

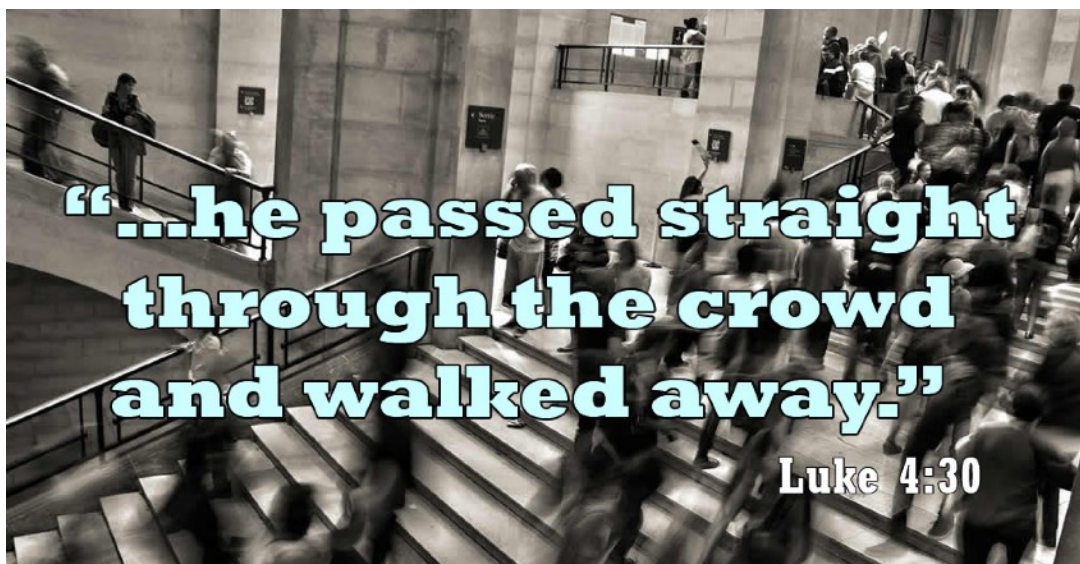
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Office Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday: 9am to 2:30pm; Wednesday: 9am to 2pm  
Office Telephone: (406) 761-1543  
Website: [www.bethelmt.org](http://www.bethelmt.org)

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# BETHEL NOTES

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*Sunday*  
Feb 3

**Serving this  
Sunday**

**Accompanist:**  
Mary Seim

**Lay Assistant:**  
Terree Wozny

**Usher(s):**  
Tim & Johnna  
Lightbourne

**Projectionist:**  
Dean Amor

**Counters:**  
Patty Braget  
Marilyn Carlson

**Nursery  
Attendant(s):**  
Carly Cushman

## Fourth Sunday After Epiphany

### **Readings:**

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Jeremiah 1:4-10  
1 Corinthians 13:1-13  
Luke 4:21-30

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### **This Sunday**

An additional offering will be received in support of ELCA World Hunger.

New Member Sunday-We will welcome the Newby Family, Joni Rae Collins, Dale & Leona Ost, Dan Morris and Jeanne Rankin into membership.

Adult Faith Formation following worship in the Fellowship Hall.

# PRAYER REQUESTS

We are here to pray for you!



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 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** as she recovers from surgery.

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

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

Prayers of healing for **Linda Walling (sister of Bobbie Bowen) and Trish McEwen (friend of Bobbie Bowen).**

Prayers for healing for **Trudy Terwilliger** as she recovers from surgery.

Prayers for God's comfort for **Grant and Janet Smith and family** as they grieve the death of Grant's mother, Francis Smith.

Prayers of thanksgiving and joy to God for the gift of new life in the birth of **Sterling Stubbs (son of Bronson and Rachael Stubbs, grandson of Daren and Patty Braget and Phil and Heidi Stubbs, nephew of Michelle and Danielle Braget).**

Prayers for God's comfort and peace for **Marj Cole** (Aunt of Cheryl Klette) as she battles cancer.

