



Bethany Briefs

SPRING EDITION 2024

Bethany Presbyterian Church

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Space for Jesus to Draw You to Himself

by Pastor Doug Kelly, Head of Staff

Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself. — John 12:31-32

I preached on this passage on the fifth Sunday of Lent encouraging us to be a church that cultivates a community and space of safety where Jesus can draw all people to himself. On a more personal level, I want to encourage you this Holy Week to cultivate space where Jesus can draw you to himself. If it is true that Jesus has a unique stairway to every human heart, how can you make a way for our Lord to step toward your soul? Let me suggest three practices:

Solitude. Holy Week is for community, yes, but it is also the time to stop, breathe, and listen. Sit with a psalm in Holy Week. Psalms 63 and 130 are not bad choices. Spend time with the Stations of the Cross during our Open Sanctuary times at noon on Monday or at 5:30pm on Thursday. Take a walk without your ear buds. Rabbi Abraham Heschel commented, “Has anything of significance in the realm of spirit been achieved without the protection and the blessings of solitude?”

Relinquishing. Is there something in your life you need to say good-bye to? In John 12, Jesus talks about the ruler of this world being driven out. Good Friday is Jesus’ end. Yet, in a profound way it is the defeat of the prince of darkness. What is there in your life that no longer holds you? Or is there something that has exhausted its usefulness and is now simply in the way? David Olsen comments on boundary making: “Only the masters of

renunciation leave an imprint, only those who can say a hundred Nos for the sake of an overwhelming Yes.”

Worship. Gather with God’s people waving palm branches this Sunday at 9:00 or 10:45am. Walk with Jesus as he descends from the Mount of Olives into the Holy City. Then trade your palm branches for the shrouding at Maundy Thursday worship, 7:00pm on March 28th. Bear the cross with Jesus as we pass a wooden cross above our heads, touching it as if we were there at the Via Dolorosa. Walk away from the service in silence and darkness, mindful of Jesus’ arrest and crucifixion. Bethany does not have a Good Friday service, but why not attend at a nearby church? I know Queen Anne Lutheran and Queen Anne Presbyterian each have a service at 7:30pm.

Complete Holy Week on Resurrection Sunday by attending one of our three identical Easter services: 7:15, 9:00 and 10:45am. If you are not attending with children or bringing a guest, consider worshipping with us at 7:15am. And don’t forget to celebrate at the Easter reception after the 7:15 and 9:00am services.

Our Lord has a unique stairway to your heart. Cultivate a space this Holy Week where Jesus can draw you to himself.



easter

AT BETHANY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

PALM SUNDAY

march **24** 9:00AM
10:45AM

MAUNDY THURSDAY

march **28** 7:00PM

EASTER SUNDAY

march **31** 7:15AM
9:00AM
10:45AM

Holy Week at Bethany

As we follow Jesus on the final steps of his journey to the cross, we invite you to join us for our special Holy Week worship services and events:

Palm Sunday

March 24th, 9:00 & 10:45am, Sanctuary (livestream at 9:00am)

Join us as we begin Holy Week together and commemorate Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Palm fronds may be picked up in the narthex prior to worship. Children meet in the Fellowship Hall at 8:50 or 10:35am to participate in the processional at the beginning of worship ([see Bianca's email here](#)).

"The Stations of the Cross" Open Sanctuary

Monday, March 25th, 12:00-1:00pm & Thursday, March 28th, 5:30-6:30pm

The Stations of the Cross are an invitation to meditation and solidarity – not only with Jesus on his Way of Sorrows, but also with all victims of violence and injustice. This art installation features pieces curated across the centuries corresponding to events of the final days before Jesus' death.

