

Office Hours: Monday through Thursday 9:00 am to 2:30 PM Closed Friday
Office Telephone: (406) 761-1543 Website: www.bethelmt.org

BETHEL NOTES

Sunday

April 5



Readings Palm Sunday

MATTHEW 21:1-11

ISAIAH 50:4-9A

PSALM 31:9-16

PHILIPPIANS 2:5-11

MATTHEW 27:11-54

This Sunday we celebrate Palm Sunday.

This Sunday's Worship is a live stream from Croxford's Funeral Home led by Great Falls ELCA Pastors and LPA 9:30 AM. Click the [link here](http://www.croxfordfuneralhome.com) or go to the website www.croxfordfuneralhome.com click on "Lutheran ELCA" under Live Church Services on their homepage Sunday morning to connect. Share this with your family and friends.

Thank you to the following pastors and synodically authorized minister for leading this service: Pastor Anna Merritt, Our Saviors Lutheran Church, Pastor Scott Hedegaard, Redeemer Lutheran Church, Pastor Barb Gwynn, First English Lutheran Church, Deb Oldfield, SAM St. John's Lutheran Church, Pastor Steve Van Gilder, Bethel Lutheran Church, Carole Hatley accompanist from First English, Drew Kent and the Croxford Funeral Home staff for the use of their facility for our live stream worship service.

For those who do not have access to the internet, we will be sending a copy of the bulletin. Blessings and prayers to all.



- ✦ Prayers for **Faith Crouch** (granddaughter of Bernice Johnson) who is awaiting a double lung transplant.
- ✦ Prayers of healing **Ed Pottratz** as he continues cancer treatment.
- ✦ Prayers of healing for **Lee Klette**, son of Russ & Cheryl.
- ✦ Continued prayers for **Angela Mart** (daughter-in-law of Jane Mart) as she finishes treatment for breast cancer.
- ✦ Prayers for God's presence and healing for **Linda Juvik** (sister of Sandy Bechard) as she continues treatment for cancer.
- ✦ Prayers of healing for **Cindy Brattain** as she recovers from a medical procedure.
- ✦ Prayers for God's presence and healing touch for **John Korpela**, as he recovers after medical treatment.
- ✦ Prayers for the **Peoples of Boliva** as they transition into new leadership within the country and prayers for **Pastor Presidente German and the IELB**.
- ✦ Prayers for healing and strength for **Katie Madsen**, niece of Doug Sexe and granddaughter of Arlene Sexe as she is undergoing treatment for breast cancer.
- ✦ Prayers of healing for **Jane Mart** as she is home and continues to heal after surgery.
- ✦ Prayers of healing and support for **Jeremy Hawks** as he prepares for surgery.
- ✦ Prayers of healing and strength for **Ann Tuomi** as she continues to recover from surgery.
- ✦ Prayers for safety and support for **Eric Poser**, Connie Titcomb's nephew as he is deployed overseas.
- ✦ Prayers for **Dakota Green**, great granddaughter of Bernice Johnson as she recovers from a recent surgery.
- ✦ Prayers for God's healing presence and peace for **Arlena Crandell's son, Mike**, who is undergoing medical exams.
- ✦ Prayers of healing for **Leonard Murphy** as he recovers at home from a recent hospitalization.
- ✦ Prayers of healing for **Marlys Baer** as she recovers from a recent hospitalization.
- ✦ Prayers of healing for **Dale Ost** as he recovers at home.
- ✦ Prayers of healing and God's presence for **Chad Erickson** as he continues medical testing.
- ✦ Prayers for God's presence, peace & strength for **Jim and Loretta Nuessle and their son** (brother, sister-in-law, and nephew of Walt Nuessle) as they face health concerns and for a safe return to their home in MN.
- ✦ Prayers for God's presence, healing & grace for **Bob Norbie** (Mary Lou) as he faces a diagnosis of bladder cancer.
- ✦ Prayers for God's healing presence and mercy for all who face the threat of the Covid-19 virus at home and abroad.
- ✦ Prayer of healing for **Allan Ost**, son of Dale and Leona.

A Note of Thanks

Dear Bethel Family,

Thelma and I would like to thank you all for your prayers and support while I was going through treatment for bladder cancer.

As of now I have been given good news and all the effort has been successful. I will have some follow up in the coming months, but know that your prayers and support were large part of my healing.

We would like you all to know how very grateful we are to have such wonderful friends and support from all and we are so blessed to be welcomed into Bethel.

