

Life Together

**Bethany Lutheran Church's
e-newsletter
October 2022**



**Pastor Paul
Stumme-Diers**

[pastorpaul@bethany
ofbainbridge.org](mailto:pastorpaul@bethanyofbainbridge.org)
Office: 206-842-4241

Who we are

Bethany is a
congregation
of the Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America, and is
Reconciling in
Christ, open and
affirming.



Where to find us

We are at 7968 Finch
Road NE, Bainbridge
Island, WA 98110.

**Sunday Worship &
Sunday School**

10 a.m. followed by coffee
fellowship & Adult Ed

Saturday Worship

5 p.m. followed by wine
and cheese fellowship.

Website

bethanyofbainbridge.org

PASTOR'S ADDRESS

Bethany Community Lutheran?

By Pastor Paul Stumme-Diers



Dear Bethanians,

Bethany Community Lutheran Church. Some days I think we should change our signage so as to better reflect who we are as a congregation, and how connected we are to our "parish". I say this as I consider the calendar of facility utilization here at Bethany, just in these weeks which include:

Our Boy Scout troop
Amabile Choir
Bainbridge Island Youth Symphony
Bainbridge Island Youth Choir
Al-Anon
Interfaith Council of BI/NK
The Bethany Lutheran Preschool, serving all families
Helpline House using Bethany's meeting space

It seems that whenever I come to Bethany on "off hours" there is some gathering, members of our community, groups that serve our parish, inhabiting our space...and it fills me with joy. This is a matter of stewardship, in using our space wisely and often. This is a matter of community recognizing Bethany as the church that is welcoming. This is a matter of the mission of Bethany being carried out in a faithful manner.

(Continued on next page.)

Council leaders



Vicki Browning,
president,
vickibrowning@comcast.net



Lynn Nordby,
vice president,
lnordby@msn.com



Jennie Harris,
secretary,
dgh4653@msn.com



Jim Rohrscheib,
treasurer,
jrohrscheib@juno.com

Bethany Community Lutheran?: *Continued*

And just imagine the logistics on this, with our sanctuary still “under construction” and most all activities confined to the Fellowship Hall. On October 1st, we had the funeral for Bud Johnson, and then turned around the same space for the reception. A big thank you to Debbie Rimkus for extending this welcome to outside groups, and also to managing these efforts in a space challenged time.

I joke about a name change, where we would include “community” in the title, seemingly popular nomenclature for churches these days. But most often the “community” name is assumed because churches are disguising their denominational affiliation, or making the point that they are not denominationally “restricted”. But for us the “community” name would be a redundancy, for the Lutheran itself insists that we are a church of “grace” and “inclusion” with a mission reaching out to and with our neighbors. Even “Bethany” as a title speaks this language, noting a place where Jesus would go that was friendly, safe, familiar, rejuvenating.

In moving my father from his six-plex into an assisted living apartment last week, I took greater notice of the items that decorated his living space. Among the pictures there is a banner that has hung as long as I can remember in his home office, a simple burlap banner with felt lettering that reads, “Where there is no vision the people perish.” (Proverbs 29:18) That is always a call to me to live into a vision larger than myself, a vision derived from God’s grace.

In my home congregation in Iowa, we had what was called a “Parish Hall” where all sorts of community activities would take place. “Parish” meaning neighborhood or local community, a geography of responsibility and coming together. I have thus always associated the church with being a place where we find ways to connect with our community, with our neighborhood, with our parish. And that is Bethany Lutheran Church.

With gratitude,

Pastor Paul (pastorpaul@bethanyofbainbridge.org)

PASTOR FOR FAITH FORMATION

Meeting Wherever You Are

By Pastor Erin Grayson



Dear Bethanians,

With October in full swing and the leaves beginning to reveal their true colors, it feels like a good time to reflect. These days I'm thinking about what a blessing it is in my life to minister--and be ministered to--at Bethany Lutheran Church. You have quite literally welcomed my family and me at the door and invited us into the fold of this "faith family" with openness and enthusiasm. We are truly grateful!

