

# Life Together



## Bethany Lutheran Church's e-newsletter The Season of Lent, 2023

### Pastor Paul Stumme- Diers

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### Pastor Erin Grayson

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### 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.

### Worship:

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

Sundays, 10 a.m followed by  
coffee fellowship (Sunday School  
& Adult Ed)

### Website:

[bethanyofbainbridge.org](http://bethanyofbainbridge.org)

### Get in touch:

Office:  
[info@bethanyofbainbridge.org](mailto:info@bethanyofbainbridge.org)  
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### PASTOR'S ADDRESS

## A Companion for the Journey

*By Pastor Paul Stumme-Diers*



Dear Bethanians,

The smell of fresh-baked bread is the smell of hospitality. Realtors might encourage sellers to fill their houses with the scent of a fresh whole wheat loaf. One knows they are in the embrace of Holden Hospitality when welcomed by warm bread at the meal served upon arrival. My grandmother's rye bread had such a loving, wholesome quality about it – and now Laurie has taken up baking bread with her recipe for family gatherings. It smells and tastes like homecoming.

Bread is also that which we take for the journey. When young, our family would grab a couple of loaves of Fisherman's Wharf Sourdough Bread, and a hunk of cheese, and we would be good for a day of adventure. The Exodus from Egypt included unleavened bread for the journey of freedom, supplemented by manna, a "bread-like substance" delivered each morning with the dew. Jesus fed bread to the 5,000, and to the twelve, sharing food and sharing community in love. "Do this in remembrance of me." And, indeed, at Emmaus the followers recognized the risen Jesus in the breaking of the bread.

*(Continues next page)*

## Council leaders



Vicki Browning,  
president,  
vickibrowning@  
comcast.net



Lynn Nordby,  
vice president,  
lnordby@  
msn.com



Jennie Harris,  
secretary,  
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Eve Curtis,  
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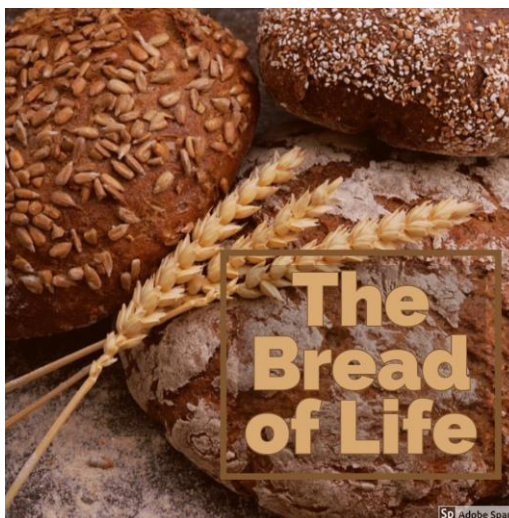
### **A Companion for the Journey: *Continued***

Lent 2023 includes “Companion” in its focus, “Companion” literally meaning “with bread.” We will hear stories of bread from temptations in the wilderness, to “this is my body, given for you.” Along the way, we will delight each Wednesday evening in fresh bread and soup, and in the prayerful companionship of one another. At communion, those who are able will kneel at the altar rail to give extra consideration to the bread that feeds us, and in Holy Week we will be fed by the bread made by our first communicants.

All this points to Jesus, the Bread of Life, our companion. In the Temptations we hear the truth, that we “cannot live by bread alone,” but so too in the breaking of the bread that is grace, our eyes are opened anew that we have life abundant in Christ.

A blessed Lent to you, companions all.

*Pastor Paul*



## **PASTOR FOR FAITH FORMATION**

# **Entering the Dark Wood of Lent**

*By Pastor Erin Grayson*



Dear Friends,

The six-week season of Lent invites us into reflection on what it means to be human and at the same time, what it means to be people of hope. We pause in prayerful meditation as we go through the motions of Lent—beginning on Ash Wednesday when we mark ourselves with ashes up until the day we celebrate that from those ashes, new life is possible. Although we enter the dark wood of Lent intentionally, we do not travel alone. We are surrounded by loving companions who enter with us, and by the love of God in Jesus who walks with us no matter where we wander.

