

Life Together

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



**Pastor Paul
Stumme-Diers**

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

10 a.m followed by coffee fellowship

Saturday Worship

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

Website

bethanyofbainbridge.org

PASTOR'S ADDRESS

The Holy Spirit is Calling

By Pastor Paul Stumme-Diers



Dear Bethanians,

For the past few months, I have had the delightful experience of sharing coffee and conversation with Pastor Erin Grayson, imagining together what it might mean to bring her considerable gifts for pastoral ministry to the Bethany staff and congregation. After months of our joy in this conversation, now is the time for you to share in the excitement and common ministry.

Pastor Erin is a familiar personality on Bainbridge Island. I have gotten to know her through clergy luncheons and in her leadership with our Interfaith Council. As "Erin the Presbyterian" our paths don't cross denominationally, but our acquaintance has been a wonderful product of the Interfaith climate here, and the full-communion partnership between the ELCA and PCUSA has paved the way for Pastor Erin to be a regular supply preacher at Bethany.

Our conversation began as I was thinking aloud about my desire/need to have more flexibility of schedule, what with a grandson in Iowa, and with Laurie and I having parents we would enjoy visiting more often. I didn't want such time away to be either a burden or a distraction for the ministry at Bethany, and I saw in Pastor Erin the opportunity to bring fresh energy, ideas, and a new voice to our pastoral leadership.

(Continued on next page.)

Council leaders



Vicki Browning,
president,
vickibrowning@
comcast.net



Lynn Nordby,
vice president,
lknordby@
msn.com



Jennie Harris,
secretary,
dgh4653@msn.com



Jim Rohrscheib,
treasurer,
jrohrscheib@
juno.com

The Holy Spirit is Calling: *Continued*

With her strong interest in education and small groups, and the desire to get more involved with worship, her gifts lend themselves well to such a position. We were on course to propose such an arrangement, essentially my moving to ¾ time and Pastor Erin at ¼ time when in our coffee conversation I asked if she knew anyone in her circles who might enjoy serving as Bethany's Child and Family Coordinator. She mentioned the many people who had asked her the same question, as this is a hard time for churches to fill such a position.

She then said, "You know, *I* have quite an interest in that area." Due perhaps to my limited imagination, I first needed to pick my jaw up off the floor, and then double check that this is something she would like to take on. She said, "Perhaps we can combine these areas and I could be the Pastor for Faith Formation" ...and I guess the rest is (recent) history.

I am convinced that this is Holy Spirit inspired. I am also convinced that in extending a pastoral call to Erin Grayson, the Holy Spirit is at the same time extending a pastoral call to each of us, to be the church together, lending all our gifts and encouragement to the common ministry to which we are all called through our baptism.

With gratitude,

Pastor Paul (pastorpaul@bethanyofbainbridge.org)

PASTOR FOR FAITH FORMATION

You are LOVED!

By Pastor Erin Grayson



Dear Bethanians,

To say that I'm grateful to be joining the Bethany ministry team with Pastor Paul would be an understatement. I'm truly overjoyed! Thank you for generously inviting me into the community and for welcoming me so warmly. Your hospitality is the foundation of my Bethany experience, and one that inspires my service as Pastor of Faith Formation.

The way I see it, faith formation is an extension of our communal worship, and includes activities like Christian education, special projects, service to one another, fun activities, fellowship, and more! In a sentence, faith formation is the way we always are becoming disciples. That said, there are many ways our faith can take shape and be deepened in the process!

You are Loved!: Continued

This year, I'd like to present to you a theme that will unite all of our faith formation activities: "You are LOVED!" It's a reminder that we are loved beyond measure by God who sees and knows us just exactly as we are. It also inspires us to reflect that love by caring for our neighbors and all of God's good creation. After all, Jesus reminds us, "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." (John 13:35)

Our Christian Education programs, beginning Sept 18, will draw from and build on Sunday morning worship. For our children's programming, we'll use Illustrated Ministry's Mini Revolutions, an intergenerational curriculum based on the scripture passages of the day. Sunday school lessons will offer children engaging and age-appropriate questions to help us enter into the story and see its relevance in our lives. Activities, spiritual practices, and prayer will help each person embrace their own "mini revolutions" each week.

Adult Education will be held weekly after Sunday worship. Throughout September and October, we'll enjoy a short video series and discussion by Christian author and activist, Shane Claiborne, entitled *ECONOMY OF LOVE: Creating an Economy of Enough*. Our learning will be enhanced by guest speakers from time-to-time. In November, we'll continue our learning together by exploring the transforming power of gratitude. Advent, beginning on the 27th of November, offers us an opportunity for reflection on the season and takes us right up to the new year.