Prayers for strength and healing for **Teresa O'Connell** (friend of Tami Grosenick) as she begins treatment for breast cancer.



This Sunday we welcome into membership the following new members:  
**The Newby Family (Julian, Laura, Livia, Paxton, Grayson), Joni Rae Collins, Dale & Leona Ost, Dan Morris and Jeanne Rankin.**

The Newby Family transferred their membership from St. Paul Lutheran Church in Niceville, Florida. Joni transferred her membership from Our Redeemer Lutheran in Petersburg, Virginia. Dale & Leona transferred their membership from Redeemer Lutheran Church in Great Falls, Montana. Dan will join by affirmation of faith. Jeanne transferred her membership from St. John's Lutheran Church in Helena.

# *A Message from the Congregation*

## **Noticing God in Everyday Life**

**Shirley Cayko, LPA**



In today's world, who are the privileged and who are the poor?

Looking back over the years, there were times when my family was very poverty stricken, but rich in spirit. There was unconditional love, security, shelter, food, though at times not much, and knowing that there was always someone that had your back. Privileged or poor? There were times when the crops were plenty, the pantry full, Air Jordan basketball shoes on the feet, a warm house and comfortable bed to sleep in, but there were conditions for showing approval, failure was not an option, laughter not present, words were silent.

Privileged or Poor?

As we see in Luke's Gospel there is the theme of "rising and falling". This Jesus is the sign, says wise old Simeon, who will be spoken against. (Luke 2:34) The home town boy who has made it good, returns and is greeted with what was not perceived by the citizen's as a perfect meeting.

Jesus sees into the citizen's hearts and knows how they will react, to his rhetoric on physicians and the prophet's fates in their hometowns, before they knew how they would respond to him. Jesus knows his words of prophetic grace will meet with rejection -- even right here in his home town synagogue. "They got up, drove him out of town, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they might hurl him off the cliff. But he passed through the midst of them and went on his way." Luke 4: 29-30

The good news of the gospel in Luke is tied to the person of Jesus, who is still both crucified and risen. "We are not promised any easier fate than is our Lord, who preached prophetic grace, dealt with rejection, and still managed to be on his way." 1 (David Schnassa,) The verbiage of this text has a ring that reminds us similarly of the resurrection mystery. Jesus "passed through the midst of them and went on his way" (Luke 4:30).

Can we pass through rejection and still be on our way? Privileged or poor?

We are all privileged and poor. Jesus's fate sealed us with the gift of grace from the cross. In his name, with the profound Grace of God, the spirit will lead us through rejection and set us on our way.

What a profound gift of grace Jesus has given us and what a better time to be present and go on our way than approaching the season of Lent.

1 David Schnassa, Commentary, Working Preacher, Jan 31, 2016.

## *Church Council*

The Church Council retreat and February meeting will be held from 1-3:30pm at the MT Synod office (1221 24th Street South) on Sunday, February 10th. Lunch will be provided. The February Council meeting will begin at approx. 2:30pm.

## *End of Year Statements*



The end-of-year giving statements will be available in the Narthex **this Sunday only**. Please be sure to pick yours up. Any statements left will be mailed on Monday, February 4th. If you need to have any changes made, please contact Dina Davis at 406-761-0400.

## *Winter Faith Formation Opportunities*



### **Down + Out ~ Where Grace Takes You**

This is a six episode series which explores the basic understandings of the Lutheran expression of the Christian faith and its relevancy for life today. Each session will begin with a brief introduction and then lead into viewing a 20-25 minute long video presentation led by Lutheran professors, followed by group discussion. The first episode will begin on Sunday, February 3<sup>rd</sup> following worship and be repeated on Thursday mornings at 10am. Each session will last 60-70 minutes and will be led by Pastor Steve.

