



# 2017 ANNUAL REPORT

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH (NALC)

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# ANNUAL MEETING AGENDA

JUNE 9-10, 2018

Call to Order – Jim Herr

Opening Prayer (Saturday)

Statement of Meeting Purpose

Election of Council Members

Announcements

Annual Report Availability

Thanks to 2017 Council

Recognition of Outgoing Council Members

Greg Brenton, Jill Duncan, Jim Herr

Closing Prayer (Sunday)



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

## STAFF MINISTRY REPORTS

### Senior Pastor

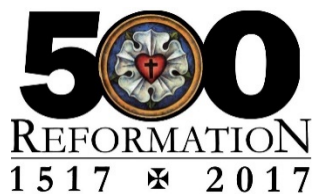
*"If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen." 1 Peter 4:11*



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

For the disciple Peter, both words and actions were the ways that we as followers of Jesus give praise and give glory to God. And we do that, not through our own strength but by the power and strength that God gives us. As I review this past year, I am reminded of how we have experienced all parts of life together. The second half of 2017 and the first half of 2018 have been filled with some high highs where we have shared the joy and love of Christ in rich and life-giving ways. For the Gast family, the high point was the celebration of our daughter Sarah's wedding here at Bethel. So many of our family's life-giving moments have been centered around faith or our church home.

But these past 12 months have brought sorrow and losses that we have shared and grieved together. Last fall, we went through a three-month period where we were announcing the death of another dear, faithful and loving member of the Bethel family almost weekly. I don't think there was anyone left unaffected and "mourning with those who mourned." I give thanks for our "Care Team," and especially our "Funeral Dinner Providers," for the wonderful ministry of providing the comfort and fellowship following the "Celebration of Life" services. Heartfelt gratitude to all who provide food, serve, and do it all with a true servant's heart.



The year of 2017 was a year-long celebration of the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation. On October 31, 1517, Martin Luther nailed 95 theses to the door of All Saints' Church in the town. When the **Reformation** began in 1517, the Church and culture were soon to change forever. But centuries haven't changed one thing: it's still all about Jesus! We at Bethel are proud of our continued Lutheran heritage and identity. Indeed, we have a long and rich history and solid Biblical theology that comes together in Word and Sacrament.

As we draw this year to a close and turn the page to the summer and fall of 2018, we are

reminded that in everything we do, we rely on God's promise to provide strength for our efforts through the active mission and ministry God has given us here. This fall on Reformation Sunday we will be celebrating our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of dedicating our present building here at the corner of 206<sup>th</sup> and Cumberland. So much has taken place over the past two decades. God is good!

There are so many things to remember and give thanks for . . . there are so many Bethel disciples who give so sacrificially, lovingly and faithfully, that I am afraid I will overlook something or someone but let me try to survey the landscape. Please forgive me if I miss something or someone.



- ✠ We have enjoyed strong and vibrant worship consistently through the year. I was personally blessed with our Sermon Series on “Joshua,” last summer, and our Lenten theme on “The Lord’s Prayer,” both on Sundays and midweek were exceptional. Again I have personally been moved by our time this past Easter Season as we dug into the short but meaningful epistle of I John using the theme “Living in the Light.” And I look forward to our upcoming summer/fall Pentecost series that will focus on the Gospel of Mark.
- ✠ Advent and Christmas were an added blessing by the Bethel Woodworkers, the Youth painters, and the ladies decorators, who shared the Christmas love by crafting 300 shadow boxes that were given with the message “Jesus is the Reason for the Season,” with a picture of the Holy Family. Thank you. We are blessed.
- ✠ Our grounds and building have been wonderfully cared for by our mowers, snow shovelers, our sweet . . . “sweet corn” patch planters/harvesters that provides delicious corn that feeds the masses, painters, landscape care-takers, our volunteers . . . all who make sure our physical appearance reflects the pride, good stewardship, and gratitude we have for what God has given us.
- ✠ We continue to settle into our new Sunday schedule with 2 services and a dedicated educational hour. There have been trade off’s, adjustments from pastors, staff, and congregation. We have done everything humanly possible to make the changes go as smoothly and painlessly as possible. We are doing everything to make disciple training and growth a high value for our congregation. Families are worshiping together, adults are making study a higher priority, and we are striving to create a culture of “Making Disciples.”
- ✠ Mission driven is not just a word or a value that we take casually. To date we have 28 missions that we support through prayer, involvement and our personal giving both to our general funds and sometimes above and beyond giving, in

order to live out our mission ministry. Bethel strives to support, local, national, and international missions.

- ✝ As a congregation, we have entered a time of Transition. I was so heartened to receive the support and encouragement of so many to the letter we sent after Easter regarding my movement from full to ¾ time ministry. We enter this time prayerfully, openly, transparently, and trusting that God will lead us and guide us so that we continue to be a vibrant and Spirit-filled people of God.



Bethel Lutheran Church continues to be a joy to serve as one of its pastors. So many of you are committed to making this congregation a life-giving presence to one and all. While many congregations are struggling these days, Bethel continues to “buck the trends because of your participation and generosity.” Because of you, we continue to have the resources necessary to move forward in all parts of our life and ministry together. Because of your courage, we are able to face the challenges and figure out what it means to “DO CHURCH” in our changing times. I hope you know what a special place God is creating in and through us. Bethel would not be what it is without the serving hearts and Christ-like love of so many.

