

Jesus loves you. Walk with him.

# BETHELITE

JUNE 2, 2021: VOL. 70, NO. 11

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### BETHEL TO HARVEST NEARBY STAR

*Investing in the MGE Shared Solar program helps Bethel live out its values*

### TAKIN' IT TO THE STREETS

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### INTERVIEW WITH STRONG BABY STAFF

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### PARKING LOT WORSHIP

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**BETHEL**  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

## It's Time for a Standing Ovation!

What began on March 12, 2020 with the announcement from Governor Tony Evers of a Public Health Emergency due to COVID-19 is coming to an end on June 2, 2021. The pandemic, which brought so much misery, fear, death, hardship, and frustration, is being brought under control by the several effective vaccines and the aggressive drive to get people vaccinated. Shortly after the onslaught of the pandemic, Bethel formed a task force to study, monitor, and recommend actions and protocols to help keep members of Bethel safe during the long months. This task force consisted of scientists, physicians, attorneys, facilities personnel, and others. They met near weekly for close to a year to decipher the many changes that accompanied the very fluid and politically-charged situation. It is due to this task force that Bethel was so effective at reading the continually evolving situation and adapting. It is to the Bethel COVID-19 Task Force that the Bethel community owes effusive gratitude and approbation. The members of the task force include Heather Moen (chair), Greg Moses, Denis/Laura Vogel, Mike/Bev Thom, Craig Gjerde, Kim Kindschi, Kathy Pielage, Judy Armelin, Steve Lawrence, and Eric Knueve. Here is the latest report from the Task Force in its entirety:



Wes Aniel gives a big thumbs up to Bethel

"The COVID Task Force convened on 5.19.21 to discuss the Dane County announcement that there will be no further emergency public health orders effective June 2, 2021.

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### Pastor Mike

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In light of the high rate of vaccination, low rate of infection, and lifting of all county mandates, the task force recommends removing all Bethel COVID related policies, including mask mandate, sign-in procedures, capacity limits, and restrictions on singing and fellowship, effective June 2, 2021.

We recommend that the church acknowledge that some individuals remain unvaccinated at this time, and congregants will have varying degrees of comfort with communal worship. We advise continuing to offer online worship and welcoming people to wear masks or not, as they choose. Our sanctuary is large enough to accommodate physical distancing of people who wish to maintain distance, but this



Danielle Moyer, Director of Finance, gives a big smile as Bethel sets aside mask requirements for those who are fully immunized against COVID-19.

does not need to be enforced by ushers, and no pews need to be blocked off. Bethel can continue to offer individual communion cups to people who prefer to take communion in their pews, either due to mobility issues, personal preference or for distancing reasons, but traditional communion at the front of the church can resume. People may choose to enjoy fellowship with refreshments in the Emmaus room, take their refreshments outside, or leave directly after worship. There should be no restrictions on Weddings, Funerals, meetings or other uses of the Bethel facility.

