

the Wellspring

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

Published quarterly
Volume 13
Issue 2



SUMMER 2018

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

1517 Northwestern Avenue | Ames, Iowa 50010-5299 | 515-232-6256 | www.bethesdanet.org



The Master Gardener of Our Spiritual Lives

~ Pr. Ryan Arnold

I'm an awful gardener. Or maybe it's just a lack of interest; we all have our hobbies, and this particular one isn't mine. But my wife Kathi? She **loves** gardening. Our long (long!) winter has now finally thawed, making room for quickly greening trees, grass and foliage. As a result, her interest in our little corner of God's world has been piqued. By all accounts our first Iowan spring has encouraged her green thumb, she's been chatting up ideas for how best to cultivate this new life growing all around us. It's been fun to watch.

First she thinned out our bed of irises. Then she noticed a thin patch of grass, then bought, applied and watered grass seeds to fill in the space. After that she encouraged both of us to tackle the backyard planter. That planter was an absolute mess, so we removed dead leaves, pesky dandelions and dense undergrowth, just to see what would happen.

And as a result? Our iris bed looks perkier, the bulb-to-soil ratio is now much better aligned for stunning results in the coming months. The grass seeds are starting to pick up, more water will transform the space from parched to lush. And that messy backyard planter? There were several hostas and bleeding heart flowers hiding in there that, now freed of weedy competition, are really starting to take off.

So while I don't enjoy the tasks of gardening I absolutely appreciate the result of her efforts to get our yard in tip-top shape. What before was either overgrown, or undergrown, or disorganized and dying is now cleaned out, and starting to take shape in some really splendid ways.

Fortunately our spiritual lives have a master gardener, ready to get his hands dirty, ready to do all the hard work for our benefit. In John 15:1-6 Jesus refers to himself as the vine and God as the vinegrower. And master gardener God knows what should be in the garden of our lives and what shouldn't.

At our best we are grafted into the vine of Christ, growing with, and one with, our savior. When that happens we blossom, new life springs forth, we bear much fruit. We are spiritually strong, we are emotionally healthy, we are closer to God's original design. But to arrive at that requires some introspection.

What weeds within need to be removed? God stands waiting, gardening trowel at the ready, prepared to pluck those distractions out.

What branches in you don't bear fruit? God is here, shears in hand, prepared to prune areas that have long since died.

What barren patches of soil in your soul clamor for more? God brings the seeds of life to plant, and the watering can to grow those seeds into fullness.

This spring as you dive into the messy work of tending to your earthly gardens I ask you to keep an eye on your spiritual garden too. Ask God to show you the areas that need some tending. Ask God to do what God does best, plucking, pruning and planting in just the right places. And then sit back and receive the blessings of new growth, splendid colors, and renewed joy in your life, right alongside Jesus Christ, just as God intends. Amen.



John 15:1-6



Offering Holy Hospitality at Bethesda

"Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it."

~ Hebrews 13:2

Here's a great reason to welcome guests! Who doesn't want to entertain an angel? However exciting that may sound, there may be many other, better reasons for practicing hospitality, especially as we share God's wonderful and Good News.

I am writing on this topic because I have come to believe that hospitality is an essential ingredient in our future at Bethesda. Summed up, hospitality creates a sacred space where people feel welcome, loved and part of a wider, caring community. As we seek to grow our community at Bethesda, it is important that newcomers and guests experience those feelings, too.

Hospitality is mentioned throughout the Old and New Testaments, seen as both a virtue and a commandment from God. Remember the three angels-as-strangers entertained and fed by Abraham? Jesus and his disciples depended entirely on the hospitality of others as they went from town to town in their ministry. And early Christians were encouraged to show generous hospitality to others, especially those less fortunate than themselves.

To help evaluate the hospitality at Bethesda, we hired church communications consultant Scott Vaughan to serve as a "mystery shopper" at both worship services one weekend in February. He shared his impressions as a guest coming to Bethesda for the first time, from parking his car to finding his way inside the building, to the welcome he got from members and information from our printed and electronic materials.

Vaughan has worked more than 20 years as a church consultant (he advised another Ames congregation recently). The weekend he visited Bethesda, he also shared his observations with staff and at two information meetings. Here are comments that I found particularly fascinating:

"Hospitality is a culture and it's contagious. We need to be friendly to everyone because we're all greeters."

