



Bethany Briefs

January-February 2020

Bethany Presbyterian Church

1818 Queen Anne Ave N, Seattle WA 98109

206.284.2222

www.bethanypc.org

Divine Encounters *in Surprising Places*

by Pastor Doug Kelly, Head of Staff

Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night. -John 31:1-2

A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." -John 4:7

I love the season of Advent at Bethany – all the sounds, candle lighting and celebration. But before I know it, the other great season of the church year is here: Lent.

A group of elders and staff met in January where we spent the morning reflecting on the season of Lent. We read the lectionary gospel readings for Lent. From that gathering, a team was assigned to identify a theme for Lent and we now have one: *Divine Encounters in Surprising Places*.

Four of the five Sundays of Lent focus on deep and profound dialogues that Jesus has with interesting people in unexpected places. There's stealthy Nicodemus in a night time engagement. There's the Samaritan woman at the well, and more. The Sunday sermons will dive into these passages with the hope that each of us will find our place in these Jesus conversations, and hear his Word to us in our own life today.

Lenten Sermon Small Groups: I want to invite your home group to consider meeting weekly during Lent and to use the lectionary gospel reading and sermon for your group study. Participants would read the scripture and listen to the sermon (live or online)

before your gathering. The preacher each week will have posted a small group study guide to aid your discussion. We will be launching 3 to 4 new Lenten groups for anyone who is not currently in a small group. Stay tuned for further details coming soon.

Midweek communion: On Wednesday mornings at 7:30, March 4 – April 8, you can celebrate the Eucharist in a 30-minute liturgy in the sanctuary.

We have two other learning opportunities to help prepare you for Lent:

First Sundays: Faith Formation – February 2, "Don't Try This on Your Own: Life in Community as a Spiritual Discipline," with presenter Jeff Van Duzer.

Living Jesus in Real Time: Learning from St. Ignatius of Loyola, February 7, 7:00 - 8:30 pm and February 8, 9:00 am - 12:00 pm. Our presenter, Margie Van Duzer, will introduce us to this pillar of Christian leadership and help us learn three of his spiritual practices just in time for Lent.

It all begins with Ash Wednesday worship, February 26, 7:00 pm, and continues through the five Sundays of Lent and Holy Week. Make space for a divine encounter in your Lent. God may indeed surprise you.

Staff Transitions & Updates

Director of Outreach Ministries

Marisa Gronholz joined the Bethany staff in December as our new Director of Outreach Ministry. Marisa is not a stranger to Bethany, as she was a member here for a number of years before completing her Master of Divinity degree. The Search Team had many excellent candidates, but selected Marisa because of her demonstrated gifts in administration and communication, combined with a genuine love of people and a commitment to God's mission in the world. Marisa, a natural networker, will empower Bethany's members to connect and engage with our outreach partners in new ways. Marisa and husband, Scott, a former youth director at Bethany, have two children, Jack and Avery, who have been actively involved in our youth ministries for years. Please welcome Marisa to Bethany's staff!



Director of Children & Family Ministries

As many of you know, Dianne Ross announced her plans for retirement last fall, and this news was met with what can only be described as joyful regret. It is a regret we feel in abundance, for Dianne's Sunday morning presence, her affection for kids and parents, her superior administrative leadership, and her capable nurturing of 150 volunteers. Dianne has loved Jesus and all of us at Bethany so well. Yet there is JOY in knowing that Dianne is crossing into a joy-filled season of retirement. We celebrate this new chapter for Dianne and her husband, Chris.

As we say good-bye to Dianne, we look forward to a new chapter in Bethany's ministry to children and families. The search team has been working diligently to publicize the position and has identified potential candidates for interviews that will begin in the next few weeks.

Dianne's last Sunday is February 23rd, when we will celebrate her with a reception. Please be praying with us - for Dianne, and for Bethany's ministry in this transition.



A Message From Dianne Ross

Dear Bethany Congregation,

Recently I've been doing significant reflection on the almost twenty years I've been here at Bethany Presbyterian Church. It's been a RICH and rewarding time of ministry, and truly the highlight of my 40 years of children and family ministry in four churches around the country. I have LOVED getting to know you parents and your amazing children. Those who were born in my first year here are now college freshmen! What a joy it has been to share Jesus' life and love with them, and to watch them grow up, now tower over me, and grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ. This past summer at VBC, it was so gratifying to have 3 young women serving as teachers whom I remember as pre-schoolers!

