

Bethesda News

Phone: 605-745-4834 , E-mail: bethesda@gwtc.net

Summer Sabbath

Summer is the gift of rest.

*No rushing to school. No homework.

*Sleeping in is the new norm (for kids).

*Vacation (We live in the Black Hills, who needs to travel?).

*Summer travel teams and tourneys, which are always fun.

*Sylvan Lake, Angostura, Cold Brook, Cascade Falls.

*Black Elk Peak, Little Devil's Tower, Sunday Gulch.

*Pulled pork, brisket, burgers, brats.

*Morning walks, evening sun.

*Garden, lawn, and backyard.

Summer is the gift of rest. The Lord gave to the Israelites a whole year of rest, no planting, no harvesting. Just rest. (Leviticus 25:4ff)

As you rest this summer, also rest in the Lord. Worship. Come to Jesus who gives you rest for your soul. And then rest. Body and soul.

You need it. It is a gift.

Sub Cruce,
Pastor Utecht



Bethesda Lutheran



June/July, 2025

FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Mrs. Heather Hunsaker

Dear Bethesda Lutheran School Families,

As the school year winds down and we step into the warmth of June, we are filled with gratitude for all the Lord has done through our school community this year. Together, we've grown academically, spiritually, and relationally. Thank you for your prayers, your partnership, and your presence throughout this blessed year.

Here are some highlights from May:

Graduation Ceremonies

We celebrated our Preschool and 5th Grade Graduates this month! What a joy to witness their accomplishments and pray over their future journeys. May they continue to seek the Lord in all they do.

Track Meet Fun

Laughter, sunshine, and friendly competition marked our annual Christian Track Meet on May 2! A big thank-you to our amazing volunteers and staff who made it a memorable day.

Year-End Chapel

Our final chapel service of the year was a time of worship, reflection, and testimony. Students shared how they've grown in their faith this year, and it was powerful to hear how God is working in their hearts.

Please continue to pray for:

Faculty and staff as they rest and prepare for the upcoming year.

New families joining our school community this fall.

This June, I encourage all of us to rest in the Lord. Take time to reflect on His faithfulness and enjoy time with your families. Whether you're traveling or staying local, may this be a season of joy, growth, and peace in Christ.

For the kids, for the Kingdom,

Mrs. Heather Hunsaker

Upcoming Events:

Tuesday, June 2 School Board Meeting at 5:30

Tuesday, June 2 First day of Summer child care (M—F 7:30 – 5:30)

Monday, August 18 First Day of 2025-2026 School Year

**Activities at
BETHESDA Lutheran Church
June and July 2025**



Worship Services are held at 9:00 am each Sunday morning at Bethesda.

8:00 am—High School Sunday School Class — Off for Summer

8:00 am—Adult Bible Study in the Fellowship Hall led by Gaylan Sieg — Off for Summer

9:00 am—Worship Service with Communion

10:00 am—Coffee and refreshments in Fellowship Hall

10:15 am—No Sunday School; John Staben continues his adult class in Library

Church Activities

Yearly Worship in the Park and lunch at Chautauqua Park on June 29 at 9:00 am!

Ladies' Bible Study: Fridays, 9:00 am, Fellowship Hall (Begins June 6, by Marianne Allen)

LWML: Host Coffee June 29; Next LWML meeting is Aug. 23 at Bethesda, 9:00 am.

Bethesda School Chapel: No chapel services until school resumes in August

Bethesda Boosters: August 4 @5:30 pm

Bethesda Lutheran Ladies: Host coffee June 8, 22 and July 13, 27; meetings as needed

Choir Practice: No Choir practice until Fall

Christ Connection Youth Group monthly meetings: 6:15 on June 11, July 9, August 13.

June 19—23 ENDURE LCMS Youth Gathering in New Orleans, Louisiana June

Pathrunners: no meetings until Fall

Sewing Circle: No meetings this summer

Incorporated Church Boards:

Church Council—Next meeting Sunday, June 1 following worship service

Voters Assembly—Next meeting will be scheduled by Council for September.

