



Gethsemane Lutheran Church

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Rebecca LeMenager
Pastor
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Parish Secretary

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Gethsemane Gazette

August, 2026

Volume 48, Issue 8

Join us for August Worship and Events!

Commissioning of the Mission Trip Participants

Here are some photos that were taken during the commissioning of our Mission Trip Participants...



Gethsemane Lutheran
Church
Virginia, Minnesota
www.gelc.info

Mission Statement
To draw all people
to Christ,
nurture faith, and
fulfill our calling to serve

Vision for Gethsemane
A vibrant place of
worship, learning and
service, where every
person is passionate
about their belonging and
their ministry

Marks of Discipleship
Pray daily
Study Scriptures diligently
Worship weekly
Encourage Faith in Others
Serve for the sake
of others
Give freely

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You are cordially invited



Rite of Installation Bishop Taryn K. Montgomery Northeastern Minnesota Synod

Saturday, September 12th at
2:00pm

First Lutheran Church
1100 E Superior St.
Duluth, MN

Presiding Bishop Yehiel Curry of the Evangelical
Lutheran Church in America will preside and preach.

Clergy are invited to vest and process.
The color of the day is red.

A light reception will follow the service.
Childcare will be provided.



Bishop
Taryn K. Montgomery



Bishop Taryn Montgomery has served on the Northeastern
Minnesota Synod staff since 2023. Previously, she worked as
a hospice chaplain and served congregations in Minnesota
and North Dakota. She is married to Pastor Christoph
Schmidt. Together, they have four children and live in Duluth.

RSVPs are not required,
but helpful as we plan for the day.



Welcome. Connect. Reform. Support.

July Angels

A very big thank you to all the July Angels: Dawn Matschiner, Tony Mazzeo, Dan Gallagher, Bunny Varani, Joyce Bloomquist, Mike Tuominen, Darcy Norha, Dana Waldron, Brenda Ryberg, Debbie Poderzay, Gail Wieman, and Laurie Harvey.

We are so blessed to have such a wonderful church family!

God's Blessings, Pam Fields
July Angel Coordinator

All Women of Gethsemane

Thursday, August 27th, at 5:00 pm in the Youth Room. We are having a casual get together just to "hang out" with other gals and enjoy visiting, relaxing, and having some laughs.

We meet on the 4th Thursday of each month. No commitments, just bring yourself and your own beverage. Please come. - we'll have a fun time! Hope to see you there!

THIS MONTH'S STAR WORD QUESTION:

(Please discuss this question with someone and/or journal and reflect on it)

What does your star word have to do with serving others or making a difference in the life of someone else?



From the Pastor

"God is everywhere!"

We have returned from our mission trip. The youth will be reporting back by leading worship on Sunday, Aug 2. If you cannot make it to church that day, you should be able to watch the service online (if we don't have any technical difficulties). Although the sharing at Coffee time will not be recorded.

I don't want to reveal too much about our time as the youth's reflection will be much more articulate than my own, but I do want to write about one thing... I am not always in favor of mission trips.

From the Pastor

- continued-

Does that surprise you? Are you shocked to hear that your pastor, who has done about a half dozen mission/service trips over the course of her ministry career, says that?

Here is my reasoning. I am always somewhat apprehensive that service trips give an unintended message: To God's work, we have to go somewhere else. To focus on faith, we need to be separated from our regular routine. And while I see the value in both going somewhere else—it often opens our eyes to our own community, and time away—it can help us take time for contemplation, worship and prayer and not get caught up in our rushed lives, I was struck by a comment that one of the adult leaders stated during evening congregational time, "God is everywhere."

When we go on a service trip, we sometimes get caught up in thinking that we bring God with us and overlook the reality that God is already there. And if God is there, then God is also back in our own communities. There are the same needs and the same opportunities to serve at home. There are the same opportunities for prayer, journaling, reflection and worship at home too. So how do we take the fire in our bellies that has been awakened into our daily lives and home location? How do we make God more a part of our regular routines. How do we find ways to serve God and feel that closeness with Christ right here at home? How do we make our faith a priority not just one week out of the year, but every week—year after year?