### **Book Study/ Discussion on the Life of the Apostle Paul**

We will read and discuss a recently (2018) released book titled, **Paul: An Apostle's Journey** written by Professor Douglas A. Campbell. Participants will need to purchase this book (You can do this on your own through your preferred book distributor (ie. Amazon or Barnes & Noble) or let Pastor Steve know, and he will order the book for you.) There will be a sign up at church or you can reach out directly to Pastor Steve at [bethelgf.pastor.steve@gmail.com](mailto:bethelgf.pastor.steve@gmail.com) to express your interest in participating in this class. This class will follow on the heels of **Down + Out** and begin in March.





# COMFORT FOOD CHALLENGE



**When: Saturday, February 23 from 4-7pm**

**Where: Moose Lodge, 401 21st St N, Black Eagle, MT  
59414**

**Hosted by Family Promise of Great Falls**

**Tickets go on sale at 12pm February 1st.  
Go to [www.brownpapertickets.com](http://www.brownpapertickets.com) to get yours!**

Ladies and gentlemen, buckle your seatbelts and tuck in your napkins for the 2019 Comfort Food Challenge! Some of Great Falls' finest eateries are going toe-to-toe to compete for your affection and the affection of our celebrity panel, including Mayor Bob Kelly, KRTV Great Falls' own Shannon Newth, and KFBB's own Taylor Tucker!

Come to the Moose Lodge and enjoy a variety of delicious local dishes and live music. Tickets are \$15/adults and \$5/children under 12. Vote for your favorites and see who wins the People's Choice Award and the Celebrity Choice Award!

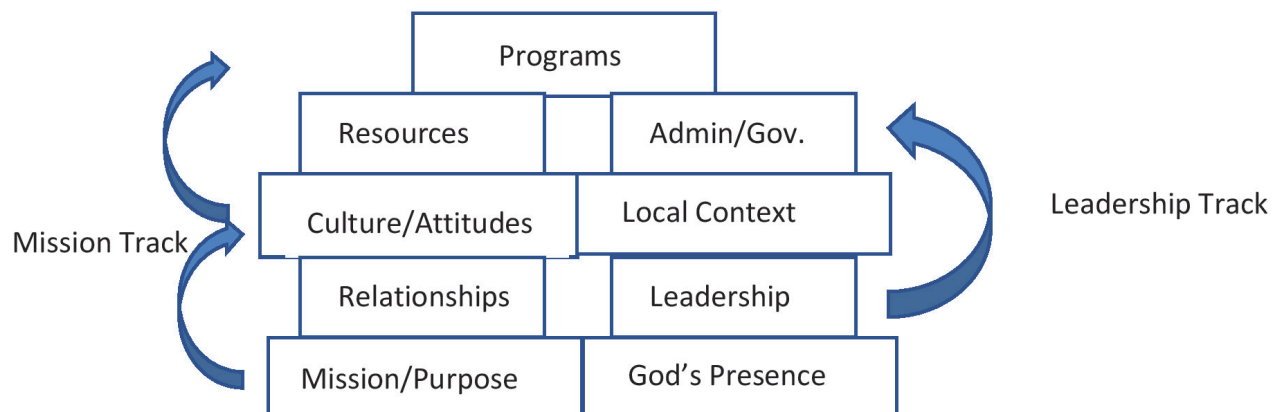
# 2019 Congregational Vitality Survey Results

Thank you to all who completed the Congregational Vitality Survey. We had an amazing response with 160 surveys turned in. For those who wish to see the [survey](#) in its entirety, and the accompanying [bar graphs](#), please select on the hyperlinks in this document. The following is a summary of the results.



The vitality score comes from the average of 15 key items that, when combined, show the congregation's overall connections to God, each other and the world. Scores over 4 are considered vital. The sustainability score shows the average from the question about overall sustainability. Average scores over 3 (able to maintain ministry) are considered sustainable. Vital and sustainable means we are on track, we remain flexible and keep focused on the foundational issues. We address any disagreements with respect and keep God's call front and center. **Bethel is a vital congregation with an average vitality score of 4.3 and an average sustainability score of 3.4.**

The survey recognizes nine areas that impact a congregation's health and vitality but they are not all equally important. Think of this as building blocks. The foundation and lower domains influence the way higher domains are lived out. They have to be strong in order to support the blocks above. Linda Bobbitt has a diagram like the following in her report:



## How does Bethel experience God's presence: 30%

Research suggests that transformation is possible when at least 20% of participants experience God as present and active.