Board of Elders—First Tues. every other month; next meeting July 1 @ 6 pm; host coffee June

Board of Evangelism—Called meetings

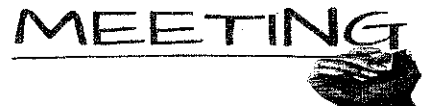
Board of Parish Education—Called meetings

School Board—Meetings Monthly on First Tuesday—Next meetings June 3 and July 1 @ 5:30 pm; New school board members to be installed Sunday, June 1

Board of Trustees—Called meetings

Board of Youth Ministry—Called meetings

Board of Stewardship—September 10, 10:00 am



Community Activities:

Hot Springs Area Right to Life: Thursday, June 26, 5:00 pm in Library

Keep Hot Springs Beautiful: Tuesday, June 10, 6:30 pm in overflow room

Alcoholics Anonymous: Tuesdays and Thursdays @ 6:00 pm; First Saturdays 9:00 am
breakfast meeting—All meetings in basement .

AlAnon: Thursdays @ 6:00 pm in Overflow room.

ACTIVITIES AND MEETINGS FOR THE MONTH OF JULY MIGHT NOT BE LISTED ABOVE—WATCH FOR THE DIFFERENT MEETINGS OR CHANGES OF SCHEDULE WEEKLY IN YOUR SUNDAY CHURCH BULLETIN. HAVE A FANTASTIC AND BLESSED SUMMER!



**CHRIST CONNECTION
YOUTH GROUP**

Bethesda Lutheran Church

**Ministering to Youth in
Middle and High School**

YOU ARE INVITED FOR

FELLOWSHIP, FAITH, AND FUN!!

Meetings through Summer

**Wednesdays: June 11, July 9, Aug.
13**

**Endure Youth Gathering
July 19—23 > New Orleans, LA**

Contact Jackie at

LJHENCK1992 @gmail.com

Cell: 715-541-2038

**YOUTH COMMISSIONING SERVICE FOR THOSE
attending Youth Gathering will be June 15th. All
those attending and their parents are to have a
meeting following our fellowship serving that
morning!**

**The ENDURE LCMS Youth Gathering is July 19—
23 in New Orleans, Louisiana. The
event may include group training meetings and
discussions, service projects, recreational activi-
ties, fellowship and learning activities.**

**Attention! Seeking a Driver from Hot Springs to
Sioux Falls! We need a ride to the airport in the
early hours of Friday, July 18, and pick us up in the
later evening of July 23 following the gathering.
Please call Jackie at 715-541-2038.**

**On Sunday, July 27, there will be a short youth
presentation during or following worship.**

ITS ALMOST HERE!!!

**Our VBS EPIC Australian Adventure
Begins June 3—5 (5:30—6:30 pm nightly).
We have volunteers who are contributing
to make this another great year of sharing
the love of Christ with kids from our
Church and community To enroll your child
let Jackie Rausch know.**

VBS Registration for Kids:

**[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/
e/1FAIpQLSydMggXgBxwfsv7q-K—
VqP86lmkxrKcng2bVxCViLUNkN75mw/
viewform?usp=header](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSydMggXgBxwfsv7q-K-VqP86lmkxrKcng2bVxCViLUNkN75mw/viewform?usp=header)**

**Invite your neighbors, soccer teammates, daycare friends, whoever!!! We would
LOVE a full house for this Christ-centered outreach.**

**Please let Jackie Rausch know any ideas, questions or concerns you have at [jacki-
erausch@outlook.com](mailto:jacki-erausch@outlook.com) or 605-209-6227.**





June & July BAPTISMS

6/1 Betty Syverson 6/3 Connor Kramer, Rosalia Sanow
6/10 Susan Decker 6/13 Kristi Spitzer 6/19 Todd Benzal, Micki Berg
6/21 James Wilhelm 6/29 Bill Atkinson, Chance Britain
6/30 Rachel Huddleston 7/? Deb Smith, Ray Ringstmeyer
7/1 Dennis Ford 7/2 Kathy Mills 7/3 Tessa Hammel
7/5 Shania Hagen 7/8 Brandon Nase 7/10 Makenzie McNemar
7/12 Cheryl Huddleston 7/14 Lillian Hagen, Bexley Dryden
7/17 Layton Ringstmeyer, Logan Gardner, John Benson
7/24 Ashley Lauing 7/28 Kim Lewis

