

# the Wellspring

Out of the believer's heart shall flow rivers of living water  
John 7:38

Published quarterly  
**Volume 17**  
Issue 3



## Fall 2022



GATHER all people into a living relationship with Jesus Christ  
GROW as disciples through worship, prayer and study of God's Word  
GO into the world to share the gospel in word and deed

**Bethesda Lutheran Church**  
GATHER...GROW...GO



# Listening for God's Call

~ Pastor Bryan Simmons

*[Jesus said to the chief priests and elders of the Temple,] "What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' He answered, 'I will not'; but later he changed his mind and went. The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, 'I go, sir;' but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him."*

~ Matthew 21:28-32

Dear family in Christ,

When you hear Jesus speak this parable against the chief priests and the elders of the Temple, what comes to your mind? How could Jesus say that tax collectors and prostitutes, likely the biggest examples of sinners in the vernacular of the day, are entering the Kingdom ahead of these well-learned and deeply committed practitioners in the faith?!? Surely, he is mistaken, for if the devout religious folk don't have a chance, how do the rest of us?

What's interesting about this parable is that Jesus speaks it after they question Jesus' authority (or source of power) to do these great works. We're talking deeds of power that haven't been witnessed since the last time such amazing things were recorded over 400 years prior! If Jesus has this kind of power AND is bashing the church leaders, he can't be a "good guy," right?

Why is the hero of our faith always going after those most connected to it? It's upsetting, isn't it? Well, most people tend to read themselves into the better parts of Jesus' stories. We're not like those dastardly chief priests, after all. But, perhaps we are? Perhaps we trend in that direction? But why is it so easy to fall into the trap of this same type of self-righteousness the faith leaders in Jesus' day exude?

The first child says they will not work, but then does it anyway. The second child says they will do it, but never does. It is easy to see that the one who does the will of the parent is the one who actually does something. The trap those of us in the established church fall into is that we start to convince ourselves that what we are doing in the Church is the will of the Father simply because we are doing it in the Church! It becomes a kind of autopilot where we say we are doing God's will, but we've actually stopped listening.

So, which child are you? Are you listening to God's call where the work is? Or are you answering without even hearing God in the first place? Are you appalled at the sinners who seek God's grace, or are you resentful of the religious folk who act as gateways for God's grace? Are you listening for God's will or are you declaring it on your own? Only you can answer these questions for yourself.

We are all sinners who depend on Jesus' righteousness and perfection. Thanks be to God that we are forgiven, loved, and accepted because of God's incarnate love in Jesus. May we trust in that forgiveness, listen for God's will, and do, gladly or reluctantly, for the glory of God.

Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Bryan Simmons



# Summary of Congregation **Council Activities**

~ **Larry Otteman** Council President

**I**t continues to be a blessing to serve as President of the Council for 2022. I am proud of all the hard work that the Council members have contributed. Remember, the minutes of the monthly Council meeting are available in the office in print and online by requesting ***Let Your Light Shine*** from the church office ([contact@bethesdaames.org](mailto:contact@bethesdaames.org)).



**February** . . . the west side of the church duplex is reserved to support immigrants and refugees

**March** . . . Glenn Rippe and Gerald Klonglan reported on the work of the Bethesda-Tanzania Ministry Team . . . A new policy for volunteers was enacted and posted in the Food Pantry, Clothing Closet, and kitchen.

**April** . . . Chelsea and David Ray shared their experience as new members and why they chose Bethesda . . . Pastor Ryan announced his departure and the Council moved to replace the position with an Associate Pastor of Youth and Family . . . The Council review two reports completed earlier in the year highlighting strengths and weaknesses of our church.

**May** . . . Mark Kretsinger-Harries, Director of Worship Arts, announced his departure and shared his thoughts on his position . . . Council elected to proceed with a three-pastor model for leadership with a new position—Associate Pastor of Worship Arts . . . Two call committees were approved at a special congregation meeting on May 22, 2022.

**June** . . . Tate Meinhard and Evan Bay Brakke shared their experiences as youth at Bethesda . . . The call committees presented Ministry Site Profiles for both associate ministers . . . Larry and Sandi Philips summarized two sessions at Synod Assembly—"Growing Young" and "Braver Angels."

Participating in Council is not a paid task, but it should never be a thankless task. ***Take time to thank the members of Council*** . . . Tony Woodcock (past-president), Larry Otteman (president), Steve Peters (president-elect), Gretchen Mosher (secretary), Andra Reason (treasurer), Chris Brakke, Sandi Philips, Rod Fischer and Sara Nelson (at-large members).

