
March @ Bethany

Bethany Presbyterian Church

From the Pastor



For some, the month of March means the end of Winter and joy and freshness of Spring! So why does the Church bring us down from that freshness and joy and enter a season talking about dust and ashes and repentance and temptation? I want to be upbeat and hopeful with the coming of warmer weather and longer days.

Do you feel the same way? Well, my message to all of us is that we really can have it all. We can experience the joy and freshness of Spring budding all around us that is real, *and* live with full acceptance that worry and fear and suffering are also an integral though less pleasant part of life.

And. That tiny but mighty word. In my letter for our 2024 Annual Report I said that my wish for Bethany for 2025 is that we would become Messengers of Hope. The more complex our world becomes and the more our default ways of seeing the world are called into question, the more important it becomes to slow down and re-discover what matters the most to us. What our values are; what we love; what we hold dear. In his book "Aflame: Learning from Silence," Pico Iyer writes about the clarity and calm that comes from a time of quiet retreat. Paradoxically, the inner reflection that happens during a time of *isolation* is actually an invitation to greater *connection*. The point of the isolation of quiet retreat is not to remain in isolation. In the same paradoxical way, Lent is a chance to be honest about our inner *darkness and struggles* so that the *renewal and rebirth* that arrives with Easter can be celebrated with a new sense of clarity and yes, hope.

I hope you will join me for this Lenten season on a journey through the lengthening days of Spring, by joining in the two activities shown here. Let us discover the renewal that is possible as we look toward the coming joy of Easter Sunday.

Blessings,
Pastor Deb



Ash Wednesday Service
Imposition of Ashes
March 5th



Lenten Adult Education Class **"What is being renewed in you?"**

Six Tuesdays from 3:00-4:00pm

March 11, 18, 25

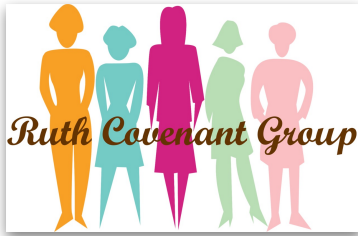
April 1, 8, 15

In person at Bethany and via Zoom

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88622652676>

Community Life



The Bethany Ruth Covenant Group will meet on Monday, March 10th at 6:30 pm at the church. At our February meeting, we were delighted to welcome back Pam Matthews and Nancy Crawford, who were in town for a long weekend. Each woman in attendance shared their history with the Ruth Covenant Group to give Elaine Tennant, first time attendee, a sense of what “Ruthies” is all about! It was a lovely time of sharing.

For our current study, we are using the Advent study guide, “Calling All Angels - An Advent Study of Fearlessness and Strength” by Erin Wathen. The book is available online, so please consider purchasing one for your use. It is a wonderful study, filled with inspiration for these difficult times. At the February meeting, we discussed the introduction and first week of Advent, and, because the study is so rich with thought-provoking ideas, we decided that the March meeting readings will be the “Daily Reflections” for Week 1, pages 23 - 34. Please read those pages and come prepared to share what resonates with you. The meeting will include our usual check-in time, fellowship, refreshments, and prayers. You are most welcome to join in for this wonderful time of sharing. Joining by Zoom is available if you are not able to attend in person. Please let Tamra Hollenbeck know if you would like to receive a Zoom invitation, and we'll send one to you. Many blessings to everyone!



Please Save the Date for A Baby Sprinkle for Bamboo and Ryan

There will be a “Baby Sprinkle” on Saturday, March 29 from 11:00 am -1:30 pm in the sanctuary of Bethany Presbyterian Church for Bamboo Lin, Ryan Hood, and Bryson’s new baby. A light luncheon will be served and you are invited to be a part of the celebration! There will be a sign-up sheet for people who might be able to help with meals and other types of support once Baby is born, due date in May. Bamboo and Ryan will have a baby registry available soon with items they need for their new arrival, and that will be included in an invitation closer to the date. Please RSVP to Tamra Hollenbeck - 650-430-5749 or tamralee55@hotmail.com
We look forward to celebrating this wonderful event with you!



