The Herald

March 2007 • Bethany Lutheran Church • http://www.bethanyportland.org/

From Our Pastor–

A Life of Prayer

"But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you." *(Matthew 6:6, NRSV)*

This season during Lent, we will focus our time together on **Wednesdays, 6 to 7pm,** on "A Life of Prayer." Several questions about this topic come to my mind: What would "A Life of Prayer" look like? Is it enough to pray on Sundays and at meal times? Or does God expect more than that?

During our Wednesdays in Lent, we will gather to explore these questions and more. While we could certainly take an "in depth" look at prayer, its formation, and discuss prayer in a cerebral sense, I believe our calling as Christ's disciples is to learn together by doing.

I propose the following for our time together:

1. First, we take a look at the significance of prayer in our lives. While Lent reminds us that prayer is certainly one of many disciplines, can we build upon a new formation of prayer for our lives that includes our own needs and the needs of others (whomever that might be for us.)

2. Second, we take a journey through Scripture and draw upon the rich resources of Saints and how significant prayer was for their lives. What does Jesus summon us to when he calls his disciples to pray?

3. Finally, we will experience a 10-15 minute service entitled **Prayer Around the Cross** where we practice the art of praying. While Jesus calls us to life of prayer as individuals, we do well to attend to prayer corporately even outside our normal parameters of liturgy. My experience of this specific liturgy was quite engaging and reminded me of the deep power and presence of God.

The schedule for our **6 to 7pm Wednesday** gatherings in Lent is as follows:

February 28 ***A Life of Prayer: Where Are We Starting from?***
March 7 ***A Life of Prayer: Good Enough for God's Saints***
March 14 ***A Life of Prayer: Jesus' Summons***
March 21 ***A Life of Prayer: Incorporating Prayerful Habits***
(March 28 none)
April 4 ***A Life of Prayer: <u>Prayer Around the Cross</u> Liturgy***

Yours in Christ-
Pastor Jeff

Intergenerational Gathering:
Theme: Faith and Values of a War-Torn Country

Date/Time: **Sunday, March 4, noon**
Event: **Potluck, fellowship gathering**
Location: **Fellowship Hall, Bethany Lutheran Church**

Come join us for our first **Intergenerational Gathering** on **Sunday, March 4** at **Noon.**

Our goal is to gather for fellowship and renewal with one another as one body of faith.

We will focus on faith and values. Many of us, myself included, have not lived through the struggles of World War as many of our Bethanites have experienced. While we are constantly inundated with news about the political battles in Washington over the situation in Iraq, many of our Bethany members still remember how wars affected their lives and contribute to the faith and values which they still remember this day. We have much to learn and to glean from those who have experienced the war and its aftermaths (both good and challenging).

Questions we will discuss together include the following:

1. What are some values that you learned during the 1940's & 1950's that are still important to you today?
2. What role did faith and values play in the rising of the church to its "heyday" during the coming decade?
3. What values are important for the life of a church? Are some values better than others? In what ways did Jesus challenge some of the values during his day and time? Why do you suppose he did that?

Come join us for a great time of renewal, fellowship, and faith as we grow together as the one body in Christ Jesus!

Please bring **one potluck item** to share! See you there!!

Bishop Paul Shares Reflections at "Going Like 60"

If you were unable to be with us on Thursday, February 22, we missed you; however, we hope to share here a glimpse of that gathering.

The **Rev. Paul Swanson**, Bishop for our Oregon Synod, delighted our hearts and lives with his stories and reflections on being Bishop since 1987. Generous smiles and laughter were heard around the room as **Bishop Paul** shared a day (or two) in the life of bishop in the Oregon synod. He graced us generously with one hour as he shared some funny stories, reflections on what the future may hold for himself and his wife, and the challenges that we and all mainline congregations face in the future.

The next "Going Like 60" gathering is scheduled for **Thursday, March 22** at **Noon.**

If you are in need of a ride, please call the church office at 503-284-3836.

Regular Vision Team Task Force Meetings Begin in March

Our second **Vision Team** meeting was held on February 21. We will meet again March 8, 3 to 4:30pm, and then **twice a month** until our task is accomplished.

The team met and went through some homework assignments which I gave them from our previous meeting. The team spent time engaged in reflecting upon experiences that they have had at Bethany and how the past informs our present. One person suggested that keying into Bethany's *reality* would be a good way for all of us to utilize our energies and keep the energy of the congregation flowing in a life-giving direction.