God bless your journey in faith,  
*Larry Otteman* Council President









## Reconciling in Christ Ministry Team **Activities**

This ministry team meets as needed. Over the year, we have considered issues relating to LGBTQ inclusion and anti-racism. A lengthy online meeting was held on April 11, 2022, centered on anti-transgender legislation and the larger national effort to undermine LGBTQ rights. The bottom line is that these are political and not scientific or medical movements and need to be understood and approached in that light.

We discussed the "Declaration of the ELCA to people of African Descent" in the Fall of 2021. We participated in the Ames NAACP Juneteenth celebration and offered a VOYAGERS Adult Forum in June 2022 using this same document. Upcoming will be a meeting to discuss "A Declaration of the ELCA to American Indian and Alaska Native People."


Finally, our ministry team helped to organize and host Dr. Stephanie Dykes, a transgender woman from Seattle. She gives a public concert "**A Transgender Life: An Evening of Song and Story**" on September 8, as well as participating in weekend worship and offering an adult forum on September 11.

Members of the team are Trace Houge Brakke, Glenn Connor, Glenda Eggerling, Russ Melby, Joyce O'Donnell, Carole Otteman, Larry Otteman, Jan Peterson, Lindsay Peters, Randi Peters and Diane Pierce.

### A Transgender Life


An Evening of **Song and Story** with **Stephanie Dykes Ph.D.**



[www.stephaniedykessings.com](http://www.stephaniedykessings.com)


**Thursday, September 8**  
**7:00 pm** in the Sanctuary

Open to the public  
Free-will donation accepted



Bethesda Lutheran Church  
GATHER...GROW...GO

1517 Northwestern Ave . Ames, Iowa . 515.232.6256 . [Bethesdaames.org](http://Bethesdaames.org)  
contact@bethesdaames.org



### New Saturday Worship Volunteer Connection!

*As the English writer John Heywood said, way back in the 1500's, "Many hands make light work."*

A **SignUp Genius** form has been created to organize Saturday worship volunteers . . .

1) **Greeters** . . . 2) **Communion Assistants** . . . 3) **Café Bethesda Hosts** . . . *or all three!*

Follow this link: [tinyurl.com/5ffcywvd](https://tinyurl.com/5ffcywvd)

(or use your smart device to scan the QR code at right) ➡  
to volunteer for Saturday worship!





# Building Community, Building Relationships

~ **Joyce O'Donnell** Congregational Life & Care (CLC) Board Chair

**W**hat is congregational life and care? Fellowship and encouragement at Bethesda is God-inspired, open, and welcoming to all, offering rich, spiritually driven opportunities that are relevant to our personal lives. CLC promotes intentional gatherings that foster and deepen our sense of community and offer a context to reflect on and nourish our spiritual lives. Congregational Life and Care engagement activities seek to be enriched by prayer, Bible studies, and care ministries. The CLC Board oversees many ministries at Bethesda, all centering on building and maintaining community and relationships among members and guests. We envision and implement programs and events that support the emotional, spiritual, and practical needs of our members and guests.

This year, CLC relieved Women's Ministries of the responsibility for Café Bethesda. We are recruiting volunteers to host this monthly event on a one-off basis. That way, no one person or group gets overwhelmed by permanently hosting. On the months that no one volunteers, the CLC Board will host.



In July, approximately 60 people enjoyed the Annual BBQ Cookoff. The food tables nearly groaned with all the shared side dishes. Six talented grill-masters shared their skills and their meatballs, brisket, ribs, and pulled pork. Les Uhlmeyer took first place, followed by Pastor Bryan and Scott Smyth.



Looking forward, we will be involved in many upcoming events:

- Stephanie Dykes' event
- The Board & Ministries Fair
- Volunteer Appreciation
- Pastor Appreciation Month (October)
- Small/Connect Groups Resurrection
- Thanksgiving Pie Social

I especially want to draw your attention to **Pastor Appreciation Month**. October is the month we can emphasize how much Pastor Bryan means to us. Many groups and individuals are already planning special ways to honor him. What can you do? Send or give him a thoughtful written note, card or text message. Give him a gift card to a restaurant, grocery store, Amazon, book store or some other place he would enjoy. Treat him and his family to dinner. Make a homemade dessert for him. Pray for him. Make a prayer calendar and have individuals sign up on a day to pray for him. Give him a copy so he knows people are praying for him. Play a round or two of golf with him. These are just a few ideas. Think about something he would appreciate and do it for him.

