
BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN NEWSLETTER

Pastor Sue Sinclair

AUGUST 2026

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FROM THE PASTOR...

WATER of LIFE & WATERLIFE JOURNAL

There is a song that we've sung found in ACS (the Indigo hymn book) called Come to the Water of Life.

The song invites 'all who are thirsty for: mercy, healing, beauty, justice, love, touch, truth and peace' to come to the water of life. It is a song of baptism into Christ and of living faith.

That song often plays on my internal play-list when I read our synod's online newsletter magazine Waterlife Journal. It's not merely the name, but also that I find it to be a resource for the things the song lists that people are thirsty for: mercy, healing, beauty, justice, love, contact with others, truth and peace'.

Many things in this month's addition spoke to me. Here are a few.

Rev. Cara Knutson (the asst. to the Bishop for mobility, call & congregational care) wrote

"A colleague of mine once said we believe in the priesthood of all believers. Then our baptism is also our ordination. Wouldn't it be neat if every person received a stole at their baptism! Every member of the faithful is called by God. Some of us are called to be teachers, or farmers, medical professionals, janitors, clerks, or some even pastors."

What a powerful truth! God has called **each of us** to live faith filled lives in ways that are uniquely our own. Whatever we do, we do it called by God as part of God's family and God's kingdom.

Waterlife supports our communal prayer lives. It contains specific prayers for the month to help

us all focus on important aspects of our life together.

This month, it has an article from Lutheran Men in Mission [similar to WELCA]. LMM is an organization that connects men of faith both specifically in our synod and is also nationwide.

I've included both the prayers and the LMM article in this newsletter.

Through an article about Lutheran Summer Music, [a four-week summer musical immersion learning experience] I discovered wonderful and uplifting musical performances that can be watched online. Anyone can access their archive of livestream recordings featuring concerts, recitals, and worship services by visiting LSMacademy.org/on-demand.

Waterlife provides information about our companion synods [Southern Diocese of Tanzania and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Chile], what's happening in the greater ELCA, as well as other Lutheran partnerships.

It provides the opportunity for us to examine social justice issues that arise in the world.

This month's addition includes a reflection by Rev. Daniel Ruth—the executive director of Lutheran Partners in Global Ministry examining the moral issue of third-country deportations.

I encourage everyone to access this wonderful resource provided by our synod. You can find it at wisynod.org. And can even 'subscribe' so that it is delivered to your email inbox each month!

~ Pastor Sue



Amanda Wiltgen, Kathy Rozeboom, Jakson Blankespoor, Anna, Jeromy, Hadlee Vande Stouwe, Virginia Beynon, Holly Rozeboom, Nathan Huyser, Kendra Michael, Austin, Erin Van Der Brink and Hazel Mae, McKenna Bouwman, Holly Horstman, Arnie Van Voorst, Arlyn Schreurs, Don Eiesland, Wayne Kollis, Michelle Johnson, and all our Nursing Home residents (Bev Jackson, Joy, Marion, Bev B, Jean M. Connie, June)



August Acolytes

2nd Edison Kerkvliet
9th Brielle Blankespoor
16th Macy Brueggeman
23rd Easton Cartmill
30th Hallie Brueggeman

CIRCLES

Fellowship Circle Thurs. Aug. 13, 2:00 pm
at Fellowship Village

GREETERS SCHEDULE

For August

2 Marilyn Thiessen
9 Gordon & Dianne Eiesland
16 Randy & Betty Kock
23 Carmen Van Dyke
30 Connie Vander Sanden & Cindy Moen

WORSHIP HELPERS THIS MONTH

Usher Team: Dan Moen
Reader: David Phipps
Altar Guild: Kim Gayer and
Teresa Kerkvliet



The Summer Bible Study will be wrapping up this month with one final short book of the New Testament, Philippians.

We'll gather at Fellowship Village Tuesday Aug. 4th at 2 pm or at Bethlehem Wednesday Aug. 5th at 7 pm.

You are welcome to join whichever study time best suits your schedule!



Please join the Phipps family on August 9 with special music from their family to celebrate 50 years of marriage. Cake and coffee to follow in the fellowship hall!



Students and teachers of all ages, bring your back packs on August 23 as Pastor Sue will be blessing each of you for the new school year to come!

BAPTISM BIRTHDAYS

In Holy Baptism our gracious heavenly Father liberated us from sin and death by joining us to the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. We celebrate the August baptismal anniversaries of the following members of Bethlehem Lutheran:

Carla Kroger-1	
Allison Munger-2	Benjamin Roemen-3
Hope Bosler-4	Deb Vogelzang-4
Bev Brinkman-6	Jamie Kelly-7
Grant Hoogendoorn-10	Marilyn Caswell-10
Tiffany Vandentop-11	Jessica Peterson-12
Rachel Folkens-12	Trent Hoogendoorn-12
Peter Bahnson-14	Ashley Kuhns-17
Dylan Whalen-18	Arlene Yunker-19
Greg Hanson-20	Angie Kuecker-24
Bryce Kock-26	Memphis Van Dyke-28
Cody Ahrendt-30	Haley Folkens-31
Claire Twedt-31	Marilyn Ahrendt

