

Bethelite

A publication of Bethel Lutheran Church distributed twice monthly.



bethelmadison.org/bethelite

WHEN, O LORD, WHEN?!:

A Reason to Hope During the Pandemic

In the Old Testament world of unique characters, Habakkuk was one of a kind. What set him apart was his role as spokesperson, not for God as was the case for all the other prophets, but for the people. In Habakkuk's day, there was all manner of ungodliness and lawlessness in the land of Judah. With the Babylonians growing in power, it didn't take a Hebrew math teacher to add it all up. As sure as $2 + 2 = 4$, the Babylonians were going to zero-in on the people of Judah and lay waste to their land. In light of the struggles of the people with both internal and external threats, Habakkuk lifts his voice with the question that could easily be on the hearts and minds of people today at Bethel Lutheran Church. Habakkuk asks "O Lord, how long shall I cry for help?" (Habakkuk 1:2). His question is "How long?" He wants to know "When?" Surely, we too, in these days when the coronavirus has shut down many of the experiences we value most in life, want to know "how long?" and "when?" When can we gather together in-person for worship?

For us at Bethel, there is an answer to that question. Actually, it is two questions. Question one is "when can we meet in person, at all." The second question is "when can we meet in large numbers." First question first: we can gather for in-



"Be astonished! Be astounded!" – Habakkuk 1:5

person worship when three things are in place. That includes: 1) when people are willing to enter the building for worship with 50 or fewer people; 2) when Bethel can provide reasonable safeguards (but not guarantees) against people becoming infected with the virus; and 3) when Dane County raises the numbers for

indoor mass gatherings to 50 people. We have met the first two conditions. There are close to 200 people who shared by survey an interest in coming to Bethel for worship even if it means completing a questionnaire, having a temperature check, wearing a mask, and being physically distant in the sanctuary. The only thing remaining for us to resume in-person worship for up to 50 people is for the numbers of new COVID-19 cases to go down enough for the county to allow in-person mass gatherings for up to 50 people. As soon as that happens, Bethel will kick wide the doors for in-person worship. Until then, we will continue offering the very best online and drive-up worship possible.

The second question has to do with "how long" until we can have our pack-the-house kind of worship where the pews are as full as we can get them. The answer is that we will be able to gather again in large numbers when there is a vaccine effective enough and widely-distributed enough that state and local officials determine it is safe for

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mass gatherings to resume without limits. From what scientists and experts in the business tell us, there may be a safe and effective vaccine approved and available for mass production in January or February. It will take months to manufacture the hundreds of millions necessary to send throughout the country. It will take more months for enough people in any given community to become vaccinated to help create the widespread immunity needed for the state and county to lift all the restrictions placed on us by this virus. Those months could easily extend though the summer and early fall. We may be able to see light at the end of the tunnel in early fall and anticipate full pack-the-house worship in November or December of 2021.

That seems like a long time away. And we can understand how Habakkuk could speak for the people in crying how “HOW LONG?!” In other words, “ARE YOU KIDDING ME?!” One of the beautiful features of the book of Habakkuk is its honesty. The prophet complains bitterly to God for the people. An even more beautiful feature of the book of Habakkuk is that not only does the prophet speak to God for the people, but God also speaks to Habakkuk and the people. In this conversation, the first thing God says is “Look and see! Be astonished! Be astounded! For a work is being done in your days that you would not believe if you were told” (Habakkuk 1:5). Here we see an amazing truth about God. While we give the full intensity of our frustration, disappointment, disillusionment, and irritation to God, God is also preparing to unload on us. God is preparing a staggering blessing to unload into our lives. Could it be possible, I wonder, that God is using the very hardship we are now enduring to clear the ground for a broader and deeper blessing? Honestly, I think that not only is it possible but likely. That is why I encourage you now. Do not hold back. Reach down deep and give to God the whole kit and kaboodle of unsettling and uncomfortable feelings. While you are unloading all that onto God, know this, God is also about to unload onto you. And God is about to unload onto us as a church. God is about to unload something wonderful, even mind-boggling into our lives. Brace yourselves. 🌈

*–Mike Brown
Lead Pastor*



back to school PHOTOS

Sundays, Sept 20 & 27

Back to School photos for this unique start to the school year with photographer, Shalicia Johnson (ArrowStar Photography: www.arrowstarphotography.com).

