



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

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
VIRGINIA, MN
55792
PERMIT NO. 57

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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

Treatment Courts on the Iron Range serves up to 80 individuals at a time. The Range Hybrid Court was established in 2006 and has served over 500 participants. The Range Mental Health Court was established in 2019 and has served over 100 participants.

How can you help?
You can purchase items, and we will donate them to the court.

- Gift cards in the amount of \$5 and \$10
- Self-help books
- Calendars/planners
- Arts & crafts kits
- Personal Care items
 - Body sprays
 - Body lotion
 - Shampoo/conditioner
- Quilts or blankets
- Bath towels
- Greeting cards – graduation, birthday and congratulations

The North St. Louis County (Range) Hybrid Treatment Court and the Mental Health Court are a collaborative effort between the criminal justice system and community organizations. The Court:

- Increases access to evidenced based treatment for chemical dependency & mental health
- Creates partnerships with organizations that provide employment, housing, education, and financial support
- Increases accountability through partnerships with local law enforcement, the judicial branch, and probation agencies
- Offers an alternative to prison or jail as a cost-effective alternative to incarceration and hospitalization
- Assists parents reunifying with their children
- Promotes the return to self-sufficiency
- Reduces recidivism

Support from our local community partners, and citizens of St. Louis County and Minnesota make the Court what it is today. Thank you for continued support for our Treatment Courts and a community in recovery.

Gifts made to the Treatment Court are tax deductible! A tax form will be provided upon request.

Mindy Rumpf, Range Mental Health Court Coordinator
mindy.rumpf@courts.state.mn.us
218-274-6037

Naomi Ranisate, Range Hybrid Court Case Manager
RanisateN@StLouisCountyMN.gov
218-471-7526



North St. Louis County Treatment Courts
Helping our community recover since 2006.

Gethsemane Gazette

July, 2026

Volume 48, Issue 7

Join us for July Worship and Events!

VACATION Bible School 2026



site location this year:
Gethsemane Lutheran Church
901 4th Street South
Virginia, Minnesota



Starting in the Fall – Grades: Kindergarten through 5th Grade
Older grades can volunteer!

July 26-29
5pm-8pm



ACTIVITIES

- Free Dinner!
- Games! Crafts!
- Music & Singing!
- Bible Study & Worship!



Living in Faith Together



Please Use the QR code to Register
Before Monday, July 19
youth & adult volunteers – please also use this code to sign up!

Questions? Please call:
Gethsemane Lutheran Church
218-741-4961
Messiah Lutheran Church
218-741-7057
Our Savior's Lutheran Church
218-741-6207

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Pollinator Sunday

We pray that this plot of land would flourish as a thriving habitat for pollinators, ensuring their protection for their crucial role in enabling plants to bloom and bear fruit. We envisioned this garden as a sanctuary for both people and plants, fostering a harmonious coexistence. May the pollinators who visit this garden serve as beacons of inspiration, guiding us to become pollinators of Christ's gospel, contributing to the wholeness of creation.

Thank you to Ethie Kniivila, Gail Wieman, Evie Kinnunen, Donna Flannigan, Andrea Alto and Sue Swanson for serving on the Garden Team!



June Angels

To our wonderful June angel church volunteers, Your service is a beautiful reflection of faith in action. Whether you are welcoming and greeting all by ushering, running the Facebook camera, which can be challenging as I know personally or preparing the heartwarming social and delicious coffee an"... your hard work does not go unnoticed. You do not just give your time—you give your heart, your energy, and your joy to this church family. Everybody out there knows you will be called next year so thank you in advance! Here are the people who helped in June: Pam Burgess, Laurie Harvey, Darcy Norha, Donna Flannigan, Gail Wieman, Sue Swanson, Ethie Kniivila, Andrea Alto, Joyce Bloomquist, Sheila Vandervort, Barb & Ken Alaspa, Mary Horan, Dana Waldron, Tony Mazzeo, Mike Tuominen, Lee & Lisa Laakso, Pam Fields, Bunny Varani, Sam Davidson-Teff, Julie Spiering, Evie & Rick Kinnunen.

"As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace." — 1 Peter 4:10

We are profoundly grateful for your consistency, your kindness, and your passion. Thank you for making our church a brighter, warmer, and more Christ-like place for everyone.

Molly Pemmaraju
June Angel Coordinator

All Women of Gethsemane

Thursday, July 23rd, 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)

Sometimes we think of summer as a time we take a break from certain routines so we can do other things.

What thing is your star word asking you to break from? What new things might it be asking of you?



From the Pastor

"Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received." 1 Peter 4:10

On July 15, 11 youth and 4 adults from this congregation embark on a week long mission trip. Those going (in no particular order) are: Halle Pauling, Lennon Hilde, Ethan Boe, Milee Gianlorenzi, Nolan Peterson, Emma Lintula, Greta Johnson, Miia Johnson, Trevor Ranisate, Ada Boe, Genevieve Ziedler, Tina Pauling, Heath Boe, Dawn Matschiner and Pastor Rebecca. But those participating are all of us. This is a ministry of LIFT and so therefore, a ministry of Gethsemane. Even if you are not traveling to Winston-Salem, North Carolina physically, you are still on this journey of faith and discipleship with us.

