

Jesus loves you. Walk with him.

BETHELITE

MAY 19, 2021: VOL. 70, NO. 10

THIS ISSUE:

AND IT WAS GOOD

June brings an emphasis on the Stewardship of Creation with a special guest speaker, Dr. Barbara Rossing.

OH, THE PLACES YOU'LL GO

Bethel's High School Graduates get the royal treatment for their big day.

BETHEL PICNIC AT HORIZONS

The annual event is here with live music, grilled chicken, sides and vegan options.

BETHEL FOOD PANTRY EXPANDS

Extending its reach all the way to Milwaukee, the Food Pantry joins fight for Strong Babies.



BETHEL
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Going Green of a Different Sort

Like most trends, going green has become a source of pride. According to the Institute for Grocery Distribution, nearly 70 percent of today's shoppers reach for more expensive grocery items if they are marked organic, fair trade, or free range. Sales of groceries labeled organic have grown by an unbelievable 20 percent a year for over a decade now. Everything from your neighborhood supermarket to couture fashion has been marked by the fad. An outdoor-wear company, Patagonia, produces fleece jackets made from recycled plastic bottles. Diane von Furstenberg, Oscar de la Renta, Nike, and Levis all offer eco-friendly items. Even Sam's Club now sells jeans and T-shirts made with organic cotton. The green revolution has even influenced corporate America. The computer juggernaut Dell is working with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to lower its carbon emissions footprint and launched an ambitious reforestation program. Every time I turn on the television, it seems a celebrity [Bono's wife, Leonardo DiCaprio, and Julia Roberts, to name a few] is promoting his or her newest environmental pet project. The message reverberates through culture beckoning us to "go green" because we will look better and feel better and fit in. But as followers of Christ, we have deeper reasons to go green. We serve the Creator of the planet, who created the earth and handed it over to our care. We have the call to care for our planet right in front of us in



The Whole Creation
Seeks New Life
in the Cross of Jesus

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the Bible. The Bible first makes that call in the opening chapters of Genesis where it asserts that we and the creation are one. We are not separate from it but part of it and one with it. Genesis 2:7 says that “God formed Adam from the dust of the ground.” The translation from Hebrew to English obscures a major point. It makes it sound like Adam was the first name of the individual God created. In the Hebrew, it doesn’t read that way at all. The Hebrew “*ha-adam*” literally means “the human.” In the original language, there is a fantastic poetic word play going on here. Genesis 2:5 says “and there was no one (*adam*) to till the ground. There wasn’t an *adam*, yet. There wasn’t a human or being yet. In the absence of being to till the earth, God formed one—an *adam*



Claire Roszkowski showing one of her wonderful pottery creations at the Bethel Horizons Adamah Art Studios

— to till the land. And God formed *ha-adam* (the adam) from the *adamah*. We call this kind of play on words — *ha adam* from *adamah* — a pun, something that is clever, even slightly funny. We can even have a slight chuckle at it. No doubt God sports a grin and a twinkle in the eye at this. Because *ha-adam* and *adamah* have the same root with “dirt,” “dust,” “soil,” and “earth” we could literally translate the phrase to be something like: Genesis 2:5 “there was no human/earthling/earth creature/dirt being” to till the dirt. So God formed the being from the soil/earth/dirt/dust.

You may notice that right before God forms *adam* (earth creature) from the *adamah* (soil), “a stream would rise from the earth and

water the whole face of the ground.” When you mix water with soil in Genesis you get clay. That leads to a beautiful tradition in the Old Testament that portrays God as a potter (Jeremiah 18:1-6). With this added touch,

Genesis reads that God formed the clay creature from the clay. *Adam* is not an individual’s name. It points to the essential connection and unity human beings have with creation. It is our essential unity with the earth that leads us to provide for its care and seek its healing. Going green for us at Bethel is not a matter of fad but faith and salvation. 🌈

“I
am the
potter”
—Jer. 18:6

AND IT WAS GOOD!

Caring for the Gift of Creation: A June Emphasis



The opening words of the Bible are so full of grace and promise, we could never soak it all in. Genesis 1 tells how when God brought all matter and life into being, God said "It is good." And then, quite matter-of-factly, God turns to those who were created in the divine image and said "Here you go. You're in charge. Take care of it all." Wow! What an amazing gift! What a wonderful honor and responsibility! During the month of June, Bethel will focus on how we serve as God's stewards of the creation. This month-long celebration, And It Was Good, will showcase the following:

1) June 6 Celebration Picnic for creation at Bethel Horizons. Each year Bethel gathers at Horizons in the deep beauty to eat, rest, and connect with the trees, the land, and all the critters.

