



Jesus loves you. Walk with Him.

BETHELITE

JUNE 6, 2022: VOL 71, NO.10

THIS ISSUE:

BETHEL PICNIC AT HORIZONS

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

BETHEL HORIZONS BIKE-A-THON

*Raising Money for a Good Cause
June 4*

BETHANY INDIAN MISSION

*The complicated, yet hopeful story
June 12*

SERMON SERIES

*How to Get Through What You're Going Through
June 5-26*



BETHEL

LUTHERAN CHURCH

Color Bethelite provided in part by Bethel Endowment Foundation

WHY PEOPLE LEAVE CHURCH

Every year our nation grows more and more secular. The latest Pew Research Center survey of the religious composition of the United States finds that the number of people who say they are “religiously unaffiliated” is 6 percentage points higher than it was five years ago. That is 10 points higher than a decade ago. While Christians continue to make up a majority of the U.S. population, the Christian share of the adult population is 12 points lower in 2021 than it was in 2011. In addition, the share of U.S. adults who say they pray on a daily basis has been trending downward, as well as those who say religion is “very important” in their lives.

Currently, about three-in-ten U.S. adults (29%) are religious “nones” – people who describe themselves as atheists, agnostics or “nothing in particular”. People who call themselves “Christian” of any sort (including Protestants, Catholics, members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and Orthodox Christians) make up 63% of the adult population. That means that Christians now outnumber religious “nones” by a ratio of a little more than two-to-one. But in 2007, when the Pew Center began asking its current question about religious identity, Christians outnumbered “nones” by almost five-to-one (78% vs. 16%). The group leading the exodus out of the church are young adults. They are leaving the



Laura Ernst helps lead young adults at Bethel

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church in massive numbers. When asked why they have left the church behind they share several reasons:

1) They were not all that active in church as children. When they have weak ties to church to begin with, it is not that hard to sever ties in adulthood.

2) They believe that the church is judgmental towards those who are different from themselves. Specifically, the issues of rejection and condemnation of people who are LGBTQIA features prominently.

3) They believe that the church is close-minded and anti-science. This comes from mainly fundamentalist battles against evolution and other scientific discoveries.

4) They believe that the church is anti-women, pointing to the “conservative” teachings and practices in fundamentalist churches and in the Roman Catholic Church that exclude



Will she be back as an adult?

women from leadership and control women's bodies with prohibitions against birth control or abortion.

5) They believe that the church is too motivated for political power and personal gain both in society and within the churches themselves.

6) They believe that the church is complicit in the abuse of minors. This mainly refers to the ongoing and pervasive Roman Catholic Church scandals of priestly abuse of minors.

When it comes to the decline of Christianity in the US, for Lutherans it is a bad news/good news scenario. It is bad news because Lutherans have also seen a decline in their membership and attendance. Lutherans have witnessed losses in participation and engagement. In this sense, Lutherans are most likely to say that they have not established strong ties and bonds of affection with the children in their midst. It is not uncommon for youth to exit church involvement after they have been confirmed. This is something that Lutheran churches, like

Bethel, can fix. We can upgrade our efforts and expand the opportunities with and among children and their families in the church.

When we make a significant commitment to something, it shows and it grows. The good news for Bethel, and other Lutherans like Bethel, is in the remaining reasons people are leaving the church. The churches that are described as reasons for leaving, churches that do not welcome gays and lesbians, or others, churches that are anti-intellectual and anti-science, churches that repress women,

churches that harbor desires for political power, churches that are havens for child abusers — all these things do not describe Bethel or churches like Bethel. Since those are the factors driving people away from church, then churches that provide the opposite are in an very good position to connect with them.

Bethel has the treasure, the goods, that people say they are looking for. The question, of course, do we want to share it? Do we have the desire, the commitment, the hospitality to reach out and invite people to share what we have known for a long time? I think we do! 🌈

Do we want to share it?