We have a passionate team of board members: Kirk Anderson, Jo Hutchins, Tami Kuhn, Duane Huffer, and Sandi Phillips (Council liaison). I chair the board. The Congregational Life and Care Board is constantly looking for additional ways to serve the evolving needs of our congregation. We welcome all ideas and look forward to adding new members with fresh ideas to this dedicated board!



## Activities of the Immigrant & Refugee Team

Bethesda has a long history of welcoming the stranger. We supported the Nguyen family from Vietnam in 1975. A Laotian refugee family was supported for 30 months beginning in 1986. We provided aid to a Ugandan refugee family in 1992. Bethesda began a new phase of welcoming with educational programs provided by the ELCA and LIRS (Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services).

In January 2022, this culminated in our congregation's approval of a new welcoming statement based on the ELCA guideline from AMMPARO (Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities).



We are members of two Ames organizations—Ames Sanctuary Interfaith Partnership (ASIP) and Ames Interfaith Refugee Alliance (AIRA). We are also

recognized by ELCA and LIRS as involved in this mission of welcome. VOYAGERS Adult Forums have been held with information from both Ames organizations regarding sponsorship opportunities.

Most recently, the remodeled west duplex has been reserved for immigrants and refugees. A new Immigrant and Refugee Fund has been set up allowing donations to Bethesda for this work and a family will be coming from Ukraine through the North Americans for Ukraine organization.

Members of the Bethesda Immigrant and Refugee Ministry Team include Anne Almquist, Ann Hein, Russ Melby, Larry Otteman and Diane Pierce. More help is needed for this ministry—prayerfully consider joining.



## CSMO Reaches OUT!

~ **Kim Burnett** Christian, Service, Ministry, and Outreach Board Chair

Saving Suds volunteers continue to step forward the first Thursday of each month. The team for August was Diane Hinderaker, Noah Hinderaker and Sandi Phillips. They served 19 families (63 people) and gave out \$388.75 in quarters plus detergent pods and dryer sheets.



Jean Nicol Jahren has retired from 1.6 decades on the Good Neighbor Emergency Assistance Board of Directors—Thank You, Jean!

Donna Kienzler has taken on that position vacated by Jean Nicol, AND will serve as the Bethesda representative to The Bridge Home—thank you,

Donna!  
6

Donna Grooms leads a tremendous team for the Bethesda Food Pantry. Guests have been coming in much larger numbers here at the beginning of the school year, and it's a smooth process for all.

The Immigration & Refugee Team held an open house for the recently remodeled and refurbished duplex, the second and third weekends in August. They are preparing to sponsor refugees from Ukraine who may be housed here as early as September. Very exciting!

Lori Woodcock and Jeanne Stewart reported on July 21 that the Many Hands Sewing Team delivered finished lap robes, walker and wheelchair bags to Story County Senior Care who was happy to receive them!

Come see us at the Board & Ministry Fair (Oct. 1/2)—there is a place for you to help among SO many ministries that we oversee.



Bethesda Lutheran Church

GATHER...GROW...GO

Stewardship Board presents . . .

# Pledge it Forward

**Our 2nd Annual Stewardship Dinner & Celebration of Giving**

**Wednesday, October 5**

**Ames Golf & Country Club**

**Social Hour 6 pm . . . Dinner 7 pm**

**Featuring Special Guest Speaker**

**Michael Londra**

**Talking about his own life  
and his work in Haiti with Concern Worldwide**



Since his breakthrough role as the voice of Riverdance on Broadway, Londra has become one of the top Irish concert artists in North America. As a singer and producer Michael tours worldwide, having received two Emmy® nominations for his PBS special "Beyond Celtic". The third season of his current PBS series, *Ireland with Michael*, will begin airing nationally this fall. Michael is a partner in VenuWorks Theatricals, which will be producing a new stage version of the 1950 film musical, *Summer Stock*, next summer.

Michael is an official ambassador for his home county Wexford. Michael will be talking about his passionate advocacy and devotion for Concern Worldwide, an NGO with which he has made many trips to support relief and recovery efforts in Haiti. Michael has called Ames home since 2014.