"'Visitor' has a negative connotation, that someone is here once and gone. 'Guest' is a positive term that indicates service."

"The Lord is sending people to you every week. You need all kinds of ways to respond to them, and this is where most churches stumble and fail."



"Being a greeter is a calling, someone who never meets a stranger." He suggested people be at church doors, serving outside as weather permits, and that greeters stay after the service to ask guests for contact information.

"Summer church programs can be different, but don't suspend them in the summer. It takes time to re-boot those programs in the fall, and summer also is when people visit other churches."

He also challenged church leadership to speak to 100 people every week. "Who did you make a friend with today?"

Last year, a group of people came together to talk about how Bethesda could better serve guests and new members. Many good ideas were presented and we ended up forming two new ministry teams. Helen Olson is leading the Hospitality Ministry Team that reports to the Christian Service, Mission and Outreach Board. Joyce O'Donnell is leading the New Member Ministry Team that reports to the Congregational Life and Care Board.

I am excited about the new things these ministry teams will bring to Bethesda. I also am anxious to see what recommendations from Vaughan's report will be adopted here. The Communications Ministry Team (which includes one person from all six boards) is prioritizing items from this report as well as our five-year strategic plan, which will be presented to Council by early summer.

Meanwhile, please read the church communications report, give me your thoughts, and answer the question: How can you offer "holy hospitality" at Bethesda?

Laura Miller
Council President

Welcome to Our 2018 New Members!

The **Bal** family is made up of **Mike, Ciara, Lincoln (5), Oliver (3)**, and their two cats, Roofus and Clowey. Mike and Ciara have been married for just over 6 years and chose to settle down in Ames about 4 years ago. Ciara is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist but is currently staying home to operate as full-time mom/wife and CEO of the household. Mike works from home managing teams from all over the world, building websites and applications for clients like Facebook, New York Times, and The Nobel Prize. Lincoln and Oliver are very active participating in hockey, swimming, music, tumbling, and more. Their favorite activity right now is Ninja Zone, which is basically parkour for kids.



Since **Gage Kelly** has become a member of Bethesda, you can see quite a bit of him. Everyone knows Gage. He has had nothing but a great experience since joining Bethesda. The best part is meeting new people, he says. When he's not at church (and volunteering for Sunday School, communion, teaching and the nursery) he's playing video games or riding his bike around Bethesda.



Rod and Kris Kerns moved to Ames from Fort Dodge. Rod works in sales, and Kris works at Iowa State University. They share their home with two fur babies

(bichon frise breed). The Saturday Praise Band is glad to have Rod joining their ranks. Look for him to sing the National Anthem at an Iowa Cubs game in July!



Mif and Barb Grotnes are native Iowans who met and married at the University of Iowa. Mif earned his Master's in Hospital Administration

at Xavier University in Cincinnati, Ohio. He then held many positions at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital in Mason City, finally serving as the first lay CEO. Simultaneously Barb became an RN at NIACC, serving in many positions. Children Matt and Marah graduated from high school with their father's signature on their diplomas as President of the School Board. Upon his retirement, Mif was the Executive Vice President of Mercy Health Services (now Trinity Health), and has done consulting and interim CEO positions. They both have been active in their churches and communities (MIF as congregational President in Mason City, Clive and Ankeny; Barb as accompanist for several churches. They are pleased to be retired in Ames and getting acquainted with neighbors and church members.

Let me introduce you to **Daniel and Mary Olson**. It's exciting to have them be a part of our faith family because come late July they are expecting a baby! What



better gift as members of Bethesda can we give Baby Olson than to envelope Christ's child with open arms. We are also very fortunate to call Mary our new Youth Education Specialist. When Dan and Mary have some free time they both love the outdoors and taking their dog, Doggie, for a walk. When in season, Dan also enjoys pheasant hunting. Mary enjoys cooking and delving into Theology even more from when she was in college.



When **Larry Peter** isn't at his job at Priority Envelope in Nevada he enjoys playing golf or he's trying to complete his on-going project of finishing his basement. He has two grown children, Nicole who lives in Iowa City and Joshua who is out in Denver, Colorado. He has found the people at Bethesda to be very friendly and enjoys the different services we offer. Welcome Larry to Bethesda!



