



The Banner

Every person feels, knows and shares God's love

Monthly Newsletter for Bethany United Methodist Church • Madison, WI • Vol. 55, No. 3 • March 2022

Bethany's Peace Fellowship — Past, Present and Future

Our church has a long history of social activism, including activities and programs to provide awareness and promote action regarding matters of peace, equality and justice.

During the 1980's, a Peace Fellowship group was active for a while. Of particular concern at that time was the buildup of nuclear armaments.

As times changed, there were new concerns and about 40 years later, in June of 2008, a second Peace Fellowship was established. Their goal was to... "seek to promote nonviolent social and political changes in our country and the world by supporting sustainable and just solutions for conditions of inequality, violence, and repression which deny people their basic human rights." Marge Lyford and Laurie Swimm were co-chairs.

Over the succeeding years, the group sponsored an annual Peace Sunday, with varied topics, speakers, and activities including book studies. Members also provided peace related articles for the Bethany newsletter.

Although membership in the group has dwindled over recent years, they have continued to sponsor Peace Sundays and submit Banner articles.

A question about the future of the Peace Fellowship: Don't you think that because of the increasing division and violence in the world currently, now would be a good time for others to join our group to provide more awareness and direction for our participation in peace matters?

This article is a call for all those who would like to help promote peace and justice to step up and join our Peace Fellowship.

Call Marge Lyford (608-233-5930) if you would like to participate or have questions.





PASTOR'S COLUMN



Determining Our Direction in the “Bewilder-ness”

We are entering the season of Lent, which begins with Ash Wednesday on March 2nd. We will gather that evening for worship at 6:30 p.m. in the sanctuary (and on Zoom). We remember each year during this season how Jesus was driven into a wilderness for forty days to face a time of testing.



Several years ago, I wrote about how Jesus was driven not just into a “wilderness” (a desert) but into a “bewilder-ness.” Burdened by hunger and deprivation, he faced a time of testing. He wrestled through a time of bewilderment, and in the end affirmed his devotion to God’s loving purposes.

We ourselves know what it is to live in bewildering times. All of us

feel lost in a wilderness at one time or another, bewildered by the challenges that the world throws at us – and our world sure has thrown a lot of challenges at us in recent times!

Lent is a time to reflect on our lives and world. We are called to take honest stock of our values, redirect our commitments, and prepare our hearts for Holy Week and Easter. During this season of Lent, we will explore how our faith keeps us steady in the midst of tests and temptations. I hope this will be a meaningful time for all of us, as we seek God’s guidance and strength.

Blessings in Christ,
Pastor Greg

Happy Retirement, Steve!

Many of you know that Steve Webster has been our church treasurer for over 25 years. It is with appreciation and gratitude that we announce that he is retiring on March 31, 2022. During Steve’s time at Bethany he has not only been our treasurer, but has taken on additional roles, serving as secretary for our Church Council for many years, as well as our annual Church Conference recorder.



Steve’s interests went above and beyond the administrative roles. He has long had an appreciation for the many ways our congregation supports local and global missions, and he has served for many years on our Outreach Team and been involved in a variety of social justice activities.

Beyond our congregation, he has been involved in denomination-wide activities advocating for a more inclusive church. He has traveled to multiple General Conferences of the United Methodist Church, in order to demonstrate for social justice on LGBTQIA+ issues.

We know many of you will want to express appreciation individually to Steve for his faithful service to Bethany. During the next month you can send notes to the church office or email Steve at: Bethany.Madison.Treasurer@gmail.com.

Congratulations, Steve, on your retirement and we wish you well in the next chapter!

2022 Special Sundays

Over the course of 2022, Bethany will participate in several special offering Sundays sponsored by the broader United Methodist Church. In the sharing of our gifts on these Special Sundays, as Methodists we are able to come together and make a significant difference in a way that no individual can do on his or her own.

The next Special Sunday of 2022 is UMCOR Sunday, previously known as One Great Hour of Sharing. Held on March 27, UMCOR Sunday enables the United Methodist Committee on Relief to reach out through worldwide ministries of food, shelter, health and peace.

UMCOR responds to U.S. and international disasters, addresses diseases and poverty, assists refugees and immigrants, provides clean water and works to reduce hunger. UMCOR would be unable to do this work without your support. From training Conference Disaster Coordinators and Early Response Teams to keeping the office lights on, the UMCOR Sunday special offering equips the organization to respond quickly to disasters.

