

Bethelite

A publication of Bethel Lutheran Church distributed twice monthly.



bethelmadison.org/bethelite

Acknowledging the Awful, Recognizing the Stress, Discovering the Good

Pastor Mike Brown

After Abraham Walker's older brother was shot and killed in a home invasion, he decided to move his family from New Orleans to Northern Virginia. He wanted to give his boys a chance to lead a life in which they wouldn't see the loss of friends and relatives as "normal." Describing himself as an "aggressive optimist" Abraham looks for the good during the awful, and when he doesn't see it, he tries to create it. That is why when he clicked on a Facebook page for residents in a neighboring county, he read through the posts and then started typing: "What are some positive things that have happened to you because of COVID-19? What have you learned?"

In the days since, hundreds of people have responded, offering comments that tell of everything from simple appreciations to life-altering revelations. Here are some examples:

- I have been having the BEST time with my 4-year-old. I never thought of myself as a good

mother, but this isolation has brought us so close together.

- I successfully grew a tomato.
- We have a swing set in our yard now.
- Before COVID I just got up late, ran around in a panic, usually in a



bad mood or at least sad, endured a road rage-filled commute, and arrived at the office late. ... Now I wake up and think, "Oh, I woke up again" and then I go out to my balcony amidst the pine trees and the chirping birds and rising sun.

- I have learned how much of an introvert I am. Being home alone for long stretches really did not bother me. I actually enjoyed

spending time with just myself.

- Not being able to spend as much time with friends, my husband and I spent more time with our adult children. That helped deepen our affections.
- I began to see the personality of my dog more and more.
- We improved our computer skills with online meetings and family gatherings.
- I realized how important my church family is and how much I need to be in the presence of others who believe.

Living a full year of COVID-19 pandemic has been traumatic for many people. There is really

no doubt about that. It has been stressful, frustrating, and brought about more than one break-down. But as we seem to be arriving at the end of this particular stage in the journey, I would like to know "what good have you seen or experienced during this past year?" Please share your observations by email to pastormikebrown@bethel-madison.org. 🌈

Help My Unbelief

Sermon Series April 11 - May 2



One of the glaring features of the story of Jesus' resurrection is the fact that when the disciples first heard the news, they refused to believe it (Mark 16:5-11, 16:12, Luke 24:11, John 20:25). To them, it seemed like "crazy talk." Jesus' life, death, and resurrection were beyond their experience or comprehension. Their acceptance and experience of the Risen Lord was neither natural nor immediate. Today, we live in a world with a super abundance of unbelief, skepticism, cynicism, and plain old doubt. That's why none of us should be surprised that, from time to time, many if not most Christians have a difficult time believing all or a part of Jesus' story. Join us the Sundays following Easter for an inspiring series of messages on this age-old topic.

Apr 11 - I Believe, Why Do I Doubt?

Apr 18 - I Don't Believe, Why Shouldn't I Doubt

Apr 25 - How Much Do I Need to Believe?

May 2 - What You Didn't Know About Doubt 🌈

“Doubt isn't the
opposite of **FAITH**
it is an element
of **FAITH**.”

Paul Tillich

Back to Nature

Spring Edition



Apr 10; 9am-4pm; Bethel Horizons

A family friendly day of outdoor activities at Bethel Horizons.

We know that friends and families are looking for ways to recreate and reconnect while being aware of Covid guidelines. We have just the place. Join us at Bethel Horizons where we have over 500 acres to share!

Activities:

- Hiking on Bethel Horizons numerous trails
- Live animals at the Nature Center
- Story book trail around Question Mark Pond
- Tree tapping demonstration
- Vertical Playground on our high ropes challenge course
- Kid friendly obstacle course at the high ropes challenge course

