

the

Wellspring

Out of the believer's heart shall flow rivers of living water
John 7:38

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Bethesda Lutheran Church
GATHER...GROW...GO



The Injustice of the Widow's Faith

~**Bryan Simmons**, Lead Pastor

As he taught, he said, "Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes and to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces and to have the best seats in the synagogues and places of honor at banquets! They devour widows' houses and for the sake of appearance say long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation." He sat down opposite the treasury and watched the crowd putting money into the treasury. Many rich people put in large sums. A poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which are worth a penny. Then he called his disciples and said to them, "Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury. For all of them have contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on." - Mark 12:38-44

Dear Beloved in Christ,

In Mark 12:41-44, we meet a widow who gives everything she has to the temple treasury. Jesus draws attention to her sacrifice, saying she put in "everything—all she had to live on." Many sermons interpret this story as a call to greater faith and sacrificial giving. It's a powerful image of trust in God, and the widow's faith is admirable. But what if Jesus is pointing us to more than just her faith? What if he's also asking us to see the injustice in her situation?

The widow in this story embodies the heart of trust, giving her all despite her own poverty. She believes in God's provision with a faith that inspires us. However, as we read this passage, it's also essential to consider its context. Just before Jesus commends her faith, he condemns the hypocrisy of the religious leaders who "devour widows' houses" (Mark 12:40). The contrast couldn't be sharper. Jesus is calling out a system that not only fails to support the widow but even leads her to sacrifice what little she has left.

Yes, we should have a faith like the widow's, trusting God fully with our lives and resources. But Jesus' words challenge us to look more deeply. This widow doesn't just need praise; she needs support. She needs the very community that she's giving her last coins to be a source of sustenance, compassion, and justice in her life.

In our world today, are we lifting up the widows—the vulnerable, the marginalized, the poor? It's easy to admire the faith of those who give sacrificially, but Jesus calls us to more than admiration. He calls us to action. True faith responds to God's love by working to dismantle systems that exploit those who already have so little.

Following Jesus doesn't mean we're called to sacrifice indiscriminately; instead, it means we're called to respond to the ultimate sacrifice Jesus made for us by living out God's love in tangible ways. That includes lifting up those who, like the widow, are left with nothing.

So yes, let's have faith like the widow. But let's also be God's hands and feet that supports the widow. God invites us to challenge and change systems that perpetuate poverty and injustice. This is how we can be true followers of Christ, building a world that reflects God's justice, mercy, and love for all people. May we be faithful, not just in our giving but in our calling to love one another as God loves us.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Bryan Simmons



Council Update

~ **Chelsey Asienbrey**, Council President

Bethesda is a special place to be!

There have been countless times over the past few months where I've been honored to be a part of this community. Each one of you has made this journey special and I'm grateful for your presence.

I want to start by expressing our collective gratitude to the group of generous members who donated time and money to bring the new electronic sign to fruition. This sign, a beacon of our community's progress, now stands as a more inviting and effective communicator of Bethesda's important work. I'm thrilled to see how these messages will enhance our connection to the community. This achievement is a testament to the vision and commitment of our members. Thank you for making this possible!

The Stewardship Dinner was a wonderful celebration of giving. I love the interactions that are fostered from bringing all of our members together. Randi and Steve Peters did an incredible job sharing their stories and specifically why philanthropy is important to them. I'm regularly amazed at what we can accomplish by working together – both within and outside the walls of Bethesda!

Another impactful event was the highly successful Scandinavian Coffee! The sheer quantity of volunteers that contributed to its success is a testament to our community's strength. Thank you to everyone who gave their time and energy to offer this event to the community again. The positive feedback from attendees was overwhelming. In a world often divided, witnessing people come together, enjoy fellowship, and create connections was truly inspiring. This success is a reflection of our collective efforts and commitment to our community.

The last item I want to highlight is our Living Water Wednesday programming. This is not just a service, but a community of support and growth. With dozens of amazing volunteers offering the programming, it's a true testament to our community's spirit. Whether you're preparing a meal, participating in the worship, or serving as a children's church facilitator, your contribution is invaluable. If you haven't had a chance to participate in the intergenerational worship on Wednesdays, I strongly encourage you to try it out. It is truly for all ages! For me personally, it's a time to reset, reflect, and be renewed. I leave every service with my spirits lifted and feeling fulfilled, and I hope you can experience the same sense of belonging and support.

