

Life Together



**Bethany Lutheran Church's
e-newsletter
Summer, 2023**

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Diers**

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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

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PASTOR'S ADDRESS

Answering the Call

By Pastor Paul Stumme-Diers



Dear Bethanians,

I attended an ordination of a young pastor last Sunday, and was reminded of the joy and expectation of such occasions. I would guess that I have presided (was the "Ordinator") for twenty ordinations, and in each instance I was moved in particular by two Scripture references:

"This is how you should regard us, as servant of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God." (1 Cor. 4:1)

and

"Come to me all who labor and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." (Matt. 11:29-30)

Both the weight of these charges, along with the promise of accompaniment and "lightness" in our calling as people of faith, speak to us and give us strength.

This ordination, in particular, accentuated these words. The woman being ordained is Emillie Binja, who has received a call to Creator Lutheran Church in Clackamas, OR, a congregation well represented at that service. But also well represented were the members of the congregation that welcomed Emillie and nurtured her call to pastoral ministry, St. Mark's/Tacoma.

(Continues next page)

Council leaders



Vicki Browning,
president,
vickibrowning@
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Lynn Nordby,
vice president,
lknordby@
msn.com



Jennie Harris,
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Eve Curtis,
treasurer,
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Answering the Call: *Continued*

You see, Emillie was born in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and then at the age of 8 as a refugee, relocated to Uganda, where she lived with her family for 15 years, in that refugee condition of being “in between”. Eventually, Emillie and her family were brought to the U.S. and resettled here through Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services, and locally through Lutheran Community Services of the Northwest.

Because of the profound welcome they received from that congregation, they began to attend worship there. Over time that connection deepened, and those in St. Mark’s identified in her gifts for pastoral ministry. With the help of ELCA seminaries and mentorship from local pastors, Emillie received her pastoral training, culminating in a call from the Oregon Synod.

The ordination ceremony was the punctuation to a wonderful story of our church and its faithful ministries, servants of Christ, giving fresh evidence of and witness to the mysteries of God. Blessings to Emillie and to God’s church and world.

Pastor Paul



FROM THE COUNCIL

Update from the President

Vicki Browning, Council President



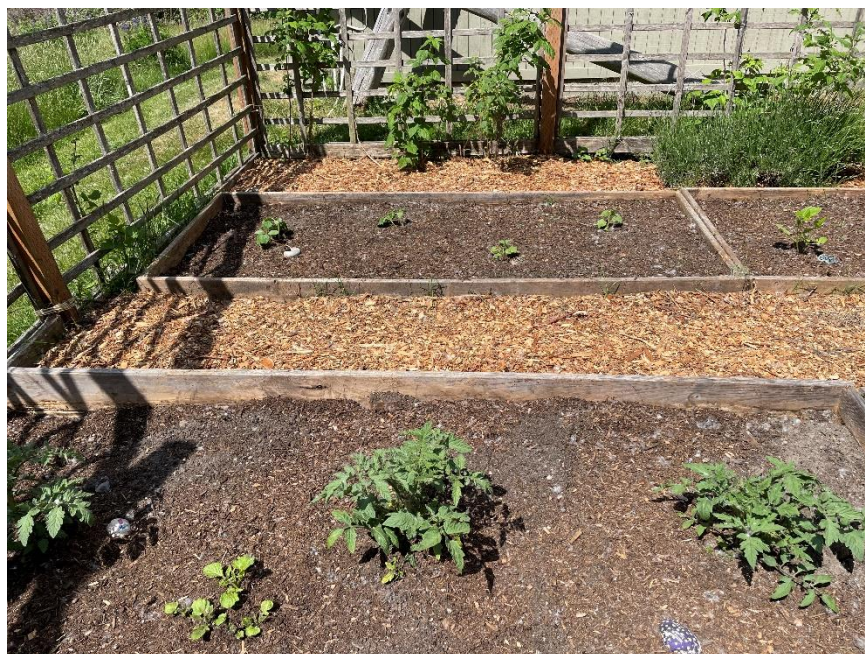
Is it really summer? It must be because it is almost time for the Rotary Auction and Rummage sale. Can you tell where my mind is?

We have had a good spring here at Bethany and summer looks promising too. We celebrated and welcomed the several new members to Bethany. We will soon see this year's senior students graduate high school and move on with their lives. We will celebrate the 20 plus years Jim Rohrscheib has served as our church treasurer. We also celebrate the many years of service to the preschool as Rachel Running and Valerie Johnson retire. We are grateful for Katie Drovda's service as the preschool director and wish her the best as she shares her talents with the Bainbridge students at Woodward Middle School.