May God keep watch over each of you and your families.

Don and Thelma Seyfert.

Holy Week Schedule

Palm Sunday April 5th
Live Stream 9:30 AM from
Croxford Funeral Home

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Maundy Thursday April 9th -
TBD

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Good Friday April 10th -TBD

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Easter Vigil April 11th - TBD

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Easter Sunday April 12th
Recorded Worship with Bishop
Laurie Jungling

MEN'S BREAKFAST

Join us for fun and engaging conversation, and insightful discussion of this week's Lectionary texts as we meet through a social distancing approved Zoom video call each Tuesday morning from 7:00 – 8:00 am. Breakfast recipes and ideas will be provided. If you are interested in more information or would like to be added to the call invitation list, click on the email link below and type "breakfast" into the subject line (and then of course press send).



dscholten@dlsconsulting.net

Entering the Passion of Jesus Book Study to Continue on Zoom

Monday Evenings 6:30 pm

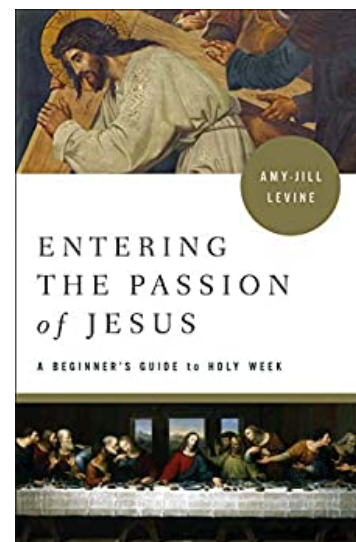
We will be continuing on with our book study with Chapter 6 Gethsemane: Risking Temptation. If you do not have the book and would like to participate the following passages will be discussed:

- Mark 14:32-52
- John 18:1-11

Session Goals

- reflect on our journey through the Passion and how Jesus' entry into our lives entails risk and courage;
- assess nonviolence as a response to injustice;
- appreciate the importance of prayer, particularly as it helps us face the demands of our vocation; and
- understand the role of outsiders in revealing God's intentions in the Passion story.

If you would like to participate in the study please email Pastor Steve at bethelgf.pastor.steve@gmail.com and request the link to the book study. The link will include instructions to download Zoom and connect to the meeting.



IN IT *WITH US* FOR THE LONG HAUL

As children, there were plenty of times when we would press the lengths of our parent's patience. When on long cross country road trips..cooped up in the back seat of the family station-wagon for hours on end, we would repeatedly whine, "How much longer until we get there ?" The longer we focused on our displeasure and boredom, the longer it seemed to take til' we arrived at our destination. Thanks be to God our parents survived the whining and endured with us as they were in it for the long haul.

Palm/Passion Sunday reminds us that in spite of our current set of circumstances and our fickle human nature, Jesus is in "it' *WITH US* for the long haul. The crowds lined the streets on the east side of Jerusalem with cheers of "Hosanna to the Son of David!" as Jesus rode in on a donkey from the Mount of Olives. The people had high hopes that this King..from the lineage of David..would be the One who



would liberate them from the oppressive rule of the empire of Rome. Just hours later, those cheers turned to jeers as they cried out for Jesus' death. In the musical *Jesus Christ Superstar*, written by Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice, Jesus enters into the city of Jerusalem to the cheers of "Hosanna!" "Hey JC, JC, won't you fight for me?" The Hebrew word, "hosanna," translates "save us, now!" Because Jesus was in it *WITH US* for the long haul, he inhabited and endured both our cheers and our jeers...our misunderstanding and impatience... all in order that he would be for us and *WITH US*..the suffering servant and Messiah whom God sent him to be for the sake of the world.

We begin the journey of Holy Week with the Palm/Passion liturgy. We, like the crowds in Jerusalem in 30 AD, begin with cheers of "Hosanna!" Save us now from the threat of death posed by the coronavirus. Save us now from the isolation we are experiencing. Save us now from the worry of job loss and the uncertain future. Save us now from the decision fatigue and the boredom that is our reality. Save us now.....

Thanks be to God that Jesus was faithful and endured even being handed over to suffering and death on a cross. Thanks be to God that Jesus was raised on the third day, that we might have life and hope. Jesus is *WITH US* and for the long haul.