To expand and deepen our Lenten experience, an interactive prayer station is set up in the sanctuary for all to find a space to pray—maybe in new and meaningful ways. A brick "prayer wall" anchors the prayer station, symbolizing the temple wall where Jesus worshiped and taught. Over the centuries since the destruction of the temple in 70 CE, the remaining Western wall has attracted pilgrims who consider it a holy site to come and pray. Our prayer wall will offer us an opportunity to have a similar experience. At any time throughout the season, you are welcome to offer your prayers and slip them in the spaces between the bricks, just as pilgrims do in Jerusalem. Slips of paper and pencils will always be available. Candles will also be available for you to light during your prayer time, symbolizing the hope we carry with us, even as we move through the dark woods of Lent and beyond.

Each week a different element will be located in front of the wall, reflective of the Gospel readings we follow through the season. The prayer wall and candles will remain for your use, but the elements will change weekly (think water, sand, stones, etc). Information about the element and what it symbolizes will be provided on Sunday to guide us throughout the coming week. You are invited to interact with the element as you pray—after worship or communion, or maybe on your way back to your seat after passing of the peace. Our Wednesday evening Lenten service will be rooted in this prayerful experience as well. The sanctuary is available during the day, so please feel free to use the prayer station during your personal prayer time.

Like the pilgrims in Jerusalem, I hope that you'll find the prayer station to be a holy place where we draw near to God and trust that God, our faithful companion, meets us there. Prayers can come in all shapes and sizes—some are spoken, some are silent, and some are experienced with our bodies. The Lent prayer station offers us the opportunity to express what's on our hearts and minds in a variety of ways. As we prayerfully journey through the dark wood of Lent, may we carry a spark of hope that leads us home.

In peace and friendship,  
Pastor Erin



## **WORSHIP AT BETHANY**

### **The Season of Lent**

We entered the Season of Lent with our Ash Wednesday which included the imposition of ashes. Now we are invited into a deeper experience of Lent through soup suppers with devotions, and a prayer wall available throughout the season.



Each Wednesday in Lent, a simple soup supper and time of devotion will be offered at 6:00pm in the fellowship hall. Are you able to help by bringing a soup or bread to share? There are still a few spots available. Look for the sign-up sheets on the hallway bulletin board.



#### **Lent at Bethany**

**Prayer Wall – Located in the sanctuary, this space is available whenever the building is open for meditation and prayer**

**Saturdays – 5pm Worship followed by wine and cheese fellowship**

**Sundays – 10am Worship and Sunday School followed by coffee fellowship and Adult Ed**

**Wednesdays – 6pm Simple Soup supper and devotion (March 1 – March 29)**

## **FROM THE COUNCIL**

### **Update from the President**

***Vicki Browning, Council President***



It feels good to be back to normal. Maybe it took sharing the peace on Sunday mornings. Maybe it is the energy during the fellowship time after the Saturday evening services or after the Sunday morning service. Maybe it is the children's messages by Pastor Erin. Maybe it is the new light bulbs in the hallway so we can read the bulletin board announcements. Whatever is happening at Bethany, it feels good.

The season of Lent is here following our Ash Wednesday service on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of February. The following Wednesday evenings during Lent we will have the soup suppers that are always an opportunity for fellowship. I hope you will plan to participate.

It is refreshing to see the activity at the quilting gatherings, the altar guild and Bible study sessions. The choir has welcomed new voices and that is reason for rejoicing. Our preschool is nearly at capacity with only a couple of openings. Our dedicated teachers are to be celebrated. As the director of the preschool, Katie Drov Dahl transitions we celebrate her service and that smooth transition.

We see activity on the site where we plan to one day have affordable housing. The feasibility studies are in progress. Forming a non-profit LLC to cover the project is in the works. The task force is busy.

The church council is always looking for ways to be of service to the congregation. Please let us know if you have concerns or suggestions. We have all agreed to serve you.