I hope this little preview gives you a peek into what's being planned—and entices you to come and always become disciples as we grow together in faith! My office hours are Tues-Thurs 9:00am-1:00pm. I hope you'll stop by sometime. I'm looking forward to getting to know you, hearing your ideas, and serving as a disciple with you.

Thank you again for inviting me in!

Pastor Erin (pastorerin@bethanyofbainbridge.org)

FROM THE COUNCIL

Update

The council met through the summer and focused on the call to Pastor Erin, the need for fellowship and family ministry as well as getting the building and grounds in shape for fall. It has been exciting to look forward to celebrating the completion of the sanctuary project and a new beginning following the COVID restrictions.

We have been successful in having Saturday evening services in the fellowship hall and outdoors on Sunday mornings. There have been several opportunities for fellowship after both service times. We are looking forward to celebrating the excitement and the timing of Pastor Erin coming on board with new ideas and energy and the amazing new look in the sanctuary. We plan to have a “welcome back” celebration.

The affordable housing need on Bainbridge has been a focus of the Bethany task force and the incredible challenges they have had. David Swartling and his team have kept the council updated on the process and it appears there is support from the Bainbridge City Council so stay tuned.

This is an exciting time at Bethany!

Sincerely,
Vicki Browning

August 28 Congregational Meeting

A huge thank you to all who attended the Congregational Meeting on Sunday, August 28th. The council is thrilled that the congregation approved the resolution calling Pastor Erin Grayson as our Pastor for Faith Formation. Pastor Erin began her ministry with us on September 1st. Read her note above about adult faith formation and child and family ministry.

BETHANY NEWS

Fall Bible Study

The Rachel Circle Bible Study group meets on the first Tuesdays of the month at 10:00am. (Due to the building closure for insulation work, Rachel Circle will meet on September 13th.) The Men's Bible Study group meets on the second Tuesdays of the month at 8:00am. The Women's Bible Study group meets on the second Mondays of the month at 9:30am. More information about each group is below.

Women's Bible Study Group

What is special about women getting together to explore spiritual issues from a Christian perspective?

There is the challenge of together choosing a challenging topic and book for discussion. There is intellectual and spiritual excitement from sharing new insights or reinforcing existing ideas. There is bonding with other women who want to dig deeper and grow their faith. There are laughs, a few tears, and – of course – coffee or tea and treats to go with those conversations.

Where can you find such a group of women to share these experiences?

Bethany Women's Bible Study group offers all this. We meet once a month (usually the second Monday at 9:30 a.m.-noon) during the school year, either in homes or at Bethany's Fellowship Hall. Last year we read and discussed Universal Christ by Richard Rohr and Jesus and Nonviolence by Walter Wink.

Our group will have its first 2022-23 meeting on Monday, September 12 at 9:30 a.m. in Bethany's Fellowship Hall. It will be a good time to meet, to catch up on news, and to plot our coming year. The first book chosen for this year is The Gift of Aging: Growing Older Gracefully by Sister Joan Chittister.

Does this sound like a group you might enjoy? Please come and check us out. Contact Alice McCain, Helen Stoll or Sonja Selboe if you'd like more information.

Men's Bible Study Group

The Men's Bible Study group will continue to meet monthly for Bible study with Pastor Paul on the second Tuesdays of the month at 8am. The group enjoys breakfast treats while looking at the lessons for the upcoming Sunday worship. All Bethany men are welcome.

Rachel Circle

The Rachel Circle will continue to meet monthly for Bible study with Pastor Paul or Pastor Erin on the first Tuesdays of the month at 10am. The September Bible study will be on September 6, followed by quilting, enjoying sack lunches and good conversation. All are welcome with no quilting experience needed. The lessons for the Bible study are available in the library beforehand.

Rachel Circle will have a planning/reorganizing breakfast meeting on Tuesday September 20. Stay tuned for more details. The group has also elected new officers. Jennie Harris will become the new President with the continued assistance of current President, Carol Fenner. Eve Curtis is the new treasurer replacing Marlene Orwiler. Marth Shonkwiler takes over Secretary duties from Alice McCain. The group thanks, Carol, Marlene and Alice for their generous years of service in the Rachel Circle, especially during the COVID pandemic.

Carol will continue to lead the Lutheran World Relief quilting project of the Rachel Circle. Marlene will continue to guide the LWR baby kit project, and Alice will continue to organize donations for the annual LWR school book bag project (400 70 sheet spiral notebooks are among the school items needed).

Calling all would-be landscape designers, gardeners, and problem solvers!

Some time ago (BC - “before covid”) a car crashed into the Bethany sign at the main entrance on Finch Rd. That crash and the sign replacement construction that followed ruined the landscaped area in front of the sign. (Yes, it was landscaped. You can still find a few tidbits of the purple blooming ground cover peeking through the dirt around the edges).

