

Office Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday: 9am to 2:30pm; Wednesday: 9am to 2pm
Office Telephone: (406) 761-1543
Website: www.bethelmt.org

BETHEL NOTES



Second Sunday of Advent

Readings:

Malachi 3:1-4
Philippians 1:3-11
Luke 3:1-6

This Sunday

The Jubilate Choir will be singing “*Silver and Shadows*”.

The Congregational Vitality Survey will be handed out during the offering for those who have not yet completed it.

We will welcome Joe Baumgardner and the Stordahl Family into membership.

Luke Bible Study will continue with Pastor Steve in the Fellowship Hall following worship.

Sunday
Dec 9

Serving this Sunday

Accompanist:
Connie Titcomb

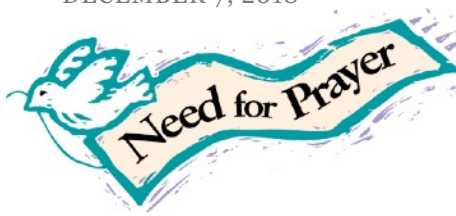
Lay Assistant:
Margie Holland

Usher(s):
Sue Hesse

Projectionist:
Dina Davis

Counters:
Pam Dougherty
Grant Smith

Nursery Attendant(s):
Adam Elkin
Carly Cushman



Prayers of healing for **Jan DeGroot** (sister of Marj Vander Aarde) who is battling cancer.

Prayers for **Faith Crouch** (granddaughter of Bernice Johnson) who is awaiting a double lung transplant.

Prayers for healing for **Patsy Berkeley Brattain** as she recovers from surgery.

Prayers of healing for **Don Bisgard** as he battles stomach cancer.

Prayers of healing **Ed Pottratz** for healing as he resumes cancer treatment.

Prayers for **Sue Hesse**.

Prayers of healing for **Lee Klette**, son of Russ & Cheryl.

Prayers for **Terry Ryan** (brother of Patrick Ryan).

Prayers of comfort for **The family and friends of Dr. William Nuessle (uncle of Walt)** as they grieve his death.

Prayers for healing for **Alex Bostic** as he recovers from surgery.

Prayers for healing for **Jean Humphrey** as she recovers from a fall.

Prayers of comfort for **Traci (Jason and Jack) Orthman** and family as they grieve the death of Traci's mother Dixie Hargreaves.



Christmas Eve Candlelight and Holy Communion Worship - Dec 24

4pm in the Gathering Place with Jubilate Choir

6pm in the Gathering Place with Karolina Pepos



2018 Advent Devotionals are available on the table by the track rack. Both regular print (black and white) and large print (color) are available.

PASTOR STEVE'S MESSAGE

Prepare the Way of the Lord!

If you were to name some best supporting actors from the world of film or television, who might you name ?

Might you choose Ed McMahon, who was Johnny Carson's sidekick and set up man for years on *NBC's The Tonight Show*? Who can forget his line: "Heeeere's Johnny !"

Might it be actor Cuba Gooding Jr. in the film, *Jerry Maguire* ? "Show me the money!!"

Now what about some of the best supporting characters from the biblical world ?

Might it be the Moabite woman, named Ruth ? Ruth told her mother-in-law, Naomi, "Where you go, I go, and where you live, I'll live. Your people are my people, your God is my God – not even death itself is going to come between us!" Ruth 1: 16

Or might it be John the Baptist, the miracle child and son of Zechariah and Elizabeth, and best supporting actor of all time ?

John the Baptist says, "Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." John 1: 26b, 27

And again, we hear from John: "Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said, 'After me comes a man who ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'" John 1: 29, 30

John the Baptist, knew well his role of supporting actor. That supporting role was to put the spotlight on Jesus, the chief actor of God's story. The gospel writer, Luke, tells us in this coming Sunday's gospel reading that John's message is "Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight....and all flesh shall see the salvation of God."