We are so incredibly fortunate. What we have, every good thing comes from God. How do we share those blessings with others? I would love for us to consider how we might serve right here in Virginia, Minnesota. Do you have a hands-on project or an organization that you feel passionate about? Would you be willing to work with me to coordinate a service project that our youth and congregation might be able to participate in to make a difference here in our own community?

And in the days and weeks ahead, I hope that all of us might open our eyes to the God sightings all around us. For indeed, God is everywhere!

Blessings,
Pastor Rebecca

Prayer Wall

In your daily prayers, pray God's blessings for:

- ♦ The innocents suffering in the war in Israel/Palestine; those displaced from their homes in Gaza; those suffering in Ukraine, Lebanon, and Sudan. We pray for those in need of strength and healing: Pastor Ellen Taube, Dan Gallagher, Dave Hanson, Nikki Hauff, Jane Erickson, Jennifer Anshus, and Lillian Ferkins.

We continue to pray for;

- ♦ All members who are homebound, in nursing homes, or assisted living.

Prayers of thanksgiving for:

- ♦ Charles Michael Hujanen, who received the Sacrament of Holy Baptism on July 5th.

Send a Greeting to Kathy Bogren

Dan Bogren has informed us that Katy is doing fine and would love to hear from you. You can send her a card or letter to this address:

Katy Bogren
C/O Paul Bogren
2332 Trestle Rd
Ft. Collins, CO 80525



Council Highlights

The council took the summer off but will be returning to our regular monthly meetings on August 11th. We meet the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 5:30 pm in the Library.

Bennet,
Council President



Giving through the Vanco App

Gethsemane offers several ways to contribute to spreading God's Word. One of them is through the Vanco app called "Vanco Mobile." Download the Vanco app from your App Store on your mobile device. If you're new to Vanco, you'll need to create a free account. Once set up, logging in and making electronic donations will take only a few minutes.

For more information, please contact Vanco at 800-675-7430 or visit their website at www.vanco.com/vm.

Thank you for using Vanco. We hope this simplifies your giving. If you encounter any difficulties, please reach out to Vanco or the church office.

QR Code for Giving at Gethsemane:

When you are reading our monthly newsletter or the Sunday morning bulletin, you will see our QR giving code.

Simply take out your phone, scan the code, put in your password, select how much you want to give for the month, and press done. It's as easy as that and takes less than a minute!



Weekly Giving

Giving update: 2026

Month	Actual Income	Budgeted Expenses	Shortfall or Surplus
JAN - JUN	140,397	126,510	13,887
JUL	10,763	21,085	-10,322
TOTAL	151,160	147,595	3,595

Bruce Kniivila,
Treasurer





Blessings to all who have a Birthday this Month:

- 1: Linda Erickson
- 2: Debra Manninen, Daniel Hilmas, Mattelyn Seppi
- 4: Sue Hiltunen
- 5: Ethie Kniivila
- 6: Tracie Birchem
- 7: Kaija Suihkonen, Freyja Walsberg
- 8: Amelia Roberts
- 9: Hunter Koski, Ann Nelson
- 16: Nancy Peterson
- 17: Nicholas Monacelli
- 18: Tanya Carlson, Nathan Spiering
- 19: Pearl Fossum, Dawn Thomas
- 22: Jennifer Krause, Jennifer Tiedeman, Donald Walker
- 23: Lynn Mauston
- 26: Ryan Peterson
- 27: Danielle Seppi
- 29: Denise Ramfjord
- 31: Rick Kinnunen, Kevin Lehtinen

Ways to Worship

In the Sanctuary - 9 am, Sundays

We are worshiping in-person in our sanctuary. Please assess your own health as you consider attending worship in person. We are now receiving communion at the altar using bread and red wine/white grape juice. Gluten free is also available. We practice an open table, meaning all believers are welcome to partake.

Facebook Livestream

We will continue to livestream our worship on our Facebook page at 9 am on Sundays. The video will be available throughout the rest of the week as well.

Local Public Access TV (one week behind)
Worship is still available on TV, on Channel 5 (Mediacom).

The Schedule Is:
Mondays – 7:30 pm
Tuesdays – 4:00 pm
Wednesdays – 10:00 am
Fridays – 10:00 am
Sundays – 7:45 am



Look who's celebrating their Anniversary for the Month of August, enjoy your Special Day!

