

# the Wellspring

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

Published quarterly  
**Volume 16**  
Issue 2



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





# The Season of Road Construction

~ Pastor Ryan Arnold

*"Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight.*

*In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths."*

~ Proverbs 3:5-6

The neighborhood our family lives in recently received a new layer of blacktop on our roads. A refresh was definitely needed. Riding bikes, using roller blades, even jogging just wasn't as smooth a trip as it once was. Cracks were evident all over; pavement parts were breaking away at the edges as far as the eye could see.

Getting repairs completed ended up being more disruptive than I imaged. No one was allowed to drive in the neighborhood for a few days. Instead we had to park on the next street over, which adds a few minutes to our commutes. This made trips to school, work, and the grocery store a bit more complex than normal. Even mail delivery was delayed for a few days too.

But now? The road represents a major upgrade. One that defines curb appeal. Now fully functional, the route is better for cars, bikes, morning jogs. We'll benefit from the enhancements the new asphalt brings for years to come. I'm guessing our mail carrier appreciates the changes most of all.

The Midwest only has two seasons, winter and road construction, or so the saying goes. In that way it's been a long winter for many reasons: political strife, pandemic isolation, missing beloved activities, people and communities more than we realized we would.

All this strain on our system hasn't been without consequence. Mental health diagnoses are on the rise. So are our many of our waistlines. Fluid face-to-face conversations don't always come as easily as they once did.

We are not living our best lives.  
And it's been that way for a while.

Yet good news is on the horizon: the season of road construction is upon us. The path to a vaccinated populace is clear. Political strife has stabilized some, at least for now. Gatherings, serving the other, enjoying the company of beloved friends and family are now so much more possible than before.

Just as our nation looks toward infrastructure improvements, by way of upgraded roads, bridges, highways and broadband, so too we seek to buttress our spiritual selves, healing cracks from within that only divine intervention can mend.

We like to set course for whatever it is we think we desire; the call to rugged American individualism is a strong siren. Yet as a matter of faith we look outward for answers. Knowing that when we do, and seek the right places, we're better off for it.

Dear Lord, thank you for journeying with us through one heckuva winter. The routes we've taken to get here are worn, cracked, not working as well as they once did. Repave the roads on which we walk daily. Make our paths smooth, seamless, straight. We realize change is hard and accept there may be bumps along the way. Lead us along a path of inner peace, right relationship with others. A path that leads, ultimately, to you. **Amen.**





## From **Small** Perspectives . . .

~ **Tony Woodcock** Council President

**W**ith summer approaching, I was curious about what the Bible says about it. There are mentions of it throughout the Bible, but it was the verse from Proverbs (30:25) about ants that caught my eye. I love the book of Proverbs for its numerous bullets of timeless wisdom and guidance. It's my go-to book. Whether you have two minutes or two hours, it's always worth it. There's another ant-related proverb in 6:6. I can't say that it's an inspiring verse, but it is sometimes appropriate. I'll let you explore it for yourself to see what I mean.

It really has to stink to be an ant, working tirelessly your entire short life for one purpose: the survival of the colony. But maybe it's not as bad as we think. Have you ever seen ants get ahold of a potato chip? All the sudden you see this chip moving slowly across the ground and you realize that tens, maybe hundreds of ants are working together, in unison, to get that thing back to the colony. Oh, there's going to be a party tonight! Maybe the scout who found the chip gets a reward...and a day off...maybe not. With ants, we know that all will share and the food will get to where it's needed. If only human life were that simple!

As I said last time, I love looking for God in nature, so ants are very fascinating creatures. Their brains are microscopic, but they seem to have this collective intelligence that makes even us humans jealous. Clearly, even through Biblical times, ants were viewed as fascinating (and wise) creatures

who served as a model for how we humans should live and work...and serve the Lord. Thank you Lord, for not making us ants, but thank you Lord for giving us ants and all the other wonderful creatures of summer. Let us model an ant's focus and determination in how we serve You and all Your Children on this earth.

