

# BETHEL NOTES

TWO SERVICES WILL BE  
HELD THIS SUNDAY

8:30 AM AND 11:00 AM



*Sunday, June 28th*

**Christ-Centered Relationships**

ISAIAH 58:6-10

1 PETER 4:8-11

JOHN 15:9-17

## Serving this Sunday

### ACCOMPANIST

8:30 CONNIE TITCOMB

11:00 MARY SEIM

### VOCALS

8:30 KARRIE PEPOS

11:00 PATRICK & LYNN RYAN

### LAY ASSISTANT

8:30 SUE HESSE

11:00 TAMY SCHOLTEN

### USHERS

8:30 EARL TERWILLIGER & PATTY BRAGET

11:00 DENA WAGNER-FOSSEN & PATTY BRAGET

### PROJECTIONIST

8:30 DEAN AMOR

11:00 AVA FOSSEN

### TECH

8:30 ADAM EKLIN & GREG GROSENICK

### FAREWELL & GODSPEED

8:30 JIM CARLSON

11:00 DAVE SCHOLTEN

### COUNTERS

PATTY BRAGET

DENA WAGNER-FOSSEN

**Today at Bethel** we lift up the Guiding Principle *Christ-Centered Relationships*.

Today during the 11:00 am service this community of faith rejoices with **Austin and Kolton Kupfner** and their parents Kent and Laura, as they join us at the Lord's table for the very first time.

We will also be offering a Farewell and Godspeed to **Pastor Steve and Kaye** during both services. We wish them all the best during their retirements.

**Please read the Reopening Guidelines on page 7. Masks are required.**

**OFFICE HOURS:** MONDAY THROUGH THURSDAY 9:00 AM TO 2:30 PM CLOSED FRIDAY

OFFICE TELEPHONE: (406) 761-1543 WEBSITE: [WWW.BETHELMT.ORG](http://WWW.BETHELMT.ORG) EMAIL: [BETHELGF.CHURCH@GMAIL.COM](mailto:BETHELGF.CHURCH@GMAIL.COM)



- ✦ 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 completes her treatments for cancer.
- ✦ Prayers for the **Peoples of Boliva** as they transition into new leadership within the country and prayers for **Pastor Presidente German and the IELB** especially during this pandemic and the increased need of the peoples.
- ✦ 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 and support for **Jeremy Hawks** as he prepares for surgery.
- ✦ Prayers for safety and support for **Eric Poser**, Connie Titcomb's nephew as he is deployed overseas.
- ✦ Prayers for God's presence, healing & grace for **Bob Norbie** as he continues treatment for bladder cancer.
- ✦ Prayers of support and good health for **RN's Katie and Kelsey**, daughters of Grant and Janet Smith.
- ✦ Prayers of healing, strength and support for **Rita Johnson (LaRae Veitch's sister)** as she continues treatment for pancreatic cancer.
- ✦ Prayers for God's comfort and consolation for **LaRae Veitch and her family** as they mourn the passing of her husband Bob.
- ✦ Prayers for healing for **Steve Young** (brother of Sue Hesse) as he undergoes back surgery and his recovery journey.
- ✦ Prayers for God's comfort and consolation for the **family of Glen Roush** (friend of Sandy Pepos) as they mourn his death.
- ✦ Prayers of comfort and support for the **family of Jean Humphrey** as they mourn her passing.
- ✦ Prayers of comfort for **LaRae Veitch** and her family as they mourn the death of her husband, Bob and father-in-law, Bob Jr.
- ✦ Prayers of healing for **Cindy Brattain** as she recovers from a heart procedure this past week.
- ✦ Prayers for God's consolation and peace for the **family of Mike and Heather Kubas** as they mourn the death of Heather's father.
- ✦ Prayers of celebration for **Pastor Steve and Kaye** as they embark on their new journey together.
- ✦ Prayers of welcome to **Interim Pastor Trina Johnsten** as she picks up the mantel and preaches and presides during this period of change.
- ✦ Prayers of support and guidance for **Bethel Congregation** as we move forward and receive a new pastor.

# Pastor's Article: It's all About the Relationships !

I conclude the series of articles, based on Bethel's Guiding Principles, with Christ - Centered Relationships.

## Belief Statement

God works through the church by the power of the Holy Spirit to build relationships guided by generosity, hospitality, and forgiveness.

