



Gethsemane Lutheran Church

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Parish Secretary

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Come and see us on the web!
www.gelc.info

Hello Gethsemane!

On behalf of the Range Mental Health Court, I want to thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your INCREDIBLY GENEROUS donations to our program!!

Treatment courts stop the cycle of relapse and recidivism by treating substance use and mental health disorders for individuals involved in the criminal justice system. Treatment Courts promote recovery through a coordinated, team approach including cooperation and collaboration of judges, prosecutors, defense counsel, probation authorities, coordinators, treatment providers, law enforcement, evaluators, and other ancillary service providers. Evidence-based practices are used in treatment courts to tailor individualized, appropriate services for participants in the program. The goal of treatment courts is to engage individuals in treatment long enough to experience the benefits of treatment in order to end the cycle of recidivism and successfully treat their substance use and mental health disorders that brought them into the criminal justice system. They improve education, employment, housing, and financial stability; and promote family reunification.

Our program, helps reward participant accomplishments and milestones in many ways, including recognition, certificates, awards, privileges, program advancement, and other tangible prizes such as monetary gift cards. Your generous donations will be displayed in our decision dollar cart. Participants can earn decision dollars throughout our program to purchase these items. They earn these decision dollars by making good choices, volunteering in the community, attended pro-social events and many more ways. Our team members all have decision dollars to give to a participant when they feel they deserve one! These incentives encourage our participants to make positive choices in their paths to recovery, and demonstrates our trust in their success.

When organizations like yours donates it further shows that it is not only this team that cares about their outcomes, but that their community is also invested in each one of them. That type support is invaluable to their long-term success in maintaining their recovery. As always, reach out to me with any questions/comments you may have. You are all invited to attend a graduation ceremony at any time, reach out to me if you are interested and I can provide details!

Thank you again!!
Mindy



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

September, 2026 Volume 48, Issue 9

Join us for September Worship and Events!



Unit 1 @ Gethsemane 9/30, 10/7, 10/21
Unit 2 @ Our Savior's 10/28, 11/4, 11/11, 11/18
Unit 3
12/2 - Messiah
12/9 - Our Savior's
12/16 - Gethsemane

Please register before 9/23
<https://forms.gle/FXnd4QgJEyNKb3wh7>



L.I.F.T. resumes **Wednesday, September 23**
with dinner and mini golf for all!
Join us at Greens on Fourteenth
6-8pm

Nightly Schedule
6-6:30 Dinner
6:30-6:45 Worship
6:45-7:05 Small Groups for all
7:05-7:55 Learning Groups

Youth Group - Grades 3-6
Confirmation
Sr. High Youth Group - Confirmed - 12
Adult Bible Study

LIFT Starts Wednesday, September 23rd.

Things to keep in mind:

~Please join us on Wednesday, September 23rd at Greens on Foreteenth for dinner and mini golf! The whole family (and church family) is invited. You do not have to have kids in LIFT to join in the fun!

~If you are thinking about joining LIFT, please register. Even if you participated in years past, we still need you to register! (see the QR Code in this newsletter)

~The first Unit of LIFT is at Gethsemane (Sept 23—Greens on Foreteenth, Sept 30, Oct 7, and Oct 21). We need cooks! Please talk with Bennet Bloomquist if you can help the church provide the meal.

August Angels

August was busy in our congregation and filled with great activities! Extra thanks for all who gave time to volunteer this month; Barb Alaspa, Ken Alaspa, Joyce Bloomquist, the youth, Dana Waldron, Deb Poderzay, Tony Mazzeo, Dan Gallagher, Dawn Thomas, Char Meinser, Ethie Kniivila, Pam Fields, Sam Davidson Teff, Brenda Ryberg, Dawn Matschiner, Nancy Eichholz, and Mike Tuominen, among others who quietly go about doing good !

Sue Swanson, August Angel Coordinator

Fall Women’s Bible Study

Please join us this fall, Tuesday September 15th at 5:00, as we begin a new Bible study - Unbreakable Courage Bible Study by Max Lucado: Strong Faith in an Age of Anxiety, Chaos, and Exhaustion (A Bible Study on Elijah.) The six-session invites you to deepen your faith by drawing from Elijah’s story of hope and resilience. Each session provides practical application from the highs and lows of his life. Hope to see you there!!

