



The Banner

Every person feels, knows and shares God's love

Monthly Newsletter for Bethany United Methodist Church • Madison, WI • Vol. 56, No. 3 • March 2024

March Happenings

March 16: Game Night

We are looking forward to another game night on Saturday, March 16th from 4:30 pm – 6:30 pm in Bethany's Fellowship Hall. There will be fun, food (supper-always a bonus!) and of course games. You can also enjoy a jigsaw puzzle or spend time at the art table. All ages welcome. Childcare staff will be present to help play with our youngest friends. Please RSVP using [this form](#) so we can get a head count for food and fun.

March 24: Forum: Antisemitism

Rabbi Bonnie Margulis of Wisconsin Faith Voice for Justice will talk to us about the rise of antisemitism and what we can do about it. The forum will take place in the chapel following Palm Sunday worship.

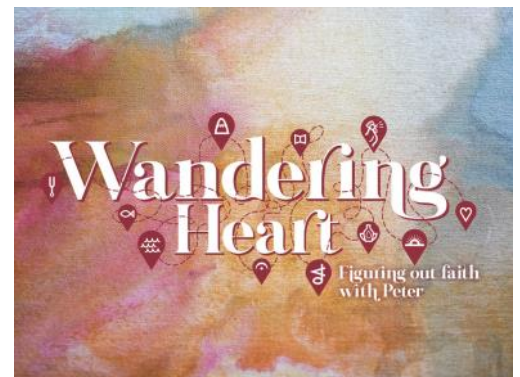
Holy Week at Bethany

March 24: Palm Sunday

Worship at 10am: We celebrate Jesus' entry into Jerusalem with a Palm Parade. We will hear the story of the crowds celebrating Jesus with palm branches. Everyone will be invited to join the parade as we wave our palm branches in joyous celebration. There will be a special appearance by a donkey as we learn about their participation in this special parade.

March 28: Maundy Thursday

Our 7pm Worship Service will recall the last meal of Jesus with his disciples and his command that we love one another. This service will include a renewal of baptism and Holy Communion. As we ponder God's amazing love for us we will be invited to share an act of love through art, words or prayer for our neighbor.



March 29: Good Friday

Our 7pm Worship Service will center around Peter's role in the crucifixion narrative. We will explore the last hours of Jesus through the eyes and experiences of his closest disciple. By focusing on Peter, we imagine how we might have acted and behaved had we been there as followers and friends of Jesus. The service will include stations that we participate in together seated in our pews. Each station features scripture readings, as well as some special readings, and ways for each of us to respond. This special service will help prepare your heart for joy of Easter morning.

March 31: Easter

Worship at 8:30 am and 10:00 am: We will offer two worship services on Easter morning. These will be joyous celebrations of new life and the hope we have because of the resurrection. Our Easter morning worship will include music from our choir, handbells, and a special brass ensemble.

- **Easter Egg Hunt 9:30 to 10:00** for children of all ages on the front lawn. There will be no separate Sunday School classes but the nursery will be open during both services for children ages 5 and younger.



PASTOR'S COLUMN



We are in the season of Lent. Lent is a time of waiting, often associated with the wilderness and a time of self-emptying and self-



reflection. Our theme this Lent is wandering heart, and we are following Peter on his journey of faith. He has moments of strong faith and moments of weakness. I'm enjoying looking at Lent through Peter's eyes because he is so human. He desires to follow Jesus and yet he often questions, doubts and flat out makes mistakes. And I have to admit that I've had some moments of doubt myself about our Lent journey. Is it somber enough?

Are we spending enough time in the wilderness or are we beginning the celebration too early? I look forward to Lent as a time to ponder all that Jesus endured. And yet spending too much time in the wilderness can be draining.

This year our weather is also a bit unusual. We have seen record high temperatures and then bouts of cold and snow. While I can hope that spring is just around the corner, realistically I know that

we will have more winter weather before spring arrives for good. As we wait and look for signs of spring, we also wait and look for signs of God's presence in our world. I wonder how we might meld these ideas of wilderness and waiting with spring and new life. How journeying with Peter might give us a new experience of Lent, where we examine our own relationship with Jesus and our own journey of discipleship. Lent is a time when we are actively engaged in seeking a deeper relationship with Christ. Perhaps listening to Peter's story is an excellent way to grow deeper in faith.

