

2021 Annual Report



OUR MISSION IS TO ENGAGE THE CURIOUS, ENCOURAGE THE CONVINCED, AND
EMPOWER THE COMMITTED TO BE FULLY DEVOTED DISCIPLES OF JESUS CHRIST.

BETHEL'S MISSION STATEMENT

Congregation Meeting Agenda

June 22, 2022

1. Call to Order Mark Heckman, President
2. Opening Prayer Pastor
3. Election of New Council Members
3-year terms: Jim Herr Steve Middleton Mary Jo Mikulski Jeff Reising
2-year term: Randy Baskerville Sarah Manro
4. Approval of Bylaws Amendment
5. Financial Report
6. Closing Prayer

Council Nominations

The Council Nominating Committee is pleased to nominate the following members for election to the 2022-2023 Bethel Church Council:

Randy Baskerville, Jim Herr, Sarah Manro, Steve Middleton, Mary Jo Mikulski, Jeff Reising

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Staff Reports

Senior Pastor

Pastor Allen Schoonover

Gentlepeople of Bethel,

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of light, it was the season of darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair.

Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*

Looking back over the past year, this quote came to mind. It perfectly captures the ongoing tension I felt without relief almost all year. There was much at Bethel that was very good, and what follows highlights some of those activities. Bethel is blessed by a Council and cadre of ministry leaders and teams that worked hard to accomplish our mission of “engaging the curious, encouraging the convinced, and empowering the committed to be fully devoted disciples of Jesus Christ.” From the guests we received at worship, the clients we served through the food and baby pantry, the friends with whom we connected through our preschool, the neighbors we met at the Easter Egg Hunt, the Rummage Sale, and at Trunk or Treat, it is clear there was significant engaging, encouraging, and empowering taking place!

We also faced a variety of challenges last year. Our ministry slowly resumed a more “normal” footing as COVID spiked, receded, and then spiked again. Our weekday preschool and weekend Sunday School and worship attendance remained at two-thirds of our pre-COVID levels. There was a palpable tentativeness by members to reengage, and we struggled to involve disciples into leadership at church. Those key leaders who stepped up are feeling the strain. Too many are feeling spread thin trying to do too much. Other frictions also surfaced last summer, leading to a visit by a listening team from the NALC in August to help us untangle the concerns and frustrations being expressed. From that, the Council developed an improvement plan that focused its energies for the remainder of the year and well into 2022.

Speaking with other pastors, our experience with slow reengagement and congregational stress appears to be universal among both Protestant and Roman Catholic churches. However, I’m not satisfied with this reality. So, may we revision this challenge as an opportunity? Can we see it as an opening for us to dig more deeply into the ministry God has given us, to be the church the Bible lays out for us to be, not just the institution we have evolved into being? Perhaps COVID reminds us that being the church isn’t primarily about coming to activities in a building at the corner of 206th and Cumberland Road. It’s about making and deepening relationships with our neighbors, coworkers, and friends so that they see how our faith makes a difference in our life.

As we reengage in ministry, we do so under a promise: neither COVID nor our challenges are stronger than the gospel, and death does not have the last word. Our God is one of life and resurrection.

He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever. And the one sitting on the throne said, “Look, I am making everything new!”

Revelation 21.4-5

May God renew our hearts and our congregation this year as we work together to “engage the curious, encouraged the convinced and empower the committed to become fully devoted disciples of Jesus!”

The Year in Review

Pastoral Acts

Baptisms

Elsie Burrow	Rose Grindeland
Garrett Mandary	Madelyn Monhaut
Noah Villines	Elizabeth Whitted
Catherine Whitted	

Funerals

Kip Chance	Brad Hanke ⁺ (Inurnment)
Velma Haynes	Edna Hecht
Rob Mathews	Steve Nealon
Dave Nee	Jerry Ottinger
Peter Sackers	*non-member

Affirmation of Baptism

Jack Anderson	Elyse Biddle
Charles Henson	Lukas Kearschner
Katie Moore	Miles Robbins
Amy Schoonover	Eden Short

Members Received

In addition to those received in Baptism above:
 Janice, James, Taylor, and Jacquelynne Bates
 Cathy and Herb Buck Susan and Greg Eaton
 Sheryl and Dan Heffren Nicole Martin
 Anna Marie, Pastor Dave, and Ryan Hill

Members Removed

In addition to those who died above:
 Karen Moffitt Susan & Allison Parks
 Kirk, Jenny, Trevor, and Brandon Pfeil
 Michelle, Martin, & Jackie Schaefer
 Kathy, Mike, Ellie, and Julia Score
 Laura & Bill Shonk Chris & Kurt Sorensen

