



Gethsemane Lutheran Church

901 Fourth Street South
Virginia, MN 55792
Phone: 218-741-4961
Email: gelc@gelc.info
Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 9 am to 4 pm

Marion Rova
Interim Pastor
Brenda “Bunny” Varani
Parish Secretary

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
VIRGINIA, MN
55792
PERMIT NO. 57

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Come and see us on the web!

www.gelc.info

Receiving community donations to support our incentive practices affords our Treatment Court flexibility in other areas of our budget, namely our drug testing and supply budget, which is the most critical means of accountability we provide. These generous incentives provided by you will be used to recognize and celebrate our participants success. That may be obtaining a valid driver's license, completing treatment, making amends in a relationship, or marking a period of sobriety. Incentives encourage our participants to make positive choices in their paths to recovery, and demonstrates our trust in their success. When organizations like yours donates as well, it further shows that it is not only this team that cares about their outcomes, but that their community is also invested in each one of them. That type support is invaluable to their long-term success in maintaining their reco

Treatment courts apply evidence-based and procedurally fair behavior modification practices that are proven to be safe and effective for high-risk and high-need persons. Incentives and sanctions are delivered to enhance adherence to program goals and conditions that participants can achieve and sustain for a reasonable time, whereas service adjustments are delivered to help participants achieve goals that are too difficult for them to accomplish currently. Decisions relating to setting program goals and choosing safe and effective responses are based on input from qualified treatment professionals, social service providers, supervision officers, and other team members with pertinent knowledge and experience. Choosing an effective response requires treatment courts to accurately classify program goals according to their difficulty level before considering what responses to deliver for achievements or infractions.

Our programs, the Range Mental Health Court and the Range Hybrid Treatment Court, helps reward participant accomplishments and milestones in many ways, including recognition, certificates, awards, privileges, program advancement, fee credits, and other tangible prizes such as monetary gift cards.

Treatment courts stop the cycle of relapse and recidivism by treating substance use and mental health disorders for individuals involved in the criminal justice system. Treatment Courts promote recovery through a coordinated, team approach including cooperation and collaboration of judges, prosecutors, defense counsel, probation authorities, coordinators, treatment providers, law enforcement, evaluators, and other ancillary service providers. Evidence-based practices are used in treatment courts to tailor individualized, appropriate services for participants in the program. The goal of treatment courts is to engage individuals in treatment long enough to experience the benefits of treatment in order to end the cycle of recidivism and successfully treat their substance use and mental health disorders that brought them into the criminal justice system. Treatment Courts are the single most successful intervention in our nation's history for leading people living with substance use and mental health disorders out of the justice system and into lives of recovery and stability. They improve education, employment, housing, and financial stability, and promote family reunification.

On behalf of the Range Mental Health Court and the Range Hybrid Court, I wish to sincerely thank you for your AMAZING donations to our program!

Hello Gethsemane!

June 3, 2025



Gethsemane Lutheran
Church
Virginia, Minnesota
www.gelc.info

Mission Statement
To draw all people
to Christ,
nurture faith, and
fulfill our calling to serve

Vision for Gethsemane
A vibrant place of
worship, learning and
service, where every
person is passionate
about their belonging and
their ministry

Marks of Discipleship
Pray daily
Study Scriptures diligently
Worship weekly
Encourage Faith in Others
Serve for the sake
of others
Give freely

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Gethsemane Gazette

August, 2025

Volume 47, Issue 8

Join us for August Worship and Events!

New Pastor at Gethsemane Lutheran Church
Reverend Rebecca LeMenager has been voted in as our new Pastor!
Congratulations! She will start on September 1, 2025.

GETHSEMANE LUTHERAN CHURCH, OUR SAVIOR'S LUTHERAN CHURCH & MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH INVITE YOU TO

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

SUNDAY, AUGUST 10-WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 13
5:00PM - 8:00PM
MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH
8590 ENTERPRISE DRIVE SOUTH, MT. IRON, MN

GRADES K - 6
YOUTH & ADULT
VOLUNTEER
OPPORTUNITIES
AVAILABLE!

COMMUNITY MEAL
WORSHIP
BIBLE STUDY
ALL CAMP GAME
NATURE TIME
CRAFTS
CAMPFIRE!

REGISTER HERE

Staff from Voyageurs Lutheran Ministry will be leading us throughout this fun-filled week, giving us a taste of camp here in our own community.

