



Gethsemane Lutheran Church

901 Fourth Street South
Virginia, MN 55792
Phone: 218-741-4961
Email: gelc@gelc.info
Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 9 am to 4 pm

Rebecca LeMenager
Pastor
Brenda "Bunny" Varani
Parish Secretary

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www.gelc.info

Congratulations to the Class of 2026

Pictured are the Seniors with their Families: Ethan Boe, Nolan Peterson, Cally Anderson, Hallie Pauling, Lennon Hilde, Eli Wedge, Connor Saxhaug, Brady Peterson, Milee Gianlorenzi.
Not Pictured: Emma Lintula, Kaija Suihkonen.



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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Gethsemane Gazette

June, 2026

Volume 48, Issue 6

Join us for June Worship and Events!

Scholarship Recipients, Congratulations to all who received a \$1,000 scholarship through the Mission Endowment Fund

New Recipients

Ethan Boe - University of Minnesota Duluth
Milee Gianlorenzi - University of Minnesota Duluth
Lennon Hilde - Minnesota North - Hibbing
Emma Lintula - Minnesota State University Mankato
Hallie Pauling - Minnesota North - Eveleth Campus
Nolan Peterson - Minnesota State University Mankato
Connor Saxhaug - Minnesota North College - Mesabi Virginia
Elijah Wedge - Bemidji State University

Returning Recipients

Ellie Gulbranson - One Stop Student Services, Minneapolis
Bethany Harvey - Minnesota State University Mankato
Alexa Ismil - St. Cloud State University
Jack Manninen - Minnesota State University Mankato
Brennan Peterson - Florida Gulf Coast University
Steven Ranisate - UW, Stout
Tyler Reid - MN North Itasca Campus
Brant Tiedeman - University of North Dakota
Makalya Waldron - Bemidji State University
Tyson Wilson - Minnesota State University Mankato
Vienna Zeidler - University of St. Thomas



Sunday, July 26th - Wednesday, July 29th
5pm - 8pm

Gethsemane Lutheran Church

This summer, we will welcome staff from Camp Onomia to lead Vacation Bible School!

The theme verse is "Wear Love" (based on Colossians 3:12-14) and during VBS, youth will explore what it means to "put on" love as part of their identity as God's beloved children.

Through Bible stories, worship, and activities they'll practice Christlike virtues - Kindness, Humbleness, Calmness, Steadfastness, and Forgiveness - discovering how love sustains us, weaves us together, and shapes our witness in the world.



May Angels

Well, May certainly went by quickly! There was a lot going on for us at Gethsemane. "Derby Day" was a hit... loads of fun for all. The Sunday School kiddos sang so beautifully, as usual on Mother's Day! On the 17th, the Quilters dazzled us with their gorgeous quilts, the scholarships were handed out and we wished our graduating Seniors a bright future! We celebrated Memorial Day at the Kline Cupeletti Building. We took a breath on the 31st!

Many thanks to those who worked hard to provide us with these wonderful memories: Mike Tuominen, Tony Mazzeo, Dan Gallagher, Dana Waldron, Darcy Norha, Pam Fields, Donna Flannigan, Laurie Harvey, Eleanor Anshus, Kimmie Christianson, Ethie Kniivila, Andrea Alto, Sue Hiltunen, Jen, Jeff, Brant and Brenna Tiedeman; Deb and Glenn Dall, Eila Isaacson, Molly Pemmaraju, Pam Burgess, Sarah and Grace Randall.

I thank God for His grace by blessing me with your presence in my life

Cindy Lustig
May Angel Coordinator

Gethsemane Men's Group

The next men's group will be meeting on **Wednesday, June 3rd at 6:30 pm** in the Library. Any questions, please call Dan Alto at 847-917-3765.

All Women of Gethsemane

Thursday, June 25th, 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 is your star word telling you about bringing other to Christ?



From the Pastor

"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." ~1 Thessalonians 16-18

For many, even more than the end of the school year, Memorial Day weekend marks the beginning of summer. And with it, all the wonderful summer activities: going to the cabin, fishing and grilling out, road trips and family vacations, days at the beach, being out in the garden. And for many, if we are honest, the break from routine, often means a break from church. With packed schedules and being out of town, many of us miss a Sunday or two during the summer and some seem to take the entire Summer off. Churches see a significant dip in both attendance and giving during the summer months.

It has been said that it takes just a little over 2 months to create a new habit (the 21 days is a myth) or lose a habit as well. So in one summer, you can get out of the routine of church, and it can be so much harder to get back into going once fall hits. And in fact, many don't return regularly at all. But God wants to be more than a habit. God wants to be the center of our lives around which all other things are built. God is to be our most important priority not something added on to the schedule if we can work it in or if it is convenient.