### **2023 Annual Meeting**

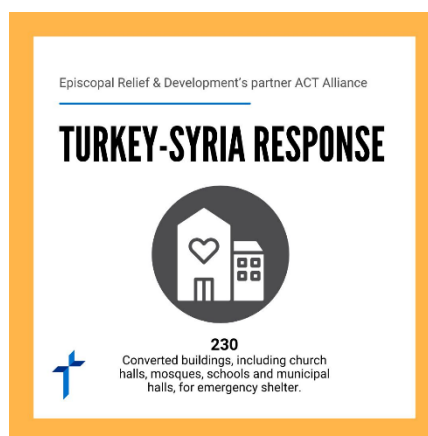
The 2023 Bethany Lutheran Church Annual Meeting was held on Sunday, January 29 after the 10am worship service. Council President Vicki Browning opened the meeting and a quorum was declared. After an opening prayer from Pastor Erin, the 2022 Annual Meeting minutes were approved. Pastor Paul and Vicki Browning both offered remarks. Treasurer Jim Rohrscheib gave a presentation on Bethany's current financial status and the proposed 2023 budget. After a brief discussion, the budget was approved. The financial report was followed by the election of new council members and the election of 2023 nominating committee members. Linnea Chu was approved for a first term and Jennie Harris was approved to continue for a one-year term on church council. Alice McCain, Barbara Deines, Wayne Daley, and Barbara Swartling were approved as 2023 Nominating Committee members. David Swartling next gave an update on the status of Bethany's Affordable Housing project. The Affordable Housing Task Force proposed a motion with a set of next steps for the initiative. The motion was approved.

The highlight of the meeting was a resolution offered by Pastor Paul, giving special recognition to Bethany volunteer, Jim Rohrscheib.

## **BETHANY NEWS**

### **Save the Date!**

Bethany members are planning a special fundraiser in response to the earthquakes in Türkiye (Turkey) and Syria. This is scheduled for Sunday, March 12 at 2:00pm, and monies raised will go to support the work of White Helmets and the ACT Alliance (Lutheran Disaster Response) in those two nations. Musical acts from the area will participate (Bethany Choir, members of Schola and Amabile, AND MANY MORE...), as well as assembly singing. We are hoping this will be a big event! Details are still being formed, but the hope is to make this a meaningful fundraiser. Already the Bethany Endowment Fund committee has elected to distribute \$1,500 to this effort. Please let Pastor Paul know if you would like to be a donor who might want to seed this event with an advanced gift, so as to have a sense of momentum going into this event.



### **March Bible Study**

The Rachel Circle Bible Study group will meet on Tuesday, March 7<sup>th</sup> at 10:00am. The Women's Bible Study & Book Group will meet on Monday, March 13<sup>th</sup> at 9:30am in fellowship hall. In March they will begin discussing "True Paradox: How Christianity Makes Sense of Our Complex World" by David Skeel. The Men's Bible Study group will meet on Tuesday, March 14<sup>th</sup> at 8:00am. All Bible Study groups meet in fellowship hall.

### **Please Sign Up Now For Altar Flowers**

While we will not have altar flowers during the Season of Lent, there are plenty of dates available after Easter. Please sign up for the special date that you would like to honor an event or remember a special person while you have a choice. Select either A - you will provide the arrangement, or B - altar guild will do the arrangement and you will provide the check [there is an envelope to put the money in by the calendar]. Questions? Email Rachel Pritchett [rachelpritchett@msn.com](mailto:rachelpritchett@msn.com).





## IMPACT!

Our second youth and family IMPACT gathering is on **Sunday, March 5 from 4:00pm-5:30pm** in Fellowship Hall. We'll enjoy chili and cornbread followed by a game (or two) of...corn hole! We'll also discuss ways we can help our neighbors in Turkey and Syria in the aftermath of the catastrophic earthquake.