John calls upon us to prepare for the Messiah's coming. But what does that look like ? In the Acts of the Apostles we learn that God helps us prepare by providing the gift of repentance. "God exalted him (Jesus) at his right hand as Leader and Savior *that he might give repentance* to Israel and forgiveness of sins." (Acts 5:31)

John's message was that "Preparing the way of the Lord" happens through God's gift of repentance....God's work of preparation done in us. Repentance literally means a "change of mind"...a "change of direction." It is a turning of our gaze and our actions toward God. It is turning the spotlight away from us and toward the One who is greater than all of us and who comes to be the Light and Life of the world. It begins with swallowing our pride and confessing, "I can't do this (changing) but God can!"

John the Baptist knew his role as best supporting actor. He was chosen by God for this role. Like, John, so we are called to point to the lead actor - -> Jesus the Christ of God. The One who can and does call and prepare us to be preparers of the way of the Lord..."and all flesh shall see the salvation of God!"

Pastor Steve

UPCOMING EVENTS



Family Promise is hosting a free estate planning seminar on: Assisted Living, Nursing Homes, Medicare, Medicaid, Wills, Trusts, Powers of Attorney and Other Confusing Stuff! This seminar is a discussion; bring your questions. The moderator, Randall Knowles, has over 30 years of practical experience with these topics.

Join us at Central Christian Church on December 19th! This seminar is open to the public. We will be taking a free will offering for our mission to end childhood homelessness, one family at a time in Great Falls, MT!

A Blue Christmas Service supports those for whom the holidays are not joyful; they are lonely, filled with grief and feelings of being alienated from celebrations. This service is designed for people who may be experiencing depression and sadness and yet are often compelled to "put on a happy face" for others, denying their true feelings. The service is composed of music, scripture and a candle lighting

ritual to help acknowledge feelings and connect with the light that shines in the darkness during a difficult time in life. **This service will be held at New Hope Lutheran Church (3125 5th Ave S) on Thursday, December 20 at 7 PM.** Please share this with those who may be struggling this Christmas. Or consider inviting someone to come with you. That may be the best gift you can offer- acknowledgment of their feelings.





Fall & Winter 2018 Adult Forums

Session # 5 December 9, 13: Parables of the Kingdom: Loosing & Finding
Scripture Focus: Luke 15: 1 - 32

Session # 6 December 16, 20: Theme of Salvation in Here & Now (Today!)
Scripture Focus: Luke 23: 26 - 49

Session # 7. December 30 & Jan. 3
Resurrection Life, Now !
Scripture Focus: Luke 24: 13 - 35 (Road to Emmaus)

CONGREGATIONAL VITALITY SURVEY

The Bethel Strategic Planning Committee needs your help in guiding the direction Bethel Congregation would like to take in the upcoming years. The last plan was developed in 2009 and it was decided at that time that a church remodel was needed among other goals. From that effort, those goals were accomplished and now we are in need of direction.

The Committee has met and decided a survey of the how the Congregation feels about Bethel, our strengths and where we can improve would be a good first step. Linda Bobbit, Project Manager/ Researcher for the ELCA Congregational Vitality Project, has developed a survey to help guide congregations in their planning efforts. This survey focuses on our relationships in the church: to God, the World, and each other. It is called the Congregational Vitality Survey. We need your help this Sunday to fill it in. The processing and analyzing did cost the Congregation \$300 so we are praying for 100% return rate. Each person, confirmation age and older, is asked to fill it in. Your input is important enough to us that time has been set aside during this Sunday's service to allow time for you to complete it.

If you're interested in seeing an example of the report, please refer to this link: <http://congregationalvitalitysurvey.com>. In the lower right corner under "Synod Sign-in", click on "View sample report".

This is only the first step. The Committee will use this survey to guide future meetings and will be asking for input throughout the process.

Thank you.

Jo Ann Dullum,

Strategic Planning Committee

FAMILY PROMISE

Family Promise is in need of gift cards to Walmart or Target for \$20 to give to parents to buy gifts for their children. They need the cards by Dec 18th as their Christmas party is Dec 20th. Target is very supportive of Family Promise and does whatever it can to help our families.



Bethel Giving Tree Advent & Christmas 2018

Once again this year Bethel will be offering you the opportunity to share your many blessings with others in need through alternative gifts.

This year we have chosen to support two ministries of the Montana Synod and our Companion Synod in Bolivia.

