

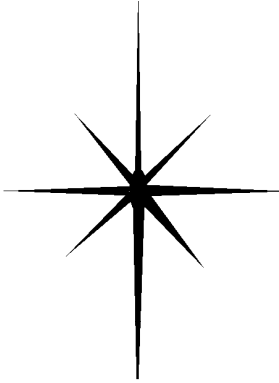


Bethel Beam

www.bethelinwillmar.org

January 2012

The Season of Epiphany



And this star, as bright as day,
That will never lead astray
With its message so appealing,
Is the word of God, revealing
Christ, the way, the truth, the life.
Christ, the way, the truth, the life.

ELW 301





COME JOIN IN WORSHIP!

Wednesdays - Matins 10:00 a.m.

Saturdays - 5:00 p.m.

Sundays

8:15 a.m. Worship

9:00 a.m. Cof-Tea Fellowship

9:15 am Education Hour

10:30 a.m. Worship

**Blessed Season of Epiphany
filled with Wonder and Light –
and a healthy possibility-filled
New Year to you all!**

Pastor Mari, Pastor Jon,
Beverly, Sharon, Ione, Becky,
Lori, Ruth, Dan, Sue, Steve,
Dwayne and Darwin

BETHEL'S SPIRITUAL VALUES

Generous Hospitality ~ Passionate Worship ~ Diverse Music ~ Faithful Prayer
Lifelong Learning ~ Adventurous Outreach ~ Abundant Grace

BETHEL'S MISSION

Walking with Christ ~ Connecting to one another ~ Serving in God's world

BETHEL'S VISION STATEMENT

Don't just go to church. BE the church. Celebrating the image of God in every person, we strive to live out our faith with urgency and relevance. Led by the Spirit, we seek to challenge and transform the world, beginning with ourselves and moving into the wider community. We are an ever-growing people of prayer, worship and service, welcoming all who long for a Christ-centered community of love.

DON'T JUST GO TO CHURCH. BE THE CHURCH.

For all events, information, photos and more, check out our website!

www.bethelinwillmar.org



JOTTINGS FROM PASTOR JON

A blessed New Year to you all! The New Year continues the newness and the freshness and the vitality that Christmas brings into our lives. Here at Bethel, we are excited about the new Bethel Annual Meeting format for 2012. I know, “annual meeting” and “excitement” should not be in the same sentence. Well, why not? Faith can be exciting! Let me ask you this: If you were a member of the basketball team or the music team or any team, would you miss the team’s most important meeting? Not if you could help it!

Well, you are part of Bethel’s team. We want you to be at Bethel’s most important meeting!

This year, Bethel’s Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 22 following our 9:00 a.m. worship – a celebratory worship with lots of kids involved. Following worship, we’ll gather in Luther Hall for a light brunch where the annual meeting will convene at 10:30 a.m. Childcare will be provided.

This year’s gathering is an important one as we continue the work of balancing our financial budget with our ministry plans for the present and future. To be sure, there have been great things happening at Bethel:

- * Worship Life
- * Increasing Intergenerational Participation
- * New Outreach Ideas
- * Learning Opportunities
- * New Friendships

Building a faith community within Bethel and beyond Bethel is what we are all about! Therefore, I would like to invite you to attend Bethel’s Annual Meeting this year so that we can continue building this vibrant faith community here at Bethel. To do this, we need to keep growing the mindset that this is “our” ministry together. A great way to start the New Year here at Bethel is with strong representation at the Annual Meeting. See you there!

Pastor Jon Dahl

COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY TEAM

Our team is preparing for a Community Meal on Sunday, January 29 at 6:00 pm. Thanks to Chuck and Carol Bredeson, we will be serving "Breakfast at Supper", a pancake and sausage meal fresh off the griddles. We request donations of fresh fruit- bananas, melon, apples, oranges, pineapple, etc. The fruit can be brought to the church kitchen on Saturday, January 28, or on Sunday before 3:00 p.m. Watch for the sign-up poster outside the church office. It should be there by January 8. The Community Outreach Ministry team couldn't do these meals without all the volunteers who work 3 different shifts these fifth Sundays throughout the year. Thanks!