Larry, Angela, and Chloë Prince have been Ames residents since Summer 2017. Originally from the Southeast, they are ridiculously happy to have survived their first real winter. Angela is an Assistant Professor in the School of Education at Iowa State University, and Larry is a Systems Support Specialist in World Languages and Cultures. Chloë is completing first grade and lives for Friday family movie night. She also

enjoys reading, playing defense in soccer, and climbing things. Larry enjoys college sports, science fiction films, and an authentic sausage gravy & biscuit. Angela enjoys crafting, lounging on white sand beaches, and riding her aqua moped. The family's fur baby, an eight pound Havanese named Savannah, recently turned three years old.

Vivian Severson recently retired from AXA Equitable in Farmington, Connecticut, in July of 2017 after 14 years. Previously worked at The Hartford for four years, and Aetna for 18 years. I lived on the east coast for 47 years before moving back to Iowa last October. I am originally from Roland, Iowa, where I was confirmed at Bergan Lutheran Church and graduated from NESCO High School (McCallsburg/Zearing). After high school I attended Career Academy in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and became a medical assistant. I moved back to Iowa to enjoy my family and also my 11 great-nieces and -nephews all under the age of 10. I have my sister and brother along with their families and most of my aunts, uncles and cousins in the surrounding area. I reside in Ames and am looking forward to starting a whole new chapter in my life in Iowa and now have time to do some traveling.



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

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Worship Schedule

Saturdays at 5:30 p.m.

Sundays at 9:30 a.m.

Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m.

Sunday School • Adult Forums • Coffee Fellowship
Sunday after service at 10:40 a.m.

Church Office Hours

9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Monday–Thursday

9:00 a.m. – Noon Friday

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NOTE: please contact Lisa Ailshie at 232-6256 or contact@bethesdanet.org with requests/comments regarding this newsletter, or to submit an article for the next issue (deadline August 1, 2018)

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

Artwork credit for this month's *Wellspring* cover photo:
www.shutterstock-573560338



Get to Know Our New Youth Education Specialist!

Hi, I am **Mary Olson**. I am excited to join the Bethesda staff! Thank you to all for being so welcoming. My husband, Daniel, and I continue to be amazed at how the Spirit is working in and through this church, making it a beacon of light and a place of love for all. I am overjoyed to be a part of this amazing community!

Previously, I worked at universities in Georgia and Illinois as a Resident Hall Director. I typically described that role as the “Dorm Mom” and the position taught me a lot! That job prepared me to handle anything from budgeting and facility management to student development and conflict resolution. But my passion is working with God’s people, and that is why I am so excited to be the Youth Education Specialist at Bethesda. My first experience with ministry was participating in music ministry. I started singing in the children’s choir when I was 4 or 5 years old. In high school I joined a music ministry group called Faith Sound. It was a local group of about 20 high school kids who traveled Iowa, playing and singing worship music for all different types of churches. We have CDs.

I continued music ministry in college while studying theology at St. Ambrose University in Davenport, Iowa. During college, I served with an organization called NET Ministries. I traveled the entire United States with a team of 11 young adults, facilitating youth retreats for middle school and high school students. Besides serving the Bethesda community, my most recent ministry endeavor is to start my own speaking/worship ministry focused on helping God’s people rekindle a culture of story-telling and song-sharing with family and friends.



Here is a list of some other fun things about me: I have a list of favorite things and S’more’s is #5. I have been to the Pyramids in Egypt. I am a newlywed!

My husband and I will share our first anniversary on July 9 and expect our first baby later in July. I am fascinated by the enneagram which is kind of like the ancient Desert Fathers’ spiritual personality test.

One of the first things you will notice about me is that I tend to smile a lot. I also studied radio/TV in college and got to sit on the set of the Today Show. One of my favorite things to do is listen to audio books while I am folding laundry or cleaning the house. I have a huge extended family with 90 first cousins on one side. My personal motto is: Life is like a patchwork quilt; we make it together.




Vacation Bible School
June 11-14, 2018 • 1:00-5:00 pm

Anyone aged 4-years -5th grade is invited!

- Age-appropriate Bible studies
- Great leaders and Riverside counselors
- Exciting worship with fun songs and skits
- Creative activities and snacks

A final program followed by an Ice Cream Social will be held the last day @ 7:00 pm, Thursday, June 14.