ANNIVERSARIES THIS MONTH

The following couples will celebrate the gift of marriage this month by observing their wedding anniversaries:

3	Brad & Cristen Standley – 1991
4	Aaron & Lori Kock – 2001
10	Kyle & Brittany Standley - 2019
11	John & Tara Twedt – 2012
14	David & Sheryl Phipps – 1976
16	Larry & Deb Van Roekel – 1986
19	Dan & Barb Pedersen – 1988
23	Rich & Sheila Fueston – 2008
26	Greg & Cheryl Twedt – 1972

BIRTHDAYS THIS MONTH

1	Cody Ahrendt
3	Lori Tracy
5	Claire Twedt
6	Tylee Kippley
7	Gloria Bonjour
8	Karen Ter Wee
10	Raelynn Van Beek
11	Emersyn Rentschler
12	Randy Knutson
13	Jennifer Underberg
14	Christina Hamann
18	Sheila Fueston
19	Sandy Lantz, Sue Kippley
	Marilyn Thiessen
20	Dan Pedersen, BJ Van Roekel
21	Alexus Jensen
22	Henry Bosler
23	Rich Fueston
25	Marty Fiech
26	Hannah Olson, Brielle Blankespoor
27	Connie Douglaas
30	Decker Berentschot

VBS

Thank you for supporting our VBS program. We were able to serve 141 kids with the help of 79 volunteers. We were able to explore the Nature of God over 4 days during Rainforest Falls.

- Thank you! VBS Board 2026



Western Iowa Synod Prayers for August

For the Start of School

Gracious God, as backpacks are filled and buses begin to run, we lift up our students, teachers, and families. Give our children courage for new hallways and new faces. Give our teachers patience and joy in their calling. Root our young people in the knowledge that they are yours before they are anyone else's—loved, capable, and never walking into a new year alone. Amen.

For the Fields Before Harvest

Lord of the harvest, we look to the fields ripening under Iowa sky and remember they are your provision, not merely our labor. Guard the machinery and the hands that run it. Send steady weather and steady nerves. As our farmers prepare for long days ahead, remind us all that what grows from this soil feeds more than our own tables. Amen.

For Gratitude and Generous Stewardship

Generous God, all we have was under your care before it was ever under ours. Thank you for the land, the harvest, the skills, and the years you have entrusted to us. Keep us from clutching what was always meant to be shared. Make us a people who bless others simply because we ourselves have been so richly blessed. Amen.

For Discerning Our Gifts and Our Neighbors' Needs

God who equips every believer, open our eyes to the gifts quietly at work among us, and to the needs quietly carried by our neighbors. Help us see what we too easily overlook—a skill, a hunger, a loneliness, a calling. Give this congregation courage to match what you have given us to what our community actually needs. Amen.



Lutheran Men in Mission News

The Western Iowa Synod Lutheran Men in Mission (LMM) is launching a new ministry to support our youth and faith communities at critical milestones, and we need your help! We want to provide Children's Bibles for infant/child baptisms, as well as Catechisms for confirmands and adult baptisms across the synod. To make this happen, we are looking for one male representative from each congregation to partner with us. As a representative, you will: Notify LMM of upcoming baptisms or confirmations in your church. Coordinate the shipment of Bibles or Catechisms to your congregation. Present these gifts to the recipients on behalf of LMM. This voluntary role is a fantastic way to directly invest in the spiritual growth of our church. LMM meets every other month with both virtual and in-person options. Get Involved: If you are interested or know a man in your congregation who would be a great fit, please contact us at Immwestiowa@gmail.com for more information



July 2026

Board of Education

Attendance: Michelle, Megan, DJ, Becky

New Business

- Review Sunday school numbers, teachers, classroom break down
- Need to order Sunday school materials, new supplies, check on Bibles for September
- No one currently wanting to be the Sunday school superintendent so the board will complete the tasks/role until someone can be found.
- Change: no Sunday school open house.
- outdoor movie night Saturday, Sept 15th.

- Rally Sunday September 13th. Kids will go to the park for craft, games, snack/drinks
- Aug meeting will be classroom prep

Board of Properties

The Board Of Properties met in July. Gary Twedt, Nate Cartmill, Brett Blankespoor, Aric Olson and Larry Van Roekel discussed new cupboards that have arrived in the sacristy and will plan on installing them in the next couple of weeks. The AC in the kitchen stopped working on the fourth and Dan Pedersen came in and fixed that for us, still planning on the outside beams being worked on this fall. We have been looking into pricing windows for the Sunday school classrooms

- Larry Van Roekel

Board of Lay Ministry

Board of Stewardship no others turned in

Board of Evangelism



BLC MISSION STATEMENT:

"To welcome all people to seek and serve God as members of the Body of Christ."

BLC VISION STATEMENT:

We will be:

A welcoming Church:

Opening our doors and hearts to all who enter.

A Church that seeks after the heart of God:

Maturing in faith.

Trusting His word.

Living God's love.

A Church that is committed to one another:

Through fellowship.

Through love and service.

Through grace and forgiveness.

A Church that ministers to the world around us.

A Church that brings its gifts back to God:

Through good stewardship of time, talent, and treasures.

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