

Bethany Lutheran Church

The following vision statement was adopted at the recent congregational meeting:

New Vision Statement

Bethany is a welcoming, caring, and growing family of believers that shares Christ's love with our members, our community, and the world. We encourage people to live out their faith through worship, prayer, Bible study, music, and Christian fellowship. Our diverse ministries and programs provide opportunities for all to share their gifts and talents. We reach out in love and compassion to those in need. Our thoughts, words, and actions honor God and show others what God has done, is doing, and will do through Jesus.



Bethany
Lutheran Church

Living and Sharing God's Love

The next day a harmful spirit from God rushed upon Saul, and he raved within his house while David was playing the lyre... I Samuel 18:10

For the last several months we have been working our way through the biblical book of I Samuel in our Sunday Morning Bible Study at Bethany. During that time, we have read familiar passages about the birth of Samuel, the capture and return of the Ark of God, and the famous battle between David and Goliath. But in early January, we began to read chapter 18. There, after a brief description of the friendship between David and Johnathan, we read of King Saul's jealousy of David. And in the midst of this jealousy, we read in 18:10 that "a harmful spirit of God rushed upon Saul"! Not surprisingly, this caused a bit of conversation among those gathered.

To summarize, we wondered how it was possible for God to send a "harmful" spirit. Isn't God good? Why would God do such a thing to Saul? Does this mean that God causes evil? During our conversation on this, that I revisited the next week as well, we clarified a few points that I believe are worth noting again. First, God freely forgives all who repent and turn to Him in faith. We are often reminded of this truth when we confess our sins during Sunday service and say I John 1:8-9, "If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Reading the Genesis account of creation when He made everything "good", we also know that God cannot be the author of evil that is opposed to His will. Rather, evil came into the world through Satan's rebellion and the temptation of Adam and Eve.

The next point is perhaps the most important one on this topic. Here, we remember that God's Word and the Lutheran Confessions, which we believe to be a true explanation of the Word, both say that a life of willful sin can drive the Holy Spirit out of a person's life. We see this in Acts 7:51 when Stephen, about to be stoned to death because of his Christian faith, accuses his persecutors, "You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you." And, as the old saying goes, "nature abhors a vacuum". Meaning, if the Holy Spirit is pushed out of our lives, something else is going to come in. And as we see in the books of both Job and

Revelation, God currently gives Satan and his demons a bit of free reign so that God's will may be done. So, if someone, like King Saul, has pushed out the Holy Spirit through his continual sinning against God, a harmful spirit may take up residence.

These biblical truths that Saul's harmful spirit brought about in bible study do more than just explain this incident while maintaining God's great goodness and desire for all people to be saved. They also serve as a loving, yet stern and serious, warning to all of us today. If we push God out of our lives, then something else is likely to take His place. This might be other gods, like social popularity and acceptance in a secular society or among ungodly friends. It could be things like sports or other activities of leisure. Or, as in the case of Saul, it could be something more demonic. Regardless, pushing away God leaves our lives vulnerable for something harmful to move right in.

Of course, if this happens, God is always calling, ready to forgive and welcome us back into His family and kingdom. But why take this dangerous chance? Saul is a reminder that we should do all that we can to live under God's gracious and loving reign and protection. And doing this does not require us to do anything. Rather it is simply receiving Him as He comes to us in His Word and Sacraments. Therefore, I encourage all of us to take advantage of the Word and Sacrament ministry at Bethany. Attend the services of the Lord's house where the Word is proclaimed and sacraments are administered. Stay in the Word through the various Bible study opportunities in the congregation. And be faithful in devotions at home and with other faithful Christians. If you need help or encouragement, talk to me or other leaders in our congregation. Because these are all things that the Lord desires to do for us. And if we don't resist them, we can be sure that our lives will be filled, not with a harmful spirit, but with the Holy One!



