Praise God, sun and moon; praise him, all you shining stars! Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars! Wild animals and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds! Let them praise the name of the Lord! —Psalm 148:3, 10, 13

Nature has a way of elevating the horizon of my soul. I remember this past February, during a wet neighborhood walk in the early morning hours, how touched I was by the dark beauty around me. There were no bright colors, only shadows and shades of grey, charcoal, and black. This does not happen often for me in winter but as I took the time to look there seemed to be so much life even in that quiet hour.

Summer is a completely different animal in the Northwest. We inhabit Psalm 148 in full, where all of creation joins in one hymn of praise to our Creator. Nature in the Puget Sound region seems to shout out every day, “God is so Great!”

There are two things I want to encourage you to do this summer.

GET OUTSIDE. Of course, one hardly has to say this at Bethany because you are so good at appreciating God’s creativity in nature. It is not surprising that a lot of our “Fellowship Small” events are outside. Part of my rule of life is to get ten nights on the ground (car camping and backpacking) which is just another way of saying “Get outside with the creation, Doug.”

Right now, I am trying to get my feet in shape for a five day, thirty-five mile hike in July in Yosemite. I received a new backpack under the Christmas tree, so I am looking forward to trying it out.

But hitting the trail isn’t for all of us. Get out on a boat or kayak. When was the last time you traveled on a ferry? Take a nice evening stroll in the neighborhood. Sit outside in the evening and gaze at a fading sky. Look, listen, see, smell, feel the earth (okay pavement) under your feet.

I find it curious that in Genesis 1 and 9 we learn that God has a relationship with non-human creatures. God talks to them and makes covenant with them! Summer is the best time for me to get pulled out of my anthropocentric world and mindset and join in the whole earth chorus. So, get outside. Join in with creation in a Psalm 148 chorus.

Secondly, I want to say join us outside on Sundays. June 23 begins our summer schedule with worship at 10:00am and then Fellowship on the Lawn at 11:15am. I love this time of year at Bethany. Hanging together and connecting, and newcomers blending right in. And we open our fellowship to our Queen Anne neighbors passing by.

Also, mark your calendar for our All-Church Picnic on Sunday, August 25th. See the details inside this newsletter and in the weekly E-News.

In all this, don’t forget to Praise the Lord.
Today we remember news of freedom finally reaching a long-enslaved people on the margins of an empire emerging from the fire of a bitterly lethal conflict fought over ownership of their very bodies, their labor, their dreams. Could it be that what they privately knew to be their own could be publicly acknowledged in this land they’d built in chains? The white man’s law had changed (2½ years earlier, costing so many lives). They were no longer considered his “property.” Yet a law unannounced, unknown, unclaimed has no effect at all . . . unless it is revealed. Lived.

A century and a half later we still struggle to know, and live into, the freedom and responsibility proclaimed by law, and more importantly established by faith in one God and Father of all whose loving reach unites us all in Christ’s body & blood, no longer Jew or Greek, slave or free, male or female. Right? Maybe in our creed, but in our church, in our society, in our world? Hardly. There remains news to proclaim and much work to do.

As a privileged white male, even one whose career has been in intercultural and anti-racism education, I struggle to know my place, my charge. Just last night I wondered what Juneteenth has to do with me. Isn’t it more of a Black holiday? How does a white man honor it accurately, respectfully? Two books I’m reading just this morning remind me that our history is damning, the work remains undone, and it calls for much more than post-racial, free market “pulling up one’s own bootstraps” proclamations.

Did you know that our neighbor, Oregon, was the first and only state admitted to the Union while it upheld a law that excluded Black people from living there? Sarah L. Sanderson (a former Bethany attendee!) tells the story in The Place We Make: Breaking the Legacy of Legalized Hate (Waterbrook, 2023). Her research and writing seek to honestly consider the past, and to faithfully wrestle with it as her own. This morning I read about the white man (of course) judge in the case that exiled, by law, Jacob Vanderpool, a free Black man seeking to make his way as a hotel proprietor in frontier Oregon City in 1851. And this not long after another law (same judge), making Indian testimony inadmissible, excluded the testimony of women from the Clackamas Tribe who had been assaulted by white settlers . . . on whose land? Case dismissed. Are our systems and laws now colorblind? Should they be? I struggle with this as we consider “owner”ship and stewardship of our property in a neighborhood where yard signs remind us that “Duwamish Rent Is Due.”

