



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | BETHEL CHURCH NEWSLETTER | APRIL 2024 – VOLUME 39

## Renaë's Thoughts

We are all searching. We are searching for anything and everything that makes us happy. We are always in the pursuit of happiness. But where does true happiness come from?

If money was no object, what experience or activity would you like to do? Think about that. What would be at the top of the list of things to do or buy that would make you truly happy? But would that give us the happiness that we are really looking forward to?

Many of us feel that we can find happiness in material things. We may feel that happiness is buying the newest phone, most modern clothes, or the sharpest looking car we can find. This kind of happiness will last only but a fleeting moment.

Luke 19:10, "For the Son of man came to seek and to save the lost."

Can you imagine, Jesus is seeking us. He wants us to come to Him. The Creator of the Universe wants us. We should be filled with overflowing joy.

But if our happiness is found outside of God, then it must be found in the world, our circumstances, or ourselves, and these things are fragile, fleeting, and often fraudulent. The only happiness we can have outside of God is temporary, which sets us up for disappointment and even despair when it disappears.

We need to seek him in order to find true happiness. Happiness can **not** be found when we are apart from God. Our true unending happiness comes to us when we spend time with Jesus. When we have a relationship with Him who died for us, we are given a new life (a fresh start). Anyone who belongs to Christ is a new creation. There is a true joy when we are known as a child of God.

Jesus and the new life that he offers is so worth investing in. Our pursuit of happiness comes when we pursue Jesus and all that he is and has done. Knowing Jesus = Knowing true Happiness!!!

Renaë Lind  
Youth Director

## Church Events

• Mar 2<sup>nd</sup> -VBS Training

• Mar 8<sup>th</sup> -Civic Breakfast

• Mar 11<sup>th</sup> – Pastors

• Mar 17<sup>th</sup> Mission Outreach

• Mar 20<sup>th</sup> Men's Breakfast

• Mar 21<sup>st</sup> Women's

• Mar 23<sup>rd</sup> New Believers Camp at City Grounds

• Mar 28<sup>th</sup> – Walk

## Pastor's Pen

### Jesus Challenges the Pharisees

The Pharisees were the ultimate religious people among the Jews during Christ's life on earth. Determined not to break any of God's laws, they had, over time, devised an intricate system of oral tradition to keep them from breaking the Mosaic law. One would think with such a desire to obey God that they would have recognized the perfect obedience of Jesus and affirmed and followed Him. And yet, as demonstrated by the events recorded in Matthew 12:1–37, they were His most bitter and implacable opponents. Why was this so?

The essential problem lay in their different understanding of the nature of God. For the Pharisees, God is primarily one who makes demands. For them, the Scriptures of the Old Testament were a set of rules that must be kept at all costs. For Jesus, as well as the Old Testament believers, God is primarily "gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love" (Ps. 145:8).

Also, for the Pharisees, God looked only at their external compliance with the law of God. For Jesus, God looks at the heart (1 Sam. 16:7). That is why, for example, Jesus would equate the lustful look, which expresses the desire of the heart, with the actual committing of adultery (Matt. 5:27–28).

The most proximate cause of the Pharisees' antagonism toward Jesus, however, lay in His ignoring of their hundreds of elaborate but petty rules that they had devised for interpreting the law of God. Not only did they devise these hundreds of man-made rules, but they had also elevated them to the level of Scripture, so that to break one of their rules was to violate the law of God itself. And yet these rules not only obscured the true intent of God's law, but also, in some cases, violated it (see Mark 7:9–13).

What really got the Pharisees upset with Jesus was the way He ignored their trivial and burdensome rules for keeping the Sabbath. In Matthew 12 verses 1–8, the Pharisees objected to the disciples of Jesus plucking and eating heads of grain as they walked through the grain fields on a Sabbath. According to their oral tradition, plucking the heads of grain and eating them was work — a violation of the Sabbath.

Almost immediately afterward, on that same Sabbath day, Jesus entered their synagogue where there was a man with a withered hand. Now, eager to again accuse Jesus of breaking the Sabbath, they asked him, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?" (vv. 9–14). Before healing the man, Jesus answers their question by asking which of them, if his sheep falls into a pit on the Sabbath, would not lift it out. If then, it is lawful to relieve the misery of a sheep on the Sabbath, how much more is it lawful to relieve the misery of a fellow human being who is more valuable than a sheep?

In both instances — that of the disciples eating the grain and of Jesus healing the man's withered hand — the scriptural principle that Jesus applies is God's Word that "I desire mercy and not sacrifice" (v. 7).