Cost is \$10 per student—max \$20 per family. Each child (*registered by June 4*) will be provided a t-shirt before the final program on June 14. Sign-up is available at the Welcome Center and online with secure payment feature at www.bethesdanet.org/site/vacation-bible-school. Sign up with your family, friends and neighbors TODAY!



Youth & Family Ministries in Action

ELCA Youth Gathering

Evan Bay Brakke, Ryan Hinderaker, Jacy Lehman, Griffin Meyer, Riley Nelson and Abby Robinder, along with Dan Hinderaker, Pastor Bryan and Katie Twedt will be attending the 2018 ELCA National Youth Gathering in Houston, Texas. Thank you to everyone for supporting our fundraising! We are excited to have met our goal of \$3000 with our fundraising efforts this year. We can't wait to take this trip and our prayer is that we will come back changed, renewed and ready to make a difference in our daily lives and as members of Bethesda!



#doyouLYFFT

LYFFT Summer Schedule

Wednesdays @ 7:00 pm

- May 30 Youth Room "Study Break" for school finals
- June 6 Ada Hayden—bring your bike!
- June 13 Kickball! Meet at Bethesda and we'll head to a nearby field to play
- June 20 Disc Golf @ Carroll Marty Disc Golf Course, 1500 Gateway Hills Park Drive
- June 27 NO LYFFT (ELCA Youth Gathering)
- July 4 NO LYFFT (HOLIDAY)
- July 11 Capture the Flag @ Brookside Park, 1325 6th Street
- July 18 Perfect Games LYFFT Outing! Meet at Bethesda and we'll carpool
- July 25 Movie Night! "I Can Only Imagine" Youth Room
- Aug 1 Team Tourney Night—Bring your friends for a night of crazy games and fun!
- Aug 8 Roller-skate/Roller-blade @ Skate West, 2019 Grand Ave., West Des Moines
Meet @ Bethesda 4:30 pm and carpool to WDSM for a fun night of skating. Back in Ames at 9:30 PM
- Aug 15 Kayaking at Ada Hayden! Meet @ Ada Hayden from 4:30-8:00 pm for a fun evening
- Aug 22 End-o-Summer Firepit Party @ Dan's backyard: hamburgers, hot dogs, smores!

Confirmation Weekend: May 5/6



Congratulations to our 8th Grade Confirmation students for a wonderful weekend celebration! Pictured above are Meghan Donald, Carter Robinder, Riley Nelson, Evan Bay Brakke, Justin Terry, and Tate Meinhard. God's blessings to each of you as you take your next step on your faith journeys.

Celebrating HS Seniors

Congratulations to our Bethesda High School Seniors: (L-R) Isak Werner-Anderson, Kate Nettleton, McKenna Meinhard, Griffin Meyer, Zach Buttenhoff and Max Goeders. God's blessings to you all as you embark on your exciting journey beyond High School.



Be Intentional During Your Summer Break!

As we look ahead to summer break and all the activities that go along with it, remind yourself to take time for God. Find a new devotional or focus on a book of the Bible that speaks to you. Enjoy some quiet time, pray or get together with friends to encourage each other in personal faith. Be a light in the world to those around you, just as Jesus is the light that gives us all hope and meaning. May your summer be full of adventure, fun, family, and relaxation. Enjoy!



Boy Scout Troop 140

Did you know that Bethesda Lutheran Church is the charter organization for Troop 140 of the Boy Scouts of America (BSA)? What does that even mean?

Bethesda received a charter in the early 1980s from the BSA to use the Scouting program and sponsor Troop 140. BSA provides the necessary training, support materials, and direct professional service necessary for Bethesda to operate the troop. A committee oversees the troop. Bethesda is represented on the committee by the charter organization representative, Dan Hinderaker. The committee appoints a Scoutmaster, reviews all expenditures, sets policies as needed and supports the execution of the Scouting program.

You've likely heard that the Scout motto is "be prepared." When asked "prepared for what," Lord Baden-Powell, the founder of the Scouting movement in 1907, said, "why, for any old thing." His idea was that Scouts should prepare themselves to become productive citizens and strong leaders and to bring joy to other people. The Aims of Scouting are the same today as it was over 100 years ago: character development, citizenship training, and mental and physical fitness.

