



BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

BEACON

Summer 2026

810 Third Ave SE, Rochester, MN | (507) 288-6430 | bethellutheran.com |  @bethelrochester

Dear Bethel Members and Friends,

When we think of the Bible's great figures, names like Moses, David, Mary, and Paul come quickly to mind. Yet woven throughout Scripture are men and women whose stories appear only briefly—sometimes in a single verse—yet their faithfulness gives testimony to God's abounding grace. Their lives remind us that God often works through those who serve quietly, humbly, and without recognition.

For example, Anna appears for only a moment in the Gospel of Luke, 2:36–38, yet her life speaks volumes. Widowed young, she spent decades worshiping, fasting, and praying in the temple. When she saw the infant Jesus, she immediately recognized God's salvation and proclaimed it to all who would listen. Anna shows us that no season of life is wasted when it is offered to God.

These lesser known figures teach us something essential: God's kingdom is built not only by the well known, but by the willing. Their lives encourage us to:

- Stay faithful in the small things
- Use our gifts—creative, practical, or spiritual—for God's glory

- Trust that unseen obedience still matters deeply
- Believe that God works through ordinary people in extraordinary ways

In a world that celebrates visibility and recognition, scripture gently reminds us that God rejoices in and celebrates faithfulness.

As we step into the slower, sun soaked days of summer, our sermon series in June, July and August will give space for the biblical stories of people like Anna. May these quiet heroes of scripture remind us that faith is lived out not only in grand moments but in the ordinary ones—through small acts of kindness, steady devotion, and a willingness to let God work through us wherever we are. Whether we're traveling, resting, gardening, or gathering with friends, may we carry their example with us and let this season become one of simple, faithful obedience that shines with God's love.



PASTOR ANJANETTE BANDEL

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Summer Worship AT BETHEL

JUNE, JULY, AUGUST

Saturdays

6:00 pm - Traditional Worship with spoken liturgy and Holy Communion

Sundays

9:00 am - Traditional Worship with sung liturgy

- Holy Communion 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month
- Special Music throughout the summer
- Live-Streaming available through our YouTube channel
- Service with a Sign Language Interpreter

10:10 am - Gate of Life (Contemporary Service)

- Holy Communion
- Gate of Life Band
- **The 2nd Sunday of the month, Gate of Life will be outdoors (see below)**

Second Sunday of the Month (June, July, August)

9:00 am - Traditional Worship with sung liturgy

- Live-Streaming available through our YouTube channel
- Service with a Sign Language Interpreter

10:10 am - Outdoor Worship Service (blended Traditional and Gate of Life)

- Held in the Bethel Courtyard
- If inclement weather, the service will be moved indoors.

Please Note:

There will be no 10:30 am services this summer. Our regular worship schedule with Saturday evening services and Sunday morning services at 9, 10:10, and 10:30 am will resume the weekend of August 29th and 30th.

**FUN
TIMES!**

Sunday Fun Days are back!

Each summer month, we will have one Sunday where we will provide opportunities for worship and family-friendly activities in the courtyard from 9:45 – noon.



Mark your calendars for June 21st, July 26th, and August 23rd because Children, Youth, and Family Ministry is bringing the FUN! Each of these days, join us in the courtyard for awesome all-age activities. We will have special treats and fancy coffee to enjoy some summer fun!

- **June 21st – Rainforest Falls VBS Kickoff and Father's Day Celebration:** Get ready for bounce houses and ways to celebrate our Dads, Grandpas, and Father Figures. Enjoy delicious donuts to celebrate Dads.
- **July 26th – Christmas in July:** Celebrate the most wonderful time of the year – in flip flops! We will have a living nativity with farm animals! We will have more fun activities to celebrate Jesus' birth in the sunshine!
- **August 23rd – Back to School Carnival:** Kick off the start of a new school year with a celebration. There will be a special blessing during worship for everyone starting a new school year. Mrs. Patty's Ice Cream will be serving yummy treats. We will have some fun activities as we get ready for a fresh start at school and church!

Faces of our Faith

Bold and Untold Stories Summer Worship Series

There are many heroes of the faith, people we admire and wish to be. However, there are even more ordinary people of faith – those doing what they can with what they have to make a difference. This summer, we'll dig into the bold and untold stories of those often overlooked in our Biblical narratives, hoping these characters remind us that we all play a role in shaping God's story of redemption and grace. Have you heard about the guy who was literally bored to death by a long sermon? (Don't worry—not at Bethel!) His name was Eutychus, and yes, it's in the Bible. Have you met Queen Vashti, or Shadrach or Philemon? You'll meet them—and many others—this summer.