Annual Congregational Meeting and 2024 Annual Report

Bethany held its annual Congregational meeting on Sunday, February 23 after worship. The Annual Report for 2024 was shared, and the Budget for 2025 was presented and reviewed. Rev. Deb McGuire’s new Terms of Call were approved, and Roxane Wales and Tamra Hollenbeck were voted in as elders for the new Leadership Team format at Bethany.

Many thanks to everyone who submitted articles for the Annual Report, and a special thanks to Cathleen Torres for assembling the report and having it ready for the congregation by February 16. Also, many thanks to Lyn Hughes and the Financial Trustees for putting together the 2025 Budget, and a huge thanks to the members and friends of Bethany for their faithful pledges and offerings, which allow Bethany to continue to do God’s work in the world. What a blessing.

Worship Updates

Liturgists and After-Church Reception Providers Needed

There is a sign-up sheet on the Narthex table for people willing to act as Lay Reader/Liturgist each Sunday. If this is something you might be interested in, please take a look at the list and pick a date that fits in your life. A thorough guide is provided to the Lay Reader/Liturgist with all the details you need for that role, and Rev. Deb McGuire or Worship Committee Chair Tamra Hollenbeck are willing to answer any questions you might have. If there are unfilled dates, Tamra might approach you to request your help with this task. Thanks in advance for your willingness to help in this way!

Also on that same table, there is a sign-up list for the church reception that is served after church each Sunday. Please consider yourself invited to participate in that capacity also! The after-church coffee and reception have become a wonderful time of visiting and catching up with each other, so many thanks to everyone who participates in that ministry!

What the Heck is the Narthex?

This question has been raised a few times recently, and it seems like a very legitimate question! The Narthex is the open area between the pastor's and church administrator's offices. It contains the copy machines, a large round table with many important items (like sign-up sheets!!), and the entry doors to the sanctuary. So, whenever you hear, "It's in the Narthex," now you know what is being referred to!

Dream Bar Recipe

Bottom Layer

- 1/2 cup butter
- 1/2 cup brown sugar, packed
- 1 cup flour (can use almond flour or any other gluten-free flour)

Mix butter and sugar thoroughly, then stir in flour until well-mixed. Press and flatten with hand to cover bottom of ungreased oblong pan 13x9x2 inches (or thereabouts!) Bake for 10 minutes.

Topping

- 2 eggs, well-beaten
- 1 cup brown sugar, packed
- 1 tablespoon vanilla
- 2 tablespoons flour (can use gluten-free flour)
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1 cup coconut
- 1 cup chopped walnuts (or other favorite type of nut)

Preheat oven to 350°. Mix all ingredients of topping together, then spread over baked first layer. Return to oven and bake for 25 minutes more or until golden brown. Cool slightly, then cut into bars.

Many people have requested the recipe for Dream Bars, which can be made gluten or gluten-free! My mom, Merriam Wycoff, made these for us, and this is the recipe she used. Enjoy!
~ Tamra



Sunday, March 9

Upcoming Events



Ash Wednesday

There will be an Ash Wednesday Service on Wednesday, March 5, at 5:00 pm in the church sanctuary. It will be a simple service with scripture, Taizé music, and the imposition of ashes. Please plan to come as we enter the season of Lent, a time of reflection and quiet.

Lent

The first Sunday in Lent will be Sunday, March 9. The liturgical art in the sanctuary will reflect this time of the Christian calendar, 40 days to consider the ministry of Jesus and its implications for our present day lives. The Sundays of Lent continue through Palm

Sunday on April 13. Palm Sunday will include the waving of palm branches and shouts of "Hosanna!" as we commemorate the triumphal entry of Christ into Jerusalem.

