



## FROM THE PASTOR (cont'd)

Beloved Bethesda Community,  
Blessed New Year to each of you.

As I anticipate the coming of the new year I try to envision a word, an intention that will guide me in my prayer, in my reading scripture, and in my spiritual practices throughout 2023. At first I thought "hope." Then "trust." Then "love."

All three of these seemed good, but a bit nebulous, vague, and imprecise. I want a word that directs my action, not just a word that lives in the head or heart, a feeling or thinking word.

Then I came across the Moravian Watchword for next year, a phrase from the 16<sup>th</sup> chapter of Genesis: "You are God who sees." For many years my father-in-law has given me a copy of Moravian Daily Texts devotional that I have used in my personal prayer and devotional life, so it seemed just perfect that this word came to me.

"You are God who sees" - El-roi in Hebrew - is the phrase that Hagar, mistress of Sarai, whom Abram impregnates, and the mother of Ishmael, uses to name God who finds her weeping by a stream in the wilderness. She, in her anguish, in her pain, in her feeling of abandonment, is spoken to by God and feels seen. God-who-sees, El-roi, encounters Hagar where she is, as she is: hurt, depressed, fearful, running from home.

God is the one who sees us, who truly encounters us as we are, masks off, fears out front, anxieties present, true-selves exposed.

My word for 2023, my intention, is "see."

I pray to see as God sees, to encounter others as God encounters them: in love, with compassion.

I invite you, too, to search for a word or phrase to guide your faith journey in 2023. I also invite you to join me in the daily practice of reading the Moravian Daily Texts. You can order a print copy or access the readings daily here: [www.moravian.org/daily\\_texts/](http://www.moravian.org/daily_texts/)

And I pray "that we may have energy, courage, and freedom to enact God's rule through the demands of this year. We submit our year to You and to Your rule, with deep joy and high hope."



### KNOWN TO HAVE BEEN SICK / HOSPITALIZED:

Scott Videen

Briana Moore

Sarah Holman

Joyce Swenson

Emmy Falco

Brad Forness (Sarah Possehl's husband)

Nate Magloughlin (Kim Krein's nephew)

**PLEASE CALL THE CHURCH  
(218) 236-1420**

*in the event of any hospitalization, a death or birth, so we are made aware of your needs.*

## STEWARDSHIP

Greetings Bethesda Contributors!

We are "very" grateful for all the pledge cards which have been returned! We are happy that we are definitely on track to meet the challenging budget 2023 presents us. All we ask is that we keep saying YES! as we all work together!

If anyone has not returned a pledge card, we welcome those as they help us plan our budget. They are not legally binding. We simply need to know how much we are working with! If anyone has questions as to how this works, we try to be as transparent and informative as possible — we love conversations!



Thank you all for all you do. We love input and conversing with everyone.

Theo Baspaly  
Chairman

***The Bethesda Star*** is an informative monthly newsletter made available to members and friends.

*It is composed at Bethesda Lutheran Church, 401 - 40th Avenue South, Moorhead MN.  
The editor is Roxanne West.*

***Deadline for inclusion in the February 2023 issue is January 26, 2023.***

# FROM THE PRESIDENT

 HAPPY NEW YEAR 

We begin a new calendar year with hope and anticipation of the many blessings, challenges, and adventures life will bring to us. Whether we are at home or at work, at school or at play, with friends or alone, God walks with us on our various paths and in our various moods, always loving and accepting us just where we are at. To hear this reassurance, this good news, is why I come to worship as much as I can. It is so easy for me to forget that God loves me. That's why I come to hear the word, to participate in the liturgy, to sing hymns, and to receive holy communion with my Bethesda family.

Advent and Christmas have been so meaningful for me at Bethesda. Thank you to all who make our worship special: Pastor Grant, Cantor Dillon, those who set up communion, readers of scripture, communion assistants, ushers, choir members and all who sing, Connor, Jessica, and Olivia for setting up and recording Facebook Live for our services, those who "click" the powerpoints put together by Terrie Jo, bell ringers: Sharon, Willy, Tammy, Sue (saxophone too), and Shannon including flute, Roxanne making bulletins and more, communion assistants, bread bakers, our candle keeper... so many people making worship possible and special at Bethesda. *Thank you!*

Take a look at the opportunities for worship, study, leadership, and service in this newsletter. **What is God calling you to do?** What is God calling you to do in your community of faith as well as at home, work, school, and play? All of these facets of life are important to one's well-being and wholeness. I urge everyone to prayerfully consider participating on a team (Worship and Music, Parish Life, Life Long Learning, Outreach, Property, Stewardship). You get to know people better and hopefully get excited about the important things we can do together for our community and in the world.

