

# THE FOLLOWER

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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AND LENT

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VBS 2020

## WANTING MORE?

BY PASTOR PAUL

We live in a world where people are always looking for more, yet many of us are settling for far too little. The problem? We settle for a definition of our faith as just one more aspect of our lives needing attention and commitment – alongside family, work, school, friendships, community, etc. We see our Christianity as a piece of a big pie, maybe even a big piece of a big pie. What we fail to see, though, is how our faith is meant to infuse, shape, and impact every aspect of our lives. Faith isn't a piece of a pie. It is more like the hub of a wheel, the center of it all, the silver thread that runs through all of life.

The difference between those two perspectives is significant. The one view makes our faith just one among many complementary and maybe even competing elements of life. The other, holistic view of discipleship makes it the core of everything, the bloodstream in the flow of life. Perspective truly matters here. I can settle for my family needing to be in church on Sunday or I can see church on Sunday as one expression of how faith needs to permeate every aspect of our family's life together. Do you see the difference? Discipleship is meant to cover and color every conversation we have as a family, the way we are early in the morning and the way we are late at night. It impacts the way we spend and save our money and what we do for leisure.

Until we see our faith as an all-embracing approach to life, we'll be less than what God has called us to be, and our lives and relationships will fall short of God's intention. If we make faith so distinct from life, we'll also settle for far too little learning. The first Christians were called followers of the Way before they were ever called Christians (Acts 9:2). That meant their faith was a way of life, a holistic, life embracing strategy for following Jesus Christ 24/7. And the Bible? It was their textbook for all of life. That's why they loved it so much.

Well, the Good News is that as followers of Jesus Christ we have a God who has come to give us more. He has come to give us what we really need. He gives us forgiveness and life and the power to walk in a whole new way. Over the next year here at Bethel you are going to be hearing less talk about being a member of this church and more talk about being a disciple as we seek to keep Jesus in center of our lives. For as disciples we are actively living out our faith in our words and our deeds. We are not just a member of a church. And what could be better... what more could we want than to be [Following Jesus Together](#).

## THIS SEASON OF LENT BEGINS ON ASH WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 26, 2020 AT 7PM

By Jesus' wounds we are healed! During Lent, we'll reflect on how the wounds of our sin affect our relationship with God and with others and how, through graceful healing, our relationship with God and others is restored once more.

### February 26 - Ash Wednesday

The Wounds of Blasphemy  
John 10:31-39

### March 4

The Wounds of Violating the Sabbath  
Luke 6:6-11

### March 11

The Wounds of Dishonoring Authority  
John 19:12-16

### March 18

The Wounds of Murder  
John 11:47-53

### March 25

The Wounds of Adultery  
Mark 2:13-17

### April 1

The Wounds of Stealing  
Luke 23:1-5

Isaiah 53:5

But he was pierced for our  
transgressions, he was crushed  
for our iniquities; the  
punishment that brought us  
peace was on him, and by his  
wounds we are healed.

## LENTEN SUPPER SERVING SCHEDULE

You are warmly invited to join us as we gather for a meal together on the six Wednesdays during Lent beginning on Wed, Feb 26 at 6pm in the West Basement. The Bethel family is divided into six groups, each led by an elder (please see below). Each group serves the meal for one Wednesday in Lent.

The elder for your group will be responsible for the main entree (with help from key people) and will ask others in the group to help provide the side dishes for the meal (salads, chips, dessert, etc.). If you have questions, you are welcome to call your elder.

This is a great time for fellowship and we look forward to seeing you.

### February 26

Ron Vegter's (630-336-8544) group  
Krueger to Pijanowski

### March 4

Clark Neuharth's (708-275-5687) group  
Soltwisch to Zobjeck, Benitez Family

### March 11

Bob Bosma's (630-247-9970) group  
Cucchi to Hinz

### March 18

Tom Harrington's (630-336-2410) group  
Jagger to Moorhouse, Pfothenhauer Family

### March 25

Gary Soltwisch's (630-441-0381) group  
Albrecht to Dooley, Sanberg Family

### April 1

Don Schwieger's (630-464-5922) group  
Reedy to Smith

## **PADS MISSION OPPORTUNITY ALERT**

Due to a decline in church attendance at many volunteer churches and the closure of various other churches, First Congregational Church (host site) is in need of additional serving help in the month of April. Our Bethel family customarily serves the last Mon/Tues of April but this year we are going to step up and also serve the week prior. Please mark your calendars for April 20-21 and April 27-28, and watch for sign up sheets as we get closer to April. Let's show our love and support for our brothers and sisters in Christ as Jesus has called us to do.

If anyone has an interest in leading out the dinner, which includes the grocery shopping, please contact Sandy Smith. There are pre-planned meals with shopping lists and cooking instructions to make it easier. Please get in touch with Sandy Smith for questions at sandylms01@yahoo.com. Come share the life-changing love of God.