Apparently, not long after the Sabbath episodes, Jesus healed a demon-oppressed man who was blind and mute (Matt. 12:22). Not having a Sabbath violation charge to bring against Jesus, the Pharisees now resorted to the slanderous charge that Jesus cast out demons by Beelzebub, the prince of demons (that is, Satan himself). Since Jesus cast out demons by the power of the Holy Spirit (v. 28), their slanderous charge was blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, a sin that Jesus said would never be forgiven. Commentators differ on exactly what this sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is. As a result, some people have become afraid that they have committed "the unpardonable sin." However, it is safe to say that no one who is afraid that he or she has committed that sin has, in fact, committed it. The evidence from the text itself indicates that this blasphemy committed by the Pharisees can only come from a heart that is totally and implacably hardened against God. Obviously, a person with a sensitive heart could not commit that sin.

Since all Scripture is profitable for us, there is a present-day lesson for us to learn from Jesus' clash with the Pharisees. We need to be careful that we do not add our own man-made rules to the Scriptures. Some convictions that we hold dearly may be derived more from our particular Christian culture than derived from Scripture, and we need to learn to discern the differences. It is okay to have cultural convictions, but we should be careful that we do not elevate them to the same authority as Scripture. So much judgmentalism among Christians today occurs because we do this. But that is basically what the Pharisees were doing. So, let's be careful that we are not modern-day Pharisees.

Written by Jerry Bridges, *Tabletalk Magazine*, Ligonier Ministries, May 2008.



Design Team Brat Fry will be held on April 5 & 6 at the Depot Park.

## Brandon Community Blood Drive

Red Cross Blood Drive Report for March 19, 2024. Sixty-five total units were collected. Thank you to each donor who came! Your donations will give hope to nearly 200 people!

Judith Henker reached her 20th gallon mark.

Thanks to Bethel Church for the use of the fellowship hall and to Ardis Redeker for assisting in the lunch area.

Upcoming: May 14 Peace Lutheran, Rosendale

July 16 Bethel Church, Brandon

Judith Henker & Sue VandeKolk Co-coordinators

## God's provision while we wait

A November 2023 landslide trapped 41 construction workers in a tunnel they'd been excavating for a Himalayan highway project. For 17 days, they were stranded nearly 3 miles from freedom. When rescuers' drilling equipment broke, miners drilled through the last 2 meters of rock and gravel by hand. Finally, all the workers were pulled to safety through a 3-foot-wide steel pipe. Because they had received food, water, medicines, oxygen and even light through a narrow pipe while underground, all were in good health.

We are trapped in sin and brokenness: our sin and that of others, fragmented relationships and systems, nearby and across the globe. Christianity teaches that God's way of goodness will win in the end. But before full rescue comes, what keeps us alive and hopeful — even healthy?

As water was faithfully provided to the laborers through that narrow pipe, God quenches our thirst through baptism. Scripture and the sacrament of communion are the food and medicine that nourish and strengthen us. Prayer — our own and others' prayers for us — along with the Holy Spirit's gifts such as comfort and joy flow into our lives like the light of hope and the oxygen of life. Though complete rescue seems slow to come, God provides for us while we wait.

—Heidi Hyland Mann

# A P R I L



<b>Tue., 2nd</b>	<b>10:00 a.m. Staff Meeting 1:00-3:00 p.m. Senior Gathering 6:30 p.m. Mission Trip Meeting</b>
<b>Wed., 3rd</b>	<b>6:00 p.m. Junior High Youth Group 7:30 p.m. Senior High Youth Group</b>
<b>5th &amp; 6th</b>	<b>Design Team Brat Fry</b>
<b>Sun., 7th</b>	<b>9:20 a.m. Prayer Time, Youth Room 9:30 a.m. Worship Following the service: Sunday School, all ages Fellowship 6:30-9:30 p.m. Bestway Drivers Education Class</b>
<b>Mon., 8th</b>	<b>6:00 p.m. Communications Meeting</b>
<b>Tue., 9th</b>	<b>10:00 a.m. Staff Meeting 12:00-3:00 p.m. Senior Gathering Potluck &amp; Fellowship</b>
<b>Wed., 10th</b>	<b>6:00 p.m. Junior High Youth Group 7:00 p.m. Choir Practice 7:30 p.m. Senior High Youth Group</b>
<b>Sun., 14th</b>	<b>9:20 a.m. Prayer Time, Youth room 9:30 a.m. Worship Following the service: Sunday School, all ages Deacon's Meeting Fellowship 6:30-8:30 p.m. Bestway Driver's Education Class</b>
<b>Tue., 16th</b>	<b>10:00 a.m. Staff Meeting 1:00-3:00 p.m. Senior Gathering</b>
<b>Wed., 17th</b>	<b>12:00 p.m. 75+ Spring Luncheon 6:00 p.m. Junior High Youth Group 7:30 p.m. Senior High Youth Group</b>
<b>Thu., 18th</b>	<b>9:00 a.m.-12:00p.m. Bethel Quilters 5:45 p.m. Executive Meeting 6:30 p.m. Consistory Meeting</b>
<b>Sun., 21st</b>	<b>9:20 a.m. Prayer Time, Youth room 9:30 a.m. Worship-Ray Tilstra Special Offering Care Team Following the service: Sunday School, all ages Fellowship 6:30-8:30 p.m. Bestway Driver's Education Class</b>
<b>Tue., 23rd</b>	<b>10:00 a.m. Staff Meeting 1:00-3:00 p.m. Senior Gathering</b>
<b>Wed., 24th</b>	<b>6:00 p.m. Junior High Youth Group 7:00 p.m. Choir practice 7:30 p.m. Senior High Youth Group</b>
<b>Sun., 28th</b>	<b>9:20 a.m. Prayer Time, Youth room 9:30 a.m. Worship New G's CWC Following the service: Deacon's Meeting Sunday School, all ages Fellowship 6:30-8:30 p.m. Bestway Driver's Education Class</b>
<b>Tue., 30th</b>	<b>10:00 a.m. Staff Meeting 1:00-3:00 p.m. Senior Gathering</b>