As I sat in Bethesda Lutheran's Centennial Hall last Sunday, participating in the Adult Forum, in person, it felt like we'd reached a milestone. Everyone sitting in there, myself included, was vaccinated. Wow! We were doing something unheard of a year ago: actually meeting in person. I had just come from in-person worship, where there were enough people (around 50) that it didn't feel sparse and started to feel very similar to pre-pandemic worship.

It seems there is a renewed energy in just seeing and worshiping with people we haven't seen for up to a year. With Summer here, I am looking forward to the return of the Modern Worship Service and the opportunities for outdoor worship that will be happening. The Council and Pastors continue to review the COVID numbers and updated CDC guidelines each month and will be updating our worship and other guidelines when it is appropriate to do so. Let us pray that the virus continues to dissipate and we can keep moving forward to a pre-pandemic type normal.

The Call Committee for the Deacon of Youth Ministry is meeting and has started the call process. Like the call process for a pastor, it starts with defining who Bethesda is, our mission and our people and what we are looking for in a candidate: the MSP (Ministry Site Profile). There is work in getting the MSP updated and that is what the Call Committee is currently focused on. From there, they will be working with the Synod to find candidates that are a good fit for our mission and goals. Let us pray that God will guide us to the right person to help grow an important part of Bethesda's ministry.

Go with God's speed,  
(and the Ant's determination),  
*Tony Woodcock*  
Council President







# Stewardship is so much more

~ **Daryle Vegge** Stewardship Board Chair



**SERVE**

**ENCOURAGE**

**CREATE**

**SHARE**

**GIVE**

**W**hen we think of stewardship in the context of church, we often think about being asked sometime in the fall of the year to pledge money to support the various missions of Bethesda Lutheran. Don't get me wrong, we will all be asked to do that again in September.

However, stewardship is so much more than just giving of our treasures—it can also be the sharing of our time and our talents. If we look around, we can see evidence of this weekly—choir singers, sound system tech people, food pantry workers, clothing closet workers, Sunday School teachers, scripture readers. There are others that are not quite so visible such as the council and board chairs and members, visitation people, Women's Sewing Group, Many Hands, those who maintain our church, those who provide banners and who “dress our sanctuary” for the various seasons. Many more!!

This year, Stewardship will provide background on various forms of personal stewardship at Bethesda by having monthly temple talks by one of our members, supported by printed material. You won't want to miss these. You will see and hear the words “**Serve, Encourage, Create, Share, and Give**” over and over again in relationship to our personal stewardship at Bethesda.



Our Stewardship annual fund kickoff will be held Sunday, September 26. We have high hopes to host a special in-person gathering! Mark this on your calendar, and we'll share details as they are developed.

Jeanne Stewart was the first Temple Talk presenter for Stewardship, representing the “Many Hands” and “Blanket Sew-ers” Ministry Teams, to exemplify how we can all be stewards with our service. **Many Hands Ministry Team**, part of the Christian Service, Mission, and Outreach Board, is busy with service projects to help people who live in our area. They are making walker and wheelchair bags, bible bags, and lap robes for those who live at Assisted Living facilities in Story, Boone and Marshall County.

The team welcomes all men/women/young adults who are interested in joining us. Even if you don't know how to sew, you are welcome to join us at workshops in the Commons as we will give you directions on cutting fabric, Velcro, or webbing. We put them together in kits with directions and give them out as “take-home kits” for those who are able to sew. Contact Jeanne if you would like to join Many Hands or the Blanket Sew-ers!



*Thank you for serving others!*



# Bethesda Youth and Outreach



## Hybrid is Our Interim Normal

During Holy Week we witnessed the FIRST COMMUNION of nine children during Maundy Thursday worship. After reinventing many things in 2020, we were so glad to get back to one very special (normal) celebration.