## CHRIST-CENTERED RELATIONSHIPS

Everyone at Bethel is a Child of God, from the oldest to the youngest person. We embrace and extend gracious hospitality and joyful fellowship. We believe generosity fosters joy so we are able to be stewards of all of God's good gifts, through time, talent, and treasure. We center our lives around gratitude to God for the abundant blessings of life.

When I think of where it all started, the beginnings of the call to serve as your pastor, I go back to the first months of the year 2004. The metaphor of dating or courtship is how I would like to describe the first arranged meetings between a pastor and a congregation. Pastor's who are open for a call and congregations, open to call a pastor, are connected through a synod office (in our case the Montana Synod Office) and the Holy Spirit, who knows of both needs, the pastor's and the congregations and/or ministries. I liken the process as to an e-harmony or match.com in that the pastor and the congregation each fill out a profile or a description of themselves that will be passed on to each other with the assistance of the Synod Office, to see if it looks like a possible match...a good fit.

What I first learned about you, Bethel, when we first entered our courtship, is that you loved to have fun together. My first impression was of a "joy-filled" fellowship. Vibrant worship, vocal and instruments music, an active youth program (LOGOS) widely known throughout the Montana Synod, and drama. The drama part was that you put on the live play, Scrooge, on an annual basis.

As I remember it, the first meeting with Bethel's Call Committee was over the phone. It was fun to try to get a sense of who Bethel was through the introductions and exchanges over the phone. No Zoom. No Skype. A phone interview on our first date. That led to another date, an in person interview and a dinner out. All along this process, we both wanted to make "good first impressions." Then came the wait. I wondered, "Will I hear from them again ? OR might they move on to another they will plan to call ?"

Then you reached out to me, again, "Pastor Van Gilder, we'd like to see you one more time and this time it will be a "Tail Gate Party." I wasn't sure what this "Tail Gate Party" would be like. Will it be like the last, a formal interview, with more questions to be asked ? Or would it be a beer and brat Tail Gate kind of informality ? I took them to mean, "They are still interested and I'll drive over as many times as it takes to help us each discern whether this is God's will for us to be together." Then the moment, when we both said, **"We're all in !"** Thanks be to God, that the Holy Spirit, working through this courting process, led to a call and to this shared mission and ministry for a little over 16 years.



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Life Together in the faith community.....it is all about relationships. In the book *Life Together* by Dietrich Bonhoeffer, he says, "Without Christ we would not know God. Without Christ we would not know other Christians around us. Only through Christ are we one and bound together." It is all about relationships ~ **our relationship with God**, who in Christ, first chose us, and loves us with an unconditional love. **Our relationships with one another**...the fellowship of the saints and sinners. The deep abiding friendships we share and deepen through our commitments to Christ and to one another. And **our relationships and connections while living out our faith in the world**, which God has called us to love and bless.

As we read in the gospel of John (15: 9-17), we learn of a final conversation which Jesus had with his beloved disciples, those whom he addresses as friends. They had been through about three years of some pretty intensive teaching, on the job training, if you will, and had learned much about their relationship with God, with one another, and the world

Jesus had called them to serve in love. Jesus called them friends because friends were ones who would know what the master is doing. Friends of Jesus are those who would be willing to lay it all down. For Jesus it meant laying down even one's life for the friend. We can safely say, that we will not be asked to physically give ourselves over to death for the sake of our friends, but we are indeed asked to lay down our lives in the sense of laying down our "it's all about me-first" tendencies.

Loving others "Jesus style" surely means laying down our defenses and need to rationalize our perspectives and behaviors in order to actively and deeply listen to our sisters and brothers, especially those whose voices are silenced or ignored. All whom Jesus chooses, and he chooses all of us to an abiding relationship, have a place at the family table. And at



Jesus' table and in the fellowship he creates and is at the center, we lay down any baggage we bring with us that would exclude or marginalize others. Yes, we lay down the life we bring to Jesus' table, but we receive oh so much more in the form of forgiveness, mercy, grace, and abundant love. Over these last 16 years, in this call of mutual ministry, I trust that we all can say, that we have experienced in the ordinariness of life, as well as in the extraordinary ways, through our strengths and through our weaknesses, what it truly means to be chosen and loved by God, who in Jesus, laid it all down in love, for we who are his friends. That we can say that we have received oh so much more in the form of forgiveness, mercy, grace, and abundant love. Friends, who in turn, have and will continue to love God....love each other....and live generously for

the sake of Christ and for the sake of the world he calls on us to love and bless.