BETHEL PENTECOST SERVICE Not One to Miss—June 4 & 5

On the Day of Pentecost the church celebrates the gift of God's Holy Spirit given to God's holy people. Pentecost is also the Greek name for the Jewish Feast of Weeks, celebrated 50 days after Passover. On this feast, the first fruits of the wheat harvest were presented, and the covenant made with God at Mount Sinai was remembered and renewed. In the Acts of the Apostles, Luke describes the promised outpouring of the Spirit and the beginning of the Church's mission as occurring in Jerusalem during this feast. The accounts in both Acts (Acts 2:1-4) and the Gospel of John (John 20:22) describe how the Holy Spirit came to the disciples as they were assembled together. This assembly of the disciples emphasizes an important point: From the beginning, the experience of the Holy Spirit has been a corporate experience. Individuals as members of the Body of Christ participate in this experience, but the power of the Spirit is given for the life of the Church. Two key words referring to the coming of the Holy Spirit are promise and power. The promise of Jesus to send the Helper to the disciples was

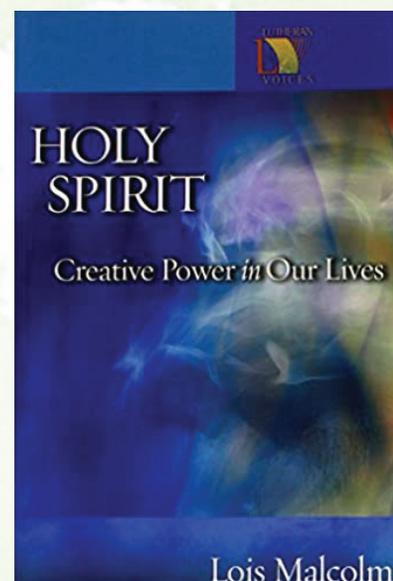
fulfilled, and the power of the Helper was bestowed, in the upper room at Pentecost. Fire and wind are signs of the Spirit's power. Fire and wind signify God's power throughout the Old Testament. God goes before the people as a pillar of fire in the exodus. God sends a wind to part the Reed Sea before them. God's power is seen in the Pentecost story as the apostles proclaim Jesus Christ crucified and resurrected. The gift of tongues in Acts 2 is a sign that God's word is no longer limited to one people or one place, one language or one race, but is now available to all people everywhere.

On June 4 and 5, Bethel celebrates this ancient and exciting occasion. Worship services will have some new, creative, exciting, and experiential elements. Please make it a point to attend this service. And as you come, and to the extent that you are able, wear the colors of Pentecost. You can wear red, orange, yellow, pink...or any combination. 🌈



LUTHERAN VOICES ON THE HOLY SPIRIT

Who is the Holy Spirit? How does the Spirit work in our lives as individuals, families, communities, and in the world at large? What would happen if we claimed the promise of our baptism - that the Spirit is truly with us, creating within our bodies the new life we have in Jesus Christ? Drawing on Scripture, Luther's writings, and contemporary theology, Lois Malcolm invites to experience the Spirit's creative life and power - precisely within our complicated lives. This little book, *Holy Spirit: Creative Power in Our Lives* is a brief but gripping description on the place and presence of God's Spirit in our lives. It is available for order on Amazon for \$14.99 🌈





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 Luhring on percussion, and Matt Rogers on upright bass. 🌈



BETHEL

KICKING-OFF SUMMER IN STYLE ALL INVITED TO BETHEL HORIZONS CHURCH CAMP FOR FUN

JUNE 5 12:00-3:00

Come one! Come all! Shed the cloistered life of cold and cool Spring 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 🌈



PICNIC



ONLY THE BEST CHICKENS

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. 🌈

Kids Activities

Pony Rides

Bounce House

Games

Trail Hikes

Nature Exploration





Dr. Betty Bergland
UW - River Falls

OUR IMMIGRANT ANCESTORS' STORES & THE NATIVE PEOPLE OF THE LAND

A workshop with Dr. Bergland, Monday, June 13 from 9-noon @ Bethel

On Monday, June 13 from 9 a.m. to noon, Bethel presents Dr. Bergland for a Monday workshop. Many of us have ancestors from Northern Europe who settled in Wisconsin, Iowa or Minnesota. We often know where in Europe they came from and where they settled. We may not have thought much about whose land this was or what happened to the Native people who lived there. Perhaps an anecdote has made its way to us about the Native people our ancestors met but often not. Curiously, little is written about these settler and Native encounters although we know they happened. Dr. Bergland will help us fill in the story based on her research, including how the settlers' church and faith shaped the relationships between settlers and Native people. Register for the workshop on REALM under Events or by sending an email to ACTJAM@bethel-madison.org. There is no charge for the workshop. 🌈