June & July BIRTHDAYS

6/1 Deb Smith 6/2 Jocelyn Umiker-Harris 6/6 Merele Klinetobe
6/8 Shania Hagen 6/10 Kathy Mills, Makenzie McNemar, Jaida Kramer
6/12 Kim Lewis 6/19 Brandon Nase, Julie Nase, John Benson
6/22 Ray Ringstmeyer 6/23 Kolby Benson 6/26 Layton Ringstmeyer
6/27 Isaiah Cox 6/28 Amelia Decker 7/3 Shelby Nellen
7/6 Gregg Salles 7/8 Karri Fischer 7/9 John Merrill 7/11 Leana Anderson
7/13 Rachel Utecht, Diann Long, Bill Allen 7/15 Liz Lorang
7/26 Sara Butts 7/29 Thomas Mahar 7/30 Larry Mason



June & July Anniversaries

6/10 John and Carol Grover 6/13 John and Connie Benson
6/15 John and Kenlyn Merrill 6/18 Andrew and Kari Kathman
6/18 Bill and Janet Atkinson 6/19 Thomas and Laurie Mahar
7/1 Mitch and Mellyssa Maring, James and Doris Wilhelm
7/3 Terry and Sara Butts 7/12 Timothy and Koreen Hammel
7/14 Jack and Patricia Lane 7/24 Peter and Rachel Utecht
7/29 Cameron and Holly Weiss 7/31 Jeff and Darcy Beougher

**Keep Hot Springs Beautiful
Meets at Bethesda on
Tuesday, June 10th
At 6:30 pm.
There will be no meeting in July.**

**Hot Springs Area Right to Life
Will meet on Thursday, June
19th in the
Bethesda library at
5 pm.
Everyone is invited.**

Bethesda Lutheran Ladies Update

Things have died down since Easter, with us having a very successful Lenten season. Soup Suppers each week were outstanding! Volunteers provided the food, cooked the meals and served about 80 people each week, making sure that our dozen or so homebound members received a meal each week as well. Many thanks to those who delivered meals!

The Ladies are providing fried chicken at our yearly worship service at Chataqua Park on Sunday, June 29th. The service will begin at 9:00 am, followed by the meal. Attendees are asked to bring a dish to round out the menu. Bringing lawn chairs would be an excellent idea, as well! If you have an extra chair or two, please bring them for drop-in guests.

BLL will also supply the tableware.

Hello Lutheran Ladies,

Friday morning Bible class will resume on June 6 with Jen Wilkin's study, God of Freedom. This spring, we observed Mrs. Wilkin artfully showing us the deliverance and birth of a nation in Exodus 1-18. Now we will explore how God taught His people to live in freedom. If you have been burdened with some habit or are seeking more freedom in your life, please join us! God said in Galatians, "It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery."

Let's run the race together.

Let Marianne Allen know if you need a book (\$25.00). 605-891-1274

**Lutheran Women's Missionary
League**

Donations collected for our seminarian totaled \$1127.45. Matthew Baker, our seminarian from South Dakota, will be graduating in May. We have two seminarians from Spearfish who are serving their vicarage. Carter Thorman will do his vicarage in Nebraska; Andrew Partipils, in Indiana.

LWML International Convention 2025 will convene in Omaha, Nebraska on June 26-29 with the theme "Growing in God's Grace" 2 Peter 3:18. Our next meeting is August 23.