I count it a privilege to have been called to serve as your pastor. To call Bethel my Church home, my family in Christ, all these years. I could never have been able to do what I was able to do, without the strength which God supplies...without your trust, your love, your

prayers, your encouragement, your leadership, and friendship.

I also wish to thank my wife, Kaye, and sons, Mark and Micah, whose love, and understanding of the sacrifices of this calling here and over the span of 34 years of Word and Sacrament ministry have supported me in this passion of serving as a parish pastor.

Change is always a part of life, and I will hold you, interim pastor Trina, in my prayers amidst your time of change and transition and I covet your prayers amidst my life transitions as well. May the God of grace, mercy and love, watch over us, friends of Jesus, and keep us leaning into his everlasting arms now and forever more. Amen.

*Pastor Steve*



# Words from the Bishop: Letting Go of Control

Control. We all think we want it...or at least some of it. None of us have it...at least over the things we wish we could control. This is especially true right now as we feel our lives, our churches, and our country seeming to spiral out of control. Many of us feel like we're barely hanging on as the roller-coaster races uncontrollably off the track into the unknown. "Just give me a little control, God!" we cry, clinging handrails so we don't get thrown off. "Give me power over something, somebody, anything so that I can feel like I have some control in my life."

Think of some of the things we're realizing now that we aren't in control of. The weather, of course. We've never controlled that. The Covid-19 virus and its symptoms. The economic markets, whether it's the stock market or job market. Our political system and who has power. Technology, which is changing faster than we can keep up. The changing culture of our society, including the church, as we are coming face-to-face with hard realities we don't necessarily want to see and own up to.

Even in our personal lives -- our families, our communities, our congregations and ministries -- there are so many things we feel like we have no power over. Masks, limited Holy Communion, no coffee hours, minimal singing, drive-in worship, and on and on. We want so badly to get back to a "normal" where we can at least pretend we have some control.

And then there are those "other people." The truth is we can't really control other people either, can we? What they are thinking, what they are feeling, even what they are doing for the most part... we can't control that. Oh, we have the law, both God's law of loving our neighbors and human laws, policies, rules and guidelines. But as we're learning during this time, the law only goes so far to control others. We may want people to think like us, act like us or feel what we're feeling, but we can't...or shouldn't force them. We can only try to persuade and encourage, educate and empower others and ourselves.

But that's not always how we live, is it? We only think about ourselves and how we can control the community, congregation, country we think belongs only to us but we really share with everyone. We forget others have the same rights to life, respect, dignity and worth as we do. And we try to take control. And the more things feel out of control in our lives the more we try to take control, hurting a lot of people in the process (including ourselves).



Too often our need to feel like we're in control, even when we aren't, leads us to try exact power over others. But those people are feeling powerless too so they try to exert power back on us in order to control their world. And back and forth it goes, each of us trying to control each other toward our way of being and doing in a never-ending spiral of anxiety, fear, destruction, and suffering. And when we finally realize that we can't control each other, then we turn to violence or abandonment, fighting a "you are either for me or against me" war or fleeing into our own private space until the next time.

All of this just to feel a sense of control over what is really uncontrollable. "Too often it seems to be easier to try to be God than to love God, easier to control people than to love people." (Nouwen)

But instead of focusing on the things we can't control, what if we did two things? First, what if we focused on what we *can* control? We do have some control over what we eat,

what we wear, those personal decisions that affect only us. We do have some control over what we read, what voices we choose to listen to, how open or closed we're going to be to hearing what is said.

And we do have some control -- more control than we think -- over how we choose to respond to the things happening to and around us. Will we react with rage, fear, or cruelty that lead us to try impose our power over others through bullying or causing pain? Or will we respond by managing those all-too-human emotions and choose love,

respect, kindness and hope as we seek the new life of God's kingdom together? Will we try to be god over people (sin at its worst) or will we let Jesus lead us forward into the uncontrollable unknown, trusting in God's steadfast love that lasts forever and ever?