Adults \$10 each . . . 18 & under \$5

**Get your tickets at: [tinyurl.com/4rztc47u](https://tinyurl.com/4rztc47u)**

or by calling the church office at 515.232.6256





# Bread for the World: Consider the Farm Bill

~ **Glenda Eggerling** Bread for the World Story County Team

**B**read for the World and the Story County Bread Team INVITE YOU TO ATTEND a 2023 Farm Bill listening session on **Monday, September 19**, from **6:30–8:30 pm** at the **Ames Public Library** in the Rotary Room.

Next year, Congress will consider the Farm Bill, a comprehensive piece of legislation renewed every five years that is an essential tool in fighting hunger. The Farm Bill not only sets most U.S. agriculture policies, but also authorizes both federal nutrition assistance programs, such as SNAP, and humanitarian relief for hunger emergencies overseas.

As you know, Bethesda as a congregation believes in the critical importance of feeding the hungry and has run its Food Pantry for many years as an essential part of its church mission work. The listening session is an opportunity for you to learn about the Farm Bill and why it currently matters so greatly to those in our communities and around the world who are facing food insecurity. We also want to hear from you. This is a tremendous opportunity for you to share your knowledge, experience, and judgment about what the Farm Bill should look like from the perspective of your organization, work, or lived experience.

We will gather for a large group presentation followed by small group discussions to listen and learn about your thoughts on this critical bill. Your opinions will help inform and advance Bread's 2023 Farm Bill platform.

Bread for the World is a collective Christian voice urging our nation's decision makers to end hunger at home and abroad. Bread organizes with member congregations and allies across the country who care about hunger and want to take action to make a difference. Bethesda is one of these congregations whose members help and provide opportunity at home and far beyond where they

Story County  
**Bread  
for the World**

**LISTENING SESSION  
on the  
FARM BILL**

**Monday, Sept. 19  
6:30–8:30 pm**

**Ames Public Library  
Rotary Room**

Limited seating,  
please RSVP: [tinyurl.  
com/2uc7pk6p](https://tinyurl.com/2uc7pk6p)

live to change policies, programs, and conditions that allow hunger and poverty to persist. This is your chance to shape the legislation that can reduce and end hunger at home and abroad.

We request but do not require you to **register by September 12** at [tinyurl.com/2uc7pk6p](https://tinyurl.com/2uc7pk6p), or you can scan the QR code above with your smart device. Some of you may have already received an email regarding this meeting. The Story County Bread Team hopes to see you there.

If you have questions, contact Bethesda's own Council President, Larry Otteman, at [larryaotteman@gmail.com](mailto:larryaotteman@gmail.com).





# BETHESDA WOMEN

## GATHER PRAYER CIRCLE

We meet to visit and discuss the Bible Study in the *Gather* magazine for the current month. 9:30 Coffee & Snacks, 10am-11am Discussion.

- Thursday, September 22
- Thursday, October 28
- Thursday, December 22

## GATHER @ GREEN HILLS

Another gathering will be held monthly at Green Hills. The Second Sunday of each month, 2pm. We will read and discuss the Bible Study from the *Gather* magazine.

- Sunday, September 11
- Sunday, October 9
- Sunday, November 13
- Sunday, December 11



## SCANDINAVIAN COFFEE

Saturday, October 22 | 9:30am – 1:30pm

## BAKING WORKSHOPS

Baking Workshops will be held in September and October—leading up to the event date. *We need you!* Are you willing to lead a workshop? As the leader, you are able to set up a day and time that works for you to use the church kitchen.

- Tea Rings . . . . . Gretchen Mosher
- Icing for Tea Rings . . . . . OPEN
- Kringla . . . . . Karla Mortensen
- Potato Cakes . . . . . OPEN
- Krumkake . . . . . OPEN
- Rosettes . . . . . OPEN
- Spritz . . . . . OPEN



## BAKE SHOPPE

The Bake Shoppe will be in the Crossroads space. Calling all home bakers! Whether you make some of the Scandinavian treats, or cookies, breads, or cakes are more your thing . . . let's stock the Bake Shoppe with lots of goodies! Thanks to Laura Miller and Ellen Janke for overseeing the Bake Shoppe.

## DECORATING

We have a six-person decorating committee! Thanks in advance to Jeanne Stewart, Kathy Harris, Barb Roepke, Nancy Janssen, Ellen Janke, and Joyce Vegge.

