



Jesus loves you. Walk with Him.

BETHELITE

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BETHEL
LUTHERAN CHURCH

RISE AND FLOAT

Developing Life Buoyancy with Prayer

A local float therapy website reads: “1000 pounds of Epsom salt + 10 inches of water = Infinite benefits. As you enter the therapy pool in your personal soundproof pod or room (we have both), your body floats effortlessly in the clear, skin temperature water (about 94° F). Your back is relieved from the effects of gravity. Your muscles and joints unwind and relax while your skin absorbs the beneficial, mineral rich Epsom Salt water. The lights dim and your senses are completely relieved from the noise and stress of your busy day. Your mind can now shift to a more relaxed state - refocusing its energy on healing the body and boosting creativity and thought. Stress, pain and anxiety melt away leaving you with an exhilarating feeling for days to come.” I know people that have undergone this experience and love it. But few of us really want to spring for the \$80 it takes for each session.

The good news is that to experience those benefits of release from stress, boosting creativity and thought, and refocused energy, and feeling exhilarated, we really don't have to go somewhere to float. God has already hard wired us with the ability to do this each day we rise from bed. It's called prayer. Prayer is the daily equivalent of a therapeutic float. In the New Testament, Acts 17:28 states “In him we live and move and have our being;” and in Colossians 1:17-19, it says “in him [Jesus] all things hold together. . .in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell.” In New Testament terms, Jesus is the love that upholds the universe — the ocean of life and power that pervades all creation. As our lives move about in this universe, we are upheld by him. Connecting with him keeps us afloat. Communion with him releases our stress. Through prayer, our lives become buoyant. We float.



UW-Madison neuroscientist, Richard Davidson, conducting research on how spirituality changes the human brain for the better.

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Pastor Mike

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Prayer has this affect because our physical bodies and the material world we live in are forms of energy, energy brought into existence by God and sustained by Jesus Christ. As human beings, made in the image of God, we are the highest forms of energy on earth. Psalm 8:4-5 reads “what are humans that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them? Yet you have made them a little lower than God and crowned them with glory and honor.” Through prayer, the deepest part of who we are, the place of our sense of identity, purpose, and meaning rests and recharges. Our minds refocus and renew.

To an outsider, prayer might look like nothing more than talking to one’s self. To the uninitiated, prayer might sound more like magic where if you say the right combination of words enough times, you somehow get what you ask for. But that is a caricature of prayer and not the real thing. Today’s scientists are making real progress understanding what happens in the brains and bodies of people who enter into



- Lowers blood pressure
- Restores balance to digestive system
- Aids in the absorption of nutrients
- Relaxes nervous system
- Relieves muscle tension
- Diminishes intensity of headaches
- Relieves insomnia
- Frees the mind of self-doubt, internal chatter, and intrusive thoughts
- Reduces anxiety
- Improves depression
- Generates optimism, self-esteem, and motivation
- Bolsters compassion for self and others

Benefits of prayer and meditation

what we would call prayer. The field is called “neurotheology.” It has attracted prominent researchers who have found that the brains of people who spend time in prayer and meditation are different. At UW-Madison, neuroscientist Richard Davidson says you can change your brain with experience and training. He says, “You can sculpt your brain just as you’d sculpt your muscles if you went to the gym.” Even more, “Our brains are continuously being sculpted, whether you like it or not, wittingly or unwittingly.” It’s based on a feature of the brain called “neuroplasticity,” which refers to the brain’s ability to modify, change, and adapt both structure and function throughout life and in response to experience. Very recently, the traditional scientific view was that after the brain went through its development from birth through early adulthood, it became fixed, or set for the remainder of life, only to be changed by traumatic injury or disease. As it turns out, that is not true. The brain is, in fact, quite dynamic and

able to regenerate with new neural pathways, connections, and synapses. The brain changes not only based on negative stimuli like a concussion but positive ones like prayer and meditation. Davidson’s research demonstrates that there are detectable changes in peoples’ brains within just two weeks of meditation. He points to a study where employees at a high-tech firm meditated a few minutes a day over a few weeks. It produced dramatic results:

“Just two months’ practice among rank amateurs led to a systematic change in both the brain as well as the immune system in more positive directions.” Along with Davidson, other neuroscientists, using ultra-modern and sophisticated equipment are looking into the brain and are discovering what God’s people have known from the days of

Abraham and Sarah. That is, communing with God alters reality. It shapes the brain. It reduces stress. It heals grief. It opens new possibilities for a better life. 🌈

GOD
ALTERS
REALITY



VERONA STRING QUARTET

April 23, at 4:00pm

“..cohesive yet full of temperament...vibrant, intelligent...” — THE NEW YORK TIMES

Bethel Concert Series funded by a generous grant from the Bethel Endowment Foundation is pleased to present the Verona String Quartet. Acclaimed for its “bold interpretive strength, robust characterization and commanding resonance” (Calgary Herald), the Verona Quartet has firmly established itself amongst the most distinguished ensembles on the chamber music scene today.

The group’s singular sense of purpose most recently earned them Chamber Music America’s coveted 2020 Cleveland Quartet Award, and a reputation as an “outstanding ensemble... cohesive yet full of temperament” (The New York Times).

The Quartet serves on the faculty of the Oberlin College and Conservatory as the Quartet-in-Residence, in addition to holding residences at the Lunenburg Academy of Music Performance, Indiana University Summer String Academy and North Carolina’s Chamber Orchestra of the Triangle.



The Verona Quartet has appeared across four continents, enchanting audiences at venues such as Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center (New York City), Kennedy Center, Library of Congress (Washington, D.C.), Jordan Hall (Boston), Wigmore Hall (U.K.) and Melbourne Recital Hall (Australia), and has performed at festivals including La Jolla Summerfest, Chamber Music Northwest, Caramoor, Alpenglöw, and Bravo! Vail, and with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center.

The quartet curates the UpClose Chamber Music Series under the auspices of the Chamber Orchestra of the Triangle, bringing the visceral energy of classical music to diverse audiences in venues ranging from concert halls to craft breweries, and unlocking the secrets of the music through the “intimate way they communicate with each other and the audience” (The Arts Fuse, Boston). 🌈



HOW TO PRAY

Prayer’s Place in Everyday Life

God has wired us for prayer. Prayer is prevalent in every culture, every religion. Who people pray to may differ, but there is an internal desire in every human being to communicate with the divine. In fact, it’s part of what makes us human. Animals don’t pray. Cows don’t pray. Birds don’t pray. Dogs don’t pray. Worms don’t pray. The reason is they are not made in God’s image. But we are. There is something about us as human beings that corresponds to God, that mirrors God, that reflects God. This mirror-image generates a longing to connect with God. Prayer and meditation are a central part of that connection. As we connect our lives become buoyant, as stress falls away, anxiety quiets, tensions release, and our brains heal. Carried on the current of Jesus’ love, we find new paths forward.

FEBRUARY 26: Raising Your Hopes with Prayer

MARCH 5: How to Set Your Mind to Pray

MARCH 12: The Five Quantum Leaps of Prayer

MARCH 19: Easy Steps to Daily Prayer

MARCH 26: Made Whole Through Prayer





WEDNESDAYS IN LENT

11:30am - Meal

Noon - Worship

**12:30pm - Bible Study
(Matthew)**

5:30pm - Meal

6:00pm - Worship

**6:30pm - Bible Study
(Genesis 12-50)**

Each week during Lent, from February 22—April 6, Bethel offers Wednesday worship services, soup, sandwich, and salad for a meal prepared by Bethel's in house chef Steve Nelson, and Bible Study. Wednesday midday worship will be a Service of the Word with song, readings, and prayer, starting at noon. This will be followed by a soup and salad lunch (*suggested donation \$10 or \$25 for a family*).