We had a great experience meeting on Zoom for SPLASH SUNDAY SCHOOL! Thanks to **Glenn Crosswait** and **Lori Woodcock** we learned about THE LORD'S PRAYER, Lent, and the Parables of Jesus.

CONFIRMATION was also a rewarding experience via Zoom, for our 8th graders, their mentors, and pastoral teachers. We celebrated their Affirmation of Baptism recently, at a Gather 'Round outdoor service. Thanks to everyone who came and showed their support *in-person* to our three Confirmants—and newest voting members!

We'll be doing these Gather 'Round outdoor services monthly, and on June 16 the celebration is for our HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS! Bring your lawn chairs @ 6:30 pm and gather in the circle around the arches.

Though it was a greyish rainy morning, our faithful Bunny Crew volunteers were on hand to set-up and host the 2021 COMMUNITY EASTER EGG HUNT! We greeted about 75 kiddos for the safely-distanced event, March 27 from 9:30–11 am. Everyone received a goody bag, and was escorted to one of four different scenario areas for different age groups. Our celebrity photo booth backdrop was a big hit as well!

This summer is also stacking up in excitement for VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL! **Sign up is LIVE** at [tinyurl.com/ebaz2kn4](https://tinyurl.com/ebaz2kn4) or use the convenient QR code at left. We are thrilled to be partnering with St. Andrew's to bring in the Lutheran Lakeside Daycamp crew to put on a fantastic VBS for kids Pre-K through 5th grade. You don't want to miss this fun, faith-filled, mostly outdoor activity for the kids this summer!

Middle schoolers also have the opportunity for a week of CONFIRMATION CAMP at Lakeside Lutheran (Spirit Lake) July 25-30. Bethesda pays half! Transportation provided. Sign-up with the QR code at left, or visit [tinyurl.com/czazxcz9](https://tinyurl.com/czazxcz9)





# Worship, Music & Arts

~ **Jeanne Stewart** Board Chair

We have come a long way since the beginning of the Covid Shutdown. We want to take this time to thank all of the people who made it possible for us to worship during the Covid 19 shutdown.

Pastors Bryan and Ryan have had to improvise on how to provide us with God's word in worship services in front of a camera; something they had not been trained to do. The first worship service was done by a cell phone camera video. Bethesda had to learn how to stream both audio and visual and make it consistently work. We learned how to have worship in our parking lot over a local radio frequency.

Mark and Mary did a great job of providing us music that was taped ahead of time or in the sanctuary while videotaping the service. Mark has been busy mixing the individual virtual choir members (Adult, Children and Saturday night band) into a music piece for each Sunday with either stop action graphics or art work appropriate for the song and liturgy for that Sunday.

The Audio/Video crew of Rod Fisher, Allan Schmidt, Randy and Kathy Slocum made it possible for us to worship at home during this time of sheltering from Covid 19. This on-line ministry is very popular with everyone. We will continue with the on-line service after we are fully open for worship for those that are home bound.

The Bethesda Council at their January meeting approved the limited face-to-face attendance of the Sunday Worship Service that allowed a total of 50 people in the Sanctuary starting in February. All people going to the face-to-face worship services had to follow the CDC guidelines of wearing masks, socially distancing and could not shake hands, sing, or go to the communion rail.

Starting with Holy Week, the Council increased the acceptable attendance to 37 family units with 6 people being the maximum to a group. We started with a total of 21 people (adults and children) on Feb 7th, 55 people for Easter April 2, 39 people on April 11th, 50 people on April 25 and 65 people on May 2nd. Slowly people are coming to church as they feel comfortable getting out and nearer people not in their "pod."



The sanctuary sound booth and projector is nearing completion.

WMA plans to slowly continue moving forward with worship returning to as normal as possible while following all of the ELCA and CDC guidelines for worship attendance. We look forward to the future when we can share Christ's body and blood together as the large Bethesda family.

We thank you for taking the survey to help us plan for the startup of the Saturday evening Service. We will use your input and make recommendations to the Council.