Parish Visitation

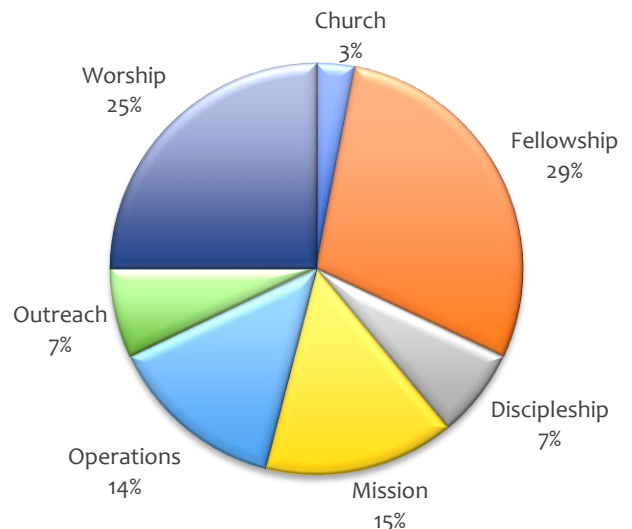
	Visits	Contacts
Members	135	191
Guests	20	38
Totals	155	129

Visits (by phone or in person) last at least 10 minutes.
Contacts (by phone or in person) last less than 10 minutes.



My Stewardship of Time

This chart shows how I spent my time in ministry last year:



Excerpts from 2021 Parochial Report

	2021	2020	2019	2018
Baptized Disciples	692	691	686*	1513
Confirmed Disciples	599	603	590*	1378
Average Attendance	183	174 ⁺	274	300

*The large drop in 2019 is attributed to a one-time “roll cleaning” that occurred as we moved to a new church management software. This upgrade revealed many who had not participated at Bethel for more than 2 years. Some had moved while others had simply stopped attending. Those remaining in the area were contacted by the pastors before being removed from our rolls.

⁺The drop in average attendance in 2020 reflects the impact of COVID. This number does not include our livestream viewership. We estimate approximately 20 people each week tune into our livestream service based on the names we can track in the chat comments. We get significantly more weekly “views” for each service; however, the average length of time watched is under 10 seconds which casts doubt on the validity of the “view.”

Members Added		Members Removed	
Infant Baptism	5	Death	7
Adult Baptism	0	Transfer	18
Confirmation	10		
Affirmation of Faith	11		
	Total 26		Total 25

Associate Pastor

Pastor Dave Hill

“For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for your harm, to give you a future with hope. Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart, I will let you find me, says the Lord” Jeremiah 29:11-14a.

The following are highlights regarding my ministry activity since my last annual report in 2021.

- † I finished a year-long familiarization with office procedures, church staff (including Preschool), community, and surroundings.
- † For the purpose of engaging people in **MEANINGFUL WORSHIP & SERMONS**, Pastor Al and I wrote the seasonal series that follow:

(2021)

1. To help Bethel move past the fear and anxiety of COVID, we used a worship and sermon series entitled: **“What’s next? The Journey to Know God, Find Freedom, Discover Purpose, and Make a Difference.”**

2. Next was a series entitled: **“ReConnect.”** Intended to focus everyone’s spiritual attention on reconnecting with Christ and one another as we do ministry together.
3. Next was an attempt to help the people of Bethel to compare their spiritual and life struggles with those of Jonah the Prophet.
4. Next was a series entitled **“Faithfully Giving”** which was all about focusing Bethel’s attention on our mission core principles to: Engage the Curious, Encourage the Convinced, and Empower the Committed.
5. Next, a Catechetical series entitled: **“What We Believe.”** Intended to refresh and re-establish good and solid Lutheran teaching amongst our people.
6. Next, a Stewardship Program series entitled: **“Bearing Fruit for Jesus.”** Intended to cause all to think about the proper and faithful use of Time, Talents, Treasures, and Testimony.
7. The Advent/Christmas series was: **“Savior of the Nations, Come!”** Had a two-fold focus: preparing for Jesus’ first coming (Christmas), and for His second coming whenever that might be.

(2022)

8. Our Epiphany series was **“Love Never Ends.”** It focused on 1 Corinthians as a way of seeing the light of Christ through the lens of love. We looked at how we can shine His love around, in, and from us as disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world and our community.
9. During Lent we took an introspective look at our lives through a series entitled: **“In view of God’s Mercy.”** Since Jesus sacrificed Himself for us on the cross, in repentance and reflection, we focused on being living sacrifices for Him and by displaying our commitment to Him in word and deed.
10. Finally, during Easter, we took a look at the expression: **“He has risen! Now What?”** And answered the “now what” looking at what do for God’s kingdom, and what we say to others about Jesus.

† **ADULT BIBLE STUDY** - I led attendees for approx. 20 weeks through a two-part series entitled **“Disciple of the Cross.”** PART ONE taught about **“Who We Are”** as disciples of Jesus. We learned some Bible and theology basics that helped us to be able to talk about being followers of Jesus. PART TWO taught about **“What We Do”** as disciples of Jesus. We learned practical aspects of discipleship and about how to live as disciples every day. Themes in the Lord’s Prayer took us through key aspects of faith life, not only to demonstrate disciplines that we are to practice as disciples, but to show how God can use us to bring the Gospel into the lives of others.