As we enter the Advent season, I hope that you experience anticipation for the incredible gift of love and grace that was given to all of us through Jesus. I also look forward to the upcoming events and initiatives that will further strengthen our community bonds. I wish all of you and your families peace, health, and lots of happiness!

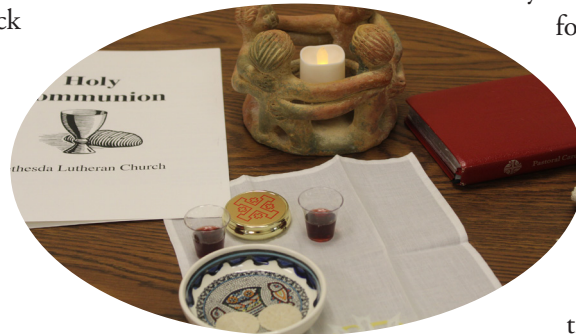
Chelsey Asienbrey



Bethesda's Caring Ministries

~ **Christine Cown**, Interim Associate Pastor

In the 25th chapter of the Gospel according to Matthew, Jesus speaks to his faithful followers, whom he calls his sheep, and invites them into the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world. He says to them, among other things, “I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.” In this passage, Jesus shows us how much he himself identifies with those who are in any kind of need and shows us how we can show love for him by loving our neighbor.



(using pre-consecrated bread and wine) in the homes or the health care centers where the members reside. This extraordinary and essential ministry has been ongoing for many years.

Our members who are served by our Holy Communion Visitors are very appreciative of these visits because they are often lonely. Many of them were formerly able to be active in the congregation’s ministries, and it is so comforting for them to see a familiar face! We want to grow this team. So, if this sounds like something God might be inviting you to do, you would be welcome. Visitors receive training from a pastor so that they feel comfortable bringing the Sacrament to those they visit.

I’m so glad that our congregation, with each of us playing a vital role, engages in many caring ministries, including our food pantry, clothing closet, and saving suds laundromat ministry. These important ministries are not just tasks, but a responsibility and a commitment. They serve many members of our community. They give us a way to work together to do those things that Jesus praised – feeding the hungry, providing clothing to those who need it, and helping our neighbors with their material needs.

Each of these ministries is powered by people like you who sense a call from God. Sometimes, that call takes the form of a little idea. You may think, “Maybe I could do that.” That could signify that the Holy Spirit is nudging you toward this ministry! If you want to share your time and presence in these unique ways of serving God, please get in touch with Pastor Chris, Pastor Bryan, or the office staff for more information.

As a congregation, we also seek to respond to other needs to feel included, valued, and loved. Not the least of these needs is connecting with our Lord through prayer and the Lord’s Supper. Did you know that we have a team of laypeople who are committed to helping with these spiritual needs? These visitors, who are integral to our ministry, go to the homes of members who cannot attend church regularly, to nursing homes and health care centers. They bring a warm smile and a time of fellowship and offer prayer and Holy Communion



Sharing God's Bounty

~Laura Miller, Grow & Give Volunteer

If you were to stop by the Bethesda Community Food pantry any Tuesday or Wednesday in August and September, you would be surprised by the tables of colorful produce. Red and orange tomatoes, green cucumbers, bell peppers in all colors, curly kale, whatever happens to be garden-ready.



Amazingly, it would all be gone in a couple of days.

Now imagine your grocery cart – also empty – as you pass the produce aisle because your budget doesn't stretch to buy cucumbers, apples, and peppers that cost more than \$1 apiece. Given the high cost of fresh produce, it's no wonder that food pantry patrons eagerly pick up whatever fresh foods are available at the pantry.

Bethesda is among nine Story County food pantries receiving locally grown fruit and vegetables weekly from the Grow & Give program (formerly Plant a Row for the Hungry). Grow & Give is coordinated by horticulture staff at Reiman Gardens. But the heart of the program lies in the hands of our dedicated volunteers—they run the program, grow and donate produce from their home gardens, pick up produce from vendors at the end of the Saturday farmers market in Ames, weigh, sort, box, and distribute produce to area food pantries. Their commitment is what makes this program a success.