The quality of ministry leaders (aka volunteers) is extremely high here at Bethany, and I've greatly appreciated the opportunity to get to know so many of you teens, singles, young couples without kids, parents, empty nesters and seniors who have extravagantly shared your gifts of teaching and loving hearts with the children of Bethany. So many parents shared their visions and ideas and together we started Godly Play, developed teams and Department Coordinators for 14 ministry teams in Sunday School, Godly Play, Children's Church, Strolling Musicians, and Nursery.

To provide opportunities for children to use their gifts in reaching out to others, we created Families Serving Together and were honored to partner alongside such kingdom-based organizations as Tierra Nueva, World Vision, World Relief, Mending Wings, and Children of the Nations. Parenting classes and MOBS (Mothers of Brothers) were started to provide support for parents. Welcoming Advent, 5th grade-led Christmas Eve services, the Epiphany Celebration, Easter Celebrations with the Flower Cross and chalk drawings on the sidewalk were all special events enabling children and families to celebrate the Church Year. We created a Milestone Unit for each elementary age class. Children's musicals and Una Voce choirs have given children a chance to learn, have fun, build community and share their musical gifts with the congregation.

I'm especially grateful that two years ago, Session approved cutting my hours back to 80% so that I could give one day a week to my "Beyond Bethany work" that God has invited me into (supporting smaller and more marginalized children's ministries in various locations). The deep, rich, and multi-talented staff at Bethany is one of the most collaborative I've ever experienced, and that has added to the richness of my time here. Chris and I have greatly enjoyed being part of this amazing worshipping and serving community.

And yes, I will reach a milestone birthday in February, so I will be retiring on February 25, 2020. It obviously comes with very mixed feelings. I will miss this great work, wonderful staff and you, my community. And I'm excited to step into a new season with more time to read, hike, swim, see our California and Virginia nieces and nephews (and now their children!), and explore more beautiful back roads of the Pacific Northwest with Chris. I will expand my Beyond Bethany work to two days a week, as I feel this is good stewardship of my gifts and experiences to encourage and support younger children's ministry leaders. After Chris and I are gone for the required 4 months of absence, you might see us now and then.

I am VERY excited for the "new person" to take this strong children's ministry to a new level. I firmly believe God will work in and through you all to continue meaningful ministry with the children and families of Bethany, and children beyond our walls. It's a good time for new leadership in children's ministry, and I think someone with different gifts, passions, ideas and experiences will be a great gift to this ministry and community.

Thank you for all the support, encouragement, and love you have given both Chris and me the last twenty years. We believe Jesus is here: teaching, laughing, encouraging, and guiding. He will continue to build His kingdom through you. In all you say and do, love God, bring glory to His name and enjoy God in this gift of life.

With great gratitude and love in Christ,

Dianne Ross

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Beyond Bethany - Baja Bound

by Brian Beaumont

My son and BPYG alumnus, Xander, invited me to join him on his third trip to Maneadero, Baja California, Mexico, to build a “tiny home” for a family in need - a team-building and “giving back” event for his firm in San Diego. That’s right, my son invited me on a company event with his colleagues. This was the first of several surprises over a three-day weekend. Similar to Wednesday Night Dinner ministry, building a tiny home with Baja Bound ministry is just the tip of the iceberg of what it takes to support these migrant farm workers not welcome across our border: <https://www.facebook.com/bajaboundbuilds/>.



We arrived at the job site on steep muddy dirt roads outside Ensenada. A young couple with their baby greeted us and ran alongside the road to a level patch of land on a hillside next to a plywood lean-to. This family, making around \$5.00 per day working the fields, had qualified for a loan and bought this land through Baja Bound, and was now ready for us to build their home on a slab of concrete after they had carried stones for a retaining wall and filled it with dirt. The construction was efficient with 15 volunteers painting, sawing and hammering along with a local foreman and hired worker. Two nights before, this family slept in mud. This was what I had expected from Xander’s Facebook posts years prior. The next morning expanded my horizons.