## **CAMP RESTORE DETROIT- JUNE 28 TO JULY 2**

Bethel's young people are heading to Detroit this summer to come alongside Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church as they seek to be stakeholders in the rebuilding of their community and share the love of Jesus in winsome ways! Youth families, please talk to Alane or Deb in the office if you have questions about the payment schedule or paperwork due. Bethel family, if you'd like to make a special donation in support of the Bethel Camp Restore Detroit group, please talk to Deb Bartash.

## **FEATURE BIBLE STORY SUNDAY - FEBRUARY 9**

Kids, invite a friend and join Aaron Shirley on an adventure to the mountain of Jesus' transfiguration (Mark 9:2-10) on Sun, Feb 9 from 9:30-10:45am. You'll also be making Valentines Cards to send to some special Bethel folks! You won't want to miss it!

## **FAMILY FAITH WALK**

In February, we'll continue our practice as a family at Bethel to set aside time to bless and encourage children and parents. Our desire is that our children grow as disciples of Jesus, with a deep sense of their identity as loved and forgiven children of God!

On Sun, Feb 23 during worship, Emmalyn Brown, Mason Trout, Ardyn Bryant, Zuzu Lawrence, Nolan Sleeper, Gabriel Givens, Harlan Paladin, Hope Carlson, Ava Doty, Owen Schulz, Lawson Hayes, Sadie Ryan, Andrea Grzych will have the opportunity to receive a blessing and a gift!

Please join us in praying this blessing over our dear children... that they will mature like Jesus, "growing up in both body and spirit, blessed by both God and people." Luke 2:52

## **BELC REGISTRATION**

Registration for the 2020-2021 school year is open. As always, we are offering quality Christian preschool programing for children ages two through five. If you or someone you know may be interested, please pick up class information near the preschool entrance or in the west basement. Contact Lisa Graziano at 630-968-3232 with inquiries or to schedule a tour.



*Your deep value  
does not come  
from being  
lovely.*

*Your deep value  
comes from  
being loved.*

## BETHEL'S 2020 VBS RAINFOREST EXPLORERS - JESUS LEADS THE WAY

Coming this June 22-26, we'll be heading to the rainforest for an epic faith adventure! It sure is easy to get lost, in the rainforest AND in life! People in Noah's time were sure adrift, and the Israelites were straying when God gave the Ten Commandments. Jesus called his disciples when they were wandering, "Come, follow Me." Jesus healed ten forgotten lepers and restored his aimless disciples after his resurrection! God's people throughout time have known what it means to be lost!

The good, good news for us is that, in the rainforest AND in life, Jesus is our ultimate guide and leads the way to the riches and treasures of GOD – beyond what we could ask or imagine.

## VBS TEAM KICK-OFF LUNCH

On Sun, March 1 from 12:15-1:30pm, come enjoy lunch and time together, as well as a team gathering to officially kick-off VBS 2020! We'll explore the theme and biblical message, brainstorm, and begin to build the VBS Team. Your help with bringing food and setting up would be most appreciated. There is a sign-up at the back of the sanctuary.



## VBS REGISTRATION NEW FOR 2020

We're sprucing up the registration process for VBS this year to make things smoother and better serve families! Here's a snapshot of what you can expect:

- Early online registration for Bethel and BELC families opens on March 1.
- We'll send you the link for the early registration form at the end of February.
- Regular online registration opens on April 1.
- No paper registration forms this year. Registration is online only.
- 200 Kids max – so please make sure and register your kiddos early.
- "Skip the lines" early name tag pick-up the week before VBS and head right into the rainforest on the Monday of VBS!

## VBS TEAM

Bethel's VBS Team comes together each year so our neighbors and the next generation experience the life-changing love of Jesus!

Young people (who are going into 8th grade or older) and young-at-heart people make up Bethel's vibrant VBS Team!

There are lots of ways to be on the team – from work night help and games to bringing in supplies and singing. From worship and decorating to registration and games. From snacks and School Supplies to crafts and bible teaching. From being with kids and Twin Lakes to taking pictures and clean-up. From one day during the week of VBS to all five, come be part of something bigger than yourself and join a team of people who long for the children in our lives, who sometimes feel lost, to experience the life-changing love of Jesus!

Talk to Raechel to be part of the team or use the VBS Team sign-up form on Bethel's new website.



## JANUARY PRESCHOOL WRAP-UP

Happy New Year! We have done our best to keep winter inside this January while the children enjoyed learning about cold winter themes. Snow, snowmen, snowflakes, winter clothing, penguins, polar bears and after-Christmas trees were just part of our discovery of “God’s big, beautiful planet”. We talked about the “top” and “bottom” of the world as the coldest places on earth where only few animals including polar bears and penguins survive. All classes focused on learning new vocabulary words for cold such as frosty, chilly, icy and freezing. We learned names for winter clothing and which things come in pairs. In art, the children expressed themselves in many shimmering ways to discover snow, snowmen and snow scenes galore. Children in the three’s class also took a very close look at Jan Brett’s *The Mitten* and all of the fun that revolves around the classic winter story.