GOD'S WORD COMES NEAR

VOYAGEURS LUTHERAN MINISTRY
Camp Hiawatha + Camp Vermilion

July Angels

A Big Thank You to all of the July Angels: Tony Mazzeo, Dan Gallagher, Anna Colden, Laurie Harvey, Joyce Bloomquist, Dawn Matschiner, Sue Swanson, Dusty Thomas, Dana Waldron, Sam Michaels, Darcy Norha, Gail Wieman, and Bunny Varani.

God's Peace,
Pam Fields, July Angell Coordinator

All Women of Gethsemane

Thursday, August 28th, at 5:30 pm in the Youth Room. We are having a casual get together just to "hang out" with other gals, enjoy visiting, relax, and have some laughs.

We meet on the 4th Thursday of each month. No commitments, just bring yourself and your own beverage. Please come. - we'll have a fun time! Hope to see you there!

Tuesday Night Women's Bible Study

As much as I dislike mentioning it, Autumn is just around the corner, which means we need to choose our next Bible Study! Let's have a Garden Party on Tuesday, August 19th at 5:00, hang out in the garden, catch up with each other, share some snacks and decide on our next Bible Study focus starting Tuesday, September 16th.

All are welcome to join the Tuesday Night Women's Bible Study group - just bring a chair on August 19th! Hope to see you there!

From the Pastor

I am telling you a true story. It may seem impossible. But we experienced it. Within the last couple of weeks we drove by a pasture in which a half dozen horses were contently grazing and the scene brought back a vivid memory of an experience John and I had on one of our many trips to Montana to visit our son and family who lived there.

We were driving on back roads in south eastern Montana, close to the South Dakota border. The landscape was low rolling hills and we came upon a group of 20 or so horses - most of them were Paints and Appaloosas - in a fenced pasture. The terrain was low by the road, but gently rose to a slight hill. We pulled over to the side of the road to watch the horses as they grazed and played in the field. (I have loved horses since I was a girl on a farm with a Shetland pony).

As we watched the horses, we realized a line of cars

was coming very slowly towards us on the road. All of a sudden, the horses, led by a beautiful Paint, trotted in a line to the top of the hill and stood still and silent, watching the line of cars. As the cars got closer, we realized it was a funeral procession, with each car flying eagle feathers. Once the procession passed, the lead horse broke the line and all the horses went back to grazing and playing. We sat there awestruck! Something mysterious and wonderful had just happened and we got to witness it!

Did the horses somehow know someone had died and was being carried to her or his resting place? Their actions were not random and they were definitely showing respect. We didn't understand and still don't, but I believe this was gift given to us - a glimpse into God's creation of which we are all members. An encouragement to be open to all the ways our triune God speaks to us. "O Lord, how manifold are your works! In wisdom you have made them all; the world is full of your creatures." (Psalm 104:24).

Respect, honor, leadership, silent witness, standing guard - are all needed in our world. As God's creation they should be just a natural part of our lives. These are also "gifts" of the Holy Spirit, given to us to share with all whom we come in contact in our daily lives.

As our world and our nation is hurting in so many, many, many ways - we are called to live as Jesus lived and taught. We can't do this on our own, which is why the Holy Spirit is given to all who believe in Christ Jesus. In June we celebrated Pentecost (the giving of the Holy Spirit to Jesus's followers) and the Holy Trinity (God in three persons). We confess we are followers of Christ Jesus in the words of the Apostle's Creed. We share the bread and wine, hearing the words of forgiveness. We are called to LIVE as followers of Christ Jesus, to LIVE with the guidance of Jesus and in the power of the Holy Spirit in our daily lives. This is why we gather as a congregation, a community of believers. We gather to worship God, to pray, to praise, to love and support one another.

As my time as your interim pastor comes to a close, I thank you for your community of believers gathering in worship; for teaching and supporting your children and youth in the many ways you do - you are building the future of the community of believers; for caring and supporting those with health concerns, loneliness, and grief. I thank you for your outreach into your community and the world. And I thank you for your support to me as interim pastor of Gethsemane Lutheran. It has been a blessing to me. May God's grace continue to guide you as you move into your next chapter of being Gethsemane in Virginia, MN.

In Jesus' name
Pastor Marion Rova

Prayer Wall

In your daily prayers, pray God's blessings for:

- ♦ The innocents suffering in the war in Israel/Palestine; those displaced from their homes in Gaza; those suffering in Ukraine, Lebanon, and Sudan. We pray for those in need of strength and healing: Tina Pauling, Jennifer Anshus, Judy Mazzeo, and Lillian Ferkins.

