



Mission Statement
Sharing God's Love Wherever
We May Be

This is the QR
code for giving
at Bethesda
Lutheran
Church.



**A Member Congregation of the Evangelical
Lutheran Church in America**

BETHESDA NEWS is a monthly publication of
Bethesda Lutheran Church, Jewell, IA

Bethesda Lutheran Church
439 Main St, PO Box 330, Jewell, IA 50130-0330

Phone: 515-827-5148

Email: bethesda439@gmail.com

Facebook: [bethesda.lutheran.church.jewell.ia](https://www.facebook.com/bethesda.lutheran.church.jewell.ia)

Website: www.bethesdajewell.com

BETHESDA NEWS is a publication of Bethesda Lutheran Church, Jewell, IA



Practicing Faith Like We Practice Baseball

For those of us who enjoy baseball (Go Braves!), there is something electric about baseball season. Let me be clear though, I'm going to write this article through the lens of baseball, you can easily replace softball with baseball if that is more relatable to you. The ping of the metal bat, the dust of the infield dirt, the smell of the outfield grass after a light rain, the rhythm of warm-ups between innings. All of this reminds us that you simply can't just show up to a game and expect to know where to throw the ball in which situation, how to

run the bases, or make contact with the ball and your bat. Baseball, like so many other things in life, is practiced, repeated, made aware, developed and refined over years of dedication. And honestly, that's exactly what the life of faith looks like for Lutherans.

*Think about it. No one becomes an accomplished ballplayer by accident. You don't wake up one morning suddenly able to field a grounder or read the rotation of the laces to determine the pitch. You show up. You stretch. You drill. You learn from coaches and teammates. You celebrate a home run and grow from the strikeouts. Baseball is a sport requiring consistency in the same direction. **Guess what? So is following Jesus.***

Lutherans talk a lot about grace, and we are right to do so. But grace doesn't mean passivity. Upon receiving the free gift of grace, we are invited to respond to it by stepping onto the field. Worship, prayer, Christian Education, Holy Scripture, service (good works) and hymns, depending on the activity serve as our batting cages, bullpen sessions or the games itself. They shape us into people who can recognize God's movement and inspired by the Holy Spirit, and respond with courage and joy. We don't practice or play to earn God's love; we practice because God's love has already claimed us and sends us out to play the game with a joyful heart.

And just like baseball, faith is never a solo sport. A team lifts each other up. A congregation does the same. When someone is struggling, we huddle around them. When someone discovers a new gift, we cheer. When someone steps into leadership, like maybe through the Lay Ministry Training Program I spent two newsletters discussing and encouraging, we celebrate the Spirit's work in them the way fans celebrate a walk-off hit. Their growth strengthens the whole lineup.

So as the season unfolds, let baseball remind you of your calling. Show up. Practice. Try again. Trust the true Coach of heaven and Earth. And remember that in God's kingdom, every single person has a position to play. The field is wide, the Spirit is moving, and the game is already underway. Step out into the field of play with dauntless confidence and swing big, unafraid. Live your faith with the same joy and grit that fills the ballpark on a summer's afternoon or evening.

Upcoming Dates
**June 7: Worship at Little
Wall Lake**
**June 14: Jewell Jubilee
Worship at J.U.C.C.**
**June 8, 9, 10 VBS at
Bethesda**

*In humble service of the Triune God,
Pastor Jonathan David Dolan*

Interim Pastor: Rev. Jonathan Dolan
Deacon roster:
Pat Melchert: 515-451-0389; Richard Heeren: 515-231-2886; Eudene Lund: 515-290-4674; Josh Hilfiker: 515-460-3637
 ===
Donna Busch, Admin. Assist.; Lisa Peterson, Custodian; Julie Lutjen, Accompanist; Confirmation Students, Sound and Technical Team
 ===
Congregation Officers:
Wade Miller, President; Jeff Scott, Vice-Pres.; Sherri Hove, Treasurer; Jen Nibe, Secretary



Please remember to update the church office of any changes to your address, email address, land line, or cell phone numbers. Also, any of the same for children at college or who have left home but are still members. Thank you.

