



BEAR FACTS

Issue 1: September 1, 2026

FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Welcome to the first day of school! It's our 80th school year! WOW! God has been so faithful, and we know He will continue to be in the year ahead!

We're so glad you are here (and we're so glad it cooled off for this first day!) I saw lots of happy faces and heard many excited voices this morning...what a great start!!

The teaching staff has been here the last two weeks participating in training, preparing materials and planning, planning, planning for a great school year. This morning we gathered for prayer and prayed specifically for our new students, for our 8th graders, for all our wonderful families and for our school. We hope you'll join us in those prayers.

Thanks for taking time to read the Bear FACTS each week. We work hard to make sure the best and latest information is right here for you. You can always find it in your email inbox or on the Bethany website.

Praying for a memorable and wonderful year, celebrating God's faithfulness!

*Blessed to be at Bethany,
Dr. Fink*



The Bear Facts is our weekly school newsletter. We will email it every Tuesday, post on our website and app AND text you a link so you can read it on your phone! (Can you tell we REALLY want you to read it every week??)

COMING UP

- **Sept. 1**-First Day of School, minimum day, out at noon
- **Sept. 2**-Classes begin at 8:30 for ALL students, K-8.
- **Sept. 3**-Catalina Camp meeting for Grade 7-6:30 PM
- **Sept 7**-Labor Day-No school
- **Sept. 8**-908 Day!
- **Sept. 8**-6th Grade Camp Meeting 6:30
- **Sept. 9**-New-to-Bethany Parent Zoom-6:30
- **Sept. 10**-8th Grade Launch Party
- **Sept. 14**-School Picture Day
8th Grade DC Meeting 6:30
- **Sept. 17**-5th Grade Astrocamp Meeting 6:30 PM
- **Sept. 20**-8th Grade Meat-Smoking Competition Fundraiser 5 PM



Need lunch?
Sign up for [Choicelunch](#) using our code:
bethany

Dress Code Reminders

Students should be in uniform dress with red, white or navy polos on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays.

On Wednesdays, everyone (staff, too!) should be wearing their Bethany chapel polo.

On Fridays, students may wear jeans (or jean shorts or skirts) and Bethany theme/spirit shirts.

Teachers may choose to offer "free dress" as a class incentive on occasion at their discretion.

The dress code is [outlined here](#) on the Bethany website.

Camp/Outdoor Ed Meetings

Parents, please plan to attend the mandatory information meetings:

7th Grade: Sept. 3, 6:30 Room 205

6th Grade: Sept. 8, 6:30 Room 204

8th Grade: Sept. 14, 6:30 Room 203

5th Grade: Sept. 17, 6:30 Room 222

New for 2026-2027

New Faces!

- We have 19 new students, including our Kindergarteners!
- We have a NEW 4th Grade teacher, Mrs. Bestelmeyer!
- We have a NEW Math Interventionist, Mrs. Mercado!
- We have a NEW school custodian, Mr. Ezekiel Cruz.

NEW curriculum materials:

- We have NEW executive functions and drug abuse prevention programs in middle school! .

Also NEW:

- The 3rd and 8th Grade classrooms have NEW LED lights and ceilings!
- The gym floor is refinished and looks almost brand-NEW with NEW pickleball lines included!
- The gym bathrooms hallways have NEW tile!