1. I also assisted David Jacobs in a ten-week Bible study entitled **“10 Men of the Bible.”**
2. Following David’s study, I began to lead attendees through a 6-to-8-week catechetical study entitled; **“Lutheranism 101”**. At the end of this study, there will be a short break for the Summer.
3. After the short break, David Jacobs will be leading a study that he is putting together while this report is being written. It will be on questions about the Bible.

† Another of my Associate Pastor duties is to assemble the **SPIRITUAL FORMATION BOOKLET**. In 2021, three such booklets were written and distributed. And in 2022, as of this writing, one such booklet has been distributed and the other (the Summer edition) is soon to go to press. These booklets are meant to inform everyone about the opportunities that they can take advantage of for their spiritual growth.

- † Pastor Al and I joined each and every Friday with the members of our **CARE MINISTRY** and we all report on the homebound, hospitalized, and MIA members whom we visited and/or reached out to by phone or email.
- † I also attended all (or most) Executive Council, Church Council, Staff, Missions, Mission District, and Preschool Committee meetings.
- † And I greet our Preschool families each-and-every morning when they drop off their children at our school.

That's the sum total of the summation of my report!

In HIS love,

Pastor Dave

Youth and Family Ministry Director

Eddie Burks

Greetings, In the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

I just wanted to give an update on the youth ministry here at Greater Bethel Lutheran Church. The youth at Bethel are a joy to serve and I want to thank you all for the opportunity. Bethel's vision is to be a place of fully devoted disciples of Jesus Christ and that is our No. 1 priority.

Some of the ways we are making sure the youth at Bethel are growing in their faith are Live @ 517 (a meeting time on Sunday evening for worship and getting in the Word), 3D Dinner Devotion Discussions (where we meet at a home and fellowship, break bread and get into the Word of God), and Trivia (where we ask a variety of questions to keep it interesting, however our main focus is to see what they know about the Word).

The youth of Bethel know the importance of acting out their faith and so we are always looking for ways to serve. The Youth serve at the Rummage Sale, Serve Noblesville, Serve Bethel, VBS, Kidz City and Nursery, just to name a few. The youth are being assigned prayer partners for the summer to stay connected to each other and grow closer to God; they will be encouraged to talk to their partner, pray and do a devotion together.

Bethel youth are on the move to engage, encourage and empower and we will stay focused on this until every youth at Bethel is empowered to share their faith and make disciples for Jesus.

General Manager

John Patterson

Bethel continues to successfully navigate ministry in this post-COVID period with a few new changes to report.

The first significant change is the office & AV ministry are now being run quite nicely by Holly Eldredge as *Office Manager / AV Coordinator*. Holly did a great job as *Ministry Assistant* and is doing an awesome job in her new position. Holly is always looking for volunteers in both areas. Please see her if you can help!

I continue to support Holly in the Office & AV areas and various church IT, security & systems.

Huge thanks to all who continue to support Bethel's ministries.

Office Manager / Coordinator

Holly Eldredge

Not too many changes to report in the office other than I love being here. Please let me know how the office can help support your ministry area.

Our A/V team is currently working on growth and training. There are three main ministry areas for each service.



Gay running the video cameras & live stream, Nicole operating Sunday's worship

Cameras for recording and streaming, **Computer** for generating the announcement and worship/sermon slides on the screen, and **Sound Board** for mixing audio for music and service. Our current need is for more volunteers as we have people willing to train. If you are interested in joining the team, please stop by the A/V booth or call me in the office. We'll get you plugged in!

Safety-Security Committee

Gay Hanson

The *Safety-Security Committee* assesses and recommends to Council and Staff Bethel's safety and emergency plan procedures and needs. This team was born when the *Bethel Emergency Plan* was developed by David Nee, with his Military Police and Postal Inspector Police background, when it was determined that Bethel was required to have an *Emergency Plan* as part of having a food pantry on site. The *Safety-Security Committee* meets regularly throughout the year. Bethel's updated door/building security system is working quite well.

Preschool Director

Laura Houser

Bethel Lutheran Preschool is a Christian-based school open to all families that want their children (ages 18 months to 4 years) to have a Christian-based school experience in an attentive and loving environment. Classes are offered Tuesday-Friday from 9:00-1:00 with a Lunch Bunch and Parents Day Out on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The school calendar year runs from the first Tuesday after Labor Day to May, ending before Memorial Day.

Jesus said, **“Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.”** Matthew 19:14

Our mission field normally has 4 classrooms throughout the week on the first floor of the Education Wing of Bethel Lutheran Church. With COVID continuing to play a role in our world in 2021, we reduced numbers to help mitigate the risk of infection as best we could. We had four classes in the 2021-22 school year, with fewer students per class.

P.D.O. (Parent's Day Out Program) is our 18-months to 3-years-old class. It met on Tuesdays and Thursdays this year due to numbers and families' needs. Families selected one or both days to participate in the program. This class begins at 9 a.m. and ends at 1 p.m. Parents provide lunch for their child. Normally this class has a 10-student cap per day with two teachers. This year there were 5 students mixed across Tuesdays and Thursdays (four per day).