*“enjoy fellowship and refreshments”*

All current mandates remain in effect until **June 2, 2021.**

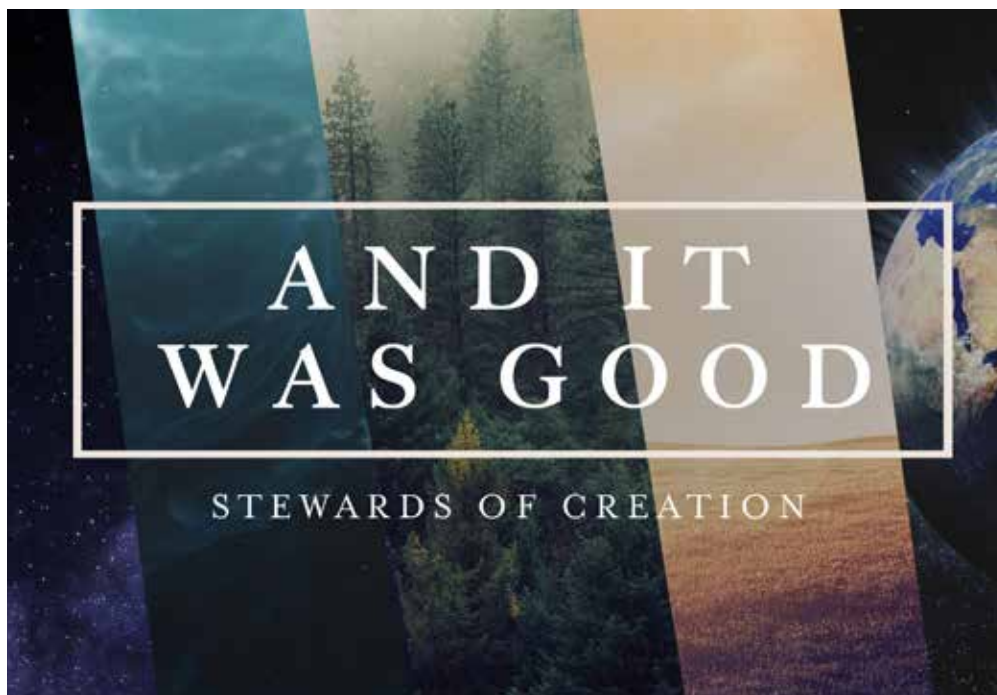
The COVID Task Force has adjourned indefinitely. The Joint Council is welcome to convene us at any time in the future if the need arises.

I would like to express my deep appreciation for the generosity of time, the wisdom of counsel, and the compassionate care of our community that was demonstrated by the Task Force in their work this year. I would also like to acknowledge the support of the Joint Council,

Bethel Staff, and Pr. Mike Brown. Without you all, this year would have been even more difficult. Thanks be to God that we are now able to resume our communal worship in health and safety!” 🌈

# 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.



### Dr. Peter Bakken Wisconsin Council of Churches to Preach

June 20

Peter Bakken joins Dr. Barbara Rossing as a guest preacher and speaker for Bethel’s And It Was Good Stewardship of Creation emphasis this month. Peter is the Justice and Witness Coordinator at the Wisconsin Council of Churches and Statewide Coordinator of Wisconsin Interfaith Power and Light. He received his Ph.D. in Theology from the University of Chicago Divinity School. He is the author of *Church on Earth: Grounding Your Ministry in a Sense of Place* (with Jeff Wild; Augsburg Fortress 2009); *Ecology, Justice and Christian Faith: A Guide to the Literature* (co-compiled with J. Ronald Engel and Joan Gibb Engel; Greenwood Press, 1995) and *Evocations of Grace: Writings on Ecology, Theology and Ethics* by Joseph Sittler (co-edited with Steven Bouma-Prediger, Eerdmans, 2000). He was a member of the task force that produced the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America social statement, “*Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope and Justice.*” He lives in Madison, Wisconsin, with his wife and daughter, where they are members of Advent Lutheran Church (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America). 





Todd Fansler,  
Bethel Caring for  
Creation, Team Chair

## ONE STEP OF MANY

An old proverb goes: “the hardest step on a journey of a thousand miles is the first one.” With Bethel’s investment in the MG&E Shared Solar program is merely a first step in the journey toward reducing our carbon footprint. This step reflects a real love for God’s creation and a desire to care for it as God would. A key point for the Bethel community to remember is that just as we have fallen into sin and brokenness, so too has the entire creation. In the words of the Apostle Paul, the creation “groans” for relief (Romans 8:22). As steward of the creation, Bethel is committed to bringing relief through the Shared Solar program as well as working toward other options like an on-site rooftop solar array, wind energy, geothermal energy, and a complete conversion to low energy consuming LED lights. 🌈



# SONPO

## Bethel Set to Harvest Nearby Star

Counting-up all the blessings God has given Bethel would be like trying to count the stars of the sky, of which our sun, of course, is just one. It from is this particular star, a mere 94 million miles away, that we at Bethel will harvest clean energy to power up to half of our building’s electricity needs. What we call the Sun is part of the creation brought into being by the Son, who is the ultimate power of all life.

After six years of faithful and quality educational ministry and advocacy from Bethel’s Caring for Creation team, Bethel has reached the decision to invest in the Madison Gas and Electric Shared Solar program. The

significant size of Bethel’s commitment makes it one of the top three largest investors in MG&E’s program in the state of Wisconsin.

