

# BETHEL NOTES

## The Theology of the Cross

### Serving This Sunday

**Accompanist:** Lynn Ryan

**Lay Assistant:** Steve Smith

**Usher(s):** Walt and Leone Nuessle

**Projectionist:** Vann Arvanetes

**Counters:** Jody Arvanetes & Dena Wagner-Fossen

**Nursery:** Carly Cushman

### Readings:

**1 Corinthians 1:18-2:2**

**Mark 15:33-39**

### Happening This Sunday

- Week 5 of the 8 week sermon series; marking the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, continues with the theme of "The Theology of the Cross."
- Adult Forum immediately following worship in the Fellowship Hall. Pastor Steve will lead a discussion based on the topic of Human Sexuality. Will Bethel have a wedding policy and will it allow Same-Sex Marriage? This Sunday's discussion will address the biblical witness.



## "Finding God the Last Place You Would Look"

The cross is God's promise -- God's solemn commitment -- to be present in the last place human reason would look for God...in the midst of suffering, oppression, violence, even death. Be clear about this -- God does not cause the suffering. Suffering is the result of sin, human nature, and the brokenness of creation. But God has promised to meet us in our suffering and draw us into God's preferred future.

## This Week's Events

### Monday 10/9:

- Boy Scout Troop 1028 meeting at 6:15pm in the Fellowship Hall.
- Pastor Steve at Chico for Luther Lectures. He will be back in the office on Wednesday, 10/11

### Tuesday 10/10:

- Men's Breakfast at 6am in the Fellowship Hall.
- Bible Study at 6:30am at Electric City Coffee.
- 6:30pm Council meeting in the Gathering Place.

## Upcoming Events

### Friday 10/13:

- Jubilate Choir retreat at 6:30pm.

### Saturday 10/14:

- Bethel Bunch will meet at 6pm at the Korpela's (30235 Delmar Dr). Wine and appetizers. Bring your favorite beverage and an appetizer to share.

### Sunday 10/15:

- Jubilate Choir will be singing at worship.

### Wednesday 10/18:

- No regular LOGOS.

### Sunday 10/29:

- Celebration of Holy Baptism for Kian, Kendall and Kari Ryan.

### Monday 10/30:

- 7pm Joint Lutheran/Catholic worship at Cathedral of St. Helena, 530 N Ewing St, Helena.

## Sermon Series in Commemoration of the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation

To mark the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, many Christians from the Reformation tradition will want to hear and learn about essential Reformation teachings. I'm trusting that Bethel is among the many...for I will be using a preaching series developed by Dr. Rolf Jacobson, Professor at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, MN.

### **OCT. 8, 2017 -**

#### **"Finding God the Last Place You Would Look" \*The Theology of the Cross**

**The Heart of the Matter:** The cross is God's promise -- God's solemn commitment --to be present in the last place human reason would look for God...in the midst of suffering, oppression, violence, even death. Be clear about this -- God does not cause the suffering. Suffering is the result of sin, human

### **OCT. 15, 2017 - "Guess Who's Coming to Worship?!"**

#### **\*The Means of Grace and Christian Worship**

**The Heart of the Matter:** The main person doing something in worship is God. God greets us with the forgiveness of sins. God meets us with an open ear when we pray. God speaks to us in the Word, offerings words of promise and challenge. God joins us in the water of baptism and the bread and wine of communion. God sends us out with a blessing. Why wouldn't everyone want to start out each their lives in God's actions?

### **OCT. 22, 2017 - "Telling the Truth Twice"**

#### **\* Law & Gospel**

**The Heart of the Matter:** God uses God's Word in two ways. First, God uses the Word as Law, to tell us how to love the neighbor -- to tell us those things we are to do for the neighbor and to tell us those things we are not to do to the neighbor. When God uses the Word as law, God creates a more loving world but also reminds us of our sin. Second, God

uses the Word as gospel -- to tell us all of the good things that God will do for us, since we are not able to do them for ourselves -- forgive our sins, give us new life, grant us reconciliation and eternal life.