Meet the Staff

Kinder-Mrs. Madison Ruiz
1st- Mrs. Lori Lange
2nd - Miss Stefanie Hinrichs
3rd - Mrs. Shannon Morgensen
4th - Mrs. Alison Bestelmeyer
5th - Mrs. Heidi Leicht
MS History- Mr. Brad Royuk
MS Math- Miss Abby Einspahr
MS English- Mrs. Carrie Evans
MS Science- Mr. Paul Brege
Spanish- Mrs. Ali Wickwire
K Aide- Mrs. Christi Koehlinger
1st Aides- Mrs. Jessica Zakharia
2nd Aide- Ms. Julie Bunting
3rd-5th Aide- Mrs. Cory Steele
Workroom- Mrs. Jen Dicecca
Student Success-Mrs. Kelsey Cornett
Mrs. Connie Kritzer
Math Int. - Mrs. Amanda Mercado
Art Teacher- Mrs. Jessica Zakharia
Music Teacher- Mr. Kevin Bowers
PE Teacher- Mr. Brent Whitfield
Custodian- Mr. Ezekiel Cruz
School Secretary-Mrs. Kim Yoshiyama
Admissions - Mrs. Sara Cerulle
Scrip Coord.- Mrs. Ruth Lopez
Financial Admin-Mrs. Andria Rosas
HR-Mrs. Holly Jainoor
EDC Director- Ms. Carlota Brown
EDC Staff-Michelle Fischer, Jacob Lagana, Laci Carlson
IT Director-Mr. Josh Hicks
Pastor- Rev. Kevin Kritzer
Director of Music-Mr. Noah Freeman
Music Academy-Mrs. Mara Widmann
DCE/Children-Families-Mrs. Alissa Brege
DCE/Youth -Mrs. Kayleigh Lopez
DCE/Care Ministry- Mr. Karl Fink
Principal- Dr. Mary Fink



School Photos

School pictures are scheduled for Monday, Sept. 14. Please avoid out-of-school appointments that day. We do have a make-up day for absent students, but they will miss being in the class photo.

Your picture package is pre-paid with your registration fee. You may also order additional prints.

Students should be in uniform dress for photos.



Welcome!

New-to-Bethany Parent Orientation is scheduled for **Wednesday, Sept. 9 at 6:30 PM** by Zoom. (We will email you the link later.) This informational meeting IS REQUIRED and it is important that one or both parents attend. You will receive your electronic copy of our Parent Handbook, meet members of the staff and Bethany community and hear about many of the happenings here on the Bethany campus. We're looking forward to seeing you!



RaiseRight™

Formerly ShopWithScrip

Welcome Back!

My name is Ruth Lopez and I am the Scrip Coordinator for our RaiseRight program. You can earn a tuition rebate by turning your everyday expenses into earnings! Simply buy gift cards and/or shop online through Bethany's RaiseRight program, and brands automatically give up to 20% back.

Use this rebate to help pay for tuition or support the ministry of your choice (SSP, tuition assistance, youth, music ministry).

Use gift cards to pay for everyday things like gas, groceries, coffee, clothing, dining out and you could earn \$1000 per year or more! There is no limit.

Plus, with eGift cards, reloadable gift cards and a mobile app available you can buy gift cards and shop online anytime, anywhere.

To learn more and request Bethany's enrolment code, contact Ruth Lopez at rlopez@bethanylutheran.org / 562-420-7783 ext. 58 Visit raiseright.com/enroll

FISH Hours

FISH stands for "Families Involved in Service Hours." Each Bethany family is required to give 5 hours of service each year. (Many of our families serve many more than 5 hours!) You can serve at events, drive for a trip/sport, bring in classroom supplies, assist your child's teacher and so much more.

You can log your FISH hours from the [Bethany website](#) OR from Gradelink. We'll send you a "FISHing Report" each quarter to let you know how many hours you've served.

Supervisory Volunteers

Would you like to drive for field trips or sports, or supervise a small group of students on a field trip? Sign up to be a "supervisory volunteer" by completing the following:

- Complete a [Volunteer Application](#) (if you haven't completed one in the past.)
- Complete [Mandated Reporter training](#) for volunteers.
- Complete a [Driver Form](#).
- Provide your [DMV driving record](#).

Turn in all forms/certificates to the school office. We will notify you when you've been cleared.

THANK YOU SO MUCH!!

Middle School Corner

Middle School Families, please keep this list someplace handy, we believe communication strengthens our partnership with you. Looking forward to a wonderful year!