Of all the features Bethel Lutheran Church can point to in its constellation of blessings, one of the most significant is the team of people who have lead us in this journey. Thank you

Ashley Becker, Todd Fansler, Faith Fitzpatrick, David Knuti, Sigrid Knuti, Rob Kohlhepp, Gisela Kutzbach, John Kutzbach (in memoriam), Wilda Nilsestuen, Tom Solheim, and the many others with Bethel’s Caring for Creation Team. 🌈



## Bethel Basil Kits

Growing plants in your home is as easy as 1-2-3 with Bethel Basil Kits. During Bethel’s Stewardship of Creation month in June, up to 200 members will receive all the materials needed for an indoor basil mini harvest. Pick up your kit on Sunday mornings in June before or after worship. Starting June 6 the Sunday worship schedule will be 7:30am, 9am, and 11am. Bethel Basil Kits can also be picked up Monday-Friday, 8:30am-5pm. Add a little flavor and new life to your day and your diet with these easy to use kits. 🌈

# POWERED

Then God said, "Let there be light"  
—Genesis 1:3



MG&E Middleton Airport Solar Array

## BETHEL PARTLY POWERED BY SOLAR

**B**ethel Lutheran Church is taking another step toward greater sustainability, partnering with Madison Gas and Electric (MGE) to power its facility with solar energy from a 5-megawatt (MW) solar array at Middleton Municipal Airport. Bethel's 761 shares of local solar will provide enough clean energy to power approximately 50% of its electricity usage and will help offset about 402,892 pounds of carbon dioxide annually. Caring for creation is an article of faith for Bethel. The

words from the Bible "for God so loved the world [cosmos]" resonate deep within us and call us to love what God loves.



*clean energy  
to power  
approximately  
50%*



Because of this, few issues are more urgent than stopping and reversing the global trend toward environmental collapse. The Shared Solar program provides Bethel the opportunity to help do just that in partnership with

MG&E. Morey Field Solar is the second array in MGE's popular Shared Solar program.



The expansion of the program gives residential and business customers throughout MGE's electric service territory the option of powering their home or business with locally generated solar energy. MGE's first Shared Solar project is a 500-kilowatt array on the roof of Middleton's Municipal Operations Center. It began serving customers in Jan 2017. The new array began delivering energy to our community grid in Aug 2020. Shared Solar participants like Bethel Lutheran Church are helping MGE to reach its goal of net-zero carbon electricity by 2050. 🌍



The Trophy Husbands

## PARKING LOT CONCERT & WORSHIP

June 13  
Sunday  
4-6pm

**B**ack by popular demand! What began last summer as an opportunity to worship and remain safe during the pandemic has become a regular feature for Bethel's worship life. If you are able, park your car in the city garage across the street and bring a lawn chair. If not, simply pull in the Bethel lot and parking ushers will help you find your spot. Worship music and concert for June 13 are provided by The Trophy Husbands. A Food Truck will be on site to satisfy your food needs. Worship will be broadcast over a local FM radio station. 🌈

# DRIVE-IN FAMILY WORSHIP & MOVIE

Alliant Energy Center  
June 19, Saturday, 6:30pm

**B**ethel brings a second season of creative community programming with a new series of Drive-In Worship and Movie events. The first of these takes place at the Alliant Center parking lot in front of the Exhibition Hall. Inspired by memories of Drive-In movie theaters from years gone by, Bethel creates a Drive-In Movie experience with two large high-definition screens, powerful sound systems, FM radio transmission, a stage, and outdoor portalets.

The first Drive-In movie will be the award-winning movie, Finding Dory, from Pixar. Prior to showing the movie, Bethel will offer a short worship experience of song, scripture, and a message that relates to the movie, helping people learn something of Jesus in the movie.

In the movie, Dory, the forgetful fish, is separated from her family and is trying to find her way back.

There are so many ways people in our community are trying to find their way. And this is one of the main gifts that Bethel offers, finding your way to family and community. Finding your way in God's Family is the theme for this event.