**OCT. 29, 2017 - "You Didn't Choose Me, I Chose you!"**

**\* Election**

**The Heart of the Matter:** God doesn't wait for us to make an application for acceptance into the kingdom of heaven, God chooses us. Think of any major character in the Bible: Abraham and Sarah, Jacob and Rachel, David and Bathsheba, Peter, Paul and Mary. Did any choose God? No, God choose them. And God chooses you.

## Thanks for your support of the CROP Walk 2017

I wish to thank all those who pledged, prayed and supported me and others who walked in the CROP Walk last Sunday afternoon. All tolled 23 pledgers supported me for a total of \$1,200. I was awarded a prize for the most raised of all the walkers. Thanks be to God! 25% of all the monies raised, will be used in support of Family Promise, Great Falls. All the other monies will be sent to Church World Service and be used to bring help and hope domestically and globally.



## Tree Trimming Day

This Sunday, at 2pm, Mick Davis and Steve Vinnedge are planning a tree maintenance day. They are looking for a few good men (and women) to join them. Give Mick a call...217-8959.



Prayers for healing for **Terree Wozny** as she recovers from breast cancer surgery.

Prayers for God's healing for Sharon and Steve Mueller's nephew, **Adam Finnegan**, hospitalized with a brain aneurism in Des Moines, Iowa.

For **LOGOS**, *that ministry needs will be filled* for Bible Study and Middle School teachers and guides.

Prayers for the **people affected by Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria**.

Prayers for the **ELCA Mission Builders, volunteers** and for the on-going needs to be met for the MT. Synod House build.

Prayers for **the victims, their families and the City of Las Vegas** as they grieve and recover from the unspeakable tragedy that occurred last Sunday.

Prayers for healing for **Amy Faulkner**, friend of Amber Pinski, as she battles cancer.

Blessings on the wedding and marriage of **Spencer Dahl**, son of Todd and Terri Dahl, to **Katie Lapke**, daughter of Kim and Gordy Lapke of Simms. Spencer and Katie will be married on Saturday at the Forde Nursery

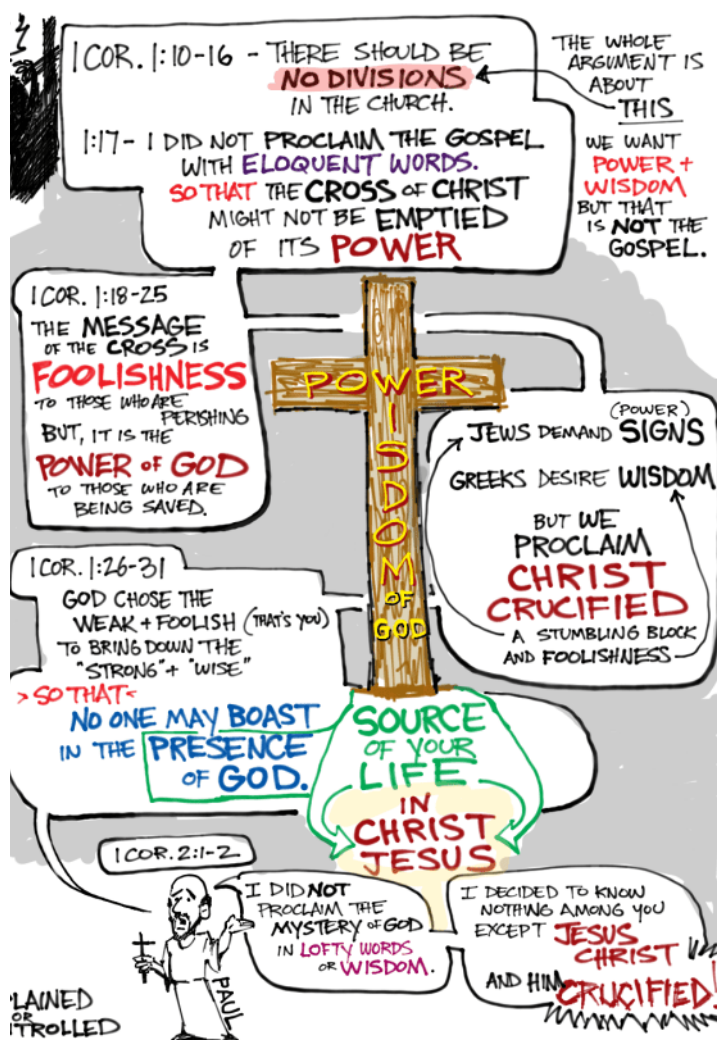
Prayers for the **Adult Forums and discussions**.