Bethel is blessed with a wonderful, caring, faithful and faith-filled staff. It makes coming to work a joy and a true pleasure. Their partnership, dedication, and love are the best. I can tell you they are not here because this is a job, but because God has called them, equipped them and filled them with the Spirit of Christ. We care about one another and do all we can to create a culture and atmosphere of Christ’s love and community.

Our congregation is blessed with leaders and volunteers on all levels and in every area. From our Council, to our teachers, our musicians, our office volunteers, Sunday coffee hosts and to each and everyone of you who step up to the plate wherever and whenever needed. And I continue to give thanks for each and everyone of you who step up when you see a need even before you are asked to make great and wonderful things happen. I love Bethel. I hope you hear it as I write, and when we chat, and when I preach. God has blessed me with another year of life and love, of serving and sharing . . . and being a part of this and being a part of this mission, this ministry, and this family of Christ brings a satisfaction, joy and purpose that warms my heart and feeds my soul.

*Pastor Doug*

### ***Preschool Director***

This past year has been a busy one with our preschool, as is every year. This year we had a change in directors. Kris Lingenfelter left the preschool to pursue a public-school teaching position. Laura Houser accepted the role of preschool Director effective August 1, 2017.

Our children enjoyed the academic themes, lessons and chapel stories this year. We have had a variety of additional experiences this year to enrich our program. We have had the Public Safety Officer for Hamilton County, a goat, rabbits, turtle and the Noblesville Firehouse Engine 75 come to enrich our program this year. The church hosted a couple family events throughout the year, including the Fall Festival and Bonfire as well as an Easter Egg Hunt. Each event was well received with many families coming from our preschool community. Something returning this year after years of not occurring, we were able to offer our families an eye check through a partnership with our local Lions Club.

Overall, the preschool year went very well. We had 6 teachers and two regular substitute teachers for 48 children. Our Friday SMASH Class continued this year, as it has become a favorite for the students and parents. A few of our traditional events – Bethel Pumpkin Patch, Thanksgiving Can Food Drive, Christmas Program, Spaghetti Dinner fundraiser, Mother’s Day Tea, Bethel 500 and End of Year Programs continued this year. We also added a quilt raffle to our fundraiser efforts this year. Registration for the 2018-2019 preschool year is well underway with Seniors currently full, Juniors currently having 1 spot open, PDO one day is full and the other 2 are on their way to filling up. God is good! Our preschool families and Bethel have been very supportive of our preschool this year. We have been blessed and continue to bless our community by offering an affordable, academic and spiritual option for preschool in northern Hamilton County.

*Laura Houser*

### ***Assistant to the Pastor***

During the previous year I have been on the preaching rotation. I have assisted at various special services, baptisms and funerals. I have continued to visit people in their homes and make hospital and nursing home calls. Hearing confession and counseling continue. I have filled in for Pastor Doug and Pastor Al during Education Hour on Sunday's in their absence.

*Pastor Martins*

### ***Office Manager / AV Tech***

Our team of Bethel Office Volunteers continue to do an excellent job of publishing anything printed each and every week. We are blessed!

The first newsworthy item to report since this time last year is that we updated the office copiers. Just before Christmas, the old machines came off lease and were replaced with their new models, saving us \$200 a month. Each week the office volunteers

especially enjoy the benefits of a couple of new features in which the machine automatically does folding/stapling of the Bethel News.

At this time a year ago, our new Publishing Team published the first issue of our very popular *FootPrints* quarterly magazine. Each new issue offers something to learn and share about Bethel history and our Lutheran heritage. A recurring question from the beginning has been, “When is the next issue coming out?”

Joy Diamond has been a faithful office volunteer for many years. Each week she collates inserts into our weekend news. Recently she asked permission to take home a copy of our newest *FootPrints* Pentecost issue a day early. About an hour after she left the church, Joy called the office and said, “I just can’t put it down... I love it, I just can’t put it down... I’m already on page 8.” She just wanted us to know.

While in Columbus, Ohio visiting my mother-in-law, Ella, Suzy and I were at lunch with the residents there at the adult living community and a gentleman who was walking by looked down at the Pentecost issue of *FootPrints* on the chair and asked if he could look at it... After thumbing through it very quickly, he smiled and gave some nice observations and then asked if he could read it later.

Bethel is and has been eagerly sharing *FootPrints* with family and friends. Congratulations to Gay Hansen, Editor-in-Chief, and the entire team for giving Bethel a wonderful tool for telling our “Bethel Story!”

Our new Bethel’s Communications Team has come together and has already had a couple of planning meetings. We’re excited about this new team and look forward to good things to come.

Bethel’s Audio/Visual team continues to operate everything electronic in the sanctuary each weekend. Each worship service has a team of volunteers for our Worship screens, for our sound board and now, our new high def video system. We are truly blessed to have so many dedicated volunteers called to serve each and every weekend. Thank you, God!