The beauty of this program is that no food goes to waste. Every gardener knows the scenario – it's always feast or famine with home gardens. What to do with all the extra summer squash? Sweet corn that's ready at the same time? Tomatoes that keep on producing?

Take it to Grow & Give! During the growing season (roughly mid-June until hard frost in October), gardeners can drop off extra produce every Monday morning

between 7:30 and 9 a.m. at the Reiman Gardens parking lot.

This drop-off is for anyone who has extra produce – from backyard growers who may have a sack of cucumbers to growers with huge gardens and a truckload of product. The donated produce is combined with what's harvested at Reiman's food gardens each week, plus what was collected at the Ames farmers market. Then, all is weighed, sorted, boxed, and delivered to four food pantries in Ames, plus Huxley, Boone, Nevada, and Cambridge. Even out-of-condition vegetables feed animals at Blank Park Zoo, tortoises at an Ames rehab center, and Reiman Gardens butterflies.

The numbers are great, but the need is greater. It's the collective effort of our community that can truly make a difference. Your involvement, no matter how small, can have a significant impact on those in need.



During the 2024 growing season, Grow & Give distributed 18,245 pounds – more than 9 tons – of fresh produce to food pantries. This was enough to provide nutritious meals for hundreds of families in our community. No matter how much was donated each week, food pantries said the fresh food quickly disappeared from their shelves, a testament to the high demand for fresh produce. Your contribution can help us meet this demand. In one week, Grow & Give received 30 crates of beautiful green, red, yellow, and orange peppers from research trials at the ISU Horticulture Station east of Gilbert. During peak tomato season, each pantry might receive several boxes of tomatoes.

As you plan your garden for 2025, consider adding a row for Grow & Give. Out of God's abundance – rainfall, sunshine and good soil – comes a bounty meant to be shared. Join us in this community effort to fight food insecurity. Your contribution, no matter how small, can make a big difference.

2024 Best of Story County Awards

~ **Bethesda Staff**

Big news - Bethesda Lutheran Church has been voted the Best Place To Worship in all of Story County! The announcement was made Wednesday, October 23rd at the Ames Tribune awards ceremony and will be highlighted in paper and online this weekend right alongside other companies and organizations that are the best at what they do.

With this 2024 win, Bethesda has now won this award for the 8th consecutive year, and it's all because of congregation members who want to help get the word out about how wonderful of a place to worship Bethesda Lutheran Church really is, as we Gather, Grow, and Go - Together!



Quilts for Lutheran World Relief

~ **Jeanne Rieck**, Bethesda SEW-ers Group

The Bethesda SEW-ers Group sent 11 boxes containing 46 quilts to Des Moines to load in the truck that made its way to Minneapolis, Minnesota Saturday October 19 to then be distributed around the world.





Bethesda Restructures Youth Programming

~ Bethesda Staff



This past fall, Bethesda relaunched Living Water Wednesdays - weekly programming that focuses on bringing people of all ages together for a meal, worship service, SPLASH children's church, OASIS Confirmation, and FLOOD High School Youth Group. With a community meal starting at 5:15 PM in the Commons, attendees can enjoy a tasty meal (prepared by our wonderful volunteers) and fellowship time before transitioning into the sanctuary at 6:00 PM for a message suited for all generations.



Following the worship service, children ages three through 5th grade (along with their SPLASH Children's Church volunteers) break into their respective age groups and discover Bible stories through different activities each week until 7:30 PM. Meanwhile, the 6, 7th, and 8th grade students meet in the Commons. Here, the confirmation youth, along with their adult guides, delve into their faith through Learning Events led by Pastor Bryan, service projects, games, and much more until 7:45 PM.

When the clock strikes 8 PM, high schoolers are welcomed to Bethesda's Youth Room to hang out with their peers and discuss their faith in a safe and welcoming environment led by Pastor Bryan Simmons until 9 PM. It's not all serious discussions-high schoolers often play pool or games that get everyone involved during this time. It's a fun and engaging way for our Bethesda youth to connect with each other and with their faith, and they're encouraged to bring their friends to join in the excitement.



We are overjoyed as we continue to re-energize our Wednesday night programming and restructure what our youth programming looks like at Bethesda. We appreciate the positive feedback and are thankful for the addition of our Children's Church Coordinator, Elsa Page. She works closely with the Christian Education and Youth Ministries Board to develop new ways to share Jesus' Word with our SPLASH children.

