



The Banner

Every person feels, knows and shares God's love

Monthly Newsletter for Bethany United Methodist Church • Madison, WI • Vol. 54, No. 1 • January 2021

Peace Sunday at Bethany ~ February 21st

Sponsored by the Bethany Peace Fellowship

Theme

Healing Divisions in Our Community and Nation

Worship Service at 10:00 am

Featuring:

- ✝ participation by members of the Peace Fellowship
- ✝ lighting of the peace candle
- ✝ peace related message by Pastor Jewison
- ✝ peace related music

Forum

11:15 am via Zoom: *How Can Poetry Heal the Divisions in Our Communities and Nation?*

Forum Leaders



Poets Amaud Jamaul Johnson and Cherene Sherrad-Johnson are members of Bethany and Professors at the University of Wisconsin. Both were featured on the cover of *On Wisconsin* magazine, which can be viewed here: <https://onwisconsin.uwalumni.com/features/poetry-of-the-moment/>.

During the forum Amaud and Cherene will discuss two poems by African American poets and explore how poetry provides opportunities for reflection and transformation of our past, present, and future.

Copies of the poems may be requested by contacting Marge Lyford (mclyford@att.net) or 608-233-5930





PASTOR'S COLUMN



A Long, Long Period of Testing in the Wilderness

We were just two weeks into the season of Lent last year when everything suddenly had to be shut down. In the weeks and then months that followed, it was so strange for me to be in the church building – alone. Normally Bethany's building is filled with activity nearly every day of the week, morning, afternoon, and evening. But the hallways and rooms were all empty. The lights were off and the shades were drawn. There was a chill in the air, because the heat was turned way down.



And it wasn't just the air that was cold. Time in a sense was frozen. The bulletin boards were still advertising March activities even months later. The Fellowship Hall was perpetually set up for a Game Night that had never happened. For months, the winter banners hung silently inside, while outside the leaves budded out, absorbed the sun of summer, and then turned colors and dropped.

Perhaps most striking to me was the altar in the Sanctuary. The twisted, weathered wood of the Lenten cross was never replaced with Easter flowers. The altar was shrouded in burlap, and held a large broken piece of pottery (the fractured pot is still in the chancel even today). It was as if instead of being tested in the wilderness

for 40 days, Jesus had accepted the need to struggle this time for 400 days instead. And actually that is exactly what Jesus has done.

The past year has been filled with struggles, and sacrifices, and many losses for all of us. And Jesus has chosen to be with us in those struggles, to give us strength, and to help us to grow in spite of the challenges. We associate the season of Lent with struggle and testing, but "Lent" comes from a word that means "spring." Lent testifies that even in the winters of our souls, God is preparing a spring of new life that will inevitably bloom.

We will observe Ash Wednesday worship on February 17th at 7:00 p.m. (yes, on Zoom). Obviously I won't be placing ashes on your foreheads – but it is hardly as if we need a sign to remind us of our mortality this time around. Normally Ash Wednesday begins the Lenten season. But this time around, it is almost as if we are continuing the Lenten journey that we started at the end of February last year. Yes, it has been a long, long struggle in the wilderness. But the blossoming of new life will come – that is God's promise to us.

Blessings in Christ,
Pastor Greg

Wisconsin Volunteers in Mission

In a normal year Wisconsin Volunteers in Mission (VIM) would have as many as twelve national mission trips scheduled, ranging from repairing our United Methodist camps at Pine Lake and Lake Lucerne to addressing the needs of neglected, poverty-stricken communities across the nation. But 2021 has been anything but normal and all of our spring trips have been cancelled. Those scheduled for the rest of the year are doubtful pending the course of Covid-19.

How does VIM address the continuing needs in this pandemic? One idea is a virtual mission trip. Those interested would make donations in lieu of normal registration fees that would go towards materials for the project. A limited on-site construction crew would do the project, documenting progress through pictures posted on Facebook. Such a project is now in progress in Appleton at the home of our longtime VIM cook, Sherry. She received a Habitat home this past summer with an unfinished basement. VIM was to have helped build her home originally but Covid concerns prevented that from occurring. She frequently has extended family staying with her and needed an additional bathroom and bedrooms completed in that basement space. Four volunteers have framed the rooms, a retired electrician volunteer has completed the rough electrical, and this past week another three volunteers have finished the rough plumbing work. We will continue with insulation and drywall work this week and next.

