



The Bethel Bell

*Newsletter of Bethel United Methodist Church
Prince William, Virginia
February 2012*

From the Senior Pastor

Dear Friends,

As this is being written we are in the midst of the “Week of Prayer for Christian Unity”. This emphasis of the church is a call for Christians to present a unified witness to the love of Christ in the world. While this might seem self evident, the Christian Church sometimes presents a less than unified witness of Christ’s love because more emphasis is placed on denominational differences than on similarities. In a world that is becoming increasingly secularized, it is important that we project the positive aspects of faithfulness to Christ so that others will see his light in us and be drawn into his love.

It is equally important that we find unity within the life of the congregation. That does not mean that we necessarily walk lock step in all matters of belief and practice; after all, we are a diverse group and United Methodism values pluralism. We encourage people to learn together about our rich Wesleyan heritage, but we also urge people to do their own thinking when it comes to working out their own salvation with God. As we grow in faith and love, it is important that we experience these values in community, seeking ever that spirit of oneness that Jesus spoke of to his disciples. As a matter of fact, it was following his last supper with the disciples in the upper room that Jesus offered what has come to be known as his “High Priestly Prayer”. In the closing portion of that prayer he says to his Heavenly Father: “I do not pray for these only, but also for those who believe in me through their word, that they may all be *one*; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.” (John 17: 20-21)

It is important that we honor one another’s differences, while searching for the Christ in each other. If we are blessed with the eyes to see the living Christ in one another, it will enable us to see past the things that divide, such as political differences or favorites on the playing field, and focus on those things that unite, such as outreach to the poor, forgiveness of offenses, and a desire to spread the love of Jesus in whatever ways we can.

While we go through a time of transition here at Bethel Church, it is important to be open to new ways of doing things, even as we continue to hold on to certain things that we deem to be important. The renovation of the church has disrupted our routine a bit, but we know the long-term gains make momentary inconvenience tolerable.

As we work our way into a possible new worship and Sunday school schedule, it might mean getting up a little earlier or planning on staying at church a little later, to allow ourselves a full expression of what the church is seeking to offer in terms of worship and study. We are hoping the new schedule will encourage far greater participation of our young people in worship, even as it will provide more opportunity for our adults to be in Sunday school. Greater learning about the things of God and wider fellowship opportunities will be the dividends of a broadened morning schedule.

We urge everyone to be working for the greater good throughout the life of the church. Parents who have enjoyed a quiet break from parenting during the worship hour will still have the opportunity for their little ones to receive the care of others, either in a nursery setting or through the provision of children’s church during the sermon portion of worship. In other words, the younger children will be

welcomed at the early part of the service to become trained in the experience of worship, but then will be dismissed after a few minutes for an age-appropriate worship experience with their peers.

Thank you for patience and flexibility as we find our way forward in new practices of ministry, even as we hold on to many established routines that will not change significantly. Together, we are building a wonderful future for ourselves and our children at Bethel Church.

Grace and peace,

Jack

Our Condolences



Tom Doyle

With great sadness, we announce the passing of Tom Doyle into eternal life on January 26th. Please hold his wife, Marie, their sons, Tommy and Mike, and their loved ones, in your prayers. We give thanks for Tom's life; he and his family have been members of Bethel for over 25 years. Marie is one of Bethel's Stephen ministers.

Tom's Service of Resurrection took place at Bethel on Monday, January 30th. He was interred at Quantico National Cemetery.

Curt Mitchell

We wish to express our deepest condolences to the family and friends of Curt Mitchell, whose Service of Resurrection took place at the graveside on January 25th at Stonewall Memory Gardens in Manassas. Curt was a faithful member of Bethel Church for over sixty years. His son, Gary and daughter, Linda, are members of Bethel Church as well, active in supporting the work of the front office.

"But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream" (Amos 5:24).

~ Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr.

Annually, since 1926, Americans have recognized Black History Month. A month when America celebrates the invaluable contributions that the African-American community has made to the culture and history of our nation.

One of the many persons recognized during this time is Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. who was a leader for equality and justice for all people. Today, I want to share an article by Amanda Stewart in our local paper on December 25, 2011 about one of our Bethel UMC Youth, Meredith Oakes, who like Reverend King is seeking equality and justice for all people.

Godwin Students Talk to Their Peers About Bullying by Ms. Amanda Stewart

Two Godwin Middle School students recently made it their mission to tackle a common problem: bullying. Eighth-graders Meredith Oakes and Sabrina Auandee put together a presentation about bullying and presented it to their classmates, all the students at Godwin Middle School.