Some of us are participating in Bethany’s “All-Church Read” of Rev. Dr. Brenda Salter McNeil’s new book, Empowered to Repair: becoming people who mend broken systems and heal our communities (Brazos, 2024). Timely and challenging. In her Introduction, she recognizes the complexity of our diverse post-colonial identities and interpretations of Nehemiah, her primary text – Nehemiah built a wall to rebuild a community. BIPOC and white historical legacies and current experiences give us very different lenses for how to read Nehemiah, our own times, and our needs. Maybe that is not so very different from those in Texas, Black & white, Mexican & native, hearing the news of freedom (accompanied by 2,000 Union troops) on that first Juneenth in 1865.

I’m thankful to Dr. Brenda for helping us with the heavy lifting (https://www.bethanypc.org/bethany-all-church-read-2024/), but we’re just getting started. I’m glad that we included “Lift Every Voice & Sing” in our worship last Sunday, but am I, are we, listening?
Looking for ways to connect with fellow Bethany-ites? Come join in a smaller gathering to get to know other folks – or consider serving, alongside your family, friends, or small group, or get matched with other folks – to serve coffee this summer on the lawn, following our (single) 10:00am church service!

**Summer Potluck (all ages)**
*Sunday, July 14th, 5:00-7:00pm, Ngongos’ Home (North Beach)*

Bring something to grill (for yourself) and a dish to share! We will eat, hang out, and enjoy the gorgeous view of the Puget Sound from the Ngongos’ North Beach deck.

**Mariners Game vs. Houston Astros (all ages)**
*Saturday, July 20th, 6:40pm, T-Mobile Park*

Come cheer on the M’s together with people of all ages and stages from our church family! Tickets are only $15.

**Polar Plunge**
*Saturday, July 27th, 9:00-10:30am, Golden Gardens Park*

Come do a mid-summer "polar plunge" at Golden Gardens Park (meet near playground and walk together to the water). Wear your suit and water shoes or flip-flops, and bring a towel, blanket, or cozy coat to wear after. If you want to be a part of the (non-plunging) beach crew, bring a beach chair or blanket – and help be ready with warm beverages.

**Low-Tide Walk (all ages)**
*Sunday, August 4th, 1:00-3:00pm, Discovery Park Lighthouse*

Join marine biologist Mark Plunkett on a low-tide walk around the Discovery Park Lighthouse! All ages are welcome to explore and learn about the creatures and features of this beautiful tidal zone. (NOTE: Dogs not encourages to join for this walk.)

**All-Church Picnic (all ages)**
*Sunday, August 25th, Woodland Park (timing TBD)*

Come enjoy a picnic with your whole church family – in nearby Woodland Park. Fun, food, fellowship, and fresh air are promised. More details about start time and food will be communicated later this summer.

>> Click Here for Event Sign-Ups >>

Questions? Contact Michelle McFarland: michelle.mcfarland@gmail.com or 206-954-5363.
As we collectively attempt to recover from the disconnectedness of the pandemic, in trying to find “the new normal,” many of us are looking for ways to reconnect with other humans!

The Fellowship Hall is back open after both Sunday services (however, moving to the lawn following the single 10:00am summer service, starting June 23rd), for coffee, tea, and fellowship. We also host Super Special Second Sunday (SSSS) every month, where we serve fun food, in addition to two large annual receptions for Easter and Advent.

For many folks, the Fellowship Hall time provides a great opportunity to see old friends and to welcome newcomers. However, it can also be a hard place for some. If you are more introverted, you come on your own to church, or you are new and just trying to make smaller connections, it can be a bit overwhelming. Therefore, we have started to provide some smaller-space gathering opportunities, outside of Sunday mornings, which we are affectionately calling “Fellowship Small” (vs the larger Fellowship HALL – get it?).