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

Register Here: <https://tinyurl.com/w5x5r783> 🌈

Bethel Steps Toward Clean Energy

Council Adopts Resolution

Whereas we recognize billions of tons of CO2 are released into the atmosphere every year as a result of coal, oil, and gas production, and that human activity is producing greenhouse gas emissions at a record high, with no signs of slowing down, with the last four years being the four hottest on record according to the September 2019 World Meteorological Organization (WMO) report, putting us at least one degree Celsius above preindustrial levels and close to what scientists warn would be an “unacceptable risk”, and by failing to act now to slow global carbon emissions, temperatures could rise to above three degrees Celsius by 2100, causing further irreversible damage to global ecosystems, jeopardizing the lives of hundreds of millions of people, and leading to greater human conflict over diminishing resources;

Whereas we affirm God as creator, leading us to embrace an incarnation theology that cherishes the continuing presence of God in, with, and under all physical reality, to declare that God blesses the world as “good” (Genesis 1:31), to assert that humankind is not only intimately related to the rest of creation but is responsible for it as steward (Genesis 2:15), and to recognize that the creation itself “groans” (Romans 8:22) and waits for redemption;

Whereas we are descendants of a Lutheran Reformation heritage, in which Lutherans pioneered social services to the poor, the elderly, the sick, the oppressed, the marginalized—through hospitals, homes for the elderly, social ministry agencies, Lutheran Refugee and Immigration Service, Lutheran World Relief, and care and concern for creation;

Whereas ELCA Lutherans issued relevant social statements calling congregations to greater stewardship of creation, namely “Caring for Creation,” and Sustainable Livelihood for All”;

Whereas the Bethel Caring for Creation Team has grown to include the active participation of many members, including David Knuti, Sigrid Knuti, John Kutzbach (in memoriam), Gisela Kutzbach, Todd Fansler, Wilda Nilsestuen, Rob Kohlhepp, Ashley Becker, Faith Fitzpatrick, and Tom Solheim, among others, and has worked diligently for six (6) full years to educate and inspire the congregation toward greater concern and stewardship of the creation;

Whereas the educational offerings and forums included Caring for Creation: Earth-Wise (Cal DeWitt of the UW-Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies, Future of the Yahara Watershed and Madison Lakes

(Jennifer Seifert & Eric Booth of the UW Water Sustainability and Climate Project), Ecological Boundaries: from Wisconsin to the World (John Kutzbach Of the UW Center for Climatic Research, Nelson Institute, and Bethel member), Pedestrians, Bikes, & Cities (David Cieslewicz of the Wisconsin Bicycle Federation), Food, Land, and Water: Can Wisconsin Find Its Way? (Jim

Mason, Chief Counsel, Retired of the Wisconsin Dept. of Agriculture, Trade and Commerce Protection), The Intersection of Energy and Food Production (Gary Randolph, Director of Midwest Energy Policy Analysis of the UW Wisconsin Energy Institute), Safeguarding Wisconsin’s Waters: Quality, Supply and Health Ecosystems (Jane Elder, Executive Director of the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts, and Letters), The Future of Nuclear Power in a Carbon-Constrained World (Michael Corradini, UW Distinguished Professor Emeritus, Engineering Physics), Entrusted: All is God’s (Cal DeWitt, Environmental Sciences), Climate Change: Impacts on Wisconsin (Bob Lindmeier, Chief Meteorologist of WKOW), Solving the Global Climate Crisis: Clear Opportunities to Save Lives & Promote Global Health (Jonathan Patz of the UW Global Health



And God said, "Let there be light" -- Genesis 1:3

continued from previous pg

Institute), Earth Day Stewardship (John Kutzbach, of the UW Center for Climatic Research, Nelson Institute and Bethel member), Cars, Trucks, and the Environment (Todd Fansler, UW Madison Engine Research Center, Bethel member, and Honorary Fellow), Meeting Madison's Sustainability Goal (Jeanne Hoffman, Sustainability Manager of the City of Madison), Madison Lakes: Challenges Facing These Local and Regional Treasures (Steve Carpenter, UW Madison Emeritus Professor of Limnology and Environmental Science), MGE Energy 2030: Working for Sustainability (Leah Samson, Residential Services Manager), Dress Rehearsal for Climate Change (Connie Mutel, University of Iowa Institute of Hydraulic Research), Lessons in Climate Adaptation & Resilience from Wisconsin Communities: A Call to Action (Megan Levy, Wisconsin Office of Energy Innovation, Wisconsin Public Service Commission); and