To go deeper, request a Faces of Our Faith summer journal, filled with simple reflections, visuals, and prompts for all 16 characters. It's designed for you to use at home, around the table, or wherever summer takes you—so you can stay connected even when you're away. And don't miss the community art project growing in our shared space all season long. Add your own "face of faith"—a biblical character who speaks to you, or someone in your life who has shaped your faith journey.

Because this story? It's still being written. And you are part of it.

Summer Pick-Up Choir & Special Music

During the months of June, July, and August, our regular musical ensembles at Bethel take a well-deserved break to rest and renew in preparation for the fall season. This creates a wonderful opportunity for members of all ages to share their musical gifts during weekend worship!

We warmly invite vocalists and instrumentalists alike to offer special music throughout the summer. In addition, for those who love to sing, we will offer a Summertime Pick-Up Choir, open to anyone interested in participating. This choir will sing on the fourth Sunday of each month, with a single rehearsal held the Wednesday prior. To ensure a meaningful and unified offering, we ask that all participants attend the scheduled rehearsal.

SUMMER SCHEDULE

Sunday, June 28th | Musical Offering at the 9 am service

- Wednesday, June 24th | Rehearsal: 6-7 pm

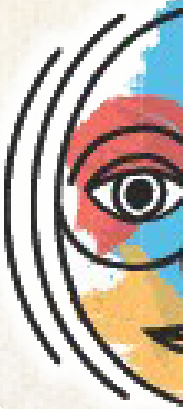
Sunday, July 26th | Musical Offering at the 9 am service

- Wednesday, July 22nd | Rehearsal: 6-7 pm

Sunday, August 23rd | Musical Offering at the 9 am service

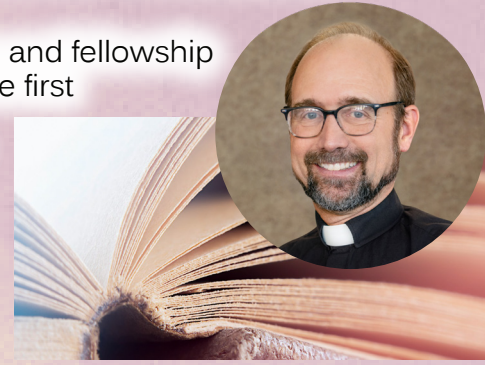
- Wednesday, August 19th | Rehearsal: 6-7 pm

Whether you're a seasoned musician or simply enjoy making music, we would love for you—and your children—to be part of this special summer experience. It's a meaningful way to connect, serve, and share your gifts with our church family. If you're interested in participating or would like more information, please don't hesitate to reach out to Brock Besse at (507) 288-6430. We hope you'll join us in making this a joyful and music-filled summer at Bethel!



Men's Ministry OPPORTUNITIES THIS SUMMER

We invite Bethel to gather once a month during the Summer for learning, and fellowship opportunities. We will meet on the second Wednesday in June and on the first Wednesdays of July and August (June 10th, July 1st and August 5th), to resume our study of 'Short Answers to Big Questions About the Bible' at 6 pm in Room 115. As a bonus fellowship activity, we will plan an outing to see Toy Story 5, which explores how technology is changing the way kids play. The timing of this outing will depend on showtimes, so keep an eye out for details. Please join us as we continue to stay in touch and make new connections this summer.



BETHEL *Roof Repairs*

You may have noticed recent roof repairs taking place around Bethel and wondered how this connects with the upcoming Built to Serve initiative. While both involve caring for our facilities, they are separate in timing and funding.

The roof repairs currently underway address more immediate needs that, if delayed, could lead to more significant and costly issues. Because of their urgency, these projects are being funded through available equity and bequest funds.



Thank you for your support as we steward our resources with care. Together, we are Built to Serve!

Built to Serve: What's Next at Bethel?

Over the past several months, you've likely begun hearing about Built to Serve, Bethel's three-year initiative focused on both capital improvements and mission. As planning continues, we're taking important steps toward bringing this effort to life.

Built to Serve centers on two key priorities. First, it addresses significant building needs at Bethel, including roof replacement and other important updates to ensure our space continues to support worship, ministry, and community life. Second, it includes a mission partnership with Iglesia Luterana del Divino Salvador in Puerto Rico, where Bethel members helped begin work in 2024 to create a hospitality house for those in transition. This initiative allows us to continue that meaningful relationship.

As we move forward, you'll see more opportunities to learn and engage. Early commitments are already helping build momentum as we prepare for the fall launch. We also invite you to attend upcoming information sessions in June. More details will be shared soon.