Here’s a recap of some of the Fellowship Small activities we have recently enjoyed, many of which have provided a chance for people of all ages and stages to be together:

**Bethany Barks – Magnuson Park Dog Walk –** Some of the Bethany pups brought their owners and other friends to play. This one will definitely be back (Marymoor Dog Park next time?)!

**Mox Boarding House Game Night –** Apparently WINGSPAN was the game of the night. It was a fun way to welcome some newcomers, and to see who the true board game-lovers are!

**Discovery Park Walk –** This walk was a multi-generational, international affair! Led by Caroline Plummer and Delene DeForest-Dale, it was a gorgeous day to hike through and “discover” more of this amazing park.
Clothing Swap – This inaugural event was a huge success, thanks to the many of you who donated, helped to sort and display, and who “shopped” for clothing either during the event or on Sunday morning. The remaining clothing items were enjoyed by Wednesday Night Dinner and New Horizons folks.

Pub Trivia Night – We fielded two trivia teams, “The Six-Sided Objects” and “Sitting on the Deck of the Stoup.” The latter took second place over the whole night, while a few of us were just happy to be able to answer one question.

Kubota Gardens Spring Walk – Led by Dianne Ross, the group got to explore the gorgeous foliage of this pretty park in the south end. Hoping to plan another one when the fall colors start to explode!

Laughter Yoga – Led by Iris Escobar, the group jumped a bit out of their comfort zone to get the full results of how great laughter (real or fake) is for your overall physical and mental health.

In the fall, we hope to host a “Who’s Coming to Dinner?” event, where people can host or attend a smaller dinner. Stay tuned for details! We are also excited to welcome back the All-Bethany Church picnic this summer. The game night and pub trivia night will also be back, by popular demand.

Do YOU have an idea, or something that you want to host? Let’s connect! Contact Michelle McFarland at michelle.mcfarland@gmail.com.
Welcome New Members

"You belong to Christ. You belong to us.
We belong to Christ together."

We look forward to welcoming these friends into membership during worship this Sunday, June 23rd:

**Julie Berger**
Julie grew up in rural farming country in Wisconsin where the Presbyterian Church was loved by her family. She has lived in the greater Seattle area since 1987 attending the University of WA obtaining an MFA in Art-Metal Design. Julie has done several public art commissions in the area. She now teaches in the Advanced Manufacturing department at Everett Community College helping students on their path to success. She loves the outdoors, hiking, and spending time in the wilderness. She also enjoys meeting new people and looks forward to connecting with people at Bethany.

**Grace Campbell**
Grace moved to Seattle shortly after college and has been making things work! Professionally, she is a Controller for her department within a Cell Therapy Pharma company that brings life-saving treatments to patients globally. In her personal life, she likes to spend time with her friends and family, travel, collect art, and tries to keep her plants alive!

**Lisa Dunn**
Seattle born and bred in the south end, Lisa completed college at SPU and traveled in Europe off and on for a year and a-half. Finally settled in the north end of the city, she married Michael Olmstead, had two great girls who are now grown, and is an accountant with a bookkeeping business. Lisa adores travel, learning, games, gardens, walking, and most of all community. :)
Welcome New Members (cont.)

**Sinclair Ralston**

Sinclair works as an ICU nurse at the University of Washington. She moved up to Seattle from Los Angeles for Nursing school and fell in love with the Pacific Northwest! She loves being outside, biking, gardening and trying all of the coffee shops in Seattle!

**Carol Jackson**

Carol was born and raised in Seattle. She has traveled extensively and lived abroad. She returned to Seattle to marry, raised an amazing family, and made fabulous friends. She’s also loved past jobs. Her post-employment go-to is volunteering for Queen Anne non-profits and the Wednesday Night Dinner at Bethany.

**Ken Jordan**

Ken is the Director of Wednesday Night Dinner at Bethany. He is a faithful servant, walking with God for over 20 years. He enjoys fellowship with his brothers and sister. Ken worked in Human Services for 25 years. He believes in loving all and caring for the needy, and helping around the church as needed.