As we get to know each other, I'm also reflecting on ways I can meet you wherever you are on your faith journey--in whatever season of life--with the same openness and enthusiasm you've shown me. In my role as Pastor of Faith Formation I serve our faith family by finding ways to enrich and nurture our individual and collective faith through both creative and practical means, in ways that are meaningful to you and faithful to God's call on our lives.

The ELCA's vision for lifelong faith formation is centered on four central components:^[1] (1) **spiritual practices**, or activities with intentional awareness of God's ever presence in our lives; (2) **respectful relationships** rooted in trust, compassion, and respect for one another--inside and beyond our faith family; (3) **learning and education** that builds on the faith stories of scripture, teaching us not only biblical knowledge, but how to live faithfully; and (4) **faith-filled service**, which recognizes our call to love God and neighbor as ourselves.

I use this vision as my guide as I think deeply about Sunday school offerings for our children and Adult Ed; and imagine new and different ways we might configure our faith formation offerings. Just as we're in the transitional season of Autumn, so too is the Church in a transitional season as we re-gather after a long pandemic-induced separation, all amidst the context of a changing world. Indeed, it's a good time to gage how the church is serving the members of our faith family wherever they are in this transition.

It's at once an exciting time of possibility and growth, even as we clear away what no longer works or serves well. It's easy to get stuck in the transition when we don't see clearly the way forward or feel too nostalgic about the way "things used to be," but it's also an opportunity for all of us to lean on our faith that God will show us a new way! I'm reminded of the prophet Isaiah who reminds us that God is always doing a new thing, constantly making a way out of what seems like no way: "See, I am doing a new thing. Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland (Isaiah 43:19)."

In this season of transition, let us put our trust in God first and then put our heads together as we imagine how Bethany Lutheran Church can meet you and your families wherever you are in this transition. Be on the lookout for upcoming opportunities to offer feedback and ideas.

Meeting Wherever You Are: *Continued*

Together, we can imagine and even co-create the new thing God is doing right here and now in this season of transition in the world, and at Bethany Lutheran Church.

In the meantime, please know that my door is always open—drop by, or drop me a line, a text, or give me a ring. I'd love to hear from you!

Yours in Faith,

Pastor Erin

FROM THE COUNCIL

Update from the President

Things are moving along at Bethany. Preschool is back in session. Pastor Erin is settling in and we now have Sunday School for the children and adult education. Pastor Paul will be taking a vacation to visit Fritz. The Bainbridge City Council is still considering the Bethany Affordable Housing options. Thank you to David Swartling and others for their undying preservation.

It has been interesting to watch the progress of the sanctuary project and it looks like it will be ready for us to move back in early in November. There will be a celebration party when all is complete. I can't express in words how much the design team, led by Rachel Pritchett, has done and how much they are appreciated. Doug Love stuck with the project long after he could have said "You take over now." I am grateful to everyone who has worked on the project and all of you who donated to make it happen.

The Building and Grounds committee, under the guidance of Lynn Nordby has been tackling projects one by one. They are now getting estimates to remove the dead tree that has been a concern. Lighting in the hallway is still a challenge but eventually we will be able to read what is written on the bulletin boards. Let us know if there are projects we have missed. And let Lynn know if there is one you'd like to help get started!

You may be aware of all the outside groups who are meeting at Bethany. A big thank you to Debbie for coordinating their meeting times. It is gratifying to be able to fill this community need.

It is an exciting time at Bethany.

Sincerely,
Vicki Browning

BETHANY NEWS

FFF Field Trip!

It's time for a field trip! The FFF group will meet next on October 12 for a field trip. We will carpool from the Bethany parking lot to the Suquamish museum. Come to Bethany at 10:30am and bring a sack lunch to enjoy. Come too with ideas for future gatherings. Cost for the museum is \$3 per person. If you plan to attend, please add your name to the sign-up sheet on the hallway bulletin board or call Debbie at 206-842-4241.



Reformation Sunday and a Blessing of the Quilts

Plan now to attend worship the weekend of October 29/30 when the beautiful quilts made by the Rachel Circle will be blessed. After being blessed, volunteers will gather and box up the quilts and kits for shipment to Lutheran World Relief. And wear red, the color which represents the Holy Spirit and the Martyrs of the Christian Church, as we celebrate Reformation Sunday!