## Pastor Steve's Message

### "Finding God the Last Place You Would Look"

"For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified." 1  
Corinthians 2: 2



If the Apostle were to be asked to summarize the Gospel of Jesus Christ in just a few words it would be (The Message) "I deliberately kept it plain and simple: first Jesus and who he is; then Jesus and what he did – Jesus crucified." God reveals Godself as concealed in the cross and his life in the death of his Son. He breathed it; and preached it through word and deed. He was a theologian of the cross.

A *theologian* is one who is a student of the ways of God and God's relationship with humankind and all of creation. A *theologian of the cross* (Latin: *theologia cruces*), is one who affirms that God's revelation comes under the appearance of the opposite. For example, God is mighty in human weakness. God imparts life even amidst its destruction. God's love for us is made known in Christ's suffering and death on the cross. The *theologian of the cross* stands in contrast to the *theologian of illutoria* (Latin: *theologia illutoria*). The word *illutoria* is the word from which we get the word *illusion*. It means make-believe, to play at.

The *theologian of illudoria* is one who would refuse to connect suffering or the cross to God and God's will. They would equate suffering and lack of wholeness, wealth and happiness in one's life to one's lack of faith. (Personal story) As my mom suffered from cancer and it became clear that the treatments weren't going to prolong or bring healing to her life, one of her well meaning Christian friends (*a theologian of illudoria*) called her up and told her that the reason that she wasn't healed of her cancer was because my mother just didn't have enough faith to believe that God wanted her to be healed. In my mom's despairing, I spoke the words which were spoken to each of us in our baptism into Christ's death and resurrection: "*You are mine. God is with you; God is faithful to you, now and always.*"

As in Martin Luther's day, we live in a day where pain and suffering is to be avoided at all costs and pleasure is the virtue to be sought after most. Suffering and pain pushes us to the edge and raises the "Why?" and the "How can this be remedied?" questions. The horrific and unspeakable violence and death and the wave of suffering in Las Vegas earlier this week, raise these questions. Suffering and pain bring us to those times when we cry out in our despairing moments, as did Jesus, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Times when we feel far away from God. But pain and suffering can also bring us closer to God. One theologian puts it this way, "Martin Luther (pastorally speaking) knew that we humans run from their crosses. In fact, however, suffering and pain are the way by which God breaks down self centeredness so that humans can actually rely on God for their lives and well being." *Dictionary of Luther and the Lutheran Traditions, General Editor, Dr. Timothy Wengert, Baker Academic* For us who have spent nights..weeks or even years of physical suffering and pain, we know all too well what those experiences can do to our faith and our own lack of ability to change those circumstances.

Being a *theologian of the cross* is a life-long journey. It is the call of discipleship and it is shaped by our own life experiences. God is revealed to us in the hidden and unexpected places of life. Be on the lookout !

Pastor Steve



## Adult Forums continue, this Sunday after worship in Fellowship Hall....

The Adult Forums are being held, during the Sundays in October, to discuss the topic of Human Sexuality, but more specifically: Does Bethel need a wedding policy (we don't currently have one) and will it include allowing same-gender marriages here at Bethel ? The Church Council voted last year to pursue this conversation and urges your participation in these discussions. Your thoughts will provide input for the Council as they discern next steps. This Sunday we will take up **the topic of the biblical witness. What does the Bible say about same gender relationships ? Marriage ?** We have only one hour, and these questions would certainly lead to weeks and months of study, alone. Come, be involved in the conversation.





# Jubilate Choir



**Jubilate** - show great happiness; rejoice

**Jubal** - is a man mentioned in the Hebrew Bible, in Genesis 4:21. Known as the father of all who play the harp and flute, Jubal is the brother of Jabel and the half-brother of Tubal-Cain and half-brother of his half-sister Naamah. Sometimes referred as the forefather of all musicians.