We started the day at Campo de Esperanza, or Fields of Hope: <https://www.facebook.com/campo.esperanza/>. This partner organization of Baja Bound started a generation ago teaching Spanish to indigenous people from Mexico and Central America and providing needed services and education to reduce child labor and provide hope. I learned that, like in the US, indigenous people are easily identified by their darker skin and hair, attire and native dialect. As in our country, they are not treated as well as those with European heritage speaking the language of the country. Put simply, they are exploited. We served an auditorium filled with children and women, a breakfast of chicken, cabbage, root vegetables, broth and tortillas while the men worked in the fields. We delivered and distributed donated food, clothing and toys to many smiling and grateful kids. None of these children were separated from their parents in cages, but were loved, educated, exercised and taught the love of Jesus, all very economically. No kids died ignored due to lack of medical attention in detention cells like in the US. This makes me weep. I am convinced ministries like Baja Bound and Campo de Esperanza are better equipped than we are in the US to care for these families and for far less money. I will be back. If you would like to join me, let me know at brianwilliambeaumont@hotmail.com.



*"God bless this family, this house and this group. The hands of Jesus would do the same for the poor."
--Nuestro Pastor Mayarino Escobar Roblero*

Outreach Ministry Updates

From Marisa Gronholz, Director of Outreach Ministry

Hello Bethany Family-

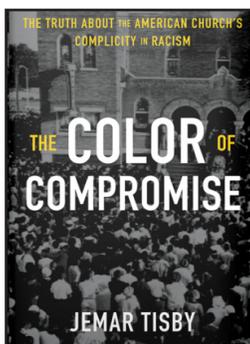
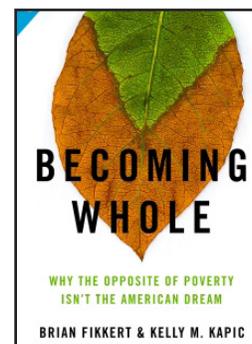
*I have spent the last month getting acclimated to my new role as Director of Outreach learning Bethany systems, engaging with staff, having meetings with Outreach Partners, Elders, Committee members and, all the while, being humbled and amazed by what God is doing at Bethany. I am so grateful that Bethany is committed to Outreach—to moving beyond Bethany to listen to, learn from, and love the people and places in our world that have suffered at the hands of oppressors—both individual and systemic. We have some great books planned for the next few months, some services of lament for the brokenness in our world, opportunities to get involved with our Ministry Partners, and an opportunity to host the play, *The Detention Lottery*, this October. Be looking for updates and opportunities in the E-News, in your bulletin, and on the Bethany website. I'm grateful to be a co-learner and co-laborer with you as we seek after God's heart for justice and an inbreaking of God's kingdom of justice and reconciliation in our world. Please reach out at any time (MarisaG@bethanypc.org) with thoughts, ideas, prayer requests, if you'd like to get more involved in Outreach efforts, or just to say hello. I'd love to hear from you!*

Coming Events with the Outreach Book Group ~ by Julia Sensenbrenner

In 2020, you're invited to join the Outreach Book Group for discussions on two books, and the PC(USA) conference. What is the Outreach Book group? It is gatherings, sponsored by our Local and Global Outreach committees, that seek to nurture discussion, discipleship, and community as we engage with Bethany's direction. All are welcome. If you're curious about a topic, please join us—even if you haven't had time to read the book.

Sunday, February 9, at 10:45am in 7 Howe House

Bethany member and former Outreach Partner, Jane Gunningham, will lead a discussion of *Becoming Whole: Why the Opposite of Poverty is Not the American Dream* by Brian Fikkert and Kelly M. Kopic. The authors evaluate the impact of fragmented communities, increasing loneliness, and rising mental health issues and make a case for a new path that allows all people to flourish. The book seeks to show how the kingdom of God can reshape our lives, and move us all towards wholeness.



Sunday, April 26, at 10:45am in 7 Howe House

New Outreach Director, Marisa Gronholz, will facilitate a discussion of *The Color of Compromise: The Truth About the American Church's Complicity in Racism* by Jemar Tisby. For those of us who continue to want to continue to recognize our own complicity in racism, to understand the contribution the American Church has made in sustaining institutionalized and systemic racism, and have a desire to seek reconciliation and reparations both personally and institutionally, this book is a great resource.