Things are happening at Bethany. Just have a look at the vegetable garden. Everyone can participate in the planting and harvesting. Everyone can also participate in the baby shower on June 10th when we collect gifts for the little ones who will receive them in our baby kits. The quilters are busy on the next ones that will be sent off to those who need them.

The Finch Green LLC has been formed and is already hard at work. Several neighborhood gatherings have been planned and a board will soon be named. Look for more details on page X of this newsletter.

Look for the special music at the Sunday services this summer as the choir takes a break. If there is something you would like to see happen at Bethany, just let us know. All ideas are welcome.



BETHANY NEWS

Summer Bible Study

The Rachel Circle Bible Study group will meet on the first Tuesday in June (June 6th) and in August (August 1st) at 10:00am. In July, they will meet the second Tuesday, July 11th at 10:00am. The Women's Bible Study & Book Group will take a break during July and August.. The Men's Bible Study group will meet on the second Tuesdays (June 13th, July 11th and August 8th) at 8:00am. All Bible Study groups meet in fellowship hall.

Baccalaureate and Our Graduating Seniors

A Baccalaureate service for graduating high school seniors will take place at Eagle Harbor Congregational Church, on Sunday, June 11, at 3pm. Our heartfelt congratulations to Bethany seniors William Bang-Knudsen and Anna Tuinukaufe.

Summertime Worship

The days are getting warmer and longer. With June upon us, the meteorological season of summer is here! For us here at Bethany, that means a return to worship on our patio. We will wait until the "June Gloom" mornings are safely behind us before moving to the patio some time in July. Watch the weekly announcements for details on patio worship, summer BBQs and root beer float fellowship hours.



Summer Impact Gathering

The next IMPACT gathering will be on Sunday, July 2 at 4:00pm. Weather permitting, we will enjoy a picnic outside near the garden! Watch the weekly announcements for more details about the next IMPACT gathering and also for how you might help with the garden. Please contact Pastor Erin with any questions pastorerin@bethanyofbainbridge.org.

A Baby Shower for Babies All Over the World!

The Rachel Circle invites everyone, young and old, to a baby shower which will be held on June 10th at 2:30pm in the Fellowship Hall. This is your chance to help fill the baby kits that we ship off each spring and fall. Clothing and blankets must be new or gently used. A list of the items needed can be found in the narthex and on the hallway bulletin. There will be food and beverages, along with a game or two. And there will be cake! Please RSVP on the signup sheet so the Rachel Circle can plan the right amount of snacks and cake.



Thank you, Bethany Choir

A big thank you to the Bethany choir and it's director, Sylvia Cauter, for another wonderful year of excellent special music. Sylvia has it set up that there will be special music throughout the summer as well, with individuals and small groups. We are grateful for her faithful leadership, and for the dedication and excellence of our choir. Choir members include:

Linda Knudsen, Linda Newlon, Linnea Chu, Tom Newlon, Doug Dudgeon, Doug Love, Hans-Thomas Richter, Jim Cauter, Mary Jensen, Jeff Jensen, Lynn Nordby, Benay Nordby, Barbie Jo Smith, Sandy Young, Jaquie Sekits, Tanya Roe, Wayne Daley, Marcy Daley, Noreen Sievertson, Jeff Sievertson, Vicki Browning, Stefanie Allison, Steve Chupik, Colleen Chupik, Paul Stumme-Diers, Jenny Coates, and Shirley Funk.



Time to Celebrate!



Have a wonderful and carefree summer!



FINCH GREEN LLC

Affordable Housing Progress!

David Swartling, Task Force Chair



The pace of activity on Bethany's affordable housing odyssey is accelerating! And, a new organization has been created to address the development of an affordable housing project enabled by City of Bainbridge Island Ordinance 2022-02 and authorized by Bethany at its Annual Meeting in January. Finch Green LLC has now been formed and is an approved non-profit limited liability company under Washington law. It will be organized in accordance with an Operating Agreement (a/k/a bylaws), which has been approved by the Bethany Congregation Council. From a legal perspective, its next steps will be appointment of a Board of Directors, which will take place at the June Congregation Council meeting, and submission of a request to the General Counsel of the ELCA to come under the ELCA's group tax exemption with the IRS.