Whereas the Caring for Creation Team brought a unanimous recommendation to the Property Resource Team on March 9, 2021 calling for investments both in the Madison Gas & Electric (MGE) Shared Solar program and in a Bethel rooftop solar array to maximize Bethel's efforts to reduce its carbon footprint; now, therefore, be it

Resolved that Bethel Lutheran Church enact the recommendations of the Property Team by taking a first step toward eliminating Bethel's entire carbon footprint with a commitment to the greatest good that can be done immediately to reduce Bethel's participation in the emission of CO₂ through the Madison Gas and Electric Shared Solar program providing Bethel with up to 50% of its electricity use from clean solar energy, and followed with additional steps to consider and possibly adopt other clean energy options, including geothermal, wind energy, and solar panels on Bethel's roof as envisioned by the C4C Team, at the earliest time as is practically possible. 🌈

In-Person Worship Registration

Praise the Lord! Bethel is now resuming in-person worship. Dane County public health orders have been adjusted allowing in-person mass gatherings. We will begin by offering worship in groups of 50 people. Since we are not yet "out of the woods" with the pandemic, we will continue to practice good COVID-19 safety protocols with all who enter the building. That means three things:

First, this means that anyone who is exhibiting signs of Covid-19 or who has been exposed to the virus within 14 days is asked to avoid in-person worship. Online streamed worship will continue.

Second, all who wish to join in-person worship must pre-register. The current limit is 50 worshipers for each service.

Third, everyone will continue to wear masks the entire time we are in the building (except for those under 5 years of age). We will also maintain 6 feet physical distance from one another. At this time, there will be no coffee, donut holes, singing, or mingling with friends. But, that day will come!

When signing-up for worship, you may register yourself and any others in your household who will be joining you. Anyone else, such as friends or family who do not reside with you, must make separate reservations. If you will be accompanied to this service by a caregiver, be sure to include that person in your reservation.

Registration for worship is offered in two ways:

1. Online is the quickest.
 - a. Go here: www.bethel-madison.org/events
 - b. Find the date of the Sunday service you want to attend in the list of events and click on it.
 - c. At the bottom of the page click on the button for the service time you want to attend and register.
2. A phone call to the church at 608.257.3577.

Once you arrive at church, there will be one last registration check-in and a great big welcome. We look forward to seeing you! 🌈

Caring for Creation: Extreme Weather & Climate Change

April 20, 2021 at 7:30pm – Online Event

Wisconsin and the rest of the country have experienced an overall increase in extreme weather during recent decades. More extreme rainfall accounts for much of this trend, including some high-profile events such as the August 2018 record deluge in the Madison area. Climate models project a greater frequency and intensity of heavy rainfalls and heat waves in Wisconsin and elsewhere, pointing to an urgent need for adaptation strategies. Improvements in climate modeling are allowing greater confidence in predicting and attributing extreme weather occurrences. This presentation will highlight the major changes expected in extreme weather related to ongoing climate change.



Steve Vavrus is a Senior Scientist in the Nelson Institute Center for Climatic Research at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He uses computer climate models and observational data to understand how our climate is changing across the world, including the Arctic and more

locally in Wisconsin. Extreme weather events are an important theme of his research, particularly how they might be affected by climate change. Steve is co-director of the Wisconsin Initiative on Climate Change Impacts (WICCI) and has been a long-time member of its Climate Working Group. He is also Coordinator of the Yahara Watershed Academy, an educational and leadership training program that promotes actionable sustainability in the Madison area..