Bethany UMC has been extremely helpful in serving as a collection and distribution site for donations. As work continues more updates will follow. Please consider VIM projects in the future as an option as you wrestle with finding a calling where your talents can best serve those in need. You can also donate to VIM projects on Bethany's "Giving Financially" page on our website.



Simple Gifts for February — “Allied Partners Food Pantry & Wellness Center”

Simple Gift collections during the month of February are going to support our partners at the Allied Food Pantry and Allied Wellness Center.

The Food Pantry and Wellness Center are both part of Allied Partners — an interfaith coalition of active congregations and organizations who share a vision of a strong, healthy community in the Allied-Dunn’s Marsh neighborhood.

By working together with members of the neighborhood and service providers, Allied Partners is dedicated to supporting the neighborhood’s physical and economic health, sustainability and common good.

Members of the Bethany United Methodist Church family are connected with Allied Partners in a range of ways, including by contributing food, financial donations, and volunteers for the Food Pantry, and to the Wellness Center. Bethany also provides representation on the Allied Partners Board.



The pantry exists to provide nutritious food to those who are in need and cannot at the moment totally support themselves. It provides both perishable and non-perishable food items, as well as other necessities such as toiletries and hygiene products. Items are distributed based on the number of individuals in each family.

Winter food pantry hours are Wednesdays, 10 a.m. to noon, and the first and third Saturday of each month, from 10 to 11:30 a.m. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the pantry is distributing pre-packed bags outside of the Boys and Girls Club in the neighborhood where the pantry is housed.

The Allied Wellness Center is dedicated to the belief that having access to health care is not just a luxury — but a fundamental human right for every member of our community. It’s the organization’s hope that the Allied Wellness Center will bring all of the community members and service partners together to continue to strengthen the foundation of the neighborhood and to serve as a bridge for our neighbors to take an important step toward creating a healthier lifestyle. The Allied Wellness Center is currently closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but remains committed to the neighborhood and will re-open when it’s safe to do so.

Please continue to give generously, as your support will make a difference in real and relevant ways.

To learn more visit <https://alliedfoodpantry.wixsite.com/allied-food-pantry> or <https://alliedwellnesscenter.org/>

Up Next: In March, Simple Gifts will be collected for the Madison Area Food Pantry Gardens.

Ash Wednesday Special Offering

There will be an additional Simple Gifts collection centered on Ash Wednesday (February 17) to support the Reconciling Ministries Network, an organization seeking the inclusion of people of all sexual orientations and gender identities in both the policy and practices of United Methodist Church. As an expression of Christ’s inclusive love, the Bethany congregation voted on Nov. 20, 2002 to become a Reconciling Congregation. On Oct. 26, 2011 the statement was revised to be more inclusive.





UPCOMING ACTIVITIES



ZOOM LINKS

Zoom links for all classes and groups are listed on the Bethany website on the Upcoming Events page. From the home page, click on the "Groups and Classes" box at the bottom right of the page. Links are listed by the day of the week in which they occur.

SUSANNA CIRCLE

The next meeting of the Susanna Circle UMW will be on Zoom at 1:00 pm on Wednesday, February 3rd. The program will be by Ann Sowaske, who will report on the mission trip she took last February. All Bethany women are welcome.

LYDIA FELLOWSHIP

Lydia Fellowship will meet on Monday, February 8, at 1:00 pm on Zoom. Ann Sowaske will be the hostess for the meeting. Ann will give a presentation on the mission trip she took to the Dominican Republic, February 17-20, 2020. Please join us.

AGAPE

Please join us for the February Agape meeting, Wednesday, February 10th at 6:00 pm via Zoom. Brenda Nemec, author of *Empath Empowerment Crystals and Techniques* will speak on spirituality.

BOOK BROWSERS

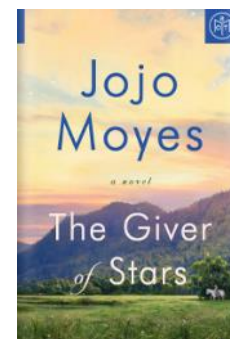
February Book Browsers will meet on Monday, February 15 at 2:00 pm via Zoom. Nancy Gloe will report on a book to be announced. Please join us.

REFLECTIONS BOOK STUDY

Reflections Book Study will meet Monday, February 22 at 1:00 pm via Zoom. The book for February is *The Giver of Stars* by JoJo Moyes. Copies are available from the South Central Library System. An impulsive British woman, her band of librarians on horseback, a punishing winter in Southern Appalachia, moonshiners with itchy trigger fingers and the town's coal tycoon just begging them to shoot: What could possibly go wrong?