Now that the sanctuary interior renovation is well in hand, the Building and Grounds Committee is looking for a person, or persons who would like to take on the challenge of re-landscaping that patch of earth welcoming everyone to Bethany.

Fall is a good time to get plantings established and will coincide with our sanctuary rededication. Plants should be low maintenance, drought tolerant and complement the sign.

In addition, we’re open to suggestions for the beds along the cherry tree walk that goes through the center of the parking lot. The ground cover is dead or dying and the area needs something simple and low maintenance to replace it.

If you’d like to try your hand at landscape design, gardening or just have some good suggestions please contact Debbie Rimkus, Lynn Nordby, Jeff Jensen or Vicki Browning by September 15.



Affordable Housing Update

Patience and optimism are the virtues currently needed as Bethany's vision for affordable housing proceeds through the Bainbridge Island City Council. Since May 2021, Bethany has been waiting for COBI to determine an "increased density bonus" as mandated in RCW 36.70A.545, the 2019 statute which requires such a bonus for religious organizations seeking to build affordable housing on their properties. The City Council first referred preparing a draft ordinance to the Planning Commission, but after months of discussion, it could not reach a consensus on how to proceed. Specifically, the thorny issues were the amount of the density bonus to provide to Bethany and whether the draft ordinance should provide that Bethany is a pilot project or apply island-wide. Now, adopting an ordinance has rebounded to the City Council, and it remains in the process of evaluating drafts prepared by staff.

The most recent discussion occurred at a Study Session on August 16. The 20 minutes allocated to a newly revised draft turned into a 100-minute discussion! While a number of differing viewpoints remain, it appears that there is a consensus to adopt an ordinance that treats Bethany as a pilot project and adopts a formula for determining density bonus of approximately 20 homes. The next steps will be for the staff to revise (again!) the draft ordinance for consideration by the City Council, and to schedule a Public Hearing on the draft. Hopefully, these steps will occur in September! Upon adoption, Bethany's Affordable Housing Task Force will need to take steps to begin to address the ordinance's requirements for obtaining necessary permits. Once again, stay tuned!

Sanctuary Project Update

The insulation work is done! The staff is grateful to be back in the building. Next up is drywalling. That work will begin the week of September 12th. Still to come – painting, lighting and carpeting.



BETHANY IN THE COMMUNITY

CROP Walk

The BI/NK CROP Hunger Walk is one of the strongest and longest-running CROP Walks in the nation. Each year, we rank among the top walks in the nation for funds raised – thanks to the amazing support of our faithful recruiters, our local faith communities, and our anonymous matching donor. We've walked for 25 years and raised nearly \$1 million toward hunger relief, with 20% going to Helpline House and 5% going to NK Fishline Food Bank. This year's CROP Walk will be on Sunday, September 25th. If you are interested in helping with the CROP Walk or for more information, contact Pastor Paul.



Marriage Encounter Opportunity

Lutheran Marriage Encounter (LME) is providing an opportunity for a marriage "tune up". This is a virtual experience so no need to travel and privacy is assured. Eve and Mike Curtis have attended marriage encounters before and found them very helpful. They plan to attend this October opportunity and invite others to join them.

**Communicate with Your Spouse
in a Whole New Way!**

October 14 - 16, 2022

**Lutheran Marriage Encounter
Virtual Experience**

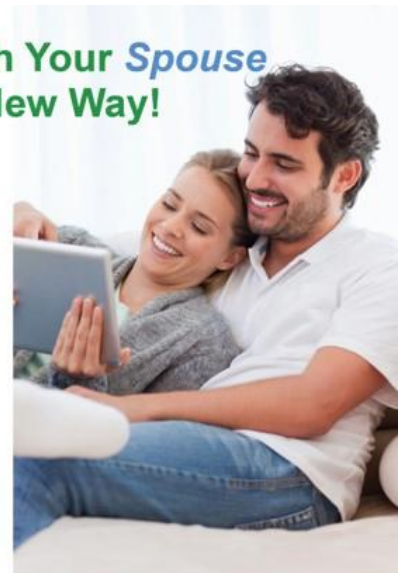
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THE GREATER CHURCH

2022 Churchwide Assembly

David Swartling



The 2022 Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA took place on August 8-12 in Columbus, Ohio. Gathered under the theme *Embody the Word*, approximately 900 voting members and hundreds of guests and visitors participated in plenary sessions to address legislative matters, hear reports on the work of this church, and worship together. Significant events included the election of Imran Siddiqui, an Asian-American and member of the Southeastern Synod, as Vice President of the ELCA. In addition, a number of important memorials and resolutions were adopted, including a commitment to examine restructuring of the governance of the church and to create a Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church. Other important actions included a commitment to reconsider aspects of the social statement “Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust”, to encourage deeper engagement with indigenous peoples, and to reduce the carbon footprint of the churchwide organization. A complete summary of actions taken at the Assembly can be found on the Legislative Update at www.ELCA.org.