During the Covid shutdown, the new sound system and screen project was started and is probably  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the way completed. We will need to determine if any modifications are necessary once we have used the system a bit.

With the expanded Audio/Visual needs, we will be looking for more volunteers to be trained to help Rod, Allan, Randy and Kathy. If you are interested in volunteering, please let me know.

Thank you for being part of this great Bethesda family!

*Jeanne Stewart*  
Worship, Music, and Arts Board





## Modern Worship Survey Results Are IN!

Throughout April we surveyed the congregation about *how best to bring back the modern worship service*. Response was strong, 165 Bethesda members and friends chimed in, many sharing how much they love, and miss the service. While we wondered if another date, or time, or location for the service might be of interest, survey results were fairly clear: *Saturday at 5:30pm, in the Commons, is what works best for most*. Church council, in collaboration with our Worship Music and Arts board are reviewing these results and should have a plan—and launch date—for the return of the service in place soon. Stay tuned!



## Clothing Closet Status

The Clothing Closet will reopen for customers when the church is unlocked to the public from 9am–4pm, Monday through Thursday. Our racks are full and ready to be shopped! The "open" schedule will be determined by our volunteers' availability. Interested in helping? Contact Kathy Harris at [kmh1951@msn.com](mailto:kmh1951@msn.com).



**Are you having trouble receiving Bethesda's emails?** We've posted an article on our website that addresses this issue. You can enable your email on your computer to safely allow (or "whitelist") the BethesdaAmes.org domain to reach you. From our homepage [www.bethesdaames.org](http://www.bethesdaames.org) click on the "Resources" tab, and then click on the image printed above (Email Whitelist Guide). Then click the button with your type of Email. Still have questions? Contact Linda Fevold at [lfevold@bethesdaames.org](mailto:lfevold@bethesdaames.org).

## Immigration Focus

### Voyagers Adult Forum

Pastors Bryan and Ryan are leading a six-week series in "hybrid" mode (both in-person and via Zoom) called "Transformed Community: Freed and Empowered for Radical Welcome." The study is a collaborative effort of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS), Lutheran Outdoor Ministries, and the ELCA/AMMPARO. About 15 participants meet each Sunday following worship, for reading and lively discussion.

### A Few ASIP - DACA Testimonials

"The help I have received from Ames Sanctuary Interfaith Partners (ASIP) has already begun to change my life. The amount of hope and excitement for my future this organization has brought me is indescribable! Knowing that I will now become a (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) DACA recipient really has been a dream come true! Words cannot describe how thankful I am to all the generous people who have donated. You all are seriously changing lives!"

"First, I want to start with a thank you. This program has helped me take a big step in succeeding my biggest dream—being able to go to college, becoming a regular student. I want to help my parents and pay them back the struggle they went through to come to this country for a better life not only for them but for their children. This organization (ASIP) helps dreamers like me have the opportunity to succeed in this country and become something big, making a change for the better. When I receive my DACA I would love to join the National Guard. I want to protect this country that has given my family and I many opportunities and everything we need. I would like to thank all the people who donate to this program and also encourage other to keep donating because it is a change in many lives. I personally will never forget this help. Thank you."

"Thanks to ASIP, I was able to not worry about spending more than a month's rent on DACA, and I'll be able to rest easier living my life like everyone else, driving a car, advocating for my community, and working like everyone else. Most importantly I'll be able to get work experience in the field I'm studying for! I've been waiting for my chance to apply for DACA for a long time, so once again I thank ASIP for this amazing opportunity."