Special Sunday contributions can also be made online at www.bethanymadison.org/giving-financially/.



Simple Gifts for March — “Madison Area Food Pantry Gardens”

Simple Gift offerings made during March are going to support the Madison Area Food Pantry Gardens, which is dedicated to providing local food pantries with fresh, nutritious, and culturally relevant vegetables.

This local, non-profit and volunteer organization has grown and donated more than two million pounds of fresh, first-choice vegetables to the Dane County emergency food system since its inception two decades ago.

During more typical times, simple gifts are made by placing loose coins in the offering plates located at the back of the Sanctuary, or by putting cash or a check in mission envelopes. You can also give online by visiting BethanyMadison.org (click on We Serve and, from the drop-down menu, select Giving Financially).

These donations will be used to purchase seeds, plants, supplies, and equipment needed by Madison Area Food Pantry Gardens (MAFPG) to continue to feed our neighbors in need. You can also make a difference by giving your time. Participate in gleaning at Farmers’ Markets or work in the gardens. Work begins with planting in April through June. Harvesting starts in early July and continues until the first killing frost, usually in October. You can work once during the season, once a month or once a week.



The organization and its many volunteers plant, tend, and grow produce at a network of 11 gardens across Dane County thanks to generous landowners, affiliated churches, and donors. These gardens range in size from less than one acre to 12 acres.

Working together with local food pantries and food banks, MAFPG establishes what vegetables are needed by users of the emergency food system. This means MAFPG is able to fill gaps by producing desired vegetables that meet the cultural needs of our community.



MAFPG dates to the late 1990s, when several churches and service clubs began collecting surplus produce from the Saturday Farmer’s Market on the Square and from the Fitchburg, Hilldale, and Middleton Farmer’s Markets. While more than 2,000 pounds of produce was collected each week, especially in the late summer, it still was not enough to satisfy the need for fresh produce across Dane County’s food pantries.

In 2000, three one-acre garden plots were then established, which produced an estimated 60,000 pounds of produce during the summer and fall.

Today, MAFPG reports that in an average year it’s able to grow 100,000 pounds of produce while gleaning an additional 50,000 pounds of vegetables.

To learn more, visit: foodpantrygardens.org

Up next: Simple Gifts for April go to support Wisconsin Faith Voices for Justice.





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 "Upcoming Events" box in the lower right of the page. Links are listed by the day of the week on which they occur.

SUSANNA CIRCLE

The next meeting of the United Methodist Women's Susanna Circle is Wednesday, March 2nd at 1:00 pm in Fellowship Hall. We will meet in person with masks, seated at separate tables. Our speaker is Pastor Greg Jewison who will give us an up-date on the recent decisions made for the United Methodist churches. He will also honor the Ash Wednesday occasion with a few words of introduction to the season of Lent. All Bethany women are invited to attend. Our hostess is JoAn Brock (798-4047).

AGAPE

The Agape meeting for March will be held on Wednesday, March 9th, at 6:30 pm via Zoom. The program will be given by Paula McKenzie telling about her time volunteering at the Humanitarian Respite Center in McAllen, Texas. The center serves hundreds of refugees from Central and South America every day.

LYDIA FELLOWSHIP

The next meeting of Lydia Fellowship is scheduled for Monday, March 14th at 1:00 pm. Faith Bauman is the hostess (the location is still being determined—watch the e-Banner for details). Everyone is invited to join the meeting. Please call Eileen Rech at 608-228-6256 or email at jim.eileen@yahoo.com telling us if you will attend.

BOOK BROWSERS

Book Browsers will hold their March meeting on Monday, March 21st, at 2:00 pm via Zoom. Nancy Gloe will review the book *Finding the Mother Tree* by Suzanne Simrad. It promises to be a very interesting presentation. Please join us.

REFLECTIONS BOOK STUDY

Reflections Book Study will meet Monday, March 28th at 1:00 pm via Zoom. The book for March is *The Lions of Fifth Avenue* by Fiona Davis. In Fiona Davis's latest historical novel, a series of book thefts roils the iconic New York Public Library, leaving two generations of strong-willed women to pick up the pieces. The discussions are always interesting and divergent.

Join in for a lively time of fellowship and reflection.



WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

The theme for this year's World Day of Prayer on March 4, 2022, is *I Know the Plans I Have for You*, which was prepared by the WDP Committee of England, Wales, and Northern Ireland and the World Day of Prayer USA Committee. Our celebration will be held from 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 pm via Zoom.

SPIRITUAL GROWTH RETREAT

All Bethany Women are Invited to attend a Spiritual Growth Retreat on Saturday April 2, 2022.

Sponsored by the South West District UMW, the retreat will take place at the Dells Delton United Methodist Church in Wisconsin Dells (we'll plan to car pool there).

Registration, coffee and continental breakfast begin at 9:00 am. The program begins at 9:45 and ends at 2:15 with lunch included. The registration fee - \$15

The retreat leader will be Rev. Marianne Cotter (daughter-in-law of Bethany members Dale and Gerry Cotter). The theme for her presentation will be "Pondering" with a focus on Mary, the mother of Jesus, pondering on the mysterious ways God is at work in our world. You'll learn practical tools and spiritual approaches to moving through uncertain times with the confidence and faith of Mary.

To register please contact Marge Lyford at 233-5930 before March 25.

EASTER FLOWERS

It's time to think about ordering Easter Flowers for our first Easter back in the Sanctuary since 2019. The price for each plant is \$16 and you may choose from the following:

- Tulip (Red, Yellow or Pink)
- Daffodil
- Easter Lily



Orders must be placed no later than Monday, April 4th. Order forms will be on the table outside the Sanctuary beginning March 6th. Or, you may email the Church Office (include the plant you want and if it's "In Honor of" or "In Memory of" someone).



Join Bethany! July 16-24, 2022

ASP is a relational ministry with construction on the side.



Appalachia Service Project brings volunteers and communities together in the heart of Central Appalachia, strengthening faith, deepening relationships, and spreading hope.



We are recruiting volunteers for this year's mission trip with Appalachia Service Project! Construction projects on resident homes include building porches, wheelchair ramps and drainage ditches and installing drywall, flooring and roofing. Most of the work is exterior, to help make homes warmer, safer, and drier. We have a wonderful time in mission and fellowship together, so please consider joining us! Volunteers must be 13+ and have completed the 8th grade. Adult volunteers must be at least 23 years of age and have a background check. We would love to have you join us on this life changing experience! Contact Brigit Parlow (Bethany.Madison.Youth@Gmail.com) for more information.



AFGHAN FAMILY UPDATE



You will recall last fall that the Outreach Team approached the congregation concerning our commitment to assist a large, extended Afghan family that had recently settled in the Bethany neighborhood. The Bethany family has responded very generously and, through Brigit Parlow, we are periodically helping them with gift cards for food, household items and, in particular, purchases of sewing material and thread that the women are using to make pants, shawls, and a dress-like covering over pants. Thank you very much!

Abdul is the only one working as the bureaucracy slowly processes applications for work permits for the remaining family members. Bethany Outreach has partnered with the Refugee Assistance Committee from First Baptist Church to cooperatively address several larger needs that Abdul's family has.

English as a Second Language (ESL) classes have been set up and were to begin in the middle of January. These have been temporarily postponed until all adult family members have undergone literacy screening through the Literacy Network. Both Bethany and First Baptist have a wealth of ESL teachers with long experience that have stepped up to begin once the screening is completed. The plan would be to have separate adult and child classes offered at Bethany two mornings each week.

The photos below and on the next page show Abdul (2nd from right, wearing a hat, in the photo below) and his brothers, a cousin, and an uncle while, others are taken in Abdul's apartment. The rugs on the floor and the cushions around the perimeter are very typical of middle eastern lifestyle.