Maundy Thursday

March 28th, 7:00pm, Sanctuary Only

At this special worship service, we remember Jesus' last supper with his followers and reflect on the final days leading up to his death on the cross. This is a multi-sensory service where we touch the cross as it passes overhead and receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

Easter Sunday

March 31st, 7:15, 9:00 & 10:45am, Sanctuary (livestream at 9:00am)

Gather with us as we celebrate the Risen Christ with gratitude and hope! Childcare will be available at all services for infants and toddlers 2 years and younger. Children's programming will be provided for ages 3 through 5th grade during the 9:00 and 10:45am services. *Please Note: If you are not attending with children or a guest, please consider coming to the 7:15am service.*

> *Easter Reception in Fellowship Hall following 7:15 & 9:00am services (no reception after 10:45am)*

Come fellowship on Easter morning, dining on a wonderful array of sweet and savory treats! Bring something to share, or volunteer to help with set-up or serving during a morning slot – [Sign Up Here](#).

Formation Ministry

by Marisa Gronholz, *Director of Formation & Outreach Ministries*

Update from "Listening Across our Differences" Series

In late February, we wrapped up our first "Loving Across our Differences" series. We maxed out at 25 people who committed to attending all three sessions with the addition of Lynne Baab's class on "Listening with Empathy." Lynne's class was open to all but was required for participants of "Listening Across our Differences." If you weren't able to attend that class, you can [click here to view the recording](#). The whole series was a sacred time of truly learning to listen...no debate, no dialogue, just opening our ears, minds, and hearts to hearing each other's stories. After the story-sharers spoke, participants were invited to silently reflect for a few moments on what we heard. Many thanks go to Lisa Hudson, Jennifer Steenstra, and Kevin McMahon for being the catalysts for this class.

We are planning on doing another multi-week class like this on another topic. What topics would you like to see covered? Do you have a story you'd like to share? Reach out to marisag@bethanypc.org.



Marriage Retreat with Jeff and Margie Van Duzer

Mary Oliver once wrote, "There are a hundred paths through the world that are easier than loving. But who wants easier?" Marriage is anything but easy, but it is made a little easier and profoundly richer when we have wisdom and guidance from friends and mentors, and time and space to reflect on our own marriages and connect with each other. I am so grateful for Jeff and Margie VanDuzer and their willingness to do both of those things—to share the wisdom they've gained through their long marriage and create a safe space for couples of all ages and stages of marriage to reflect on their own relationships as they host an in-town retreat for married couples at Bethany. You can read more about the retreat below. For questions or inquiries about childcare, contact Marisa: marisag@bethanypc.org.

Marriage: Flourishing, Floundering and Formation

You and your spouse are invited to register for a marriage enrichment retreat to be held at Bethany on May 10th and 11th. Beginning Friday night from 7:00-9pm and then continuing through Saturday from 9am to 3:00pm, Margie and Jeff Van Duzer will lead a series of short reflections on different aspects of marriage each followed by time set aside for couples to explore the topic on their own. Drawing on Scripture, marriage research, and their own personal experiences, Margie and Jeff will explore different topics including spiritual friendship, sexual companionship, and working together. Arrangements are being made to assist with childcare and babysitting, as needed. Advance registration is required to ensure that we can make the appropriate arrangements for food. [>>> Sign Up Here >>](#)

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Welcome New Members



Genna Dalence

Genna is 28 years old, from Tampa, Florida, and the youngest of two older sisters. She moved to Seattle two years ago to attend The Seattle School of Theology and Psychology. Genna graduated last year and is now an Associate Licensed Mental Health Counselor practicing at Puget Sound Psychotherapy.



Andra Fix

Andra is a lifelong Seattleite, growing up in Ravenna, attending the University of Washington, and now living in Crown Hill. Andra married her college sweetheart, Matthew, and has three children: Margo (7), Carl (3), and Mabel (9 months). Andra is a postpartum doula working with families as they welcome a new baby.



Matthew Fix

Matthew was raised in Oregon and SW Washington, but has lived in Seattle since attending UW as an undergraduate. He met his wife, Andra, here in Seattle and they have three wonderful children. Matthew's professional training is as a statistician and he works in the machine learning space for a local company. When he finds the time, he enjoys spending time outside hiking, camping, and fly fishing in our beautiful rivers and lakes.