**Jason Herman**

Jason works in technology consulting and also teaches as an adjunct professor in the SPU English department. In January, his wife (Gloria Sandford) and he were married here at Bethany. Together, they have five kids: Adam (25); Victoria (22); Sophia (21, a junior at Arizona State); Izzy (19, a freshman at UC Irvine); and Livi (15, a freshman at Shorewood High School). Jason recently completed the Living School program at the Center for Action and Contemplation, which is a two-year immersion in the Christian mystical tradition. He loves writing, reading, discussing literature and theology, and spending time with his wife, kids, and friends!

**Sinclair Ralston**

Sinclair works as an ICU nurse at the University of Washington. She moved up to Seattle from Los Angeles for Nursing school and fell in love with the Pacific Northwest! She loves being outside, biking, gardening and trying all of the coffee shops in Seattle!
While I have been around Bethany for 20 years now, it has been four and a half years since I came on staff. I can hardly believe it and do still consider it an honor and a privilege and a deep joy to serve as the Director of Formation and Outreach. One of my greatest joys is to come alongside both our long-term ministry partners and support the outreach passions and efforts of congregants who are involved in other organizations and ministries. Because of your generous giving, we are able to keep an undesignated line item in the budget and respond to emergent needs both locally and globally. We draw on the Outreach Fund (a fund that houses designated gifts to outreach and rolls over from year to year) to respond to requests for funding outside of partners listed as line-items in our budget. I wanted to take a moment to thank you for your generosity to Bethany and update you on some decisions the outreach team has made in recent months.

We were able to:

• Provide $2,000 to Greg Nelson and $2,000 to Kay Westburg from the Outreach Fund, which will support the Opportunity International Rise Project in Malawi. This funds two women who live well below the global poverty line of $2.00/day to participate in the Rise Project and get the training and financing necessary to provide for their families. Greg and Kay will be climbing Mt. Kilimanjaro to raise funds and awareness for this project. For more information, visit: www.opportunity.org

• Provide $2,500 to Mature Christian Ministries / Pastor Hermon in Bukavu, Democratic Republic of the Congo. Pastor Herman visited Bethany in May and shared with a group about his ministry in the DRC. His work is focused on supporting traumatized and frequently displaced rural and urban populations to find ways of healing, stabilizing and developing their own food security and economic autonomy through Christ-based, practical discipleship. He is a dear friend of Jane Gunningham and Ruth Silue. For more information, contact Jane Gunningham: janegunningham@gmail.com.

• Provide $2,500 to Bizra / Benjamin Selle in Somalia and. Bizra is a social enterprise that partners with local landowners to improve their farms through regenerative agriculture design and management, in order to fight desertification and contribute toward resilient landscapes and communities. Benjamin is a family member of Bethany member, Jay Derr, and his family has had a long relationship with several people in our congregation. For more information, visit: https://www.bizra.biz/

• Provide $1,500 to ECOS Church in Nairobi, Kenya led by Pastor Prince Amani Drake. ECOS church seeks to engage the next generation of Kenyan pastors and leaders. Prince is Pastor Harvey Drake's son and has been doing some work with long-time partner and friend of Bethany, Marta Bennett. For more information visit https://www.instagram.com/ecos.church.kenya/?locale=bz-hans&hl=am-et

Surplus Funding for Ecclesiastical Reparations

Last year it came to my attention that Bethany had been blessed with some surplus funding from the 2020-2021 fiscal year totaling $65,352.42. A few elders proposed that, in the spirit of our Roadmap to Reconciliation work and our ongoing commitment to racial justice and reconciliation, that we use those funds towards ecclesiastical reparations. Ecclesiastical reparations are repair attempts by the church to address the systemic inequity that racism has caused. In his book, The Color of Compromise, Jemar Tisby has a robust definition of Ecclesiastical reparations on pages 197-200 that Session, the global and local outreach committees, and the Race and Justice liaisons used to explore and discern where those funds might be used. While ecclesiastical reparations can take many shapes and forms, the team decided to focus on individuals and organizations with limited financial networks. Thank you so much for helping to make this possible! Those funds went to the following individuals and organizations:

• $15,000/year for three years to King County Youth Chaplaincy to help fund Durrell Green's position (total $45,000) For more information, visit: www.youthchaplaincy.org

(continued on next page)
Outreach Ministry Updates (cont.)