1921 Confirmation Class, Bethany Indian Mission, Wittenberg, Wisconsin

THE COMPLICATED, YET HOPEFUL STORY OF BETHANY INDIAN MISSION

Sunday, June 12, 10:15 Good Shepherd Chapel

"Miss Borge brought up the matter of doing some good for the Indian Mission at Wittenberg and it was made a motion, seconded and carried that we would give them \$10.00 and some flannelette night gowns and petticoats for Christmas." Bethel Guild minutes, November 14, 1923

From 1883 to 1955, the Lutheran synod(s) to which Bethel belonged, ran the Bethany Indian Mission, one of twelve Indian boarding schools in Wisconsin identified by the National Boarding School Healing Coalition. Bethel supported the Bethany Indian Mission, just as the congregation supported Lutheran missions around the world.

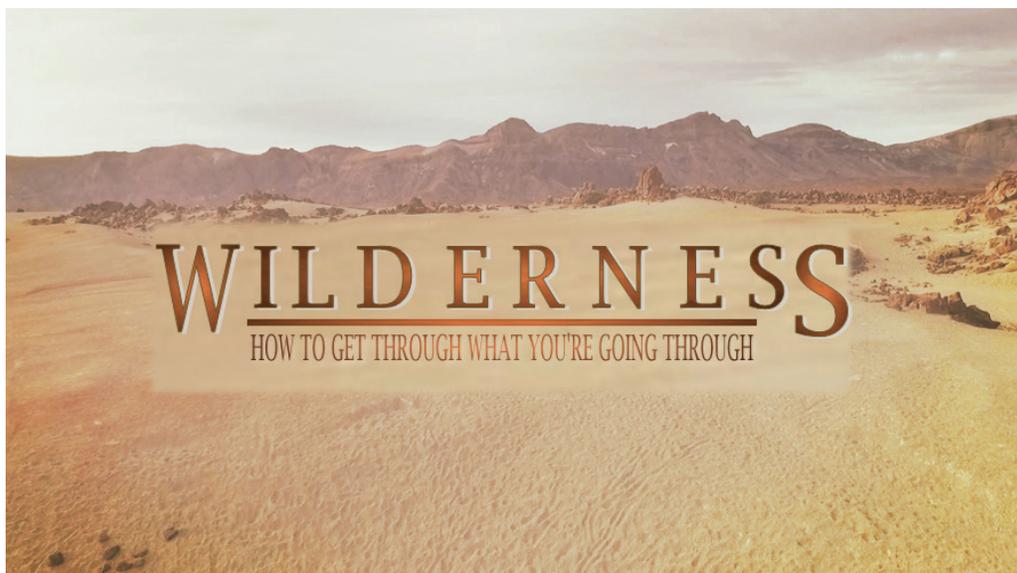
Much is coming to light about the 100-year Indian boarding school era in the U.S. that paints a tragic picture of forced removal of children from their families and Native culture and forced adherence to non-Native practices, including Christianity. The goal of the 400+ Indian boarding schools in the U.S. was assimilation. Some followed a military model and used punitive and authoritarian forms of discipline. How did Bethany Indian Mission fit into this picture? Dr. Betty Bergland says the answer is complicated. Bethany was a typical

Indian Boarding School in some ways, atypical in others. Dr. Bergland's research on the Bethany Indian Mission includes interviews with students and staff and study of the archival records. Today, the repercussions of the boarding school era live on in every Native American Tribe.

The federal government and Christian denominations are coming forward to create conditions for healing, starting with truth-telling. We can be part of it. We can ask how the mission spirit that's in Bethel's DNA can be a spirit for healing now. We can start by learning what happened.

On Sunday, June 12 @ 10:15 at Bethel, Dr. Betty Bergland, Emerita Professor of History at U.W. River Falls, will talk about the Bethany Indian Mission's complicated history, from a simple log structure to a substantial set of buildings housing up to 150 students. Dr. Bergland's research and writing is focused on Norwegian immigrants and their interactions with Native Americans.