Jenna Farleigh

Jenna is a partner at Susman Godfrey, a litigation law firm. She lives in Magnolia with her husband, Todd, two kids—Thane (5) and Laney (1)—and two black labs. They are a busy family who love to ski and be outdoors.

Welcome New Members (*cont.*)



Todd Yezefski

Todd is originally from Pennsylvania and moved to Seattle in 2012 with his wife, Jenna Farleigh (above). He works as an oncologist at Fred Hutch, and in his free time enjoys biking, skiing, and spending time with his two children, Thane and McLane.



JJ & Lisa Kissinger

JJ and Lisa Kissinger live in Shoreline with their kids, Jane (11) and Leo (7). Lisa is a real estate broker with Compass in Fremont, and JJ is the Executive Director of The Light Collective, a regional nonprofit supporting families who have a child with cancer. They enjoy long walks together, trying new restaurants, and playing with (or stepping on) Legos. Soooo many Legos.



Laura Sammons

Laura grew up in Illinois and found her way to Seattle via New Mexico. She has worked in the tech industry on and off during her career days and is currently is a happy homemaker, caring for her dog, Mari, and her wife, Zita. She loves bikes, movies, reading, crafting, and music.



Tatumn Walter

Tatumn is a passionate adventurer with a love for the outdoors and getting outside her comfort zone. She loves movement and relishes the full range of all that PNW offers - biking, backpacking, kayaking, skiing... When not outdoors you can find her gathering friends together, reading, or engaged in deep conversations on theology, psychology and self-growth. Tatumn is a 'Jill-of-all-trades' Project Manager with experience in both tech and communications, and always ready for a new challenge.

Outreach Ministry Updates



PACT Team Update and Outreach Potlucks: You are invited!!

For several years, Bethany has promoted PACT teams for each of our outreach partners. Over the past few years, we have sought to ensure that each ministry partner has a team of people who are Praying for their partners, Acting on behalf of and Advocating for that partner, Communicating with that partner and Traveling to visit that partner (when appropriate) either on a regular basis as a volunteer, or in a short term capacity on a service and/or learning trip. We are not abandoning this model. There are still large and vibrant groups of people involved in ministries like New Horizons, World Relief, and Urban Impact and strong connections for some of our overseas partners. However, there are some partners that have struggled to have a full PACT team for a variety of different reasons. We still want those partners to have the robust support of and relationships with members of our congregation. Moreover, we want to continue to provide opportunities for people who care about our outreach partners to hear about what is going on in outreach, pray for our partners, and have some fellowship with each other. So, we've moved to a liaison model where one or two people are responsible for getting in touch with our partners and getting prayer requests from them, and then we come together for a quarterly potluck for local outreach partners, and another for our global and regional outreach partners. We've hosted two of these so far and we are all enjoying the time and space to go a little deeper in prayer on be-

half of our partners and deepen our friendships with each other as well. Anyone who wants to be more involved in Outreach or hear more about our partners is invited!

The next Local Outreach potluck will be held on May 2nd at the home of Mig Schaaf from 6-8pm.

The next Global/Regional Outreach potluck will be held on June 2nd at the home of Carrie Ngongo from 5:30-7:30pm.

For more information and to RSVP for the upcoming potlucks, contact Marisa Gronholz; marisag@bethanypc.org.



Intergenerational Summer Service & Learning Trip to Esperanza *This Summer: July 13th-20th*

Founded in 1937, Esperanza exists to promote healing and restoration in a place of refuge working primarily with indigenous people groups off the coast of Vancouver Island. Bethany has sent teams for over 30 years to learn from and support their community. This summer Mike Christensen and others will be leading an intergenerational trip to Esperanza. For more information about this opportunity, contact Marisa Gronholz at marisag@bethanypc.org

High School Summer Service Trip *August 11-16 - Register by March 30th*

We will be serving this summer with our Ministry Partner, Mending Wings, on the Yakama Reservation. This trip will include community service projects during the day, late afternoon game time, evening cultural activities and crafts, worship and small groups. >> [Click here for more info & to sign up](#) >>