Meredith, 13, said she got the idea to speak to her classmates about bullying after listening to a song, "Welcome to My Life" by Simple Plan one day.

"Basically it just helped me to see how big of a problem bullying is," she said. "It's a big problem because people think it's just name-calling and it's not a big deal, but it is."

In their presentation, Meredith and Sabrina used music and bullying statistics to convey their message. The girls also included a message from Kevin Epling, the founder of Bully Police USA.

Meredith said she and Sabrina were surprised by the reaction other students at Godwin had to their presentation.

"Afterwards, kids were coming up to us in the hall, saying they like our presentation," Meredith said. "Normally, we don't talk a lot to sixth- or seventh-graders, but after the presentation, random students were coming up to us in the hall hugging us."

Their presentation also got some attention from school administrators and school division employees who work on bullying prevention, who watched the presentation.

Meredith said she and Sabrina hope their presentation made some kind of difference at Godwin, and they think it did.

"I think we opened up people's eyes about how bullying affects people and what a big problem it is," she said.

As we celebrate *Black History Month* again this February, it is my prayer that all of us may continue to be a people who *does justice, loves kindness, and walks humbly with God* (Micah 6:7).

Grace & Peace,
Rev. Lemuel Pearsall, Jr.

Lenten Bible Study

Soon, the season of Lent will be here; a forty-day period where we are called to prepare ourselves for Easter Sunday.

This year, I invite you to join me for a five-week journey where we will ask one of life's oldest questions---"Why God?" Why do the innocent suffer? Why do my prayers go unanswered? Why can't I see Your will for my life? Have you ever asked, "Why God?"

In *Why? Making Sense of God's Will*, Reverend Adam Hamilton brings new insights to one of life's oldest questions---"Why God?" Rejecting simplistic answers, Reverend Hamilton addresses how we can comprehend God's plan for the world and ourselves.

As we begin this New Year, I invite you to join us as we discuss "Why God" during the season of Lent. We have three dates for you to choose from to start this five-week Lenten Journey:

**Wednesday, February 29, 2012
@ 7:30 p.m.**

Friday, March 2, 2012 @ 10:00 a.m.

Sunday, March 4, 2012 @ 1:30 p.m.

See me to register for one of the classes.

Roger Olson, author of *Questions to All Your Answers* writes, "Unlike many Christian writers these days, Adam Hamilton does actually make sense of God's will. This is a profoundly satisfying treatment of common misconceptions about God. Everyone who asks 'Why?' when confronted with evil, innocent suffering, unanswered prayers, and failure to perceive God's will should read this book."

Grace & Peace!

Rev. Lemuel Pearsall, Jr.

Bethel Sunday School Celebrates Lent

The Lenten Season begins on Wednesday, February 22, 2012. It is a season for reflection, soul-searching and repentance as we remember the forty days Christ endured temptation and suffering in the wilderness, His death and resurrection. God gave us a wonderful gift in Christ, yet we sometimes forget what God has done for us. We forget that because of our wrongs God gave His only Son to save us.

During Lent, Sunday School will present age-appropriate materials covering the life, death and resurrection of Christ as we remember what God has done for us. I ask parent(s)/guardians to help their children/youth decide what they can do to make room for God.

In keeping with tradition, Karen Johnston, mission coordinator, will provide Sunday School with Easter Eggs to be filled with coins/dollars for a mission project. The Easter Eggs will be presented before the congregation on Easter Sunday. We will also have an Easter Celebration on Easter Sunday that will include an Easter Egg Hunt. I will need filled eggs for children and youth ages 2 years through high school.

Audrey Lewis
Bethel Church School Superintendent



February 22, 2012
Ash Wednesday Service
7:30 p.m.

Welcome, New Members!

We are delighted to welcome John and Tammy Etter into membership by transfer from the Columbiana United Methodist Church in Columbiana, Ohio, and Ann Lescaleet by transfer from the Centreville United Methodist Church in Centreville, Virginia.

We thank God for bringing these talented and committed Christians to our fellowship. Please extend a special personal welcome to them when you get the opportunity.

If you have been attending, but have not yet made the decision to join Bethel Church, you might want to contact one of the pastors to discuss the possibility of becoming a full member. It is always a day of rejoicing when new folk become part of the warm, caring fellowship we share in Jesus Christ in this place!

