



BETHELITE

Jesus loves you. Walk with Him.

DECEMBER 1, 2024: VOL 73, NO.12

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The Healing of the Nations

As the days grow shorter and the cold sets in, December brings a time of reflection and anticipation. The Advent season calls us to prepare our hearts not only for the celebration of Christ's birth, but also for his ultimate promise to restore all things. This year, as we light the candles of hope, faith, joy, and peace, may we ponder the profound hope expressed in Revelation 22:2: "The leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations."

In a world that often feels fractured and broken, these words are a balm for our weary souls and remind us that God's vision is one of reconciliation; where every wound is mended, every tear is wiped away, and every nation is brought into harmony under Christ's reign. This vision isn't just a future hope—it is a call for us to be agents of healing here and now.

During this holy season of Advent, how might we, as a people of God, embody the healing Christ brings? Perhaps it begins with small acts of kindness in our homes and neighborhoods, as we bridge divides and seek peace in our relationships. Perhaps it grows as we advocate for justice, care for the marginalized, and share the good news of Emmanuel, "God with us."

As we approach Christmas, let us remember that the Child in the manger is also the Son of God who will make all things new. May Christ's love transform our hearts, our church, and our community, so that we might be part of Christ's healing work.

Blessings to you and your family this Advent and Christmas season.

Lauren Wrightsman, Lead Pastor



Pastor Lauren Wrightsman

ADVENT VESPERS

Wednesday, Dec 4th, 11th
and 18th at 6:30 pm

Join us this Advent season for Evening Vespers, featuring the beloved *Holden Evening Prayer*. As we worship, we'll reflect on the theme "The Healing of the Nations" from Revelation 22:2. Through prayer, scripture, and song, we will dwell in the promise of Christ's peace and restoration for our world.

Come and experience this sacred time of hope and healing. All are welcome! 🌈

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP SERVICES

Celebrate the wonder of Christmas with us! Join us on Christmas Eve for a joyful and meaningful time of worship as we welcome the birth of Christ, the Light of the World.

Services of Blessing

Family-friendly worship for people of all ages to celebrate Christ's birth among us. At the close of service, individuals and families will be invited to come forward for individual blessings and prayers by the pastors.

- 3:00 pm Jazz service
- 5:00 pm Contemporary Service

Candlelight Service with Holy Communion

Traditional worship with carols, scripture, and the beauty of candlelight.

- 7:00 pm Traditional
- 9:00 pm Traditional

Come and experience the hope, faith, joy, and peace of this holy night. All are welcome. 🌈



ATTENDER TO MEMBER: JOIN THE BETHEL FAMILY

Sunday, Jan 12 at 10:30 am

Are you ready to take the next step in your faith journey? Join our "Attender to Member" classes at Bethel Lutheran Church! **Attender to Member** sessions are a welcoming opportunity to learn more about our church's mission, beliefs, and ministries, and to explore what it means to become a member of our faith community. Members will be welcomed on Sunday, January 26th at the 9:00 am worship service.

Whether you're new to Bethel or have been attending for years, we'd love to have you join us. A light lunch will be served. Registration is required. For more information or to sign up, contact Chelssey at chelssey@bethel-madison.org or scan the QR code.

Welcome home to Bethel!



2025 ANNUAL APPEAL—HOPE GROWS HERE!

It isn't too late to complete your pledge for annual giving in the year 2025. Your pledge assists us in being faithful financial stewards of the gifts provided. Pledge cards will be made available in worship. You can also make your pledge online at the Bethel Lutheran website on the Giving page, or scan the QR code. We thank you for your support of Bethel's shared mission and ministry.

And as of November 24, over 250 households have pledged towards our goal of 400. 🌈





HOMELESS MINISTRY CLOTHING NEEDS

The Homeless Ministry volunteers want to thank all of those folks who have donated clothing items during the summer and fall. Many donations are anonymous so we can't thank you directly, but we certainly appreciate your generosity. As winter approaches we are starting to gather the items we need to meet the needs of our homeless and disadvantaged guests during this season. We can use sweaters, sweatshirts, hoodies, pants, winter coats, gloves, hats, scarves, winter underwear, boots, hand and toe warmers, backpacks, blankets, and sleeping bags. Donations can be dropped off at the reception desk on any day or at the Pentecost Room on Tuesdays and Thursdays. 🌈

RETURNING STAFF MEMBER!