If you haven't already begun, I encourage you to read our Lenten devotional. Attend Sunday worship when you can and if you can't be present in person watch our YouTube worship anytime during the week. Our staff is working hard for a special Palm Sunday worship service. And two of my favorite worship services are Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. Read more about them on the front page. May your wandering heart grow closer to God this Lent as we await the joy of Easter morning. Have a blessed Lent,

Pastor Julie

February 11 Introduction to Lenten Theme: Wandering Heart



Simple Gifts for March — “Bolivia Project”

Simple Gift collections during March are going to support [Senior Adult Ministries](#) in Bolivia. This project is designed to provide a new assisted living center for older, “orphaned parents.”

When poor seniors can no longer dig potatoes, take care of sheep, or work in other ways — these older adults rely on their grown children to help support them. However, because of the high mortality rate of young people in Bolivia, there is a significant number of senior adults whose children have all died. An additional problem is migration of young people to other nations looking for work. This has led to a significant population in Bolivia called “orphaned parents,” who often have no means to feed or house themselves. Another targeted group for this home are pastor spouses. Dave Harsh explains that many Bolivian pastors earn very little and when they can no longer work or are deceased, their spouses (typically women) are in poverty.

These senior adults are too often living in abandoned adobe or rock homes, and they struggle to find food. The goal of this project is to develop a high-quality assisted living center for these orphaned elders — and to raise awareness of what is possible to help these struggling seniors in Bolivia.

The Wisconsin Conference of The United Methodist Church has a partnership with the Bolivian Evangelical Methodist Church, and Bethany has had ties to work being done in Bolivia that spans a couple decades. The Senior Adult Ministries in Bolivia project is part of Global Ministries, the international mission, humanitarian relief, and development organization of The United Methodist Church.

Last year at this time, Simple Gift collections went to help a congregation in the Bolivian village of Huanocollo that was in need of pews. Located on the Altiplano (which is Spanish for “high plain”), the church only had a few plastic-type chairs and its members dreamed of having real pews its families and individuals could use — instead of sitting on the cold, earthen floor at the high altitude.

Dave Harsh reports: “Our pew project was a success and the pews have just arrived at the little church on the altiplano of Bolivia.” He also notes that a more recent project raised \$7,000 — in addition to receiving a challenge grant of \$5,000 — to secure funding for essential furniture to fill empty Methodist hospital rooms in Bolivia.

Simple gifts are made by placing loose coins in the offering plates, or by putting cash or a check in mission envelopes. You can give online by visiting [BethanyMadison.org](#) (click on We Serve and, from the drop-down menu, select Giving Financially).

Please consider giving generously, as your support is making a difference in real and relevant ways in Bolivia.

To learn more about supporting Senior Adult Ministries in Bolivia, visit: <https://umcmmission.org/advance-project/3020535/>.





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.

MARCH FOOD & FELLOWSHIP LUNCHEON

Food and Fellowship will next be held at Great Dane Pub at 2980 Cahill Main, Fitchburg.

Everyone is invited to come for lunch on March 20 at 11:30 am. Everyone orders from the menu and shares a pleasant time of dining on good food and engaging in conversations with our fellow church family. This is a good opportunity to get to know each other better and perhaps meet someone new to you. Betsy Tishler is the hostess for March. If you would like to attend, please email Betsy or call (608.233.0180) with your reservation by March 18. All are welcome.

LYDIA FELLOWSHIP

The next meeting of UWF's Lydia Fellowship is on Monday, March 11, at 1:00 pm in Fellowship Hall. Winnie Boyar is our hostess and will give a presentation entitled *Two Women of the Bible*. Everyone is welcome to attend. Please email [Eileen Rech](mailto:Eileen) or call at 608-228-6256 if you are able to attend.