Staff Parish Relations Committee

The SPRC had its first meeting of the year on January 24th. All members have accepted duties within the Committee and are looking forward to building a meaningful Christian plan for the year, to accomplish the Mission of the Church. The Committee's leadership role at Bethel can be enhanced by input from the Church members. If you have a concern or comment, it can be brought to the attention of the Committee by contacting one of the following Committee members:

Don Ritenour, Bill Card, Gayle Espinosa,
Richard Goad, Chris Higgins, Joe Johnston,
Judy LaPorte, Brian Lewis, April Richardson,
John Smith, Wanda Smith

Virginia Conference, The United Methodist Church

Bishop Charlene Kammerer
<http://vaumc.org/>

Alexandria District, The United Methodist Church

Rev. Ken Jackson, District Superintendent
<http://www.novaumc.org/alexandria.html>

Bethel United Methodist Women News

Calling All Crafters (Men and Women):

Calling all crafters that would be willing to share your knowledge with the Bethel women's group.

We want to start this year with our Fun and Fellowship gathering as a means to work on items that we can sell at the fall bazaar. If you have a talent such as knitting, crocheting, card making, candle making, stained glass designing & creating, etc., and can show people how to do it, please contact Carol Kale at 703-580-8432 or cbktraveler@yahoo.com.

Calling all Women of Bethel UMC (18 years old and up):

Our first Fun and Fellowship meeting of 2012 will be February 20th at 7:00 p.m. at the church. We will meet in the Fellowship Hall. The first meeting will be basically an organizational meeting to find out who is available and willing to teach us new crafts. Then, we will break out into groups depending on what crafts are available that evening. We hope to hold this meeting every month on the 3rd Monday, with the exception of the month we hold our business meeting.

We understand that not all women want to, or can work on, every type of craft. That is why we want to have more than one teacher at each meeting; we can break out into smaller groups, and everyone can work on what they like.

I am looking forward to these meetings and hope you will be too!

Sincerely,
Carol Kale
BUMW Evening Program Chairman

Coming Soon...

Church potluck dinner – Saturday, March 17th, 5:30 p.m., sponsored by Bethel United Methodist Women. More details to come.

Kid's Night Out!

SPREAD THE WORD to everyone you know! Bethel's women's group is sponsoring a Kid's Night Out for the WHOLE community. The event will take place at Bethel United Methodist Church. Kids ages 4-10 are welcome to join us for dinner, a movie, and crafts on Saturday, February 11th from 5:00-8:00 p.m. It is going to be a fun evening for all, so be sure to plan a night out for the kids at Bethel United Methodist Church. Any questions may be directed to Tonia Parker (tparker@almanack.org) or April Richardson (aprlichardson@aol.com). A love donation or non-perishable food donation is appreciated.

*** We must have a minimum of 10 kids for the event to happen as scheduled.

*** Children must be potty trained.

CHILDREN'S WINTER CLOTHING NEEDED!!! for Rising Hope United Methodist Mission Church in Alexandria. Many parents are coming to Rising Hope's Rags to Riches Clothing Closet asking for winter clothing for their children who are very underdressed for the weather. Rising Hope is trying to help BUT they just don't have enough warm clothing to go around right now... So, if you have any items that are too small for your kids, or just not needed or used any longer, please consider donating them to a local child that could put it to good use!

Please note: All donations should be new or slightly used... nothing worn and falling apart, dirty, etc., please. Let's give our best to those in need!

If you can donate, **please bring clothing to Bethel by February 12th**. There will be a collection bin in the narthex.

For more information, see Karen Johnston, Bethel mission outreach coordinator.

March Bethel Bell Deadline:
February 20
newsletter@bethelumc.org

Lenten Project: Personal Products for Soldiers and Personnel in Iraq

Dear Bethel Friends,

Most of you know that my husband, Chaplain John Read, is deployed to Iraq. He contacted me a couple of weeks ago, telling me that there are over 200 military personnel and contractors, both male and female, at a site in Iraq who have no access to personal hygiene items.

When I talked to Rev. Martin, we decided to collect these items during Lent. Below is a list of suggested items. If you cannot shop, you can donate money to help defray the shipping costs. If you have questions, you can contact me at (703) 680-0191, or Karen Johnston at outreach@bethelumc.org.

Thank you in advance!

Laura Read

Needed items:

Toothbrushes
Toothpaste
Floss
Stick deodorant
Bar soap
Shampoo
Female hygiene products.
Lotion
ChapStick
Snacks, such as M&Ms, nuts, and jerky
Financial donations for shipping

Bethel will begin collecting these items in March, and will continue to do so throughout the Lenten season.



30 Hour Famine - Youth Participants, Adult Drivers and Chaperones Needed

On February 25-26, Bethel Youth will participate in the 30 Hour Famine at First United Presbyterian Church of Dale City. The purpose of this event is to raise awareness of world hunger and to provide opportunities for service projects at the local level. Participants (ages 12 and above) will fast from noon, February 25 until 6:00 p.m., February 26. Lots of Gatorade, Powerade and water will be provided during the fast.

