

Bethany Lutheran College

Bethany Lutheran College opened its 2026–27 academic year on Monday, August 24, with its traditional Opening Service in Trinity Chapel. This year marked a significant milestone in Bethany's history as the college began its 100th academic year.

The service brought students, faculty, and staff together to give thanks for God's blessings throughout Bethany's first century and to ask for His continued guidance in the year ahead. The opening of the centennial academic year provided a fitting opportunity to reflect with gratitude on Bethany's enduring mission of Christian higher education while looking forward to the college's future.

2026 Bjarne W. Teigen Reformation Lectures

October 29–30, 2026

Did Luther Have an Agenda? Luther's Liturgical Writings

1. **Luther's Divine Services**—Dr. Joseph Herl, Concordia University Nebraska, Seward, Nebraska
2. **Luther's Hymns**—Prof. Dennis Marzolf, Bethany Lutheran College, Mankato, Minnesota
3. **Luther's Reforms and a Lutheran Theology of Worship**—Dr. Jon Vieker, Concordia Seminary, Saint Louis, Missouri

Registration available online: blc.edu/reformation-lectures

Upcoming Events

September 10–11 – Circuit Visitors Conference
September 15 – Planning and Coordinating Committee
September 18 – Committee for Communication
September 19 – Decommissioning of Mt. Olive (Trail MN)
September 20 – Installation of C. Anderson (Bethany, Ames IA)
September 24 – Committee on Archives and History
September 28 – Bethany Lutheran College National Auxiliary Day
September 29 – Board for Youth Outreach
September 29 – Committee on Worship
September 30–October 2 – General Pastoral Conference
October 19–20 – Evangelical Lutheran Confessional Forum
October 23 – Synod Review Committee
October 29–30 – B.W. Teigen Reformation Lectures

ELS Newsletter



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So many boxes. No, I'm not thinking about how that describes the present state of my house or office. I'm thinking about the *mental* boxes we have in our heads that—we think—need to be checked off. For families with kids in school, those mental checkboxes might seem endless. (I'm not even going to list examples because I don't want to add to your stress if you forgot one!) For pastors, those mental checkboxes might multiply after a summer hiatus from certain activities. For teachers ... enough said.

For any of us, September might simply be a return to our “normal” routine, getting back to checking off certain boxes like we're used to. For all sorts of reasons, summer brings a break from the norm. We take vacations. We feel more relaxed. We spend more time outside (at least in the northern hemisphere!). We are less frequent in our worship attendance.

Wait ... *what?* Did you just accuse me of skipping church too much in the summer? Not necessarily. Many times we miss going to worship in the summer simply because we're travelling more than normal. But we might end up making that the standard instead of the exception. That is, it's a temptation to appreciate the extra time we get on a Sunday if we don't get up and go to worship. We may decide we have enough on our plates already and we simply *need* those extra hours to get some of the many boxes checked off, all the important things we need to accomplish.

And yes, it's true that we don't *have* to go to church to be saved. No, we *get* to go to church *because* we are saved! Our Savior God invites us to come to his house where he feeds and strengthens us through his Word and sacraments. Our loving Savior invites us to gather with family members—sisters and brothers in the faith—so we can build each other up, encouraging each other in our daily struggles. The Creator of the universe invites us to come and

experience over and over his recreative work that he performs in us.

Gathering to worship is not merely one of many boxes to be checked off. Gathering to worship is part of our lifeline with our loving God.

Michael K. Smith

Anniversary at Peace

Peace Lutheran Church in Jefferson City, Missouri celebrated its fortieth anniversary on Sunday, August 30. Pres. Michael K. Smith preached for the occasion, and Pastor Micah Ernst conducted the liturgy and read the lessons. The service was followed by a presentation by Pres. Smith on the history of the ELS over the past forty years and also a history of the beginnings of the congregation by Peace member Paul Junkans. The congregation also celebrated with a potluck lunch and numerous outdoor activities.



Installation

The Rev. Kent Dethlefsen was installed as pastor at Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church of Windsor, California, on July 12 at the Sunday morning Service. The Rev. Aaron Hamilton, circuit pastor, served as liturgist and preacher, and officiated at the Rite of Installation. The Rev. Arlen Dethlefsen, Kent's father, age 94, was present and participated in the installation. The congregation provided a luncheon after the service.



Pastors Kent Dethlefsen, Arlen Dethlefsen, Aaron Hamilton.

Giving Counselor

Our synod's giving counselor, Paul Manning, submitted a letter of resignation in August. Paul has been a faithful worker for our synod for the past three years and will be missed. His efforts for our synod have borne much fruit during his tenure with us.

The giving counselor is called or hired by the synod's Board of Trustees and is supervised by the president. Please keep us in your prayers as we begin the process of securing a new giving counselor. Be assured that the Lord always provides the necessary workers in his kingdom.