There are openings on Council to be filled. We have to always be evaluating how Bethesda can best function to be God's hands and feet in Moorhead and for Bethesda to be a place of healing for all. You can make a difference. Bethesda needs your gifts. Please say YES! Say yes to serving. Say yes to leading. Trust that Jesus is by your side, leading, calming, and providing what is needed. Think about it. Pray about it.

With gratitude for your partnership in mission and ministry at Bethesda and wishing you and yours all the best in 2023.

Sue Reinhart  
President



Bethesda's 8th Annual

## Comfort Food Cook-Off

AT BETHESDA LUTHERAN CHURCH

**JANUARY 29, 2023 - 11 AM**

*We are looking for your favorite:*

☆ **Hotdishes**      ☆ **Soups/Chilis**      ☆ **Desserts!**



**Prizes awarded in all three categories!**



# YOUTH CONNECTIONS

## *Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!*

Of course this is the time of year that we think about new years resolutions: be better at saving money, reach out to friends more, hit the gym, eat less sugar, less screen time, the list goes on. Personally, I have never been super great at sticking to these things. Then it's easy to get down on myself thinking, "My goal was to be more active this year and I haven't made it to the gym yet." And then I give up. I think these types of resolutions can definitely be good goals to reach for and can be achieved but can also easily be forgotten by mid-February. Resolutions and goals for the new year can be good when approached in a positive way, knowing there will be failures, knowing goals can start and restart at any time.

I find more hope and comfort knowing Jesus continues to make me new. Just because I don't stay consistent at the gym or stick to my savings plan or eat right all year, I know I am a new creation in Christ and nothing can separate me from his love.

So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; look, new things have come into being! -- 2 Corinthians 5:17

For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. -- Romans 8:38-39

Yes, I want to be more active, save money, and watch less TV this year - those are good things to aim for. I know there will be months I do very well and months it seems I have no new year's resolutions at all. And that is ok! I also know that I can continue to grow and learn in faith and Jesus can grow and create newness in me. While the work toward my goals may be inconsistent, Jesus remains the same.

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. -- Hebrews 13:8

I look forward to 2023 and the ways we, alongside our children and youth, can explore being new creations, experiencing the love of God, and the consistency of Jesus.



Jessica Berndt,  
Youth Connections

# HEALTH MINISTRY

## ***A Prayer to Welcome in the New Year***

by Myra Goodman

As I stand upon the Earth with the light of the New Year dawning,  
I lift my face to welcome the rising sun  
grateful for the constancy of its radiant warmth that coaxes everything to grow.

I pray for a loving connection with all of creation,  
remembering that I share the sun's infinite light with all living beings.

I pray to honor and release last year's sorrows,  
to let go of separation and condemnation,  
to have faith in the essential goodness of all beings.

I pray to always live with an awareness of my original infinite nature,  
in gratitude for the abundance and beauty the Earth graciously bestows.  
In this New Year, and forever more, to walk forward in love toward the light.

<https://www.spiritualityhealth.com/articles/2020/12/30/a-prayer-to-welcome-the-new-year>

***My best wishes to you in the New Year!*** Tammy Costin, Parish Nurse

# Bethesda Evangelical Lutheran Church

## 2022 Bethesda Budget

### NOVEMBER 2022

(Church only)

	MTD			YTD		
	Actual	Budget	over Budget	Actual	Budget	over Budget
Total Income	\$26,888	\$21,618	\$5,270	\$236,537	\$237,798	(\$1,261)
Total Expenses	\$21,204	\$22,318	(\$1,114)	\$267,127	\$245,498	\$21,629
Net Income	\$5,684	(\$ 700)	\$6,384	(\$ 30,590)	(\$ 7,700)	(\$22,890)

## THE RECIPE CORNER



### BEEF STROGANOFF

Submitted by Kristin Ohren

One of her 'go to's' as a family favorite!!