Attendance	
04/26	120
05/03	171
05/05	32 – Timberland
05/10	96
05/17	75
05/24	58
05/31	NA

Fund Balances to-date: May 26, 2026							
Fund Name	2026 Budget (only applies to General Fund)	Needed per week to meet budget-GF	Needed @ 21 weeks to meet budget-GF	Actual received @ 21 weeks	Disbursements to-date	To-date Transfers from Contingency Fund	Fund Balances
General Fund	\$218,464.96	\$4, 201.25	\$88,226.23	\$71,058.92	\$83,215.62		\$4,014.24
Sunday School	NA	NA	NA	\$312.16	\$615.90		\$6,938.60
Youth & Family	NA	NA	NA	\$559.00	\$356.04		\$21,112.17
Designated Missions	NA	NA	NA	\$7,609.61	\$2,855.52		\$12,728.74
Undesignated Missions	NA	NA	NA	\$350.00	\$213.34		\$3,120.06
Discretionary Fund	NA	NA	NA				\$685.11
Capital Improvements	NA	NA	NA	\$1,600.00	\$		\$9,411.02
Gifts and Memorials	NA	NA	NA	\$2,953.78	\$2,148.14		\$11,588.10
Contingency Fund	NA	NA	NA	-0-	-0-		\$53,848.28
Endowment Fund*	NA	NA	NA	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00		*

*Funds managed offsite

Note: This is for everyone's information and is: General Fund ONLY

General Fund	Income	Transferred from Contingency Fund	Disbursements	Fund Balance at end of month
January Only	\$12,903.37	-0-	\$15,665.71	\$13,408.60
February Only	\$12,601.79	-0-	\$15,638.19	\$10,372.20
March Only	\$14,688.11	-0-	\$18,705.74	\$ 6,354.57
April Only	\$16,525.16	-0-	\$20,901.77	\$1,979.95
May Only	NA	-0-	NA	NA
June Only				
July Only				
August Only				
September Only				
October Only				
November Only				
December Only				

**Bethesda Lutheran Church - Council Meeting
Minutes - 13th of April, 2026 7:00p.m.**

Present: Wade Miller, Jeff Scott, Jen Nibe, Marcia Wheeler, Pastor Jonathan Dolan, Sherri Hove, Nicole Ferguson, Lisa Peterson. Absent: Hans Koehn, Amy Barquist

Guests:

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 pm by President Wade Miller. Devotions were led by Pastor Jonathan Dolan.

Approval of the Agenda

Lisa Peterson moved to approve the agenda. Jeff Scott seconded, and the agenda was approved unanimously.

**Approval of the Minutes of the
January/February Meeting.**

Lisa Peterson moved to approve the February minutes with Nicole's corrections; seconded by Jeff Scott, and the motion passed unanimously.

Financial/Treasurer's Report

Sherri Hove gave the Treasurer's Report. As of March 31, the general fund balance was \$6,356.56.

Rich Heeren moved to approve the Treasurer's Report; Jeff Scott seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Pastor's Report

Pastor Dolan gave a report on his Pastoral activities for March. He discussed attending board meetings, youth group, visiting shut ins, and working on the final items for confirmation. Seder meal went very well, and Easter breakfast was well attended. Pastor will be gone on 5/17/26.

Old Business

- available.
- Insurance provider now changed – Executive council previously voted to approve insurance change on 3/18/26.
Lisa Peterson moved to ratify the vote for changing Insurance providers; Sherri Hove seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.
- Jewell Jubilee Meal – The council discussed and decided to pass on this activity for this year.

New Business

- Baccalaureate – Baccalaureate will be held on 5/13/26 at Bethesda. Council discussed

having refreshments afterwards. Council decided not to have refreshments as there was to be a meal for seniors and their families at the school, prior to the service.