# Saving Suds Makes a Real Impact

~ **Cheyenne Steward** Christian, Service, Mission & Outreach Board Chair

**S**aving Suds is a laundry ministry team that is a partnership between St. Andrews Lutheran Church and Bethesda Lutheran Church. We at Bethesda have committed to handing out quarters, laundry pods, and light snacks every first Thursday of the month to anyone in need at Squeaky Clean laundromat. Pastor Ryan, Jo Hutchins, and Cheyenne Steward were able to volunteer for the first event on Thursday, May 6, from 4-7:00 pm, where we set up a table outside and helped patrons as they entered. It was a wonderful opportunity to help families and individuals in need. We could still use your help! We need 2-3 volunteers to be available from 4-7 the first Thursday of the month.

Please sign up online (at [tinyurl.com/94cyv7u](https://tinyurl.com/94cyv7u), or by using the QR code at right) if you are interested. Contact Cheyenne, Lisa or Pastor Ryan if you have any questions. Keep the donations and volunteers coming! This is a great opportunity to help those in need have clean clothes and dignity!



SCAN ME



# Change is Just Around the Corner!

~ **Rod Fischer** Food Pantry Co-Chair

**A**s vaccinations increase and the number of Covid infections decrease, the Bethesda Lutheran Church Food Pantry Committee is working towards reopening the food pantry to guests once again!

After nearly 16-months of providing curbside service to food pantry guests in all kinds of weather, July 1 is the target date for making the transition to in-person food shopping. Guests will be required to wear a mask and only individuals (one at a time), or family members (as a group) will be admitted to shop. Other changes will include the lifting of the one-visit-per-month rule to the food pantry and guests will not be restricted to the weight limits that were in place before the pandemic.



It's anticipated four volunteers will be needed when the pantry reopens. One person will be responsible for admitting guests into the church, one person will handle paperwork, a third person will oversee helping guests at the meat freezer and cooler and the fourth person will weigh the food selected by the guests. The food will be weighed to keep track of our inventory and to report it to United Way of Story County.

The Bethesda Lutheran Church Food Pantry remained open during the entire length of the pandemic lockdown and recovery. That could not have been possible without a small, but dedicated group of individuals willing to take some risk by interacting with the public to help those families and individuals in need of supplemental food during this public health crisis. They fulfilled the mission of our food pantry by demonstrating "Jesus' love for others by providing supplemental food to all who ask" in these truly extraordinary times.



# Story County **Bread for the World**

~ **Glenda Eggerling**

**P**resident Biden's \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan, includes a one-year expansion of the Child Tax Credit (CTC) that would make it available to all low income families with children. According to a Bread for the World Fact Sheet, expanding the CTC would do more to reduce hunger and poverty among our nation's children than any single policy has in decades. Presently, nationwide an estimated 27 million children under age 17 live in families who do not earn enough to qualify for the full CTC because they do not have enough taxable income. The CTC needs to be available to all children in need, including children in immigrant families with ITIN numbers, children in U.S. territories, in large families, and involved with the child welfare or other intervention system. These are families in which food insecurity and hunger are most prevalent according to a report on the CTC expansion from the Center of Budget and Policy Priorities.

The three major components of the CTC expansion are: it would increase the benefit from \$2000 per year to \$3000 for children up to age 6 and \$3600 for children 6 - 17; it would pay in monthly installments of \$300 per month for each younger child and \$250 per month for each older child; and it would be equally available to all families starting at \$0 income through middle-income status. Providing the credit monthly, rather than in a lump sum when families file their taxes which is now the case, makes it more effective in preventing hunger. Frequently low-income households run short of grocery money on a cyclical basis, say, before workers receive their next paycheck. This money will smooth out the fluctuations between the paycheck money available for food, any SNAP benefits, and the food bank allotment.



**breadfortheworld**  
HAVE FAITH. END HUNGER.

These changes should be made permanent. By making this significant set of changes to the Child Tax Credit, The American Rescue Plan Act will cut the number of children in poverty by more than 40 percent which is historic.

What will families receiving this benefit do with this additional money? The Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago has studied this question as well as the Niskanen Center, a conservative think tank, and their conclusions are similar. According to a study from the Niskanen Center, titled, "Report: The Conservative Case for a Child Allowance," a child allowance such as the CTC would relieve household instability by strengthening the family through increasing the dollars available to spend on education and health, and by helping pay for household rent, food, and transportation.