✠ Pastor Erickson

Thanksgiving:

Nora (g-granddaughter of Pat Krekeler) - recovering at home
Bridgehaven Pregnancy support Center - Life Sunday 1/22

Illness, injuries, health issues:

Lorena (sister of *Brenda Heims) - recovering after surgery
Jill (cousin of *Karen Pfeffer) - awaiting transplant
Kathy (sister of *Mark Holt) - awaiting transplant
Lorena (sister of *Brenda Heims) - recovering after surgery
Marcia (relative of *Brenda Heims) - health issues
Jean (mother of *Kristi Montague) - recovering after stroke
Raymond (father of Lora Raymon) - health issues
Trevor (son of *Thomas') - recovering after hospitalization
Sylvia (aunt of *Patricia Hinrichs) - health issues
Rhonda (friend of *Larsons) - health issues
Teri (relative of *Schoens) - health issues
Dave (relative of *Jennet Volden) - bike accident
Judy (relative of *Brenda Heims) - health issues
Tom Mark (former member) - recovering after accident
Andrew (relative of *B Heims) - recovering after surgery
Hayden (relative of *Bonnie Bubke) - brain disorder
Gwendolyn- (friend of *Karen Swanson) - terminal illness
John (nephew of *Bonnie Bubke) - health issues
Ruth (friend of *Velma Ziesemer) - health issues
Rod (nephew of *Bonnie Bubke) - Parkinson's Disease

Safety:

Ben - serving in the Iowa National Guard
Mitchell & Benjamin (relatives of *Schoens & *Smith)- U.S. Navy
Harrison (son of *Siecks) - U.S. Army, deployed to Poland

Local/National/World:

Local, state, and national leaders
Victims of floods, hurricanes, fires and disasters

Grief, family and friends of:

Helen (mother of *Angela Sturtz) - died 1/19
Neva (relative of *Don Hein) - died 1/18
Marcia (relative of *Brenda Heims) - died 12/29
*Norm Rutz - died 12/26
John (brother of *Donice McDonald) - died 12/26
Winona (sister of *Bonnie Breiholz) - died 12/24
*Joyce Fritz - died 12/15

Homebound members of Bethany:

*Wayne Schilling - Linn Manor Care Center, Marion
Candi Engel - Heritage Care Center
*Nadine Wax - at home
*Del Block - The Gardens
*Tom Stock - at home
*Larry & *Sharon Easler - Summit Pointe, Marion
*Darlene Eckert - at home
*Melba Davison - Terrace Glen Village, Marion
*Shirley Kellogg - at home
*Dorothy Freese - Keystone Place

Cancer/Hospice:

Alice (friend of *Brenda Heims) - cancer
Rose (friend of *Kay Karsten) - hospice care
Chuck (father of *Jim Novitch) - cancer
Courtney (Monday am coffee friend) - cancer treatment
Sam (friend of *Carol Grimminger) - cancer treatment
Francis (friend of *Larsons) - hospice care
Patrick (friend of *Mary Vezina) - cancer treatment
John (friend of *Dunns) - chemo treatment
Ron (brother of *Ray McGraw) - cancer treatment
Shauna (niece of *Schmiths) - cancer
Karen (relative of *Carol Grimminger) - hospice care
Tony (friend of *Mike Thomas) - cancer
David (relative of *Hasses) - cancer immunotherapy
Julie (friend of *Brenda Heims) - cancer
Chad (son of *Vicki Huschka) - leukemia



Prayer Chain

Are you a prayer warrior? If you would like to receive periodic prayer requests from the congregation via email, contact the church office at:

office.bethanycr@gmail.com to be added to the prayer chain email list.

Bethany Prayers

Do you have prayer requests? Let us know if you would like your request added to the prayer list, the email prayer chain, or both. Call 364-6026 or email requests to nurse.bethanycr@gmail.com.

FEBRUARY CALENDAR

Wednesday, February 1

6:00 am Men's Bible Study
6:00 pm Confirmation
6:00 pm High School Youth
6:30 pm Vocal Choir

Thursday, February 2

9:00 am Adult Bible Study
10:00 am Walking Exercise
6:00 pm Human Care Meeting

Saturday, February 4

9:00 am Holy Yoga - Opening Room

Sunday, February 5

1:00 pm Food Pantry Open
4:00 pm Pickleball

Monday, February 6

6:30 am Coffee Outreach
6:00 pm Trustees Meeting

Tuesday, February 7

10:00 am Walking Exercise
6:00 pm Evangelism Meeting
6:30 pm Handbells Practice

Wednesday, February 8

6:00 am Men's Bible Study
5:30 pm Family Meal
6:00 pm Family Faith Night
6:30 pm Vocal Choir

Thursday, February 9

9:00 am Adult Bible Study
10:00 am Walking Exercise
1:00 pm Leah Circle
6:30 pm Naomi Circle