"What's IMPACT?" you wonder? IMPACT is a new monthly gathering of young people and their families and friends of all ages. We share a meal and have lots of fun in the form of games and activities and just being together. We meet for fellowship AND to serve each other and our neighbors. At each of our gatherings, we'll learn about a different organization that serves our community and/or our world. We'll talk about how we can support their work in a respectful and loving way, reflective of our faith.

Future IMPACT gatherings will be held on the 1st Sunday of the month, with minor exceptions including April when we'll meet on the third Sunday instead (due to Holy Week and spring break). If you like to plan ahead, mark the upcoming IMPACT dates on your calendar: **April 16, May 7, and June 4**. Among the other worthwhile and fun activities planned is planting a garden to "grow a row" for our local food banks.

Everyone is invited, young or young-at-heart. It's a great intergenerational opportunity to form deeper relationships within our congregation. Feel free to bring friends and share the invitation with others. All are welcome! Contact Pastor Erin with questions and to RSVP; or sign up on the sheet on the Youth and Family bulletin board in the Narthex. [pastorerin@bethanyofbainbridge.org/860-705-8212](mailto:pastorerin@bethanyofbainbridge.org/860-705-8212) (texts are fine too).

## Holy Communion Instruction



Here at Bethany, children are encouraged to come up for a blessing or participate in the Service of Holy Communion from a young age. As they get older, they may have questions or wonder about our practice of Holy Communion. Holy Communion instruction, primarily geared for those in mid-elementary grades and above, will be held on Sunday, March 12 from 11:00am-12:30pm. A pizza lunch will be served. Contact Pastor Erin or Pastor Paul if you are interested in having your child included, or for more information. A second session focusing on bread

baking will be held at 4:00pm on Sunday, March 26.

## Don't Forget!

Daylight Saving Time begins Sunday, March 12<sup>th</sup>. Don't forget to set your clocks *ahead* one hour before heading to bed on Saturday, March 11<sup>th</sup>.



## **THE GREATER CHURCH**



### **From the Bishop**

*Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee*

When I was in sixth grade, my teacher decided that we were going to build chicken skeletons. From real chickens. So, the teacher divided us into groups. A local farmer donated the chickens. Each group had to boil and boil their chicken. When all the flesh and tendons, etc. were boiled off, and the bones were clean, then we had to build the chicken back up so that it formed a

complete bird.

When I think back on this project, I wonder what we were learning. Anatomy? Names of bones? I'm not sure. But what I did learn was community, relationship, and collaboration. Without the people in my group – and the different skills and gifts that they had – we would not have been able to put this chicken back together. We had to make sure that the bones were sorted into the right boxes (the feet bones, the leg bones, the wing bones, the beak, etc.) We had to make sure the bones weren't wet and that there wasn't anything left on the bones so it didn't stink. (My mom claimed it did stink. Side note, I was elected to bring home the completed chicken. My mom was not pleased and at some point it disappeared from the living room bookcase.)

Anyway, getting back to community, relationship, and collaboration ... as I think of our synod, and what God is calling us to do and to be together, I think that these three things are key. I know that many of you are already in relationship and collaboration with other ELCA congregations around you. Perhaps you share your building with other ministries. Perhaps you share a food bank or work with a school. Perhaps affordable housing is part of your collaborative work. Many of you have preschools. All of these are wonderful ways to collaborate.

I'm wondering if we can think even bigger and more relationally than that. What if people from geographically close congregations met and talked about who they are. What their hopes are. What their fears are. What they need from others. What they have to offer others. What might come out of these conversations and relationships? Perhaps a way to share staff? Perhaps a way to be more impactful in the community? Perhaps new ways of using property? I'm not sure. It would be interesting and exciting to find out.

As I have mentioned before, study after study indicates that pastors today are lonely and feel isolated and anxious about the future. As my staff and I travel around the synod, we hear that many congregations also feel lonely and isolated and anxious about the future. Hearing stories and knowing some of the difficulties, doesn't it seem that it would be better to build relationship with one another and collaborate rather than every congregation trying to figure it out on their own?

Here are three ways that we are encouraging congregations to be in community, build relationships, and collaborate.