- 2) The four Sunday messages will emphasize the goodness not only of creation but of the effort to care for it.
- 3) June 13 Barbara Rossing as special guest preacher and teacher.
- 4) June 27 Celebration and dedication of Bethel's Solar Commitment in partnership with Madison Gas and Electric.
- 5) Caring for Creation Pledges. Pledge forms offering ideas for how each one of us can contribute to the caretaking of the gift of creation will be sent to every member.
- 6) Friday Care 4 Creation videos showing the ways Bethel is living out its call to be a blessing to the creation, including video of Bethel's solar program, Bethel Horizons Adamah Center water filtration work, and Bethel commitments to energy efficiency.



Barbara Rossing
Best-selling Author
Professor
June 13

Best-selling author of the book *The Rapture Exposed*, Biblical Scholar, Professor of New Testament at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, and advocate for creation care, Barbara Rossing will join Bethel on June 13 to preach and teach. Preaching at each of the three worship services at 7:30am, 9:15am, and 11am, Dr. Rossing will speak to the current climate crisis in terms of God's revelation in Jesus Christ. Later that same day, from 2-3:30pm, Dr. Rossing will lead an adult forum in Bethel's Borgwardt Hall to talk more fully about how scripture and theology shape our unique voice. 🌍





The Dang-Its
performing at Bethel's
Parking Lot
Worship 2020

AWARD WINNING BAND TO PERFORM AT PICNIC

The Dang-Its return to Bethel this year to provide musical entertainment for the Bethel Picnic at Horizons. Playing an award-winning mix of Americana, including Honky-tonk, Bluegrass, Western Swing, Country-swing and Country-blues, Rockabilly, Folk-rock, and Alt-country, the band was named 2013 Country/Bluegrass Performer of the Year by the Madison Area Music Awards (The MAMAs). The group's fourth recording, *A Lick Of Sense*, won the MAMA Country/Bluegrass Album of the Year in 2014. The band consists of founder Tom Waselchuck on acoustic guitar and lead vocals, Rick Nass on pedal steel guitar and dobro, Mark



BETHEL

June 6, Sunday
12:30-2:30pm

Come one! Come all! Shed the cloistered life of pandemic living. Break into the open outdoors with friends and family at the annual Bethel Picnic at Horizons. Set out a blanket and soak up the sun. Kick off your shoes and walk barefoot in the grass. Relax. Eat some fresh chicken with homemade BBQ sauce and your favorite sides. Enjoy the live music. Talk with your friends. Then lay back down to watch the clouds above you make shapes, first this one then that. Let yourself doze off with the easy breeze flowing over you. Get up for some pie. Take a walk in the woods


and breathe deeply the fresh air. Let the trees tower over you and wrap you in shade. Relax. It's been a long year. Relax with your friends. You may preregister on the Bethel website at www.bethel-madison.org/picnic or simply show up and register when you arrive. For any in need of assistance getting from the parking lot to the picnic shelter, a "gator" vehicle will be on standby for transportation.

Here's the address:

4651 Co Rd ZZ, Dodgeville, WI 53533 



Tom Waselchuck

Luhring on percussion, and Matt Rogers on upright bass. Originally scheduled to perform at last year's picnic, the pandemic interfered with those plans. The group and Bethel finally found a way to make the connection for one of the parking lot services later in the summer. This is one band that is easy to listen to that you won't want to miss. 

L P I C N I C



Randy Rogers' crew grilling picnic chickens

CHICKEN EXPERTS SECURE THE BEST FOR YOU

Every year, Randy Rogers and his crew do a masterful job at selecting and preparing chickens to eat. Thanks to chicken expert and Bethel member Jeff Rupnow, not just any chicken makes the cut. Only the very best chickens with the greatest nutritional value and flavor are even considered for this culinary extravaganza (true). Once the chickens pass this high bar, they

then go through a rigorous screening process, including background checks and interviews (not true, lol). Only the chickens with the best attitudes and commitment to the cause are considered worthy to wear the secret homemade BBQ sauce. Add to that all the sides and pies you can eat and you have a satisfying day.

“God fills the hungry with good things.”