Donovan Truss *Custodian*

I am thrilled to be back with the Bethel Lutheran Church community. I grew up in Zion, Illinois with three sisters and two brothers. I loved Zion and graduated from Zion Benton High School in 2003 and moved to Jacksonville, Florida for ten years. I have two beautiful daughters - Mariah, 18 and Nora, 6. I now live in Madison, and in my free time you can find me cheering on the Chicago Bears, playing video games and traveling to new places. 🌈



BETHEL BIBLE SERIES: OLD TESTAMENT CLASSES

Beginning Jan 4th and 5th

Bethel Bible Series Old Testament classes begin on January 4th and 5th with two options: the Saturday class meets weekly from 8:30 to 9:30 am on Zoom. The Sunday class meets weekly from 7:45 to 8:45 in person in room 120 at Bethel. The Saturday class is recorded and made available to students in both classes.

Using the Bible as the textbook, we learn how everything in the Bible is connected, from Genesis to Revelation. It helps us to understand the Bible in relationship to the culture and history of the times in which it was written. It brings us closer to the One who has blessed us.

We invite you to join us.

For more information contact Dave Myhre at dave@bethelbibleseries.org. 🌈

NOVEMBER FLOWERS

A lovely photo taken by Bethel's own Laura Vogel in mid-November. It's the time of year to be thankful for our blessings, and we have been blessed with the nicest stretch of weather in recent memory. Let's hope for a repeat of last winter!



ADVENT BY CANDLELIGHT: AN ADVENT CELEBRATION WITH PURPOSE

Monday, December 2
5:00–8:00 pm

We invite the Women of Bethel to join us for a special evening of candlelight, music, and God's good news. Together, we will celebrate the essence of Advent in a way that honors both the joy of Christ's coming and the call to serve our community.

On this special evening, we are delighted to welcome **Pastor Mary Martha Kannass**, who has been a beacon of hope at Hephatha Lutheran Church in Milwaukee for over 33 years. Alongside the incredible women of Hephatha, she has played a vital role in developing the Strong Baby Sanctuary—an initiative dedicated to decreasing infant mortality, improving maternal and child health, and addressing the challenges of lead poisoning.

This partnership exemplifies God's work through us. Pastor Mary Martha and leaders of the Strong Baby Sanctuary—Natalie Branch, Paulethia Cherry, Terrill Wallace, and Alexander Bates—along with parish nurse, Chris Keim, RN, will guide us through this evening of inspiration and action.

Together, we seek to embody God's call, recognizing that the Advent season is not only a time for personal reflection but also a period for collective mission and service.



We invite you to bring donations that will help advance this work. Recommended items include baby bottles, pacifiers, teething toys, baby towels, baby washcloths, baby shampoo and wash, and baby lotion. Cash or checks are always appreciated.

Contact Sue Stein for donation questions.

This Advent, let us not only celebrate the arrival of our Savior but also embrace the work He calls us to do in His name. Music for the evening will be provided by the talented **Stephen Self and soloist Minseon Lee**, bringing a beautiful backdrop to our gathering.

Tickets will be available for \$10. Please contact Sue Rogers or Kathy Forde to volunteer to host a table or for setup and cleanup. 🌈

To register, click the link in the Bethel Weekly Email or scan the QR code.



EMERSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PARTNERS

Thank you, people of Bethel, for responding to our fall clothing appeal for Emerson Elementary students. We collected 59 pairs of leggings and sweatpants. These have been delivered and are being used now. About 10% of the Emerson student body come from newly resettled families, and many of them never needed cold weather clothing in their countries of origin. Also, young children frequently have accidents and fall in puddles. Replacing wet clothing saves valuable teaching time if they don't have to go home for a change.

You may have noticed the inside back bulletin cover. The Emerson School Partners project as well as the Poinsettia Garden are the two choices if you plan to give a special Christmas offering in December. From the money donated, the project team leaders will purchase Walmart and Woodman's gift cards for needy families identified by Emerson's social worker. 🌈

SUNDAY FORUMS AT BETHEL

FALL FORUM WRAP-UP: HEALING THE PAST

Sunday, December 8 at 10:30 am

We close our Fall forum series “The Healing Power Of...” with a special forum on reckoning with the past on Sunday, December 8 from 10:30 to noon in Good Shepherd Chapel. Our presenters are Eric and Brenna Anglada from St. Isidore Catholic Worker Farm in Cuba City, Wisconsin.

The forum follows the book *Healing Haunted Histories* by Elaine Ens and Ched Myers. The book recounts Elaine’s journey to discover and reckon with her family history, originating in Ukraine and settling in Canada. Like settlers across North America, the land colonized by Elaine’s family was Native land, leaving Indigenous communities dispossessed of the source of their identity and livelihood. The forced assimilation of Native children in boarding schools — many run by churches established by settlers — soon followed. Today, we live in a land that is haunted by that root

injustice, where the past is never quite past.