Bethel recently received some very generous estate bequeaths. A portion of these funds were gratefully accepted, used, and completely paid for the entire upgrade of our video system, which includes: three new high definition video cameras with pan/tilt/zoom remote controls, video switches and state-of-the-art digital recorder, and, a new dedicated mini-Mac computer/software to control the new video system. The entire infrastructure was upgraded, allowing us to display high definition images to the

Narthex, Fellowship Hall and Nursery monitors. Our sermons are once again being posted to our website, now in high def!

Interested in joining one of our teams? Watch the news for upcoming AV training workshops for the new video system, and the worship computer and sound board systems. We also now have the equipment to stream live video. We look forward to utilizing this new capability sometime soon!

God continues to bless us with active spirit led teams of volunteers in the office and also on the AV team. We're always looking to grow our volunteer teams... come check us out!

*John Patterson*

### ***Youth and Property Minister***

I have two primary responsibilities at Bethel. **Youth Ministry**, where I lead our Middle School, High School and post High School young adults. **Property Ministry**, where I help to manage the care and maintenance of our church buildings, property and grounds.

My goal is to love everybody, always. I want all of our volunteers and participants to feel as though they are welcome and valued. In all of my ministry areas I want everyone to feel that Bethel truly is their church home, their church family. We are called to love one another.

Our Youth Ministry team works hard at developing relationships and mentoring possibilities for our youth (as well as our adults!). We meet weekly at MIDWEEK (Bethel's Youth Group) every Wednesday night from 6:30-8:30p. We share and learn from each other. We go on outings, listen to music, work in the community, play games, watch videos, and go on adventures.

This past year we incorporated a speaker at MIDWEEK every month who talked to us about their career and how they came to it. Vic Hanson has led this and it has proven to be very informative and eye opening.

We try to use as many volunteers as possible with property tasks. Cutting the grass and shoveling snow have proven to be two very successful opportunities. The recent addition of our memorial trees and benches to the Peace Trail has been amazing to our congregation as well as our community. If you've not seen or walked the Peace Trail, please do so as soon as you are able.

*Joe Rudy*

## Associate Pastor

*Then the LORD said to Moses, "Now tell the people, 'In the evening you will have meat to eat, and in the morning, you will have all the bread you want. Then you will know that I am the LORD your God.'" That evening vast numbers of quail flew in and covered the camp. And the next morning the area around the camp was wet with dew. When the dew evaporated, a flaky substance as fine as frost blanketed the ground. The Israelites were puzzled when they saw it. "What is it?" they asked each other. They had no idea what it was. And Moses told them, "It is the food the LORD has given you to eat." (Exodus 16:11–15, NLT)*

Gentlepeople of Bethel,

By any measure, this has been a wonderful year of ministry together. Near the end of the year, our extended church family was hit with the stress of grief and heartache. From late August to early December several long-time members completed their baptism and entered the Church Triumphant, and we feel their absence keenly. Through it all, however, we were sustained and strengthened in our ministry by the power of Word and Sacrament received in worship, by our mutual encouragement of each other, by the renewal of new disciples who share our vision for ministry, and by our shared mission in the community and the world. Like the manna and quail God provided the Israelites during their wilderness travels, God promises to provide the human, spiritual, emotional, and social resources we need for our ministry. Our experiences this year are a testimony to God's faithfulness. Thanks be to God!

There were several highlights to my year, both personally and professionally:

**Malawi** I can't tell you the thrill I experienced during my time in Malawi last summer! I deeply appreciate the support Bethel showed by dedicating the midweek Lenten offerings – over \$9,000! – to this mission trip. Your incredible generosity not only covered my costs, but the expenses associated with providing food and lodging for the approximately 225 pastors who attended AND a tablet, a pen, and a Chechewa-language Bible to each person. I am excited by the possibility of returning in 2019 under the auspices of Awakening Lives for World Missions (ALWM), the same organization that sponsored our



first trip. The need for training indigenous language pastors is great, and the partnership model undergirding ALWM's mission outreach is excellent and sustainable.

**Our Schedule Change** A visible change to our ministry this year involved our worship schedule. In August, we moved from a three-service to a two-service format on Sunday mornings, with Sunday School for all ages nestled between the services. After praying about this for several months, the Council and Pastors moved ahead with this for two reasons they found compelling. First, our nearly ten-year experience with Sunday School and worship at the same time was leading to some unintended consequences. The convenience of a "one hour" involvement (children in Sunday School while parents worshipped) meant that many children were not attending worship, only Sunday School. We were raising "liturgically incompetent" Christians, which did not fit with our congregation's core value of raising disciples. Second, our adult spiritual formation ministry was weakly supported. Some came to classes offered during the week, but our Sunday morning classes were sparsely attended. Since the shift in schedule, we've averaged 47 adults each week in 3-5 adult classes at any given time (Mike Score's report below lists those adult classes). We will continue this approach in 2018-2019. We will appreciate your input on possible classes – see the adult class display in the Narthex during June.