DIRECTOR OF MUSIC UPDATE

The search for a full-time music director continues. We postponed the search process during the month of December due to everyone's full schedules. We'll begin again in January and will keep you posted. Thank you for your continued prayers for this significant part of Bethel's life and Christ-inspired witness.

*Candy Anderson, Barb Holmgren, Jane Kochis, Gary Paulson,
Molli Strandberg, Judy Wright and Pastor Mari*

BEAM GOING ELECTRONIC!

Beginning in February, those who have elected to receive their Bethel Beam via email will begin receiving a Constant Contact email with a link that will open to the electronic version of the newsletter. Reminder: If we have not received a preference from you and there is a valid email address for you in our system, your household will automatically be converted to the e-Beam. The e-Beam link is also available on Bethel's website, www.bethelinwillmar.org. Our website has recently been updated, new and improved! Check it out! If there are any questions regarding your receipt of the Beam or if you would like to begin receiving the Beam online, please contact Sharon in our church office or Ruth at ruth@bethelinwillmar.org. Thank you.

IMPORTANT ITEMS...

- * **The 2012 Daily Texts** are available in the church office. Pick up your copy and know that each day you are sharing the same devotions with people around the world.
- * Pick up your **2012 offering boxes and Simply Giving envelopes** from the tables located on second floor in the hallway.
- * **Please note:** There will be no Sunday School on January 1, 2012.
- * **Annual Reports** are due in the Church office by 5:00 p.m. Tuesday, January 3, 2012. New guidelines: ½ page in length, include 3 highlights from 2011, and email to ruth@bethelinwillmar.org.
- * **Due to the holiday** Bethel will be closed on Monday, January 2, 2012.
- * **2012 Altar Flower Chart** is available for you to sign your name to your favorite dates!



FROM YOUR BETHEL PRESIDENT...

Our Council met on December 13th at Pastor Mari's home. After our meeting, we were treated to a delicious meal. It was a festive time for this Christmas season to help us keep focus on Jesus the "Reason for the Season".

Pastor Jon shared the highlights of a great weekend's events: Lucia Day, Scandinavian Dinner and the Silent Auction. All were well attended. Thanks to all involved for a very successful fund raising event that will help 32 young people from Bethel to attend summer mission trips in 2012. Pastor Mari spoke of the chance to use these trips to positively influence those 32 youth for the rest of their lives. She also spoke of the continued drive of Bethel to be the Downtown Church and our outreach to the community around us at Bethel. Pastor Mari wished everyone a Blessed Christmas season and shared her hopes for a great time with our families during this season of worship for Christmas.

Budget and financial reports were presented for November with a weaker giving month than normal while expenses are running just below budget YTD. Although giving for December is expected to come in stronger, we will not be able to replenish the revolving fund for the year which will cause us to end up further behind by year's end. This is a further reminder of the importance of our committed giving and further use of the *Simply Giving* program for us all. Council will meet Tuesday, December 20, for a special budget meeting for the 2012 year. We will work on making the budget for 2012 realistic and one that the congregation can support at our annual meeting in January.

There was no building update on the plans from Engan and Associates. In January, we expect to see the plans and further discuss as council how to inform the congregation.

The Annual Meeting will be Sunday January 22, 2012 at 10:30 a.m. This will follow a 9:00 a.m. worship service (one service on Sunday) and a brunch in Luther Hall. There will be no Sunday School that day. Child care will be provided so we can get more in attendance at our Annual Meeting. Take advantage of the format change to be a part of the activity in your church.

We pray that Bethel Lutheran Church's holiday season will be a blessed influence to everyone in this Christmas and New Year season. May we be reminded of what we have to be thankful for as well as an active role in the effort to "Be the Church". During this season, I am reminded of Luke 3:4 "*Prepare the way for the Lord and make straight paths for him*". Let us keep the Bethel Mission going with that approach. Watch the Beam for all the key dates in the coming month for you to do your part in being the church.

Darrell Forkrud, Council President



ANNUAL REPORTS

2011 Annual Reports Are Due! Deadline is Tuesday, January 3 by 5:00 p.m.

Please note that there has been a change in the way Annual Reports are written and collected.