Sunday, June 28, at 10:45am in 7 Howe House

This June, we shift gears to discuss the Presbyterian Church (USA) in Action by focusing on the new policies and priorities coming out of the 224th General Assembly held in Baltimore June 20-27. The discussion will emphasize social justice and environmental concerns. It will be led by Janette Plunkett, who has been an advocate for a joint Bethany and Seattle Presbytery request to the broader Presbyterian church to continue advocacy for action against global warming. The proposal highlights some specific steps, including affirming the Paris Agreement. Recommended articles will come from <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/story/category/advocacy-social-justice/>.

Coming Up in Children's Ministry

Schedule of Events for Children & Families

January

Sunday, January 26 – Childcare at the Annual Meeting 5-6:15pm. Sign up with Dianne (DianneR@bethanypc.org). Children up through 3 years of age will go to the nursery at 5pm, children 4 years old through 4th grade will start in the sanctuary for about 20 minutes, then will be dismissed to the Parlor for a fun movie and popcorn. Fifth Graders - let Dianne know if you'd like to be a helper.

February

Sunday, February 2 – Children's Celebration with Dianne (during 9am hour)

Friday, February 7 – Fun Friday for 4th and 5th grade girls hosted by Rachel and Beth MacLean. Watch your email for more information!

Monday, February 10 – Children's Ministry Elder meeting with Dianne at Cathee Till's home at 9:30am

Sunday, February 16 – Special "Winter Break - Building Friendships" Event during the 9am hour. First through Third Graders will meet together in the Parlor for special friendship-building activities. Fourth and Fifth Grade boys and girls go to their normal rooms upstairs in 11 Howe for special activities. Pre-school and Kindergarteners will all have classes as normal.

Sunday, February 23 – Gratitude & Commitment Brunch after each service, and Praying for Dianne during worship

Tuesday, February 25 – Dianne Ross's last day



Upcoming Youth Events

- **Saturday, February 1 & 2 – Seventh Grade Milestone.** All 7th grade students are invited to join us on Saturday, February 1st, from 10am-3pm for their milestone event. This milestone will focus on the spiritual discipline of prayer. We will have various lessons/activities led by Danielle, Cody, and other leaders. Participants will also write prayers for parts of the services on Sunday that they will have the opportunity to share with the congregation (Sunday the 2nd) as they lead worship. There will be games, and lunch will be provided; cost is \$10. Please RSVP to Cody (CodyD@Bethanypc.org) by Tuesday, January 28th.

- **Sunday, February 2 – Pancake Breakfast Mission Trip Fundraiser** for students in grades 8-12.

- **Sunday, July 12 through Saturday, July 18 – Immerse Youth Discipleship Academy at Seattle Pacific University.** This program is open to current 9th– 12th graders. To register: spu.edu/immerse. Please note: There are a limited number of half price spots available for people who register early.

- **Sunday, August 2 through Saturday, August 8 – High School Mission Trip 2020** for 8th grade and older. Location: Yakama Reservation, WA. Read more about Mending Wings and service trips for youth online at <https://slamtrips.com>.

Adult Christian Education 2020

First Sundays: Faith Formation

Sunday, February 2, 9:00 - 10:15 am, 7 Howe House

Jeff Van Duzer will be the presenter for our next gathering: "Don't Try This on Your Own: Life in Community as a Spiritual Discipline." In this class, we will discuss the strong individual orientation of our culture and the different communal culture that prevailed at the time of the early church. We will discuss how Scripture can be read as a community and how to deepen our walk with God by inviting others to participate with us in study, worship, confession, discernment and accountability. The class will touch on some key principles for practicing our faith in the context of corporate worship and small groups and suggest some ways to embed these principles in practical spiritual disciplines.

Jeff is a long-time member and regular preacher at Bethany. He and his wife, Margie, have been part of a home group that has met for more than 35 years and have frequently taught on living out the Christian life in community.

Mark your calendars for our March 1st gathering: "Making Jesus Lord of All of Life" with presenter, Mike Purdy.