Register Here: <https://tinyurl.com/6b8cvb9x> 🌈

Treasurer's Report

| | Actual February 2021 | 2021 budget (full year) | Actual February 2020 | 2020 budger (full year) |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| Pledges received to date | 1,247,876 | | 1,327,175 | |
| Pledges per budget | | 1,204,000 | | 1,350,000 |
| Operating revenue | 333,192 | 1,555,000 | 273,665 | 1,755,000 |
| Non-Operating revenue | 263,789 | 364,613 | - | 215,805 |
| Total revenue | 596,981 | 1,919,613 | 273,665 | 1,970,805 |
| Expenses | (255,960) | (1,919,477) | (337,411) | (1,970,718) |
| New income | 341,021 | 136 | (63,745) | 87 |

A Call for Mercy & Justice

Welcome to ACTJAM 2Q Focus on Racism in Health and Healthcare



If you've been around Bethel Horizons you know the four harmonies: God, nature, neighbors, and self. Living in faith is about caring with God for all creation. To be in harmony is to be in balance with.

But what if we're not? What if 2020 has knocked our selves out of balance? Restlessness. Fuzziness. On edge-iness. Exhaustion. The reality is we can't care about neighbors when we are frazzled. That's why self is one of the harmonies. It must be cared for.

Our theme for this quarter is health and healthcare, sponsored by Bethel healthcare providers. Given the havoc of Covid on ourselves and our neighbors we're going to focus on both - self and neighbor.

For ourselves, we'll look at restoring balance. One example is this 10-minute breath exercise at <http://bit.ly/316IKz7>. (Scroll down to play the audio.) People have noticed that YAHWEH – God – is the sound of breathing in (YAH) and out (WEH). To breathe is to be filled with God.

As we turn the lens on racial disparities in health, we see that Covid revealed and deepened fractures that have been there all along.

The announcement in February, 2021, was easily missed, mixed in with vaccine news, alerts of new virus variants and daily case and death updates. But there it was: life expectancy for Americans fell by a full year in the first six months of 2020, the biggest drop since World War II. And then further on: life expectancy for African Americans dropped by 2.7 years. Twenty plus years of gains wiped out. Just like that. The statistical life expectancy gap between Black and white Americans is now at six years, the widest since 1998.

Covid on its own did not cause the drop in life expectancy for African Americans. Rather, it exposed the underlying condition of racism and its effects on health that persist today. For example, Wisconsin has the worst Black infant mortality rate of all states.

It took until Medicare in 1966 for thousands of hospitals to become integrated. And as recently as 1986, some hospitals were still "dumping" - the practice of transferring "unsuitable" patients often based on income, and thus race. The Emergency Treatment and Labor Act (EMTALA) now prevents this practice.

ACTJAM activities will be "bite sized" to replace a Big Read book and a Big Watch movie. We'll use the Goldilocks method to offer a choice of small, medium, and larger amounts of material to read and/or watch. And we'll continue to come together periodically for conversation and discussion via Zoom.

Short activity guides for 2Q can be found on the ACTJAM page on Bethel's web site. Each guide includes self-care activities and ways to expand what you know about racial health disparities and their solutions. The Getting Started guide is on the ACTJAM page of the Bethel web site: www.bethel-madison.org/actjam. 🌈



Fireside Chats



Pastor Mike will continue to host Fireside Chats on Tuesday evenings. If you have any questions you would like to ask, please send them to christal@bethel-madison.org.

Men's Current Christian Concerns (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.

Apr 1 - Unforeseen Consequences of Corona Virus

Apr 7 - The Lonely Century

Apr 15 - Gene Editing and Its Significance

Apr 22 - Japan's Future

Apr 28 - Population Dynamics and Exponentials

If you have questions, contact Larry Larrabee at 608.249.9982.

The **Men's Friday Book Study** is reading *Near Occasions of Grace* by Richard Rohr. The book will be concluded on April 16. Please feel free to join our Zoomed gatherings at 8am. We are just getting into this small book so it is really doable to get the book and catch up to us. For more information and the Zoom details, contact Larry Larrabee at lar3car2@gmail.com or 608.249.9982.

Wednesday Night Live Streamed Lord's Supper - Join us on Wednesdays at 6:30pm for the Lord's Supper. Every Wednesday until we are able to celebrate in person, Pastor Mike will lead us in a live-streamed Lord's Supper at 6:30pm on Bethel's Facebook or you can watch any time after 8pm on our YouTube channel. Everyone is asked to have wine/juice and bread ready for the evening's communion.

