

The Herald

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Faith Partners Give Opportunities to Share Faith

There is nothing like sharing the gift of faith!

It's taken some time to get used to sharing my faith. I still remember how awkward it felt to do something as simple as sharing the peace during church services when I was in my late teens and even early twenties. I can think of many *reasons* why this was uncomfortable including my Germanic, Lutheran roots to not completely understanding the reason for greeting one another. Whatever the reservation for sharing, I now look forward to each time I am able to share the peace with another.

Sharing our faith with another might seem awkward at first, even if the sharing is in simple ways (i.e. – sharing the peace). If we, however, take a small step in the direction of daring to share it with another, amazing things can unfold during the conversations. The venues for sharing our faith with another do not have to be complicated either. Having a **faith partner** can be as simple as picking up the phone and dialing the number of a friend and asking a simple question such as:

“When was your faith nourished this week?” OR

“How did faith make a difference for you this week?”

We are all faith-filled people. We all need opportunities to share our faith with others so we can be reminded of the faith that lives within each of us. Because of my calling, I often have conversations with you and others about life and faith in so many rich and wonderful ways. How incredible the gift of your sharing with me has been!

Why not share the gift of faith with another? It's simple.

1. Think of someone whom you would like to get to know better in our congregation or a person who you believe would make a great **faith partner**. Ask that person.
2. Sign your names together on the chart by the information table at church.
3. Schedule a weekly time (by phone or in person) with your **faith partner** to have a chat about faith.

Can't think of a person to ask or not sure who to ask? NO PROBLEM!!

1. Sign your name on the chart where indicated.
2. Ask another person (who signed up seeking a **faith partner**) if they would like to be your partner OR wait to be contacted by a prospective partner.
3. Once you have a faith partner, schedule a weekly time (by phone or in person) with your **faith partner** to have a chat about faith.

Sharing our faith with another need not be complicated or intimidating. Each person shares their faith and the way they see God active in their life and their partner listens and reflects back what they have heard.

The gift of faith is meant to be shared! Consider becoming a **faith partner** with another person in our congregation. It could be one of the greatest gifts any of us has yet to give/receive!

May God bless your conversations richly!!

We live in Christ –
Pastor Jeff

Holy Week and Easter Offerings/Services

April 9 – Passion/Palm Sunday – will draw upon the voices of the people gathered at the **9:30am** Traditional Service as worshippers participate in **The Passion Narrative**. In this story, we hear our own story as it is played out by Christ’s disciples and the ultimate betrayal by all except God alone. **11:00am** Contemporary Service worshippers will hear a portion of the Passion story from the Gospel of St. Mark. Please come with voices ready and ears willing to hear this story of God’s ultimate redemptive work in Jesus Christ.

April 13 – Maundy-Thursday Worship – 7pm – Our Lenten journey concludes this evening with our corporate Confession of Sin and individual Laying on of Hands for the Absolution. Just as we have struggled throughout our Lenten Pilgrimage with sin and death, so we receive God’s consolation with the laying on of hands as individuals as we worship together corporately. The service begins with a welcome, hymn, and then sermon followed by prayer, our readings, communion, and then ending with the stripping of the altar. The stripping of the altar symbolizes the humiliation Jesus suffered at the hands of the soldiers. We close the service by reading Psalm 22 and then depart in silence in preparation for the solemn observance of Good Friday. This evening, there is no Benediction or Dismissal. Come experience this powerful liturgy and the ultimate love which Jesus shares with those even as death draws near for him!

April 14 – Good Friday Worship – 7pm – Together, we ponder the paschal mystery of God’s salvation given to us through the death of God’s only son. Our worship encapsulates a time of deep reflection with Scripture and a hymn appropriately chosen. If you have never been to Good Friday worship, you are encouraged to join us this week. Good Friday makes Easter Sunday truly a celebration of priceless worth!

April 15 – 11am– 1,000-Egg Easter Egg Hunt – at Wilshire Park sponsored by Bethany. Come meet some neighbors and children of our Beaumont-Wilshire neighborhood!

April 16 – 9:30 & 11am Services – The Resurrection of Our Lord/Easter Day
and 10:30am to noon – Easter Brunch –

Come celebrate the joy of Christ Jesus who lives for us!

Christian Education Opportunities to Grow through Easter

- **Wednesdays, 6pm:** **Discerning Our Spiritual Gifts – Lenten Classes (continued)**
April 5 – “Discovering Our Spiritual Gifts”
April 12 – “Empowering Gifted People”
- **Thursdays, 11:30am:** **No Experience Necessary Bible Study Unit Three**
“On the Job Training”
Bring a brown bag lunch
- **Sundays, 10:30am:** **Adult Bible Study &**
Sunday School for youth/children

Outreach Team Members Prepare for 1,000-Egg Hunt & Discuss Formats for Being ‘Evangelical’

There was plenty of energy for our kick-off around the nuts and bolts of organizing a 1,000-egg Easter egg hunt for Saturday, April 15, at 11am in Wilshire Park. But that was not the only energetic discussion held during our past meeting.