The **Junior Class** is for 3- and 4-year-olds. It met on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9 to 11:30 a.m. Parents can send their child for Lunch Bunch time, as well, adding 90 minutes to the experience and providing lunch for their children. Normally this class caps at 14 with two teachers. The 2021-2022 Junior Class had 9 students.

The **Senior Class** is for 4- and 5-year-olds. It met on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 9 to 11:30 a.m., with the 90-minute Lunch Bunch option also available. Parents can select one, two or all three days. Normally this class caps at 16 with two teachers. The 2021-2022 Senior Class had 6 students for most of the year, until one student's family moved outside the area.

The **S.M.A.S.H. Class** (Science, Music, Art, Stories and Hodge Podge/Teacher's Choice) is an enrichment class for students 3 to 5 years old. S.M.A.S.H met on Fridays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., with parents providing lunch for their child. Normally this class caps at 10 with two teachers. The 2021-2022 S.M.A.S.H. Class had 5 students.

This is a preschool where students are introduced to God and education. Classes have weekly chapel led in rotation by Pastor Al, Pastor Dave, Mr. Eddie and Laura Houser. A chapel sheet was sent home so families of our students can share in the stories their children are taught.

We had a letter of the week, as well. A great deal of the preschool day was spent in play in the classrooms and the outdoor playground. On wet, rainy, cold or snowy days, play moved to the Round Cross Room upstairs and the preschool hallways, especially as we waited for the playground to be re-fenced. The fencing project is still underway, needing a gap closed for the safety of all.

Bethel Preschool students get numerous hands-on experiences that range from making cookies, jam and pizzas and dressing up for themed days, to Trick or Treating in our hallway with stations, walks on the Peace Trail and watching the life cycle of butterflies in the classrooms.

In the fall, the preschool raised \$160 through a U Paint Pottery Fundraiser and a great deal of enjoyment for people who participated and took home a finished piece. A similar, in-person fundraiser in March raised \$76.20. It attracted Preschool families and one church member family that is not tied to the Preschool.

A Christmas Program with a cookie reception was held in 2021. A special thank you to Ms. Holly and her daughter Bailey who came in and ran the sound board. We were blessed by some ladies of the congregation who made cookies for our evening.

This year the Preschool was gifted with a donation from Cicero Christian Church that was intended to benefit our staff and to acquire/update some of our equipment. To date, we have used some of the funds to purchase lunch for Staff Appreciation Day.

A highlight of our year was the Spring Student Art Show and Silent Auction to bless our Preschool. The Art Show filled the Preschool hallway with joy. The auction was set up in the Narthex Saturday evening and Sunday morning so worshippers could bid on the wide variety of items donated. The auction raided \$1,130, with an additional \$66 raised by selling cupcakes and outright donations. A huge thank you to Diana May and the Preschool Staff -- Brittany Pritsch, Danielle Schultz, Sandy Mazzocchi, Karen Yochum and Rachel Thompson -- Jill Dietz and Lacey Dewsbury for their roles to make the Art Show a success.

After being cancelled by COVID for two years, the Mother's Day Tea returned in May. A huge thank you to Rise Helgemo, Susan Adda, Jill Dietz, and Phyllis Anderson for their help to make our tea a success, as well as Mr. John and Ms. Holly for their assistance in making the video run smoothly.

Always a fun two days, the Bethel 500 ran May 17 and 18, and was well received. Trophies and certificates were presented.

The school year ended with an End of the Year Program/Senior Graduation Ceremony on May 19. A special thank you for Ms. Holly and her daughter Bailey for running our sound board. A cookie reception followed the ceremonies. The Preschool gives a special thanks Trudy Kussow, Jane Nee, Jill Dietz and Phyllis Anderson, Bethel members who made cookies.

The Preschool staff feels blessed to be entrusted with these little hearts and minds. It is our privilege to share His love and words with them. If you have any questions about this ministry, contact Preschool Director Laura Houser at laura@bethellutheranchurch.com or at (317) 773-4315, ext. 33.



Ministry Reports

Care Ministry

Sandy Hanke

Bethel's Care Ministry is made up of several small groups that are involved in a variety of different activities to offer physical and emotional support to Bethel members as well as others outside the congregation.

“Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.” Ephesians 4:32

Care Team: Coordinated by Kim Radant and Jill Duncan, this ministry reaches out in multiple ways to care for the congregation. They hosted over 100 people at the annual **80+ dinner** in November, a **movie night** in March and a **Planning for the Future seminar** which had four speakers to engage the attendees with topics related to end-of-life planning, estate and funeral considerations and introduction to the columbarium. Both the movie night and planning seminar were open to the public as a door to opening Bethel to people from outside the congregation.

Additionally, this team reached out by phone weekly to members who had not attended a service for several weeks. They continued to send grief books to those who recently lost a loved one and cards of prayer, encouragement, or sympathy to members and to extended family of Bethel members at the request of a congregant.