Evenings during Lent start in Borgwardt Hall at 5:30pm for soup, sandwich, and salad for a meal prepared by Bethel's in house chef Steve Nelson (*suggested donation \$10 or \$25 for a family*).



HOLY WE

Good Friday is a tremendously important day in our worship life as Christians. The call to observe it fully is as much a heavy gift and challenge as the story at the heart of its liturgy. The reality of Christ's death is unflinching darkness. It is the snuffing out of all hope that ever lived or ever will. To gather and worship on Good Friday, we are invited to get in touch with our deepest despair, trepidation, and agony. It would be so easy to avoid this invitation and seek solace on easier roads.

Yet there are few other days when despair, darkness, and death are given space. Each Sunday of the year is a "little Easter," full of words of praise and good news. Of course, we bring diverse experiences and complicated emotions with us to worship, and there are many dimensions to our collective act of worship apart from those spoken or sung aloud. But being free to worship God through grief, through anguish - this is the gift of Good Friday. It is that life-saving reminder that even and especially in death, God is with us. We are not alone.

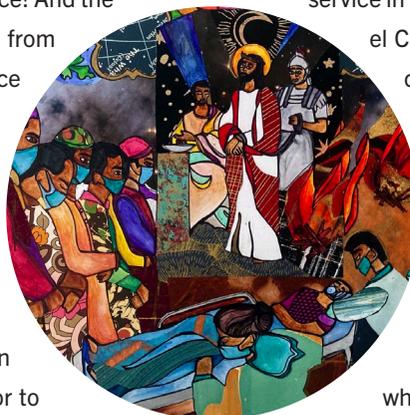
So what can you expect this year? The activities will be organized into three events in three different spaces. The symbolism of 3 in the Trinity always provides such a useful inspiration and a trustworthy resting place! And the movement of the evening - from story to art to song, from space to space to space, from Passion to Stations to Last Words - is an intentional part of its planning. It's my hope that this movement will stir us and stir in us. You are invited to take in the whole evening, 6:30-9, or to come and go as you please.

To begin, we will read the Passion according

to John seated in the round. The cross will be in the middle with lots of candlelight, and three readers will usher us through the story. Simple music will punctuate.

Following the Passion reading, the Community Room/Good Shepherd seating space will remain open for prayer and reflection around the cross. A side room will be open with supplies and prompts to pray through making art. Additionally, an art installation in Sacred Grounds proper will open for viewing. Mary Button's Stations of the Cross and Resurrection will be on display. Button is a native Texan whose background in art and theology have led her to create a body of work around justice and Christian spirituality. She creates sets of artwork blending the Stations of the Cross with modern social justice issues like the struggle for LGBTQ+ equality, the humanitarian crisis at the U.S./Mexico border, and the COVID-19 pandemic. This particular set is unique in that it juxtaposes the 8 stations of the cross with 8 narrative events from after Jesus rises. Viewing darkness and light together in this way, along with Button's use of layering, color, pattern, and story, is a powerful alternative way to experience the Passion narrative.

The evening will conclude with a musical service in the sanctuary offered by Bethel Choir and a chamber orchestra comprised of University students and folks from the community. This musical liturgy will use the Seven Last Words of Jesus on the Cross as a framework. During the prelude, the cross will be brought in from where it was laying in the previous space. The first of the words will be read ("Father, forgive them, for they know



EK AT BETHEL



not what they are doing”), we will observe silence for contemplation, and then a musical reflection on that word will happen. And so on. Taize music will bind the service together and invite attendees into the song. The sanctuary will be almost completely dark with only candlelight. The musical selections are diverse and traverse the height and depth of human experience and emotion. Following the first word, for example, choir and orchestra will offer the Agnus Dei (“Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world. Have mercy on us.”) movement from living Ukrainian composer Oleksandr Shchetynsky’s Requiem (Mass for the Dead). Later, following the 4th word (“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”), the choir will sing a spellbinding arrangement of the African American Spiritual “Hard Trials,” verses of which, sung by our soprano section leader Jerzy Gillon, describe the experience of an enslaved woman on the auction block. As we reach the final words of Jesus, a cathartic arrangement of Dolly Parton’s “Light of a Clear Blue Morning” embraces us with



a glimpse of resurrection.

