

BETHANY BRANCHES WEEKLY

NOVEMBER 3, 2026

www.wbbethany.org

THIS WEEK AT BETHANY



TUESDAY
Prayer Group
10:00 - 10:30 AM in Sanctuary
Executive Committee Meeting
4:15 PM in Small Hall

WEDNESDAY
Men's Breakfast & Bible Study
7:00 - 8:00 AM in Great Hall
Choir Rehearsal
6:00 - 7:00 PM in Sanctuary
Youth Faith Formation (Grades 3-8)
6:00 - 7:30 PM in Great Hall

THURSDAY
Women's Study Group
6:00 - 7:00 AM in Great Hall
Quilting Group
12:00 - 2:00 PM in Great Hall

SUNDAY
Worship (Stewardship Sunday)
9:30 AM (Also streamed live on Facebook)
Fellowship immediately following worship
(Stewardship Celebration with Cake)



CONTACT US

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Pastor Chad Whaley
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Heidi Christensen
Administrative Assistant
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Office hours: Tuesday & Thursday 8:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Find us on Facebook
Bethany Lutheran Church (ELCA) West Branch

BIRTHDAYS
NOVEMBER 2 - 8

11/2 Addison Langley
11/6 Tami Urmie
11/7 Paul Weismann
11/8 Madelyn Anderson



COUNCIL MINUTES

Council minutes can be viewed on our website. In the black menu bar on the home page, click "Council Minutes".

Visit our online calendar.

A NOTE OF GRATITUDE

Time and again Scripture reminds us to give thanks. Even our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, modeled this behavior. Before feeding the multitudes, he took the loaves of bread and gave thanks. Prior to raising Lazarus from the dead he looked upward and said, “Father, I thank you for having heard me.” (John 11:41). And of course, as he shared one final meal with his disciples, he took bread and wine and gave thanks.

Yesterday in worship, I was surprised with a small gift from the congregation for “Pastor Appreciation Day”. Our council president, Dale Swenson, expressed on behalf of the congregation words of appreciation. It deeply touched me and I want to thank all the faithful saints at Bethany! My heart is full of joy! It is an honor to serve as your pastor.

This past Sunday was a day of thanksgiving as we welcomed several new members, gave thanks for the baptized saints in the past year, gave thanks and honored our senior saints, and also remembered and gave thanks for the saints who have died in faith during the past year. The short offertory hymn we have been singing for some time is sounding in my head, “To God our thanks we give.” (ELW 682)

The stewardship committee has been busy with the fall stewardship campaign. Thanks to their faithful and holy work. WIth that said, I give thanks for your faithful stewardship of your time, talents and financial gifts. I could not live out the calling God has set before me without all of you and your generosity. I am forever grateful that I get to do what I love because of God at work in each of you and your faithful response to God’s grace and love.

That faithful stewardship has also allowed for some needed upgrades that Amanda and I are grateful for and will serve future pastors and their families living in the parsonage. Most notably was renovation of the upstairs bathroom that included a new tub and surround and new flooring. We absolutely love how it turned out and enjoy it daily. This same flooring was installed in the kitchen a couple years ago.

We are also thankful for the new washing machine and clothes dryer. The washing machine was malfunctioning and repairs would most likely have exceeded replacement. The clothes dryer was also aging. The decision was made to replace both with a matching pair. We are so appreciative.

Additional projects completed were removal of carpet and refinishing of the existing wood floor in a room on the first level. There were also a few landscaping projects. Lastly, my office at church was completely transformed and also looks fabulous.

I am well aware of how many of you faithfully tend to the buildings and grounds at Bethany and have done so for many years, long before we arrived. It would be impossible to list everyone and inevitably I would miss someone. So, please accept my thank you for all you do in stewarding the house of God’s people at Bethany.

Sincerely - Pastor Chad







MINISTRY PARTNERS

Stay up to date with some of our partners in ministry below.

LUTHERAN CAMPUS MINISTRY

Check out the ministry at the University of Iowa on their website.

LUTHERAN SERVICES IN IOWA (LSI)

Visit the website of LSI to learn more and stay up to date on this ministry partner.

SYNOD UPDATES

Stay informed about events and happenings within the Southeastern Iowa Synod by subscribing to their weekly newsletter.

ELCA UPDATES

Stay up to date with happenings in the ELCA by visiting their website at www.elca.org



NOVEMBER MINISTRY ASSISTANTS

Minister of Proclamation (Lector)
11/8 Kami Poppen
11/15 Mike Fryauf
11/22 Jill Barnhart
11/29 Jon Twing

Minister of Hospitality (Greeter)
11/8 Del & Sue Hughes
11/15 Al & Claudia Beyer
11/22 Linda & John Black
11/29 Nancy Bruns

Minister of Technology
11/8 Kent Kaufman
11/15 Paula Casper
11/22 Jill Taylor
11/29 Dale Swenson

Minister of Altar Care
Pat Cassabaum

We are always looking for additional ministry assistants. Contact Heidi to be added to the list.

Thanks For Your Help

Minister of Food & Fellowship
11/8 Stewardship Cake
11/15 Opportunity to assist
11/22 Opportunity to assist
11/29 Opportunity to assist

If you can help, sign up in the Great Hall.


Beyond Sunday
Continue your walk with Christ throughout the week. These simple practices can help.
On the Way
A weekly God pause with Scripture, a conversation prompt, and prayer.
Open On the Way
Give God 10
Spend ten minutes preparing your heart for Sunday worship. Read. Pray. Reflect.
Open Give God 10
Explore more ways to grow in Christ this week under Beyond Sunday on our website.


Choir Practice
Wednesday Evenings
6:00 PM
All are welcome!


Come and Quilt
Thursdays from
12:00 - 2:00 PM


Women's Bible Study Group
Every Thursday
at 6:00 AM
Bible studies, book studies, and time together.
All are welcome!


Men's BREAKFAST
AND BIBLE STUDY
Every Wednesday
at 7:00 AM
All are welcome!
Discussion of the upcoming Sunday gospel.
You don't need to be a biblical scholar.
Come as you are and enjoy the food, fellowship, and time in God's word.

STEWARDSHIP NEWS

The Stewardship Committee has diligently been at work carrying out their fall campaign. Thanks to the entire committee for their faithful efforts. There have been wonderful reflections in worship by Cheryl, Wayne, and Dave. This Sunday, you are invited to join us for worship and then a time of thanksgiving and celebration with cake during fellowship. Below is a graphic prepare by the committee showing the variety of ways you can steward your financial gifts for the workk of ministry and mission at Bethany.

NOVEMBER CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

Sunday School (PreK - Grade 2)
Sunday - 8:30 - 9:15 AM

November 15 and 29

Faith Formation (Grades 3-8)
Wednesday - 6:00 - 7:30 PM
Meal Provided

November 4 and 18

USE OF AI AT BETHANY

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is becoming a common part of our everyday lives, often in ways we may not even recognize. At Bethany, we are beginning to utilize some of these tools in our work and ministry.

AI has been helpful and more efficient in creating graphics for our bulletins, newsletters, and social media, as well as serving as a resource in other areas of our work. For example, the graphic below and those on the preceding page. The words and message are ours. AI helps transform them into a more appealing and professional-looking graphic.

More recently, the church council began using an AI tool to assist with meeting minutes. Recognizing the importance of privacy and transparency, the council developed a specific policy outlining how and when this tool may be used, including informing those present and obtaining permission beforehand.

As with any new technology, we want to approach AI thoughtfully and responsibly. It can be a helpful tool, but it does not replace the relationships, care, and personal connections that are at the heart of our ministry.