Of course, it is letting Jesus lead that we as followers of Christ are called to again and again. Yet letting God lead us into love is the second thing we can do to break the spiral of control and power-over others. Being a follower of Christ is just that: following. Letting God lead. Letting go and letting God. Those who are familiar with 12-step groups know this: that the only way to break the cycles of trying to control others while resisting something's control over us is to let go and let God lead.

And believe it or not, we have some say in that too. By letting go and opening our hearts, spirits and minds to the Spirit's working in us, we open ourselves to God's leadership... God's suffering, letting-go-of-control on the

cross, bringing new life out of powerlessness leadership. As Jesus said in some of his final words to Peter: "Very truly I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go." (John 21:18) It's time for us to mature in our faith and let Christ lead us where he wishes us to go rather than trying to control everything ourselves.

"Thy will be done," we pray every time we pray our Lord's prayer. And giving God that control is okay, because God loves me...and you...and the whole world. And in God's selfless love, we can trust that Jesus will lead us into the new and abundant life that God wants for every one of us when we just let go of control.

In Christ,

Bishop Laurie

## *The Sacrament of Holy Baptism for Oakley William Barnes*



Wednesday, June 24th we celebrated along with parents John and Becki, sister Jameson, sponsors Brittany Barnes and Staci Hanson and many family members the baptism of Oakley William in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Congratulations to the Barnes Family on the blessed occasion.

## **Bethel Lutheran Church Church Council Reopening Guidelines** *We will still be offering a live stream of the service for those who wish to worship from home.*

### **Guidelines:**

- Front doors will be propped open and the only entrance into the Church. The west side entrance through the TLC Daycare will remain locked.
- Masks will be **required** and we have some available.
- A table is at the front doors with hand sanitizer, masks, tissues and an offering plate. Ushers will be there to assist with masks and help people find seats.
- Physical distancing of 4 feet will be observed.
- Windows and doors will be opened to increase air circulation.
- Signs on the restroom doors should be used to indicate if you are in the bathroom in an effort to keep the 6 feet physical distance.
- The kitchen, Fellowship Hall and back office hall doors will be closed.
- Hospitality area will be closed.
- We will pass the peace in a no-contact fashion.
- Sanctuary will be cleaned with disinfect cleaner after each Sunday worship service

Please consider the following **before you return to worship:**

- Have you traveled outside the U.S. in the past 30 days?
- Have you been in close contact with anyone who has traveled outside the U.S. in the past 30 days?
- Have you been in close contact with anyone with flu-like symptoms in the past 30 days?
- Have you had any of these symptoms:
  - Fever over 100.4
  - Persistent cough
  - Shortness of breath
  - Sudden loss of taste or smell

**If you answered YES to any of these questions, please do not enter and contact your health care provider.**




## *Celebrating Pastor Steve and Kaye!*





# 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 7:00 am. If you are interested in joining email Laurie Turner at [lolli51gus@icloud.com](mailto:lolli51gus@icloud.com) and give her an email or cell number and she will send you a link to the meeting.



**June 30th will be the last Men's Breakfast until SEPTEMBER!**

## 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](mailto:dscholten@dlsconsulting.net)



## Calendar Of Events

### Tuesday 6/30:

- Pastor Steve's last day at Bethel.
- Electric City Bible Study Zoom meeting at 7:00 am.
- Men's Breakfast Zoom meeting 7:00 am

### Thursday 7/2

- Council Exec Committee conference call 5:30 pm

### Friday 7/3:

- Bethel Office is closed

### Saturday 7/4:

- Happy Independence Day!!

### Upcoming Events

### Sunday July 5:

- World Hunger Sunday
- Bishop Laurie Jungling will be preaching

### Tuesday 7/7:

- Electric City Bible Study Zoom meeting at 7:00 am.
- Men's Breakfast on break, will meet again starting in September
- Church Council meeting 6:30 pm at Bethel

### Friday 7/10:

- Bethel Office is closed

## 1<sup>ST</sup> MONDAY NIGHT QUILTERS MEET

**JULY 6, 2020 AT 6 P.M.**

Come join the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday Night Quilters at New Hope Lutheran Church, 3125 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue South on Monday evening, July 6, 2020, 6-8 p.m., and in the Social Hall in the basement. Please use the door in the alley.

We will be social distancing, and please wear a mask. We will be tying the quilts and hoping to get several done to make up for the months we haven't met due to Covid 19. Come and see; no experience necessary. Questions? Call Trudi at 799-0100.