Circle of Sisters: Coordinated by Suzy Patterson, Circle of Sisters makes banners for baptisms and other special occasions and makes and sends sympathy and encouragement cards to members. Circle of Sisters held its annual craft sale in November 2021. Open only to Bethel members and guests due to COVID, the sale raised \$726 -- \$363 for Water Missions and \$363 to Circle of Sisters for supplies for cards, baptismal materials, and craft supplies. The 2022 Craft Sale and Quilt Raffle will again be open to the public in November. The congregation is invited to help make squares for the quilt, which Circle of Sisters will assemble.

Creative Spirits: Suzy Patterson and Cathy Crosley coordinated Creative Spirits in 2021 and for most of the first half of 2022. The group of crafters crochet and knit lap blankets, cancer caps, baby blankets and hats, and prayer shawls for those in need. They currently have a large supply of prayer shawls available to any Bethel worshipper to give to someone in need of the reassurance of prayer. The project underway in summer 2022 is crocheting edges on fleece baby blankets for newborns at Riverview Hospital.

Sonshine Club: Valerie Kitko leads Sonshine Club, which provides meals to Bethel members who have been hospitalized, are homebound or are overcoming overwhelming circumstances. Typically, the request for a meal is made to a pastor, who then forwards the information to Valerie. After gathering the logistical information, Valerie sets up a schedule on the [TakeThemAMeal.com](https://www.TakeThemAMeal.com) and emails a link to the approximately 30 members that have volunteered

to help make or purchase and deliver meals. Support for the ministry isn't limited to cooks. Gift cards for Door Dash or restaurants that deliver are welcome.

Funeral Dinners: Rise Helgemo coordinates funeral dinners with the help of more than 20 volunteers who step forward every time the need arises. Bethel has hosted three dinners since COVID restrictions were lifted. The group needs volunteers to help set up and take down tables and chairs for the dinners.

Eucharistic Ministry: This Eucharistic Ministry is coordinated by Ellen Gill. Eight volunteers take communion to nine members or friends of Bethel who are shut-ins or unable to attend services.

Healing Services: Coordinated by the pastors, Healing Services focus on those with physical and/or emotional hurts and needs. They are open to any worshipper and are held the first Wednesday of the month in the Chapel.

Prayer Chain: After many years of leading the Prayer Chain ministry, Trudy Kussow stepped down in March, and three people – Jill Dietz, Gary Tobison and Kristen Wells – stepped forward to form a prayer chain committee that shares the responsibility of keeping the congregation aware of prayer needs. They compile prayer requests and email them to the prayer warriors. Prayers are submitted by email, through the Bethel web page, prayer cards in the pews or calling the office. Anyone can become a prayer warrior by contacting the office and asking to have their name added to the prayer chain list.

Shepherding Ministry: New in 2022, the Shepherding Ministry helps new disciples acclimate into the congregation. Sandy Hanke is coordinating this ministry. A Shepherd is assigned a new member that attends the same worship service and commits to shepherd the new member for three months. The Shepherd looks for and greets their new member at church services, sitting with or near them as often as possible. They introduce them to other members of the church, encourage their participation in church activities and invite the new member to join them at church functions. If the new member is absent a few Sundays, the Shepherd will call them to see if everyone is okay. Anyone who loves the Lord and his family can be a Shepherd. Contact the coordinator if interested.

Christian Education

Ashley Mandery

Bethel's Christian Education program is designed to provide everyone -- from small children in the nursery through the oldest adults -- with the basic tenets of a Christian life and knowledge of the Lutheran church's beliefs and theology.

**“I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go;
I will counsel you with my eye upon you.” Psalm 32:8**

Christian Education comprises:

- **Church Nursery**, which provides care for children under 3 years old during services and the 10:00 education hour. Usual attendance on a Sunday is 5 children. Nursery also leads the preschool kiddos during Kidz City time.
- **Sunday School Preschool** introduces children from 2- to 5-years-old to a classroom experience and basic Christian Education. This is available for the entire school year (September-May) and generally has 3-5 children participating.
- **Sunday School** is for students in kindergarten through 5th grade. Classes gradually increase the depth at which the students study the Bible and the Lutheran experience. Bethel has established goals for what each grade should know before they reach confirmation. Average attendance is usually around 20 students.
- **Kidz City** is a children's church ministry introduced in 2021 to share a message with children from kindergarten age through 5th grade during the Sunday services. Participants leave the sanctuary right after the children's message and return for communion with their parents. During Kidz City, Eddie Burks, our Youth Director, and a team of volunteers lead the students in learning the bible messages from a lens that children will understand.
- **Confirmation Class** gives 6th through 8th graders an in-depth understanding of the Lutheran faith. Upon completion of Confirmation, they become an adult member of Bethel. A group of lay people teaches Confirmation classes with the help of the youth director and pastors. Average attendance is usually 12 students. Eight students were confirmed in the 2021 Confirmation Class.
- **High School Sunday School** is for 9th through 12th grade students. This class gives students an even deeper look at the bible stories they have learned from their youth and digs deep into the readings from worship services. Average attendance is usually 6-8 students.
- **Adult Sunday School** classes are offered year-round with varying topics and themes. These classes are led by the pastors, as well as interested and willing lay people. Many of the classes span a number of weeks, allowing individuals to find a class that interests them throughout the calendar year.
- **Preschool** is a Christian-based weekday school open to all families that want their children (ages 18 months to 4 years) to have a Christian-based school experience in an attentive and loving environment. Classes are offered Tuesday-Friday from 9:00-1:00 with a Lunch Bunch and Parents Day Out on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Collectively, the classes had more than 20 students in the 2021-2022 school year. (For more detail, see the separate Preschool report.)