The second part of the assignment was to think about a key piece of Scripture that has been formative for oneself with regard to vision and/or faith. The Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20) was spoken of highly as a great focus for them for vision and faith. Others shared Scripture that they were both challenged and affected by and generously shared their responses with the group. I provided Scripture through Bible software using the church video projector and we spent time discerning Scripture in its context from 2 Corinthians 12 and Psalms 115 & 117 as well.

For the last part of the assignment, I asked each one in the group to share one risk which they took and the result that they experienced. With the exception of one person, the results were very favorable for each person. As each individual shared, we quickly discovered a key characteristic within that person whether the outcome was favorable or not. We learned that in taking risks we have many opportunities not only to stretch our lives and faith but to grow in the experience through individual reflection and what it took from us to take such a risk.

A homework assignment was given for next time which asks each person for their sense of God's calling for Bethany. At our next meeting we will begin sharing those responses. Please keep all of us in prayer as we engage the Spirit and each other in this visioning process together!

Pastor Jeff

ELW Hymnals Arrive

[reprinted from February Herald]

It took a while, but our new ELW (Evangelical Lutheran Worship) hymnals have finally arrived. Our organist, Phil Baker, and Pastor Jeff will be working together to coordinate a transition Sunday and a decommissioning of LBW (Lutheran Book of Worship) as we begin using ELW.

The cost of each hymnal ordered is $17.50 (not including shipping charges). Memorials may be given in memory or honor of someone if congregational worshipers would like to purchase a hymnal(s) in memory or honor of someone. Please place your gift in one of the envelopes labeled "Evangelical Lutheran Worship". Please indicate on the memo line of your check ELW memorial gift (if the person is deceased) or ELW honorary gift (if the person is living). A memorial/honorary designation sticker will be placed in the front of the ELW hymnal in memory or in honor of the person in whom you designated the gift. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the church office at 503-284-3836. Thank you!

Articles for Monthly Herald – Bottom Left Hand Slot of Church Boxes

If you have articles for publishing in the monthly Herald newsletter, please place them in the bottom left hand slot labeled Herald Articles/Information before the information due date (published on the calendar each month). We would appreciate you leaving your name with the article in case our editor has any questions about it. Thanks for your help and assistance in this matter!

Women's Bazaar Money Distribution

The Women's Bazaar money plus some treasury money totaling $3,400 has been distributed for Lutheran agencies, national and local; community agencies; Bethany Day Camp, etc.

February 2007 Council Meeting Highlights

Council met February 13 at 7pm with two members excused. The following officers were elected: Bill Markwart, president; Phyllis Parker, vice president; and Midori Suzuki, secretary. Council elected Kathy Norton, Treasurer and LeDonna Schrumm, Financial Secretary. Council discussed Lent and Easter schedules. A Wednesday 6pm educational hour is planned for Lent. Property: We are waiting for quotes for replacing the main furnace. Property items needing attention include: carpets (cleaning), all floors (waxing) and bathroom floor (replacement). Financial: January general fund income was $4,629.50 and disbursements were $9,932.68. MSP to authorize the Treasurer to borrow as needed from savings to pay expenses through April. MSP to hold a Special Congregational Meeting at noon on April 22 for congregational authorization to use Trust Fund principal for paying operating expenses. The next Council meeting is scheduled for March 13, 2007 at 7pm.

Bethany Church Council

Your 2007 Church Council Members and Financial Officers are:

Edith Aanderud
Barbara Andersen
Eileen Eckart
Donna Frey
Wanda Joaquin
Bill Markwart
Kathy Norton (treasurer)
Phyllis Parker
LeDonna Schrumm (financial secretary)
Midori Suzuki

Explore our Uniquely Christian Way of Life with Pastor Dan Erlander

First Immanuel Lutheran Church, ELCA
1816 NW Irving St. (NW 19th & Irving), Portland, OR, 97219, 503-226-3659,
www.firstimmanuelluth.org

Saturday, March 3, 8:30 am - Noon
"A Surprising God; A Surprising People"
A brief and whimsical survey of the Bible as a story of God "not acting like God is expected to act" and then calling humans who will "not act like humans are expected to act."

Sunday, March 4, 9:30 am - 10:45 am
"It's All About Love"
Invite a friend along to hear the best news there is: God's passionate, unconditional love for all humans and creation. Celebrate God's love in Worship with Holy Communion at 11 am.

There's no charge, and childcare is provided. Parking on-street and in nearby lots.
To assist in planning, please call/email ahead to say you're coming.

Luther House

Luther House (a Lutheran Campus Ministry) located at **Oregon State University**, is celebrating its 100th Anniversary of Campus Ministry. A celebration event will be held on **Sunday, April 29, 1:30-4:30pm** at the CH2M Hill Alumni Center at Oregon State University