- Ring Doorbells – Southwest doorbell is not working well and has been taken down. Lisa will be talking to Donna and adding signage that visitors should use entrance/doorbell at the north door.
- Annual boiler maintenance/inspection - Lisa has contacted Neighbors and is waiting on them.
- Sexual Misconduct Policy – Council will vote policy drafted by Jeff Scott at the next meeting.

Board Reports

Education – Amy reported by email that last day of Sunday school is 4/26/26. Volunteer appreciation will also be held this day. VBS forms will be out at the end of April. For Easter all palm branches were ordered instead of buds for adults. Will order from Masie Floral in Jewell next year.

Deacons – Rich reported that the Seder meal went well. Confirmation has been splitting up into 4 groups on Wednesday's for confirmation class exams. The kids did well serving Easter breakfast.

Evangelism/Stewardship – Nicole reported that Musical Blessings/Auction/Volunteer Appreciation will be on 4/26/26 with Lynn Beyer as auctioneer. The board is researching stewardship campaigns.

Worship – Marcia reported that Lent went very well. The first Sunday in June will be the blessing of the pets at Little Wall Lake.

Trustees – Lisa reported on the new hot water heater. The elevator is scheduled to be repaired next week.

Youth – Hans reported by email that Youth group will meet for the last time on 4/29/26. Senior recognition will be held on 5/10/26.

The next council meeting will be held on Monday, May 11 at 7:00 pm.

Jeff Scott moved to adjourn the meeting; Lisa Peterson seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned with the Lord's Prayer at 8:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jen Nibe



Bethesda Lutheran Church - Special Council Meeting Minutes - 28th of April, 2026 6:30p.m.

Present: Wade Miller, Jeff Scott, Jen Nibe, Rich Heeren, Sherri Hove, Hans Koehn, Lisa Peterson.
 Absent: Marcia Wheeler, Amy Barquist, Nicole Ferguson, Pastor Jonathan Dolan
 Guests: Donna Busch

The meeting was called to order at 6:37 pm by President Wade Miller.

Donna Busch led with an opening prayer.

A special meeting of the council was called to discuss the resignation letter submitted by Bethesda's Administrative Assistant, Donna Busch. Her last day will be 7/9/26. Donna thanked the Council, Board members, Congregation members, visitors, and all clergy that she has worked with.

The council discussed the need for finding a replacement and putting together an ad to obtain potential candidates as soon as possible.

Amy Barquist, Sue Lund, and Jen Nibe were asked to work on the job requirements for an ad to be submitted to the local newspapers to start on 5/4/26. Discussion was held on the number of hours and pay range needed to fill the position.

Rich Heeren moved that the advertised pay range would be \$18.00 - \$22.00 per hour depending upon experience. Hours would be 20-25 per week, with potentially up to 30 during the initial training period; Jeff Scott seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Jen Nibe moved to adjourn the meeting; Lisa Peterson seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned with the Lord's Prayer at 7:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Jen Nibe

BOARD OF EDUCATION Meeting 5/7/26

Pastor Jonathan Dolan, Amy Barquist, Heather Thelen, A'Lora (Trinity Lutheran)

VBS 6/8/26 - 6/10/26 9:00a - 2:00p Bethesda Lutheran Church
 Forms have been sent to all 3 churches.

Heather will copy the large posters provided by Riverside and the BOE will get them to the churches to hang up around the community. Forms Due 5/24/26. Need to confirm with Riverside by 6/1/26.

Volunteers Needed - 3-5 helpers with the kids 1st - 6th, 2 helpers & a teacher for the Preschool-Kindergarten kids, 2-3 Kitchen helpers & 2 or 3 floaters (1 consistent for all 3 days). **Also need 2 Host families.**

Food Lunch Snack

Monday - Pasta / Bread / Fruit? Cereal Bar or String Cheese
 Tuesday - Tuesday Together Group Banana & Graham Crackers
 Wed - Burgers/Chips/Grapes Cheese Crack. or Pretzels/cheese
 2 cases 8oz water bottles. Juice / Lemonade for snack. Paper plates small & large.