First, we continue to expand the LiVE Project (Living into Vocational Engagement). We are excited about the synod's collaboration and building relationship with the Trinity Education Foundation who is contributing funding this year and partnering with us. I encourage you to visit [www.lutheransnw.org/ministries/the-live-project](http://www.lutheransnw.org/ministries/the-live-project) and learn more.



Second, in lieu of a Synod Assembly this year, we are hosting two Synod Gatherings in the spring with forums where relationships and collaboration are key. Watch for information in early February on the two Gatherings (May 13 in Mount Vernon and May 20 in Bellevue) via email and on our website here: [www.lutheransnw.org/events/synod-gatherings](http://www.lutheransnw.org/events/synod-gatherings)

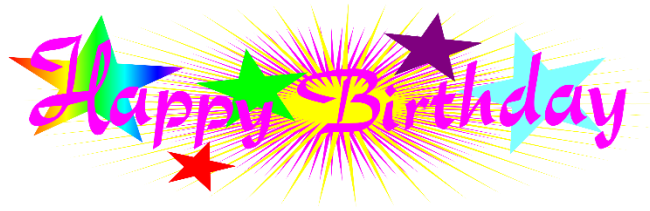
Third, the Grace Grant application this year asks applicants with whom they are collaborating on the proposed project. The application process is open February 1 – May 31. Read about the focus areas and how to apply for this final year of funding here: [www.lutheransnw.org/pages/grace-grants](http://www.lutheransnw.org/pages/grace-grants)

You know, I could never have built that chicken alone. Nor would I have wanted to. Truthfully, even with my group, it was messy and hard. In my memory, we had a few bones left over that we quietly threw in the garbage. And yet, I am still in relationship with many of the people in my sixth grade group. And we are bonded from the chicken-building experience.

As the body of Christ, may we build relationship, be in community, and collaborate together. I'd love to hear what you are doing in your congregation towards this. Please email me at [bishop@lutheransnw.org](mailto:bishop@lutheransnw.org)

+Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee  
[bishop@lutheransnw.org](mailto:bishop@lutheransnw.org)





## March

Mabel Keeney	3/3	Sienna Christensen	3/12	Marcy Daley	3/24
David Noland	3/6	Karen Watson	3/17	Kristi Sutton	3/25
Vikki Anderson	3/7	Lynn Nordby	3/10	Abbie Love	3/26
Cheryl Bartholomew	3/8	Rachel Pritchett	3/22	Ric Becker	3/28
Lynn Nordby	3/10	Jennifer Weaver	3/22	Jim Rohrscheib	3/29

## April

Ed Noland	4/1	David Swartling	4/7	Georgia Hansen	4/17
Shannon Noland	4/1	Sundi Stauffer	4/9	Karen Kushner	4/18
Randy Weiss	4/1	Kathy Dudgeon	4/10	Gavin Jakubik	4/21
Rachel Running	4/2	Brett Lindquist	4/11	Renzo Lucioni	4/24
William Hansen	4/3	Andy Rimkus	4/12	Dianne Peeples	4/25
Dale Johnson	4/3	Gail Christensen	4/15	William Bang-Knudsen	4/28
Louise Urness	4/4	Peter Bang-Knudsen III	4/15	Signe Lindquist	4/29

# March Worship Assistants

## Altar Duty:

Date:	Name:
March 4/5	Carol Fenner
March 11/12	Gail Christensen
March 18/19	Nancy Wetzler
March 25/26	Barbara Swartling

## Saturday Evening Worship:

Date:	Task:	Name:
March 4	Usher/Greeter	Dick Coar
	Lay Reader	Barbara Michael
	Hospitality Host	Luanne & Tom Croker
March 11	Usher/Greeter	Jennie Harris
	Lay Reader	Rachel Pritchett
	Hospitality Host	Veronika & Jim Rohrscheib
March 18	Usher/Greeter	Charlene Selvar
	Lay Reader	Gail Christensen
	Hospitality Host	Marlene & Al Orwiler
March 25	Usher/Greeter	Jim Rohrscheib
	Lay Reader	Carol Fenner
	Hospitality Host	Carol Fenner