This score represents the percentage of all respondents who gave the strongest rating possible for God's active presence in the congregation. Spiritual renewal is a critical first step in congregational renewal and vitality.

**Sense of Mission at Bethel: 4.4**

This field summarizes the congregation's sense of mission. Ideally this number will be near 4.5. People in Bethel should be very clear about God's call.

**Relationships at Bethel: 92%**

This field shows the percent of respondents who describe a healthy social climate (harmony or respectful disagreements). Ideally this number will be over 80%. When congregation's work toward vitality, it tends to rock the boat and some people struggle.

**Bethel Leadership: 39%**

Vital, sustainable congregations most often have leadership that inspires others to action. Ideally this number will be over 50%. What kind of leadership does Bethel perceive? How does Bethel more intentionally engage people in pursuing their spiritual passions?

**Bottom line: Bethel is a Vital and Sustainable congregation. But is this good enough?**

There is always room for improvement and that is what the Strategic Planning Task Force is going to focus on in the coming weeks.

Some noticeable things from the survey are that the majority of the respondents, 88/160, are age 55 and older. What will this church look like in the future with fewer young people participating in church? How can we prepare for that? How do we create and appeal to younger people?

The following areas are some indicated possible challenges Bethel is facing.

**God Scale Score 4.6/5**

Connecting with God:

Help adults grow in faith

-Congregations connection with God

Clear sense of mission/purpose

Always ready to try new things

Willing to change to live into mission/purpose

-Respondents connection with God

Pace of Spiritual Growth is : Slow – Moderate

Meaningful spiritual conversations in congregation: 82 said never, once or 2-3 x per year.

**Each Other Scale score 4.4/5**

-Connecting with Each Other

Build strong, healthy relationships

Incorporate newcomers

Seek out and use gifts of all ages

Involve youth/young adults in decisions

-Respondents describe themselves

I volunteer in congregation: 72/160 volunteer never, once, or 2-3 x per year

**World scale score 4.3/5**

-Connecting with the World seemed to need the most work

Helps people live out faith in daily lives

Equip people to share faith with others

Build mutual relationships with neighbors

Interact with local community

Partner with other congregations

Share information about denomination

### **Where do we go from here?**

The Strategic Task Force would like to ask each ministry (i.e. Altar guild, Choir, Men's breakfast, Council, Close Knit, Bethel Bunch, Hope Circle, Logos, etc.) to take a few minutes as they gather to answer some questions.

Does this small group agree with the observations in this survey? Why or why not?

How would you prioritize the areas we need to work on?

What resources should we put toward these priorities?

What ideas do you have?

In addition, the Strategic Task Force is going to host a series of small group meetings following worship starting on February 24th, and all are invited and encouraged to participate. Bethel will welcome Montana Synod Director for Evangelical Mission (DEM), Rev. Peggy Paugh Leuzinger, as our preacher and consultant at the first small group gathering. These small group meetings will continue through March (3/10 and 3/24). We will be asking the same questions above and gathering input from the congregation. You can also contact anyone on the Strategic Planning Task Force: Jo Ann Dullum, Bob Norbie, Kris Voorhees, Patrick Ryan, and Pastor Steve.





# Pancake Breakfast



**When: Sunday, February 10th following worship**

**Where: Bethel Gathering Place**

Come support Boy Scout Troop #1028 by attending their Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser. There will be lots of yummy pancakes, great fellowship and a free will offering.