## EVENT DAY (AND BEFORE)

\*\*\*\*\*  
*We will need help from all of Bethesda on event day!*  
 \*\*\*\*\*

Women, Men, Youth, Members, and Friends are all welcome to volunteer! We will need volunteers for Plate Arranging, Serving Meatballs, replenishing Tea Table, pouring coffee, making coffee, greeting, Bake Shoppe, Gift Shoppe, Grandma's Attic, assembling Assortment Boxes, packaging and pricing baked goods, and more.

Look for Sign up sheets and Sign-Up Genius beginning in September.

Co-Chairs . . . . . Karla Mortensen, Gretchen Mosher,  
 . . . . . Lindsay Peters

Gift Shoppe Chair . . . . . Jeanne Stewart



## Bethesda's Call Committees are BUSY

With the near simultaneous departure of Pastor Ryan and Mark Kretsinger-Harries, the Council and Congregation had the opportunity to reimagine pastoral leadership. At a special congregational meeting on May 22, 2022, two call committees were formed. One for an Associate Pastor of Youth and Family and one for an Associate Pastor of Worship Arts.

For all you who have served in that capacity, you know the work that goes into the call process. First a profile of Bethesda and Ames is constructed and that a detailed summary of expectations and commitments for the position. Each call committee accomplished this in record time with the Council approving both site profiles in early June. We have worked closely with the Synod liaison, Reverend Dan Kuckuck, who has provided valuable insight and advice. People may not realize the limited number of rostered clergy in the ELCA with a nationwide total of only 423 individuals available for call at this time.

Nonetheless, we have received inquiries about both positions and each call committee is in the midst of constructing a template of questions and arranging next steps. Of course, each call committee is constrained by a confidentiality agreement, so trust their judgment until we are ready to announce a candidate for the congregation's consideration. Please keep them in your prayers, though.



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### WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Saturdays @ 5:30 pm | Sundays @ 9:30 am  
 Livestreamed at [www.bethesdaames.org](http://www.bethesdaames.org)  
 and Facebook [BethesdaAmes](https://www.facebook.com/BethesdaAmes)

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Assistant Custodian  
**Curtis Malone**



*We invite you to join our community, which is committed to inclusion, racial equity and anti-racism. We share in God's abundant grace knowing that we cannot be separated from the love of God by our age, race, ethnicity, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, marital status, political beliefs, socioeconomic status, physical or mental abilities or faith background.*

For more information on our inclusivity visit:  
<https://www.reconcilingworks.org/RIC/>

**NOTE:** please contact Lisa Johnson at 232-6256 or [contact@BethesdaAmes.org](mailto:contact@BethesdaAmes.org) with requests / comments, or to submit an article for the Winter issue (deadline November 3).

All submissions to Bethesda Lutheran Church's *The Wellspring* magazine are subject to editing for clarity, space, and content.

Artwork credit for an element in this month's *Wellspring* cover photo:  
<https://www.thewinesociety.com/discover/explore/the-road-less-travelled/man-vs-machine-the-challenges-of-harvesting>

## Youth Programming

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### **SPLASH CHILDREN'S CHURCH**

**Saturdays & Sundays** after Children's Message  
Pre-K through 5th Grade

### **OASIS CONFIRMATION CLASSES**

**Wednesdays @ 7:00pm** weekly  
6th through 8th Grade



### **FLOOD FELLOWSHIP NIGHTS**

**Wednesdays @ 8:00pm** weekly  
High-Schoolers

NE Iowa Synod <b>Middle School Lock-in</b> (@ UNI, Cedar Falls)	October 21-22
<b>Scandinavian Coffee</b>	October 22 ... 9:30am-1:30pm
<b>Trunk-or-Treat</b>	October 26 .. 6:30pm
<b>Christmas Program</b>	December 18
Community <b>Easter Egg Hunt</b>	April 1
<b>First Communion</b>	April 6
Preparation Class Series	March 15, 22, 29
<b>Confirmation</b> Celebrations	April 29/30
<b>Senior Recognition</b> Weekend	May 20/21
ELCA <b>National Youth Gathering</b> (New Orleans)	July 16-20, 2024

*The Living Water of Youth Education*

**Bethesda Lutheran Church**

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**Bethesda Lutheran Church**

1517 Northwestern Avenue  
Ames, Iowa 50010

[www.BethesdaAmes.org](http://www.BethesdaAmes.org)

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Permit No. 137

Invite **EVERYONE** to our  
**Community-wide Annual Event!**



Trunk decorating . . . 5:30-6:30 pm

**Trunk-or-Treating . . . 6:30-7:30 pm**

PRIZES . TREATS . FUN . COME—ONE AND ALL!