Friday, February 10

9:00 am Rebekah Circle

Saturday, February 11

9:00 am Holy Yoga - Opening Room

Sunday, February 12

12:15 pm Board of Education Meeting
1:00 pm Food Pantry Open
4:00 pm Pickleball

Monday, February 13

6:30 am Coffee Outreach
10:00 am Women's Bible Study
6:00 pm Stephen Ministry Supervision
7:00 pm Elders Meeting

Tuesday, February 14

9:00 am Quilting
10:00 am Walking Exercise
6:30 pm Handbells Practice

Wednesday, February 15

6:00 am Men's Bible Study
4:00 pm Cottage Grove Devotion
6:00 pm Confirmation
6:00 pm High School Youth
6:30 pm Vocal Choir

Thursday, February 16

9:00 am Adult Bible Study
10:00 am Walking Exercise
11:00 am Senior Worship

Saturday, February 18

9:00 am Holy Yoga - Opening Room

Sunday, February 19

1:00 pm Food Pantry Open
4:00 pm Pickleball

Monday, February 20

6:30 am Coffee Outreach
10:00 am Women's Bible Study
6:00 pm Stewardship Meeting

Tuesday, February 21

10:00 am Walking Exercise
6:30 pm Handbells Practice
7:00 pm Church Council Meeting

Wednesday, February 22

6:00 am Men's Bible Study
6:00 pm Confirmation
6:00 pm High School Youth
7:00 pm Ash Wednesday Service

Thursday, February 23

9:00 am Adult Bible Study
10:00 am Walking Exercise

Saturday, February 25

9:00 am Holy Yoga - Opening Room

Sunday, February 26

9:30 am Blood Pressure Checks - Office
1:00 pm Food Pantry Open

Monday, February 27

10:00 am Women's Bible Study
6:00 pm Stephen Ministry Cont. Ed.

Tuesday, February 28

10:00 am Walking Exercise
6:30 pm Handbells Practice

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

2/1	Joel Conrad David Jasper	2/14	Sarah Gates Rita Tiedt Lucas Volden Madi Clark	2/21	Mike Prohaska
2/2	Mason Corey			2/23	Mike Raymon
2/5	Noah Dohrmann			2/24	Kelly Frampton
2/7	Porter Brink	2/16	Jada McGinnis Holden Caldwell	2/25	Andrea Russman Sawyer Stepanek
2/10	Joan Mosel Nancy Owens	2/18	Robby Russman	2/27	Kyle Gates
2/12	Erin Crawford Jordan Throgmartin Larry Kroemer	2/19	Aaron Elias	2/28	Dave Karsten
2/13	Andy Gates	2/20	Jeff Gebert Ellie Smith Mark Ranbarger		

FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

2/21 Arlen & Bonnie Breiholz **2/23** Wade & Sharon Ramsey **2/24** Gene & Nancy Owens

A note from the DCE Intern

I just wanted to say thank you for the great warm welcome in my first weeks here at Bethany. I am really glad to be here and want to show my appreciation to all who came to the card shower and helped me move. I really appreciate your generosity and kindness towards me. I am looking forward to this coming year and getting to know everyone and making some great friends. This is going to be a wonderful year to continue my education and learn and gain experience from everyone. I just have to show gratitude to all of you for welcoming me and letting me continue my education here and I hope that through that process I can help grow some of your ministries here at Bethany. While I am here continuing my education I look forward to working with all of you in some of our educational ministries. They are so important to help learn and grow and help you share your faith with others. I am so blessed to be here and am so grateful you all have welcomed me.

Kierra Penney

LMWL Thank You

Bethany LWML would like to thank all Bethany members for their generous Christmas donations. Gift cards were purchased with the money you gave and distributed to Bethany families. Recipients of your generosity truly appreciate this Christmas gift. Here is what a few of them said. "My heart is so full! I can't thank you enough for the generous Hy Vee gift cards. With today's economy, it is truly a blessing. God Bless each and every one of you!" "Thank you so very much for thinking of our family this holiday season. It means so much to us! You are so generous!" "I just want to thank the LWML for the generous gift of Hy-Vee gift cards for Christmas. They are much appreciated."

The LWML would also like to thank all of you who supported our bake sale on December 18th. The money from this sale will be given to mission organizations locally, nationally and internationally.

Council Connection

Welcome to the Council Connection! The purpose of this section is to keep you updated on status, decisions, and other happenings from the Church Council. Look for the latest in each month's Beacon.