# April

BIRTHDAYS &  
ANNIVERSARIES



# April

SCHEDULES

1st Bruce Belmer  
2nd Lexi Dahlke  
7th Teresa Schmuhl  
Aaron Beekman  
8th Ann Mulder  
11th Lennis Hiemstra  
16th Elizabeth Schmuhl  
Owen Beekman  
17th Shelly Freiberg  
Sam Owens  
18th Betty DeBoer  
19th Les Hiemstra  
20th Nick Kamphuis  
Josh & Krista Schliepp  
21st Adelynn Knox  
Pastor John Tilstra  
Nancy VandeSlunt  
22nd Reed Redeker  
24th Jean TerBeest  
Coty Hiemstra  
Eric Mulder  
Rhett Huebschman  
25th Herb Beekman  
Shyanne VandeBerg  
Rick Redeker  
Jeff & Jane Brown  
27th Nash Wiedeman  
Bill & Renae Lind  
28th Levi Phillips  
29th Arlene VandeBerg  
Jeff & Bree Gunnink  
Steve & Karen Smit  
30th Zach DeBoer  
Angie Smit

## LIFT

7th Floyd Smit  
14th Harley Coehoorn  
21st Ken Beekman  
28th Ed Montsma

## SOUND

7th Merwin Kimble  
14th Kelly VandeZande  
21st Harley Coehoorn  
28th Merwin Kimble

## GREETERS

7th Jon Post  
14th Ed Montsma  
21st Charlie & Connie Blank  
28th Dallas VandeSlunt

## FELOWSHIP

7th Jack Theyerl  
14th Byron Navis  
21st Charlie & Connie Blank  
28th Jared Hoinacki

## LITURGIST

7th Karen Redeker  
14th Jen Post  
21st Amanda Hiemstra  
28th Mark Kastein

## NURSERY

7th Angela Arndt  
14th DanICA Riedeman  
21st Sadie Newbury  
28th Rosanne Bresser

## DVD DELIVERY

7th Jeanette Winkel  
14th Shelly Hiemstra  
21st Karen Redeker  
28th Charlene Kamphuis

## CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

7th Heather Wegner  
21st Danelle Smit



Bethel Church,

Thank you so much for all of the prayers while I was in the hospital while my kidneys were healing. I'm so thankful for all of the food and treats the care team brought us while I was recovering at home. I'm grateful for a wonderful church family and for the prayers!

Danica, Caleb, Greyden, Tenley, Sophie, & Coltyn Riedeman

Bethel Reformed Church

Thank you for the special offering donation to Ripon's Food pantry. Truly a gift of joy for so many of our families that are struggling this year. Joy to your church family, Amy Pollesch & Traded Treasurers Food Pantry

I would like to thank everyone for the prayers, cards, and good thoughts during and after my surgery. Also thank you to Pastor John for the phone calls and to the care team for the beautiful blanket. Recovery is going well during rehab.

Wayne Hiemstra

To the '23-'24 Senior Bible Study Group  
Thank you very much for your gift. I thoroughly enjoyed and appreciated all of you this season... your attendance, your willingness to share, your words and thoughts, and your acceptance of each other as long time friends.

Ken Margers

### March 18, 2024 Elders Meeting

- Caleb & Danica Riedeman were present to request baptism for Coltyn Scott. Baptism will be held on April 21, 2024.
- Keeton Grade & Camden Smit were present and presented their "I Believe" statements and were granted to make their Profession of Faith. Date to be determined.
- Quilters will meet March 21, 2024.
- Communion Scheduled for March 28, 2024.
- Next meeting May 13, 2024.