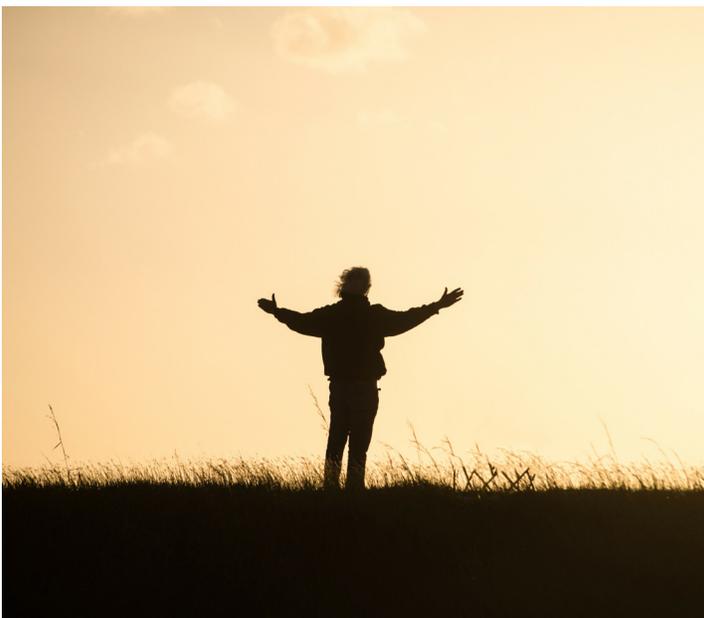
Bethany Adult Christian Education Conference

"Living Jesus in Real Time: Learning from St. Ignatius of Loyola"

Friday, February 7th, 7-8:30 pm & Saturday, February 8th, 9 am-12 pm, Fellowship Hall

Margie Van Duzer will lead us in exploring Ignatian ideas and practices around reading scripture, prayer, discernment, and faithful living in our world. Although this conference is intended to be a two-day experience, feel free to come to only one of the sessions. Register online (link on Bethany's homepage) by February 4th.

Gratitude & Commitment Sunday



Sunday, February 23, 9 am & 10:45 am Worship Celebration Meal following both services

Gratitude and Commitment Sunday is a time for Bethany to celebrate God's faithfulness and provision. This year, Gratitude and Commitment Sunday is on February 23rd, and you are personally invited to join two special events that day to celebrate God's goodness: Sunday morning worship and a celebration meal following both services.

Your presence will help our Session plan for effective ministry next year. Our 12-month budget cycle runs from July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021.

Please mark your calendars for Sunday, February 23rd, and plan to join us - we're looking forward to celebrating together.



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Session Notes

by Lars Johnson, Clerk of Session

NOVEMBER

- Margie Van Duzer pointed us to Christ through a reflection on guardian angels.
- Timothy Chang reported a net income loss from reduced pledged income, with a YTD loss of around \$18,000. Expenses are in line with expectations.
- Suzanne Mason provided a report of the Appreciative Inquiry for Outreach which influenced the job description and priorities of the new Director of Outreach.
- Session approved the following Bethany new members:
Jenn Cavanaugh & Jason Pratt (*Transfer: Capitol Hill Presbyterian Church*); Bill Clark (*Reaffirmation*); Jeremy Chan & Matt Karolak (*Reaffirmations*); Susan O'Connell (*Transfer: Capitol Hill Presbyterian Church*); Beverly Rogers (*Reaffirmation*); Gloria Sandford (*Reaffirmation*); and Claudia Steinman (*Reaffirmation*)
- Jill Mackie reported that she, along with Jay Derr, Laurie Nelson, Kristin Wilhite, and Shannon Johnson, will form the new Search Committee for Director of Children & Family Ministries. The job will be posted by December. The plan is not to do an interim position, but move directly to hire the permanent position.
- Margui Rutherford described the process that was used to

identify and evaluate strong candidates for the Director of Outreach role, ultimately recommending Marisa Gronholz for the position.

DECEMBER

- Milt Smith pointed us to Christ with a discussion of sources of joy and wonder during Advent.
- Reed Standlee, speaking for Timothy Chang, reported a net income loss in November from reduced pledged income, with a YTD loss of around \$30,000. Expenses are higher than last year, but are in line with plan.
- Jeff Van Duzer was invited to session to have a conversation about the "third way" which is a thought piece about how we can approach the recent points of view and difference on social issues.
- Dianne Ross provided an overview of strategies for connecting with newcomers at Bethany. Often the way we welcome newcomers in children's ministries can be helpful for broader engagement in the congregation.
- Search Committee for Director of Children & Family Ministries reported that the job was posted on December 5th and will be open until January 5th, with the goal of having some overlap between Dianne and the new candidate.