Legal work on Finch Green LLC is accompanied by a new phase in the project – community engagement. The first steps are a preliminary series of gatherings which will update community members on Bethany's vision, provide an explanation regarding the application of COBI Ordinance 2022-02, introduce Finch Green, and invite ideas and input as plans are beginning to be developed for the project. In these activities, Finch Green is blessed by the continued support and endorsement of Housing Resources Bainbridge (HRB), and Executive Director Phedra Elliott spoke in its support at the first informational community gathering in late May! This teamwork is exceptionally important because HRB's community needs assessment is a cornerstone in developing a project which addresses our community's most critical needs, and affordable housing advocacy to COBI must be coordinated to maximize the likelihood of success.

Two other aspects of the initial work of Finch Green LLC warrant mention. First, on-site analysis and preparatory work continues, focusing on site capacity. COBI's Ordinance authorizes up to 24 units, and preliminary site work supports the vision to build approximately 20 units, consisting of 2-, 3-, and even some 4-bedroom homes. Second, Bainbridge Island resident Marja Williams has joined Jonathan Davis on the Finch Green development team. She brings extensive development experience as well as important expertise in pro forma preparation and project management. Welcome aboard and thank you, Marja!

As in past reports, Finch Green now joins with Bethany's Affordable Housing Task Force in inviting members to "stay tuned" as the pace of activity accelerates and as plans emerge to translate a long-time vision into reality!

THE GREATER CHURCH



From the Bishop

Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee

In 1994, the ELCA adopted a social message entitled *Community Violence*. This social message acknowledges that the causes of violence are complex and pervasive and that violence breeds violence. This social message raises these questions:

In the face of this, what are we as a church called to be and do? What resources of our faith can we bring to bear on this apparently intractable predicament? How shall we respond to both victims and perpetrators of violence? What shall we do in cooperation with others as together we seek to counter violence in our communities?

As I write this, we have had more mass shootings in the United States than days of the year (mass shootings are defined as an incident in which four or more victims are shot or killed). The sheer volume of these killings naturally brings up the questions above – how do we respond?

First, we are called to pray. We are called to pray individually and collectively. We are called to pray for the victims of violence and for the loved ones of those harmed. We are called to pray that justice might come, for reconciliation and for peace. We are called to pray in repentance that we are not paralyzed in fear or hatred or numbness. I confess that I do not like memes that make fun of people saying, “thoughts and prayers.” My siblings in Christ, we are called to pray as people of faith! But prayer is not an excuse to do nothing. Through prayer, we are called to action.

Second, we are called to prayerfully enter into hard conversation about this issue with one another – in love and grace and accountability. Have someone directly affected by gun violence come and speak – a trauma doctor, a school counselor, a parent, a social worker. While I know some people would rather come to church to take refuge *from* the world and not engage the world, we, as siblings in Christ, grow in peace and understanding when we carefully listen and learn. When we are faced with difficult decisions or situations, the Holy Spirit gathers diverse people together to challenge one another and to discern where God is calling us to be as people who follow Jesus.

Third, we are called to advocate – especially for those without voice. Provide and call attention to resources and services that prevent violence, racism, and hate. Work individually in your own life to learn more about how systems of oppression lead to violence and humbly learn and practice. Partner with other congregations, churches, interfaith communities, and organizations to have a larger voice toward peace and justice. The advocacy arm of the NWWA Synod is Faith Action Network. Go to their website (www.fanwa.org) and see how to be engaged. For other resources, I encourage you to go to www.elca.org/60days and download “A 60-Day Journey Toward Justice in a Culture of Gun Violence.”

Fourth, we are called to treat each person as a child of God. We choose life or death every day in our words and in our actions. Fundamentally, as Lutherans, we believe that the good news of Jesus Christ has redeemed each one of us. So how do we live and move and be in this world with such good news?

Pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer writes in the *The Cost of Discipleship*, “Words and thoughts are not enough. Doing good involves all the things of daily life. ‘If your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink’ (Romans 12:20). In the same ways that brothers and sisters stand by each other in times of need, bind up each other’s wounds, ease each other’s pain, love of the enemy should do good to the enemy. Where in the world is there greater need, where are deeper wounds and pain than those of our enemies? Where is doing good more necessary and more blessed than for our enemies?”

As your Bishop, I pray that through God’s Holy Spirit, we may work together toward peace, toward justice, toward understanding, and toward the end of violence in all forms, especially, in this day and time, the end of gun violence.

Trusting in God’s grace, we pray, we listen, we advocate, we act.

+Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee
bishop@lutheransnw.org



Bethany members at the Interfaith Advocacy Day in Olympia.