## Join The Choir!!

## Choir Retreat Friday, October 13 at 6:30pm

## Come Sing With Us!!





## Synod House Build Update

**At the corner of 24<sup>th</sup> St. S and 13<sup>th</sup> Ave S**

Visitors and volunteers are welcome. We work from 7:30 – 4:30 with a break and devotions at 9:30, lunch at noon and afternoon break at 2:45.



### Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp Retreats, Events, Updates"

#### November 3-5: Men's S-S-S Retreat

The S-S-S (Scripture, Scales, and Suds) Retreat is a one-of-a-kind FLBC experience featuring Bible study, fishing, and homebrewing! Register early to secure your spot!

#### November 3-5: Bread of Life Retreat

Warm hearts and warm ovens unite as you join our fabulous bakers to make 8 different breads throughout the weekend and of course, take the recipes home with you! We will join the S-S-S Retreat participants for morning and evening worship experiences, and enjoy Bible studies on the theme, "Jesus, the Bread of Life."



This week we have finished putting siding on the ground floor and started siding the clerestory, installed brackets for sunshades on all the windows, installed metal door frames, and put in much of the blocking for cabinets and bathroom fixtures.

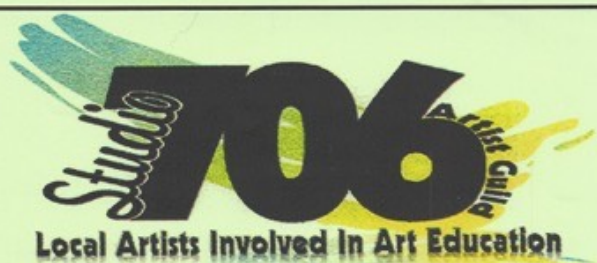
On Friday the last two out-of-state Mission Builder couples will head home. Everything will be ready for various subcontractors-- electrician, roofers, drywallers, masons, site workers, and HVAC to come and do their work. They will be supervised by Mission Builders Allan and Sue Ost. They will be in charge of completing the last remaining tasks after the subcontractors finish. Allan and Sue are very capable, but they will need your help with these last tasks. Please contact them through the synod office to volunteer or say "yes" when they call for help.

We want to thank all those who have had a part in supporting the construction of the new Montana Synod House. Through the weeks we've mentioned all the congregations who provided food and meal hospitality to us this summer. We'd like to thank all the construction volunteers. Volunteers came from Bethel, First English, Our Savior, and Redeemer in Great Falls, Saint Paul in Fairfield, Trinity in Choteau, Zion in Lewistown, Immanuel Lutheran Community in Kalispell, Butte, Hope in Bozeman, Good Shepherd, Bismarck, ND, a youth group from West Point, Nebraska, a group from the Allegheny Synod in Pennsylvania, and a group from Spirit of Joy, Seguin, Texas. Special thanks to the volunteers from

October 6, 2017

Our Redeemers', Helena who sent at least one, and sometimes several, volunteers every week. Without volunteer help we would still be building instead of starting finishing work. Nor would we have built the friendships or spent time in devotions with people from around the state of Montana and beyond. Thank you for a wonderful build this summer. We look forward to seeing y'all at the dedication next summer.

Jim & Chris Dyess, manager



2017  
**Fall Festival  
of Art**

**Ursuline Center**  
2300 Central Avenue, Great Falls  
(2nd floor)

Saturday October 21 from 10am to 7 pm  
Sunday October 22 from 11 am to 3 pm

Tour of the Ursuline Center Saturday October 21 at 2:00 pm

# Choir Extravaganza!

October 8, 2017  
7 pm at the  
UCC/CUM Church  
2900 9th St So.

*An evening of your  
favorite Hymns!*

## Featuring

- The Great Falls CommUNITY Gospel Choir
- United Church of Christ/Christ United Methodist
- Corpus Christi Catholic Parish
- Shiri
- New Hope Lutheran Church
- Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints/East Stake
- Faith Lutheran Church
- Our Savior's Lutheran Church

**AND a Combined Choir Finale**

*Free Will Offering to benefit*



*Ending childhood homelessness one family at a time*