O.W.L.s Through The Fall

~ Marnette and Dennis Warth, O.W.L.s

O.W.L.s (Older Wiser Lutherans) meets on the second Thursday of each month from 2:00 to 3:30. We have a variety of activities and speakers throughout the year.

In July, Nancy Carroll, executive director of Heartland Senior Services, spoke about the new Sixty Forward building and programs. Lynn Anderson led our group in silly trivia and facts in September. In October, Kathy Slocum spoke about grief and things to consider when speaking to a grieving person. Matt Ringgenberg with Adams Funeral Home spoke about how visitation and funerals play an important role in grieving. In November, Jean Nicol Jahren spoke about being a legally blind person and sharing resources for people with vision impairments.

Our Christmas gathering will be on Thursday, December 12. Consider joining OWLS for fun singing Christmas carols and participating in our white elephant gift exchange. Please bring a wrapped gift, either something you already own or spend no more than \$5.00 on your gift. Hope to see you at our Christmas party. If you have suggestions about speakers or activities for O.W.L.s, please get in touch with our ministry team or the church office.



The River at Bethesda Lutheran Church

~ **Diane Hinderaker**, Young Adult Ministries

Welcome to Fall at Bethesda! The Children’s Education and Youth Ministries Board (CEYM) has been hard at work this Fall with exciting initiatives for Children and Young Adult programming. Under the leadership of Kristina Greenfield, the Board has been seeking new initiatives, ministry teams, and volunteers to engage our youth, families, and young adults.

We have launched a new Young Adult Ministry team called The River. We are excited about connecting with young adults to facilitate a ministry that speaks to that perplexing time of life post-high school, when you are in your 20s and seeking a path for your life. Our team wants to explore that time of life with all its changes, challenges, and exciting events. There may be decisions that take Bethesda’s Young Adult members away from Ames to another area, state, or even a far-off land. Or they may be going to college, trade school, apprenticeships, working, or just right here in our midst but are not actively engaged at Bethesda. We do not want to abandon them when connections and feeling that support from their church is so pivotal. Young adults need to feel the love of God and a sense of belonging in their church home now more than ever.

We also aim to reach out to young adults at our local colleges and nearby towns, marketing our ELCA status, inclusion and acceptance of all, music programs, work in the community, and prayerful and powerful services. We see God’s work in the lives of young adults as crucial as they face struggles and successes and navigate transforming life events.

Bethesda’s Young Adult Ministries team attended the 2024/25 ISU Welcome Fest on August 28th on the ISU campus. We talked with college students and reached out to those looking for a church home, inviting them to visit Bethesda and see what we offer. We met with over a hundred students to share the excitement of God’s promise for us all. We will continue to invite new young adults and our current young adult members to events this year.

Please pray for our new ministry and reach out to Young Adults you see at our church who may be new or returning. Please pray for our current Young Adults in college, working, or living their lives, offering them a place to belong and the knowledge that Bethesda is here for them and praying for their happiness and success.





Reconciling in Christ Ministry Team's Busy Fall

~ Larry Otteman, RIC Ministry Team

The Community Pride Worship, held in the ISU Memorial Union on Sunday, September 15, 2024, was a testament to our community's active involvement. Bethesda, a financial supporting congregation, played a significant role. Pastor Bryan, along with Pastor Sonja from St. Andrew's, offered Communion at one of the stations. The Call to Gather, which opened with these words: Gathered together, we proclaim the Good News publicly, intentionally, and explicitly, was a **collective affirmation of our community's values**.

Three people offered their reflections- Gene Manhattan, an ISU student; Dr. Susan Harper, ISU Director of the Center for LGBTQIA+ Student Success; and Reverend Sam Houser (pronouns she/they), who offered the keynote address "Embracing Authentic Joy."

Exciting news!

St. Andrew's and Bethesda will sponsor a community lecture and participation in worship by Reverend Houser in early April 2025, a significant event that we all look forward to.

An adult forum based on the Interfaith Alliance of Iowa pamphlet "Becoming an LGBTQ Ally in Your Faith Community" took place on October 13, 2024. The forum opened with a video from the 2018 ELCA Youth Gathering featuring Rebekah Bruesehoff, who is transgender. Topics included misgendering, best practices in LGBTQ terminology, including pronouns, and a focus on Iowa law regarding bathroom equality and nondiscrimination for LGBTQ people.

