

The Bethel Beacon¹

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UPCOMING!

Sunday, March 11

Community Breakfast 9am

Worship 10am

Sunday, March 18

Community Breakfast 9am

Worship 10am

Church Council Meeting 11:30 - 1pm

Saturday, March 24

Neighborhood Hygiene Program 9am - noon

Sunday, March 25: Palm Sunday

Community Breakfast 9am

Worship 10am

Thursday, March 29

Passover Seder 6pm

Friday, March 30

Mt. Carmel Good Friday Jazz Service 7pm

Leaving from Bethel at 6:30

Saturday, March 31

Easter Vigil - children gather at 3pm, adults at 4pm.

Light supper to follow at 5pm.

Sunday, April 1: Easter

Community Breakfast 9am

Worship 10am



The Bethel Beacon is published by Bethel Lutheran Church. You can find our members and friends scattered throughout North Portland, the metro area, and beyond. As a community, we worship God together, proclaim the Good News of grace, and show hospitality to all people. Join us as we live out Christ's command to love each other.

Notes from Pastor Christine...



Dear Friends –

This year in our lectionary, we are reading the Gospel of Mark. It seemed appropriate that my chosen Lenten discipline might center around a study of this Gospel. (Yes, this is theologically “geeky”. I mentioned this to my brother. His reply? “Geez, why don’t you just give up potato chips or something – that would be easier. He’s not wrong.)

I’ve concentrated study on what the Evangelist says specifically about the last week of Jesus’ life – the events of Palm Sunday to Easter. I’d like to briefly share just two of my “aha” moments. I do so humbly – it’s likely you’ve already thought about this and have moved way beyond me!

“Aha”Moment #1 – The meaning of the word “passion”. The word comes from the Latin *passio* which means “suffering, enduring” and stems from the Latin *pati* meaning “to endure, undergo, experience”. It makes sense therefore that we speak of Holy Week in terms of Jesus’ Passion for surely, the Gospels tell us, Jesus did suffer and Jesus did endure. In modern usage, however, passion is defined as an “intense emotion or a driving feeling or conviction”. And in this context, the Passion of Jesus also makes sense to me, for in the Gospels, we learn a great deal about what Jesus is passionate about – unconditional love, non-violent justice, care of the least among us and the reign of peace. I’m pondering the way the things Jesus cared about deeply are intertwined with the more narrow meaning of “passion” as Jesus experienced it in the events of Good Friday.

“Aha”Moment #2 – There were two processions that first day. As worshippers, we tend to concentrate on Jesus’ triumphant entry into Jerusalem, on a colt, with thrown palms and cloaks, and a noisy crowd shouting “Hosanna!” However, this procession wasn’t the only procession in town: it was the beginning of the feast of the Passover and the Romans were coming to town to enforce peace among the peasants. Who needs an uprising after all? There were two kingdoms represented that day: One entering the town from the East: Jesus who is proclaiming the Kingdom of God that will usher in peace; and one from the West: Pontius Pilate who is representing power, glory and violence of the empire ruled by Caesar. Juxtaposed, this is profound statement of the Jesus message and just how radical this Son of Man really was.

By the end of a tumultuous week, Jesus suffered death on a cross because he was a threat to the Empire. He preached destruction of the powers of domination that ruled the world then (and still do, I might argue, today). This is a social system that politically oppresses the many by the few, the powerful and the wealthy and a system that economically exploits the majority through land ownership, taxation and misuse of labor. When Mark was writing, the religious authorities were used to justify the way things were. Some of the more cynical among us might see parallels with some religious leaders today. Jesus confronted this system of domination, which is contrary to the kingdom of God. For that reason, we experience Jesus’ Passion.

Friends, we still cry out for the reign of the Kingdom of God – where injustice and suffering and pain are no more; and where peace and mercy and grace abound. This is possible because we know He Is Risen! Blessings, Pastor Christine

Blessings,

Pastor Christine

Bethel's Results Are In

This past fall, Bethel participated in a synod-wide "Visitation Listening Process" in which 11 Bethelites were interviewed by friends from other congregations. The questions asked by the interviewers were very open-ended. The responses you see are the thoughts and feelings people reflected without prompts from the interviewers. Bethel's results reflect a healthy congregation that is engaged in the community and focused on doing God's work in the world.

The numbers in (): first number is the number of folks mentioning this, second is "weightedness": on a scale of 5 (high) to 1 (low).

A. Bethel is ...

+Friendly and welcoming (11/4.73), strong relationships (8/4.50)-(7/4.43)(10/4.70); burden is shared by others (5/4.80)///

Comments: lack of hatred and hypocrisy (2x); People feel connected to the church and God even if they aren't members; congregation is more open now than ever; lots of children and babies; Bethel has "good vibrations"; the most loving, gifted, free-spirited community I have ever encountered; we want people to be here, to feel safe and loved; very welcoming congregation; diversity lots of ways; new members joining congregation and serving ministries; church is a safe place for everyone, God's children no matter what

+Good Pastoral Leaders (9/4.33)///

Comments: Open-minded pastors; got involved because of Pastor Christine (2x); Pastors have different strengths and connect with different people (2x)

+Engaged in the community (11/4.55); Public engagement (8/4.75)

+Good Neighbor-- long history in the community (7/4.00); community support (7/4.29)///

Comments: neighborhood ministry (3x); long commitment to Drop-In program

+Bethel is healthy in that it can deal with divisive issues (4/4.75). This is true on almost all the pressures raised and for moving forward in being open and welcoming.