- Sunday, Sept 20; 11:15am-2pm - Bethel Lutheran Church Parking Lot
- Sunday, Sept 27; 11:15am-2pm - Warner Park
- If you have more than two students in your family, please sign up for more than one time slot.
- We will have fun props/signs for your student to choose from (i.e. grade levels) for their photo!
- Digital Photos will be shared with you via email (no cost for you!)
- Questions or Concerns? Email Cindy@Bethel-Madison.org 🌈

Do You Have This Number on Your Phone?

608.216.3600

Bethel is always committed to being there for you in good times and in bad. You may always call the church main number at 608.257.3577 to request a pastor or other staff person. But as that phone line is only answered during normal business hours from 8:30-5pm, Bethel also has an emergency phone number for you to use should you need it. That number is 608.216.3600. Please keep this phone number with you for easy reference. Pastor John Swanson carries this cell phone and will respond immediately. The number is also included in the after-hours voicemail for Bethel's main number. In the event you wish to speak with Pastor Mike in an emergency, you are welcome to call him on his personal direct cell phone at 419.345.2836. Bethel is here for you! 🌈



My Skin: Racial Reconciliation

New Sermon Series: Sept 20 - Oct 4



This three-week series by Pastor Mike and Pastor John will speak with honesty and hope about how Bethel can lead the community toward healing and racial reconciliation. Every single person in our community has been touched by racism and suffers from its effects. Every single person in our community needs to hear God's promise for people longing for a better world. 🌈

Bible Study with Mimi



The Narrative Lectionary is an alternative to the Revised Common Lectionary. Developed by Lutheran pastors and professors a decade ago. It follows the sweep of the biblical story, from Creation through the early Christian church. It includes well known favorite stories (like Joseph and Noah) as well as some you might have never heard before (like the prophet Joel). Please sign up beforehand, it will help me stay in touch with you and send you resources you may want or need for the class. Join us anytime, come when you're able.

Day: Mondays, beginning September 14

Time: 7-8:15pm

Zoom Link: <https://intvarsity.zoom.us/j/98537309370>

Leader: Mimi Troutman

Register Here: <https://tinyurl.com/yyq5ng9x> 🌈

Back to Nature at Horizons



Date: Saturday, Oct 10 & 17

Address: 4651 CTH ZZ, Dodgeville, WI

Contact us at 608.215.1117 or Molly@bethelhorizons.org with questions or concerns.

Bethel Horizons and Bethel Lutheran Church know that friends and families are looking for ways to recreate and reconnect while being aware of physical safety guidelines. With this opportunity paid for by Bethel Lutheran Church, we will be welcoming friends and families of Bethel Lutheran Church for free outdoor activities on two fall weekends, Sat, Oct 10 & 17, from 9am-3pm. Each group of friends or family will receive a welcome packet, with a map, and passport for activity stations. Guests at Back to Nature at Bethel Horizons programs can participate in the following activities:

- Hiking the trails
- Fishing at Question Mark Pond (from the shore or dock).
- An arts & craft station
- Nature Center Exhibit Room with Live Animals
- Rock climbing & rappelling near Main Cliff.

Space is limited so register soon! Lunch will not be provided by Horizons, you will need to bring your own meals, snacks and beverages. With any questions please contact Molly at Molly@bethelhorizons.org.

Register Here: www.bethel-madison.org/nature 🌈

A Call to Justice and Mercy

"What does the Lord require of you but to do justice,
love kindness and walk humbly with your God." –Micah 6:8



We are called - all of us - and invited:

- to **imagine** ending racial injustice and systemic racism
- to **learn** why racial injustice and racism thrives
- to **work** for racial justice and dismantle racism

Let's join together in A Call to Justice and Mercy (ACTJAM) to answer Jesus' call to love our neighbors and work for God's way of justice and mercy.