—Psalm 107:9

Vegan Options

Not only does Bethel set a feast for the carnivores and omnivores at the picnic but for vegans and vegetarians as well. So if you are one to avoid meat consumption, just know that vegan options are also planned.





Cadance Becker



John Derr



Ellie Kohlhepp



Kodie Kraemer



Maggie Lee



Drae Lick

OH, THE PLACES YOU'LL GO!

Hot Air Balloon Rides June 12, Saturday, 6-8pm

Bethel joins to celebrate its High School seniors who graduate this year. The journey from preschool/kindergarten to receiving a high school diploma is a long one with many twists, turns, and challenges. These young adults have accomplished much and have so much to be proud of and to give thanks to God for. On June 12, from 6-8 pm, Bethel hosts these graduates and others from the community for a unique celebration. Gathering in the Bethel parking lot at 6:00pm, graduates and participants will take tethered hot-air balloon rides for a fun new perspective on their community and their lives. Imagining the wonders and adventures God will show

them, this event is called "Oh, the Places You'll Go!" named after the Dr. Seuss book by the same title. To register or for more info, contact Bethel Director of Youth Ministries, Rachel Kenney-Brown at rachel@bethel-madison.org. 🌈





BETHEL FOOD PANTRY EVOLVES NEW WAYS TO BLESS

Supports Strong Baby Sanctuary

Many Bethel members have had the opportunity to hear Mary Kannass, Hephatha Lutheran Church’s pastor, describe the Strong Baby Sanctuary program, one of Hephatha’s ministries serving its Milwaukee neighborhood. This program seeks to decrease infant mortality and help babies thrive, especially in the Milwaukee downtown African American community. According to Chris Keim, a Hephatha parish nurse, baby formula and meat are two of the most needed and most expensive food items needed by the Strong Baby program.



Pastor Mary Martha

given through property sales and memorials to the Bethel Food Pantry, and because our monthly operating budget has not needed to draw upon this custodial account recently, the Bethel Food Pantry Board has decided to make a donation to Hephatha to assist in securing food for the Strong Baby Program.

When contacted about this new support, Pastor Mary Martha immediately emailed back, “Thank you!! Thank you!!” And thank you to

our Bethel Congregation for your continuing support of our Food Pantry that allows us to reach out to our partner congregation to reduce food insecurity. 🌈

Through the wise management by the Bethel Endowment Fund of money that has been

The Wrong Kind of #1

It’s the kind of distinction we’d rather not have. But, Wisconsin is #1 in the nation for infant mortality among black children. African-American babies born in Wisconsin die before age 1 at a higher rate than any other state in the nation, according to a new report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The rate of infant deaths for black babies in Wisconsin is nearly three times as high as white babies. 🌈





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Alex and Matt Endress NEW MEMBERS

Alex and Matt have been attending Bethel for close to two years. Matt became Facebook friends with Pastor Mike through a connection with Nathan Gerlach. Matt recently completed his Phd in music and teaches drums at UW. He also is Bethel's principal drummer for the contemporary service. Alex works at and manages an Escape Room in Madison. Prior to moving to Madison, Alex lived in Illinois where she was the lead singer in a rock band. They are expecting their first child in May. Welcome Alex and Matt Endress! 🌈

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A CALL TO JUSTICE AND MERCY

The ACTJAM Magazine for May is Here

This month we continue our focus on racism and health by bringing attention to the health crisis among Wisconsin's African American mothers and infants.

Wisconsin has the highest rate of Black infant mortality of any state in the country. The rate of deaths for Black babies is nearly three times as high as white babies. That ratio holds true in Dane County too. Add to this the maternal mortality rate for African American women in Wisconsin that is five times greater than for white women. In Dane County, babies born to African American mothers are twice as likely than white infants to be born with low birth weights, putting them at risk of health challenges and death.

The issues are complex and rooted in racism. Even college-educated Black women die at higher rates from pregnancy-related causes than white women who didn't finish high school.

One article features the Strong Baby Sanctuary program at Hephatha Lutheran Church in Milwaukee, a long-time Bethel partner church. We sat down (via Zoom) with Chris Keim, Parish Nurse, and Elisha Branch, Leadership Team member, for an in-depth interview about the program that's been going Hephatha-strong since 2015.

View magazine here: <https://bit.ly/3y5TJbt>
Download here: <https://tinyurl.com/4cafvy4>



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BethelLutheranTV

Worship Times: Sunday at 7:30am & 9:15am - Traditional; 11am - Contemporary