- **Vacation Bible School** is an evening learning opportunity offered every summer for preschoolers through students who have completed 5th grade. The 2022 VBS will take place June 26-30 using the theme “Monumental: Celebrating God’s Greatness.” Between 80-100 students attended “Rocky Mountain Railway,” the 2021 VBS program.

In addition to organizing and developing a host of classes and other learning opportunities, the Bethel Christian Education ministry partnered with the Evangelism and Fellowship ministries to organize and host two popular annual family events, Trunk or Treat and an Easter Egg hunt. Both attracted several families from Bethel and its Preschool, as well as from the community-at-large.

The Christian Education program that Bethel offers is possible due to the great volunteers and staff members that bless our congregation. We want to continue to grow this program and we always need more volunteers willing to give a few hours a week to promote Christian Education. A strong children’s ministry is important to growing our church.

Communications Ministry

Rosalyn Demaree

The Communications Ministry partnered with all Bethel ministries to help the congregation *be a dynamic, life-changing church of fully devoted disciples of Jesus Christ. The ministry used a variety of channels to reach members and guests and keep them aware of parish news, worship opportunities and special events, both in print and electronically.*

“A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in a setting of silver.” Proverbs 25:11

Several initiatives were launched to make it easier to get answers to questions, particularly those related to church governance, and stay abreast of what Church Council does throughout the year.

- A council@bethellutheranchurch.com email address is now a sort of 411 service to help connect the writer with someone who can answer their question or concern, largely within 24 hours of receipt.
- The Communications Ministry and office staff collaborated to ensure that at least six months of Council meeting minutes are available in the Narthex literature racks.
- A Church Council page was added to the website, giving access to a variety of governance information, including council and ministry job descriptions, the council application, the annual report, and council minutes since July 2021. The page also provides a form to email the Council.

A series of Ministry Moments was launched in fall 2021, providing worshippers in all three services the opportunity to hear about the various Bethel ministries and put a face with the names of Council members. The series was so well received, a second one was presented in the spring that reinforced the lessons in the “Now What” Easter sermon series.

Regular publications, including FootPrints and Bethel Happenings, continued to be key ways for Bethelites to be engaged and empower others. The Pentecost issue of FootPrints marked five years of the quarterly magazine providing information, features and profiles written by a dedicated team of pastors, staff and members.

Weekly, Bethel Happenings provided news, event details and updates. The information-packed newsletter was emailed to members and friends, posted on Facebook and the church website, distributed at services and made available in the Narthex throughout the week.

Evangelism Ministry

Evangelism takes flexibility and teamwork! The pastors and key volunteers reach out to first-time worship guests by calling and writing notes. The goal is multiple gentle “touches” that convey our warm welcome and thanks for their visit.

We hosted a new event, an overnight family campout that included music on the newly acquired farm property. It was an evening full of stars, music, good food, and Christian fellowship. Trunk or Treat was another great event that reached out to church families, their friends and neighbors, and preschool families. In addition to decorated trunks, there was a hay ride, a campfire and, thanks to the youth, a haunted bus. Participation was great. Cool weather moved our annual Easter Egg Hunt inside, but it was still a memorable afternoon for children and parents alike.

Three Discovery classes were held in the past year, bringing new members to the Bethel congregation. In January, the committee launched a series of monthly evangelism tips, simple ways to encourage more people to learn about God and join Bethel on His mission.

The Evangelism team always welcomes people who are interested in partnering to reach out to our community. The best way to reach out to the team is through the Council email, council@bethellutheranchurch.com, or the church office.

Fellowship Ministry

Sarah Manro

Fellowship is alive and thriving at Bethel Lutheran Church.

“That which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.”

I John 1:3

The ministry continued to coordinate the 4th Saturday Worship and meal events, as well as the Advent and Lent midweek dinners. Each week on Wednesday night at 6 p.m., we worked with other Bethel groups and ministries to serve wonderful meals one hour before the services. Sunday Coffee Fellowship is offered weekly, with new hosts always welcome to sign up.

Other special fellowship opportunities included the Pie Fellowship after the Thanksgiving Eve service, where so many pies were offered, there were plenty of slices to serve during Sunday Coffee Fellowship; partnering with Evangelism to organize Trunk or Treat, the Easter Egg Hunt and the fall family campout that about 70 people of all ages attended; hosting Comedy Night, which brought 55 guests to Fellowship Hall and raised around \$2,000 for the youth ministry; the Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner and fall Fish Fry; a December Chili Cookoff; and a family Movie Afternoon in the spring.