Caring for Social Justice Team

Did you know that Wisconsin

- has the **worst** Black infant mortality rate of all 50 states at 15.7 per 1,000 births?
- has the **worst** economic disparity between its Black and white residents?
- ranks **worst** for Black/white racial equality in education?

An invitation to learn

We want to do something about racial injustice. As Christians we know what Jesus asks of us. Love our neighbors. How is the question. How do we love our neighbors? How do we eliminate racism?

To answer these questions we need to go back to school. We need to learn about racism, how it came to be, and in what forms it lives on today. We can't dismantle something unless we know it.

ACTJAM is borrowing a page from the University with Big Reads. We'll all read a book and then talk about it. Virtually of course. Each month we'll have a Big Read, a Big Watch (movie) or a Big Sing (music). The Bigs will give us a common language to talk about what we're learning as a Bethel community. In families, circles, men's groups, XYZ, youth group, etc.

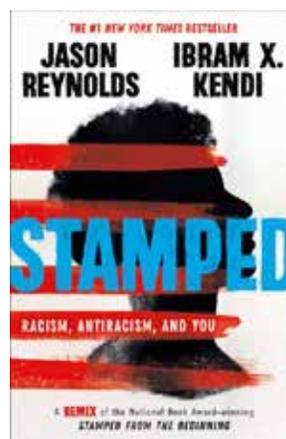
The Bigs are not entertainment. They're not about liking or even agreeing with. They're openers. Eye openers. Ear openers. Heart and mind openers. Conversation openers with family and friends. With ourselves.

During October, we'll read and discuss *Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You* by Jason Reynolds and

Ibram X. Kendi, a fast-paced look at the history of race in America written for ages 12+.

Getting started

- Check out the ACTJAM page on Bethel's website: www.bethel-madison.org/actjam
- Email ACTJAM@bethel-madison.org to join the Facebook group
- Order *Stamped* from the library or a book seller



Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You

By Jason Reynolds and Ibram X. Kendi
248 pages
Written for ages 12+

Optional:

Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America by Ibram X. Kendi., 516 pages

An invitation to work for God's justice

Dismantling racism is a heavy lift. Racism is way bigger than we are – a super Goliath. And it's deeply entrenched from education to healthcare.

The apostle Paul says the church is to be a prophetic community. Community because we're stronger together – and strength matters against super Goliaths. Prophetic because that means telling it like it is -- calling out the difference between God's justice and human injustice -- and doing something about injustice when we see it.

God's justice restores creation – bringing all of it together. God's justice removes the barriers we've created between "us" and "them". Removing barriers is what Jesus did and we're following him!

This is why we'll be partnering with other churches and organizations to form an even bigger community. Big enough to go after the super Goliath of racism. We'll partner with organizations that are already doing anti-racist work to grow the impact of their programs. 🌈

Caring for Creation

Is excited to announce the launch the new season of C4C programs on September 27!

The new series expands on what you have come to expect from C4C:

- Fact-based content from leading experts
- Environmental education for the curious novice and the well-informed advocate
- Answers to questions about how, when, and why Creation is subject to human impacts
- Insights about what we as individuals and we as Bethel can help mitigate the crisis in our own community

C4C events this year will connect climate responsibilities and social justice. Why? Caring for creation includes humanity in all its hues, conditions, and locales. Human decisions, policies and actions critically impact the safety of our environment and our collective future. And damage wrought by climate change and pandemics falls most heavily on the poor and the powerless.

Until we can gather in person, online technologies will connect us to live presentations with audience interaction.



Plan to join us via Zoom for our first forum Sunday, September 27, 10:30-11:30am. UW Professor Josh Garoon of the Department of Community and Environmental Sociology will help us understand some root causes of social injustice associated with pandemics.