AGAPE

The March meeting of UWF's Agape will be held on Monday, March 11 at 6:30pm. We will meet in Room 228 at Bethany. The presenter will be Sue Lutter, a juried member of Southern Wisconsin Art Guild. She will speak of her work in making stringing beaded necklaces and bracelets to bead woven jewelry and bead embroidery. Janet Daniel will serve as hostess. All are welcome!

BOOK BROWSERS

Book Browsers will meet on Monday, March 18, at 1pm via Zoom. Jan Vetrovec will report on the book *Dinners With Ruth* by Nina Totenberg. Please join us then.

INTERFAITH INTERSECTIONS

Wisconsin Faith Voices for Justice is excited to announce our 2024 Interfaith Intersections events. This program brings people together to hold intentional conversations on a variety of topics related to faith.

An important aspect of this program is that our panelists are lay people, not clergy or academics. Therefore, panelists will address the topics speaking from their own understanding of their faith but not speaking for their faith.

Please join us: (all events are Thursday nights, 7:00 to 8:30 in person and on Zoom)

- March 7 – Sin; at Madison Christian Community, 7118 Old Sauk Road, Madison
- April 11 - fasting/self-denial; Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 5701 Raymond Rd, Madison
- May 9 - forgiveness - person to person; person to God; at the Bahai Center, 324 W Lakeside St, Madison
- Sept. 12 - what is your faith's "high holy day" - location TBD
- Oct. 17 - cycle of times/seasons in different traditions; location TBD
- Nov. 14 - giving thanks; Sugar River United Methodist Church, 415 W Verona Ave, Verona



RSVP by scanning the code to the left or email wifaithvoices4justice@gmail.com.

SAVE THE DATE UWF SPRING SALAD LUNCHEON

Saturday, May 4th, 12:00 pm

Get ready for delicious salads and mouth-watering desserts! A wonderful program will follow the luncheon! Details to come.

Tickets on sale beginning April 21 for \$12.00 each.
(This is the major UWF fundraiser for missions in 2024)

SAVE THE DATE MEN'S RETREAT TO PINE LAKE

All men and their sons are invited to share a weekend of fellowship and fun at Pine Lake Methodist Camp the weekend of April 26—28. More details will be coming on our website, in the e-Banner and in the April Banner.



ANNOUNCEMENTS



OUR SPECIAL GIVING

Our congregation is known for its outreach--locally, nationally, and globally. In addition to all of the volunteer hours provided by members of our congregation, our financial generosity is noteworthy. The majority of our financial giving for these causes happens through monthly Simple Gifts designations as well as UMC Special Sundays donations. Throughout 2023 our church family donated almost \$32,000 through these giving opportunities, and all those funds were passed on to 27 organizations to support their work. This is a great example of how we are living out our Breakthrough Prayer as we find ways to help "where love and hope are needed most."

VOLUNTEER IN MISSION OPPORTUNITIES

Wisconsin Volunteers in Mission or VIM is an organization under the Wisconsin Conference UMC that both responds to disaster recovery needs and the home repair needs of those families in poverty stricken areas of the United States. Formed in the 1980's VIM has sponsored a number of trips for volunteers each year. Initially these were bus trips that became several van trips to now being drive-to-only trips because of the expense of the previous types of transportation. We stay in local churches, bring our own cooks, and spend the week on-site broken down into specific project groups. We largely bring our own tools and have our own site coordinators that guide the project work for the week. Our skills and work experience vary widely over the group and all are welcome and made to feel comfortable and productive over the course of the week. In the evening we have a devotion and then break into smaller groups by interest playing cards, doing puzzles, in conversation, or collapsing in our bunks. A quick overview of this year's trips follow. More information for each trip with contact info for each trip's registrar can be found on the conference website under "Ministries" and then "Volunteers in Mission."

- March 3-8: Midwest Missions
- March 17-22: Midwest Missions
- April 7-13: Mayfield, Kentucky Tornado Recovery
- May 12-18: Pine Lake UMC Camp
- June 16-22: Red Cliff
- September 26-October 4: Lake Lucerne UMC Camp



Again, consult the Wisconsin Conference [UMC Volunteers in Mission](#) website (click on National), for complete information on each trip.