The Church Council is excited to launch into 2023 with some new members! Please join us in welcoming Julie Elias as the Treasurer and Mary Nanke as the Chair of the Board of Stewardship. Also, the Board of Elders welcomed Mark Elias. We very much appreciate their willingness to serve and use their time and talents for our congregation.

Come as you are! Any member of the congregation is welcomed and encouraged to attend Council meetings. This is an excellent way for interested members to learn more about what is happening in the church. Meetings generally consist of reports on the activities from the last month, discussion of old business, and introduction of new business. We meet monthly (next one is **February 21th at 7pm**). During these meetings, we ask visitors to be "spectators" instead of active participants. Thank you for your consideration.

Our most recent Council meeting was on January 10th. Here are the highlights:

- We have a Director of Christian Education Intern! Warm welcome to Kierra Penney who recently completed her coursework at Concordia-Seward. If you haven't met her yet, please introduce yourself! She will serve as our intern for all of 2023.
- Thanks to the generosity of the congregation, we had a strong financial year in 2022. Details were provided at the Voters' Assembly meeting on January 22nd.
- The upgraded Vision Statement for the congregation was adopted by the Council and it was agreed upon that it should be presented to the congregation at the Voters' Assembly. This Vision paints a picture of where we want to go as a congregation over the next several years. At the next Council meeting, each Board will be challenged to develop an action plan to bring the Vision to life.
- A short description of the purpose of each Board and Committee at our church has been updated and is now available from the office. If you feel called to serve on any of them, please contact the leader of that area (see below). Thank you for your consideration.
- In each month's Beacon, we will be providing attendance and giving numbers. If you think of other areas that you would like to know in the Beacon, contact one of the Council members below.
- The Angel Tree supported 35 children from 17 families with gifts, including household items and groceries! Thank you to all who supported this ministry.
- The Food Pantry continues its outreach to the local community and attracts 8-15 new families each week. If you haven't been down there for a tour or to volunteer, contact Nurse Ronda. It's incredible.
- Women's small groups begin again the week of February 13th on Monday mornings and Thursday evenings (select a time slot that works with your schedule). The study covers the book "Emotions and the Gospel: Created for Connections".
- We will discontinue funding of new schools in Kenya (Project 24), but will continue to sponsor our two students in Kenya (Yvonne and Lorine through Christ Care for Kenya). This is made possible by the generosity of the congregation.
- We are considering adding additional Bible studies to better serve the congregation's needs of topics and times. More to follow in coming months.
- Currently, there are vacancies in the Council Vice Chair and the Board of Trustees Chair. If you would like to learn more about these positions, please contact Darrell.

Please pray for your Church Council!

Ronda Anderson (Parish Nurse), Darrell Chiavetta (Council Chair), Julie Elias (Council Treasurer), Pastor Erickson, Kelly Frampton (Recording Secretary), Steve Hanchera (Elders Chair), Laura Holt (Financial Secretary), Dave Johnson (Endowment Chair), Debbie Mills (Education Chair), Mary Nanke (Stewardship Chair), Lissa Novitch (Evangelism Chair), and Rita Tiedt (Human Care Chair)

Lenten Services

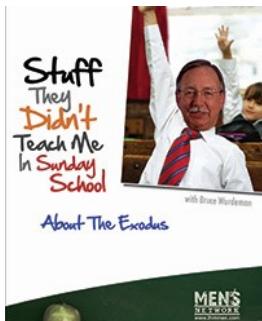
Beginning on Ash Wednesday (2/22) and every Wednesday throughout the season of Lent, you are invited to Bethany's Midweek Lenten Services at 7:00 pm. This year our theme is: *You Meant it for Evil, But God Meant it for Good*. In each service we'll see how faithless disciples, hapless crowds, and Satan himself all work for one evil purpose - Jesus' destruction. God the Father, however, puts their plan to use and then overturns it in the victory that no one expected. Please note that Holy Communion will be celebrated during the Ash Wednesday service, and each service will be preceded by a fellowship meal in the Family Life Center at 6:00 p.m.

Help Wanted

Bethany is looking to hire a new Office Manager. This part time position will work with Pastor and the rest of Bethany's staff, focusing on accounting, payroll, and human resource responsibilities. If you are interested, contact the church office for more information.