The most vibrant discussion centered around the question of sensitivity to our visitors (who come for a community event such as Z.A.P. – Zoo Animal Presenters) with regard to our desire to share God’s word with them. If we invite them to a “free” community event and then use that event for evangelizing (I’m using this term quite loosely), then we would be using this event as a means to an end rather than truly offering a “free” event (in the secular world, this process sometimes is referred to as “bait and switch”). Yet, if we don’t take it upon ourselves to share some measure of God’s word with them, some thought, then how will they come to know God’s love?

From this discussion, it was agreed upon that using a theme of “creation” and setting up a small corner area with information including stickers and other fun children items would be a sensitive, non-intimidating way of sharing God’s love for all of creation including the zoo animals and people too.

1,000-Egg Easter Egg Hunt – Saturday, April 15

Members of the Outreach Team have made plans for Bethany to host a “1,000 Egg” Easter Egg Hunt for the neighborhood on the vigil of Easter. Pastor Jeff is working with the city to secure a park permit to allow us to hold the Easter egg hunt across the street in Wilshire Park.

Remember, our first step in reaching out is making a connection with adults and children. The more each one of us is involved in reaching out, the greater potential we have for impacting lives and the neighborhood around us. Our effectiveness in reaching others depends on all of us! Thanks for your consideration of joining us!

Remember to save this date and time: **Saturday, April 15, 11am.**

2006 Day Camp Is Coming

2006 Day Camp: *Spread the word!* Bethany will once again host a Day Camp from July 31 to Aug. 4 (Monday - Friday) from 9am to 3pm. This camping experience, for children ages 4-12, allows children to experience, in an outdoor setting, what a Christian summer camping program is like without leaving home. Staff from Camp Lutherwood along with dedicated adult volunteers of Bethany Church will guide the week as the children sing, play, discover, touch creation, do crafts, act, participate in Bible Adventure Time, worship ... Did we mention HAVE FUN!

Cost for the week is \$40 and includes lunch and two snacks each day and a field trip to Grant Pool. Scholarships are available to make it affordable for those in need. Call the Bethany office for more information. A registration form is printed on the next two pages. For additional forms or for more information, call the church office at 503-284-3836 or go to www.bethanyportland.org.

Easter Garden

You are invited to bring your plants or flowers to beautify the sanctuary for Easter. Please put your name on the plants or flower arrangements, so they can be returned. Church doors will be open Saturday, April 15, 11 to 11:30. For info, contact Mildred Brown.

Bethany Women Give Offerings to Many...

As usual extraordinary manner, the women at Bethany have been hard at work making numerous contributions to ministries in and around Bethany Church! Bethany Women's Bazaar monies plus treasury money totaling \$2,900 have been disbursed as follows:

Lutheran World Relief (\$200), ELCA Global Mission (\$200), ELCA World Hunger (\$500), ELCA Missionary Support (\$100), Northeast Loaves & Fishes, Hollywood Loaves & Fishes, Portland Lutheran School, Lutheran Community Services, Fish Emergency Services, Church of Living Waters in Burns, Raphael House, West Women Salvation Army, Bethany Utilities, Bethany Day Camp.

If you have a moment, please take time to say "Thanks" to these women of faith who continue giving to others and making a big difference for the lives of many people with their financial resources.

Bethany women...OUTSTANDING JOB!!! Thanks for being such a vibrant part of the ministry of Bethany Church for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord!

Lutheran Women Today

The Lutheran Women Today magazine, which so many people enjoy, is an award winning publication. The Associated Church Press gave it six awards and the Religion Communication Council gave it three awards. This magazine will enrich, encourage, and energize your life. Our Bethany women find this to be so. To order a subscription, call 800-328-4648 today.

Council Approves Recommendations to work with Consultants

In the March meeting, church council approved the recommendations given to our congregation. There was quite positive feedback from the congregation for those who participated with our 'Courageous Space' consultants, **Mary Sellon** and **Dan Smith**, in the small group interviews and in the all congregational meeting held in January.

As per the recommendations given to us, **Mary** and **Dan** will work with our church council in at least two three-hour sessions as well as with the entire congregation in an all day session. The purpose is to work with us all to deepen understanding and to communicate in healthy ways and to participate and understand more fully our roles and nature in redeveloping Bethany as we move into a preferred future.

We are looking forward to their being with us to share more of their knowledge and teachings of being a transformed congregation and what it will take to be just that!

Church Council Highlights

Council met March 7 at 7pm. The February Financial Secretary Report and Treasurer Report were received. Outreach Committee kickoff meeting will be March 21. Old business: Pictorial directory leaders will meet March 9 with Olan Mills to discuss next steps now that individual pictures have been taken. We now have four church office telephone volunteers.—we could use one more. New business: Council approved the consultants' recommendations (see above article). A 1000-egg hunt is planned for April 15 in Wilshire Park. Easter Brunch is planned for April 16, 10:30 to noon. We will ask the congregation for people interested in being voting members at the Oregon Synod Assembly May 19-21.