We all need healing. In the forum, we’re invited to grapple with history and with our family stories and explore paths toward healing and repair.

In preparation for this forum, you are invited to pick one immigrant ancestor to the U.S. Where did they come from? When? Why did they leave their home country? Where did they come to in the U.S.? Who were the Indigenous peoples of that place?

Eric and Brenna Cussen Anglada lead Christians to honor indigenous wisdom to learn how to live with the land. They practice living in reciprocity with the earth as co-founders of the 25-acre St. Isidore Catholic Worker Farm near Cuba City, Wisconsin on the ancestral homeland of the Ho-Chunk, Ioway, Meskwaki and Sauk nations. There



they live in Christian community, integrating sustainable agriculture, communal prayer, simple living, hospitality, educational workshops, and activism. In addition to farming, Eric is a collaborator with Honor Native Land Fund and Land Justice Futures, and a Wild Church network lay leader. Brenna is a leader with the Land Justice Futures Team. 🌈

Christmas Giving 2024

Online form:

bethel-madison.org/ministries/christmas-giving/

Please write *separate checks* for Poinsettias & Emerson School Partners. The **Deadline is Tuesday, Dec. 10**, to return this form & money to Bethel for donations to be included in the Bethel Weekly.

Poinsettia Garden

CIRCLE ONE: In Memory In Honor

NAME

BY

X \$22 =

OF PLANTS

TOTAL DUE

Flowers may be picked up after worship on Dec 26 or after.

Emerson School Partners

CIRCLE ONE: In Memory In Honor

NAME

BY

AMOUNT

CASH/CHECK #

ENVELOPE #

PHONE

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



VISIT THE HOLY FAMILY IN SACRED GROUNDS

This year I have been asked to share some of the creches Norv and I collected from several countries where we traveled or served. Each one has a story of discovery which often included discussions of faith. For example we were in the Czech Republic with Bethel folks led by Pastor Duane Hanson when we visited a small church in a small town. I asked if there was a creche to be found in the village. The pastor's wife quickly replied that the church created small creches from the soil on the church property. It is hand formed from their clay soil. I love it! From Jerusalem to Uruguay to Bolivia, Panama, New Zealand, Africa and beyond, the creches help us prepare for the most important story ever told and to celebrate the birth of Christ. Our family has enjoyed them through the years but we are spread out now, so I am grateful for the opportunity to share them with you.

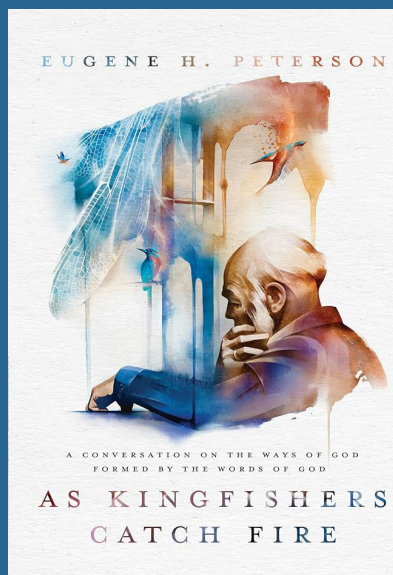
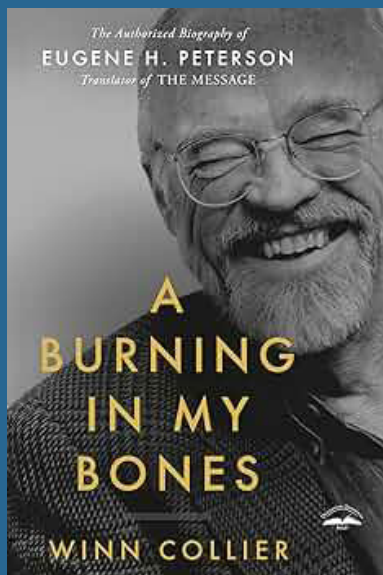
Bethel is Blessed to enjoy the creche collection of Carrie Bernhardt's Family in our Sacred Grounds area during Advent and Christmas. Families, members, and all visitors are invited to see the unique artistic variations of creches from numerous different cultures and countries around the world.

Bethel is also Blessed with the gift of a ceramic creche given by Ann Leon. It will also be featured with the exhibit. It was handmade by women potters from Nicaragua.