- 8/6: Braden and Rebeka Roberts
- 8/6: Don and JoAnn Sipola
- 8/7: Andrea and Dan Alto
- 8/7: Amanda and Mark Peterson
- 8/10: Barb and Ken Alaspa
- 8/14: Julie and Mark Spiering
- 8/15: Greg and Heather Manninen
- 8/15: Jen and Jeremy Waldron
- 8/17: Bill and Debbie McCormick
- 8/20: Megan Saari-Copeland and William Copeland II
- 8/25: Jeff and Jennifer Tiedeman
- 8/29: Eric and Jennifer Krause



Celebrating the Anniversary of your Baptism

- 8/5: Charles Eichholz, Shelby Karakas
- 8/6: Ethie Kniivila, Jack Manninen
- 8/8: Michaela LeDoux, Bo Seppala
- 8/10: Milee Gianlorenzi, Steven Ramfjord
- 8/13: Tyler Reid
- 8/14: Sharon Lager, Natalie Lamma
- 8/17: Barbara Johnson
- 8/18: Bethany Harvey
- 8/20: Henrik Elg
- 8/22: Giles Friedlieb
- 8/23: Mikko Meinzer
- 8/24: Connie Christenson, Don Sipola, Andrew Wedge
- 8/25: Mikaela Christenson
- 8/27: Samuel Dragon, Sylvie Dragon
- 8/28: Kathleen Horvath, Mary Jo Ralston
- 8/29: Branden Gulbranson
- 8/31: Keith Nelson

****If we have left you out, we need your help to know!
Call the office to update your information****

Summer Bible Study with Dawn Matschiner

Does summer activities have you away from worship on Sundays? Are you looking for some conversation with others about Jesus? Have you been thinking about our community? **On Wednesday evenings for 6 weeks at Gethsemane Lutheran Church from 6-7pm**, we are taking a journey through The Sermon on the Mount in the Gospel of Matthew, and we'd love for you to join our conversation.

Starting on August 5th, I will be utilizing the book *Contrast Community - Practicing the Sermon on the Mount* by James L. Bailey and the Bible to guide us on this walk through the Sermon on the Mount. The book can be purchased online through Amazon in paperback or Kindle format and also through Barnes & Nobles's eBook. Do you need to have the book to attend? What if you can't make it each week? You do not need to have the book to join us, bring your Bible and attend on weeks that fits your schedule. During our time we will review points James L Bailey brings forward about that week's scripture focus, however the focus of time spent together will be discussion on the scripture, our thoughts, and Community. Depending on the size of the weekly group we could have one large group discussion or table discussions. I look forward to this time together! Here are the dates:

- August 5th Matthew 5:3-12
- August 12th Matthew 5:13-16
- August 19th Matthew 5:27-42
- August 26th Matthew 6:7-15 & 6:24-34
- September 2nd Matthew 6:7-15 & 6:24-34
- September 9th Matthew 7:1-12 & 7:24-27

MARK YOUR CALENDAR WITH THESE UPCOMING DATES:

- Aug 2: 9am; Youth Led Worship on the Service Trip
- Aug 5: 6pm Bible study lead by Dawn Matschiner Starts
- Aug 6: 11am Nursing Home service at Diamond Willow
- Aug 9: Pastor Rebecca gone
- Aug 11: 5:30pm Council
- Aug 13: 11am Nursing Home service at Waterview Pines
- Aug 18: 7:00 pm Northern Lights Chamber Music Concert
- Aug 19: 4 - 6 pm Rock the Block
- Sept 8: 5:30pm Council
- Sept 12: Bishop Taryn's Installation
- Sept 13: Rally Sunday
- Sept 23: LIFT starts

Are You Willing To Be A Part Of The Faith Forward Initiative?

As many of you know, I attended a continuing ed opportunity in Des Moines, Iowa in May. Faith Forward is not so much a program as it is a way of thinking and doing faith. The hope of Faith Forward is to better equip parents, grandparents and other caring adults to pass on the faith to the next generation through simple activities in the home. This is done through focus on 5 areas: Bible, Prayer, Acts of Service, Faith Conversations and Meals Together. We will do some of the activities at church, send home instructions and supplies so you feel equipped to do them at home with others.