Past and Future Adult Forums

~ Bethesda Staff

Bethesda saw a surge in adult forums on various topics this past fall. For those unfamiliar, Bethesda Lutheran Church's VOYAGERS Adult Forums are small to medium, hour-long group discussions held in Centennial Hall on Sundays after worship. The adult forums cover topics like educating interested congregation members on the conflict in Israel and Palestine and the Court of Justice Rulings, Christian Zionism, and how to be an LGBTQIA+ ally in your faith community, with the latter including educating attendees on pronouns and more. Each Adult Forum presents different topics, and attendees get the opportunity to learn about communities and experiences different from their own.

On November 10th, an Adult Forum on what is happening at the Southern border was discussed by a few ASIP members who went there last May. Individuals came with questions about the unique travel experience that impacted those who made the journey there and back. Members of ASIP were also joined by the Valero family, who were able to recount their firsthand experience of life in a migrant shelter while waiting for permission to cross the Southern border into the United States of America.

If you are interested in hosting an Adult Forum, contact Pastor Bryan Simmons (bsimmons@bethesdaames.org) to discuss and schedule a date for your Adult Forum.



2024 Scandinavian Coffee Success

~Lindsay Peters, Women's Ministries President

A big thank you to all of our 68th Annual Scandinavian Coffee and Craft Fair bakers, volunteers, vendors, and patrons! Your time, talents, and contributions have made this event a true team effort.



Because Of God's Great Mercy

~Ellen Janke, Stewardship Chair



The theme for our Stewardship campaign this year was "Because of God's great mercy," based on the text of 1 Peter 2:9 "But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's people so that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." In this message, we are called to be a part of the mission of sharing Christ's love and mercy. We have the opportunity to do this through the various missions of Bethesda Lutheran Church, including our worship ministries, outreach and mission ministries, Christian education ministries, and community life ministries.

Thank you to Maynard Hogberg and Tony Woodcock for their temple talks, which helped us to understand more about these ministries and how our financial giving helps support these missions.

On Wednesday, October 2nd, a celebration of giving was held at the Ames Golf and Country Club, with a cocktail hour, accompanied by the musical stylings of Ed Kaizer and his band, a buffet, and door prizes. We are deeply grateful to Randi and Steve Peters for being our guest speakers that evening and for their generous donation of time and theater tickets from Venue Works. Their inspiring words touched on how Bethesda makes a difference in the world through volunteering because of their strong community, and their generous contribution added a special touch to the evening. Several pledges were received that evening. Thank you again to Bethesda's strong community; this would not have been possible without your generosity and commitment to Bethesda Lutheran Church. Jesus entrusted us to take care of his world, and we have many ways to do that at Bethesda.





2024 Indoor Trunk-or-Treat

~Chelsey Ray, Children's Education and Youth Board

On Wednesday, October 30, over 85 trick-or-treaters lined up to participate in our annual Bethesda Lutheran Trunk-or-Treat event, despite the cold and rain. We showed our resilience by moving the event indoors, and I want to express my gratitude to all the trunk decorators who adapted their plans to accommodate this change. Bethesda volunteers welcomed each family and helped register participants for a raffle to win gift cards from Chocolaterie Stam, Reiman Gardens, and Perfect Games.

Monsters, cartoon characters, princesses, superheroes, and many more filled the commons, creating a vibrant and entertaining atmosphere. They collected treats, played games, and after visiting each of the 14 'trunks' expertly decorated by Bethesda congregation members and local businesses, they grabbed a cup of hot chocolate or apple cider before braving the cold and rain.

Our annual Trunk-or-Treat event is planned by the Children's Education and Youth Board (CEYB) to invite our community in to have some fall fun at church! If you are interested in participating in next year's event, you may consider creating a trunk, supporting the event planning, volunteering the night of the event, or stopping by to join the party! Any questions you have may be directed to Pastor Bryan, Kristina Greenfield, or Chelsey Ray. We are excited to see the event continue to grow and bring our community families together for fun and fellowship each fall.





Music at Bethesda, Winter 2024

~Randy and Nancy Ewing, Co-directors of Music and Worship

Bethesda Celebrated All Saints Sunday with Music

Volunteer musicians shared special music by playing an anthem on our Orff instruments on Sunday, November 3. It was a great way to celebrate All Saints Sunday!