We continue to pray for;

- ♦ Judy Bennick, Ruth Koski, and Fran Shimmin.
- ♦ All members who are homebound, in nursing homes, or assisted living.

Prayers of peace and comfort for:

- ♦ Family and friends on the death of Arlene Olson

Farewell to Pastor Marion

Pastor Marion has served as Interim Pastor since June of last year, and her final day with us will be on **Sunday, August 17th.**

To thank her for her time here and to say goodbye, we invite all of you to coffee 'an after the worship service



Council Highlights

On July 8th the Council held their regular monthly meeting. The hi-light of the meeting was a visit from Sam Davidson-Teff, Chairman of the Call Committee, informing us they had a Candidate of Choice, the Reverend Rebecca LeMenager. Upon Council approval the process continued, culminating with a Congregational Meeting Sunday, July 27th. Our Congregation unanimously approved Pastor Rebecca and the Compensation Package offered to her to be our called Pastor. We are all so excited and feel very blessed knowing we have much to look forward to with her leadership. She will begin her time with us September 1. Her actual Installation date will be later in the month or possibly October.

Bennet reported on the water problems, (new ones), in our church basement during July with the heavy amounts of rain. After much investigation and meetings, it was decided, and has been approved, Duluth Basement Solutions, (DBS), will be hired to repair the problem. There are no guarantees, but at this time they are confident about a solution, and there really were no other options. The work will be done in August with a cost of \$7,568. It will be paid for with money left over from our roof project. At the time of that project it was decided those funds would be used for future projects.

Sheila reported that this year's Rock the Block party

Giving through the Vanco App

Gethsemane offers several ways to contribute to spreading God's Word. One of them is through the Vanco app called "Vanco Mobile." Download the Vanco app from your App Store on your mobile device. If you're new to Vanco, you'll need to create a free account. Once set up, logging in and making electronic donations will take only a few minutes.

For more information, please contact Vanco at 800-675-7430 or visit their website at www.vanco.com/vm.

Thank you for using Vanco. We hope this simplifies your giving. If you encounter any difficulties, please reach out to Vanco or the church office.

QR Code for Giving at Gethsemane:

When you are reading our monthly newsletter or the Sunday morning bulletin, you will see our QR giving code.

Simply take out your phone, scan the code, put in your password, select how much you want to give for the month, and press done. It's as easy as that and takes less than a minute!



has been cancelled in August due to a number of various conflicts. We will miss it, but look forward to resuming it next summer.

Bruce gave his Treasurer's report and reviewed our current budget.

Please try to attend the last "Summer Fun Night" at Messiah on August, 27th, at 6pm. Our Savior's "Fun Night" was well attended. Those attending had a really nice evening of music, socializing, and were treated to a great meal.

Our August Council Meeting date has been rescheduled for the 14th due to the 12th being during VBS week and a number of our members are volunteering.

Enjoy your last month of summer.
Peace, Mary Horan, Council President

Weekly Giving

Monthly giving, for July, has dropped back down below the amount needed for meeting our budgeted expenses. July giving has averaged \$3,329 per week, however, our budget shows planned monthly expenditures of \$4,214 per week. Please remember your church's financial obligations. Enjoy the rest of your summer.

Bruce Kniivila, Treasurer



Blessings to all who have a Birthday this Month

- 1: Linda Erickson
- 2: Debra Manninen, Daniel Hilmas, Mattelyn Seppi
- 4: Sue Hiltunen
- 5: Ethie Kniivila
- 6: Tracie Bircherm
- 7: Kaija Suihkonen, Freyja Walsberg
- 8: Amelia Roberts
- 9: Hunter Koski, Ann Nelson
- 15: Laney Nelson
- 16: Nancy Peterson
- 17: Nicholas Monacelli
- 18: Tanya Carlson, Nathan Spiering
- 19: Pearl Fossum, Dawn Thomas
- 22: Jennifer Tiedeman, Donald Walker
- 23: Lynn Mauston
- 26: Ryan Peterson
- 27: Danielle Seppi
- 29: Denise Ramfjord
- 30: Rick Kinnunen, Kevin Lehtinen

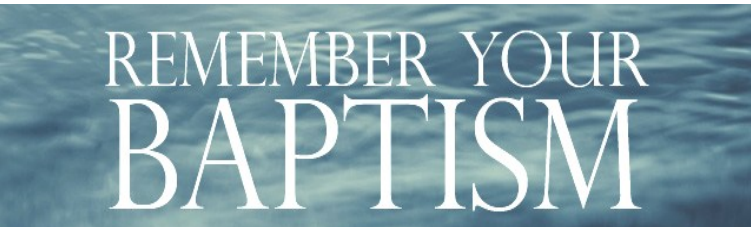
Memorial Gifts received during the month of July

In Memory of: Vivian Prlina
From: Richard and Sheila Vandervort, Eila Isaacson



Look who's celebrating their Anniversary for the Month of August, enjoy your Special Day!