Affordable Housing – At a Crossroads!

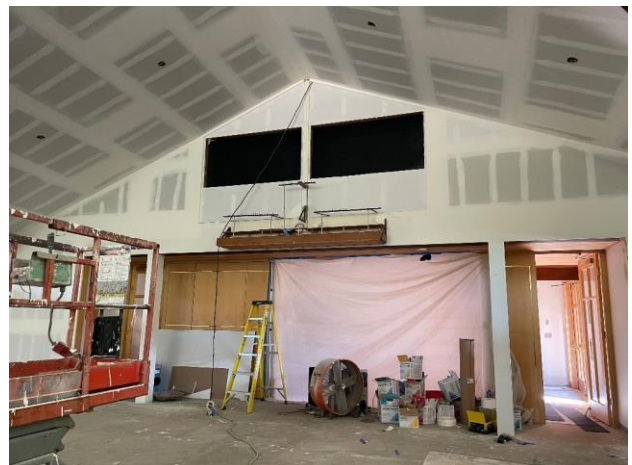
October will be a crossroads month for Bethany's affordable housing odyssey! Almost 18 months after we requested an "increased density bonus" under a 2019 state statute, the Bainbridge Island City Council is poised to take action on draft Ordinance 2022-02, which would authorize Bethany to move forward with its vision for affordable housing on its property and to build up to 23 units, all of which would be affordable! Prior to voting, a Public Hearing will take place on October 11, and the Bethany Affordable Housing Task Force is working to mobilize community support, both by encouraging letters to the City Council and by putting together a team of speakers for the meeting. With respect to mailing letters to the City Council, every member and friend of Bethany is strongly encouraged to write to the City Council endorsing Bethany's long-time affordable housing vision and passage of the draft Ordinance. (The email address for letters to the City Council is: Council@bainbridgewa.gov.) With respect to putting together a team of speakers for the Public Hearing, a number of community leaders already have agreed to speak. These include: Maria Metzler of Helpline House, Phedra Elliot of HRB, and Peter Bang-Knudsen, Superintendent of BI Schools, as well as a number of Bethany members. (Speakers can participate either in person at City Hall or via Zoom.)

Once the ordinance passes, the complex work of further site evaluation and preparation will begin. Early steps will include a survey and conducting a number of studies required by the new Ordinance. To help subsidize the costs of these steps, we anticipate applying for a grant from the Housing Action Fund of Bainbridge Community Foundation, applying for remaining ARPA Funding already designated for affordable housing, and using remaining funds from the Grace Grant received from the Northwest Washington Synod.

Please keep Bethany's affordable housing vision in your thoughts and prayers. If you would like to see the draft Ordinance and/or receive Talking Points to help craft a letter to the City Council, contact the Bethany Office where copies are available. Stay tuned!

Sanctuary Project Update

Drywall work is now done and painting has begun! Still to come – lighting, AV, and carpeting.



BETHANY PRESCHOOL

Back in Action!



BETHANY IN THE COMMUNITY

CROP Walk

Thank you to all who supported the BI/NK CROP Hunger Walk either by walking or sponsoring walkers. This year over \$13,000 was raised to help end hunger, including over \$300 raised from our own 'noisy offering'!



Bainbridge Prepares Workshop

Bainbridge Prepares will hold a workshop on disaster preparedness for houses of worship on Saturday Oct. 15, 2022, 1pm to 3pm at Bainbridge Island City Hall. Pastor Erin will attend and warmly welcomes anyone else in the congregation who would like to join her. The event is free, but we need to RSVP so that the group can plan accordingly. Please let Pastor Erin know if you plan to attend (pastorerin@bethanyofbainbridge.org).

The workshop will feature an expert panel to discuss:

- + An overview of emergency preparedness steps for faith-based groups
- + A deep dive into organizing and conducting evacuation and earthquake drills in houses of worship
- + Discussion, questions, and knowledge sharing among local congregations

Please contact Laura Samant at readycongregations-leads@bainbridgeprepares.org if you have any questions.