All Women of Gethsemane

Thursday, September 24th, at 5:00 pm in the Youth Room. 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)

As the program year starts, how might your star word guide you into something new?



From the Pastor

“Forget the former things;
do not dwell on the past.
See, I am doing a new thing!
Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?
~Isaiah 43: 18-19a

It is hard to believe that I will have been at Gethsemane a year starting September 1. As pastors, there is something about being at a church for a year that makes you feel settled in. I’ve been through an entire year rotation, experienced the way this particular church does the high holy days: Christmas, Easter, Pentecost. In the last year I’ve done 2 weddings, 2 vow renewals, a few Baptisms and countless funerals.

From the Pastor - continued-

I’ve navigated visiting at some of the care facilities, the hospitals here and in Duluth. I’ve been honored to be asked into your lives: home visits, lunch out, pastoral care calls in homes and at my office. I’ve been introduced to the Synod through Laurentian Conference meetings, Synod Assembly, The Fall Leadership Gathering, LYO leadership camp and Walking Together and other NEMN Synod events. I feel like I’m finally starting to get my feet under me.

It might be tempting to think that things will settle down as I settle in. But we all know that is not the way life goes: not in our personal lives, our professional lives and not in the life of the church. In life, the only constant is change. I don’t always love change. In first grade, I spent the first couple of months in the nurse’s office with tummy aches. The change from half day kindergarten to full day first grade was a hard adjustment for me. So if change is difficult for you, I can relate.

And yet our holy scripture points to the fact that we belong to a God who loves change. Day changes into night; seasons change—Fall, Winter, Spring, Summer; we change as we age from baby to child, to teen, adult and then senior. In fact, in the world our Lord has created, nothing stays the same. And the church is no different. If we do not change, we die. And so I hope we all might be open to changes at church as well.

In the year ahead, I hope there will be new programs. There will be changes in leadership as some folks time off council and new people come on board. We might explore how to use new technology. There might be new things in worship: new songs or changes to the liturgy. I hope we will have a few new members, new faces in worship or at church activities, some new kids at LIFT or Sunday school.

As we go into this new program year, I hope you might consider what new thing God might be asking you to say yes to. Is there somewhere at church or in the community where you might be able to share your gifts? Is this the year you decide to participate in LIFT or Bible Study, Quilting or come downstairs for coffee time? Is there a program you would like to see Gethsemane start? Even though you don’t have kids, could you help with Sunday school or fundraising for National Youth Gathering?

I’m thinking about new things and I hope you are too. I’d love to hear your thoughts and dreams for the future of this amazing church.

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: Tom Hiltunen, 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.

Office Closed

The church office will be closed on Monday, September 7th in observation of Labor Day. Enjoy the holiday.



Council Highlights

Hello everyone! I’m not going to say happy Fall...yet. Last month’s council meeting went over property issues, reviewed the general fund and Mission Endowment requests. Also discussed was outside requests for donations, hosting a Via De Christo event at Gethsemane, changes in church Library operation and discussed employee job descriptions and duties.

Budget discussions for 2027 began with the emphasis that we must increase our giving to match expenses. Challenges and change are a part of our future, but I know we can meet the challenges and grow!

Peace and Grace,
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	10,965	21,085	-10,120
AUG (est)	24,364	21,085	3,280
Y-T-D	175,726	168,680	7,046

Bruce Kniivila,
Treasurer





Blessings to all who have a Birthday this Month:

- 1: Nancy Maki
- 3: Pam Burgess
- 4: Kirby Carlson, Donald Erickson
- 5: Ronald Picek
- 7: Megan Saari-Copeland
- 9: Nicole Reid
- 10: Sam Davidson-Teff
- 11: Steve Manninen, Debbie McCormick
- 13: Karen Line
- 14: Jeff Mauston, Mindy Lind-Rumpl
- 15: Kimmy Christenson
- 16: Derek Jorgenson, JoAnn Sipola
- 17: Thomas Alto, Sammantha Himes, Andrew Meinzer, John Rosewall
- 18: Sharlyn Dahl, Sheryl Kochevar
- 19: Sara Lamppa, Amanda Rosandich, Owen Rumpl
- 20: John Cochems
- 21: Darlys Jacobson
- 22: Dan Alto, Kristine Anderson
- 23: Fletcher Hanson, Jeffrey Johnson
- 24: Tatiana Koski
- 25: Bruce Nevala
- 29: Rodney Flannigan, Bjorn Meehan, Ron Reierson

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	



Congratulations on your September Anniversary, enjoy your Special Day!