Comments: deals with tension openly

+Perseverance (9/4.67); Scrappy-deals with what comes (6/4.00)

Comments: Bethel thinks outside the box; we never give up; core community of Bethel is able to carry it forward; Bethel has "crazy glue" that holds it together despite its many parts

B. Pressures & Challenges

Bethel

Can we talk about it?

~Financial P-(9/3.33), C-(5/4.20)

Yes (7/4.43)

~volunteers / leadership (9/3.22)

Yes (6/4.50)

~Lots of young families(3x)

~Facilities (4/3.00)

Yes (3/4.67)

~Pastoral transition is a concern (6/1.83) 4x

Comments: hard for long-time older members to open up; when pastors retire-how to pay for experience full-time pastor; Council talking about money...passed deficit budget and explained why; younger children getting older-what happens then; time pressure on young families is tremendous (4x); not enough time and energy to do organizing to work on problems up stream; need 10-15 new families to take another step in programs; "small church, big mission"; find ways to listen to the kids...let the children lead them

Community

~Poverty P-(7/4.43), C-5/4.80) Yes (6/4.67)

~Housing/Homelessness P-(9/4.11), C-(7/4.57) Yes (8/4.63)

Comments: housing crisis getting worse; growing homeless population and how to respond

~Immigration (7/3.00); (5/4.00)Yes (5/4.00)

Comments: need to be a sanctuary church;

Many social/community issues surfaced in addition to those above.

Comments: gentrification and limits on affordable housing; homeless guests in the neighborhood-creates tension between church and neighbors; lots of needs to be met and not enough people to help

C. Move beyond comfort zone.

Starting new programs (10/3.50); Reconciled in Christ (5/4.60); Engaging people beyond members (7/4.71); civic action for the sake of others (5/4.40); Involve children/youth from the neighborhood (6/3.50)

D. What does God want FOR Bethel

Courage to serve others and most in need (8/4.88)

Comments: feeding others(3x); clothe the naked; committed to serve; breakfast and shower programs have blossomed and built community between the congregation and community

Advocate for justice and peace, take action in the face of injustice (6/4.33)

Spirit of joy and celebration (7/3.43)

Vitality and longevity (7/3.57)

Deepening spiritual life and relationship to God (6/2.67)

Financial stability and enough resources to do our ministry (5/3.40)

Growth in numbers, families, and/or children (5/2.60)

What does God want FROM Bethel

Relationships with community/neighbors (8/4.75)

Listen to each other (9/4.67)

Sharing in the suffering faced by others (5/4.60)

Unity (7/3.33)

Justice (6/4.50); Environment/creation commitment (4/3.00)

Comments: open eyes to what a person might be going through; keep going the way we are going and ask the community what they are looking for; do not stagnate...take chances and learn from mistakes; God wants us to keep talking and relating to member to member – God's vision is for a multicultural community, a family across race, class, age, etc.

Bethel Gets Organized (ok... maybe kinda)

Thanks to all who have agreed to serve as your Church Council for the 2018 year. On February 25th, we had a work session from 11:30-3:30 covering a lot of ground. Below is a list of council members and ministry areas for which they have agreed to be liaisons. If you have energy and interest to help in one or more of these areas, please contact the liaison.

Liaisons for Council.

Parish Transitions	Holly Redfern, Karen Carpenter, PJ Bentley, Tana Bishop, Cate Milburn
Finance	Meghan Cyr, Ryan Olson
Fun	Stephanie Burdick, Don Worthington, Tana Bishop
Community Care	JulieAnn Edman, Karen Carpenter, Sonia Fornoni
Worship & Musician Search	Holly Redfern, Pastors
Adult Education	Naso Michaels, Sonia Fornoni
Youth & Education	PJ Bentley, Stephanie Burdick
Connections/Synod/Network	Naso Michaels, Cate Milburn
Communication Strategy	Jim Van Dyke
Drop In	Pastor Christine Core
Facilities	Ryan Olson (maintenance), Tana Bishop



○ God, Hear Our Prayer

To the lone God who calls,
Edwina Gateley

To the lone God who calls
And pleads a New Jerusalem
In the bloodied Sinai Straights.

We are called to say yes
That honeysuckle may twine
And twist its smelling leaves
Over the graves of nuclear arms.

We are called to say yes
That children might play
On the soil of Vietnam where the
tanks
Belched blood and death.

We are called to say yes
That black may sing with white
And pledge peace and healing
For the hatred of the past.

We are called to say yes
So that nations might gather
And dance one great movement
For the joy of humankind.