Change in content length: All reports are to be one-half page or less in length and list 3 highlights from the year.

Change in how reports are collected: Please email all reports to Sharon or Ruth. Their email addresses are: speterson@bethelinwillmar.org or ruth@bethelinwillmar.org

If you have questions, contact Sharon or Ruth at 235-5450.

ANNUAL MEETING

New Annual Meeting Format

There will be a new Annual Meeting format in 2012 for Bethel! On Sunday, January 22, there will be **ONE** worship at 9:00 a.m. There will be no Sunday School on this day. Following the 9:00 worship, a light brunch will be served in Luther Hall with the Annual Meeting set to commence at 10:30 a.m. Childcare will be provided during the Annual Meeting. The intent of the Bethel Church Council with this new format is to encourage greater participation for our Annual Meeting. The Annual Meeting is a very important communication time within our church - highlights of Bethel's ministry are shared and the course of direction is discussed for the year ahead with the adoption of the 2012 Bethel budget, or what we prefer to call "a ministry plan." Thank you for your effort in attending this meeting!

BETHEL STAFF

Pastor Mari Thorkelson—(320) 262-3639

Pastor Jonathan Dahl—(320) 262-3432

Beverly Baseman—Christian Education

Lori Knutson—Youth Ministry

Becky Fordyce—Youth Ministry

Sharon Peterson—Lay Ministries

Ione Pillard—Finance/Building Management

Ruth Koenen—Communications Coordinator

Custodians: Steve Christianson, Sue Klavetter, Dan Mohlin, Dwayne Ninow, Darwin Thorpe

mari@bethelinwillmar.org

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lknutson@bethelinwillmar.org

becky@bethelinwillmar.org

speterson@bethelinwillmar.org

ipillard@bethelinwillmar.org

ruth@bethelinwillmar.org



JANUARY ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University. Looking to change your future? Set financial and life goals? Then Dave Ramsey's faith-based *Financial Peace University* is for YOU! This class helps you create a good plan for giving, saving, eliminating debt, and spending wisely. Beginning Sunday, **January 8**, Bethel will be hosting this 13-week DVD/discussion course. Classes will be Sundays from 3-5 p.m. in Luther Hall. Childcare provided. Thanks to a Bethel Foundation grant, the price for Bethel members is only \$43. Sign up today in the church office or by contacting Chad Petersen at zimpete1@gmail.com or 320-382-9954.

Bethel Quilters will meet Thursday, **January 12** at 9:00 a.m. If you wish a bus ride to Bethel, call Sharon at 235-5450. Doreen will pick you up. Everyone is welcome.

Who's In The Middle Snow Tubing! Sunday, **January 15** at Andes Tower Hills. Leave Bethel at 1:15 p.m., Snow Tube 3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. (Cost \$10 per person) then into Alexandria to have supper at Pizza Ranch. (Supper covered through the Middles group.) Sign-up sheet is in the office. We must have 20 people signed up to go so the sooner you sign up the better so we know we can go.

Over/Under 60's: We will begin the new year at noon on Thursday, **January 26** with a potluck meal. Our guest for the day will be Tang Beiyi. She is here from China helping teach at the high school. If you can help in the kitchen or give devotions please call Carol Bredeson at 235-1725.

Open House and Sing-along Celebrating Mabel Hulstrand's 90th Birthday! Please join in celebrating 90 years of good, fun-filled living on Saturday, **January 28**, 2:00 - 3:30 p.m. in Luther Hall. Sing-along from 2:30 - 3:00 pm. Your presence is your gift. Please pass the word. All are welcome.

There are many other January events that are not listed on this page. Please take a moment to look over the BEAM and calendar. Thank you!





GOD'S GREATEST POSSIBILITIES

“Telling the WE Story” by Rosamund Stone Zander and Benjamin Zander

When I was nearing the end of my first sojourn in America, I set up a program that allowed me to take a group of American high school students back to England to study music for a year. I rented a house for them near Hampstead Health in London, and instituted a complete course of study that included music, art, philosophy and English. I arranged each week for a scholar to come to a dinner cooked by the students, to talk to them about his or her particular field.