Today, Troop 140 has 33 Scouts from the Ames area. The troop meets (nearly) every Monday night at Bethesda and camps once a month. A garage on the west end of the church parking lot holds the troop's gear. Nearly three times as many Troop 140 Scouts earn the rank of Eagle Scout as compared to Scouts in an average troop. The troop is active and healthy, in part because of the strong support of Bethesda Lutheran Church, its chartering organization.

by Tom Brumm, Scoutmaster



Bethesda Extended

...



Update from Bethesda Women

Greetings from the women of Bethesda, all of whom are named in the little green directory that was updated and distributed recently. This resource is helpful for Bible Circle information, scheduled events, and functioning of 10 service groups. Thanks to Joanne Fredericksen and Pat Swanson who are initiating calls to service group leaders, and to all who respond with cakes for funerals or other needs as they arise. Please call the office for any corrections, additions, or 'new business' regarding the list of names, addresses, phone numbers, and e-mails.

A new Bible Circle is meeting on the THIRD TUESDAY, 9:30 am, at the Northcrest Commons "Gather at Northcrest," using *Gather* magazine. This group is open to residents of Northcrest, or to those who are unable to attend their Circle meeting. Coffee and cookies available (thank you Northcrest)!



On April 21, Dave and Dorothy Dyer Hansen delivered 50 Baby Care Kits, 10 boxes of quilts, and 50 baby blankets for Lutheran World Relief (LWR) to Redeemer Lutheran in Ankeny. Also that day, 26 women met for the Spring Gathering Brunch at Bethesda. Guest speaker John Claes presented good news from Lutheran Services of Iowa (LSI), and a special offering of \$326 was received for LSI.

Betty Snider (90), and Hazel Hogue (100), especially enjoyed the Cluster Gathering, held April 28 at their "growing-up church," Bethlehem Lutheran in Slater. Eleven of 13 Cluster congregations were represented.

June 22-23 will be our Southeast Iowa Synod Women's Gathering, at Windsor Heights Lutheran Church in Des Moines. Bethesda women will add \$326 to a Stewardship Challenge designated by the Synod Women's Organization at that time. Please attend!

~ Carolyn Ahlstrom (Pres); Karla Mortensen (VP); Gretchen Mosher (Sec); Jo Hutchins; Lindsay Peters



Bethesda Portraits . . .

Enjoy this story of faith from our Youth Ministries Specialist, **Katie Twedt**. Published in the May issue of *The Joyful Noise*, the newsletter of St. Stephen Lutheran—Katie's church in Urbandale—view the entire story at www.ststephenlutheran.org/newsletter/. Bethesda plays a big part in Katie's faith journey . . .



Stories of Faith



A faith story is easier to tell than you think. A Christian faith story has three parts:

FROM—THROUGH—TO

Put another way, a faith story goes like this: I used to be (like this), then (something) happened to me, and now I'm (this way).

This month, Katie Twedt shares her faith story. There are at least two hopes: that you'll be filled with the Spirit as you witness the way God has worked in her life, and that you'll be inspired to write a story of your own.

FROM	TO
Judgmental	Merciful
Depressed	Joy-filled
Foolish	Wise
Selfish	Generous
Empty	Fulfilled
Gluttonous	Temperate
Entitled	Grateful
Fearful	Courageous
Short-tempered	Patient
Uncaring	Compassionate

My faith journey is one of strengthening, deepening, and finding ways to share more love and light. I grew up going to Sunday school every Sunday, completed confirmation, and actively participated in high school youth group. One thing that I value about my faith is the fact that my parents were so diligent in helping me establish this important foundation that would guide my life. Leaving for college, I knew I had this solid foundation to help carry me through my daily endeavors. However, I didn't stay as connected to God as I thought I was going to be able to do. I continued to pray and try to find time to dig into my bible, but I wasn't attending church like I did before entering this new season of my life. Fast forward to sophomore year, I received a text from Tracy Sabus as I was waiting to start my last class of the day. It said something along the lines of, "I gave out your information to a lady who is looking for youth assistants so you should be expecting a text or email about that later!" Little did I know that this would turn into something that would change my heart and relationship with God.