Many people want to be more active in their faith at home but don't know how. Have you ever wanted to do more to instill a love of Jesus in your children but were at a loss of how to do that? Wanted some simple activities to do when you grandchildren or nieces and nephews visit that might strengthen their faith but had no idea where to start? Have you ever had the experience of wanting to pray with your friend or neighbor but felt ill equipped to do so? Then Faith Forward may be exactly what you are looking for.

In the next month, I will be looking for some folks to be part of a leadership team. The commitment is minimal: attending a one hour zoom training session (Sunday, June 28 from 6-7:15pm) and then helping me brainstorm some ways to roll out the program and generate interest.

If you are not on the leadership team, there will still be ways for you to get involved! There will then be other zoom meetings specifically for Grandparents on October 18: 6-7:15pm, parents on October 25: 6-7:15pm and then Triple-A-Adults (adults who are authentic, affirming and available) on November 1: 6-7:15pm. If you are interested in hearing more, would consider being part of the leadership team, please talk with Pastor Rebecca.



Youth Group - Grades 3-6
Confirmation - Grades 7-8
Sr. High Youth Group - Grade 9 - 12

More details will be released soon

**L.I.F.T.
resumes
Wednesday,
September 23**

Fall Unit is at
Gethsemane
6-8 pm



**Wednesday, August 19th
4:00-6:00 pm**

2026 ROCK THE BLOCK!

GETHSEMANE LUTHERAN CHURCH PARKING LOT
If it rains: MOVE TO PEACE UNITED METHODIST

**FREE HOT DOGS, CORN ON THE COB, CHIPS,
ROOT BEER FLOATS**

**ENTERTAINMENT BY
HUTTER BUNCH**

BOUNCE HOUSE & FACE PAINTING!



We are looking for some Gethsemane Angel Coordinators

Our Gethsemane Angel program is a great way that we as a congregation are helping in service to the Lord. We ask each person to volunteer to serve during one month of the year with a "Team of Angels" to provide all the help that is needed for worship services. Any and all people of the congregation can be a volunteer. Each month the Angel Coordinator schedules the Angels with what is needed to be done.

We are still in need of 3 Angel Coordinators to fill the months of March, April, and October. Please consider helping out for this position. Just a reminder that the Angel Coordinator is not responsible for doing the funeral luncheons. If you don't want to do it alone, ask a friend to help you and pair up as a team. If you would like to sign up as an Angel Coordinator, or have any other questions regarding this, please talk to any current Angel Coordinator: *Joyce Bloomquist, Laurie Harvey, Cindy Lustig, Molly Pemmaraju, Pam Fields, Sue Swanson, Pam Burgess, Sheila Davidson*, or call the church office at: 218-741-4961. Thank you...

Generosity Team

Welcome to our edition of **"Gethsemane Gifts!"** Each month we will recognize the gifts of generosity that we have experienced from our very own Gethsemane Family. We will focus on one member of our church who has experienced a time of support, love, and/or generosity from other members of our church.

This month please welcome – Donald Erickson

My name is Don Erickson. I was born in 1949 and grew up in Grand Rapids, Minnesota in 1949 and grew up there in the 1950s and 1960s with three brothers and a sister. I was the second oldest. My father was a biology teacher, and my mother taught home economics and also had a degree in library science. We were members of the Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church. My mother started the church library at Zion and grew it from a few donated books to a large church library. We were heavily involved in church activities from Sunday School, Luther League, Sewing Circles, Vacation Bible School, Lutefisk and Swedish Meatball Dinners, and helping at Camp Hiawatha for the annual spring cleanup.

In the summer of 1966, I was working as a maintenance worker at Camp Hiawatha. There I met Sandra Sakarias, from Virginia and a member of Gethsemane. Sandy was one of the lifeguards at Hiawatha. I eventually also obtained my Water Safety Instructor certification and joined Sandy as a lifeguard at Hiawatha. After graduation from High School in 1967, we enrolled at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa. Decorah, in the late 1800s and early 1900s was the center of Norwegian American life in the United States. My paternal grandparents and great grandparents had emigrated from Norway in the 1880s and lived in the Decorah area before moving to Northern Minnesota. After college graduation in 1971, I attended Law School at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, graduating in 1974. For the past 52 years I have worked as an attorney in the U. S. Marine Corps, as an Administrative Law Judge, and in private practice. I currently specialize in Labor and Employment and work for the Fryberger Law firm in Duluth.