First, thank you for all the ways you have been a part of this journey so far: praying for us, encouraging the youth, and supporting their fundraisers. But more importantly, thank you for being a church that takes the baptismal vows to love and nurture children seriously. Thank you for making church a fun and safe place for them to grow, question and learn. Because of you, they feel called to use the gifts you have helped them identify and serve Christ and others.

Here are some ways you can continue to support the group going to North Carolina both before, during and after the trip:

- ~Attend worship on Sunday, July 12 for a short commissioning during worship.
- ~Sign up to be a prayer partner for a youth or adult. Sign up is on the table in the Narthex
- ~Send a note of encouragement while our crew is on the trip (Pastor Rebecca's email: becbec218@gmail.com, Cell number to text a message: 218-290-7314)
- ~Attend worship on Sunday, August 2 when the crew reports back on their trip.
- ~Help our youth continue what they have experienced by finding ways to volunteer here back home. We will need caring adults to help chaperone, drive and coordinate events

Thank you for all the ways you show love for our children and youth. Thank you for instilling a sense of service in the hearts of our youth and all our members. Thank you for making this trip possible!

~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: 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 peace and comfort for:

- ♦ Family and friends on the death of Lani Laakso.

Baptism

Please join us as we celebrate the baptism of Charlie Michael Hujanen, son of Madelyn Schefers and Frank Hujanen on Sunday, July 5, 2026.



Council Highlights

Happy Summer! Kind of different this month for the council. Reports were sent online for the council to review and respond to if needed electronically! We will also be doing this in July and then back to our regular meeting schedule in August. If need be, during these two months, we will call an in person meeting. This will give council members a bit of a breather during these busy summer months.

Thank you to those individuals that are completing the replacement of our front doors! The work looks great and now it will also be more efficient and it won't leak in under the old doors during storms with strong winds.

Speaking of strong winds, that's enough of me. Hope all of you are enjoying your summer. See you in church!

Bennet



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	25,751	21,085	4,666
JUN, est	38,049	21,085	16,964
TOTAL	138,731	126,510	12,222

Bruce Kniivila,
Treasurer



Blessings to all who have a Birthday this Month:

- 3: Sharon Lager
- 4: Peggy Reiersen
- 5: Tyler Reid
- 6: Renee’ Pollock
- 7: Bo Seppala
- 9: Haidyn Seppi
- 11: Dorothy Garland, Branden Gulbranson
- 12: Vienna Zeidler
- 13: Karen Roberts
- 14: Craig Emery, Connor Saxhaug
- 16: Grant Meehan
- 17: Grace Brunfelt, Brenna Tiedeman
- 18: Lynne Judnick
- 19: Anna Colden
- 20: William Suihkonen, Emily Zeidler
- 21: Sarah Randall
- 22: David Pollock
- 23: Halli Aluni, Parker Dahl, Kaleb Dickinson, Wendy Kalisch
- 24: Madison Pauling
- 27: Waylon Bothwell
- 30: Bennet Bloomquist, Kyle Lamppa, Alexander Rebholz
- 31: Eric Kuitunen

Memorial Gifts received during the month of June

In Memory of:	From:
Lani Laakso	Barry and Jean Collins, Deron and Sheila Davidson, Betty Lehtinen and family



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

- 7/10: Donna and Mark Olson
- 7/17: Kerri Dahl and Scott Leslie
- 7/17: Danee’ and Jim Haenke
- 7/17: Char and John Meinzer
- 7/22: Edward and Shelly Zeidler
- 7/29: Jim and Tina Pauling



- 7/1: Joyce Bloomquist
- 7/2: Jean Collins, Brant Tiedeman
- 7/6: Tatiana Koski
- 7/11: Alexa Ismil, Mailee Peterson
- 7/12: Tom Krause
- 7/14: Madison Krause
- 7/15: Pearl Fossum. Jim Haenke
- 7/17: Brock Birchem, Eric Krause
- 7/25: Jace Friedlieb
- 7/28: Abigal Olson, Brady Peterson
- 7/31: Evan Friedlieb, Ben Harvey

****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 hope you are enjoying your summer. We look forward to seeing you at Vacation Bible School!
Gods Peace,
Pam and Donna

VBS PLANNING MEETING

When: Tuesday, July 7 @1pm
Where: Gethsemane Library
Who should attend: Pastors and Volunteers
If you are planning to volunteer for LIFT VBS (Sunday, July 26-July 29) or are considering it, whether working with the kids, helping with music or being in the kitchen, we would love for you to join us for a VBS planning meeting. If you have questions, please talk with Pastor Rebecca.

Summer Bible Study

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!

- Dawn Matschiner

- 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

MISSION TRIP MEETING

When: Sunday, July 12 directly following worship
Where: “back of the shack” Sugar Shack on Chestnut St
Who's invited to Attend: Mission Trip Participants and Parents.

All youth (and their parents) going on the mission trip are encouraged to attend a final meeting before we head out. Final details about travel and other details will be talked about again. Parents are asked to be present from 10:30-11:15, Youth/Adult participants from 10:30-12. Breakfast will be provided.