"But as for me, I have trusted in you, O Lord. I have said, 'You are my God. My times are in your hand; rescue me from the hand of my enemies, and from those who persecute me. Let your face shine upon your servant; save me in your steadfast love.' Psalm 31:14-16, NRSV

Pastor Steve

Words from the Bishop: Staying at home with God

Dear Fellow Home-bodies in Christ,

Yes, we are indeed home-bodies right now, ever since Governor Bullock issued the "Stay at Home" directive last Friday. Well, many of us are. Some, those who are essential to the ongoing functioning of our communities, are out doing their work, keeping us safe, caring for our health, providing food on grocery shelves, picking up our trash. Thank you to all those who continue to work and risk your health for our well-being!!

But many of us – at least those of us who have homes -- are staying home as we've been asked and ordered to do. For some this is the most time we've spent in our homes in months, even years. For others staying home with family members we only see occasionally has been an experiment in relationship growth. For those who are introverts, staying home is a dream come true... until it's not anymore. For those who are extroverts, seeing the same walls and people only through a screen is a bit maddening.

One question we might be asking during this stay-at-home time when we're not able to join together in physical, in-person worship is: where is God in all of this? Is God in God's own home safe and sound and watching us from a distance through Zoom or Facetime as we suffer through Covid19 alone? Or has God left home to somehow punish the group of people we dislike the most with this awful virus or to punish us for some slight?

The answer to both of those questions is no, absolutely not, no way! The God of steadfast love and endless mercy, the God of forgiveness of sin in Jesus Christ does not work that way. God is with us in this time, suffering with and supporting us, loving us in our love for one another and weeping when we don't.

In the Gospel of John, we hear several references to God's home that describe vividly where God is right now. In John 1:14, we hear that the Word – God in Jesus Christ – became flesh and

made his home among us. Literally, Jesus pitched his tent in our home. Later, also in John 1:38-39, two disciples ask Jesus where he is staying. And Jesus says "Come and see! Come and see my home, my place, and my way." Also, when Jesus is getting ready to depart, Jesus says, "In my Father's home there are many dwelling places and I am going to prepare a place for you." (Jn 14:2-3) And then, in that upper room where the disciples are staying at home in fear, Jesus breathes the Spirit into us, his followers, again entering our homes to stay. (Jn 20:22)

In these words from Jesus, the Word of God, we see that we are already home with God and God is home with us. God's home is our home and our home is God's home. Because Jesus became incarnate and lived with us, God made us God's own home in this place. Because Jesus breathed the Spirit into us through our Baptism, God made us God's own home in this space. And now Jesus calls us, invites us to dwell with him in his home, following him and his way of "staying at home" by trusting in God (faith) and loving one another in all that we say and do, perhaps even by finding ways to help those who have no physical home. In Christ we are home in God, and God has made a never-ending home in us. Praise be to God!



I would like to close with these home-y words from Henri Nouwen, again from *Following Jesus: Finding our Way Home in Anxious Times* (p. 20-21): "The Lord is my house. The Lord is my hiding place. The Lord is my awning. The Lord is my refuge...my tent, my temple, my dwelling place. The Lord is my home...the place where I want to dwell all the days of my life. God wants to be our room, our house...to be anything that makes us feel at home."

So stay at home with God these next several weeks until once again we can return in person to our communities and congregations and be at home in Christ together.

May God bless and keep you all in your homes!
Bishop Laurie

School Food Pantry Donations During Stay-At-Home Directive

Dear Friends in Christ,

Due to the shelter in place and the fact that Bethel is closed (except for phone calls), we have decided to suspend our help with food deliveries to the schools. Once the shelter in place is lifted we can regroup and see how we can help.

In the meantime, I would encourage you to donate either food or money to the school of your choice to help them continue to stock their food cupboards. If you are delivering food, please call the school first to make sure someone would be available to receive your food. Or send a check to the GFPS district office at 1100 4th Street South, Great Falls, MT 59405. Designate Food Pantries on your check.

Or You can also donate through the Great Falls Public School Foundation website using PayPal. Designate Food Pantries in the memo and it will be used to purchase food.

You can also drop off a cash/check to Double Barrel Cafe which is providing sack lunches for kids Monday through Friday.

If donating food, items needed:

- Peanut butter
- Tuna fish
- Jelly Butter
- Noodles
- Spaghetti Sauce
- Tortilla shells
- Salsa
- Cereal
- Bread
- Butter
- Orange Juice.

Thanks you everyone for your generosity these past few months. Let's continue to help our schools, our future generation by not letting them go hungry.