Learn more about Built to Serve and make an early commitment at bethellutheran.com/builttoserve.

This next chapter is possible because of where we are today. On November 14th and 15th, Bethel will celebrate the retirement of our mortgage, a milestone made possible through years of faithful generosity. Built to Serve is a natural next step as we carry that spirit forward.

We look forward to what God will do through this next season at Bethel.



Summer Activities

It appears that Spring weather and temperatures have arrived. It's the time of year when we are anxious to be out of doors enjoying God's creation and beauty. The following activities are being planned for anyone's participation. We'd love to receive suggestions for any other activity that could be facilitated. In addition to the events below, please watch for more information about upcoming bird walks. More information about each activity will be available in our weekly eNews.

HOLY STROLLERS/ WALKING GROUP

Walks are scheduled weekly on Tuesday mornings at 8:30 am and Thursday evenings at 5:30 pm, at various locations throughout Rochester. It's a great way to socialize too. All experience levels are welcome.

BETHEL BIKERS

More information to come soon about the Bethel bicycling group.



BETHEL HIKERS

Hikes will take place at locations around Rochester. Diane Johnson, a member of the Health Cabinet and an avid hiker is volunteering to assist with the schedule.

Rochester MISSION TRIP

Ready to Serve! Please join us this summer for mission/service projects right here in Rochester. The Rochester Mission Trip takes place on June 23rd and July 14th. There will be times available from 9 am - 8 pm. There will be projects in the community and right here at Bethel. Whatever your talent or interest, you can find a way to serve. All Bethel members ages 6 and older are welcome to serve. Locations away from Bethel may have age restrictions. **Save the date as there will be work to do.** Watch for information on projects and ways to sign up the end of May.



Night to Unite!

AUGUST 4TH

Mark your calendars! Neighborhood Outreach Team is hosting our Annual Night to Unite, Tuesday, August 4th from 5:30-8 pm! Join us for food, entertainment, and kid's activities. More to come, but we can't wait to spend the evening with you and your family! Bring a friend (or 2!) for a fun evening!



SUBSCRIBE TO OUR TEXT MESSAGES!

If you are not receiving our text messages already, you can subscribe by texting "Subscribe" to our number (507-288-6430).



BETHEL COUNCIL *Update*

Summer brings sunshine, vacations, outdoor activities and a change of pace. Bethel's ministry continues to be filled with activities and worship all summer long. We want to thank you for your continued generosity and support and for your faithful giving. We've been able to meet our essential financial obligations through the first part of the year while continuing to support our ministries and outreach efforts.



Like many congregations, we typically experience a dip in giving during the summer months as families travel and routines shift. We encourage you to consider setting up or reviewing your recurring gifts to help us maintain a steady support of ministry. Your consistency makes a meaningful difference in our ability to plan and serve.

We remain hopeful and committed to transparency. In the coming months we will continue to provide updates, with a closer look at Bethel's year-to-date financial position, the upcoming budget process, ways to engage in stewardship and information about the "Built to Serve" appeal.

If you want to give online in a safe and secure way, you can make a one-time gift or set up recurring donations by visiting: bethellutheran.com/give or call the church office and ask to speak to Janet or Alyssa.

Thank you for how you contribute to making Bethel a vibrant faith community!



Columbarium & MEMORIAL GARDEN

The Columbarium and Memorial Garden sit on the East side of the church beneath the stained glass cross you see in the sanctuary. There are six columbaria, A, B, C, D, E, & F with twenty-five niches in each unit.

There are two black benches facing the Columbaria & Memorial Garden to sit and reflect. Also, a black wrought iron fencing with wheat & grapes around the air conditioning units, enhancing their look. A black "Peace be with You" plaque is on display in front of the Memorial Garden. A street light shines at night overlooking the Columbaria & Memorial Garden.

Throughout the Columbarium and Memorial Garden there is beautiful landscaping with rose bushes, gorgeous hostas, and small trees. Each niche holds 1 or 2 sets of ashes. A double niche sells for \$2,000, and a single niche sells for \$1,400. Ashes can be buried in the memorial garden for \$600 a person.