On one occasion I invited my father, Walter Zander, who had devoted a lifetime to thinking and writing about conflict, especially the conflict between Jews and Arabs. By candlelight, over a dinner into which the students had put extra care, he began by describing the whole sweep of Jewish history reaching back to the days of Abraham. He poured his passion into the tale—the great biblical stories, the medieval ages, the accomplishments in the arts and sciences, the story of the Diaspora and the tragedy of the Holocaust. He brought the whole saga down to rest on the tiny sliver of land called Palestine in 1947, the year before the land was partitioned between Arabs and Jews so that the Jews could have a homeland.

Then he went back and narrated the whole sweep of the history of the Arab people. He again started with Abraham, the acknowledged ancestor of the Arabs as well as of the Jews. He spoke of Arabic sciences and learning, the magnificent library at Alexandria, the great artistic achievements—the tapestries and the architecture, the music and the literature, the folkloric “Tales of the Arabian Nights.” Above all he spoke of the legendary courtesy of the Arab people.

What was most striking was that he seemed to speak with equal enthusiasm whether he was speaking about the Jews or the Arabs. When he brought the great four-thousand-year saga of the Arab people down to the same little sliver of land called Palestine in the year 1947, one of the students exclaimed, “What a wonderful opportunity! What a privilege for both those peoples to share that land and that history!”

Imagine if this sentiment had been the one to guide Arab and Jewish relations in the Middle East since 1947.

By telling the WE story, an individual becomes a conduit for this new inclusive entity, wearing its eyes and ears, feeling its heart, thinking its thoughts, inquiring into what is best for the United States. This practice points the way to a kind of leadership based not on qualifications earned in the field of battle, but on the courage to speak on behalf of all people and for the long line of human possibility. The steps to the WE practice are these:

1. Tell the WE story—the story of the unseen threads that connect us all, the story of possibility.
2. Listen and look for the emerging entity.
3. Ask: “What do WE want to have happen here?” “What is best for US?” - all of each of us, and all of all of us. “What is OUR next step?”



THANK YOU!

THANK YOU, thank you, thank you all, from the planners for our Lucia Day to the decorators, publicity, musicians, sound & video men, ushers, bakers, workers, custodians, office staff, Pastors Mari and Jon, and all who attended making this extra special day a resounding success. We especially enjoyed our honorary Lucias!

Thank you to everyone who bought a ticket to the Scandinavian Dinner or donated/bought an item(s) at the Silent Auction. The Bethel youth greatly appreciate all of you. Thanks again for helping to make our mission trips next summer possible!

A great big thank you to Jackie Payne and her St. Lucia Day crew! We haven't been here for this celebration for a few years, but what a grand year it is to be here to celebrate not only St. Lucia but to honor our very special women of Bethel! Thank you!

Millie & Gary Paulson

Thank you to all who answered the need for simple things like shampoo, toothbrush and toothpaste. Because of your willingness to share, our supply overflows. Please continue to collect these items and pass them on to Safe Avenues or Salvation Army.

To all Bethelites, **Thanks** to each one of you for your prayers, thoughts, cards, calls, visits and the beautiful prayer shawl that was delivered to our home. You are just the best and very much appreciated!

God's peace to all, Marlin & Betty Kroona

Dear Members of Bethel Lutheran Church, On several occasions this fall, I have requested hygiene items for a few of our Middle School students who cannot afford even the basic items of shampoo, soap, deodorant, toothpaste and the like. The staff at Bethel have been very pleasant and helpful in my requests for these students. On behalf of these students, we would like to thank the staff and members of Bethel church for generously donating these items in order to help these students and others in the Willmar Community. *Sincerely, Aggie Meium, Willmar Middle School Child Guide*

A very **Grateful Thank You** to my Bethel family for all of your prayers and concern this past year for my daughter, Pam and our family. Pam is now back teaching and doing well since her cancer treatments at Mayo Clinic. Your support has given us the most wonderful Christmas gift possible.