See www.bethel-madison.org/c4c on Bethel website for a description of this session and also a listing of the full schedule for 2020-2021. 🌈



Transformed Community: Freed & Empowered for Radical Welcome



Thursdays, Now-Oct 1, 7-8:30pm
Led by Pam Shellberg

A Bible Study for our Reconciling in Christ work together, opening our hearts and our church to the LGBTQIA+ community

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God— what is good and acceptable and perfect. —Romans 12:2

The kind of transformation Paul is talking about is not easily come by. It demands that we not conform to this world but rather live counterculturally. This kind of faithfulness requires a group effort! This study will focus on the nature and character of Christian community—what kind of change it makes in the world and also how it challenges its individual members, even as it sustains them, in the work of living with radical generosity, inclusion, compassion, justice, and forgiveness. Let's consider how this kind of radical discipleship shapes relationships with LGBTQIA+ people, and advances Bethel's effort to become an RIC church.

Login Link: <https://tinyurl.com/yd97ymws>

Meeting ID: 985 8873 5393

Password: 431880

If Calling In Via Phone: 312.626.6799 🌈



Sunday Morning Worship Time Change

Preparing for the Future

Bethel's Sunday morning worship times will change slightly in anticipation of the day when Dane County allows mass gatherings of up to 50 people. The new schedule will be:

- 7:30am** - Live-Streamed Liturgy
- 9am** - Streamed Liturgy Service of the Word
- 10am** - TV Broadcast (WKOW, Channel 21)
- 11am** - Live-Streamed Contemporary
- 4pm** - Drive-up Worship (weather permitting)

This change will take place on October 4, 2020. 🌈

2020 Bethel Kubb Champions



Bob Mertes, Kathy Pielage and John Shanda

Bethel Drive-up Worship Sundays at 4pm

Using its own parking lot as the scene for a holy and wholesome time of worship, Bethel will celebrate the goodness of Jesus Christ and the invitation to a new life. Attendance will be limited to 60 cars. Because of limited parking, you must pre-register. Register by phone by calling the church office at 608.257.3577, or use the online registration located here: www.bethel-madison.org/driveup. Bulletins will be provided as well as communion elements for each person in the car. Sound will be broadcast over an outdoor PA system and over an FM radio station for worshipers to receive through the radio in their vehicles. 🌈

Picnic and Pianos at Horizons

Saturday, October 3 from 5-8pm



Picnic and Pianos is back with Luke Hrovat-Staedter and Patrick Kenney! Bring your chairs, blankets and beverages of your choice for a great time out on The Hill at Horizons! Transportation to your assigned location can be provided if needed. Some picnic tables can be provided as well. They will play YOUR requests LIVE!

If you register before Sept 29, you have the option of purchasing a picnic provided by Horizons (See options below). Beginning Sept 29, online registration will be closed but you are still able to attend the entertainment portion and pay upon entry with check, cash or card. If you have any questions contact Molly at Molly@bethelhorizons.org.

Meal Options (A beverage will be provided for each purchased meal):

- Chicken quarters with Bethel Horizons secret marinade, mashed potatoes, corn, grapes and french bread
- Stuffed peppers, mashed potatoes, corn, grapes and french bread
- Gluten Free option available upon request

Register Here: <https://tinyurl.com/y6eoytmg> 🌈



Luke Hrovat-Staedter



Patrick Kenney

Men's Current Christian Concern (Thursdays at 8:30am)

Men's Current Christian Concerns continues to meet each Thursday morning via a Zoom video conference. The meeting starts at 8:30am instead of 7am during this temporary rearrangement.

Sept 17 - China's Future in the World

Sept 24 - Reparations: Theory and Problems

If you have questions, contact Larry Larrabee at 608.249.9982.

Realm Corner



Welcome to Realm, Bethel's online community. Please join us and give it a try!

In each Bethelite we will give you a little insight into ways you can use Realm. Keep your eye out of them!

What is Realm?

Realm provides many ways for the people of Bethel to connect with each other as well as being a store house for our online directory. Realm is a closed community which means you need to be invited to join (we only invite Bethel Members). You also need an email and password in order to access the information so your information is only visible to Bethel staff and members.

How does Realm work?

- **Profiles:** Your profile is your starting point. It contains your contact information, household members, email preferences, giving history, groups you belong to, and more.
- **Groups:** Realm's "Groups" feature simplifies interacting with others in the church, including committees and small group ministries. When you activate your profile, you are automatically part of a group called "Bethel Member Directory."
- **Giving:** You can pledge, contribute, and see your giving history through your profile.