We are called to say yes
So that rich and poor embrace
And become equal in their poverty
Through the silent tears that fall.

We are called to say yes
That the whisper of our God
Might be heard through our sirens
And the screams of our bombs.

We are called to say yes
To a God who still holds fast
To the vision of the Kingdom
For a trembling world of pain.



Prayer Requested for:	Prayer Concern:	Prayer Contact:
For all victims of shooting violence	Peace and comfort and that our distress of our hearts become action to prevent more violence	Bethel Staff
Elizabeth Presberg	For healing and comfort, as her health is fragile	Joann Noll
Katie Reitel	Prayers of healing, strength and comfort for Katie and support for her family	The Bentleys
David Lingnau	Prayers for healing and comfort; prayers for Stephanie and the rest of the Burdick family	Pr. Christine
Shirley and Jeff Kolpin	Prayers of healing for Jeff; peace and comfort for Shirley	Cate Milburn
Our prayers continue for many among us: for Bertha Anderson, the family of Skip Getman, Vance Burghard, Dennis Mitchell, Dale Tersey, Timothy Collins, Elizabeth, Rob, Jacob Bard, Miles Bard, Annalu Lingnau, Ben Lingnau, Jr., and Ben Lingnau III, Paul Beezhold, Dorothy Hansen, Mary Rix, Patricia Connor, Bob and Nancy Leon. Steve Garrick, Wayne & June Hassebroek		

A word from the council president... ⁸

At Bethel's annual congregational meeting in January, I was heartened by the conversations we had and the work that got done. We honored the incredible work that the Bethel community accomplishes every week. We had an honest discussion about the church's finances. Together we wondered aloud how such a vibrant community that supports multiple high-impact ministries continues to face a budget shortfall. And we elected new members to church council to move forward with these discussions.

This council is an amazing group, with folks from different backgrounds and ties to Bethel. Some have been here barely a year while others have a history with the church that goes back decades. This range of perspectives is going to be a strength of council over the next couple years, just as it is currently a strength of the congregation and the Bethel community at large.

In February, the 2018 council met for the first time for an extended work session. We reflected on the past year, how ministry has grown and how we've continued to expand our connections to the community. We faced more difficult budget math, the hard reality that our expenses simply outstrip our income, and we recognized that we don't have time for hand-wringing. Facilitated by Pastor Terry Moe, we shared with each other those things that we truly love about Bethel and that keep us tied to this place. These conversations led to tears, statements of fierce commitment, and expressions of joy. Did we find a way to tweak the budget that puts us back in the black? No. Did God write on the wall in flaming letters a 5-part plan for success? No. But did we find a way forward? Yes.

We came to this conclusion: Bethel might be facing a challenge when it comes to making the numbers add up, but no one is walking away from the table because of that challenge. **This place means too much to all of us. We cherish it.** It feeds the hungry (hundreds of them!) every month. It clothes the exposed. It gives students a safe place to play and learn. It fosters relationships and supports families. It offers spiritual nourishment to anyone, regardless of belief or doctrine, who walk through its doors every Sunday. When you put all this together, it doesn't make the financial math any easier, but it makes our commitment to each other and our community even more vital.

PJ Bentley

Council President

Looking for an Overnight Camping Experience for Your Child this Summer?

During the week of July 22 - 27, Camp Lutherwood is holding a special camping experience for kids entering grades 6 - 9. The focus is on Confirmation. From Lutherwood's description for the week:

"Time spent with Confirmation groups and leaders offers a unique opportunity for adventure, service, team building and spiritual growth. Campers will grow together while making new friends, playing games, taking part in onsite service projects, singing and worshipping together. Don't forget to sign up for a canoe trip!"

If your middle school child is interested in this opportunity, please contact Pr. Christine right away. All Confirmation campers need to be connected with a Confirmation group and leader at the time of registration. Pr. Christine will talk with kids and parents about this opportunity and whether to arrange to accompany Bethel kids to camp or connect them with another loving pastor who will serve that function.

Check out the Camp Lutherwood program and register online at www.lutherwoodoregon.org



March Birthdays!



2018!

5	Kristi Mowe
7	Logan Milburn
7	Miles Bard
9	Jared Burdick
16	Barb Keys
22	Naso Michaels
24	Sue Ruth
26	Annika Michaels
29	Jim Beck
30	Harry Griffin





Ongoing prayers for healing for the following:

Paul Beezhold	Patricia Conner	Skye
Dorothy Hansen	Bob and Nancy Leon	Wayne and June
David Lingnau	Steve Garrick	Hassebroek
Phyllicia McGowan	Christine Downing	
Mary Rix	Kathy Buss	

As Lent is the time for greater love, listen to Jesus' thirst...'Repent and believe' Jesus tells us. What are we to repent? Our indifference, our hardness of heart. What are we to believe? Jesus thirsts even now, in your heart and in the poor -- He knows your weakness. He wants only your love, wants only the chance to love you.

Teresa of Calcutta



First Class Mail

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