MARIANNE CHALSTROM

Marianne is a founding member of Ames Chamber Artists (ACA). This local group of vocalists just celebrated

their 30th year in Ames, with a special concert on May 19, "Endless Song."

Marianne is an alto and loves to sing with her friends who are also passionate about singing.

Chalstrom studied music and elementary education at Wartburg College in Waverly, Iowa.

Check out this great interview with Marianne . . .

www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ydcug2tLSuY





Outreach Ministries Highlights

Coins for Clothes v. 2.0

The second year of Coins for Clothes (lead by our Bethesda Sunday School program) raised a total of \$1,434.00. The funds were transferred to Tanzania by Lori Woodcock, and Mark Mvungi acknowledged the receipt!

"I am pleased to inform you that I was able to collect the money you sent for the school uniforms to the less privileged children in Primary schools. The money is deposited to Womens Group Account of Shighatini women and have informed them, They appreciated the wonderful gift to the kids in need, thank you so much they said.

Today I met with one of the ladies doing the visits to the schools identifying the needy children. They have done two schools and have three more schools to cover. Thus on behalf of the womens group and the needy children and Shighatini community as a whole, do receive our heartfelt thanks for the gift. Will keep you updated as the women continue the exercise.

With kind regards and Lords Blessings, *Mark Mvungi*"



Global Food Security

Do you find yourself watching TV documentaries on the natural disasters occurring in the world, the escalating number of civilian deaths, the growing stream of homeless and hopeless in many places, and ask yourself, what in the world can I do about this? What can America do? There *is* something we can do . . . In 2016 Congress passed the **Global Food Security Act** which authorized a global food security strategy for two years to reduce global hunger and malnutrition. Our Senators, Ernst and Grassley, and Rep. King all voted for it, and it had overwhelming bipartisan support. **Feed the Future** is the federal program authorized by the bill. Since 2011 in Feed the Future targeted program areas, there has been a 19% drop in poverty and a 26% reduction in stunting.

What can you do? The GFSA is up for reauthorization this year (S.2669 and HR 5129). Call, write, or email Ernst, Grassley, and King and ask them to vote to reauthorize this bill. Ask them to fully fund global food security programs: Feed the Future, Nutrition in Global Health Programs, and Food for Peace. As Christians, we are called to serve those Jesus called "the least of these." (Matthew 25)

"In addition to Feed the Future . . . this is the year the Farm Bill must be approved for another five years. In 2018 for the first time, ELCA Advocacy is putting its entire staff behind farm bill efforts . . . The farm bill is so vital for programs that are really important to us. . . from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to emergency food and commodities."

Bethesda, please contact Senators Grassley and Ernst, and Rep. King, and ask them to vote for fully funding the . . . farm bill." - *Living Lutheran* May 2018, p. 32
- Glenda Eggerling

AMOS Economic Summit

With all the sound bytes in the news recently, we've heard a lot about taxes. But how much do we really know about who benefits and who pays? It's time for a grown up conversation about taxes in Iowa.

Join AMOS leaders and institutions for an Economic Summit on **Saturday, June 2**, as we get beyond the sound bytes and partisan rhetoric to:

- Learn about our state and local tax system, asking "Who benefits? Who pays?"
- Hear from the team of AMOS leaders who have spent three months researching taxes in Iowa.
- Look at specific funding strategies to address the pressures on our families and neighbors, including mental healthcare, education, work force, and housing and neighborhood improvement.
- Engage candidates for public office and ask for their support of our agenda providing opportunity for all.

The summit will be at the Norwalk Christian Church with lunch and registration at 11:30 am; session held from noon-4:00 pm. For carpool information contact Henry or Janet Gray (233-270 or janheng@aol.com).



Be Informed About Bethesda

You are invited . . . to attend one of two forums the weekend of **June 2/3 after each worship service** to learn about proposed updates for our sanctuary! Council members have approved recommendations from the Sanctuary Media Task Force to update the audio-visual system and lighting in the sanctuary. The forums will explain details of the project and possible ways to finance it.

Last fall, Council hired R & D Industries, Inc., to conduct a study of the acoustics in the sanctuary and suggest ways to improve the audio-visual system. In January, RDI offered its report to Council, including options to add video screens and equipment to record worship services. Since that time, a task force led by Council member Chris Brakke has been evaluating the report. The task force's recommendations were presented to Council May 15, which voted to move ahead with the project.