Surplus Funding for Ecclesiastical Reparations (continued from previous page)

• $5,000/year for three years to Chris Thurton with the Unity Collective – a BIPOC-led organization committed to Transforming individuals, relationships, and communities through embodied intersectional, integrative, and holistic care. They provide low to no cost care for BIPOC individuals and families.

• $5,000 to Acts on Stage – Acts On Stage is a product of the collaborative imaginations and efforts of its founders, Michelle Lang-Raymond and Isaiah Anderson, Jr. Combined, they have dedicated 40+ years to serving various artistic communities in the Pacific Northwest while remaining laser-focused on increasing access and opportunity to artists of color and activists of faith. Acts on Stage is committed to respecting the arts as method and equipping the artists as messengers who generate thought and action on matters of social justice and reform.

• Remaining $353.42 to Roadmap to Reconciliation Fund.

Contact Marisa Gronholz with any questions at: marisag@bethanypc.org.

Young Adults Ministry Reflections & Update

by Matt Miller, Associate Director of Young Adults

In her book *Liturgy of the Ordinary*, Tish Harrison Warren remarks,

“We are shaped every day, whether we know it or not, by practices—rituals and liturgies that make us who we are. We receive these practices—which are often rote—not only from the church or the Scriptures but from the culture, from the “air around us.”

The air around us, today, forms us into little self-sufficient silos. Individuals: separate and disconnected. Countless tiny rituals and liturgies do this, from the way we’re shown to Google for information instead of seeking others’ wisdom to the way we’re implicitly told that fears & anxieties should be held inside lest we reveal weakness to another. This deformation away from community and towards individualism is powerful and consistent...what can we do about it?

We can, it seems, become liturgists. Become ritualists, planning “ceremonies” to form each other towards community and interconnectedness.

On June 5th, Bethany’s young adults had the privilege of hosting our 2nd annual High School Graduate Night—a small liturgy celebrating our community’s newly-minted young adults, welcoming them into this new stage of life. Six graduates joined more than a dozen of our YA community, and what followed was several hours of counter-cultural connectedness.

*Everyone* vulnerably shared answers to a *connection-question* of their choice. I wonder which question you’d pick to answer in front of others, and from which questions you’d shy away?

Then, Steven Westburg continued a new YA tradition by giving a *PowerPoint presentation* (yes, you read that correctly) about what he does for work. This new tradition is a way we, as a community, are developing curiosity about each other’s lives. I wonder who in your church community you’re curious about? I wonder whose work life you really know, and whose work life you simply assume to be a certain way?

Next, graduates gamely shared—with a room full of older strangers—an anxiety and an anticipation for this next season they’re entering. What anxieties and anticipations do you hold in your own season of life, and how might it feel to voice them as courageously as the graduates did?

(continued on next page)
Finally, our young adult community responded to and expanded on questions asked by the graduates. Some shared advice, some shared stories. Memories were refreshed on how scary it is to go away to college; young adults remembered difficult seasons through which they’d grown. I wonder what wisdom you might have to share with those you’ve preceded in life? And what wisdom you might hope to hear from those who have preceded you?

Our time concluded with a blessing from Kate Bowler and a reminder that—even though our graduates are leaving, we are their home as part of Bethany—and that our doors are always ready to welcome them home.

To be a counter-cultural liturgist can be as simple as what happened on June 5th. Invite someone or many someones in. Host: with food, with conversation, with curiosity, and with intention. Bring your vulnerability as a bridge across whatever gap may exist: a difference in age, state, or political affiliation. Lead with new practices, like remarking on how huge someone’s recent life transition is, instead of giving into our culture’s constant hustle & churn. And, if you’re into this kind of thing...borrow Kate Bowler’s words and send your guests with a blessing.