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR
April 1, 2025 through April 30, 2025

	Revenue		Expense		Excess / (Deficit)
Church	\$	33,870.06	\$	22,338.65	\$ 11,531.41
Primary School	\$	8,525.00	\$	11,026.87	\$ (2,501.87)
Preschool	\$	2,190.00	\$	3,039.75	\$ (849.75)
Childcare	\$	5,901.27	\$	2,208.61	\$ 3,692.66
Totals April 1 - April 30, 2025	\$	50,486.33	\$	38,613.88	\$ 11,872.45

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR
January 1, 2025 through April 30, 2025

	Revenue		Expense		Excess / (Deficit)
Church	\$	112,104.86	\$	80,990.74	\$ 31,114.12
Primary School	\$	42,533.29	\$	46,764.18	\$ (4,230.89)
Preschool	\$	8,389.55	\$	11,983.26	\$ (3,593.71)
Childcare	\$	14,686.32	\$	18,447.93	\$ 6,238.39
Totals Jan 1 - April 30, 2025	\$	177,714.02	\$	148,186.11	\$ 29,527.91



BABY BOTTLE



BOOMERANG

Celebrate God's Gift of Life by
Honoring Your Mother and Father!

On Mother's Day, Sunday, May 11th, baby bottles were handed out following the worship service for people to collect money in to benefit Black Hills Pregnancy Center in Rapid City to support women in crisis pregnancies in the Black Hills region.

On Father's Day, Sunday, June 15th, the baby bottles will be checked in after the worship service. The last Sunday to collect baby bottles will be June 22nd, so if you cannot turn in your baby bottle on those Sundays, please drop your bottle off in the church office ahead of time and make sure your name gets checked off the list.

If you prefer to write a check instead of collecting coins, please make your check out to Black Hills Pregnancy Center and place it in the baby bottle.

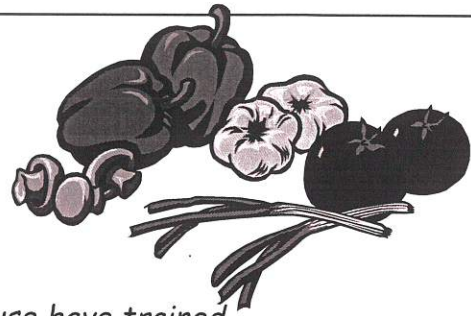
Thank you very much for supporting this project and ministry with your generosity.

Your gifts SAVE LIVES!

SOLID FOOD

June 2025

Submitted by Beth Spitzer



"For solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil."

"Hasten, O God, to save me; come quickly, Lord, to help me. May those who want to take my life be put to shame and confusion; may all who desire my ruin be turned back in disgrace. May those who say to me, 'Aha! Aha!' turn back because of their shame. But may all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you; may those who long for your saving help always say, 'The Lord is great!' But as for me, I am poor and needy; come quickly to me, O God. You are my help and my deliverer; Lord, do not delay." *Psalm 70*

Powerful Preposition

"I can't stop thinking about something my friend Dr. Joel Muddamalle said recently during a Q&A he and I hosted together.

He was asked about getting over heartbreak and hurts and disappointments. He said, "One of the most powerful prepositions in the Bible is the word 'through.'"

The Israelites had to go through the Red Sea.

Jesus had to go through Samaria.

Jesus had to go through the suffering of the cross.

Sometimes we have to walk through stuff even when we desperately want to quickly get over it. But going through is what will get us on the other side with a greater understanding that God has always been and will always be with us." *Lysa TerKeurst, Proverbs 31 Ministries, 5/8/2025*

Marriage Isn't Just a Piece of Paper

"Even as the American marriage rate has steadily declined, the cohabitation rate has steadily grown. According to a 2019 Pew Research study, more Americans have cohabitated at some point than have been married. Fifteen times more couples live together outside of marriage today than in 1960. Rather than being an option among many, cohabitation is a cultural norm when it comes to romantic relationships, one that reflects the belief that marriage is 'just a piece of paper,' and all that

matters for a couple is that they 'live together and love each other.'

In truth, cohabitation is a disastrous way to form a household. Recently on X, pro-life author Lila Rose highlighted the facts about 'shacking up': *According to research, couples who cohabitate before marriage are 48% more likely to divorce. ... Cohabitation doesn't set you up for success—it undermines the success of your marriage. So, for those who are dating and in a relationship: build a strong foundation by growing together spiritually, intellectually, and emotionally. If this is the person God is calling you to marry, make the commitment first—get married, then build your home together.*

Reposting this advice, Brad Wilcox of the Institute for Family Studies reaffirmed how many young people accept the popular wisdom on cohabitation despite how wrong it is: 'My students [at the University of Virginia] think cohabitation is a great way to prepare for marriage. They don't know: Cohabitation [is] actually linked to marital failure. [A] Stanford study found that Cohabiting [with an] extra partner boosted women's odds of divorce by 3 times.'