Denver Bierman Christmas Show at Bethesda



If you missed seeing and hearing Denver Bierman and the CJC Big Band at Bethesda this past July, you have another opportunity to join in the festive fun! Denver will bring his Christmas show to Bethesda on Tuesday, December 3, beginning at 6:30 PM in the sanctuary. This family-friendly event will help kick off the Christmas season with a joyful flourish! While this event is free and open to the public, a free-will donation will be collected to help cover travel costs. So, if you love Christmas music, get ready to be seated in the pews or dance in the aisle as you enjoy Denver's music and his message about the birth of Jesus!

Bethesda Christmas Festival 2024

Are you looking for a relaxing and fun afternoon full of Christmas music, cookies, crafts, and photos? Take a break from the hustle and bustle of the holiday season and join us for the 2024 Bethesda Christmas Festival (Jesus' Love Keeps Us Warm), which will take place on Sunday, December 15, from 3-5 pm. Preparations are underway for this year's festival full of fellowship and fun! Check out the children's corner, make a craft, and have your individual or group photo taken. At the same time, you enjoy a variety of Christmas music offered by our talented Bethesda members! Mark your calendars and join us in the Commons and Crossroads on December 15. Plan to stay for the entire event or come and go as it fits your schedule. Regardless of age, there's something for everyone! We hope you will come and celebrate the reason for the season!

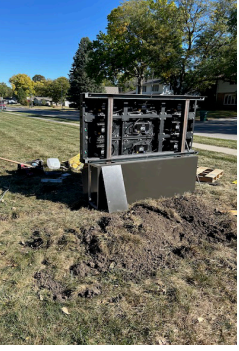
Luther College's Nordic Choir to perform at Bethesda

Another wonderful opportunity for great music is coming in January 2025! Luther College's world-renowned Nordic Choir will be in concert on Saturday evening, January 18, and then they will sing for our Sunday morning worship service on January 19! We will be looking for host families for the night of the 18th and people to help prepare and serve a meal to these wonderful college musicians. Bethesda's own David Hinderaker is a Luther sophomore and a Nordic Choir member. Watch for more information regarding volunteer opportunities in the coming weeks.

Bethesda Goes Digital

~Sharon Axland, Memorials & Gifts Board

A monetary memorial was first given in July of 2012 for a new Bethesda sign, stipulating that the sign should be positioned perpendicular to Northwestern. Fourteen years later, a new digital sign is in place that provides Bethesda information and showcases events. The complete project included placing a cross in the landscaping beside the sign and adding BETHESDA LUTHERAN letters to the church. Monetary memorials and gifts funded the project. Thank you to the families that designated their loved one's memorial money and for the financial gifts that made this project possible. The sign provides pertinent information and showcases events. Are you wondering how the data shows up on the sign? Information pertaining widely to our congregation and the community is put on the sign by the director of marketing and communications using Project Content, a software Bethesda has access to with our digital sign. While Project Content comes with pre-made templates, Bethesda has started to make its own animations for the digital sign to showcase some of the more Bethesda-specific events.



Harold Pike and Donna Scherr were instrumental in the planning, which included the architectural drawings, meeting with the sign company, and complying with city code. We want to express our gratitude to them and the Bethesda Council for their crucial role in approving and supporting this project.



\$aving Suds Ministries Update

~Kim and Lynn Burnett and Bethesda Staff

Saving Suds distributed copious quarters and TidePods to families in need at Squeakyclean Coin Laundromat on the first Thursday of the month during the Fall quarter. At our November 9th event, over \$600 in quarters in two hours (\$50 being brought over from St. Andrews Lutheran Church). We are deeply grateful for the support we've received so far. Saving Suds is always a busy time as many community members depend on it for access to clean clothes and bedding. In November, we assisted 32 families and 67 people. While Kim and Lynn Burnett are passionate about the Saving Suds Ministry, they are looking for new individuals to take over the operation in 2025.

Saving Suds is a very well-utilized and recognized ministry of Bethesda, and we would love to keep Saving Suds an active ministry at our church. If you are interested in making a difference in the community and taking over Saving Suds, please get in touch with the church office via email at contact@bethesdaames.org or via phone at 515-232-6256.