- 8/6: Braden and Rebeka Roberts
- 8/6: Don and JoAnn Sipola
- 8/7: Andrea and Dan Alto
- 8/10: Barb and Ken Alaspa
- 8/14: Julie and Mark Spiering
- 8/15: Greg and Heather Manninen
- 8/15: Jen and Jeremy Waldron
- 8/17: Bill and Debbie McCormick
- 8/20: Megan Saari-Copeland and William Copeland II
- 8/25: Jeff and Jennifer Tiedeman
- 8/29: Eric and Jennifer Krause



Celebrating the Anniversary of your Baptism

- 8/1: Marjory Wood
- 8/5: Charles Eichholz, Shelby Karakas
- 8/6: Ethie Kniivila, Jack Manninen
- 8/8: Michaela LeDoux, Bo Seppala
- 8/10: Steven Ramfjord
- 8/13: Tyler Reid
- 8/14: Sharon Lager, Natalie Lamppa
- 8/17: Barbara Johnson
- 8/18: Bethany Harvey
- 8/20: Henrik Elg
- 8/22: Giles Friedlieb
- 8/23: Mikko Meinzer
- 8/24: Connie Christenson, Don Sipola, Andrew Wedge
- 8/25: Mikaela Christenson
- 8/27: Samuel Dragon, Sylvie Dragon
- 8/28: Kathleen Horvath, Mary Jo Ralston
- 8/29: Branden Gulbranson
- 8/31: Keith Nelson

****If we have left you out, we need your help to know!
Call the office to update your information****

Faith Builders (Preschool - grade 6)

We hope you all are enjoy your time off and hope to see you once in awhile at church during the summer.

Remember to Save the date for Vacation Bible School, August 10 - 13, 5 - 8 pm at Messiah Lutheran Church. Hope to see you soon!

God's Blessings,
Donna and Pam



Boston Youth Group

The Youth going to Boston on their Mission trip would like to thank everyone who has helped us in making this trip possible. Through your kind words and unbelievable generosity. We have successfully raised all the money needed.

Super Bowl Sub Sale- \$1500

Surprise me Board-\$1000

Auction Items- \$625.00

Easter Brunch-\$1200

Land of the Loon Parking- \$777 special shout out the Meinzer family.

Men in Mission-\$1411

Anonymous Donations- \$3750

Thrivent (2) \$250 gift cards to help cover Easter and Lent food costs.

\$10,263 Total

LYO Camp Lutheran Youth Organization Leadership Camp

Pictured Left to Right:

Milee
Ethan
Trevor
Hallie
Lennon



Two weeks ago, 5 of Gethsemanes Youth attended LYO (Lutheran Youth Organization) Leadership Camp! They spent June 8-13 at Camp Vermillion with other Lutheran youth and their adult helpers from different areas of Minnesota. The kids explored their "genuine", constructed their faith stories, participated in team building activities, and developed their leadership skills. Gethsemane's youth are excited to use these skills to spread God's word and love! The kids will soon take off for their mission trip to Boston, MA as well. They hope to establish connections and form relationships with the community in Boston and help out where they are able. Gethsemane Youth Group thanks all members of the church/community for supporting and donating towards their camp and mission trip!

Lennon Hilde

Some Pictures from the Boston Youth Trip



Foster Care Closet

What would you need if you had to leave your home in the middle of the night?

The Generosity Team was asked to provide answers to this question, and we all had different perspectives. However, there are children in our community who lack the privilege of taking anything. To address this issue, the Generosity Team, in collaboration with St. Louis County Foster Program, will be establishing a Foster Care Closet in Gethsemane. To support these children, we are requesting your assistance in creating special bags that we can distribute to our area foster care families when they receive new placements.

As you clean your home, attend local rummage sales, or browse through Marketplace, please keep an eye out for these items: (new or gently used) smaller suitcases, duffle bags, child-size blankets and pillows, travel pillows, socks, underwear, children's plates and cups, and children's clothes and pajamas (newborn through size 6). All donations can be brought to the church office during the months of August and September. We kindly encourage you to share this initiative with your family and friends.

Matthew 25:35-36

For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothes me, I was sick and you looked after me...