- 9/2: Linda and Ray Erickson
- 9/2: Andy and Nicki Johnson
- 9/8: Brad and Gina Anderson
- 9/8: Dave and Denise Ramfjord
- 9/10: Derek and Marjia Jorgenson
- 9/10: Andrew and Kayla Meinzer
- 9/12: Eric and Jennifer Krenz
- 9/14: Melanie and Ryan Peterson
- 9/17: Danielle and Matt Seppi Jr.
- 9/17: Abby and Kyle Toivari
- 9/26: William Norton and Molly Pemmaraju
- 9/28: Hannah and Sam Davidson-Teff



Celebrating the Anniversary of your Baptism

- 9/1: Jeff Peterson
- 9/3: Pam Burgess
- 9/7: Connor Saxhaug
- 9/10: Vienna Zeidler
- 9/12: Martin Hudson
- 9/14: Sarah Randall
- 9/17: Klara Roberts
- 9/18: Betty Laakso, Tyson Wilson, Clayton Zeidler
- 9/20: Brenna Tiedeman
- 9/22: Kristine Anderson, Jack Florey
- 9/23: Nicholas Monacelli
- 9/25: Bennet Bloomquist
- 9/26: Sue Hiltunen
- 9/27: John Rosewall
- 9/28: Emmi Aluni, Miia Johnson
- 9/?: Mary Sterling

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

Sunday School (Ages 4 - 5th grade)

We hope everyone had a great summer, and we are so excited for fall and for Sunday School to start!

Mark your calendars, **Rally Sunday is September 13th.** We will have food, fun, and games. Sunday School will resume on September 20th.

God's Blessings! Donna and Pam



Second Sunday with Sunday School

I want to start building deeper relationships with our Sunday Schoolers. This is difficult since the kids meet during worship. On the second Sunday, starting in October, I will be leaving worship after communion. Our assisting minister will do the communion blessing and prayer, announcements, benediction and sending so I can slip out to be with the Sunday schoolers for the last part of their class on those Sundays. So if you see me leaving, I'm not making a run for the hills, I'm just spending some time with the kids! Thank you for allowing me this time to minister to this part of our church family and to get to know our children and young families in a deeper way.

Rally Sunday, September 13

In Worship we will:

- ~Commission our Sunday School and LIFT leaders. If you are a Sunday School or LIFT leader, please plan to be in worship that Sunday.
- ~Blessing of Backpacks. Please have your child bring their backpack to worship (and if you have a work bag, please bring that as well) and we will have a blessing.
- ~Give out Bibles to children and youth

After Worship, we will:

- ~Have a meal together! Please plan to eat lunch with us that day!
- ~Games! And Fun outside!
- ~There will be time to register for Sunday School (you can also do this online with the QR code in this newsletter.)
- ~Cook Country Connection will be here with their animals

QR Codes for Sign ups!

Bible Sign up Code:



We are giving out Bibles to children on Sunday, September 23. Please use this QR code if you want a Bible (or a new Bible) for your child.

LIFT Sign Up Code



LIFT is open to all children and youth grades 3rd-12th. Please register using this code

Sunday School Sign up code:



Sunday School is for all kids ages 4-5th grade. Please register using this code.

TeamReach App

Knowing that not everyone is on facebook, we are seeing if the TeamReach App might be a way to help keep members informed! Office closed due to snow? A notice will go out on TeamReach! Bible study canceled? Which Sunday are the Sunday Schoolers singing? Those sort of notices will go out on TeachReach. To know the latest information about the church, download the free TeamReach app to your phone. Here's how to do it:

1. Go to your app store (google play store for android users, appstore for iphones).
2. Download the free app (skip the payment question).
3. Group name: Gethsemane Virginia
Group Code: l0v3mychurch (l-zero-v-three-m-y-c-h-u-r-c-h)

If you have questions, please contact the church office.