The Pre K I class stepped out on a huge adventure to cold regions as well as hot areas of the earth, including special passports to warm island beaches and ocean fun. By the end of the month, everyone was ready for “our big dive” into the ocean to learn about ocean life, shallow and deep places, and the concepts of sink and float. Children in the Enrichment class discovered scientific and math principles related to ocean life. They had loads of fun measuring animals, building igloos and counting sea life creatures.

During Jesus time, we discovered how Jesus lived as a young child, growing up in a hot, dry region of the world. And we learned about his friends and followers – the disciples. We also continued to identify and discuss feelings in others and ourselves.

## BELC CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

We wrapped up December with the beautiful choral presentation of Christmas Presents on December 20. We wish to thank Julianne Confalonieri, Patti Bednar, Jo Gaudette, Pastor Paul, Don Schwieger and Alane Laatz for helping orchestrate the details of the performance from stage moving, program creation, and production assistance. A GREAT BIG Thank You to the Nechvatal Family for recording the performance and setting it up on the private link for all to enjoy! If you didn’t get a chance to see our presentation, here is the link to view it online: Private link here to view all the videos with password: Jesus

<https://vimeo.com/showcase/6668681>

\*For the privacy of the families of the Early Learning Center, we ask that you use this link for personal viewing only and do not share or post on any social media sites or to other individuals. Thank you and enjoy!

## HEARTFELT THANKS TO YOU

Thank you Bethel Family for your continued generous giving to our preschool at Christmas. In December and January, the Early Learning Center received many beautiful and engaging new learning materials, books, gift cards and school supplies to continue to provide the very best for the children in our weekly care. We are grateful to everyone who selected a gift from our “Giving Tree”. A heart-felt THANK YOU for supporting our mission!

## STAFF CHANGE FOR 3’S AND FRIDAY ENRICHMENT CLASS:

In January, Miss Judie once again “retired” (as we all well know she won’t ever be far away from us!) Miss Julie Albrecht is now assisting in 3’s and Friday Enrichment in addition to the PreK1 class. We are super excited to have Miss Julie take on the littles classes and are so confident of the team that Miss Julie and Miss Jodie are that we expect a very smooth transition. Miss Judie will continue to substitute as needed moving forward. Please help us to send out a great big Thank You to Miss Judie for all the years she has invested here with the children in the name of Jesus. She has a beautiful servant heart!

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY**

1 Keith Beck  
 1 Walter Shah  
 1 Danielle Hopp  
 2 Shirley Murphy  
 4 Nolan Kitlica  
 4 Lucille Spiker  
 7 Jerry Niewold  
 7 Raechel Pfothenhauer  
 8 Lisa Bosma  
 8 Josie Bylaitis  
 9 John Haraldsen  
 9 Jordyn Krejci  
 10 Anabelle Christensen  
 10 Travis Kuciunias  
 13 Carole Weisbecker  
 14 George Carlson  
 15 Judy Lite  
 16 Paul LeGare  
 17 Jill Cucchi  
 17 Lenore Hinz  
 19 Thomas Harrington  
 19 Megan Maassen  
 20 Brett Harrington  
 20 Roberta Sarkauskas  
 26 Michelle Muckey

**HAPPY ANNIVERSARY**

03 Stephen & Gloria Kubik  
 05 John & Daphne Frederick  
 21 Bruce & Julie Dooley  
 26 John & Yelena Haraldsen, Sr.  
 28 Mark & Kate Maassen

**KEY EVENTS FOR FEBRUARY**

9 Feature Bible Story Sunday  
 16 High School Breakfast  
 23 Family Faith Walk  
 26 Ash Wednesday

**F E B R U A R Y**

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
						01
02	03	04	05	06	07	08
09	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29

**MEMORIALS**

A gift was given to the Marge Gross Scholarship Fund by Grace Kochendorfer in memory of James Roel, Dawn LeGare's father.

A gift was given to "Following Jesus Together" by Patti Bednar in memory of Chief Howie Krueger.

A gift was given to VBS by Roberta Sarkauskas in memory of Margaret Vernon.