VBS Fundraiser for Supplies - Check with Ursula about the fundraiser. Get set up with a list of possible donations needed. Amy will check with Riverside on Art Supplies for groups 1st - 6th. Blow up Dino costume. HS helpers.

The Board of Ed and Pastor Jonathan will continue to pull together decoration ideas.

Amy will touch base with Donna about the curriculum for this fall. Next Meeting 6/4/26 at 5:30p.

Board of Ed should plan to be at the church on Sunday 6/7/26. We will decorate following church and return at 5:00p to meet the Riverside staff along with the host families.

=====

BOARD OF WORSHIP

The **Worship** committee met on 5/11/29 (10:30am). Pastor Jonathan, Marcia and Ortrude attended.

Marcia sent a scripture reading volunteer clipboard around Sunday 5/10 and we are full through August.

We discussed the Easter Season Services briefly:

1. there were good comments about Good Friday reading of the „Solemn Repouches“
2. Music at Bethesda service had good participation.
3. Confirmation Sunday went well and didn't seem too long because 3 of the hymns were sung during the confirmation rites.

We discussed the rest of May:

1. May 17, (white Paraments) Pastor will not be here and maybe Pastor Jane will preach. There will not be communion that Sunday.
2. May 24, (Pentecost - red Paraments)
3. May 31, (Holy Trinity - white Paraments and after that back to green for awhile)

We discussed the service at the lake (June 7): Marcia will give Julie and Dave a heads up. Pastor suggested going down to the lake for the animal blessing part so he could sprinkle water on pets with a branch to symbolize baptism. Marcia will bring the coffee and water. Ortrude will bring donuts and cookies (something not messy)

Continued on page 7



REMEMBERING OUR HEAVENLY FATHER

Father's Day is a time to thank our father and father-figures who work hard to keep our families safe and loved. Let us also remember God, our heavenly Father, who gives life to us all.

Use the grid to fill out the blanks below. To find the letter for each number, look down the column to the dot, and then go to the left to the letter. Write the letter on the appropriate blank.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
A						.														
B										.										
C											.									
D							.													
E																		.		
F								.												
G											.									
H	.																			
I													.							
J																				
K																				
L														.						
M																				
N																		.		
O															.					
P																				
Q																				
R						.														
S																				.
T			.																	
U				.																
V		.																		
W																.				

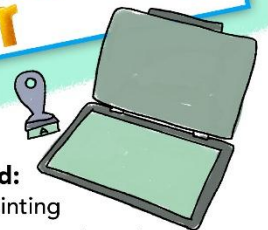
16 1 6 3 10 5 17 6 3 14 15 2 17 3 1 17 8 6 3
 1 17 5 1 6 20 14 6 2 13 20 1 17 7 15 18 4 20
 3 1 6 3 16 17 20 1 15 4 14 7 9 17
 11 1 13 14 17 7 11 1 13 14 7 5 17 18 15 8 10 15 7

1 John 3:1, NIV

Answer: What great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God!

WORDS THAT HONOR DAD!

Create this artwork to show your love and appreciation for your dad or another special man this Father's Day.



What you need:

- A white painting canvas, foam-core board or poster board
- Letter stickers or letter stamps

What you do:

1. Using the letters, spell out words that describe your dad's character (loving, honest, godly, etc.) and/or his roles (protector, provider, mentor, etc.).
2. Arrange the words in a crossword-style design, placing them both horizontally and vertically.
3. Once you're happy with the layout, stick the words onto the canvas or board.
4. Decorate the canvas as you like, then present it as a meaningful reminder of your love and appreciation for who he is.

Community Matters!

The Lord's Cupboard will be providing kids' bags again this summer. And, we need your help! A little swimming pool is placed in the Narthex to collect snacks for the kids April 19 through May 31. If you can support this cause, please bring **pre-packaged, individual snacks/treats**. Let's splash into the summer filling the pool!!.

Thank you for your continued support.