HANNAH OLSON MEMORIAL LIBRARY

Summer is nearing its end and we are entering the fall season, children are back in school, and the Library Team will begin meeting on Thursdays from 9:30 a.m. to Noon starting on September 3rd.

The Hannah Olson Memorial Library has over 2,000 adult, teen, and children books, videos, and DVDs that can be checked out to enjoy. The library is accessible Monday through Friday during office hours. Instructions to check out any of these items is displayed on the computer desk. And, if you happen to come on a Thursday, stay for coffee and a visit.

Over the last couple of years, we have done an inventory of the books and have taken many off the shelves and will not be accepting used books anymore.

COME VISIT THE
CHURCH LIBRARY

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 – Schiller Family, Aubree, Lane, Abigale, and Zachary

Greetings!

Lane and I moved to Virginia almost 20 years ago from Two Harbors. There we attended Knife River Lutheran Church, and I myself was a lifelong member. It is here where my faith base was established.

When we moved here, we really missed our church community. During visits to family, we would go to church in Knife River, however, we soon realized that we needed to establish ourselves within our new home.

We began visiting various churches in the area. I had conversations with work colleagues and this is where Gethsemane was suggested. The following Sunday we went to Gethsemane and have been going ever since. My little family was welcomed right away. Abigale loved Sunday school from the second she stepped foot in the room. Zac was too young at the time; however, the busy bags and snacks were a perfect addition to enjoy the service. Gethsemane felt safe from the moment we walked in.

Fast forward to today, the Schiller's are proud members! We are so blessed to have found Gethsemane. The youth programming is exceptional and everything I could hope for my children. Abigale and Zachary now have their church to call home while they grow and create their own faith base. Thank you all!

-Aubree, Lane, Abigale and Zachary



September Favor of the Month

Please join the Generosity Team in September to collect healthy snacks for our local teachers and students. Drop off items like granola bars, crackers, and fruit snacks in the grocery carts at the back of the church. Every donation helps support our schools during these tough economic times. Thank you!



Our schools need healthy snacks for their students!

Please drop off any individually wrapped snacks - granola bars, crackers, healthy cookies, fruit snacks, popcorn, etc.

This collection will take place during September and we will deliver to our teachers during the first month of the new school year!



7th Annual Iron Range Rotary Chili Cook Off

Save the Date! **Thursday, September 17th** at the Iron Trail Motors Event Center. The doors and bar open at 4 pm. Chili tasting begins at 5 pm. There is a \$10 Entrance Fee. Join us for some Fun; Drawings; Door Prizes; etc.

Food Truck Festival

The Revive Virginia Food Truck Festival returns to downtown Virginia on **Saturday, September 19, 2026, 12 pm to 6 pm**. for a full day of amazing food, live music, shopping, family activities, and community fun on Chestnut Street.

There'll be something for everyone — from savory meals and comfort food favorites to sweet treats and specialty drinks.

Bring your friends, bring the kids, and come spend the day enjoying great food and great vibes in the heart of downtown Virginia.

Voyageurs Lutheran Ministry

The VLM Board of Directors is inviting you to help shape the future of VLM. After much thought and prayer, the Board has identified several potential paths forward and is seeking your feedback as we discern how VLM can become sustainable, continue our mission and ministry, and transform lives for Christ's service. **Your voice matters in this process.**

You Are Invited: VLM Listening Sessions

We will host five listening sessions. You are welcome to attend whichever gathering is most convenient for you. [Click here to register.](#) If you register for one of the online options, a Zoom link will be sent to you ahead of the meeting.

• **September 8** --6:00-7:30pm Virtual Listening Session (Zoom Meeting)

• **September 9** – 7:00-8:30 - St. Andrews Lutheran Church, Grand Rapids, MN

• **September 13** - 6:00-7:30pm Virtual Listening Session (Zoom Meeting)

• **September 15** - 6:00-7:30pm - Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Virginia, MN

• **September 19** - 1:00-3:00pm - St James Lutheran Church, Crystal, MN

VLM are asking people to register if you plan on attending. Pastor Rebecca will be attending the one at Our Savior's. If you plan to attend this one, please let her know and she will register us as a group.