If you would like help with anything related to Realm please email Judy Armelin with the email judy@bethelmadison.org. I can set up a Zoom tutorial for a group or individuals. See you in Realm! 🌈

Confirmation Program Updates

We are buzzing with excitement about our fall plans. You're missed and loved and you belong with us! The good news, my friends, is that we have lots of good things in store for us this year. Not only do we have exciting plans coming up, but we can also feel good that God has already carried us this far! As much as things have been different, and as much as we've struggled to adjust, God is bringing us through with a new hope for the powerful and wonderful ways that God continues to creatively bring us together and nurture our hearts and souls.

Here is what our young people get to look forward to this fall! Please mark your calendars and pass on this info to the young people and families in your life!

Clothing Swap (for Middle Schoolers and High Schoolers!) Sept 26 from 1-3pm

We all need a back-to-school new look, virtual school or not! Bring a trash bag of your washed unwanted clothes to Orchard Ridge Park. Pick a tarp to lay out your clothes, and stay tuned for the go-ahead for the rotation around to see what inspiring new clothes you can find! We'll mask and socially distance to keep everyone safe!

Transformations: People of God Introducing our Confirmation Program for the Fall!

This Confirmation series will feature monthly video "transformations" of people you know in your Bethel community into people of the Bible. Starting September 13, we will begin to study Priscila and Aquila, a couple that worked with the Apostle Paul in the beginning of the Church and hosted church in their home. Patrick Kenney and I will transform before your very eyes and tell their story. Mid-October, you'll see Drae Lick transform into a Roman soldier, telling the story of the Roman soldier assigned to Paul's house arrest. Confirmation-aged youth (6th-8th grade) will follow along with their lesson materials and participate in weekly zoom meetings, one in person event per month, and cool at home activities. 🌈

—Rachel Brown, Director of Youth Ministries



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16 PENTECOST

Pastor Mike Brown - Sept 20 at 7:45am, 9am, 11:15am & 4pm

17 PENTECOST

Pastor Mike Brown - Sept 27 at 7:45am, 9am, 11:15am & 4pm

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

- 7:45a Worship Service (live-stream Facebook & YouTube)
- 9:00a Worship Service (viewed on Facebook & YouTube)
- 10:00a Virtual Coffee Hour (Zoom)
- 11:15a Worship Service (live-stream on Facebook & YouTube)

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 21

- 9:00a Daily Devotion (Email)
- 12:00p Food Pantry Open 1-3pm (MWF)

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22

- 9:00a Daily Devotion (Email)
- 7:00p Fireside Chats with Pastor Mike (Facebook)
- 8:00a Fireside Chats with Pastor Mike (YouTube)

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23

- 9:00a Daily Devotion (Email)
- 6:30p Lord's Supper (live-stream Facebook)
- 7:00p Bethel 101: New Member Orientation (Zoom)
- 8:00p Lord's Supper (YouTube)

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 24

- 8:30a Men's Current Christian Concerns (Zoom)
- 9:00a Daily Devotion (Email)
- 10:00a Contemplative Scripture Reading with Pam Shellberg (Zoom)
- 7:00p Transformed Community: Freed & Empowered for Radical Welcome (Zoom)
- 8:30p Contemplative Scripture Reading with Pam Shellberg (Zoom)

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25

- 8:00a Men's Friday Book Study (Zoom)
- 9:00a Daily Devotion (Email)

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26

- 9:00a Daily Devotion (Email)

PASTORAL STAFF

Pastor Mike Brown - Lead Pastor
pastormike@bethel-madison.org

Pastor John Swanson - Director of Congregational Life
jswanson@bethel-madison.org

Church Flowers:

Aug 30: Altar Spray given in loving memory of Diane, his wife, by Bill Wiedenbeck.

Sept 6: Altar Spray given in loving memory of Paul and Jane Holmen by Dale and Deb Holmen.

Sept 13: Altar Spray is given in memory of Irene (Scottie) Skattum by Peder & Jeanne Moren.