Finance Ministry

Steve Horton

The 2021 financial report is detailed on page 22 of this Annual Report. Even in the face of challenging finances due to the impact of COVID and other circumstances, the congregation approved the purchase of neighboring farmland as an investment in Bethel's future ministries and was able to bless the member-funded Columbarium.

Missions Ministry

Randy Baskerville

Bethel continues to support 30 missions through prayer, funding, and time. Our missions are on a local, national, and global level, as well as support of the North American Lutheran Church. (NALC)

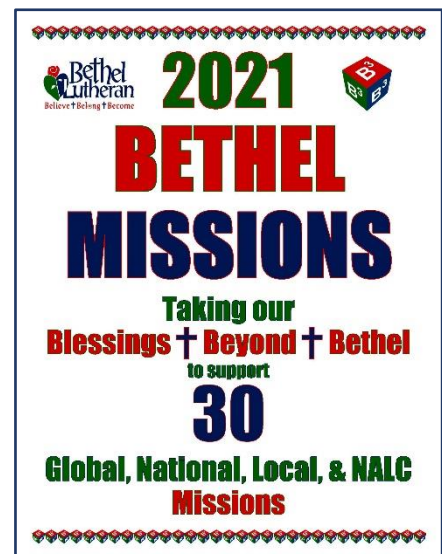
“Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.”

Galatians 6:2

Locally, Bethel's missions include collecting backpacks and supplies, giving blood, providing a food and baby pantry, hosting an annual rummage sale and Fish Fry, and supporting NALC Disaster Response. At Christmas, Bethel provided gifts from the Angel tree for those living in group homes. We also are partnered with Wreaths Across America. We also support foster families through Respite Ranch. Other missions are SERVE Noblesville, Lutheran Military Veterans, Fight Hunger through Kroger rewards, and Creative Spirits, who crochet healing stoles, prayer shawls, baby hats, booties, and blankets for preemies.

At the national level, Bethel has supported start-up churches through prayer and funding. We also have partners who we have supported for several years which include: Ministeria Su Luz in Miami, FL; Living Faith Lutheran in Wabash, IN; and Servants of Christ NALC in Robins, IA.

Globally, Bethel has a mission partner in Senbete, Ethiopia; along with its synod, the North Central Ethiopia Synod. (NCES). Operation Christmas Child sends gifts and Jesus' love to children all over the world who do not receive Christmas gifts. The East European Mission Network



(EEMN) is an international relational network. They help people and churches in former communist nations. Bethel helps fund clean water in places around the world through Water Mission.

Property Ministry

Jeff Reising

The Property Ministry covers everything from snow removal, mowing, gardening and playground upkeep, to elevators, well pumps, septic system, geothermal system, janitorial services, and so many more things. There is always something to do, and the ministry can always use volunteers to step up and see a task through.

“As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace.” 1 Peter 4:10

To say that the Property Ministry was busy in 2021 would be a major understatement. After a busy and expensive 2020 replacing the entire roof and completing the Peace Trail extension and the Columbarium Garden area, Bethel marched right into 2021 and found that the Overdorf farmhouse, which 10 years ago was offered to the church to have first right of refusal, became a reality. The remainder of the year saw many hours dedicated to picking up, cleaning up, cutting down, mowing, burning and rehabbing the 2.8 acres and the structures. That work continues into 2022 and beyond.

As the Bethel facility matures, big-ticket repairs will become more regular. The roof replacement was \$130,000. The parking lot sealing project, which needs to happen every other year, was \$15,000, and the geothermal air handlers that were replaced in spring 2022 was \$92,000. The cost for heating and air conditioning work needed on the education wing is still to be determined.

The congregation's support is a necessary part of our church life. Bethel has stepped up time and again, raising over \$100,000 in donations for the Columbarium Garden and over \$300,000 for the purchase of the farm property. The Property Ministry and Council appreciate this kind of support and hope that it can continue to bless our beautiful building and grounds.

Small Groups Ministry

Mark Heckman

The Small Group Ministry is very much alive and well at Bethel. Whether it be Bible study, fellowship or scripture-based gatherings of brothers and sisters in Christ who have common interests, groups are meeting, sharing and ministering to each other.

“And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.” Hebrews 10:24-25

Even during the challenging days of social distancing and lockdowns, groups found a way to

safely meet and continue their faith walk, undeterred from all the obstacles they confronted.

We refer to these group meetings as “Life Groups” because common interests and life experiences serve as a great platform for people to connect to read and study scripture, engage in discussion, plan trips and discover new ways to serve Christ in our community. Those existing groups that continued to meet over the past two years are:

- **Monday Night Men’s Group**
- **W.O.W. (Women on Wednesday)**
- **Circle of Sisters**
- **Men’s Saturday Sausage & Scripture Morning Bible Study**

We are excited to report that three new groups have formed in 2022:



Sisters Without Misters, a group of women who are single, widowed or divorced that goes out to eat together, attends concerts and events, and hosts get-togethers on game days.