Worshipping God isn't about us. It isn't about our schedules but about our very lives, about the rhythm of our days and what we place as a priority. Worship anchors our week. Time with God each day helps set our priorities and reminds us to do God's will not our own. And so as busy as this summer is, as out of routine it becomes, I hope you will continue to make church a priority. You are missed when you are not here. If you are out of town, consider watching online, finding a church near where you are staying to attend or spend some time as a family or as a couple in prayer, reading the Bible and talking about your faith. Whether in church or on the lake, make sure with all the trips and visits this summer, trips to God's house and visiting with God is a priority.

Hope to see you in church!
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: Dave Hanson, Nikki Hauff, Pastor Ellen Taube, Jane Erickson, Jennifer Anshus, Lillian Ferkins, and the loved ones of Lani Laakso.

We continue to pray for;

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

Graduation Party

Please join us in celebrating **Hallie Pauling's** graduation on Sunday, June 7th from 2:30 pm to 6:00 pm at the Pauling residence: 8653 Donnywood Cricle, Britt Mn.



Council Highlights

Happy Summer everyone! We hope! At last month's council meeting, we heard a report from Dawn and Gail about the Synod Convention. Thank you to them for representing Gethsemane at this event and they recommend that if you are able to, you should consider representing Gethsemane at future meetings.

Property updates, information on the ELCA Hunger Initiative and highlighting our connection to the ELCA on our website were discussed.

Financial reports were reviewed and the summer schedule was considered. Thank you to all of the council members for your service to Gethsemane! Make sure to do your best to enjoy the summer however you can!

Peace,
Bennet

Property Team

A date has been set to work on the front doors. The date will be Wednesday, June 10th, starting at 9:00 am. If you have any questions, please talk to Ken Alaspa.

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	16,267	21,085	-4,818
FEB	15,906	21,085	-5,179
MAR	24,504	21,085	3,419
APR	18,255	21,085	-2,830
MAY* est	22,924	21,085	1,839
* MAY income includes 6,000 transfer from Mission Endowment			
TOTAL	97,856	105,425	-7,569

Bruce Kniivila,
Treasurer



Blessings to all who have a Birthday this Month:

- 1: Jennifer Rebholz
- 2: Erika Bauman
- 4: Margaret Picek
- 5: Mark Spiering, Gail Wieman
- 6: Kai Meehan
- 7: Brock Birchem, Niki Voll
- 8: Glenn Dall, Timmy Emery, Klara Roberts
- 9: Mayme Barber, Jaimie Birchem
- 11: Jack Manninen
- 12: Donna Olson
- 14: Nolan Dunn, Darren Hilmas
- 16: Abby Tveiten
- 17: Kathy Hanson, Kayla Meinzer, Kylo Toivari
- 18: Andrew Wedge
- 22: Chuck Bothwell Jr.
- 23: James Stanhope
- 24: Callie Mauston
- 28: Char Meinzer
- 29: Michael Alto, Samuel Dragon, Chrystal Olson, Braden Roberts

Dedication and Blessing of LWR Quilts

Gethsemane’s Mission Sewers filled the pews with beautiful quilts that they have lovingly worked on for months. We give thanks to these women — Ethie Kniivila, Lori Schiebe, Leslie Gustafson, Mary Sterling, and Eleanor Anshus (missing Sue Hiltunen) — who used their caring hands and hearts to create these beautiful quilts. Each graduating senior received a quilt, and the remaining quilts will be donated to Lutheran World Relief.



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

- 6/7: Georgene and Mark Tomazin
- 6/9: Frank and Janet Peterson
- 6/10: Ron and Winnie Lackner
- 6/11: Mark and Valorie Florey
- 6/13: Jaimie and Tracie Birchem
- 6/14: Lee and Lisa Laakso
- 6/15: Karen and Larry Roberts
- 6/17: Peggy and Ron Reiersen
- 6/19: Chuck and Shirley Bothwell Jr.
- 6/21: Matthew and Nicole Reed
- 6/23: Bennet and Joyce Bloomquist
- 6/23: Barry and Jean Collins
- 6/23: Betty Ann and Laurie Laakso
- 6/26: Tom and Wendy Krause
- 6/30: Clayton and Emily Zeidler
- 6/?? John and Kayla Cochems



Celebrating the Anniversary of your Baptism

- 6/1: Jason Ramfjord
- 6/2: Lois Curry
- 6/3: Livia Jorgenson
- 6/4: Rahmy Johnson
- 6/8: Georgene Tomazin
- 6/9: Jeffrey Lind
- 6/13: Madison Waldron
- 6/14: Thomas Alto
- 6/15: Donna Flannigan
- 6/16: Clarence Mattson
- 6/18: Nicki Johnson
- 6/20: Stephen Dahl, Lisa Krause
- 6/29: Cally Anderson, Greg Manninen
- 6/30: Kirsti Axelson

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

Faith Builders (Preschool - grade 6)

We enjoyed singing on Mother’s Day, and this was also our last day of Sunday School.