All-Church Read this Summer

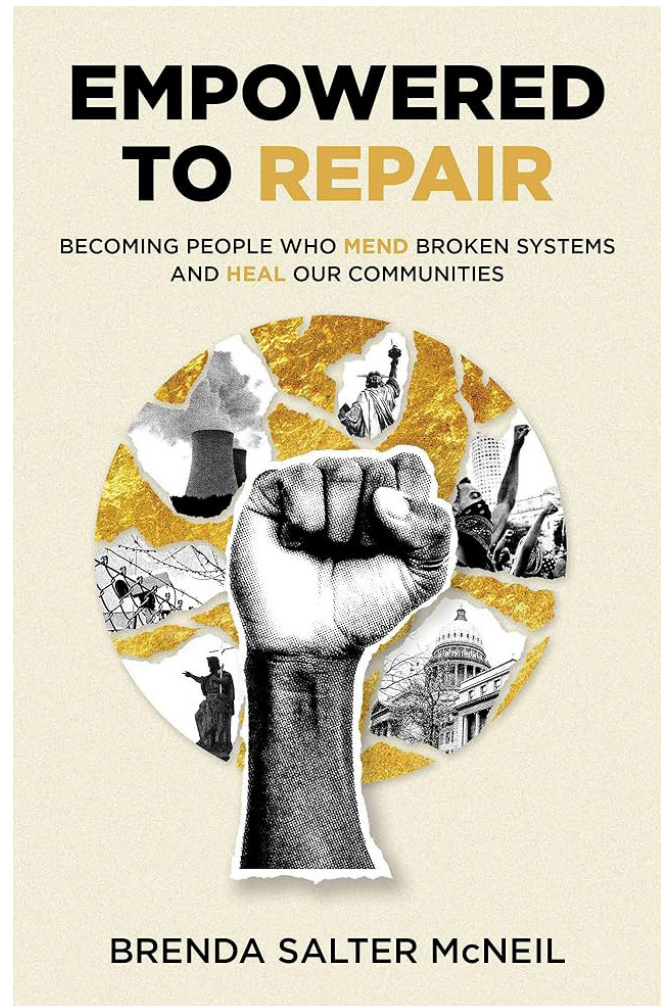
by Marisa Gronholz, Director of Formation & Outreach Ministries

For our next all-church read, we will be reading a brand-new book by Dr. Brenda Salter-McNeil entitled *"Empowered to Repair: Becoming People Who Mend Broken Systems and Heal Our Communities."* As many of you know, we have grounded much of our work in racial justice and reconciliation under Dr. Brenda's prophetic wisdom and leadership, specifically in her "Roadmap to Reconciliation" material. In that material, she warned us that this is life-long work and I'm grateful for Bethany's continued commitment. Dr. Brenda's new book urges us on towards more concrete action as we continue pursuing racial justice and equity.

Here is how she describes it in her own words: "In *Empowered to Repair*, I ask us to join in God's work of repairing and rebuilding broken communities. I go beyond theories by offering practical tools for organizing communities and activating people to work for systemic change. I also provide strategies for moving beyond superficial diversity. Aren't we all tire of seeing more POC, but no change in our spaces? Lastly, I hope to teach skills that we all need to engage in this important work for the long term."

The book comes out on May 24th, so be sure to order it wherever you buy books (I try to support QA Books across the street from our church and they'll have some copies available, but if you have a favorite bookstore, feel free to buy from there). We'll have a reading guide available starting Friday, May 31st, and will have a schedule of some discussion groups and community activities throughout the summer. I'm looking forward to reading alongside and learning with you! Just to get you even more excited, here is an endorsement of the book from Dr. Willie James Jennings:

"McNeil is one of the most important scholars and practitioners of racial reconciliation of our generation. This book offers a new paradigm for thinking about the work of reconciliation a this heartbreaking moments. It is timely, powerful, and so very necessary. It must make its way into the hands of every pastor, congregant, and Christian who believes there is a work of reconciliation yet to be done."