The Giver of Stars, based on the true story of the Pack Horse Library initiative, a Works Progress Administration project that ran from 1935 to 1943 and turned women and their steeds into bookmobiles. Moyes's characters travel into the remote Eastern Kentucky mountains to deliver learning to the most isolated residents.

Discussion is open to all whether you have read the book or not.



REGULAR WEEKLY ZOOM GATHERINGS

The following gatherings occur every week and everyone is welcome to join in for a time of fellowship and commiserating.

- ⇒ Sunday, 8:30 am — Early Bird Coffee Chat
- ⇒ Monday, 10:00 am — Coffee Chat
- ⇒ Wednesday, 3:30 pm — Tea Time



ANNOUNCEMENTS



MEMBER CARE

Our Prayers and Sympathies are with...

- ✝ Shirley Siefert on the death of her brother-in-law who is also Linda Huttenberg's uncle. We keep the family in our thoughts.
- ✝ Sally Gaard and Jennifer Goulette and family on the death of Sally's cousin.

In Appreciation...

- ✓ Thank you to everyone who sent cards to me in 2020, after I moved to Noel Manor in Verona. They are very much appreciated. Blessings to you all for 2021. — Lois Jones

MEMORIAL GIFTS RECEIVED IN DECEMBER

For Clarence Olson: Sue Poullette, Mary Ann Drescher and Thomas Ramsey, Mary K. Ellis, Kelly Carothers and Chelsea Herrera, Linda Ertel, Dorothy Smead, Shirley Kramer, Jerry and Ruth Apps, Maxine Olson, Leslie Brodhead Griffith, Leo and Mary Fitzgerald, Robert Crom, Diane Johnson, Arthur and Loretta Paulman, Sue Coats

For Gale VandeBerg: Robert Forbess and Eunice Reep, Sue Poullette, Jerry VandeBerg, Linda Niesen

For John Kruse: Sally Gaard

For PJ: Bonnie Griskavich

CARING FOR EACH OTHER IN THE NEW YEAR

During these trying times that have had effects on us all, have you considered how loneliness may be affecting the friends you don't see in person any more? ALL OF US should be a friendly voice to our church friends . . . AND our neighbors or other acquaintances who might welcome a friendly, caring voice. The Caring Ministries Team encourages all of you to make that effort to make some "how ya doing" calls. Lets be the friendly congregation we say we are by sharing God's love with others. And, maybe there is also a way you can lend a helping hand during these trying times to make life a little more pleasant for someone.

ATTENTION STAMP COLLECTORS

A few weeks ago a box of stamps was dropped off at the church. These stamps, several hundred, are from around the world and vary in age but most are in good condition. The stamps are a donation to any collectors that might be interested. If you would like them, or know of someone who would, then let the church office know. First come, first served.

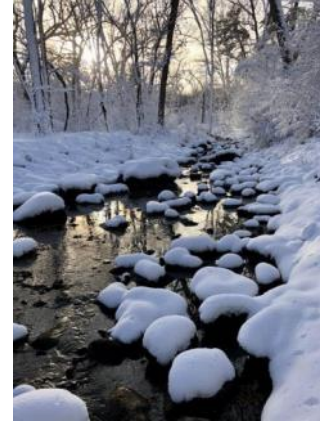


For Children's Ministry information, contact Lisa Weaver, Director of Children's Ministries
Phone: (608) 238-6381 / Email: childrensministries@bethanymadison.org

Rivers

On January 10, the Zoom Sunday School children read the story of the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River, as told in Matthew 3:13-17.

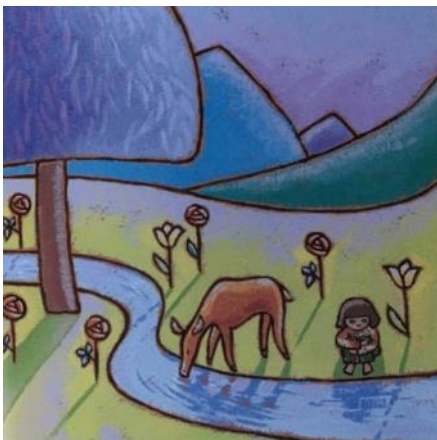
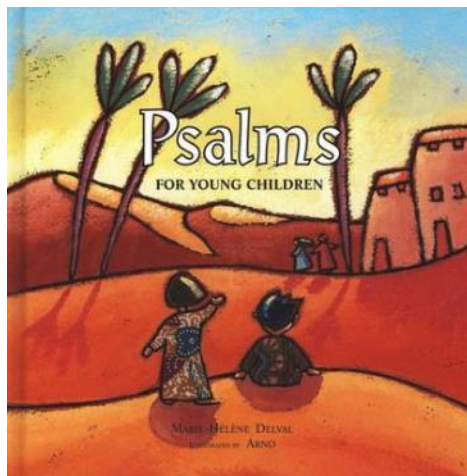
Children created river pictures of their own, using shades of blue paper, crayons, and markers. In the Children's Message in worship on that same day, Lisa shared photos of a couple of her favorite waterways: the small creek behind Thoreau School and the Pheasant Branch River in the Pheasant Branch Conservancy.