## *FLBC News*

eaIt's that time of year again! Online registration for FLBC Summer Camps opens on Friday, January 11th. If you register with your deposit by April 1st, you will save \$50 and if you register with deposit between April 1st and May 1st you will save \$25. Please contact Pastor Steve if you are interested in a scholarship.

More information about camp dates, activities and fees are available on the camp's website at [www.flbc.net](http://www.flbc.net), by phone at (406) 752-6602, or by email at [registration@flbc.net](mailto:registration@flbc.net). There are also brochures available in the Narthex by the track rack.

# Happy Birthday

|                      |    |                         |    |                    |    |
|----------------------|----|-------------------------|----|--------------------|----|
| Keith Marr           | 2  | Eric Peterson           | 15 | Ed Ferguson        | 27 |
| Regan Will           | 2  | Mary Gernaat            | 15 | Terree Wozny       | 27 |
| Patsy Berkeley       | 4  | Pam Dougherty           | 16 | Stephanie Cummings | 29 |
| John Wendt           | 5  | Pam Purdy               | 16 |                    |    |
| Vernon Kutzler       | 5  | Donna Wester            | 16 |                    |    |
| Jennie Gresham       | 7  | James Peterson          | 18 |                    |    |
| Liisa Nelson         | 7  | Maelee Frick            | 18 |                    |    |
| Reena McCarty-Stimac | 8  | DeeAnn Coffman          | 19 |                    |    |
| Riley Kutzler        | 8  | Jessica Crist           | 19 |                    |    |
| Joni Rae Collins     | 8  | Don Hesse               | 20 |                    |    |
| Kendal Blades        | 10 | Fred Crandell           | 20 |                    |    |
| Shelly Murphy        | 10 | Raphael Graybill        | 20 |                    |    |
| Sonja Baumgardner    | 10 | Raylene Rein            | 20 |                    |    |
| Abby Troyer          | 11 | Tyler Marr              | 21 |                    |    |
| Tom Slater           | 13 | Liam Quinn              | 23 |                    |    |
| Dale Mortenson       | 14 | Maddy Gooldy            | 25 |                    |    |
| Kathy Bisgard        | 14 | Sandra Bechard-Peterson | 25 |                    |    |
|                      |    | Daniel Brattain         | 26 |                    |    |

**\*\*If you do not wish to have your birthday published, please contact the church office at 761-1543.\*\***





| S   | M   | T   | W  | T   | F          | S              |
|---|---|---|--|---|------------|----------------|
| 3   | 4   | 5   | 6  | 7   | 8          | 9              |
| 9:30am-Worship  | 6:15pm - Boy Scout Troop 1028 in the Gathering Place                                | 6:30am - Bible Study at Electric City Coffee<br>7am - Men's Breakfast   | 10am-Staff Meeting<br>5:30pm - LOGOS               |   | Pastor Off |                |
| 10  | 11  | 12  | 13   | 14  | 15         | 16             |
| 9:30am-Worship<br>11am-Boy Scout Pancake Breakfast<br>1pm-Council Retreat & Meeting @ Synod House | 6:15pm - Boy Scout Troop 1028 in the Gathering Place                                | 6:30am - Bible Study at Electric City Coffee<br>7am - Men's Breakfast   | 5:30pm - LOGOS                                     |  | Pastor Off | 9am-Close Knit |
| 17  | 18  | 19  | 20   | 21  | 22         | 23             |
|   |  | 6:30am - Bible Study at Electric City Coffee<br>7am - Men's Breakfast<br>5:30pm-Childbridge Meeting in Gathering Place<br>7pm-Hope Circle | 5:30pm - LOGOS<br><br>Montana Rural Water Training |   | Pastor Off |                |
| 24  | 25  | 26  | 27   | 28  |            |                |
|   | 6:15pm - Boy Scout Troop 1028 in the Gathering Place                                | 6:30am - Bible Study at Electric City Coffee<br>7am - Men's Breakfast   | No LOGOS   |   |            |                |
| -----Family Promise Host Week-----  |   |   |  |   |            |                |