Columbarium Garden Team, which meets the second Saturday May through October to tend to the newest Bethel garden.



Women’s Health, where women meet the first and third Thursdays of each month to learn from and support each other concerning nutrition, mental health, exercise and more.

The good news is that Bethel has room for many, many more Life Groups. Whether your interests are parenting, sports, camping, art, nature, travel, or even classic movies, there is a Life Group waiting for you to start or join.

Let us know what your interest are at the Bethel Office, or contact Mark Heckman at president@bethellutheranchurch.com

Just as is 2020, we all had NEW things to think about in 2021. Who could have predicted what year would look like? Uncertainty was prevalent on many fronts. For a family, business, or organization, we tend to get more focused on minimizing perceived risk when stressed.

We can reduce perceived risk in many ways: drive more cautiously, eat healthier, watch our spending, and share God's love with more people. Do all of those really reduce our risk, or are most of them just our own attempt to control outcomes? Over the past year, we missed some opportunities to maintain perfect focus on our one true mission: share God's love with more people. In a year that our country and community were seeking a savior more directly than ever, our path to welcome those in need had obstructions. Thankfully, we serve a God that teaches us grace. God speaks to our hearts, shows us opportunity, and extends grace so we may glorify Him by extending grace to others.

Being good stewards means taking our limited resources of time, talent, testimony, and treasure and using them in a way that not only glorifies God but leads more people to His holy salvation. For the year ahead, how can we do better at utilizing the resources of time, talent, testimony, and treasure to bring more people in need to God? My personal ask of the congregation: do not tolerate obstructions and actively seek paths that put Bethel's resources to work. Invest your time, talent, and testimony to hold church council accountable, engage with feedback, and help identify HOW we do better at sharing God's love. Thank you for your grace as we aim to learn from 2020-2021 and actively engage in providing a fast lane to God for everyone who seeks Him.

Worship and Music Ministry

Linc Schneider

The Worship and Music Ministry assists the congregation to ensure that services of God's house are conducted regularly in accordance with the Lutheran liturgy accepted by the North American Lutheran Church.

“Praise the Lord! Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty heavens! Praise him for his mighty deeds; praise him according to his excellent greatness! Praise him with trumpet sound; praise him with lute and harp! Praise him with tambourine and dance; praise him with strings and pipe! Praise him with sounding cymbals; praise him with loud clashing cymbals!”

Psalm 150: 1-6

Bethel continues to see growth in our Praise Group that helps lead the 11:11 Sunday worship. About 10 musicians and singers participate weekly in the Praise Group now. This has been a great blessing and encouragement for our Music/Worship Team.



Additionally, many volunteers stepped up throughout the year to assist with AV, Worship Music, Altar Guild, Reading, Ushering and Greeting for all services. It has truly been an honor to lead and serve this group. Many thanks go to the part-time organists who filled in throughout the year for our long-time servant Michelle Whitehead, Director of Music, as Michelle regrettably stepped down due to her demands of family and being a teacher.

God will continue to lay his hands on this special group and Bethel, as we continue to strive to be a conduit for His work and Spirit. We are always looking for volunteers who feel a tug in their heart to serve in His kingdom. I can think of no better place than at Bethel. To volunteer for the AV team, to join the Praise Group or Altar Guild, or to be a reader, usher or greeter, contact the office or Linc Schneider, Lincoln.Schneider@unitedanh.com

2021 Financial Report

Income/Contributions	Actual 2021	Budget 2021	Difference
Total Contributions Receipts	754,061	864,601	-110,540
Interest Income	132	0	132
Other Income	26,231	22,873	3,358
Missions Receipts	-30,000	-30,000	0
Transfer to Building Fund	-11,000	0	-11,000
Total Income	\$739,423	\$857,474	-\$118,051
			(Red Indicates Over Budget)
Expenses			
Youth Expenses	1,876	2,530	-654
Christian Education Expenses	5,286	14,110	-8,824
Council Admin Expenses	13,790	8,212	5,578
Mortgage Expenses	73,490	73,440	50
Office & Supplies Expenses	38,011	31,800	6,211
Pastoral Expenses	3,585	5,600	-2,015
Salary & Benefits Expenses	481,097	525,429	-44,332
Property Expenses	52,228	67,500	-15,272
Utilities Expenses	49,155	58,060	-8,905
Worship & Music Expenses	10,282	9,180	1,102
Total Expenses	\$728,799	\$795,861	-\$67,062
Excess Income/Expenses	\$10,624	\$61,613	-\$50,989
Less Principal Payment	\$83,830	\$83,830	\$0
Net Income/Expenses	-\$73,206	-\$22,217	-\$50,989
Corresponding Data from 2020 Financial Report			
Net Income/Expenses	\$79,767	-\$47,216	\$126,983

Fund Balances	12/31/2021
General	\$143,267
Building	\$203,847
Youth	\$17,453
Pantry	\$14,080
Designated	\$235,612
Missions	\$84,813
Preschool	\$25,239
Columbarium	\$22,271
Total All Funds	\$746,582