Psalm 42 talks of how we thirst for God the way a deer thirsts for a drink of water. What rivers are important to you?

Psalm 42 (From Psalms for Children, by Marie-Helene Delval)

A thirsty deer looks for water,
For a river to drink from.
I need God that way.
I'm thirsty inside.
God, send me your light,
Show me the way to your house,
high on the mountain!



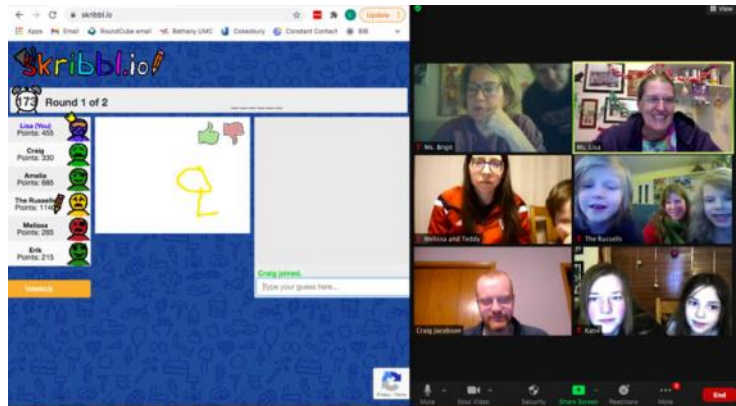


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MONTHLY FAMILY GAME NIGHTS ON ZOOM

One option for staying connected with other Bethany children, youth, and families during this time of physical separation is to participate in a monthly Game Night via Zoom. Taking place on one Saturday evening per month, recent activities have included Boggle, Pictionary (Skribbl.io), and Jigsaw Puzzles. So make some popcorn, sip a hot drink, and join in the fun! Watch the E-Banner for the next date and Zoom link, or check in with Lisa or Brigit for more information.



A LOOK AT OUR FAITHFULNESS

Sunday, Jan. 3
Total..... 147

Sunday, Jan. 10
Total..... 155

Sunday, Jan. 17
Total..... 188

Sunday, Jan 24
Total.....



We are a Reconciling Congregation,
 welcoming all people to be a part of
 our church family.

Information

Office Hours: 8 am - 2:30 pm

Church Office: (608) 238-6381

Email: bethanyoffice@bethanymadison.org

Website: www.bethanymadison.org

Sunday Morning Schedule

Early Bird Coffee Chat (Zoom)	8:30 am
Faithlink Adult Discussion Class (Zoom)	9 am
Zoom Worship	10 am
After-Worship Fellowship (Zoom)	11 am

Bulletin Deadline : Tuesdays at Noon

E-Banner Deadline: Tuesdays at Noon

Banner Deadline for the March Issue: February 10

Staff

Lead Pastor.....	Greg Jewison
Pastor of Visitation	Brad Mather
Director of Children's Ministries	Lisa Weaver
Director of Youth Ministries	Brigit Parlow
Global Mission Partners.....	Ardell & Gordon Graner, Dominican Republic
.....	Temba Nkomozepe, Mujila Falls, Zambia
Director of Music.....	Taras Nahimiak
Organist	Sue Poullette
Director of Bell Choirs	Nick Bonaccio
Director of Children & Youth Choirs	Lori Nahimiak
Office Administrator	Carl White
Membership Secretary.....	Betsy Dunne
Financial Secretary	Sandra Arrington
Treasurer.....	Steven Webster
Custodians.....	Ron Rebholz
Church Phone	(608) 238-6381
Church Office Email	bethanyoffice@bethanymadison.org
Website.....	www.bethanymadison.org

Banner Assembly

Mary Blasdel . Gerry Cotter . Judy Cox . Betsy Dunne . Eileen Dunne
 Sally Gaard . Vada Mayfield . Kathy Nelson
 Gail Steinhorst . Donna Wold