Members of the Columbarium Memorial Garden Team:

Rick Rathbun, chair
Dorothy Becher, secretary
Cheri Brinson, treasurer
Steve Milburn
Paul Velsor
Ardell Olson
Pastor Anjanette Bandel



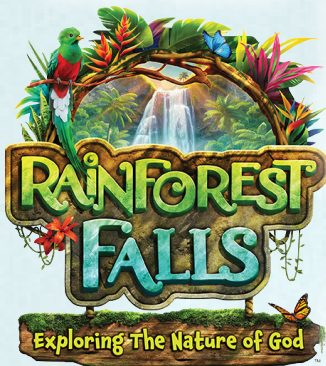
CYF Summer Activities at BETHEL



Confirmation camp is June 14th - 19th this summer. We can't wait to go to Good Earth Village with our incoming 7th and 8th grade (Fall '26) students! Students get to spend time in nature with friends, camp staff and Bethel staff, while exploring and sharing their faith! We also have tons of fun hiking, canoeing, creek splashing, and more!

VBS

**JUNE 22ND - 25TH
9 AM - NOON**



REGISTER KIDS TODAY!

Sunday School aged children **Pre-K 3 - 4th Grade** (2025-2026) can attend. Register by June 15th at bit.ly/rainforestfallsvbs
Invite a friend to join you - everyone is welcome!

VOLUNTEER & BE PART OF THE FUN!

We need helpers from current 5th graders through adults to bring the week to life! Whether you're into crafts, games, snacks, music, or guiding kids - there's a spot for YOU! Sign up to volunteer at bit.ly/vbsvolunteers2026
Special VBS Youth Volunteer Gathering: Wednesday after VBS, 12-3 pm.

HELP TRANSFORM BETHEL INTO A RAINFOREST!

Join us for **VBS Decorating Day - Saturday, June 20th at 9 am.** We'll create waterfalls, vines, palm trees, and more experience the kids will never forget!

Middle School Summer Fun!

July 11th, 6:30-8 pm | Blue Lagoon Mini Golf

5th - 12th grade: Join us for a night of laughs and friendly competition! Only \$10 - bring your best putting game and your friends!



August 4th, 8:30 am - 9:30 pm | Valley Fair

7th - 12th grade: Get ready for thrills, rides, and soaking up the fun at Soak City! Spots are limited, so grab a friend and sign up fast!



August 16th, 6:30 - 8 pm | Back to School Hangout

5th - 12th grade: Say good bye to summer. Come hang out with friends at Bethel: laser tag, outdoor games, bonfire, s'mores, and MORE!

ELEVATE HIGH SCHOOL SUMMER ACTIVITIES

Friends are always welcome!

June 4th/July 2nd/August 6th, 4:30 - 7:30 pm

Volunteer Opportunities Sign up to help serve a meal at Ronald McDonald House.



July 18th - 24th | Youth Mission Trip 8th -12th grade

is going to Louisville KY through YouthWorks.

August 4th, 8:30 am - 9:30 pm | Valley Fair Trip

Follow QR code to the left.

SUNDAY MORNING EDUCATION

GROWING IN FAITH TOGETHER AT BETHEL

We're excited to launch another year of Sunday Morning Education for our kids and youth starting this Fall. Programs offered during Sunday worship:

Sunday School:

Pre-K 3 (age 3 by 9/1/26) through 4th Grade

- At 9 am Kids Connection, students go directly to their classrooms
- At 10:30 am Side by Side, kids attend worship with their family and are dismissed after the Children's Word

L.I.F.T. (Living in Faith Together): 5th and 6th Grade

- At 9 am, LIFT students go directly to Youth Hall
- At 10:30 am, LIFT students attend worship with their family and are dismissed after the Children's Word

Reset and Chill ****10:30 ONLY****

- Youth go directly to Youth Hall.

Save the date!



- **Sunday, September 13th:** Meet the Teacher/Rally Day/New Family Welcome
- **Sunday, September 20th:** First Day of Class

Cost is \$20/child (scholarship available). We also need volunteers to lead classes. The lesson is taught by CYF staff during our large group time. Leaders meet kids and guide them through stations that are prepared by staff. Sunday mornings at Bethel are full of joy, learning, and connection. We can't wait to grow in faith together!



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Rochester, MN

BETHEL *Membership* KEEP US UP TO DATE!

- Please contact us with any address or email changes, or if you will be temporarily away from your home address for a time.
- Let us know if you are members of another church or do not wish to remain a member of Bethel.
- If you would like to receive the Beacon newsletter via email rather than mailed to you, please let us know.

Call the church office 507-288-6430
with any of the above updates.

Wa **Ways** *to Give*

- Mail your weekly or monthly giving to us
- Text "BETHELGIVES" to 73256
- Visit our website, bethellutheran.org, and click -Give Online-
- Venmo: @bethel-lutheran-rochester or scan the QR code below



For information about
Bethel events, please visit
bethellutheran.com/calendar-events
or scan the QR code!