Happy Summer! We hope to see you all at Vacation Bible School!

Gods Peace,
Pam and Donna



DAY CAMP FOR GRADES K - 6th

Date: Tuesday June 9
Time: 9am-3pm
Place: Our Savior's Lutheran Church
Cost: FREE!

As part of LYO Leadership Camp, the synod is offering a one day pop-up Day Camp! (Think VBS but for one day only!). This will allow the youth to put the leadership skills they are learning into practice! Please use the following QR code to register your child and reach out to Pastor Rebecca. If you have any questions



THANK YOU!

Thank you to everyone who helped us pivot when the outdoor worship service moved indoors. Thank you especially to the Vandervort's who helped set things up in our sanctuary, Dawn who was on mics and tech, our wonderful musicians from all three churches, Pam Fields and the wonderful kitchen crew who got everything ready in a hurry, Scooby (Pastor Liz’s husband) for the delicious pulled pork and for everyone who attended! It was a fun, spirit filled day!

Land of the Loon Parking

Volunteers are needed from the congregation for Land of the Loon parking on Saturday, June 20th and Sunday, June 21st.

If you or someone you know could please take a two-hour shift, it would be so greatly appreciated! If you are willing to take a shift, please contact Pastor Rebecca. Thank you!



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.

Wedding Anniversary, Sunday June 21

Please join us as we celebrate **Laurie & Betty Ann Laakso's 75th Wedding Anniversary** immediately following church for coffee and cake in the Fellowship Hall.



Your Weekly Offering

To be certain that you are receiving credit for your weekly offering to Gethsemane, please make sure that your offering is in an envelope with your name and amount included. Please do not use last year's offering envelopes as the envelope numbers change from year to year. While we certainly accept any loose offering, your family will get credit for any offering that is clearly designated. All donations made to Gethsemane can be included on your yearly tax return! Thank you!

Greet Pastor Nathan!

Pastor Nathan Sager, former pastor at Gethsemane, will be in worship on Sunday, June 28th, Please plan to attend worship and Coffee an that day for time to greet him and catch up. Please remember that per our ministerial code, former pastors are to visit only at the invitation of the current pastor. If you know of a former pastor who would like to visit, please talk with Pastor.

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 – Kim and Matthew Bothwell

Hello Gethsemane! This is the younger Bothwell family. Our Family consists of Matt and Kim and Jonathan (6) and Waylon (3). Matt's journey at Gethsemane started from the very beginning, from baptism all the way through until my marriage to Kim in 2017. We chose to get married here because it matched our beliefs and, let's be honest it's BEAUTIFUL in wedding pictures!

As many do, we started coming to worship more regularly after our boys started growing up. I believe Sunday School teaches our children so many wonderful lessons. Big shout out to Pam and Donna who put in so much time to Sunday school (they were my Sunday school teachers too).

Gethsemane Lutheran has welcomed us with open arms every time we've come around over the years, and we couldn't be more thankful for it. We look forward to watching our children grow up with this church family and strengthen their faith in Christ.



Summer Sounds Are Back Olcott Park

Tuesdays, 6 - 8 pm, By the Fountain in Olcott Park

Enjoy live music form 14 amazing acts - from blues to country rock - with **local food trucks** serving up your favorite bites. Bring a blanket or chair and soak in the summer vibes!



Thursdays, 7 pm, Olcott Park Bandstand

Relax under the stars with the timeless sounds of the **Virginia City Band**, performing weekly through mid-July.

Full lineup + special nights like **National Night Out** mean there's something for everyone this summer. Let's make Tuesday and Thursday nights in the park your favorite tradition!

In case of rain, all concerts will move to the Iron Trail Motors Event Center.



2026 Land of the Loon Festival

Join us for the 48th Annual Land of the Loon Ethnic Arts and Crafts Festival June 20-21, 2026!

Parade starts Saturday at 9:00 AM down the 100 Block of Chestnut Street, turning right on Fifth Avenue and ending at 8th Street.

Then, stop by beautiful Olcott Park in Virginia, MN and enjoy a variety of delicious foods with our food vendors and shop arts and craft booths with so many things to offer. Live entertainment all day at the bandstand! There is also a dedicated children's area with activities.

Festival Hours:

Saturday: 10:00 AM - 6:00 PM

Sunday: 10:00 AM - 5:00 PM

There is no admission for entrance *free event to the public*



Biwabik Music in the Park

Here's the lineup for 2026 MUSIC IN THE PARK every other Thursday evening. Bring a lawn chair and sit and enjoy our free concerts!