Monday Morning Outreach

On Mondays during the school year we set up a tent out front to serve free coffee and cocoa to Washington High School students and any neighbors who stop by. This outreach is very well received by the community! We hand out about 80 cups each week. Each Monday we need volunteers at 6:30-8:00 a.m. to help serve warm drinks and smiles. If you would like to serve in this unique ministry, sign up for a Monday at www.bethanycr.org/serve.

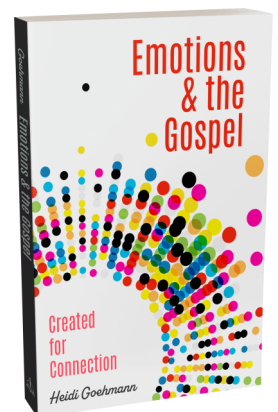


Men's Bible Study

Bethany men meet via Zoom on Wednesdays at 6:00 a.m. They have finished their study of Exodus and will continue with another book in their "Stuff They Didn't Teach Me in Sunday School" study. All men are welcome and encouraged to participate in this group for study and fellowship! The group also meets occasionally for breakfast. If you would like the link to the Zoom meeting, please contact the church office at office.bethanycr@gmail.com.

Women's Small Group

The Women's Small group will be starting a new study entitled, *Emotions & the Gospel*, on Monday, February 13 and Thursday, February 16. The Monday group will meet in the Bethany Family Life Center at 10:00 a.m. and the Thursday group will meet at the Chiavetta's house at 7 p.m. All women are welcome and encouraged to participate one of these groups for study and fellowship! If you would like to learn more about women's small group, contact Ronda (nurse.bethanycr@gmail.com). Let Nurse Ronda know if you plan to join the Monday am group, and Naomi (nrchiave@gmail.com) know if you plan to join the Thursday p.m. group.





Growing in Faith Sunday School

This year's Sunday School theme is "Growing in Faith"! Sunday School is held on Sundays at 9:45-10:45 a.m. for students in preschool through high school. Please join us each Sunday in the lower level. If it is your child's first time attending Sunday School, please accompany them downstairs and bring them to the Sunday School office, and someone will be happy to show you to their classroom! Not sure where to go while your child is in Sunday School? All parents are invited to Pastor Erickson's Bible study for adults in the Family Life Center.

Family Faith Night: Wednesday, February 8

Family Faith Night is a ministry for students in preschool through high school and their parents to attend on the second Wednesday of each month. Our next Family Faith Night will be on Wednesday, February 8, and titled, "Jesus is baptized into God's plan". A meal is served at 5:30 p.m. and the program is held 6:00-7:30 p.m. If you plan to attend Family Faith Night, RSVP at www.bethanycr.org/children-youth.



Happy Birthday Jesus Party

Here are a few photos from the party held after the children's Christmas program to celebrate Jesus birth. Everyone was invited for yummy cupcakes and a Zio Johno's pasta meal provided by Thrivent funding.



Joy's Journal

Hello, Bethany FURiends!

I've been a busy pup lately going on visits and doing my comfort dog "work." Turns out I did 78 visits in 2022 - I hope to do even more this year!

Last month I had my last "formal" training with Laura King of King's Creatures Animal Training. Over the course of two years, I had a total of 35 training sessions with Laura and my people. Laura taught me everything I know - like how to be calm, greet people calmly (I'm still working on this some days), and how to be confident in unusual situations. She really is the best! My people continue training me almost every day and, of course, I get on-the-job training when I make my calls. I appreciate all the love, support, and training Bethany has given these past two years. To God be the glory!

These are pictures of me and Laura – the first one at my very first training when I was eight weeks and one day old, the other one at our last training.



Love you!  Joy



February Evangelism Challenge

There are ways we can all live and share God's love with those around us. This February you are challenged to send a Valentines Day card to someone saying "Jesus Loves You" or "God Loves You".

Senior Worship

Thursday, February 16, 2023

Senior Worship Service at 11:00 am
Fellowship Luncheon to follow.

**If you plan to attend, please call
the church at 319-364-6026.**

Support the Bethany Food Pantry

Bethany LWML invites everyone in the congregation to support our food pantry by providing ingredients to make a casserole. These ingredients will be wrapped in a foil casserole pan, along with the recipe and distributed at the food pantry during March. Watch for sign up sheets beginning February 11th near the sanctuary.

Also, please join LWML members on Sunday, March 12th at 2 p.m. to package these items, enjoy fellowship and a dessert.