SERVICE OPPORTUNITY: JOIN THE "MEAL TRAIN" EFFORT!

We rejoice with the Bethany families who are welcoming new babies into their lives. One tangible way for the church community to show love and support is to provide meals during this time of transition to new realities. Please contact the church office if you would like to be added to a list of potential meal providers! Additional details - and an opportunity to sign up for a particular day - will be given to those who respond to this invitation. This initial focus is for families with new babies, but we hope to expand the Meal Train to include families or individuals experiencing other life changes or facing medical challenges.

WORSHIP PREP!

Thank you to the youngest children's Sunday School class members who painted the big yellow heart which was used in worship on Sunday, Feb 11. The purple background was painted on the Thursday evening prior by kids whose adult family members were in Bell Choir rehearsal. Do you see the red and blue paint they mixed to achieve the color they wanted? The heart canvas was part of a Prayer Station in which congregation members wrote their names on pink hearts, symbolizing the line of a hymn: "Take my heart, oh take and seal it, seal it for Thy courts above."



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

Crafternoon!

Handwork from home, sewing felt hearts for the Lent worship banner, cutting out dining smocks...these projects kept our hands busy while we enjoyed warm conversation and visiting in Fellowship Hall on Saturday afternoon, Feb 11. Look for the "Wandering Hearts" banner at the front of the sanctuary during Lent worship. Thanks to Winnie and Eileen who organized the dining smock project. And our youngest participant was taught beginning crochet skills by Pastor Julie!



Puzzling

Who can resist a jigsaw puzzle? This 500-piece winter scene was finished in three stages: It was started at the January Game Night, continued during Sunday morning fellowship time for the next couple of weeks, and completed by a Bethany office volunteer who stopped by during the week. Go team!



Youth News

For Youth Ministry information, contact Kathy Mohs, Director of Youth Ministries
Phone: (608) 238-6381 / Email: Youth@BethanyMadison.org

Tubing at Tryoll!

On Saturday, Feb. 17th, over 20 folks of all different ages came out to Tyrol Basin for an epic afternoon of tubing, fun, and fellowship! It was windy, but sunny and perfect, and a new yearly tradition has begun!!



Confirmation:

On Sunday, Feb. 18th, our three confirmands and their mentors were joined by Rev. Mallory Yanchus from First UMC and two of her three confirmands and mentors. Our presenter was Deacon Kory Douglass, who presented and led a very interesting discussion on mental health.

On March 1st & 2nd, our confirmands, along with Pastor Julie and Kathy, will head to the Wesleyan Heritage Confirmation Retreat at Lake Lucerne.



BETHANY SCHOLARSHIPS

High School seniors, second year college students, or seminary students may apply for Bethany scholarships on our website (go to bethanymadison.org and click on We Connect, Bethany Forms and scroll to Bethany Scholarship Form). Please fill out the application and submit it no later than May 1st.

SUNDAY WORSHIP ATTENDANCE (IN-PERSON AND YOUTUBE)

Sunday, Jan. 29	Sunday, Feb. 4	Sunday, Feb. 11	Sunday, Feb. 18	Sunday, Feb. 25
Total202	Total..... 171	Total.....205	Total..... 195	Total..... 184



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: BethanyOffice@BethanyMadison.org

Website: bethanymadison.org

Sunday Morning Schedule

Faithlink Adult Discussion Class 8:45 am

Coffee Fellowship 9:15 am

Worship (in person and on YouTube) 10:00 am

Coffee Fellowship Following Worship

Staff

Lead Pastor.....	Rev. Julie Wilson
Pastor of Visitation	Rev. Brad Mather
Deacon	Rev. Kory Douglass
Office Administrator.....	Carl White
Director of Children's Ministries & Music	Lisa Weaver
Youth Director	Kathy Mohs
Director of Music	Kristie Halverson
Organist.....	Sue Poulette
Pianist.....	Evan Lange
Director of Bell Choirs	Nick Bonaccio
Choral Program Collaborative Artist.....	Evan Lange
Custodian	Ron Rebholz

E-Banner Deadline: Fridays at Noon

Banner Deadline for the April Issue: March 18