**Our Lay-Involvement** Last (but by NO means least!), Bethel is blessed with an active ministry. Not a busy calendar for the sake of boasting about a busy calendar, but meaningful ministry for and with the community that involves you, our disciples, and not just the pastors or staff: Eucharistic Ministers and Care Ministry; the width and depth of 26 missions we supported this past year (see Gay Hanson's report below) and the 28 we'll support in 2018; our testimonials during mid-week Advent and Lent services, the food and baby pantry, Sonshine Club, Confirmation mentors, our seasonal mowing and snow removal teams, our worship leaders, those who provide refreshments between services . . . . As you know, this list only scratches the surface of what God is doing at and through Bethel. Thanks be to God . . . and to YOU!



**Looking Ahead** In our congregation forum after Easter, Pastor Doug mentioned that his word for this year is "emergent." This word aptly describes the new spiritual reality into which you and I are living each day as we live out our baptisms. But it also perfectly describes the transition in pastoral leadership we are currently navigating. How this will play out remains to be seen, but already Pastor Doug and I sense God's leading hand at work,

guiding us into the future God has already prepared for “us” – collectively, as a congregation, and personally, as your pastors. Without a doubt, it will be different – not in overall direction, as God’s vision for our ministry is clear and not dependent on any one Pastor or Council – but perhaps in how we accomplish it. Pastor Doug has served here almost 28 years; he is the only pastor many have had. I am grateful that our Church’s polity will allow for him to remain for as long as he desires. Bethel will be stronger for his and Terri’s continued involvement.

Here’s a snapshot of a variety of pastoral acts from last year:

### Baptisms

*David and Katie Moore (5/21)*  
*Dottie Foreman (7/16)*

### New Disciples

*Jane, Curt, Tristan and Hayden Bragg;*  
*Lisa, Abigail, Tyler, Ashley Crist; Erin,*  
*Larry, Charlie, Henry Eckert; Peggy*  
*Fulton, Arlette and Larry Gray; Sarah,*  
*Kevin, Kathleen, and David Moore;*  
*Debbie and Bill Nielsen; Jim Nighten-*  
*helter; Kathy and Rick Tardy; Sue Wilson;*  
*Christine, Steve, Ashley and Emily Wyatt;*  
*Kent Zepic; Brian and Bree Zieger*

### Weddings

*Sarah Gast and Mike Allen (7/29)*

### Funerals

*Allen Elder (5/4)*  
*Bert Haisma (8/12)*  
*Bob Hanson (9/24)*  
*Erlene Mills (10/6)*  
*Diana Heiskel (10/29)*  
*Marj Kaiser (11/4)*  
*Pat Ross (11/30)*  
*Martin Curley (12/8)*  
*Jim Kussow (12/9)*

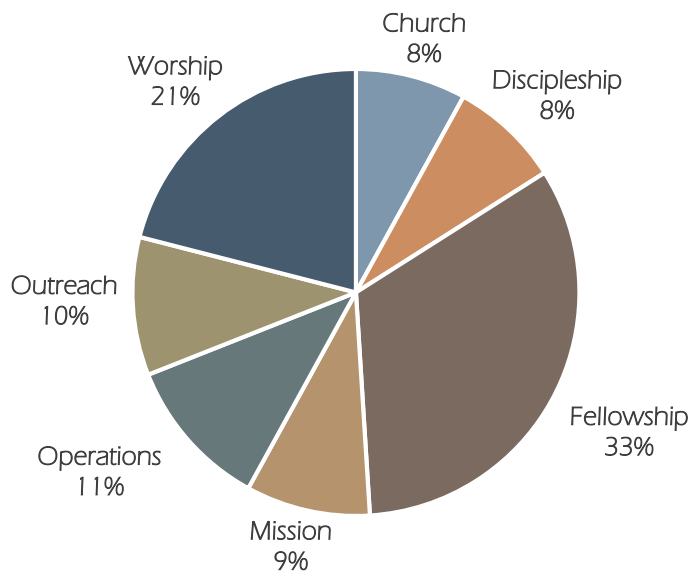
### Parish Visitation

Type	Visits	Contacts
Members	148	219
Guests	20	37
<b>Totals</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>256</b>

*Whether by phone or in person, **visits** last at least 10 minutes and **contacts** last less than 10 minutes.*

### My Stewardship of Time

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



*Pastor Al*

### ***Music Director / Organist***

Thank you to all the singers, handbell players, and musicians at Bethel who have shared their talents this year. We appreciate those that help every week and those that share for special music ministries.

This year brought about a small change in the direction of music during the 8:45 worship time. The choir that gathered in the fall was small but mighty. When it was time to return to singing in the spring, it was hard to find a time when all the interested singers could come together. At the same time, there was some interest in the handbells. So after a survey of people, we saw a return of the Bethel Handbells. After one season, we have a dedicated 14 players. The Bethel Handbells will take a break for the summer months but plans to return to playing in the fall.

Looking forward, we would like to continue and expand the Bethel Handbell group. We will continue to monitor the interest in adult choir as well as youth music opportunities here at Bethel.