ANNUAL MEETING

JANUARY 22, 2023

Annual Meeting

Our annual voters' meeting was held on Sunday, January 22 at 12:30 p.m. Darrell Chiavetta, congregational president, led the meeting while leaders covered the highlights of their annual reports. Extra copies of the annual report are available at the welcome center.

Two votes were taken. The first vote was confirming changes to the constitution approved at last November's meeting. There were six changes and all were intended to clarify the intent of the text. The second vote was to approve of the updated vision statement approved by the church council having been worked on in meetings during 2022. The front page of the Beacon has this new wording. It is intended to give direction but not exact instructions as to how Bethany should operate going forward. Please read it and share it.

If you have any questions regarding the new vision statement then please speak to Pastor Erickson or any of the members that helped craft the vision: Arlen Breiholz, Darrel Chiavetta, Mark Elias, Chris Frampton, Colby Schmitt and Karen Swalley.



Stephen Ministry

The photo to the left shows Bethany's Stephen Ministers during their monthly continuing education training. Stephen Ministers help those who are experiencing a life challenge or a life crisis. One-on-one Christian caregiving is Stephen Ministry. Talk to Pastor Erickson or Nurse Ronda if you think you might be helped by this ministry.



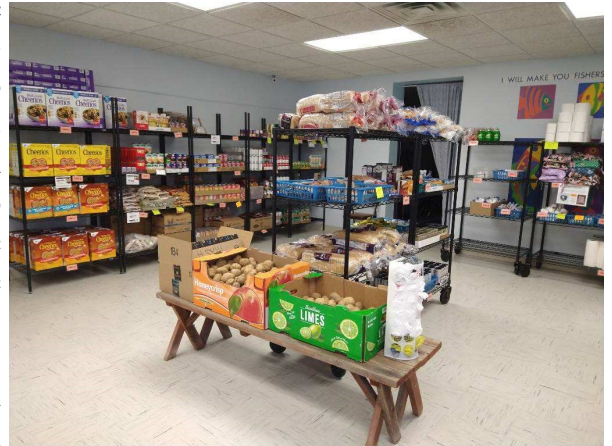


Bethany Lutheran FOOD PANTRY

A typical Bethany Lutheran food pantry Sunday...

12:30– Six volunteers report to the food pantry (located in the lower level). The pantry policies are reviewed with Nurse Ronda and other volunteers. Volunteers are assigned a station to work in. This will include restocking and facing items, assisting neighbors with the items and food they need.

12:50– Nurse Ronda greets the line of neighbors that have assembled outside the back door at Bethany. She communicates what new items are in the pantry, reminds people to respect the limits that are posted and that they are welcome to come each Sunday and to please take only what they need for the week. She asks if there are any new neighbors. If so a simple form will need to be completed. Neighbors are then registered and one by one invited to come to the pantry.



Sunday, January 22 we had 81 neighbors that took food home to 310 people in their households. 12 of those 81 were first time visitors.



Personal care items, canned and dry goods, frozen and refrigerated food are available in the Bethany Lutheran food pantry.

3:00– The shelves have been restocked and the pantry again has space for the food that will be ordered and picked up on Friday. The volunteers have just helped over 300 people get the nutritious food they need.

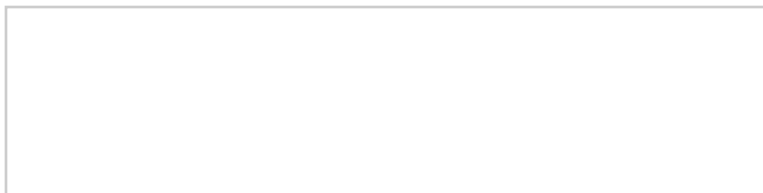
Sign up is done through SignUpGenius on our website. (bethanycr.org/food-pantry)

If you haven't visited the pantry yet, Nurse Ronda or Pastor Erickson would love to show it to you. Thanks for your support!
< 5# bags of frozen chicken hindquarters

BETHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH
2202 FOREST DR SE
CEDAR RAPIDS IA 52403-1654

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
U. S. POSTAGE PAID
Permit #118
CEDAR RAPIDS IA, 52403

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED




Living and Sharing God's Love

WORSHIP WITH US

Sunday Mornings

8:30 am	Traditional Service
9:45 am	Education Hour
11:00 am	Contemporary Service

CONNECT WITH US

Website	www.bethanycr.org
Email	office.bethanycr@gmail.com
Phone	319-364-6026
	facebook.com/bethanycria