God Bless.

Stay safe. Stay healthy.

Terry Korpela



Thank you to Warren and Judy Johnson's for taking the donation to Valley View last Thursday.

A HISTORY OF HOPE CIRCLE

Hope that is the name several young Bethel Women chose for their circle back in 1982. At that time Bethel had one women's circle that met monthly in the afternoons. Lydia Circle was made up of a wonderful core of women. Women like Ruby Vestre, Doris Muir (Steve Smith's second home), Fern Myhre (Shelly's mom), Effie Higgins (grandmother to many of our small children), Stella Hays (Nancy Barne's mom), Sylvia Ladd (Sue Swingly's mom), Stella Stimac (mother of Frank), Joy Tyler and Madeline Bobbitt (Colleen Barne's mom.). I believe all of these Lydia Circle members have now passed on and are now knitting, quitting, and eating cake pieces with other Lutheran Circle Women in heaven. But their children and grandchildren can provide you with wonderful stories of their Bethel lives. Legacies that will remain a part of Bethel and our community for a very long time.



Personally, I grew up with a mother who was very much involved in the Lutheran Church through her circle. She is now 94 and the only one left from her circle. Mom's church circle and those women were a part of my growing up. And when I moved away they all wrote me letters, and kept me up to date on their lives. Most of them traveled to Colorado from Nebraska for my wedding, as they were my mom's closest and dearest friends. When I joined Bethel I just knew I would also be involved in a Circle group. My problem was that Lydia met during the day and I was a working mom so could not attend those meetings. There were a few of us working moms who thought we should form a second Circle that met in the evenings. So a few of us like Marge Holland, Jackie Baumgartner (now in Iowa), Shirley Johnson, Brenda Smith (now in Phoenix), Ellen Schoenbeck (also in Arizona), Deb Peters (wife of Pastor Dave) and myself got together and came up with Hope Circle. Most of the core group have now moved away, but Hope Circle is still going strong. Thank you. I am pretty sure it is because we want to live up to the example set by Lydia Circle and the circles our moms belonged to. But most of all it is the friendships we have formed through Bible Study, Community outreach and being in community with God.

Thank you Lord for the women of Bethel. For your devotion to God, community, relationships, and to Bethel. I give thanks to those that have gone before us. Blessings to those who give so much back to our church. Prayers for those who are yet to come. May we be good examples for them, just as Lydia Circle, our moms, grandmothers, aunts, and sisters were for us. God Bless each and everyone of you. Stay connected. Stay healthy. Stay safe. We are all in this together and fortunately the Lord is by our side. As we struggle with social distancing and shelter in place, remember this season of Lent is even more meaningful this year as we reflect on all that we have. Let us pray for all those heroes keeping us safe - the nurses, doctors, hospital staff; the grocery workers; truck drivers delivering goods; firefighters and police; garbage collectors; farmers; clergy; and so many more. God Bless them all and God Bless you my sisters in Christ. I love each and everyone of you and wish you well. I look forward to the day we can once again gather together.


Terry Korpela

Prayer for a Pandemic*by Cameron Bellm (Krug the Thinker)*

May we who are merely inconvenienced
 Remember those whose lives are at stake.
 May we who have no risk factors
 Remember those most vulnerable.
 May we who have the luxury of working from home
 Remember those who must choose between
 preserving their health or making their rent.
 May we who have the flexibility to care for our
 children when their schools close
 Remember those who have no options.
 May we who have to cancel our trips
 Remember those that have no safe place to
 go.
 May we who are losing our margin money in
 the tumult of the economic market
 Remember those who have no margin at all.
 May we who settle in for a quarantine at home
 Remember those who have no home
 As fear grips our country,
 Let us choose love.
 During this time when we cannot physically
 wrap our arms around each other,
 Let us find ways to be the loving embrace of
 God to our neighbors. Amen

Electric City

BIBLE



Study

On - Line!

What a great way to connect with one another! Join the Electric City Bible Study on a Zoom conference Tuesday morning at 6:30 am. If you are interested in joining email Laurie Turner at loli51gus@icloud.com and give her an email or cell number and she will send you a link to the meeting.

UPCOMING EVENT

Church Potluck
Date To Be Determined
At Bethel after Sunday Service

Get your best church potluck recipe ready. When this social distancing storm has passed and we are once again gathering for Sunday Services we will be having a HUGE POTLUCK immediately following our service!