At the conclusion of the musical service, space will be held in the sanctuary for an activity known as Prayer Around the Cross. Similar to how we use candles in sand on All Saints Sunday to remember loved ones who have died, we will have candles available around the cross for worshipers to come forward and kneel or sit, pray, and light candles. It is traditional for the liturgy on Good Friday to end with “reverencing” the cross, touching it and praying near it.

It really will be quite an evening. The Worshiping Team, Bethel Choir, and many others will put forth lots of effort to make a space for us to worship. Especially as we are turning the page from pandemic to life-after-pandemic, as we are becoming reacquainted with so much we had missed and notice all the ways we are changed, as we move forward - this juxtaposition of death and resurrection rings holy and true. Join us for this special evening.

In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us. We are not alone. 🌈

TRANSITIONS

by baptism
none

by affirmation of faith
none

by marriage
none

by death
Rolland Julseth (1/08)
Mary Jane S. Nicholson (1/11)
Elaine D. Moehlman (1/16)
Dorie Underkofler (1/27)
Barbara LaMay (2/6)





UPCOMING FRIENDSHIP CLUB EVENTS

Friendship Club recently celebrated 85 years of Fellowship, growing in God's Love and sharing this love with each other. A Bethel supported group that provides ANYONE with Christian Fellowship. All are made to feel welcome. This club ministers to church members with cards, prayers and greetings; a spiritual leader guides us each month after dinner.

Programs for March- June, after a delicious dinner:

MARCH 10: Jennifer O'Malley, Director Adamah Studio, Bethel Horizons, Fascinating experiences creating clay jugs to bring drinkable water to African homes, without transporting it over land, on foot, in pots on top of native's head.

APRIL 14: Harmonica Hour; DeWayne Keyes, Harmonica and Doug Barrette, Guitar

MAY 12: Deliberate Vibration; if you are frightened of musical instruments; terrifying trumpets, pernicious piccolos and snarling saxophones, look no further. This quintet of adult accapella male singers can do it all.

JUNE 9: New Horizons Swing Band; a Fellowship Club favorite at Lakeview Park in Middleton.

Contact Judi Griffin Program Coordinator, 608 222-9290. 🌈



SPRING AT HORIZONS

April 14 - 16

Please join us for Spring@Horizons, taking place this year Friday-Sunday, April 14-16, 2023. Come for the whole time or just for a portion. A variety of activities will be available including ropes course adventures, hiking, art and nature activities, campfire, and service projects. We can't wait to spend some quality time together enjoying all that Horizons has to offer. All are welcome!

WHO: Anyone who enjoys spending time at Bethel Horizons with friends both old and new .

WHAT: A spring weekend full of fun, relaxation, and connections with God, Self, Others, and Nature.

WHERE: Bethel Horizons, 4651 County Road ZZ, Dodgeville, WI 53533.

WHEN: April 14 at 6pm through April 16 at 11am (arrive/depart as needed).

OTHER DETAILS: For those spending the night, accommodations are available at the Prairie Center (1 household to a room) Meals will be provided Saturday and Sunday morning; we can accommodate dietary restrictions.

COST: Overnight visitors (2 nights): \$100/person or \$300/family, (1 night): \$65/person or \$200/family; Day visitors: \$35/day/person or \$100/day/family. Scholarships

are available. Please prayerfully consider what you can contribute. Registration costs cover accommodations if applicable, activities, and meals.

QUESTIONS: please contact Kelly Knueve at kellyknueve@gmail.com or Heather Moen at heather.rainwater@yahoo.com or Jennifer LaMontagne at terioj@hotmail.com. 🌈





EASTER EGGSTRAVAGANZA

April 8

It's the Easter bunny, Charlie Brown! Please join us on Saturday, April 8, from 10am-12pm for a hopping good time at our first Annual Easter Eggstravaganza!