The Bethel Fine Arts team wishes you a blessed Advent along with great enjoyment of this extra Christmas display.

Thank you! 🌈

Carrie Bernhardt



BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PASTOR JEFF QUINTO

To say my wife and I love to read is an understatement in the extreme. In the '90s and early 2000s, she wore out Itty Bitty Book Lights from reading so much at night. Then we switched to Kindles, and our reading accelerated. Today, our shared Kindle library holds 401 books, most of which we've both read.

I started reading as an adult after my wife recommended *Pillars of the Earth* by Ken Follett. At first, I thought I'd never finish the 983-page book, but once I got into the story of building a Gothic cathedral in England, I couldn't wait to read more each day. After finishing *Pillars of the Earth*, I was hooked. By the time I went to seminary in 2011, all the required reading felt normal, and I loved learning.

I'd like to share my love of reading by suggesting books that have been important to me, while also donating copies to the Bethel Lutheran Church library. The first two I recommend

are Eugene Peterson's biography, *A Burning in My Bones*, and a collection of his sermons, *As Kingfishers Catch Fire*.

Peterson, one of the most influential Christian authors and pastors of our time, is best known for his translation of the Bible, *The Message*. What you may not know is that Peterson served as pastor of Christ Our King Presbyterian Church in Bel Air, Maryland. Despite his fame, he kept the church small, with no more than 500 members, so he could personally remember each name.

Peterson's biography traces his journey from a small Montana town to a seminary professor and preacher. His sermons blend biblical wisdom with modern life. I think you'll love both *A Burning in My Bones* and *As Kingfishers Catch Fire*. Let me know what you think of these books that have been so important to me.

Soli Deo Gloria!



CHRISTMAS AT HORIZONS

Saturday, December 14
from 12 - 5 pm

Head out to Bethel Horizons for Christmas crafts, holiday games, pictures with Santa and storytime with Mrs. Claus. Enjoy snacks, warm drinks and a tour of the camp. This is a free event, but please register with the QR code below. Transportation will be provided from Bethel Church in Madison out to Bethel Horizons. 🌈



CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

Sunday, December 15
9:00 am Service

Be sure to attend the beloved annual **Children's Christmas Pageant** at Bethel Lutheran Church, a cherished tradition that brings the Christmas story to life through the eyes of our youngest members. This special event will take place during the 9:00 am Sunday service, offering a heartwarming and joyful experience for all ages.

It's a time to reflect on the true meaning of Christmas, celebrate the season, and support the creativity and faith of the next generation. 🌈



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BETHEL

LUTHERAN CHURCH

312 Wisconsin Avenue
Madison, WI 53703



LOOKING AHEAD

Dec 2 | 5:00 pm
Advent By Candlelight

Dec 8 | 9:00 am Worship
Installation of Pastors Lauren
and David Wrightsman by Synod
Bishop Joy Mortensen-Wiebe

Dec 8 | 10:30 am
Fall Forum Wrap-Up:
Healing the Past

Dec 14 | 12:00 – 5:00 pm
Christmas at Horizons

Dec 15 | 9:00 am Worship
Children's Christmas Pageant

Dec 24 | 3, 5, 7 and 9 pm
Christmas Eve Services

Jan 4th, 5th
Bethel Bible Series begins

Jan 12th | 10:30 am
Attender to Member

Jan 26 | 10:00 am
Bethel Annual Meeting

FUND FACTS

Will you consider joining
the growing number of
households who give monthly via
Simply Giving – either weekly,
semi-monthly or once a month?
It's a great help to be able to
count on these gifts to help keep
Bethel on an even keel. 🌈

OCTOBER 2024 YEAR-TO-DATE FINANCIALS

October 2024 year-to-date financials results			
	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	Variance
REVENUES			
Offerings	1,150,582	1,317,084	(166,502)
Miscellaneous revenue	522,865	330,288	192,577
Non-operating revenue	22,711	6,666	16,045
Total Revenue	1,696,158	1,654,038	42,120
MINISTRY INVESTMENTS			
Staff	1,026,605	1,174,375	(147,770)
Ministry & Resource Teams	369,993	372,628	(2,635)
Benevolence	24,383	23,334	1,049
Administration	69,068	82,707	(13,639)
Total Ministry Investments	1,490,047	1,653,044	(162,995)
Total Net Income (Loss)	206,112	993	205,115

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



[bethel_madison](#)



[Bethel.Lutheran.Madison.WI](#)



[BethelLutheranTV](#)

Worship Times: Sunday at 7:30am & 9am - Traditional; 11am - Contemporary
Saturday at 5pm - Casual