AFGHAN FAMILY UPDATE



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

Children's Sunday School

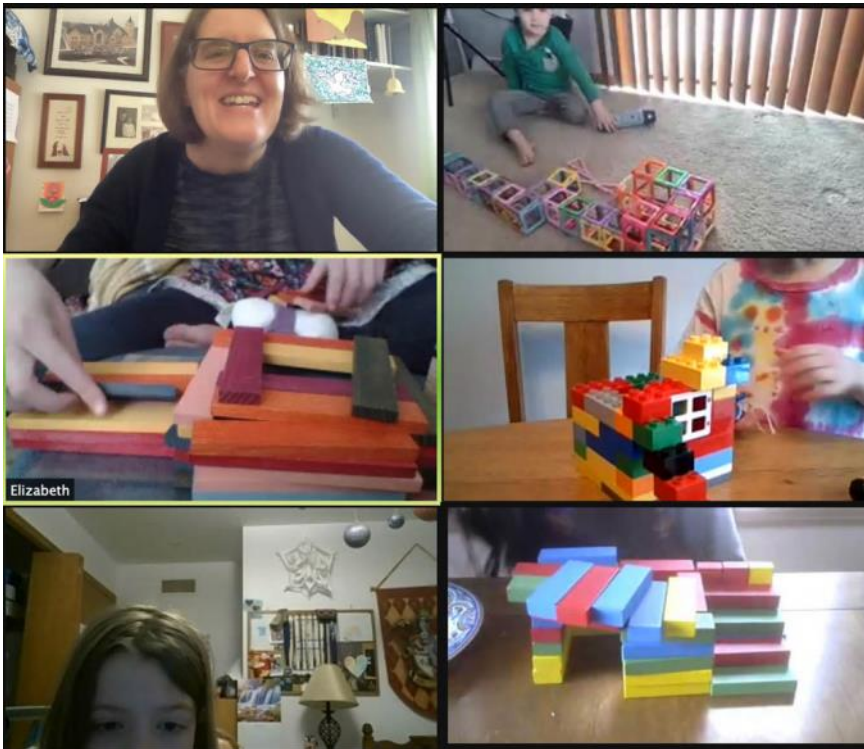
Ms. Lisa and the children are currently reading stories from the life of Jesus, during their weekly Sunday School class. And even when the gathering is on Zoom, we always manage to do a project related to the story!

From Luke 5:17-26

Four men carry their friend to Jesus, hoping that Jesus will be able to heal him. When they arrive at the house where Jesus is, it is too crowded to fit through the door. So the four men carry the cot up to the roof and lower their friend through a hole in the ceiling. This photo shows what the Sunday School children built to make a scene from the story. Can you see the homes made out of duplos, wooden blocks, and magnet squares? Can you see the steps and ladders, and a hole/space in the roof of each house?

From Luke 6:6-11

Jesus is in the synagogue, and notices a man with a withered hand. Despite disapproval from others, Jesus heals the man's hand on the Sabbath. This photo shows a sample of the art project we made to remember the story -- tracing our hands, catching hearts in our palms, and passing along love to others.



A LOOK AT OUR FAITHFULNESS

Sunday, January 30
 Total.....144

Sunday, February 6
 Total 136

Sunday, February 13
 Total.....137

Sunday, February 20
 Total 120

BETHANY OAK TREE



On Wednesday, February 16, the large oak at the center point in the parking lot, was removed. This oak, one of many on Bethany's property, was mostly dead and was in danger of coming down in a windstorm causing damage to vehicles in the parking lot and also, potentially, taking out power lines and damaging the property of our neighbors.

It was sad to see this magnificent tree come down, but it had to happen.





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

Information

Office Hours: 8 am - 2:30 pm, Monday — Friday
Church Office: (608) 238-6381
Email: Bethany.Madison.Office@Gmail.com
Website: bethanymadison.org

Sunday Morning Schedule

Early Bird Coffee Chat (Zoom)	8:30 am
Faithlink Adult Discussion Class	8:45 am
Worship (in person and on Zoom)	10:00 am
After-Worship Fellowship (Zoom)	11:00 am

Bulletin Deadline : Tuesdays at Noon
E-Banner Deadline: Tuesdays at Noon
Banner Deadline for the April Issue: March 14

Staff

Lead Pastor..... Greg Jewison
 Pastor of Visitation Brad Mather
 Deacon Rev. Kory Douglass
 Office Administrator..... Carl White
 Director of Children’s Ministries & Music..... Lisa Weaver
 Director of Youth Ministries..... Brigit Parlow
 Global Mission Partner Temba Nkomozezi, Mujila Falls, Zambia
 Director of Music..... Dr. Shannon Gravelle
 Organist Sue Poullette
 Director of Bell Choirs Nick Bonaccio
 Choral Program Collaborative Artist..... Evan Lange
 Membership Secretary..... Kathy Doran
 Financial Secretary..... Sandra Arrington
 Treasurer..... Steven Webster
 Custodian Ron Rebholz

Banner Assembly

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