WILDERNESS

HOW TO GET THROUGH WHAT YOU'RE GOING THROUGH

Our greatest growth as Christians does not take place primarily in comfortable situations. Many characters in the Bible find themselves in the wilderness right before God uses them to make a huge impact. God wants to do a mighty work in us because he wants to do a mighty work through us. God knows how use our trials, tribulations, and difficult circumstances to launch us to a new level of effectiveness and triumph. It is in these places we find out God is always with us and he is working in us off the grid. This 4-week series offers encouragement and hope to face hard times and to grow.

June 5: Tested in The Wilderness

Jesus is fresh off a forty-day fast when the Evil One tests him by trying to provoke him. Yet, in the wilderness, Jesus true self comes shining through. Learn from Jesus how periods of barrenness, loneliness, and want lead to moments of great personal power.

June 12: Trusting God's Timing

Though David had already been anointed the new King of Israel, Saul was still on the throne. David hides for his life in a cave deep in the Desert as Saul hunts him down. Even though David had a chance to kill Saul, he is patient and recognizes that God would be the one to bring things to pass at the right time. With

David, we are inspired and renewed in the wilderness to trust that God's timing is always better than ours.

June 19: Transforming Our Troubles

After Elijah's greatest moment as a prophet of God, he finds he must flee in terror from the Queen Jezebel. Curled in the fetal position in a cave at Mt. Horeb. God asks him a very important question. "What are you doing here, Elijah?" Elijah is there because he is vulnerable, afraid, depressed, and feeling defeated. God speaks to Elijah and us showing us how God transforms our troubles.

June 26: Getting Through Life's Losses

Joseph is treated harshly by his brothers and thrown into a cistern in the desert. He is eventually sold into slavery in Egypt. His life takes many twists and turns until he finally is elevated to power in Egypt. After his family has to come to Egypt to be saved, Joseph faces how to respond to the pain they caused him. Rather than seek revenge, Joseph sees God's work in what was supposed to be the end of his life. God won't waste your pain in the wilderness, but will use it to bring him glory and to bless others. 🌈



*Eric Knoeve
Executive Director of Bethel
Horizons Church Camp*

BIKE-A-THON

2023

Join us for the 36th Annual Bethel Horizons Bike-a-Thon on Saturday, June 4 2023! Participants and volunteers come together to raise money and awareness for the Adventure & Environmental Education Programs at Bethel Horizons. All while building community along the way! The Bethel Horizons Bike-a-Thon starts at the Mount Horeb Train Depot and participants ride, hike or walk on the Military Ridge State Trail between Mount Horeb and Barneveld or Mount Horeb and Ridgeway and back. You chose the distance that suits you best. 🌈

June 4, 9am, Saturday
Mt. Horeb Train Depot

CHECK-IN
Check-in will be at 9am
Mt. Horeb Train Depot
Mount Horeb, WI

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BETHEL

LUTHERAN CHURCH

312 Wisconsin Avenue
Madison, WI 53703



Over the course of the summer, Bethel will spend a good amount of time bringing the future into focus. Since 2019, staff and teams have worked from and toward a strategic plan. Then, the pandemic happened and many of those plans had to be adapted and adjusted. The process of adjusting and readjusting continues as we continue moving forward. This summer, all members are invited to join bringing Bethel's future into sharper focus.

June 18, Saturday

Of the several opportunities, the first will be on June 18, Saturday, from 10:00-2:00 in the Fireside Room. Lunch and childcare are provided. This meeting is especially for all staff, Ministry and Resource Team Facilitators, and the Church Council. But others are welcome as well.

June 19, Sunday

This Sunday morning Focus Group will meet in the Fireside Room from 10:30-11:30 and dig down into the big questions affecting Bethel's future.

June 26, Sunday

This Sunday morning Focus Group will meet in the Fireside Room from 10:30-11:30 and dig down into the big questions affecting Bethel's future.

June 25, Tuesday

This Zoom Focus Group will meet at 6:30p

July 5, Tuesday

This Zoom Focus Group will meet at 6:30pm 🌈



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Worship Times: Sunday at 7:30am & 9am - Traditional; 10:30am - Contemporary
Saturday at 5pm - Acoustic Casual