*(Donna Olson's recipe from 1980 cookbook)*

- 1 lb. sirloin steak, cut in large pieces
- 1/4 cup flour
- 1/4 cup margarine
- 1/4 cup minced onions
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1 can beef broth soup
- 1/4 teaspoon instant garlic or garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 - 4 ounce can mushrooms
- 1 cup sour cream



- Shake meat and flour in plastic bag.
- Saute meat and onion in margarine.
- Add soup, garlic, mushrooms and seasonings.
- Simmer covered until done.
- Add sour cream and heat before serving.

# COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

Council met by zoom due to weather. Present were Theo Baspaly, Connor Henschke, Jay Johnson, Nancy Lund, Marty Ohren, Susan Reinhart, Pastor Grant Vanderford, Mary Wallum. Absent: Chris Carlson, Carol Hamilton.

President Susan Reinhart called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm. She announced that Carol is moving to Eden Prairie and unable to attend this evening. Carol asked that the Council be encouraged to keep pursuing the mission of Bethesda, healing for all. It is important.

Devotions by Jay Johnson.

Sandra Retzlaff was asked to attend this meeting at the beginning so the council could hear the report of the Nominations Committee.

The committee includes Pam Dahl, Adam Huss, Sharon Olson and Sandra Retzlaff. They have filled all the trustee/delegate/representative positions and have two volunteers for Nominating, wanting 1-2 more. However, there are three positions on council for a 3-year term and one position for a two-year term to fill. Fifteen people have been asked to serve on council and so far, the one two-year position has been filled. Three 3-year positions remain. The committee wants council to consider ways to deal with filling these positions. A smaller council, a 2-year term, "job sharing" a 3-year term, and/or a call from Pastor. Some names were suggested to be called.



A motion to approve the November minutes and committee/team reports was made. Motion carried.

Nancy gave the Treasurers Report saying we are holding steady with a deficit but not getting worse. End of year donations are expected and needed. There will be an Open House on Friday, December 30<sup>th</sup> in the lounge to receive any contributions and/or adjustments to online giving. Treasurers report was approved.

BAS agreed to sharing the custodial service cost with their share of 75% and Bethesda's 25%. BAS and BLC are pleased with the service. The carpets were cleaned at a reduced rate because we went with Ambassadors. No complaints have been heard.

A motion was made that the Wednesday Advent offerings be held until the new year and then distributed to Crossroad Campus Ministry MSUM. Motion Carried.

The council will host the Comfort Food Cookoff on January 29, 2023. Marty Ohren, Nancy Lund and Sue Reinhart volunteered to make plans and organize.

Stewardship reported on Yes!, the annual pledge drive. Hearing from 74 families either thru pledge cards returned or online giving, over \$200,000 is expected in 2023. This figure is closer, (but, still below the expected budget) than in previous years. There are 119 family units active at Bethesda. Pastor expressed gratitude for the excellent giving of the congregation and thanked the Stewardship Committee for their dedication and work.



A discussion about fundraisers for Forward 50 was held. Pastor suggested we contact Jon Olson on Synod Staff to help us determine if we need a capital campaign to complete raising funds for these repairs and upgrades to our building. A motion to contact Jon Olson passed.

A brief discussion on the 2023 budget was held. We will meet with BAS Board in January and approve the budgets for the annual meeting. Churchwide will continue their \$12,000 contribution to Table of Mercy for 2023.

The Annual Meeting is February 5, 2023. Reports are due to Roxanne on January 16<sup>th</sup>. The Council Retreat is scheduled for Saturday, February 11 and installation of the 2023 Council is February 12<sup>th</sup> at worship.

Council discussed the planning for Table of Mercy as the three-year agreement with churchwide and NWMN Synod ends in the Fall of 2023. Pastor reminded the council the agreement was a guarantee for funding for the three years. Pastor also mentioned that there are mission development sites that are supported by churchwide for many years. By contributing the same amount in 2023 as in 2022 instead of decreasing funding, churchwide must like what is happening with this important mission for this area.