In addition to legislative matters, a number of memorable events occurred at the Churchwide Assembly. More than a dozen denominational and interfaith leaders were introduced, and the firm commitment of the ELCA to working with other faiths was highlighted. In a non-legislative session, Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton apologized, on behalf of the ELCA, to the worshipping community of Iglesia Luterana Santa Maria Peregrina in Central California for the abrupt removal of the congregation’s pastor on the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe by the former bishop of the Sierra Pacific Synod. In addition to the apology, Bishop Eaton plans to visit the congregation and to work together with the synod to address repairing the damaged relationship.

The next Churchwide Assembly will take place in late July/early August in Phoenix, AZ in 2025.



September

Steve Chupik	9/2	Patsy Cook	9/12	Jeff Sievertson	9/22
Jeff Jensen	9/3	Scott Lindquist	9/13	Claire Dasler	9/25
Tom Newlon	9/4	Allen Lang	9/15	Katie Drovdaht	9/26
Craig Stauffer	9/6	Paige Asher	9/17	DeMar Sather	9/27
Gayle Robbins	9/10	John Erickson	9/18	Ron Fenner	9/30
Peter Bang-Knudsen	9/13	Nico Lucioni	9/22	Susan Morris	9/28
		Michele Mancuse	9/19		

October

Mattea Drovdaht	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		

September Worship Assistants

Saturday Evening Worship:

Date:	Task:	Name:
September 3	Usher/Greeter	Gail Christensen
	Lay Reader	Carol Fenner
	Hospitality Host	Carol & Ron Fenner
September 10	Usher/Greeter	Charlene Selvar
	Lay Reader	Jennie Harris
	Hospitality Host	Marlene & Al Orwiler
September 17	Usher/Greeter	Joe Sommereth
	Lay Reader	Carol Fenner
	Hospitality Host	Jim & Veronika Rohrscheib
September 24	Usher/Greeter	Barbara Michael
	Lay Reader	Barbara Michel
	Hospitality Host	Jennie Harris

Sunday Morning Worship:

Date:	Task:	Name:
September 4	Usher/Greeter	Alice & Bruce McCain
	Lay Reader	None
	Communion Assistant	Alice McCain
	Hospitality Host	Vicki Browning
September 11	Usher/Greeter	David & Barbara Swartling
	Lay Reader	Barbara Swartling
	Communion Assistant	David Swartling
	Hospitality Host	Andy & Debbie Rimkus
September 18	Usher/Greeter	Eve & Mike Curtis
	Lay Reader	Claire Dasler
	Communion Assistant	Vicki Browning
	Hospitality Host	Vicki Browning & Kristi Sutton
September 25	Usher/Greeter	Andy & Debbie Rimkus
	Lay Reader	Andy Rimkus
	Communion Assistant	Kathy Dudgeon
	Hospitality Host	Kathy & Doug Dudgeon

The Month Ahead

September 2022						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<i>Non-Bethany events in italics.</i>				1	2 <i>Noon AI Anon, FH</i>	3 5:00pm Worship followed by wine and cheese fellowship
4 10:00am Worship followed by coffee fellowship	5 Labor Day – Office Closed	6	7	8 5:00 BI Youth Orchestra Parent Night	9 <i>Noon AI Anon, FH</i>	10 2:00 BI Youth Orchestra Auditions 5:00pm Worship followed by wine and cheese fellowship
11 10:00am Worship followed by Celebration Cookout 2:00 BI Youth Orchestra Auditions	12 8:30am Women's Bible Study 7:15 Boy Scouts	13 8:00am Men's Bible Study 10:00am Rachel Circle followed by Quilters 3:15 BI Youth Choir 7:00pm Council Meeting	14 Noon Altar Guild 3:30 BI Youth Choir	15 7:00 Bethany Choir (Education Building)	16 <i>Noon AI Anon, FH</i>	17 5:00pm Worship followed by wine and cheese fellowship
18 10:00am Worship & Sunday School followed by coffee fellowship and Adult Ed	19 5:30 Bainbridge Chorale 7:15 Boy Scouts	20 10:00am Quilters 3:15 BI Youth Choir	21 3:30 BI Youth Choir 7:00 Bethany Choir	22 4:00 BI Youth Orchestra	23 <i>Noon AI Anon, FH</i>	24 5:00pm Worship followed by wine and cheese fellowship
25 10:00am Worship & Sunday School followed by coffee fellowship and Adult Ed CROP Walk	26 5:30 Bainbridge Chorale 7:15 Boy Scouts	27 10:00am Quilters 3:15 BI Youth Choir	28 3:30 BI Youth Choir 7:00 Bethany Choir	29 4:00 BI Youth Orchestra	30 <i>Noon AI Anon, FH</i>	