*Michelle Whitehead*

## **PARISH MINISTRY REPORTS**

### ***Bethel Library Ministry***

The Bethel Library continues to offer a wide array of print, audio, and video resources, providing spiritual encouragement to Bethel members of all ages. Efforts have been made to freshen up the library's collection by including the addition of gently-used and new materials generously donated by Bethel members and friends. In addition, the library has launched a dual program: Wish List / Adopt-A-Book. Members are asked to submit titles of materials they would like to see added to the library. This list will then be paired with donations of funds of any amount that are designated as "Adopt-A-Book" monies. As funds collect, items from the wish list will then be added to the library to help keep additions relevant to the Bethel community. Periodic book and video reviews appear in the Bethel News to alert members to new product additions. Each month, the library features seasonally relevant books in a display both in the library proper as well as in the small kiosk in the narthex.



*Debbie Nielsen*

## ***Care Ministry***

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

### **CARE TEAM – Coordinated by Jane Nee and Kim Radant**

The main roll of this group is a monthly Tele-care or personal contact with Bethel members who have short or long term physical and/or emotional needs. In addition, this past year they offered a "Grief Support" class, a movie night showing "The Shack" and are currently leading an adult education class centered around the book/movie, "The Shack". They also sponsored a recent workshop, "Planning for the future" and will plan to hold this every other year. An 80's plus luncheon is offered every year to our seniors under this ministry. "Grief books are sent out to those who have recently lost a loved one.

### **CIRCLE OF SISTERS – Coordinated by Suzy Patterson**

This is a group of women who do "God's handiwork". Activities they do include making and sending cards to members who have lost a loved one or just needing encouragement. They make banners for baptisms and other special occasions. They also provide a "Ladies retreat" in May, work the craft room at the annual rummage sale and have a craft sale in the fall.

### **CREATIVE SPIRITS GROUP – Coordinated by Suzy Patterson & Cathy Crosley**

This is the old Prayer Shawl group that has been revamped and renamed. This group crochets and knits lap blankets, cancer caps and baby items such as baby blankets and hats. Some are donated to hospitals and some are available for use within the congregation.

### **SUNSHINE CLUB – coordinated by Bobbi Dankert**

The Sunshine Club offers meals to Bethel members who have been hospitalized or are homebound. This group has remained very busy throughout this year.

### **FUNERAL DINNERS – Coordinated by Lee Anne Burrow and Rise' Helgemo**

Many people work together to provide a post funeral dinner or luncheon for bereaved family and friends. The fellowship is greatly appreciated.

### **EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS – Coordinated by Ellen Gill**

Volunteers take communion to members who are shut-ins or unable to attend services.

HEALING SERVICE – Coordinated by Pastor Doug and Pastor Al. This service has been offered the first Wednesday of every month focusing on those with physical and/or emotional hurts and sorrows.

PRAYER CHAIN – Coordinated by Trudy Kussow

People offered up in prayer via email notification. Mostly taken from each Sundays prayer list.

#### LIFELINE SCREENING

A community outreach program where Bethel provides the physical location for this activity.

*Jill Duncan*

### ***Christian Education Ministry***

Bethel's Christian Education program is intended to provide everyone from preschool through adults with the basic tenants of a Christian life and knowledge of the Lutheran Church's beliefs and theology. Christian Education consists of:

- Church Nursery provides care for children under three years old during the 10:00 education hour, with a self-serve nursery during services. Usual attendance during education hour is two – three children.
- Sunday School Preschool introduces children from two - four years old to a class room experience and basic Christian education. This is available for the entire year and generally has approximately 10-12 children.
- Sunday school is for students from kindergarten to 5th grade and gradually increases the depth at which we study the bible and the Lutheran experience. We have set goals as to what each grade should know before they reach Confirmation. Average attendance is usually around 50 students. Sunday school, First Communion and Confirmation dates generally follow the school year.
- First Communion is generally for 4th – 5th graders and prepares the students in understanding the mystery of the conversion of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus. This is a basic tenant of our faith.
- Confirmation is for 6th through 8th grade students and is taught by our Youth Director with lay people and pastors assisting. Confirmation prepares our youth for an in depth understanding of the Lutheran



faith. Upon completion of Confirmation they become adult members of our church.

- Bethel Lutheran University (BLU) was offered during the Spring. Two adult BLU classes we offered in the Spring of 2017 were “I Am Who I Am”, and “The Keys to a Blessed Life.”
- Moving to a dedicated Sunday School hour has greatly improved our adult Sunday School offerings and attendance. Adult Sunday School classes and teachers include: *Ask the Question* (Lu Olp, Jason Pearson), *Loose Links* (Suzy Patterson), *The Story* (Pastor Martins, Pastor Al), *Faces of the Reformation* (Ben Black), *Path to the Cross* (Karen Schoonover), *Souls Like Stars* (Pastor Joe Freeman), *Introduction to Islam for Christians*, *Spanish with a Mission* (Debbie Nielsen), *Generosity: Responding to God’s Radiant Grace* (Tom Foreman, Tom Hooper), and *Because of Bethlehem* (Pastor Martins).
- Preschool is a Christian based School open to any families that want their children (ages 18 months to four 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, Wednesdays, and Thursdays
- Vacation Bible School is scheduled for the week of June 24th and runs from 6 - 8:30 PM. VBS is not limited to Bethel kids but is open to any child from preschool – 5th grade (completed) that wants to attend. Students completing 6th grade through High School assist. VBS is educational and very fast paced and fun.