### March 21, 2024 Consistory Meeting

Meeting was cancelled



Bethel Church Family Fishing Retreat will be held May 31-June 2, 2024 at Camp Luther, Three Lakes, WI. Registration deadline by May 5. Individual cost is \$50 and the Men's Ministry will be covering the remaining cost. Sign up is in the Information Center. Contact Ed Montsma for more information at 920-948-4578.

## Consistory 2024

### Elders

Lynn DeBoer (24) 920-948-0380  
Ed Montsma (24) 920-948-4578  
Torrie Grade (25) 920-948-7419  
Jon Post (25) 920-960-1402  
Merwin Kimble (26) 920-517-1042  
Dallas VandeSlunt (26) 920-229-2337

### Deacons

Dan Brown (24) 920-204-2125  
Jack Theyerl (24) 920-979-3918  
Brian Brown (25) 920-204-2663  
Jared Hoinacki (25) 920-517-8073  
Byron Navis (26) 920-597-0203  
Jay Smit (26) 920-858-1739

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

John Tilstra, President  
Lynn DeBoer, VP  
Ed Montsma, Clerk  
Byron Navis, Deacon Chr.  
Dan Brown, Treasurer

### TREASURERS

Dan Brown, Main Account  
Randi Turner, Mission

### PASTORAL/STAFF

Lynn DeBoer  
Ed Montsma  
Dan Brown  
Byron Navis  
Deanna Theyerl  
Mary Kimble

### BUILDING

Brian Brown Chr.  
Jared Hoinacki  
Karl Rens  
Jay Smit  
Byron Navis

### ELECTION/SELECTION

Lynn DeBoer  
Ed Montsma  
Dan Brown  
Jack Theyerl  
Jon Post  
Torrie Grade  
Brian Brown  
Jared Hoinacki

### WORSHIP PILLAR

Jack Theyerl, Co-Chr.  
Deanna Theyerl, Co-Chr.  
Caleb Riedeman  
Danica Riedeman  
Leesa Tilstra  
Gary Henker  
Shelly Hiemstra  
Dianne Kastein  
Merwin Kimble

### MISSION PILLAR

Ed Montsma, Chr.  
Dallas VandeSlunt, Elder Rep.  
Randi Turner, Treas.  
Dione Kimble  
Ron Mulder  
Cathy Rens  
Jon Post  
Rick DeBoer  
Dan Brown

### CARE TEAM

Sharon Bos, Chr.  
Darlene Kamphuis  
Ann Mulder  
Jane Brown  
Mary Ann Smit  
Connie Blank  
Sally Kok  
Nancy DeBoer  
Ann Zabel  
Merwin Kimble, Elder Rep.

### PULPIT SUPPLY

Lynn DeBoer  
Ed Montsma

### EDUCATION PILLAR

Gerri Buteyn, Chr.  
Nick Kamphuis  
Jenni Post  
Lori Coehoorn  
Angela Arndt  
Renae Lind  
Jen Post  
Jon Post  
Torrie Grade, Elder Rep.

### COMMUNICATIONS PILLAR

Pastor John, Chr.  
Renae Lind  
Judi Post  
Nick Kamphuis  
Jon Post, Elder Rep.

### YOUTH GROUP SPONSORS

Dallas VandeSlunt  
Nick Kamphuis  
Kenna Freiberg  
Anna Lind  
Bill Lind  
Dawson Drews  
Julie Brown  
Brody Gerrits  
Ruby Flegner

### CARE ELDERS

Les Hiemstra  
Shelly Hiemstra  
Linda Smit  
Herb Beekman  
Lynn DeBoer, Liaison



## **BETHEL CHURCH**

### **Bethel Church**

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Brandon, WI 53919

920-346-5810

[www.bethelbrandon.org](http://www.bethelbrandon.org)

Find us on Facebook, Twitter & Instagram

### **John Tilstra, Pastor**

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Office: 920-346-5810 Ext. 12

Home/Cell 815-238-8514

### **Renae Lind, Youth Director**

[youthministry@bethelbrandon.org](mailto:youthministry@bethelbrandon.org)

Office: 920-346-5810 Ext. 16

M, T, Th: 8 a.m. - 3 p.m.

W, F: 8 a.m. - Noon

Home/Cell 920-960-2852

### **Judi Post, Secretary**

[secretary@bethelbrandon.org](mailto:secretary@bethelbrandon.org)

Office 920-346-5810 Ext. 10

M - Th: 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

F: 9 a.m. - Noon

Cell 920-979-3908

### **Custodians**

[jasonssmit438@yahoo.com](mailto:jasonssmit438@yahoo.com)

**Jason Smit** Home/Cell 920-858-1739

**Danelle Smit** Home/Cell 920-851-8624