God bless you all, Betty Croonquist

Happy New Year ♪ *Happy New Year* ♪ *Happy New Year*



THANK YOU!

Thanks to the many volunteers and donors who made the Food for Kidz event in November such a success! There were 183 children and adults who filled 6,937 bags to serve the hungry 41,625 meals. We were told that Food for Kidz has a campaign to fill one million bags by the end of 2011 to ship to Somalia where there has been no rain and therefore, no crops to feed the population. Bethel contributed in a big way to help meet that goal! The total dollars raised to date are \$4,143.21. We also delivered 216 bags to our local Food Shelf to help families in Kandiyohi County. Special thanks to Dan, Steve, Darwin and Sue, our custodians, who worked extra hours due to the inclement weather to set up and tear down!

Andrea Carruthers

A very big **thank you** to the Sacred Dancers for your commitment in making our Advent worship very special through your dance, readings and ushering in the light of the Advent candles. Our young dancers were at every Saturday and Sunday worship during Advent. Thank you for sharing your talent and showing us the many ways we can express our worship and devotion to God. A special thank you to Beverly Baseman for her continued strong leadership of this Bethel Sacred Dance group. On behalf of the congregation, thank you for uplifting our Advent and Christmas spirit!

Pastors Mari and Jon

ADULT EDUCATION

On Sunday, January 8, during the Education Hour, the Heritage Room is the place to be as we explore *God's Journey With Us!* This is a unique Bible overview looking into what many scholars consider the eight core stories of the Bible. Core stories include: God's Call, The Exodus, Sinai Covenant, Promised Land, Davidic Rule, Jesus' Life, The Cross and Resurrection Life. Want to get to know the timeline, events, and people of the Bible better so that your faith life might be deepened? This 8-week DVD/discussion Bible overview will do just that. This is appropriate for everyone!

OUR SYMPATHY

Bethel family extend deepest sympathy to:

the families of Bernice Challberg, Phyllis Norine, and Ruby Lundahl,

and to **Bud & Helen Johnson** on the passing of Bud's sister, **Lila Evans.**

We also extend our sympathy to those who have recently lost loved ones.



BETHEL WOMEN OF THE ELCA

Tuesday, January 3

9:30 a.m.

Martha/Ruth: Luther Hall
Myriam Ivers

Mary Unit Friendship Room
Mary Bock

12:00 p.m.

Eunice: Friendship Room

5:00 p.m.

Susanna: Friendship Room

7:00 p.m.

P.M. Altar: Friendship Room
Carol Bredeson
Helen Butler

Thursday, January 5

9:30 a.m.

A.M. Altar: Diedra's

2:00 p.m.

Honor: Luther Hall
Hostess: Eunice Unit

BETHEL'S YOUTH & THEIR PARENTS

Super Bowl/Pizza: As the Super Bowl approaches and we look forward to Super Bowl Parties, Senior High Youth will be Selling Papa Murphy's Pizza! Delivery will be Friday, February 3 from 5-6 p.m. at Bethel. Order taking will be January 11-25. Proceeds will go towards the National Youth Gathering in New Orleans in July 2012! Thanks again for your support in Bethel's youth!

Senior Graduation Quilts: It's time to start the quilts for our graduating seniors. Parents - if you have not turned in your pictures and t-shirts to Lori or Becky, please do so ASAP. We will meet on Sunday, January 22 in Luther Hall immediately following the annual meeting (no dinner will be served as we will have all enjoyed brunch before the annual meeting). We welcome anyone who would like to help us (including parents of graduates) to pick out squares and lay out the quilts and start sewing. Bring your sewing machines and lets have a great work afternoon!

Prayers Needed: As we make arrangements for the National Youth Gathering in New Orleans, not only are we in a fund raising mode, but we are also looking for people in Willmar to pray for our students. We also need individuals to write a letter to send with the group so they can receive a note from home every day of their stay (total of 5 letters or notes). If interested, sign up in the church office or talk to Becky. As always, thank you for supporting Bethel Youth!



Bethel Lutheran Church

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The Church Downtown

Non-Profit Org.
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**RETURN SERVICE
REQUESTED**