The fantastic Christian Education program the Bethel offers is due to the great staff and volunteers that we have. To continue to thrive and grow, we can always use more volunteers willing to give a few hours a week to promote Christian Education. Thank you!

Mike Score

### **Communication Ministry**

The Bethel website has been and continues to be a great asset for communication at Bethel. It is a great information resource for the church's many activities, events, and outreach programs. It is also a valuable format to receive prayer requests from people who may otherwise be missed. Trudy Kussow continues to do great work with 'prayer warriors'. Through the past year, she has had a direct email set up to receive requests

instantly to aid her communication efforts to the team. If you have a prayer request, Trudy WILL find you!

In April, a new high definition camera and recording system was installed using memorial and Fish Fry funds. In May, this allowed us to again post sermon videos on the internet through the church's website. John has all the hearing enhancement equipment up and running for people to use during service. He continues to keep the website updated with current information and is an integral part of the communications team.

Through Pastor Doug's direction, we put together a Council picture board for the congregation's reference. Pictures are inter-changeable and will be updated after the upcoming Council member changes. An information gathering process was done for new Bethel sign proposals for the southwest corner of the property (206th and Cumberland). Some interest was expressed in having a more permanent looking



**Logan and John in the AV Booth**

foundation sign. Perhaps brick/masonry columns with signage in between. A couple estimates were received for future consideration. Presentation drawings were prepared for planning of the 'Peace Trail' phases 1 and 2 (construction 2015-16 and tree plantings 2016-17). Through great efforts and work from all, these phases have both been completed. It's awesome out there! Fantastic work Reising family!

Upcoming agenda has many things in-store. In August of 2017, we moved from a monthly newsletter to a quarterly magazine based on the church year.

FootPrints has been very well received. Many thanks to all those Bethel disciples who have contributed! Talk continues on design and layout of the next phase for the "Peace Trail." This could include trail extension, memorial/prayer garden, columbarium, etc. A Communications Committee was formed early in 2018 and has been meeting to discuss aspects of communications including website, social media, print media, etc. Presentation boards hopefully to come this winter.

*Kirk Pfeil*

### ***Eucharistic Minister Team***

Eucharistic Ministry is Bethel's outreach to our members who are too frail to join us for worship on a regular basis. Trained, dedicated volunteers take a consecrated Communion kit to these folks monthly, to share Communion, prayer, Bible reading and Christian fellowship with them. Currently, Bethel has 17 trained Eucharistic Ministers.

During 2017, Communion was shared with more than 15 of our shut-in members and friends. This ministry touches them in a very real, personal and Christ-like way.

*Ellen Gill*

### ***Evangelism Ministry***



Our church family has grown again this year through our Discovery classes. Discovery classes are 4 weeks long, and new members are taught all about Bethel, its roots, and our beliefs as a church. New members are introduced to the pastors, staff members, and church council members as they participate in the classes. New members see us outside of the church and share a meal and some experiences at Bethel.

In October, we held another successful *Trunk or Treat*. We advertised at the IMAX at Hamilton Town Center prior to the event to encourage community members to join us. The *Trunk or Treat* was well attended despite the cold temperatures. This is an event we hope to continue with the help of the wonderful Bethel members who participate by decorating their trunks and providing treats as a safe way for kids to enjoy the holiday.

Another event that was well attended by community members was our Easter Egg Hunt. It was once again a huge success thanks to the hard work of our members. Thank you to everyone who assisted and shared in the fun.

We have begun reaching out to first-time church visitors by taking cookies to their homes. This is a practice that was popular in the past, and it has been well-received so far this year. In addition, the Evangelism team is sending a "Welcome to the Neighborhood!" mailer to people who move into the area. We are still determining whether this is an effective way to encourage people to join Bethel.

In an effort to reach others in the community, Hamilton County Television airs a segment with Jennifer Johnson about Bethel the first Tuesday every month. In those segments, a member of the congregation joins Jennifer to explain what is currently happening at Bethel. The video is posted onto Facebook and YouTube for others to watch.



**Easter Egg Hunt**

For the upcoming church year, encourage the members of Bethel to reach out to members of their communities and invite them to join our church family. We welcome your suggestions, participation, and prayers.

*Jennifer Luce*

### ***Fellowship Ministry***

Fellowship time was moved from the Fellowship Hall to the Narthex (church lobby) in June. With the change in Sunday morning services and the addition of more adult education classes, a new location was needed for the socialization time. The executive committee of the council made the directive. The Bethel Café has been a welcomed addition, serving food from the member-made and donated credenza as well as baker's racks for the drink services. Many positive comments have been received.

Several people have welcomed the opportunity to be the host/hostesses for the fellowship time, enjoyed by adults and children alike. Many people have welcomed the chance to be the providers for the first time. More people are encouraged to serve.

Lenten and Advent mid-week dinners were very well attended. The Shrove Tuesday dinner was also well received.

The Progressive Dinner was held in April under the direction of Terri Gast, Shellie Martz and Anne Perryman. This is always a popular event at Bethel.