The Facilities Ministry Team has been working to improve the dim lights in the sanctuary, also part of this project. **Come to the forums to get more details!**

Bethesda Choir

Another season of singing is winding down for the Bethesda Choir. In the summer months, you can expect all variety of other special music and musicians to pop up in Sunday morning worship: vocal soloists, instrumentalists, small ensembles, maybe even the full choir on the odd occasion. And be on the lookout for special events! The idea for an evening of "Pub Choir" was tossed out there by Pastor Ryan, so who knows?
~ Mark Kretsinger Harries

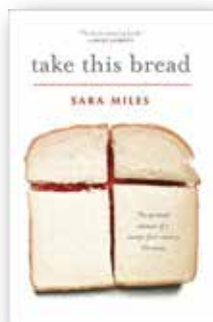
New Day for Scandinavian Coffee . . .

The 62nd Scandinavian Coffee is scheduled for SATURDAY, October 6, 2018. **Save the Date!**



Church Library Recommendation

Take this Bread, by Sara Miles is the spiritual memoir of a twenty-first-century Christian. Our newest book was given anonymously, but we would love to credit the donor. It includes a reading group guide in the back so a CONNECT group could use it as a book study. Check it out today, or sign-up to reserve it if it's already out.



Summer Treat Shop Reading

The Bethesda Library Treat Shop will be open from 9–11:00 every Monday morning from June 4 until August 13. All K–5th graders are welcome to read with our older Reading Buddies—and share our stories with Bethesda members who can no longer worship with us onsite. We will go visit our homebound members, and get acquainted through poetry, stories, jokes and riddles. Registration forms are in the church library. If you are willing to drive a group to visit locations within Ames and Story City, let us hear from you at 233-2720. Sixth graders and up have already volunteered to be Reading Buddies, but we can always use more. A sign-up sheet for helpers is also with the registration forms. Come have fun in the church library media center lounge on Mondays! ~ Jan Gray



Prayer Shawl Ministry

If you've looked in the office, you likely noticed the new display of Prayer Shawls—from an underused ministry of Bethesda women. These shawls (call them a wrap or a blanket, if you wish) are knitted and crocheted for any member of Bethesda to give to someone who needs prayers. My husband, Bob, has been blessed to know someone is praying for him, but when he is wrapped in a soft prayer shawl, it becomes even more real. If you know someone (not necessarily a Bethesda member) who needs cheering up or to know that someone cares, you may request a shawl. To avoid duplication, please make your request to Lynn Anderson—she keeps track of who has received a shawl. ~ Ann Hein

Bethesda Lutheran Church

1517 Northwestern Avenue
Ames, Iowa 50010

www.bethesdanet.org

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gather ... grow ... go

Changes in Semi-annual Meeting

We are trying something different for the semi-annual meeting this year! The meeting will be on **Wednesday, June 20, after the mid-week worship service.** Please come for a meal at 5:30 pm, worship at 6:30, followed by the semi-annual meeting at 7:00 pm.

Council members felt that a different day/time might encourage attendance by people who have not participated in the past. They also hope to keep the meeting as brief as possible.

Please consider joining us! You can expect to hear updates on the many activities happening at Bethesda!

AGENDA *(tentative)*

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|-------|---|---------------------------------|
| I. | Call to Order | Laura Miller, Council President |
| II. | Opening Devotions and Prayer | Bryan Simmons, Lead Pastor |
| III. | Approval of Agenda | |
| IV. | Approval of Minutes of Annual Meeting, January 28, 2018 | |
| V. | Reports | |
| | a. Pastoral Reports | Bryan Simmons and Ryan Arnold |
| | b. Treasurer's Report | Joel Brinkmeyer, Treasurer |
| | c. President's Report | Laura Miller, President |
| | d. Oktoberfest Ministry Team Report | |
| | e. Stewardship Campaign Update | |
| | f. Sanctuary Improvements Update | |
| | g. Landscape Project Update | |
| | h. Strategic Plan Update | |
| VI. | Old Business | |
| VII. | New Business | |
| VIII. | Adjournment | |
| IX. | Closing Prayer | Ron Morgan, President-elect |