It was agreed that the Vendor Fair is the place to have special sales that benefit Bethesda.

An Epiphany service with a hearty soup supper preceding it is planned for January 4, 2023. Details to follow.



Dates for the newsletter/reports for the council packet were given.

The meeting ended with the Lord's Prayer and was adjourned at 8:45 pm.

Submitted by Susan Reinhart  
Substitute Secretary

# HAPPY NEW YEAR

# STEWARDSHIP

Greetings! The Property Committee has been hard at work in planning mode, making sure that our building is working through the winter months for everyone visiting!

We are monitoring the Forward 50 plans and accounts to make sure that when the Stewardship Committee formally launches the campaign (it has already started, and members are welcome to contribute presently), we can work seamlessly to complete the projects with adequate funding.

Other projects that we will be working on include promoting inclusiveness with our bathrooms, as we wish to enhance the ADA (handicap) accessibility of these facilities to keep our building up to our promise contained in our Reconciling in Christ statement. We will also be installing new water fountains, so that people with water bottles will be able to fill them and carry them around with them. They will have the famous counter so that we can track how many plastic bottles are saved!

In other news, we are enjoying a nice clean building, as we are now having a cleaning service professionally clean our building. Keep watch as how a clean church is a happy church!

Thank you all for your encouragement and input of our projects!

Theo Baspaly



*Dear Bethesda Lutheran Church,  
We hope you all are staying safe and warm this Holiday season!*

*Thank you for your recent gift to Pathways! Your faithful and continued support throughout the year means so much to our mission!*

*Peace and Gratitude,  
The Pathways Staff*

## MEMORIALS

### UNDESIGNATED

**In Memory of:**  
Lenore Crouse

**From:**  
Donna and Michael Podratz

### FORWARD 50 - Sound System

**In memory of:**  
Leroy Sletten

**From:**  
Earl and Lois Johnson

### FORWARD 50 CAMPAIGN

**In memory of:**  
Leonard Ioppa

**From:**  
Arland and Willy Jacobson



## READING RELIGIOUSLY

Wednesday,  
January 25th  
@ Noon

Bring a brown bag lunch!

## Do I Stay Christian?



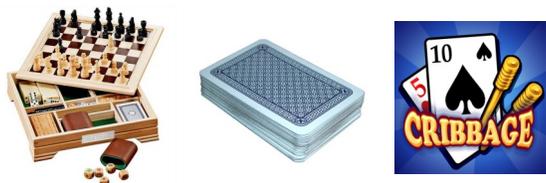
A GUIDE FOR THE DOUBTERS,  
THE DISAPPOINTED,  
AND THE DISILLUSIONED

**BRIAN D. McLAREN**

*Author of Faith After Doubt*

## FRIENDSHIP GAME DAY

Tuesday, January 10th, 2023  
1:00 PM



*Please come for games  
and fellowship!*

## WORSHIP SCHEDULE for January

January 4 — 5:30 PM Soup & Bread Supper  
6:30 PM Eucharist

January 8 — 9:30 AM Eucharist  
10:30 Fellowship; 10:45 Sunday School

January 15 — 9:30 AM Eucharist  
10:30 Fellowship; 10:45 Sunday School

January 22 — 9:30 AM Eucharist  
10:30 Fellowship; 10:45 Sunday School

January 29 — 9:30 AM Eucharist  
10:30 Fellowship; 10:45 Sunday School



# Annual Meeting

Sunday, February 5th  
@ 10:30 a.m.

Fellowship Room

Members who are snowbirds or  
homebound may attend via Zoom.  
Link available closer to date

Annual Reports will be available  
on Sunday, Jan. 29th



### CHURCH STAFF

Pr. Grant Vanderford . . . . . Pastor  
Roxanne West . . . . . Office Manager  
Jessica Berndt . . . . . Youth Connections  
Dillon Swanson . . . . . Cantor  
Tammy Costin . . . . . Health Ministry  
Billi Jo Townsend . . . . . Financials

### OFFICERS

Susan Reinhart . . . . . President  
Mary Wallum . . . . . Vice President  
Chris Carlson . . . . . Secretary  
Nancy Lund . . . . . Treasurer