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.

VLM Splash

What an amazing congregation we have! During the month of May, our congregation collected over \$1400 to be sent to Voyageur Lutheran Ministry to help with their new docks. With this donation, at least 7 sections of a dock were able to be purchased just from Gethsemane alone!

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this wonderful and worthwhile cause.

July Favor of the Month - Second Chance Swag

Due to popular demand, the Generosity Team has agreed to help the Range Treatment Courts collect Second Chance Swag for all of their participants again this year.

Please bring any of the donations listed in our insert to church. The insert is on the back page of the newsletter. All collected donations will be picked up on Friday, July 31st.

Save the Date! 2026 Synod Bishop Installation

The installation of Pastor Taryn K. Montgomery is Saturday, September 12, 2026, at 2:00 p.m.

It will be held at First Lutheran Church in Duluth (1100 E Superior Street, Duluth). Other details will be shared as they become available. ELCA Presiding Bishop Yuhel Curry will preside at the Installation Worship.



Saturday, September 12th

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH
DULUTH, MN



save
the Date

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 – Steve and Tanya Carlson

Hi there! Thank you Gethsemane Lutheran for asking us to be a part of the July Newsletter. July is my favorite month so it seems very fitting! We are the Carlsons. Myself, Tanya, and our 3 boys Cooper, Sam and Kirby. We have lived in Virginia for the past 30 years and started a business in town 5 years ago. Greens on Foreteenths Mini Golf! Our older boys are in their 20's and off living on their own. Occasionally we get to bring them to church when they are up for a visit!

A couple years ago we were searching for community and really, I don't even know if we realized at the time that we felt something was missing. We just knew we were gravitating toward a feeling of joy and positivity. We attended a few summer church services at Gethsemane and we felt very welcomed right away. It's hard to pinpoint, but it felt light and easy. Fall was on the way and we knew Kirby (then 12) would be starting Sunday school soon and he was confident that Gethsemane would be the place for him to go. I'm sure you've heard many times that a church is so much more than a building. Well, for our now 14 year old Kirby this was very true! He had a few friends at Gethsemane and that made going to church and confirmation somewhere he actually wanted to be. Throughout the school years we have always been pretty diligent about attending church regularly and we rarely heard that pre-teen groan (ha ha!!) about getting up Sunday morning for church. He was always eager to attend church, Sunday school and then confirmation class. He loves helping out when needed and thinks very highly of the older teens in church who participate in the services. That is a testament to how welcoming we have felt right from the start!

Early in June this year Kirby attended Camp Vermilion for the first time and even though I was a little nervous dropping him off for 4 nights, I could tell he was excited so I was excited for him. He absolutely loved camp and said the food was even pretty 'solid.' That means good in teenager speak! He said a few times how nice everyone was and he loved the experience. The second day of camp they led a mini day camp for younger kids and that is an experience you don't often get at his age. Leadership skills, couldn't we all use a lesson there! We are very thankful to the Gethsemane family for helping to cover the cost for Camp Vermilion.

Generosity Team

- continued-

Parents! Encourage your kids to go to Camp Vermilion! It's a beautiful place and I'm sure your kids will love it! Kirby said he would definitely go back again next summer.

The past few years, Gethsemane along with Messiah Lutheran and Our Saviors Lutheran Churches have brought all of the combined kids (and kids at heart) to Greens on Foreteenths for mini golf, fellowship and food. To see all 3 churches coming together, laughing and playing is a beautiful thing! We are so thankful for all of the support and kindness shown to us as members of the church and business owners.

If there is anyone reading this article and you have been on the fence deciding if you should become a member at Gethsemane Lutheran, I would encourage you to have faith and take that leap. All are welcome and to be a part of a faith driven community is a blessing.

Summer Sounds Are Back Olcott Park

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

Enjoy live music from 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.

Camp Corner

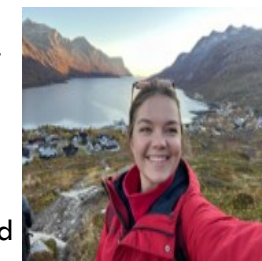
Dear Friends and Supporters, On behalf of the Board of Directors, I am pleased to announce the appointment of **Anna Quanbeck as Acting Executive Director** of Voyageurs Lutheran Ministry.

Anna brings a deep commitment to our mission and a passion for outdoor ministry that reflects the values of VLM. During this transition period, we are confident that she will provide thoughtful guidance and steady leadership for our staff, congregations, volunteers, campers, and community.

We are grateful for Anna's willingness to serve in this important role and ask you to join us in offering your prayers, encouragement, and support in the months ahead.

Thank you for your continued commitment to the ministry and mission of Voyageurs Lutheran Ministry.

With gratitude,
Ryan Jagim
Board Chair



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

August 15, 2026

8:00 AM Gunn Park

Grand Rapids, MN

[Register](#)

[Donate](#)



VLMcamps.org

Voyageurs Lutheran Ministry | 1325 N 45th Ave E | Duluth, MN 55804 US