*

*on our website at*

*[bethesdacarlton.org](http://bethesdacarlton.org) or if you*

*would like to have a copy*

*mailed or emailed to you please*

*contact the office.*