Tuesday Together Time



The South Hamilton Community is invited to "Tuesday Together Time" each Tuesday at noon held in Bethesda Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall. Bring a potluck dish to share with others. All tableware is provided. Don't have food prepared, please come! There is always plenty and, if you desire, a container is provided for you to put a little donation in to go toward Global Good Gifts.

Donations are growing again; total at this time is \$1134.00.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING ON TUESDAY? DO YOU NEED A LITTLE FELLOWSHIP WITH OTHERS IN THE COMMUNITY?

JOIN US – THERE'S A PLACE READY AND WAITING FOR YOU!

Prize winners in May include: Larry B., Carol S., Sylvia S., Janet B., Dick S., Julia J., Cyndy S., Pastor Nancy.

The Lunch Wagon – Jewell Residents

- **Do you need assistance with meals?**
 - **Do you live in Jewell?**
 - **Are you homebound?**
 - **Are you recovering at home?**
- If you answered yes to any of these questions, you can contact:**



- **Susan Lund at 515-290-3000 or Sarah Freeman at 515-291-1528**
- **Lunches will be delivered Monday through Friday between 11:30 to 12:15.**
- **The cost of the lunch is \$5.00 per meal.**
- **Lunches will be prepared in Jewell by:**
- **JEWELL MARKET: Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs and**
- **THE MALIBU: Fri.**
- **Lunches will NOT be delivered on holidays.**



Proud Partner of Food Bank of Iowa

The Lord's Cupboard Food Pantry is open each Monday of the month from 5:00 to 6:30 pm. Additionally, the Lord's Cupboard is open the *first Monday* of each month from 1:00 to 2:00 pm. The Lord's Cupboard's location: Jewell, PO Box 330, 439 Main Street, Jewell 50130-0330. Phone: 515-827-5148

This is an urgent plea: The Lord's Cupboard Food Pantry is seeing an increase in use by local families. If you are able to help supply the shelves with non-perishable food items, toiletries, laundry supplies, (and anything else that you routinely use at home), or monetary donations, it would be so appreciated. Thank you for your prayerful consideration.

Please contact Karla @ 515-310-0151 ; or Sue @ 515-290-3000; or leave a message at the church office for a return call @ 515-827-5148.

All women of an ELCA congregation in the Northeastern Iowa Synod are invited to attend the bi-annual convention and gathering scheduled for June 20. Registration materials can be found in the Narthex. If questions, please ask Donna in the office.



To Women of the Church,

You are invited to come and participate in the bi-annual convention and gathering of the Northeastern Iowa Synodical Women's Organization (NEISWO). It will be a fun and informational event for all women of the church with FOOD, singing, worship, FOOD, learning, fellowship, FOOD, and, yes, a concise business meeting.

- Who:** You and your friends!!
- What?** 2026 NEISWO Convention and Gathering
- When?** June 20, 2026
Registration and coffee at 8:00 a.m.
Welcome and Worship at 9:00 a.m.
- Where?** Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, 2502 S. Jefferson, Mason City 50401
- Why?** Learn about the Northern Lights New Beginnings House of Hope For Women and Children and also the Beacon House of Mason City. Also experience how you might grow in your prayer life with making a prayer journal and discussing ways to make your own holy space for prayer and devotions.

Cost - \$30.00 Register by June 1, 2026 (See registration form for details.)



There will be a valet service available for those who need to be dropped off near the east middle door for the elevator to the worship sanctuary and the fellowship hall. (Please drive up to that door on the sidewalk.)

Also, prayerfully considered putting your name, or someone you know who is agreeable to it, up for nomination as a Board leader or member. Every position is available for election, or re-election, due to the change in our convention cycle. (Contact Chris VanDeventer at cdvandeven@gmail.com for nomination forms if you don't have one from January's mailing.)

HELP BRING AWARENESS & PREVENTION TO HUMAN TRAFFICKING

It happens everywhere and thrives on silence.
Awareness saves lives!