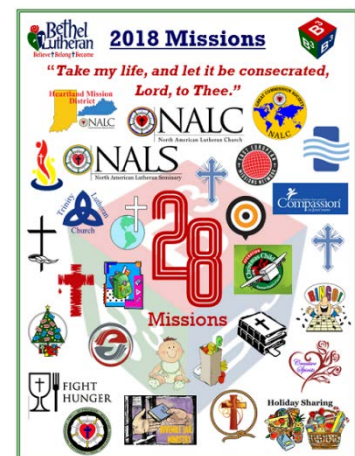
Pastor Al provided a pictorial and narrative presentation of his trip to Malawi during a pot luck dinner.

*Kathie Hill*

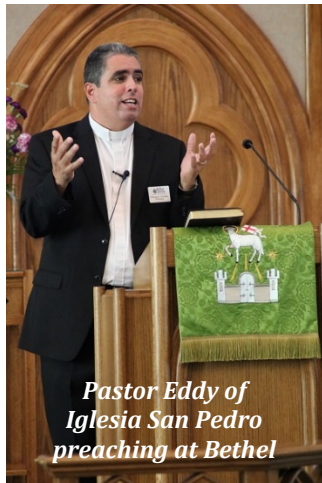
### ***Missions Ministry***

Bethel supported 26 missions in 2017 and will support more than 28 missions in 2018. Through prayer, funds, time, and talents, Missions are supported on global, national, and local levels as well as through the North American Lutheran Church (NALC). Bethel's Missions theme for 2018 is: *"Take my life, and let it be consecrated, Lord to Thee."*

Globally, Bethel supports a mission partner congregation in Senbete, Ethiopia, as well as its synod, the North Central Ethiopia Synod (NCES). Individuals and families of Bethel support Operation Christmas Child by preparing boxes to send to children throughout the world who would have no



gifts otherwise. Bethel continues to support Awakening Lives to World Missions (ALWM). This is the organization that Pastor Al Schoonover went to Malawi with. Pastor Martins and Gunta Irbe continue their long-standing mission relationship through travel to Latvia with the aid of Bethel's support of the East European Mission Network (EEMN). Through Water Mission, Bethel helps fund clean water in places in the world that have none.



*Pastor Eddy of  
Iglesia San Pedro  
preaching at Bethel*

At the National level, Bethel has strong relationships with three churches and is beginning a new one with a mission start congregation in Virginia. Living Faith Lutheran in Wabash, IN; Iglesia Luterana San Pedro in Miami, FL; and Servants of Christ NALC in Robins, IA, have been our mission partners for the last few years. Trinity Lutheran Church in Warrenton, VA, is a new partner. Regular communications and visits help to build up these partner congregations and provide Christian fellowship around the country.

Locally, Bethel is very active. Missions range from backpacks to Bibles and jail Bible studies to giving Blood to Bingo with seniors. Bethel helps Fight Hunger through the pantry and provides food to help families celebrate Thanksgiving and Christmas. Gifts are provided through the Holiday Sharing missions as well as the Angel Tree. Foster families are given respite, veterans are helped, and Noblesville is SERVED. Mission support began this year for "Creative Spirits" which is a group that crochets prayer shawls and baby hats, booties, and blankets for preemies.

Bethel supports the NALC through funds and participation at the national level as well as the Heartland Mission District. Gifts to the North American Lutheran Seminary help to assure well-trained and theologically sound Lutheran pastors for the future. In 2018, Bethel joined the Great Commission Society (GCS) of the NALC to support its global mission workers, mission starts, and renewal initiatives.



The Disciples at Bethel contribute their time, efforts, and funds to support its many and varied Missions. Thank You for taking our BLESSINGS BEYOND BETHEL (B3) to do Christ's work in the world!

*Gay Hanson*

### **Property Ministry**

Big ticket items included The Lord of Light project that included change out of all the lights around the church both inside and out, led by Jim Eynon. The Legacy Peace Trail, which was Zach Reising's Eagle scout project, led by him and his dad Jeff, continue to be improved. It has grown into an incredible addition for the church. The Kitchen remodel has been a huge success, giving the church a functional kitchen at a fraction of the budgeted cost. A fewer smaller projects include gravel parking addition, Pantry floor remodel, and utilities ran out to the outdoor shelter making it a more usable space. All this on top of the day to day jobs that many of our members volunteering their time to keep the church beautiful and manicured. Pretty busy 2017!!

*'Matt Corley*

### **Stewardship Ministry**

*Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. (2 Corinthians 9:7)*

This past year, the stewardship campaign was focused on the thanksgiving and gratefulness of being entrusted as stewards of the blessings God has bestowed on us. This included testimonials from members of the church, more publication of how contributions have benefited the ministries Bethel serves, and long-term planning on future opportunities to provide unique contribution opportunities. Bethel is blessed to receive pledges from over 100 families for over \$400,000 in contributions for 2018. We are blessed to be a part of a Church family where gifts of time, skills, and finances are converted to such a wide variety of ministries.

*Tom Foreman*

### **Worship and Music Ministry**

Healing services continue to be a very blessed event. Personal spiritual healing has been witnessed through the presence of the HOLY SPIRIT, prayers, anointing oils and the laying of hands.