Special Guest Event - Save the Date Pentecost Sunday, May 19th

Dominique Gilliard, author of *Rethinking Incarceration and Subversive Witness*, will be leading us in worship. We'll have some post-worship activities with him, so be looking in your E-news for more information to come!

All-Church Events

Coming up in April:



All-Ages Movie Night

Friday, April 5th, 6:30-8:30 pm, Fellowship Hall

Let's get together and watch a fun animated movie, "Migration" (rated PG). Bring your favorite camping chair, bean bag, or blanket - and wear your comfiest sweats or jammies. Bring your picnic dinner, if you so choose. Otherwise, light movie snacks will be served.

[>> Sign Up Here >>](#)



Discovery Park Walk (all ages)

Sunday, April 21st, 3:00-5:00pm

Come enjoy a "rain or shine" spring walk through Discovery Park! Walk will be around 4 miles, and will include steep stair-climbs down and up from the beach. Wear sturdy shoes and layers! Meet Caroline Plummer and Delene Dale in the South Lot, next to the port-a-potties on the edge of the parking lot. Leashed dogs welcome.

[>> Sign Up Here >>](#)



Bethany Clothing Swap

Sat., April 27th, 10am-2:00pm, Fellowship Hall

Love thrifting and changing up your wardrobe? Want to spring-clean your closets? Concerned about environmental stewardship? This first-annual Bethany Clothing Swap is your chance to hit the jackpot! Bring your gently-used clothing and accessories (no household items, please) to Bethany between services during the month of April. Then come to the Clothing Swap and shop 'til you drop FOR FREE! Want to help with this event? [>> Sign Up Here >>](#)

May & Summer Look-Ahead:

- Kubota Gardens Spring Walk (all ages; leashed dogs welcome) on Sunday, May 3rd
- Pub Trivia Night in May; specific timing TBD
- All-Bethany Mariners Game (all ages)
- Low-Tide Walk with Mark Plunkett
- All-Church Picnic

Contact Congregational Life Elder, Michelle McFarland, if you have any ideas for activities you'd like to host: michelle.mcfarland@gmail.com.

What is Worth Wanting in Life?

Young Adults Update by Matt Miller, Associate Director of Young Adults

In January, Bethany's Young Adult Ministry retreated to snowy Greenwater for a weekend of learning & connecting. Seventeen of our little family attended—so many that sleeping-bagged young adults littered the nighttime floors, while several braved winter temps to sleep outside in tents! Our ministry ethos is genuine belonging from interest to engagement to embedding; it was a joy to behold true newbies (Jonah, we love you!) and Bethany Birthers (born & raised at Bethany) finding equal connection & rest.

We cooked with our traditional retreat recipe: 1 part intentional connection, 1 part communal learning, and 1 part easygoing rest. Let me share three highlights:

– On Friday, we learned about social imaginaries, a philosophically informed way of understanding what motivates our lives. Do we center today's cultural priority of consumeristic entitlement...or might we choose to center the Gospel—the Christ-enabled reality of intimate connection with God & one another?

– On Saturday, we practiced the Gospel by creating space for a couple to speak to the group about a significant life transition they're going through. They vulnerably invited us into their story, baring joy, pain, hope, fear, and longing. The group asked open, reflective questions in response, and the Spirit hovered thick in our midst.

– On Sunday, Bethany's 9:00am service streamed from a laptop screen & speakers as we wrapped breakfast. Not all engaged the service the same way, and all knew their acceptance in the group wasn't predicated on how they engaged church that morning. However, everyone chose to participate in communion, served by two young adults who have been ordained to the office of elder. To be served communion is special; to see the liturgical life of the church expressed in unique ways & in unique places raises goosebumps.

– *Bonus highlight: a small crew chose to pray the daily office liturgy in the evenings and mornings. What sweet time to worship, pray, and connect amidst a rarefied stillness of body & soul. Second bonus highlight: a few brave souls took a cold plunge in the snowy, freezing White River during the day on Saturday! Brrr!