After reading about the benefits of the CTC, I hope you will write to our Senators Ernst and Grassley, and to Rep. Feenstra to ask that they support legislation making the CTC permanent.

**Senator Chuck Grassley**  
721 Federal Building  
210 Walnut Street  
Des Moines, IA 50309  
Phone: (515) 288-1145  
[www.grassley.senate.gov/contact/  
questions-and-comments](http://www.grassley.senate.gov/contact/questions-and-comments)

**Senator Joni Ernst**  
733 Federal Building  
210 Walnut Street  
Des Moines, IA 50309  
Phone: (515) 284-4574  
[www.ernst.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/contact](http://www.ernst.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/contact)

**Representative Randy Feenstra**  
723 Central Avenue  
Fort Dodge, IA 50501  
Phone: (515) 302-7060  
<https://feenstra.house.gov/contact>



# BETHESDA WOMEN

## ZOOM . . . GATHER PRAYER CIRCLE

All women are welcome to join our discussions as we transition **from Zoom Prayer Circle to . . . Gather Prayer Circle**. For our May and our Summer Gatherings, we are tentatively planning on meeting in person, outside, on the church patio, weather permitting. (East side of the building) If it's cold or raining, we can relocate into the Commons. Please bring your copy of the *Gather* Magazine. The *Gather* Magazine is a unique opportunity for women. It has grown into a colorful, contemporary collection of articles that includes this Bible study.

May's Study is titled "The journey of generations."

(*Gather* magazine, May 2021, page 20)

New Subscriptions to *Gather* are available at a reduced price online. (\$9.95/year)

Our upcoming **Gather Prayer Circle** are as follows:

- **Thursday, May 27**  
9:30am visit 10:00 Bible Study . . . . . East Patio
- **Thursday, June 24**  
9:30am visit, 10:00 Bible Study . . . . . TBA
- **Thursday, July 22**  
9:30am visit, 10:00 Bible Study . . . . . TBA
- **Thursday, August 26**  
9:30am visit, 10:00 Bible Study . . . . . TBA

## WOMEN'S BOARD ELECTIONS

**We need a Treasurer!** Have you been looking for a way to connect with the women and love crunching numbers? If so, we need you! Please reach out to any board member for more information.

We have been having Zoom Board Meetings every other month. As summer approaches, we will transition back to monthly, and tentatively in person.

- Tuesday, May 25 . . . . . 6:30pm
- Tuesday, June 22 . . . . . 6:30pm
- Tuesday, July 27 . . . . . 6:30pm
- Tuesday, August 24 . . . . . 6:30pm
- Tuesday, September 28 . . . . . 6:30pm

## SCANDINAVIAN COFFEE

We will decide at the July Meeting what we will be planning for this year's Scandinavian Coffee. We are hoping and praying it will be possible to have an in-person event, although we may need to modify some aspects. Stay tuned!



**The Wellspring** magazine is published quarterly by Bethesda Lutheran Church, a Congregation of the Southeastern Iowa Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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

## WORSHIP SCHEDULE

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 Ailshie at 232-6256 or [contact@BethesdaAmes.org](mailto:contact@BethesdaAmes.org) with requests/comments regarding this magazine, or to submit an article for the Fall issue (deadline July 29, 2021)



## **June 2021, LSI Bulletin/Newsletter Article and Story**

### **Happy Father's Day!**

At Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI), we strive to build up and empower Iowa kids and families. For us, Father's Day is a time to celebrate all the fathers and male role models we see every day.

Through our Early Childhood Services, young men are learning to become dads. They're becoming confident and active in their child's life, and they are creating loving, bright futures for their families.

Many Iowa children entering foster care need a positive male role model in their lives. And through LSI Foster Care and Adoption, our licensed foster dads are there to help guide them.