June

Jon Christensen	6/3	Elaine Keeley	6/11	Evan Stoll	6/15
Colin Lindquist	6/4	David Christensen	6/14	Ralph Munro	6/17
Steve Stenberg	6/5	Tanya Roe	6/16	Nancy Wetzler	6/23
Bruce McCain	6/6	Sheryl Biegert	6/18	Diane Beck	6/30
Luke Shields	6/6	David Boothby	6/18	Chris Marten	6/30
Marshall Whittlesey	6/7	Linda Newlon	6/22	Raymond Miles	6/31
Vicki Milander	6/10	Linnea Chu	6/24	Barbara Deines	6/31
		Grace Dudgeon	6/24		

July

Mitchell Milander	7/2	Vicki Browning	7/12	Doug Dudgeon	7/22
Barbara Michael	7/3	Mary Toepel Coar	7/13	Howard Howlett	7/25
Tom Croker	7/4	Patty Ellerby	7/15	Wade Watson	7/26
Harrison Howlett	7/6	Lloyd Pritchett	7/17	Tia Stauffer	7/27
Elsie Love	7/10	Linda Sommerseth	7/18	Maimu Truitt	7/30
		Samuel Drov Dahl	7/22		

August

Jacob Bang-Knudsen	8/2	Vince Mattson	8/7	Steve Christensen	8/15
Joe Sommerseth	8/3	Bruce Anderson	8/8	Stephen Deines	8/17
Ruth Bartunek	8/5	Vickie Bech	8/8	Bob Jakubik	8/23
Ruth Miles	8/5	Melanie Olson	8/9	Grace Miles	8/30
Benay Nordby	8/5	Paul Robbins	8/10	Gladys Schulz	8/30
Burton Shields	8/5	Whitney Lane	8/13	Colleen Chupik	8/31
Scott Ellerby	8/7	Paul Stumme-Diers	8/13	Georgia Figgins	8/31

June Worship Assistants

Saturday Evening Worship:

Date:	Task:	Name:
June 3	Usher/Greeter	Jennie Harris
	Lay Reader	Jennie Harris
	Hospitality Host	Veronika & Jim Rohrscheib
June 10	No Saturday Service	
June 17	Usher/Greeter	Charlene Selvar
	Lay Reader	Carol Fenner
	Hospitality Host	Jennie Harris
June 24	Usher/Greeter	Dick Coar
	Lay Reader	Carol Fenner
	Hospitality Host	Carol Fenner

Sunday Morning Worship:

Date:	Task:	Name:
June 4	Ushers/Greeters	Stephen Deines & Andy Rimkus
	Lay Reader	Barbara Deines
	Communion Assistant	Barbara Deines
	Hospitality Host	Kristi Sutton & Vicki Browning
June 11	Ushers/Greeters	Eve & Mike Curtis
	Lay Reader	Tom Newlon
	Communion Assistant	Linda Newlon
	Hospitality Host	Kathie & Doug Dudgeon
June 18	Greeters/Ushers	Barbara & David Swartling
	Lay Reader	Linnea Chu
	Communion Assistant	Linnea Chu
	Hospitality Host	Becci Kerstetter & Vicki Browning
June 25	Ushers/Greeters	Alice & Bruce McCain
	Lay Reader	Lynn Nordby
	Communion Assistant	Alice McCain
	Hospitality Host	TBD

(June calendar on back page.)

The Month Ahead

June 2023						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 9:30am Women's Bible Study, FH 7:00pm Finch Green Neighbor Meeting	2	3 5:00pm Holden Evening Worship followed by wine and cheese fellowship
4 10:00am Worship followed by coffee fellowship	5 7:00pm Preschool Board Meeting 7:15pm Boy Scouts, FH	6 10:00am Rachel Circle Bible Study followed by Quilters 6:00pm Amabile Auditions	7	8	9 Noon Al Anon, FH	10 NO 5:00pm service
11 10:00am Worship followed by Tailgate Party!	12 7:15pm Boy Scouts, FH	13 8:00am Men's Bible Study 10:00am Quilters 6:00pm Preschool End of Year Celebration 7:00pm Council Meeting	14 5:00pm Preschool End of Year Celebrations	15	16 Noon Al Anon, FH	17 5:00pm Worship followed by wine and cheese fellowship
18 10:00am Worship followed by coffee fellowship	19	20 10:00am Quilters Noon Margot Jacobs Memorial at Faye Bainbridge	21	22	23 Noon Al Anon, FH	24 9am BI Quilters Retreat 5:00pm Worship followed by wine and cheese fellowship
25 10:00am Worship followed by coffee fellowship	26 930:am Preschool Summer Camp	27 930:am Preschool Summer Camp 10:00am Quilters	28 930:am Preschool Summer Camp	29 930:am Preschool Summer Camp	30 Noon Al Anon, FH	