Please join us and others from around Madison in this unique and wonderful outreach experience. Simply show up by 6:30pm or come earlier to volunteers. To offer your help as a volunteer, please contact Cindy at [cindy@bethel-madison.org](mailto:cindy@bethel-madison.org). 🌈

**DRIVE-IN  
FAMILY WORSHIP  
AND MOVIE**

- Saturday, June 19 at 6:30pm
- Alliant Energy Center Parking Lot
- 30-40min worship (Finding Your Way in God's Family) followed by Disney's Finding Dory movie

Disney · PIXAR  
**FINDING  
DORY**

**BETHEL**  
LUTHERAN CHURCH  
[www.bethel-madison.org/dory](http://www.bethel-madison.org/dory)

COMING SOON



## ACTJAM Interviews Strong Baby Staff

The May 19 Bethelite reported how Bethel's Food Pantry is supporting the Strong Baby Sanctuary at Hephatha Lutheran Church in Milwaukee, a church supported by Bethel. Strong Baby Sanctuary is a city-wide program in Milwaukee that began in 2015 to reduce infant mortality. Bethel's social justice ministry (ATJAM) sat down with Elisha Branch from Hephatha's Strong Baby Sanctuary Leadership team and Parish Nurse Chris Keim to talk about the love and support that Strong Baby brings to the community.

Read the full interview in the ACTJAM Magazine for May: <https://bit.ly/3y5TJbt>

### What do you do as a Strong Baby Sanctuary?

Elisha: One Saturday a month we have a luncheon at the church and then we provide resources like diapers. We have an informational piece and then we tie a meditation or devotion into it.

### How does church make a difference?

Chris: The first of the year we had a mom

who lost a baby. She was due in February and she lost the baby on Jan 1. It was very devastating. What we did at our January meeting was we supported her. She came and Pastor Mary Martha did a service honoring the baby and the mom. There was so much support. Then a lot of the moms sent cards to her and reached out to her on Facebook. It's just a way of connecting these young people. They're suffering. In the last three years we've had three young moms have stillborn babies.

### What's the impact?

Elisha: The impact is the relationships that are being created and the conversations we're hearing that we haven't heard before.

Chris: The issues that these moms face – many of them, really probably all of them – stem from systemic racism. I don't think this program is trying to change systemic racism. This program is working in the community that is most affected and trying to do some healing and be a support system so parents can do what they can to help them make good

choices, learn and make the best decisions they can for parenting.

### What does Strong Baby mean to you?

Chris: I've been around Hephatha for 16 years and before that I was the school nurse at Hopkins down the street. It's through Hephatha that I've come to truly understand how God really works with money. It's all God's. If I have a mom in need, she's getting what she needs [and] God is going to renew it. You may not know what direction it's going to come from but it's going to come from somewhere.

Elisha: I'm a volunteer. I love to do it. My daughter [Daisy] was the first Strong Baby Sanctuary baby at Hephatha. After the program helped me, I wanted to help others. It's an amazing program and important for our church and community to have.





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# BETHEL

LUTHERAN CHURCH

312 Wisconsin Avenue  
Madison, WI 53703



Matt and Jenny  
Brooks

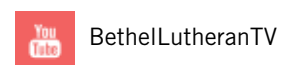
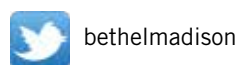
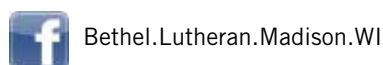
NEW  
MEMBERS

**M**att and Jenny Brooks come to Bethel with warmth and joy. While Matt is a classical guitarist by training, he is very skilled on electric bass and lead guitar, and plays in Bethel's contemporary worship band. Jenny who grew up Catholic in Dubuque, IA works for First Solar in Madison. They were married October 3, 2020 by Pastor Mike.

They have made Bethel their church home this Spring along with Suzanne McMillan; Marcus Alzine; Bethany Rasmussen/Dan Crombie; Aaron/Felicia Dettman; Alex Wranovksy/Bridgette; Matt/Jenny Brooks; Stuart/Michelle Rittenhouse; and Matt/Alex Endress. 🌈

## HIGH SCHOOL GRADS UP, UP IN THE AIR!

**B**ethel joins to celebrate its High School seniors who graduate this year. On June 12, from 6-8pm, Bethel hosts these graduates and others from the community for a unique celebration. Gathering in the Bethel parking lot at 6pm, 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](mailto:rachel@bethel-madison.org) 🌈



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