This is only possible through your support of LSI! If you would like to make a gift, please contact Deb Whitford, LSI director of philanthropy and church relations, at [Deborah.Whitford@LSIowa.org](mailto:Deborah.Whitford@LSIowa.org) or 563-676-2065.

Thank you for responding to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service!

*Our Mission: Lutheran Services in Iowa responds to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service. LSI is an affiliated social ministry partner of the Iowa congregations of the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) and a member of LSA (Lutheran Services in America). We proudly serve people of all ages, abilities, religions, sexes, gender identities, national origins, ethnicities, races, and sexual orientations. Learn more at [LSIowa.org](http://LSIowa.org) and [Facebook.com/LSI.iowa](https://Facebook.com/LSI.iowa).*

### **Finding Paradise**

Perseverance is a familiar quality for Mon, who after spending decades living as a refugee from an early age was recently able to place roots in Iowa and succeed in building a life for his family.

After living in a Nepali refugee camp for almost 24 years, Mon's family was able to resettle in the U.S. When they arrived in Iowa, they moved directly into a tiny apartment. But the single room was not sufficient for their family – especially once their youngest daughter was born. They stayed in the apartment for four years, but Mon was determined to create a better home for his family.

Mon secured housing for his family through the Habitat for Humanity program, and through LSI Refugee and Immigrant Services, he was able to get on track and save and earn money towards his goal of homeownership. With guidance from staff in LSI's Match and Save financial program, he was able to open a savings account and develop a monthly savings plan.

Mon and his family moved into their new home last year, and he said LSI and Habitat for Humanity were critical steps in helping him learn about U.S. finances and savings – lessons that will pay off during his journey as a homeowner.

"I felt very sad when I left my country," Mon says. "I felt as if I lost my paradise. But when I got the key and when I entered my house, I felt that I regained my lost paradise. So that was the happiest moment in my life and right now, I, my family, and kids are super happy to live in this new house."



**Bethesda Lutheran Church**  
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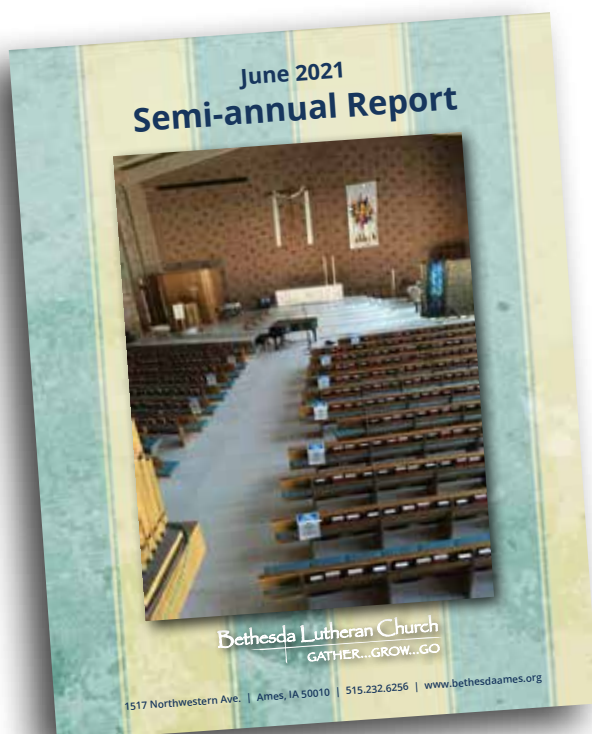
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Permit No. 137

## Semi-annual Meeting: **June 27**

SAVE THE DATE for our Semi-annual congregational meeting—**Sunday, June 27**, immediately following worship.

A vote will be held to approve changes to the Constitution and Bylaws. Those changes can be reviewed in advance of the meeting by scanning the QR code at right with your smart device, or by contacting the church office at [contact@bethesdaames.org](mailto:contact@bethesdaames.org) or 515.232.6256.



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