Good Friday

Bethany will open the doors of the sanctuary from 12-3 pm on Friday, April 18. The congregation is invited to come by for a time of personal reflection and quiet, pondering the story of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

Easter

Easter will be celebrated on Sunday, April 20. The day will start at the crack of dawn with an Easter Sunrise Service at 6:15 am (sunrise will be at 6:27 am, so we want to make sure we are up in time to see it!). Following the early morning outside service, everyone is invited into the warm sanctuary for coffee, hot cocoa, and a variety of sweet rolls and other treats.

The traditional Easter service will be at 10:00 am, and it will be celebrated with scripture, a wonderful message of resurrection, and glorious music! There will also be an Easter brunch to celebrate this jubilant day. We look forward to entering the Easter Season with all of you!



Birthdays

9 - Roberta Henry
13 - Linden Cady
16 - Elara Nicolosi
17 - Barbara Liedtke
21 - Bethany Delander
23 - Paulette Emfinger
27 - Eddy Bray

Anniversaries

17 - Walt and Doreen Bird

Community Action



Ongoing donations to Catholic Worker Hospitality House can be brought to Bethany Church or call Lyn Hughes at 650-867-0667 for pickup.

Financial Trustees

Financial Issues:

- Completed: 2025 BPC Budget; discussed with congregation at Annual Meeting on Feb 23, 2025
- In progress: Replacement of our antiquated electrical panel for maximum efficiency. Next steps: 1) update electrical panel, 2) Decide on solar energy panels/installation. The vendor Dave Wales was originally working with is no longer working with BPC, so Dave is seeking out other vendors, and 3) Install heat pump which includes reviewing vendors.
- In progress: Room 9 clean-up continuation
- In progress: Kitchen update cleanup and cleanout
- In progress: On-line giving opportunities; Pastor Deb is working to move this forward
- Patio repair: On hold for now
- Upper roof repair: On hold for now

Leadership Meeting Highlights - February 11, 2025

Pastor Report (Deb)

- Planning of Leadership Retreat discussed. Sign-up sheet is on table in back of Sanctuary.
- Visioning board making - 2/15 from 12p-3p. Deacon's will send reminder.
- Congregational meeting (2/23 after service) agenda approved.
- Westminster Woods Women's weekend (3/21-23) camperships are available. Contact Deb or Tam.
- Service for Randy J. being planned.

Financial Trustees (Lyn)

- 2025 Budget draft reviewed & approved with minor revisions. Lyn will make changes and send for Session review.
- Deb's phone needs repair. George will switch it out with a 2 line phone pending repair.

Worship (Tamra)

- Liturgists needed. Tamra is making a list.
- Ash Wednesday service planned for March 5 @ 5 PM.

Next meeting- Tuesday, March 11, 2025 @ 4:30 PM.

Monthly events at Bethany

Sundays: Worship at 10:00 am
Coffee Hour 11:00 am
(rehearsals start 8:30 am)

Wednesdays: Prayz 5:00 pm
Chancel Choir 6:30 pm
Prayer Group 6:30 pm

Submissions for W@B: Tuesday mornings, 10:00 am

Submissions for the April newsletter:
Tuesday, April 18, 10:00 am

1st Sunday: Communion at Worship Service

2nd Monday: Ruth Covenant Group 6:30 pm

2nd Tuesday: Session 4:30 pm

3rd Monday: Financial Trustees 5:30 pm

Buildings & Grounds,
Community Action committees
- As scheduled

Worship Committee - As scheduled

Our Purpose Statement

Bethany's purpose is to provide a nurturing
and energizing environment to feed the soul
so we can go out into the world and reflect the glory of God,
the love of Jesus Christ, and the power of the Holy Spirit.

Our Welcoming Statement

We don't yet know who you are,
but we do know that you are a dearly beloved child of God,
and you are already welcome here.
We invite you, on your unique spiritual journey,
to join us in the life and ministry of Bethany Presbyterian Church.

Bethany Presbyterian Church

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Bethany is a member of More Light Presbyterians
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