August Noisy Offering

On Sunday, August 31st we will be focusing our Noisy Offering on our new Foster Care Closet.

If you don't have any physical donations to share, please use this opportunity to share your monetary gifts for this worthwhile endeavor! We as a church look forward to supporting our St. Louis County Foster Care Community.



Generosity Team

Welcome to our edition of "Gethsemane Gifts!" Each month we will recognize the gifts of generosity that we have experienced from our very own Gethsemane Family. We will focus on one member of our church who has experienced a time of support, love, and/or generosity from other members of our church.

This month please welcome – Eila Isaacson

I am Eila Isaacson. Most of you will know me from my Finnish Cardamom Bread (Pulla). Here is the rest of my story.

I was born in Kuopio Finland. I was 9 years old when the winter was war started. I came to the USA when I was 19 years old. My Uncle sponsored me. I was only supposed to be here for one year but I fell in love and got married to Ronald Isaacson.

I have two children - Glen & Irene, 4 Grandchildren and 5 Great Grandchildren.

My faith started when I was a little girl at home. We prayed a lot while my Father fought in the Winter War. My Husband and I were married at Zion Lutheran Church in Virginia. We moved to Gethsemane when it was built. I attended all of the Finnish services in the Chapel. I belonged to the Ruth Circle which I really enjoyed.

My church family means everything to me. I really enjoy hearing the Joyful Noise sing. I have many wonderful friends at church. I have enjoyed all of the Pastors and all of the events at the church - especially the Lutefisk dinners.

Thank you for being my wonderful church family.



MUSIC IN THE PARK, TUESDAYS 6 – 8 PM, OLCOTT PARK

August 5 – National Night Out

August 12 – Beauty Mountain Rd

August 19 – Grand Holler

August 26 – Ranger Things



Mayhem at the Life of Moses Museum – Escape Room:

Time is creeping every closer to our next Escape Room Event. This year's event will be a competition between teams. So, gather a team of 5-8 players and test out your investigative skills. The team with the fastest time and score wins bragging rights and possible something more!



Theme: The life of Moses.

Setting: A traveling museum exhibit hosted by Our Savior's.

Scenario: Pastor Liz has dropped her laptop while fishing and can't print the exhibit's brochure.

Mission: Recreate the 10 Facts Brochure about Moses in less than 1 hour.

August 6th thru August 8th

Times: 3:30 and 7:00 pm

Saturday, August 9th

Time: 10:00 am

Link to sign-up:

Mayhem at the Life of Moses Museum – Escape Room Event

Save the Date for the Last Summer Fun Night!

Join Gethsemane, Our Savior's, and Messiah Lutheran Churches as we gather for our monthly fun and fellowship **on Wednesday, August 27th, 6 pm at Messiah.**

They will have Cowboy Angel Blue as a music guest, with food and games for kids, etc. in their courtyard - should it rain, it will take place in the Fellowship Hall. Hope to see you all there!



The Chamber Music Society of Minnesota

A wonderful free summer concert by the Northern Lights Chamber Music Institute (NLCMI) on Tuesday, August 19 @ 7:00pm at Gethsemane Lutheran Church in Virginia, Minnesota in a program of quartets, quintets, sextets, octets and full string orchestra.

Please join us for an evening of beautiful chamber music performed by 33 outstanding young artists, many from our region but also this year from Boston, Chicago, Utah, California, Wisconsin, Iowa and Minnesota. The NLCMI is an annual summer institute where eleven days of intense chamber music studies take place at Camp Vermilion on pristine Lake Vermilion outside of Cook, MN. Gifted young musicians of college and high school age, along with internationally acclaimed faculty will participate in this concert.

The NLCMI faculty are Ariana Kim, GRAMMY nominated violin professor at Cornell University, Young-Nam Kim, founding Artistic Director of the Chamber Music Society of Minnesota, Daniel Kim, violist of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Daniel Orsen, violist of the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, and Michelle Djokic, former principal cellist of the San Francisco Symphony.

The program will be invigorating and consist of engrossing works by **Boccherini, Bruch, Dittersdorf, Dvorak, Harbison, Fanny Mendelssohn, Felix Mendelssohn, Mozart, Pleyel, Schulhoff, Schubert, Schumann, Shostakovich, Smetana and Telemann.** At the conclusion of the concert, all participants play together in a full string orchestra.

The Northern Lights Chamber Music Institute is the premiere educational wing of the **Chamber Music Society of Minnesota**, Young-Nam Kim and Ariana Kim, Co-Artistic Directors.