KNOW THE SIGNS:
CONSTANT MONITORING & CONTROL
LACK OF PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION OR FREEDOM
SIGNS OF FEAR, ABUSE, OR INTIMIDATION
INCONSISTENT STORIES OR SCRIPTED RESPONSES

**IF YOU SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING
CALL 911**

"Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves." Psalm 31:8



Board of Worship (cont.)
We discussed what to do if rain was possible. Up until now we've always had good weather.

We discussed VBS a little (June 8,9,10 from 9-2)

We decided not to meet again in June and possibly in July.

Respectfully, Ortrude Dial
====
BOARD OF DEACONS
We are looking into new confirmation material for next year.

Dear Members,
Greetings,

As we step into June, we are surrounded by the fullness of the season-longer days, vibrant growth, and moments that invite us to pause and reflect. This time of year reminds us of the steady, faithful work happening both in nature and in our communities, where hope continues to take root and flourish. Because of your generosity, compassion, and commitment, lives are being strengthened every day. Your prayers, your time, and your support make it possible for LSI to walk alongside individuals and families as they navigate challenges and embrace new opportunities. We are continually inspired by the way our shared faith calls us to serve one another with care and purpose. Thank you for being part of this mission and for helping bring light and encouragement to those who need it most.

Our Mission: Lutheran Services in Iowa responds to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service. LSI is an affiliated social ministry partner of the Iowa congregations of the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) and a member of LSA (Lutheran Services in America). We proudly serve people of all ages, abilities, religions, sexes, gender identities, national origins, ethnicities, races, and sexual orientations. Learn more at LSIowa.org and [Facebook.com/LSI.Iowa](https://www.facebook.com/LSI.Iowa).



Renee Hardman

PRESIDENT AND CEO

As president and CEO of Lutheran Services in Iowa, Renee will lead the organization and oversee one of Iowa’s largest human services agencies, with more than 400 employees and an operating budget of \$28 million.

“I am honored and humbled to lead an organization that does such good work throughout the state for families, children, immigrants, refugees, persons with disabilities, DEI, and so many more, said Ms. Hardman “Serving my community and all 99 Iowa counties is my lifelong passion, and I am so excited to lift up our collective work while transforming and positively enhancing LSI’s brand.”

Monica never imagined she would become a mother.

After a childhood marked by trauma, the devastating loss of her sibling to violence, and years spent in turbulent foster care settings, she made a quiet promise to herself: she would never bring a child into a world that had caused her so much pain. But life has a way of opening doors we never expect. In her thirties, alongside her husband Tim, Monica found herself preparing to welcome a baby girl. Even then, fear and uncertainty lingered.

When Monica heard about LSI’s free community baby shower in Le Mars, she hesitated. Social gatherings often triggered her anxiety, but something told her to take a chance. That decision would change everything.

At the event, Monica met Angie, a Family Support Specialist who immediately made her feel safe, seen, and supported. For the first time, Monica felt like she didn’t have to navigate motherhood alone. Encouraged by that connection, she took a leap of faith and enrolled in LSI’s HOPES (Healthy Opportunities for Parents to Experience Success) program. Soon after, baby Lily was born, and with her came a love that transformed everything.

Today, Monica and Tim eagerly welcome Angie into their home each week. Together they are building the kind of family Monica once believed was out of reach. Monica soaks up every parenting resource she can, applying what she learns with determination and care. Tim is a steady, patient presence. And Lily? She is a joyful, thriving toddler growing exactly as she should be.

But Monica’s journey didn’t begin with confidence. It began with a single moment of courage and an agency that showed up for her. Because of that one event, Monica found more than support, she found belief in herself. She found the tools to heal, to grow, and to become the loving, capable mother she once thought she could never be.

Stories like Monica’s are only possible because of compassionate donors.

Community support makes it possible to host community baby showers that connect families to vital resources. It funds programs like HOPES that empower parents, strengthen families, and give children the safe, nurturing start they deserve.

And Monica’s story is just one example of many.