## Sunday Morning Worship:

Date:	Task:	Name:
March 5	Greeters/Ushers	Eve & Mike Curtis
	Lay Reader	Noreen Sievertson
	Communion Assistant	Vicki Browning
	Hospitality Host	Noreen & Jeff Sievertson
March 12	Greeters/Ushers	TBD
	Lay Reader	Tom Newlon
	Communion Assistant	Vicki Browning
	Hospitality Host	Linda & Tom Newlon
March 19	Greeters/Ushers	Stephen Deines & Andy Rimkus
	Lay Reader	Barbara Deines
	Communion Assistant	Barbara Deines
	Hospitality Host	Becci Kerstetter & Andy Rimkus
March 26	Greeters/Ushers	Nancy & Harry Wetzler
	Lay Reader	Linnea Chu
	Communion Assistant	Linnea Chu
	Hospitality Host	Kathy & Doug Dudgeon

(March calendar on back page.)

# The Month Ahead

March 2022						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			<b>1</b> 3:30pm BI Youth Choir 6:00pm Lent Soup Supper & Devotion 7:00pm Bethany Choir	<b>2</b> 4:00pm BI Youth Orchestra	<b>3</b> Noon: Al Anon, FH	<b>4</b> 5:00pm Worship followed by wine and cheese fellowship
<b>5</b> 10:00am: Worship & Sunday School followed by coffee fellowship	<b>6</b> 7:15pm: Boy Scouts, FH	<b>7</b> 10:00am: Rachel Circle Bible Study followed by Quilters 10:15am: Preschool Chapel 3:15pm BI Youth Choir 6:00pm Amabile Choir	<b>8</b> 10:20am: Preschool Chapel 3:30pm BI Youth Choir 6:00pm Lent Soup Supper & Devotion 7:00pm: Bethany Choir	<b>9</b> 4:00pm BI Youth Orchestra	<b>10</b> Noon: Al Anon, FH	<b>11</b> 10:00am Service of Prayer, Eucharist, and Healing 5:00pm Holden Evening Prayer followed by wine and cheese fellowship
<b>12</b> 10:00am: Worship & Sunday School followed by coffee fellowship	<b>13</b> 9:30am: Women's Bible Study, FH 7:15pm: Boy Scouts, FH	<b>14</b> 8:00am: Men's Bible Study 10:00am: Quilters 3:15pm BI Youth Choir 6:00pm Amabile Choir 7:00pm: Council Meeting	<b>15</b> 3:30pm BI Youth Choir 6:00pm Lent Soup Supper & Devotion 7:00pm: Bethany Choir	<b>16</b> 4:00pm BI Youth Orchestra	<b>17</b> Noon: Al Anon, FH	<b>18</b> 5:00pm Worship followed by wine and cheese fellowship
<b>19</b> 10:00am: Worship & Sunday School followed by coffee fellowship	<b>20</b> 7:15pm: Boy Scouts, FH	<b>21</b> 10:00am: Quilters 10:15am: Preschool Chapel 3:15pm BI Youth Choir 6:00pm Amabile Choir	<b>22</b> 10:20am: Preschool Chapel 3:30pm BI Youth Choir 6:00pm Lent Soup Supper & Devotion 7:00pm: Bethany Choir	<b>23</b> 4:00pm BI Youth Orchestra	<b>24</b> Noon: Al Anon, FH	<b>25</b> 9am BI Quilters Retreat 5:00pm Worship followed by wine and cheese fellowship
<b>26</b> 10:00am: Worship & Sunday School followed by coffee fellowship	<b>27</b> 7:15pm: Boy Scouts, FH	<b>28</b> 10:00am: Quilters 3:15pm BI Youth Choir 6:00pm Amabile Choir	<b>30</b> 3:30pm BI Youth Choir 6:00pm Lent Soup Supper & Devotion 7:00pm: Bethany Choir	<b>31</b> 4:00pm BI Youth Orchestra		