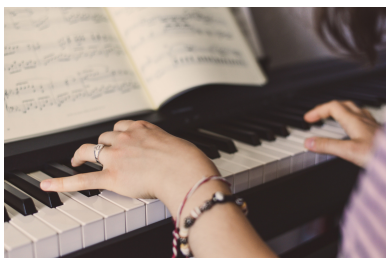
Middle School Faculty

- Dr. Mary Fink: Principal (mfink@bethanylutheran.org)
- Mr. Brad Royuk: History 6/7/8, Spiritual Formation 8, Lit 8, Treblemaker Bells, (broyuk@bethanylutheran.org)
- Miss Abby Einspahr: Math 6/7/8, Spiritual Formation 6/7, Phys. Ed./Health (aeinspahr@bethanylutheran.org)
- Mrs. Carrie Evans: English 6/7/8, Lit 6/7, Phys. Ed./Health (cevens@bethanylutheran.org)
- Mr. Paul Brege: Science 6/7/8, 6th Blue Math, Phys. Ed./Health (pbrege@bethanylutheran.org)
- Señora Ali Wickwire: Spanish 6/7/8 (awickwire@bethanylutheran.org)
- Mr. Noah Freeman: Troubadour Choir 6/7/8 (nfreeman@bethanylutheran.org)
- Mr. Kevin Bowers: Chimes 6 (kbowers@bethanylutheran.org)
- Mrs. Sara Cerulle: Wednesday Hand Bells (scerulle@bethanylutheran.org)
- Mrs. Jessica Zakharia: Art 6/7/8 (jzakharia@bethanylutheran.org)
- Mrs. Alissa Brege: Student Council Advisor (abrege@bethanylutheran.org)
- Mr. Brent Whitfield: Phys. Ed./Health, Flag Football Coach (bwhitfield@bethanylutheran.org)
- Advisory Team Leaders: Mr. Royuk, Ms. Einspahr, Mrs. Evans, Mr. Brege, Mrs. Brege



We love our partnership with SEEDS! This amazing organization provides our students on-campus access to individual therapy, social-emotional skill groups, parent and staff training and so much more. We have already benefitted from our SEEDS partnership: our staff participated training about helping students who struggle with anxiety and emotional dysregulation.

We have witnessed over and over again the shortage of available therapy for children, and the frustration parents experience trying to find help. We know SEEDS is a valuable service for our families.



Music Academy

Bethany's Music Academy provides extra-curricular music instruction to students in Grades 2-8 after school, M-F between 3:15 and 6:30 PM.

We have Christian instructors who are professionals in their field and offer lessons in piano (Grade 2 and up) and trumpet (Grade 4 and up) and voice (Grade 6 and up.)

Tuition is \$260 which covers 8 lessons for the fall semester

Information and enrollment forms are [available here](#). Enrollment forms are due September 4. Lessons begin Sept. 14.

Student Council

Congrats to our Student Leaders
for 2026-2027

President: Henry Cerulle
Vice President: Aaron Castellanos
Secretary: Alex Joanes
Spirit Coord.: Holly Peck
Servant Leadership: Justin Armstrong

PTL

Parents, you are all members of the Parent Teacher League, our amazing group of parent leaders/volunteers and an important part of making Bethany such a special place.

We'll need your help to pull off our events in the year ahead (and it's a great way to earn FISH hours!) Please [click this link](#) and let us know where you'd like to plug in!

Our first PTL meeting of the school year will be on Sept. 22. Watch for more details in the weeks to come!

Did you know?

We have students from Valley Christian High School's "Christian Service" class who visit our campus once a week throughout the year. Their role is to be on the playground with our K-2 students and teachers, engaging students in games and conversation while demonstrating a Christ-like demeanor and attitude.

We LOVED our Valley Christian friends last year, and we're looking forward to welcoming a new crew this year!

MEAT SMOKING COMPETITION ... AND ... BBQ FUNDRAISER

SUNDAY,
SEPT 20

5-7PM



BIT.LY/BBQFORDC

Bethany Lutheran School Field



BENEFITING BETHANY LUTHERAN SCHOOL 8TH GRADE WASHINGTON DC TRIP



Not all Heroes wear capes!
Check out the QR code above
to volunteer for PTL activities!



School Lunch Done Right[®]

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Child & Teen Individual Therapy

2026-2027 School Year



Our therapists provide support in areas such as:

- Self Esteem
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Phobias
- Grief & Loss
- Relationship Concerns
- Trauma Attachment
- Life's Transitions
- Body Image
- Identifying Substance Abuse
- Screen/Gaming Addiction
- Self Harm

Individual sessions are held at
Bethany Lutheran, during the school day.

Limited after-school (3pm) sessions must be booked in
advance.

Scholarships available on an as-needed basis.

To schedule an intake or for more info:

 clairew@seedstherapy.org

 (949) 345-1130



www.seedstherapy.org