Thursday Contemplative Scripture Reading (Zoom)

Join Pam Shellberg for a time of interactive, contemplative scripture reading. During each 45-minute period, we will read a passage from scripture and reflect on it by way of the ancient practice of lectio divina. This involves engaging the scripture with our minds, imaginations, and hearts – along with good measures of silence and sharing. Links provided in the Thursday Daily Devotion email for joining this group. Send any questions to Pam Shellberg at pam@bethel-madison.org.

Horizons Summer Camps

Registration Now Open



Summer Camps are the cornerstone of Horizons' Ministry. Our camps run Sun-Fri for 8 different weeks over the summer from mid-June through mid-August. Our camps are open to all youth in 2nd-11th grades. Set your Summer Camp schedule now, we look forward to sharing sunshine and smiles with your child this summer!

More Info & to Register:

<https://tinyurl.com/phcveye8y>

Contact the Horizons office at bethelhorizons@bethelhorizons.org 608.257.3577 x334.

Use Amazon Smile and Donate to Bethel - Do you shop online using Amazon? Did you know you can donate to Bethel by doing your regular shopping through Amazon? By using Amazon Smile, they will donate 0.5% of the price of your purchase automatically to Bethel! How can you set this up? It's Easy!

1. Go to: <http://smile.amazon.com> (we recommend bookmarking this page for easy accessing)
2. Under the search bar click on the word "Supporting" in orange letters.
3. Select "Change your charity".
4. Type "Bethel Lutheran Church, Madison, WI"
5. Click the Search Button.
6. Click the Select button.

That's it! You will now be donating to Bethel every time you make a purchase. (Remember to use the Amazon Smile web page as that is how Amazon tracks your purchases for donation. If you use the regular Amazon page, your donation won't be recorded.) Your Contact: christal@bethel-madison.org

VIEW MORE OPPORTUNITIES: www.bethel-madison.org/events



BETHEL

LUTHERAN CHURCH

312 Wisconsin Avenue | Madison, WI 53703

Bethelite (USPS 053-160) Published bi-weekly by Bethel Lutheran Church
608.257.3577 | Email Christal Swigart: christal@bethel-madison.org
Emergency Cell: 608.216.3600

2 EASTER

Pastor Mike Brown - Apr 11 at 7:30am, 9am, & 11am

3 EASTER

Pastor Mike Brown - Apr 18 at 7:30am, 9am, & 11am

SUNDAY, APRIL 11

- 7:30a Worship Service (live-stream Facebook & YouTube)
- 9:00a Worship Service (viewed on Facebook & YouTube)
- 10:00a Virtual Coffee Hour (Zoom)
- 11:00a Worship Service (live-stream on Facebook & YouTube)

MONDAY, APRIL 12

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

TUESDAY, APRIL 13

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

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 14

- 9:00a Daily Devotion (Email)

THURSDAY, APRIL 15

- 8:30a Men's Current Christian Concerns (Zoom)
- 9:00a Daily Devotion (Email)
- 10:00a Contemplative Scripture Reading with Pam Shellberg (Zoom)
- 8:30p Contemplative Scripture Reading with Pam Shellberg (Zoom)

FRIDAY, APRIL 16

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

SATURDAY, APRIL 17

- 9:00a Daily Devotion (Email)

PASTORAL STAFF

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

Pastor Roger Black - Visitation
roger@bethel-madison.org

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED
DATED MATERIAL: REQUESTED IN HOME BY APR 9 2021

NONPROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

MADISON, WI
PERMIT 602

We welcome you to Bethel. We see you as we see ourselves, vulnerable to the challenges of human relationships, and deeply beloved by God.

We welcome you who have ever felt excluded by the church because of race, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, physical or mental ability, family or economic status, or for a reason known only to you. We welcome you whether church life is familiar to you or your faith journey is new, whether you are certain in your beliefs or unsure what you believe.

We invite you here because God is inviting you to be here. Striving to create a place where all feel safe and can find peace, let us share the unconditional love of God and, in the power of the Holy Spirit, work together to extend grace, mercy, and justice – within Bethel, in our communities, and the world.



Hearing Loop available in all our worship spaces.