THE GREATER CHURCH

From the Bishop

Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee



“Sometimes it’s boring.
Sometimes it’s thrilling.
Sometimes it makes me cry”

(Quote from “The Wonderful Ordinarity of Congregational life” by Cheryl Fullerton, Christian Century, March 2022)

Recently I was thinking about church. (Full disclosure...I think about church quite a bit.) But, in particular, I was thinking about the rhythm of church life. And I think the above quote from Cheryl Fullerton sums it up nicely.

Sometimes it’s boring

I admit, sometimes there is something that is uninteresting about church. Perhaps it is the repetitive nature of it. Perhaps it is the cyclical nature of things. Perhaps it is seeing the same people in the same pew week after week and year after year.

We know that Fred will sing the hymns out of tune...every time. We know that Mary will cluck her tongue at someone’s tattoo peeking out from their sundress. We know that Mike will fall asleep during the sermon, and we know that Dan will try to share the peace with every single person. We know that the children will fidget. We know that the baby might cry. We know that we have rituals and sacraments and prayers that we say each week. We know that sometimes we won’t hear the utter preposterousness and absurdity

and utterly amazing news that Jesus loves each of us and all of us – that sometimes this message sails over our heads because we're too busy looking at the bulletin.

And yet...

Sometimes it's thrilling

I always get goosebumps when I hear the words, "I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." I rejoice each Easter when we all shout, "He is risen! He is risen indeed!" Candles lit in the darkness bring hope and light on Christmas Eve. When I am privileged to place bread in people's hands and I see young, old, wrinkled, black, white, brown hands reaching out for Jesus, it is truly miraculous.

We know that Fred cares for his wife with Alzheimer's. We know that Mary still grieves her daughter. We know that Mike works the late shift, and we know that Dan only leaves his group home for church. We know that the children will hear of Jesus. We know that the baby will grow up in the community of elders. We know that sometimes we will hear and understand, if even for a moment, the utter preposterousness and absurdity and utterly amazing news that Jesus loves each of us and all of us.

And so...

Sometimes it makes me cry

Church is not for the faint-hearted. Church is not for people who only want to be with their own kind. Church is for the young, the middle-aged and the old. The healthy and the sick. The spiritually depleted and the spiritually full. Those who are seeking, those who are exhausted, and those who are filled with fire for justice. We all come together. The Freds and Marys and Mikes and Dans. And we sing and we pray, and we receive Jesus, in community, together. Church is wonderfully boring and thrilling. We catch glimpses of the divine amongst the coffee pot and petty disagreements. We see Mary hug the tattooed young girl after she is baptized. We see Mike exchange high fives with Dan. We see Fred with tears singing at the top of his lungs, "I Know that My Redeemer Lives."

There is nothing like church.

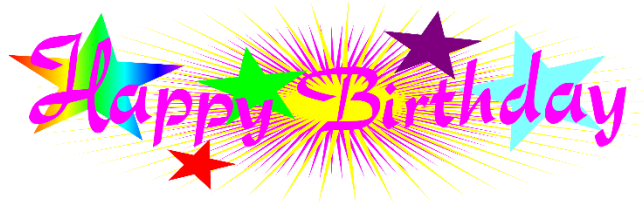
"Sometimes it's boring.

Sometimes it's thrilling.

Sometimes it makes me cry"

+Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee

bishop@lutheransnw.org



October

Mattea Drov Dahl	10/1	Linda Stenberg	10/10	Anne Howard-Lindquist	10/23
Sylvia Cauter	10/2	Jessica Wilson	10/15	Joe Michael	10/27
Marianne Milander	10/6	Casey Shields	10/16	Brighton Whittlesey	10/28
Alice McCain	10/8	Luanne Croker	10/17	Hunter Whittlesey	10/28
Chris Christensen	10/10	Drew Hansen	10/22		

November

Cindy Beam	11/6	Ed Kushner	11/13	Isaiah Drov Dahl	11/19
Dick Coar	11/6	Peter Miles	11/13	Marty Milander	11/20
Wayne Daley	11/6	Jim Sutton	11/18	Fred Truitt	11/20
Jan Thrun	11/7	Harry Wetzler	11/18	Connie Yenne	11/29

October Worship Assistants

Altar Duty:

Date:	Name:
October 1/2	Linnea Chu
October 8/9	Alice McCain
October 15/16	Kathy Dudgeon
October 22/23	Vicki Bech
October 29/30	Carol Fenner

Saturday Evening Worship:

Date:	Task:	Name:
October 1	Usher/Greeter	Jennie Harris
	Lay Reader	Jennie Harris
	Hospitality Host	Marlene & Al Orwiler
October 8	Usher/Greeter	Gail Christensen
	Lay Reader	Gail Christensen
	Hospitality Host	Jim & Veronika Rohrscheib
October 15	Usher/Greeter	Barbara Michael
	Lay Reader	Barbara Michael
	Hospitality Host	Carol & Ron Fenner
October 22	Usher/Greeter	Charlene Selvar
	Lay Reader	Gail Christensen
	Hospitality Host	Gail & Dave Christensen
October 29	Usher/Greeter	Jim Rohrscheib
	Lay Reader	Carol Fenner
	Hospitality Host	Ron & Carol Fenner

Sunday Morning Worship:

Date:	Task:	Name:
October 2	Greeter	Jan Thrun
	Lay Reader	Claire Dasler
	Communion Assistant	Vicki Browning
	Hospitality Host	Claire & Marty Dasler
October 9	Usher/Greeter	Eve & Mike Curtis
	Lay Reader	Andy Rimkus
	Communion Assistant	Alice McCain
	Hospitality Host	Debbie & Andy Rimkus
October 16	Usher/Greeter	Doug Dudgeon & Jim Cauter
	Lay Reader	Noreen Sievertson
	Communion Assistant	Jim Cauter
	Hospitality Host	Bethany Choir
October 23	Usher/Greeter	Barbara & David Swartling
	Lay Reader	Marcy Daley
	Communion Assistant	Wayne Daley
	Hospitality Host	Karen & Ed Kushner
October 30	Usher/Greeter	Harry & Nancy Wetzler
	Lay Reader	Harry Wetzler
	Communion Assistant	Vicki Browning
	Hospitality Host	Vicki Browning & Kristi Sutton

The Month Ahead

October 2022						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Non-Bethany events in italics.						1 5:00pm Worship followed by wine and cheese fellowship
2 10:00am Worship & Sunday School followed by coffee fellowship and Adult Ed	3	4 10:00am Rachel Circle followed by Quilters	5 3:30pm BI Youth Choir 7:00pm Bethany Choir	6 4:00pm BI Youth Orchestra	7 Noon AI Anon, FH	8 5:00pm Worship followed by wine and cheese fellowship
9 10:00am Worship & Sunday School followed by coffee fellowship and Adult Ed	10 9:30am Women's Bible Study 7:15pm Boy Scouts	11 8:00am Men's Bible Study 3:15pm BI Youth Choir	12 10:30am FFF Field Trip 3:30pm BI Youth Choir 7:00pm Bethany Choir	13 4:00pm BI Youth Orchestra 7:00pm Council Meeting	14 Noon AI Anon, FH	15 5:00pm Worship followed by wine and cheese fellowship
16 10:00am Worship & Sunday School followed by coffee fellowship and Adult Ed	17 7:15pm Boy Scouts	18 10:00am Quilters 3:15pm BI Youth Choir	19 3:30pm BI Youth Choir 7:00pm Bethany Choir	20 4:00pm BI Youth Orchestra	21 Noon AI Anon, FH	22 9am BI Quilters Retreat 5:00pm Worship followed by wine and cheese fellowship
23 10:00am Worship & Sunday School followed by coffee fellowship and Adult Ed	24 7:15pm Boy Scouts	25 10:00am Quilters 3:15pm BI Youth Choir	26 3:30pm BI Youth Choir 7:00pm Bethany Choir	27 11:00am Preschool Halloween Party 4:00pm BI Youth Orchestra	28 Noon AI Anon, FH	29 5:00pm Worship followed by wine and cheese fellowship
30 Reformation Sunday! 10:00am Worship & Sunday School followed by coffee fellowship and Adult Ed	31 10:45am Preschool Halloween Party 7:15pm Boy Scouts					