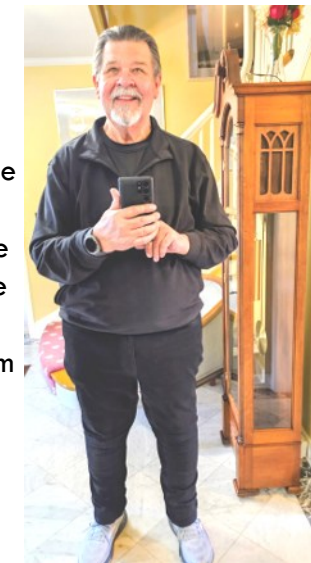
On May 31, 1969, Sandy and I were married at Gethsemane. From Camp Hiawatha, we knew many of the congregants as campers and several of the pastors on the Iron Range. We have three (3) children (now age 47 through) and have seven (7) grandchildren (now age 9 to 24).

Generosity Team

- continued-

In 2014 we moved back to Virginia, just around the corner from Gethsemane on Third Street South. We started attending Gethsemane again. In 2025, after fifty-six (56) years of marriage, Sandy passed away. Pastor Rebecca conducted Sandy's interment service at the site of her parents' and grandparents' gravesite in Hibbing, which gave my family great comfort and closure.

I recently formally rejoined Gethsemane as I felt welcomed by the congregation. Gethsemane fills a spiritual need in my life. I feel gratitude to be a part of the friendly congregation. I enjoy the services, especially the down-to-earth enthusiasm, wit, and wisdom of Pastor Rebecca's sermons. Gethsemane brings back to me the many good memories of my 56-year marriage to and life with Sandy as well.



National Night Out

The Virginia Police Department would like to invite you to the 2026 Virginia National Night Out. on Tuesday August 4th from 4pm - 7pm at Olcott Park in Virginia.

It is a free event. Food and beverages will be provided (while supplies last). There will be music, family activities, information booths, and so much more



Join us for... Voyageurs Lutheran Ministry's Second Annual Bike-A-Thon!

Our goal is to raise \$20,000 to help kids go to camp.

Register



Donate



August 15, 2026
8:00 am
Gunn Park
Grand Rapids MN

The Chamber Music Society of Minnesota

A wonderful free summer concert by the Northern Lights Chamber Music Institute (NLCMI) on Tuesday, August 18 @ 7:00pm at Gethsemane Lutheran Church in Virginia, Minnesota in a program of quartets, quintets, octets and full string orchestra.

Please join us for an evening of beautiful chamber music performed by 34 outstanding young artists, many from our region but also this year from California, Utah, Wisconsin, Ohio, Iowa and Minnesota. The NLCMI is an annual summer institute where eleven days of intense chamber music studies take place at Camp Vermilion on pristine Lake Vermilion outside of Cook, MN. Gifted young musicians of college and high school age, along with internationally acclaimed faculty will participate in this concert.

The NLCMI faculty are Young-Nam Kim, violin and founding Artistic Director of the Chamber Music Society of Minnesota and the NLCMI, Leslie Shank, violin and former assistant concertmaster of the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, Daniel Orsen, violist of the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, Sally Chisholm, viola and faculty member of the University of Wisconsin in Madison and Alice Yoo, cello and Co-Artistic Director of the Denver Chamber Music Festival.

The program will be invigorating and consist of engrossing works by **Bargiel, Bartok, Brahms, Bruch, Dittersdorf, Dvorak, Harbison, Hoffmeister, Mendelssohn, Mozart, Pleyel, Shaw, Schulhoff, Schubert, Shostakovich, and Vivaldi.** At the conclusion of the concert, all participants play together in a full string orchestra.

The Northern Lights Chamber Music Institute is the premiere educational wing of the **Chamber Music Society of Minnesota**, Young-Nam Kim and Ariana Kim, Co-Artistic Directors.