You've never experienced an egg hunt quite like this before... with face painting, enter-to-win drawings, a petting zoo, crafts, a celebrity-style bunny entrance you may just have to see to believe, and fun booth prizes!

We are asking each child to bring in an egg carton! Each child can stop by our craft center

and decorate this carton to their heart's content before going egg hunting. Once the carton is full, they can show their full carton to our prize booth and receive an Easter pail full of goodies to take home.

While children up to sixth grade are busy hunting eggs, parents can enjoy a continental breakfast or join in the fun and take some family pictures at one of the photo booths. We can't wait to see you there! 🌈

NEW MEMBER CLASSES

March 5, 12, 19, & 22

Sundays from 11:45am - 12:30pm

Any and all friends, guests, and attendees are warmly invited to make Bethel your spiritual home. There is no replacement for being surrounded by people who love you, support you, and bring out the best in you. We want that for you. If you have not officially made Bethel your church home, please do. We want to be a blessing to you and make you

rich in Christian relationships. We want you to get in on the action as we are caught up in Christ's Spirit. We want you to feel the thrill of victory as we help transform our families and community. To learn more, please contact Pastor Mike at pastormikebrown@bethel-madison.org or call/text 419-345-2836. 🌈



BREAKFAST WITH THE BIRDS

Sunday, March 4,
9am - 11am

Join Naturalist Jim Marlow, Saturday, March 4th from 9am - 11am for an entertaining morning of Bird watching & lore at the Bethel Horizons Nature Center. Relax in the Nature Center classroom and enjoy a delicious breakfast prepared by Chef Cena, as we identify birds coming to the feeders and relate bird feeding information, stories and area sightings. Bring binoculars if you have them and bird feeding stories to share! Cost for the breakfast and program is \$19 / person. 🌈





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MADISON, WI
PERMIT 602

Easter Giving 2023

ONLINE FORM:

bethel-madison.org/easter-garden

Please write **separate checks** for the Easter Garden & Bethel Homeless Support. The **Deadline is Tuesday, March 28**, to return this form & money to Bethel for donations to be included in the Bethel Weekly.

Easter Garden

CIRCLE ONE: In Memory In Honor

NAME

BY

X \$20 =

OF PLANTS

TOTAL DUE

Flowers may be picked-up after last worship service on April 9 or after.

Bethel Homeless Support

CIRCLE ONE: In Memory In Honor

NAME

NAME CONT

BY

AMOUNT

CASH/CHECK #

ENVELOPE #

PHONE

Return entire form to: Bethel Lutheran Church
Attn: Christmas Giving
312 Wisconsin Ave, Madison, WI 53703

BETHEL

LUTHERAN CHURCH

312 Wisconsin Avenue
Madison, WI 53703

JANUARY 2023 YEAR-TO-DATE FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	Budget
REVENUES			
Offerings	171,929	133,892	38,037
Miscellaneous revenue	12,635	19,508	(6,873)
Non-operating revenue	110	(63)	173
Total Revenue	184,674	153,338	31,337
MINISTRY INVESTMENTS			
Staff	98,957	114,918	(15,961)
Ministry & Resource Teams	25,648	28,701	(3,053)
Benevolence	1,290	2,334	(1,044)
Administration	6,481	7,346	(865)
Other	-	-	-
Total Ministry Investments	132,376	153,299	(20,923)
Total Net Income (Loss)	52,298	39	52,260

A complete copy of the financial statements are posted to Realm; you can access these through your Bethel Realm profile.



[bethel_madison](https://www.instagram.com/bethel_madison)



[Bethel.Lutheran.Madison.WI](https://www.facebook.com/Bethel.Lutheran.Madison.WI)



[bethelmadison](https://twitter.com/bethelmadison)



[BethelLutheranTV](https://www.youtube.com/BethelLutheranTV)

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