The Worship and Music committee especially wants to thank all the faithful members of the sound system crew for their dedicated and quality efforts throughout the year led by John Patterson. A very special thank you also goes to the Altar Guild led by Jill Duncan.

We have experienced growth in our church as we celebrated several new confirmands and congratulated 18 high school graduates from our church family.



We have shared tears and supported fellow church members as we lost several loved ones this last year. We rejoiced in the knowledge that they were with our Father in heaven. We also grieved as we experienced the real loss of their presence here with us on earth.

The Lenten season of Bethel was made very special by all the contributions made by individuals to the moving mid-week services. This was culminated by the Holy Week experience and Easter Sunday itself. The sacrifice of our Lord for us is a very moving time each year. The leadership of our Pastors and worship team made this 40-day period very moving.

Michelle Whitehead's contributions have been a highlight of the year as she has a fun smile, has been very organized and helps us all by planning well ahead of what most of us are thinking. She is also very eager to accommodate Pastor's last-minute requests. Michelle has also been very faithful in leading our adult choir as they have contributed to several services.

The Advent devotional books this year were written by church members. Many shared that it was a moving experience to contribute to the book as well as to read the devotions written by our members.

We are joyous to watch the birth of a new season in the life of the church as our beloved Pastor Doug has moved into a  $\frac{3}{4}$  time role. This is allowing Doug and Terri the well-earned opportunity to visit with family and friends.

This past year we have enjoyed the change in our church service times which has allowed us to experience a significant increase in attendance at our education hour. Additionally, the changes have allowed previous service attenders to experience "new" faces at a different time.

The church has continued to be a host site this past year on Tuesday evenings for a women's group of Bible Study Fellowship. This has been a good outreach program and great utilization of the facility that we have been blessed with.

*Tom Hooper*

## **Youth Ministry**

May 2017

We had 8 youth confirmed.

June 2017

We had 23 Seniors receive Blessing Blankets. We had several Youth volunteer, and in a few cases lead areas of our Vacation Bible School. There were a few Youth able and willing to help with SERVE Noblesville.



**The Youth on the Move!**

July 2017

We had 13 Youth and 3 adults attend camp at Lake Louise. 1 kid had to come home early because he broke his arm but he's a champ and can't wait to go next year (his folks are good with this too). Camp remains one of the most if not THE most important places kids connect with God.

We had 8 Youth and 3 adults attend our Boundary Waters adventure the week of July 22-29. Kyle Dankert was our student leader this year and he did a nice job.

August 2017

MIDWEEK began 8/16. The focus this year was on problem solving and how faith can help with that.

Confirmation Class started back up 8/27. We found a new teacher, Erik Forbes (a former member of our Youth group who has returned to the Noblesville area and attending Bethel again post college). He will be filling in for Jeff Schwartz who has served for many years & is stepping down.

September 2017

MIDWEEK is up and running. Vic Hansen and Joe have been discussing for several months a monthly program (during MIDWEEK) where kids can learn budgeting, resume writing, character traits, personality markers, different careers/callings. We will have 1 speaker a month. Confirmation class began this month. It is a large group with roughly 30 kids.



**Midweek Youth Group**

The Youth attended a documentary screening at NHS on 9/20 during MIDWEEK called "Screenagers". It was about mobile devices and social media and how the effects they have on all of us.

October 2017

Joe packed up the Senior Blessing Blankets which were not received in June and sent them to those now away at school.

MIDWEEK Cinema Deliberation aka Movie Night for Fall Break.

The High School Youth decided on bus decoration for Trunk or Treat. They also grilled out/provide food and drinks for those attending the Trunk or Treat.

November 2017

Joe's Youth Cohort wrapped up the year in Chicago 11/7-8. It was a positive experience for Joe. He made many connections in Youth Ministry and definitely helped hone his skills and our Youth Ministry at Bethel.

Confirmation Class starts up this Semester with "Luther and the Catechism"

December 2017

The Youth lead an Advent Service.

We have many activities planned for 2018.

Mother Teresa once said, "If you want to change the world, first go home and love your family." How truly blessed Bethel is to have such a resource in our Youth! May we continue to give them roots in the faith and wings to strive for the grand adventures God has in store for them.

*Laura Houser*

## Bethel Lutheran Church Income and Expense Statement

Year to Date	Year to Date Budget	YTD Budget Difference	YTD Prior Year	Annual Budget
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## ANNUAL PAROCHIAL REPORT

Excerpts from our 2017 Parochial report:

	2014	2015	2016	2017
Total Baptized Membership	1381	1420	1458	1494
Total Confirmed Membership	1233	1275	1328	1364
Average Weekly Attendance	304	331	328	334

MEMBERS ADDED IN 2017		MEMBERS REMOVED IN 2017	
Infant Baptism	10	Death	11
Adult Baptism	2	Transfer	8
Confirmation	8	Other	5
Transfer	21		
Affirmation of Faith	11		
Total	52	Total	24

GIVING BEYOND BETHEL	
NALC Benevolence	\$12,158
District Benevolence	400
Local / National Partnerships	1,746
International Mission	21,493
Total	\$35,797



# NALC

North American Lutheran Church





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