How did this arrangement so prone to failure become the common choice? One reason is that the data about cohabitation is unknown. Another reason is that cohabitation is easy, especially for men. Rather than 'defining the relationship,' planning for the future, or making a lasting commitment, men receive physical and financial benefits of a marriage-like relationship, but only on an 'at will' basis. This helps to explain why cohabitation often fails to lead to anything permanent.

Cohabitation also conforms to the widely held view of what love and sex are. If these things are purely transactional, as a source of producing personal happiness, then it makes sense to 'try before you buy' and not 'put anything on paper' until you are sure. However, the data suggests that cohabitation increases incompatibility. Why is that?

Cohabitation fails to prepare people for marriage because it is fundamentally *unlike* marriage. As Wilcox explained, cohabitation *causes* partners to

SOLID FOOD continued...

'adopt a less committed view of marriage,' and that 'this low-commitment mentality makes them more vulnerable to marital dissolution when times get tough.' In cohabitation, both people are on trial, while implicitly telling the other, 'You'll do for now, unless I find someone better.'

This is why most people would not enjoy the prospect of a life of going from one job interview to the next without ever being employed. Job interviews are high pressure environments, with constant scrutiny and the fear of being rejected. Cohabitation is like a perpetual job interview. The benefits of marriage only come when you have the job.

In short, marriage is more than a piece of paper. Publicly committing to another person, especially in a religious and family context where couples call on the community and God to hold them accountable, makes marriage fundamentally different than other relational arrangements. The fact that it was created by God as part of the human order means that marriage makes people different too. As Glenn Stanton summarized in his book, which compared the outcomes of marriage with cohabitation, 'the ring makes all the difference.'

Wedding vows are more than window-dressing. They bring real, measurable, relational consequences. Too many young adults are unaware of those consequences and, as such, do not understand what marriage really is. The Church can help. In fact, it must, because the truth about marriage and cohabitation needs to get out there."

John Stonestreet and Shane Morris, Breakpoint Daily, 5/2/2025

Fight the Good Fight

"We are told to be at peace, for Jesus is Lord. I get that. But don't let it be the kind of peace that serves as a sedative, the kind of peace that puts you to sleep while it is still day, and there is work to do. Christ remains on the throne, but that fact should stir us all the more to do good, and that means, on a day like today, in the political arena. The fact that Jesus is King should not lead us to complacency, but to the boldness that our Lord has our backs, now and into eternity. Knowing that our future is secure, here and now we defend our neighbor, including our littlest neighbor in the womb. Today we defend our right to speak the truth, and not just inside of church walls. Today we defend the vocation of fatherhood and motherhood against a regime that takes children away from parents who do not affirm their supposed gender by administering puberty blockers, and hormone treatment leading to mutilating surgery. It is

through voting that we strike a blow against those who would silence us, or would compel us to say that 2+2=5, that a man is a woman. Peace in our hearts, yes. But not the peace of the anesthetized, not the sleep of the dull of heart, not the lulling to sleep of the ones who cry out, 'Peace, peace,' when there is no peace. (Jeremiah 6:14). While it is day, arise, work and fight. And then, only after having done all that, sleep the sleep of Christ's peace. And then, tomorrow, get back at it." *Rev. Dr. Peter Scaer, professor of Exegetical Theology at Concordia Theological Seminary, writing for Word From The Center a publication from Lutheran Center for Religious Liberty, 1/31/2025*

Look for the Joy

"Let me encourage you that your spiritual journey doesn't end the minute you become a Christian – that's where it really begins! Being a follower of Christ is a continual process of learning, growing, stretching, and trusting. Each day we can look and listen for God's invitation to join Him in His wondrous work.