**A BIG THANK YOU!!!**

Thank you, Bethel, for supporting our Blood Drive Service Project in December! This was a tremendously successful event that allowed the Scouts to learn about service to others as donors gave generously of themselves to help those in need of blood products in our community. 37 units of blood were collected at our blood drive, which is equivalent to 111 SAVED LIVES! Cub Scout Pack #3006 Girl Scout Troop #55452

**BETHEL SCOUT SUNDAY**

Bethel's own Girl and Boy Scouts and families will host refreshments at the Bethel Cafe on Sun, Feb 9. Please come meet and mingle with our scouts and enjoy a treat! Scouts and families wanting to participate, please contact Maria Wootton ASAP at mj10wootton@gmail.com.

**JOIN BETHEL'S AV TEAM!**

Bethel's AV Team is in need of 1 or 2 more people to run slides during the 11am worship service. The team uses a rotation schedule, so each person runs slides about once a month. This is a great behind-the-scenes way to bless worship! You will receive all the training you need - no special skills needed, just a heart to serve during worship. If you have questions or are interested, please talk to Sue Richardson or Raechel Pfothenhauer.

**FESTIVAL CHOIR PRACTICE COMING SOON...**

Behtel's Festival Choir will start rehearsing in March. Watch for more information with practice dates and times. If you have any questions...talk to Janet or Christian.

## **NATIONAL LUTHERAN SCHOOLS WEEK IS JAN 26-FEB 1, 2020**

Happy National Lutheran Schools Week! Thank you for sending your child(ren) to Bethel Early Learning Center. This year's theme, "Joy: Fully," is based on 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18. "Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

We are Following Jesus Together here at Bethel ELC and we continually invite families to join us anytime in worship and in Sunday School and bible studies and our Chicago-wide Knowing God event that we are participating in at Bethel. And we invite any of you who would like to join in the Wednesday Morning Parents/Friends and Family group as they gather for fellowship and the study of God's word. Feel free to speak with Lisa, Raechel or Pastor Paul to find out how you can join us as we are Worshiping Faithfully Together, Growing as Disciples Together, Serving Our Neighbors Together and Sharing the Good News of Jesus Together.

**1 Thessalonians  
5:16-18  
Rejoice always,  
pray continually,  
give thanks  
in all  
circumstances;  
for this is God's  
will for you in  
Christ Jesus.**

## **FEBRUARY: GOD LOVES US AND KEEPS US SAFE**

Our themes for February will encompass love and safety. All classes will learn about community helpers including firefighters and policemen as we enjoy visits from BELC parents who serve in community Fire Departments and Police Departments and will share their stories with us. We will also learn about good dental hygiene with a visitor from Grove Dental in February. During Valentine's week, we will talk about love and how we love because God first loved us. The remainder of February will be devoted to the study of construction, developing building projects, and learning about transportation.

Another adventure begins in the traditional three-year-olds class as they begin to study the book; My Truck is Stuck by Kevin Lewis and Daniel Kirk.

### **ANNUAL BELC GARAGE SALE**

Start sorting through your stuff and separate out items you want to donate to the Annual BELC Garage Sale. We will begin taking donations in March with the bigger items on hold until after Easter due to storage. We would love your help sorting and pricing, selling and displaying or with donation or clean up. Consider working along side our BELC parents to put on the biggest fundraiser of our year. Save the dates April 24-25 with set up and pricing on the 22-23. Talk to Lisa or sign up in the Narthex or West Basement to be part of the team.

### **DINE OUT AND DONATE EVENT**

Check your church bulletins to stay tuned for Date and Time to join us at our February dine out event to eat a great meal and raise money for BELC. We are so grateful for all of the support from our Bethel Church family dining out to provide for our Bethel Early Learning Center families!



**BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
**BETHEL EARLY LEARNING CENTER**

36 NORTH GRANT STREET  
WESTMONT, IL. 60559

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

**Time Sensitive Materials**

NONPROFIT  
ORGANIZATION  
US POSTAGE PAID  
DOWNERS GROVE, IL  
PERMIT NO. 316

**Worship Schedule**

Traditional Services  
Saturday, 5:00pm  
Sunday, 8:15am  
Family Joy Service  
Sunday, 11:00am

**Summer Worship Schedule**

Thursday, 7:00pm  
Sunday, 9:30am

**Communion Celebrated**

1st, 3rd & 5th Saturdays and Sundays  
of Every Month

**Sunday School and Adult Bible Class**

Sundays, 9:45-10:45am  
Rev. Paul J. Pfotenbauer  
Office (630) 968-3232  
Fax (630) 968-2030

**Bethel Early Learning Center**

bethelearlylearningcenter@yahoo.com  
Like Us on Facebook!  
[www.facebook.com/BethelELC](http://www.facebook.com/BethelELC)

**Watch what God does, and then you do it,  
like children who learn proper behavior from  
their parents. Mostly what God does is love you.  
Keep company with him and learn a life of love.  
Observe how Christ loved us.  
His love was not cautious but extravagant.  
He didn't love in order to get something from us  
but to give everything of himself to us.  
Love like that. Ephesians 5:1-2**