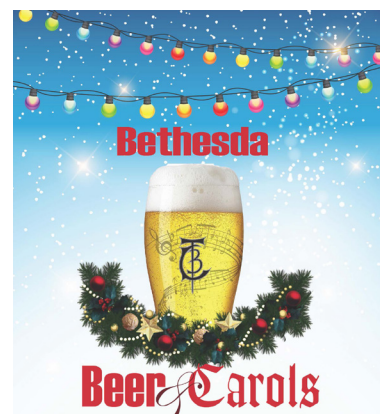
Advent at Bethesda

Christmas Festival

Dec. 15th 3-5 p.m.

Christmas Eve Services

Dec. 24th 4 & 11 p.m.



Friday, Dec. 6
6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

Torrent Brewing Company
504 Burnett Ave



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We invite you to join our community, which is committed to inclusion, racial equity and anti-racism. We share in God's abundant grace knowing that we cannot be separated from the love of God by our age, race, ethnicity, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, marital status, political beliefs, socioeconomic status, physical or mental abilities or faith background.

For more information on our inclusivity visit:
<https://www.reconcilingworks.org/RIC/>

NOTE: please contact Tess Hanson at 232-6256 or contact@BethesdaAmes.org with requests / comments, or to submit an article for the Spring issue (deadline Feb. 11th).

All submissions to Bethesda Lutheran Church's *The Wellspring* magazine are subject to editing for clarity, space, and content.

September 2024 – Impact of In-Kind Donations

At LSI, in-kind gifts (non-monetary) are just as impactful as financial donations. Director of Philanthropy, Deb Whitford, was inspired by the song “If I Could Dream” by Elvis Presley. She wondered, “What would I dream about for our clients? What would our clients dream for?”

A Story by Deb Whitford:

When is a yardage not just pieces of fabric? In the hands of someone learning to sew, fabric becomes a blank canvas of possibilities. A nearly empty closet containing the few items a refugee could fit in their suitcase when traveling to the US turns into a place of pride when filled with hand-sewn clothes made from that fabric. If I could dream...I dream of curtains for bare windows and cloth to cover worn tables. I dream of the magic of small pieces of fabric fitting into beautiful patterns in quilts to brighten homes and become treasured wraps providing comfort and warmth. These dreams are becoming a reality thanks to the generosity of an LSI donor.

Connie Hansen from Audubon, Iowa, is no stranger to fabric and sewing. Connie has enjoyed sewing for much of her lifetime. In her younger years, she shared her passion for sewing, serving as a 4-H leader in Melville Township, sewing clothes for herself and daughter. Through the years, her love and passion for quilting has grown friendships with others who love the craft. Connie dreamed of keeping her newest neighbors warm with her remaining fabric and donated the yards to LSI. This fabric will be used by our newly resettled immigrant and refugee families to create quilts and clothing, helping them feel more comfortable in their new homes. We hear about dreams every day at LSI from our direct service providers, team members, and clients. Thanks to your generosity, these dreams can become reality.

Help our clients’ dreams become reality by donating in-kind gifts to LSI. To learn more, contact philanthropy@LSIowa.org.

Bethesda Lutheran Church
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www.BethesdaAmes.org

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Celebrate the Season with Bethesda

- Wednesday, December 4th, 11th & 18th***
Midweek Advent Worship Services 6:00 pm
**Featuring Bethesda Youth*
- Friday, December 6th**
Beer & Carols (Torrent Brewing Co @ 504 Burnett) 6:30 pm
Family-friendly event for all ages
- Sunday, December 15th**
Christmas Festival 3:00 pm
Music, kids activities, crafts, cookies, warm beverages & more!
- Tuesday, December 24th**
Pre-Service Christmas **Music** 3:30 pm
Christmas Eve Candlelight **Worship** 4:00 pm*
Christmas Eve Candlelight **Worship** 11:00 pm

Living Water Wednesdays

Now though the end of the academic year

- Community Meal** 5:15 pm
CrossGen Worship 6:00 pm
SPLASH Children's Church 6:45 pm
OASIS Confirmation 6:45 pm
FLOOD High School Youth Group ... 8:00 pm



*Livestreamed

www.BethesdaAmes.org  [@BethesdaAmes](https://www.facebook.com/BethesdaAmes) 515.232.6256