Bethel Youth will join the youth of FUPCDC, Covenant Presbyterian, Potomac Crest Baptist, and St Paul UMC for this special event. Participants will attend workshops focused on world hunger and faith-based issues on Friday night. There will also be games and praise music throughout the evening. On Saturday, the young people will go on a scavenger hunt to collect food for ACTS and will pick another service project to do in the afternoon. The fast will be broken with communion at 6:00 p.m.

The cost is \$15 for each participant, which includes a t-shirt and a wristband.

For more information or to volunteer to attend or assist with chaperoning or driving, please contact Debbie (daw2007@verizon.net) or Elizabeth Wells (natsfan247@verizon.net), 703-730-8042.

Lenten Special: Youth Volunteers in Mission to Costa Rica

Throughout the season of Lent our members and friends will have the opportunity to make a sacrificial offering toward mission. This year's youth project is to participate in the Alexandria District VIM team to Costa Rica, where they will work among the poor. A special Lenten offering container will be made available to keep on your meal table to remind you to make a weekly sacrificial gift at whatever level you choose. It is suggested that an amount at least equal to a meal, once a week, is a good minimum. At the close of the season these offerings will be dedicated to God's glory and to advance our youth outreach in mission.

Fear Factor Game Night Toothbrushes for Kenya

Bethel will sponsor Fear Factor Night, a Bi-District Youth Event, on March 9th., 7:00-11:00 p.m. Admission is \$10 plus a new children's toothbrush for youth; \$6 plus a new children's toothbrush for adult chaperones.

The theme for the Games Night is based on the "Fear Factor" Show. Participants from local churches will have the opportunity to participate in Bible Trivia, food challenges and physical challenges. Come play the Banana Game and the Cheetos Game, and join in the ice cream eating contest.

Are you up for the Chocolate Covered Insect Challenge?

The toothbrushes will be donated to orphanages in Kenya. Because of the poverty level, it is not uncommon for families in Kenya to share a single toothbrush.

Sudley UMC Youth Band will provide music; Kurtis Goad will also perform at the closing.

Admission includes supplies and CiCi Buffet and drink. The youth will carpool to the Smoketown Road CiCi's at 10:00 p.m.

A basket will be placed in the narthex so members of the Bethel congregation who are not attending the event can also donate toothbrushes for this mission project. The youth's goal is to collect 500 toothbrushes (Children's toothbrushes are available at local dollar stores at a cost of two for \$1.).

For more information about this project or to volunteer to assist with "Fear Not" Game Night, contact Elizabeth Wells at Natsfan247@verizon.net.

Come Dream With Us...

The Dream Team Steering Committee will meet on the following dates at 7:00 p.m.: March 6, April 17, and May 22. Come join us as we discuss where we currently *are* as a church and develop a vision for our future. Plan to be a part of this interesting and strategic group. Everyone is welcome.

Be a Caretaker for a Very Special Part of Local History

Bethel Church has been located at the same intersection since its founding in 1850. Old Bethel Church was originally situated on a small knoll at what was then the end of Smoketown Road, across from where the Sunoco station stands today. The building served not only as a church, but as a hospital during the Civil War, and as a center where area folk could congregate for community events. In 1977, the Bethel Historical Society completed a successful fundraising campaign and moved Old Bethel Church to its current location. The Society restored the old church, and continues to oversee the structure today. Old Bethel Church is a separate entity from Bethel UMC.

We invite everyone to join Bethel Historical Society and become a part of the care for this lovely old, historic building. We generally hold quarterly meetings at the Old Church.

We would gladly accept help with our upkeep efforts, such as repairing the split rail fence and keeping the grounds in shape. If you are interested in becoming a member of the Bethel Historical Society or helping with projects at Old Bethel Church, please contact Wanda Smith through the church office.

GET READY: THE YARD SALE IS COMING!

Again this year we are asking you to clean out those closets, your attic or garage and make these no longer needed treasures available to the church to generate a fabulous day of fun and fellowship, meeting friends and neighbors. Even as you get rid of stuff, it is a good chance to get some more stuff that you just can't live without!

It's all for a good cause. We are using the proceeds to help in the refurnishing of the front office. Please participate and make it the best yard sale in town! The date will be in late April with details to follow. For more information contact Grant Sharp, Chair of Fund-Raising.