In Bethany YA tradition, we leave you with a few key questions from our retreat:

- How would you articulate the **point** or **purpose** of Jesus' redemptive death on the cross?
- What is worth wanting in life? What isn't worth wanting?
- What is a place of community/relational ache in your life?



YOUNG ADULT & COLLEGE STUDENTS - KAYAK & CAMPING TRIP

From Friday, July 12, to Sunday, July 14, we're headed to Blake Island in Puget Sound for a weekend of paddle-access camping. In the tradition of past wilderness trips, we'll spend ample time relaxing (lounging on the beach!), learning (this retreat is lightly programmed), and connecting (fireside convos, games, and sunset paddles). Logistic & gear support is available, and beginner campers & paddlers are welcome. Nervous about kayaking? Get in touch; we plan to host a "kayak practice hour" on Lake Union in late April. Contact Matt Miller for more information: mattm@bethanypc.org.

children & family ministries @ Bethany

by Bianca Quezada, *Director of Children & Family Ministries*

This Christmas Eve we had a rousing family service led by our 5th graders and Kids Choir. The readings, the acting, and the singing combined for a memorable commemoration of Jesus' birth. Along with the earlier Welcoming Christmas event, this Advent season was a wonderful way for Bethany to connect, worship, and celebrate. We took a short break from Sunday children's program, returning on January 7th.

Sunday Classes. This quarter we revived an old classic, the 4th & 5th graders now have their own separate class which meets in 11 Howe during the 9am service. Led by the experienced and energetic crew of Shannon Johnson, Alan Beasley, and Meghan Waddle, every Sunday the upper elementary kids enjoy a safe, fun, and educational time together. I am so thankful for this team, prayers for the future of this effective set-up.

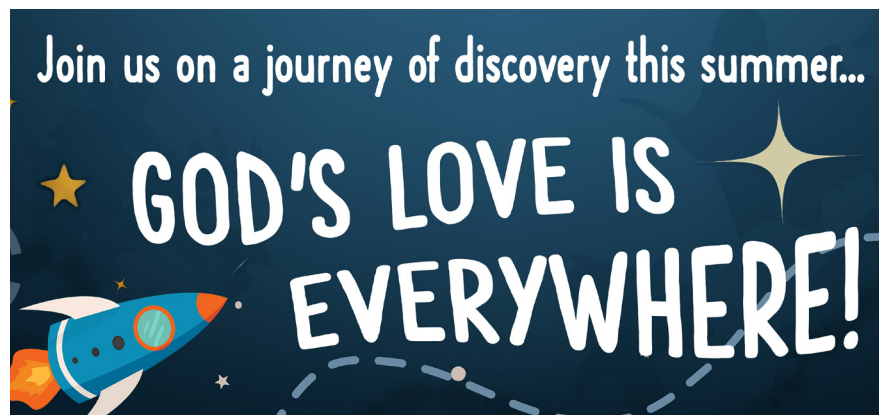


All other classes including the infant & toddler room, preschool room, Godly Play at both services, and the 1st-3rd grade lesson and response activity are running smoothly. Of course, we could always use more youth and adult volunteers to pour into the lives of our young people. Reach out if you're interested!



Volunteer Appreciation. Speaking of volunteers, we hosted a homestyle brunch for our 70+ volunteers on Sunday classes kick-off morning. I hope our volunteers felt the love in that room, from CFM leadership but also the parents of Bethany who are so grateful for this team of caregivers.

Vacation Bible Camp (VBC). The dates are set and plans are in motion for this summer's main event, Space: God's Love is Everywhere, July 22-26, 9am-12pm on campus! All kids near and far, from Bethany regulars to friends, family, and neighbors are invited to join the fun this summer. If you have any time that week or prior to help make this the best VBC ever, please sign up to be a volunteer in one of these roles: crafts, preparing snacks, leading a group of kids, set-up, clean-up, and more!



[>> Click here for more info & to sign up >>](#)