Has it been easy? No. I left my comfort zone and entered into a famine place where I am forced to depend on God like never before. Are there some days I feel like tearing my hair out and wish I had less laundry, less messes, lower grocery bills, and more 'me' time? Yes. But this life is not about me. It's about joining hands with Jesus to fulfill whatever tasks He sets before me and to share His love with all He brings my way. Don't miss this point – though the famine phase is hard, it does not have to be void of joy. Look for the joy. It is there. Answered prayers, treasures of wisdom, and the peace of God's provision are waiting for you in this phase. Depending on God brings such joy as I would never know any other way." *Lysa Terkeurst, What Happens When Women Walk in Faith, p. 63*

Be Clear




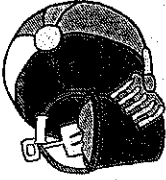

"My first and most important rule for better everyday communication is simply take time to be clear. And to be clear, speak carefully to be understood. And, just as important, listen carefully to understand.

This rule is easy to say, but not always easy to remember to do. It is all too easy to mind read or jump to conclusions, and sometimes you can just be plain lazy in expressing yourself, assuming your partner will know what you mean. But your spouse doesn't always know what you mean, and the possibilities of a tiny misunderstanding growing into something a lot more serious are legion."

Dr. Emerson Eggerichs, Love and Respect for a Lifetime, pg. 108-109

BETHESDA LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL

JULY 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
 <p>9:00 am Worship w/Communion 10:00 am Coffee—Elders 10:15 am Adult Bible Class in Library</p>	<p>Chancel for July</p> <p>Marilyn Kaiser</p> <p>Doris Belitz</p>	<p>1</p> <p>5:30 pm School Board 6:00 pm Elders 6:00 pm Alcoholics Anonymous</p>	<p>2</p> 	<p>3</p> <p>6:00 pm Alcoholics Anonymous 6:00 pm AIAAnon</p>	<p>4</p> <p>INDEPENDENCE DAY No Childcare NO LADIES BIBLE STUDY</p>	<p>5</p> <p>9:00 am Alcoholics Anonymous Breakfast</p>
<p>6</p> <p>9:00 am Worship w/Communion 10:00 am Coffee—Elders 10:15 am Adult Bible Class in Library</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>8</p> <p>6:00 pm Alcoholics Anonymous 6:30 pm Keep Hot Springs Beautiful</p> 	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p> <p>6:00 pm Alcoholics Anonymous 6:00 pm AIAAnon</p>	<p>11</p> <p>10:00 am Ladies Bible Study</p>	<p>12</p> <p>10:00 am Alcoholics Anonymous</p>
<p>13</p> <p>9:00 am Worship w/Communion 10:00 am Coffee—Bethesda Lutheran Ladies 10:15 am Adult Bible Class in Library</p>	<p>14</p> 	<p>15</p> <p>6:00 pm Alcoholics Anonymous</p>	<p>16</p> <p>AUGUST NEWSLETTER DEADLINE</p>	<p>17</p> <p>5:00 pm HS Area Right to Life 6:00 pm Alcoholics Anonymous 6:00 pm AIAAnon</p>	<p>18</p> <p>10:00 am Ladies Bible Study</p>	<p>19</p> <p>10:00 am Alcoholics Anonymous</p>
<p>20</p> <p>8:00 am Early Bible Study 9:00 am Worship w/Communion 10:00 am Coffee—Christ Connection 10:15 am Adult Bible Class in Library</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>22</p> <p>6:00 pm Alcoholics Anonymous</p>	<p>23</p> 	<p>24</p> <p>6:00 pm Alcoholics Anonymous 6:00 pm AIAAnon</p>	<p>25</p> <p>10:00 am Ladies Bible Study</p>	<p>26</p> <p>10:00 am Alcoholics Anonymous</p>
<p>27</p> <p>8:00 am Early Bible Study 9:00 am Worship w/Communion 10:00 am Coffee—Bethesda Lutheran Ladies 10:15 am Adult Bible Class in Library</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p> <p>6:00 pm Alcoholics Anonymous</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p> <p>6:00 pm Alcoholics Anonymous 6:00 pm AIAAnon</p>	