Renovation Update

We hope you are enjoying the new vinyl floors and new high-rise, water efficient commodes recently installed in all bathrooms of the church. These handicap accessible commodes are a gift to the church from a generous member. In addition to this work, the hallways and the front office have received two fresh coats of paint, thanks to the professional quality work of Frank Turner and George Gero, and new carpeting has been installed in three church offices and the library.

In mid-February the new kitchen and office cabinets will be installed. The configuration of the beautiful new kitchen cabinets will allow for increased storage, while making it much easier to keep the kitchen clean and sanitized.

A new water heater was installed in mid-January and efforts are underway to solve the plumbing problems that have caused periodic flooding in the kitchen and men's room.

We have been able to do much of this work through funds contributed by members and from some of the bazaar proceeds, plus funding from a no interest loan from a church member that will be paid gradually over the next few years.

We extend special thanks to our Board of Trustees for their leadership in getting this important work accomplished.

Boy Scout Troop 1363 News

On January 1, Troop 1363 re-chartered for its 33rd year with Bethel United Methodist Church as the chartered organization. The troop has 30 Scouts. The troop sincerely appreciates the continued support of Bethel over those many years. Jonathan Guepe stepped down as scoutmaster after four years to become committee chairman, and Keith Roberts became scoutmaster after having served on the troop committee since 1993.

The troop's next outing is the Occoquan District Winter Camporee, February 17-19.

Keith Roberts, Scoutmaster, Troop 1363

Bethel Calendar

Every

Sunday Fellowship Breakfast, Fellowship Hall, 8:30 a.m.

Feb. 4 Bake Sale for 30 Hour Famine, location TBD

Feb. 5 Super Bowl Sub Sale, Fellowship Hall, between services
Senior High Youth meeting, 5:30 p.m.

Feb. 7 Boy Scout Troop 1363, Fellowship Hall, 7:30 p.m.

Feb. 11 Bethel United Methodist Men, 8:00 a.m., Fellowship Hall
Kid's Night Out, Fellowship Hall, 5:00-8:00 p.m.

Feb. 12 TICS and Senior High Youth meetings, 5:30-6:30 p.m. (TICS prep for Fear
Not)

Last day to bring winter clothing for Rising Hope

Feb. 13 Bethel Church Council meeting, Fellowship Hall, 7:30-9:00 p.m.

Feb. 14 Boy Scout Troop 1363, Fellowship Hall, 7:30 p.m.

Feb. 17-19 Boy Scouts Occoquan District Winter Camporee

Feb. 19 **No TICS meeting**, Senior High Youth meeting 5:30 p.m.

Feb. 20 Bethel United Methodist Women Fun and Fellowship meeting, Fellowship
Hall, 7:00 p.m.

Bethel Bell Deadline

Feb. 21 Boy Scout Troop 1363, Fellowship Hall, 7:00 p.m.

Feb. 22 Ash Wednesday Service, Main Sanctuary, 7:30 p.m.

Feb. 25-26 30 Hour Famine, First United Presbyterian Church of Dale City; registration –
Sat. 6:00 p.m.; ends Sun. 6:00 p.m.

Feb. 28 Boy Scout Troop 1363, Fellowship Hall, 7:30 p.m.

Feb. 29 Lenten Bible Study, 7:30 p.m.

Mar. 2 Lenten Bible Study, 10:00 a.m.

Mar. 4 Lenten Bible Study, 1:30 p.m.

TICS and Senior High Youth meetings, 5:30-6:30 p.m.

Mar. 6 Dream Team, 7:00 p.m.

Boy Scout Troop 1363, Fellowship Hall, 7:30 p.m.

Mar. 9 Fear Factor Game Night Bi-District Event, Bethel UMC, 7:00-11:00 p.m.

Mar. 10 Bethel United Methodist Men, Fellowship Hall, 8:00 a.m.

Mar. 11 **No TICS or Senior High Youth meetings**

Mar. 12 BUMC Church Council Meeting, Fellowship Hall, 7:30-9:00 p.m.

Mar. 13 Boy Scout Troop 1363, Fellowship Hall, 7:30 p.m.

Mar. 17 Church Potluck Dinner, Fellowship Hall, 5:30 p.m.

Mar. 18 TICS and Senior High Youth meetings, 5:30-6:30 p.m.

Mar. 19 Bethel United Methodist Women business meeting, 7:00-8:00 p.m.

Mar. 20 Boy Scout Troop 1363, Fellowship Hall, 7:30 p.m.

Mar. 24-26 TICS – Journey Retreat at Rockbridge (pre-registration required)

Mar. 25 Senior High Youth Meeting, 5:30 p.m.

Mar. 27 Boy Scout Troop 1363, Fellowship Hall, 7:30 p.m.