God, challenge us to be bright lights, illuminating each other’s faces against the dark disconnection so thick & present in our world. Challenge us to reach out as Christ’s hands and feet, risking rejection & awkwardness in an inward-retreating world. Remind us that it is our mission to love one another as you have loved us—boldly, dangerously, and sacrificially. Amen.
Summer Camps & Trips at Bethany

**Summertime.** It is finally arriving in Seattle meaning parades around town, tending gardens, and the best sunsets. We are all so busy during the year – especially our students! Summer offers space to get away to play, encounter Jesus, make new friends, serve, and grow as a community. While you might not see us in the pew on a Sunday, know that we are worshiping under the trees that day. This year, I’d like to invite you to pray for us. Pray for the best weather possible, safety, patience for our volunteers, all the details, packing mercies, the anxiety of students at drop off, good rest, and simply for each person to meet Jesus in our journey.

**Trips and Dates:**

- June 26 - 30: Middle School Summer Camp (open to all 6th-8th graders) to Port Orchard, WA
- July 12 - 14: Young Adult + College Student Kayaking trip to Blake Island
- July 22 - 26: Vacation Bible Camp at Bethany for Pre-K - 5th grade students
- August 11 - 16: High School Service Trip to Mending Wings ministries, Yakama Reservation

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**Youth Ministries Summer Events - Mark Your Calendars!**

**Wednesday, June 26th - Sunday, June 30:** MIDDLE SCHOOL CAMP!

**Tuesday, July 9th, 6:15 - 8:00pm:** Scavenger Hunt and Menchie’s; meet at Youth House (11 Howe)

**Wednesday, July 17th, 5:00 - 8:00pm:** Wednesday Night Dinner + Games Night; meet in Fellowship Hall to serve at WND (and eat!) followed by games in the Youth House

**Saturday, July 20th, 6:40pm at the Mariner’s!** This has been a fun youth event in summers past and we are now turning this into an all church event! Bring your family and friends! Sign up for tickets here.

**July 22-26:** Volunteer at Vacation Bible Camp; to sign up, click here

**Tuesday, July 30th, 7:00 - 9:00pm:** You’re invited to THE birthday party of 2024! We are celebrating everyone with summer birthdays with a big party in the Youth House!

**Tuesday, August 6th:** Mini Golf night at Interbay, time TBD. All incoming 6th graders - graduating seniors are welcome. (Parents, we will also need 3 people to help out this night!)

**Sunday, August 11- Friday, August 16:** High School Summer trip to learn and serve alongside our friends at Mending Wings, Yakama Reservation
We’re heading into the homestretch of our regular season Sunday program and preparing for a wonderful summer! One thing I have learned in 18 years of church work is when it comes to volunteers, provide extended on-ramps and easy off-ramps. This season we are saying goodbye to a few volunteers as many more are considering joining this amazing team by assessing their God-given gifts and capacity. If volunteering in Children & Family Ministries is a way you’d like to participate in God’s kingdom, please reach out!

**Sunday Classes.** Every spring we see a jump in kid attendance, and this year is no different. It has been a joy to see the kids’ smiling faces as they learn, play, and explore together. Elder extraordinaire, Meghan Waddle and I are examining the many lessons and milestones a child experiences from birth through 5th grade graduation. We are asking, what do we want the kids to know after each year of Sunday classes, how do subsequent classes build on each other, and what are children learning about God’s diverse and beloved creation? Stay tuned for exciting outcomes!

**Milestones.** Since January, the 1st-5th graders have completed their church milestones including learning the Lord’s Prayer, participating in Communion, receiving their Bibles, and exploring Creation Care. Last weekend, Janette and Mark Plunkett hosted 8 families on a Discovery Park nature walk where we slowed down, listened to God’s voice in nature, and considered God’s beautiful handiwork throughout creation. Congratulations to all classes for diving deep into dense but essential topics of faith!

**Vacation Bible Camp (VBC) registration deadline July 8!** 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. Registration and information can be found on our website, [www.bethanypc.org/children](http://www.bethanypc.org/children). If you have any time that week or prior to help make this the best VBC ever, please [sign up here to be a volunteer](http://www.bethanypc.org/children)!