The Giving Tree Ornaments:

*\$10 – Provides a hank of beads and package of beading needles for Spirit of Life on the Fort Peck Reservation

*\$30 – Helps provide a much needed new roof for Our Saviors Lutheran Church on the Rocky Boy's Reservation

*\$40 – Provides a tuition scholarship for one month for a student at a Lutheran school in Bolivia. The Montana Synod is a Companion Synod of the Lutheran Church in Bolivia

Choose an ornament(s) and write a check to Bethel for the amount on your ornament(s), listing the recipients on the memo line (e.g. Spirit of Life beads, Rocky Boy roof, or Bolivia scholarship). After Christmas Bethel will send the donations to the MT synod to be dispersed appropriately.

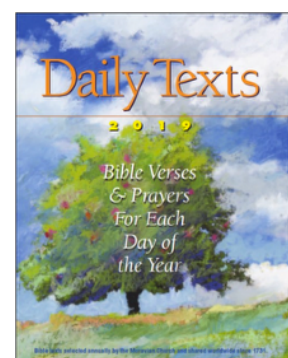
Join together in doing God's work for the life of the world.

Thank you for your generosity!



2019 Daily Texts

The 2019 Daily Texts: Bible Verses and Prayers for each day of the year will be available this Sunday. (No charge to you!) If you wish to take more than one, there is a suggested donation of \$6. and if you write a check, make it to Bethel and footnote it: Daily Text in the memo line.



CALLING ALL USHERS

I am looking for 4 ushers for the 4:00 pm Christmas Eve service and 2 Ushers for the 6:00 pm Christmas Eve service. If you are interested, please let Tami Grosenick know at bethelmc.church@gmail.com or write your name in the usher/greeter book on Sunday. Thank you for helping with these worship services.

Tami Grosenick

RESCUE MISSION

Christmas Opportunities

“So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver”

-2 Corinthians 9:7

With Christmas right around the corner, there are many opportunities to volunteer at the Great Falls Rescue Mission. We will distribute wish lists to our guests and those in our Christian Recovery Program. Volunteers and GFRM supporters will have the opportunity to sponsor a Family or Male or Female in our recovery program. Stay tuned to our Facebook page for more information about how to sponsor Christmas gifts for those at the Great Falls Rescue Mission. We have many opportunities for volunteers to help us prepare for the holiday.

- December 17th - 21st: Wrap Gift

- January 5 th: Undecorate the mission

CHRISTMAS GIFT IDEAS

- \$30 MAXIMUM
- TOYS; SMALL & MEDIUM
- SMALLER INEXPENSIVE ELECTRONICS (NO IPADS OR TABLETS)
- FOOD GIFT CARDS
- HYGIENE ITEMS

FOOD NEEDS

- HAM
- POTATOES
- STOVE TOP
- CHICKEN BROTH
- DINNER ROLLS
- BAKED PIES
- CANNED VEGGIES

THE DEADLINE TO SPONSOR CHRISTMAS GIFTS IS DECEMBER 14TH. TO SIGN UP TO HELP WITH ANY OF THESE CHRISTMAS EVENTS HELD AT THE GFRM, PLEASE CONTACT THE VOLUNTEER DEPARTMENT AT 406-761-2653.





Mark your calendars!!
Wednesday evening 7:00 PM
Family Worship

January 30th

March 6th - *Ash Wednesday*

April 3rd

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
9:30am-Worship Luke Bible Study after worship New Member Sunday 1-4pm - Synod Open House 6-8pm - Carols and Beer @ 'Do Bar	6:15pm - Boy Scouts	7am - Men's Breakfast 6:30am-Bible Study @ Electric City Coffee 6:30pm - Church Council Meeting	6pm-Family Worship Night	Luke Bible Study @ 10am	Pastor Off	9am - Close Knit Bethel Bunch at 5:30pm at Earl & Trudy Terwilligers: 141 17th Ave. N.W.
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
9:30am-Worship Luke Bible Study after worship				7pm-Blue Christmas service @ New Hope 12pm: GFMA Meeting & Lunch Luke Bible Study @ 10am	Pastor Off	
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
9:30am-Worship Luke Bible Study after worship	Christmas Eve worship @ 4pm and 6pm Office Closed				Pastor Off	
30	31					
9:30am-Worship Luke Bible Study after worship						