

BETHEL UCC beacon

worship

FEB 5

Sustaining Ministry: *Mark 1:29-39*
Rev. Kristen Curlee Preaching

FEB 12

Healing Presence: *Mark 1:40-45*
Rev. Carolyn Richar Preaching

FEB 19

Thin Places: *Mark 9:2-9*
Rev. Anne Troy Guest Preaching

FEB 26

God's Loving Paths: *Psalms 25:1-10*
Rev. Kristen Curlee Preaching

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

10 am Worship
11 am Fellowship

FROM THE PASTOR

Epiphany: The Season of Light

“For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.” - Matthew 2:2b

This is the season of the light that shines from the star guiding us to witness God, fully present in this world. Yet, in the darkness of winter it is sometime hard to find the light. We struggle to see God's light when those we love are struggling with illnesses or we are bogged down with colds and flu. We struggle to see God's light when we experience the loss of dear friends or family and sadness and grief threaten to overwhelm us. We struggle to see God's light when exhaustion weighs us down. We struggle to see God's light when disagreements, conflict and broken relationships consume our energy. Sometimes the cold winds of winter seem so strong that the light God promises might be blown away by the cold.

And yet... Even when we cannot see God's light, God is there. The Psalmist writes, "Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me;" (Psalm 23:4). God's light breaks into this world even when we do not have eyes to see it; it is there. God's light is there in the hands of a nurse's aid that offers a bath to a dying woman and in the doctors that offer comfort and healing. God's light is there in a friends who calls to say, "we've missed you, I'm sorry you are still sick." God's light is there in the sharing of stories and memories of those dear to us who have died. Their memory lives on in our hearts. God's light is there as we seek forgiveness and healing. God's light is there in the work of reconciliation, even when the work seems never ending. God is always with us.

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BETHEL UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST

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Season of Light

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Even as the winter months drag on and the groundhog says “six more weeks of winter” even still, God’s light will shine. God’s promise to be with us always is core to who we are as people of faith. No matter how challenging our path or how great the joy we experience, God is there. In the words of a poet...

One night I dreamed I was walking along the beach with the Lord.
Many scenes from my life flashed across the sky.
In each scene I noticed footprints in the sand.
Sometimes there were two sets of footprints,
other times there was one only.
This bothered me because I noticed that during the low periods of my life,
when I was suffering from anguish,
sorrow or defeat,
I could see only one set of footprints,
so I said to the Lord,
“ You promised me Lord,
that if I followed you,
you would walk with me always.
But I have noticed that during the most trying periods of my life
there has only been one set of footprints in the sand.
Why, when I needed you most, have you not been there for me?”
The Lord replied,
“The years when you have seen only one set of footprints,
my child, is when I carried you.”
Author Unknown

This month we move from the season of Epiphany to Lent on Ash Wednesday, February 22nd. This begins a journey of inward exploration preparing our hearts and minds for the death of Jesus. As we walk this journey together may we all remember that God’s light goes before us.
Rev. Kristen Curlee ■

Saying Goodbye

On Saturday, February 18th at 2 p.m. we’ll gather with Jeane Frey’s friends and family to celebrate her life and legacy. Jeane has been a member at Bethel since she moved to DC in 1991. She served on virtually every committee including Outreach, Christian Education, Social Concerns, Pastoral Support and Spiritual Council bringing her passions for equality, justice, service and community to all that she did. We hope you will join us as we thank God for all the ways Jeane touched our lives. ■



Shaw Community Ministry

Help for Low Income Families

Shaw Community Ministry in Washington, D.C. was founded in 1991 by the Potomac Association of the UCC to provide educational and social service support to residents of DC's Shaw neighborhood, where two UCC congregations were already active, having built the Lincoln Westmoreland apartments in 1968 after the MLK assassination riots. They stand today and house 230 low-income families.

For many years Bethel has been a supporter, along with other local UCC congregations. Most recently Bethel has been supporting summer camps for children as well as supplying backpacks and other school supplies just before the start of school.

Each year, in November Bethel collects monetary donations to help supply Thanksgiving food baskets for families in the Shaw neighborhoods. This past November three members of Bethel's Social Concerns Committee were able to meet staff, tour the Shaw Community Ministry facility and share in a pre-Thanksgiving celebration. All of our donations are accepted with sincere thanks and are very greatly appreciated. ■

First Friday

AFAC on Feb. 3

This month, Bethel will visit the Arlington Food Assistance Center. As is the First Friday tradi-

tion, volunteers may opt to gather for dinner before venturing to the AFAC center in Shirlington. This month dinner will be at the Boston Market on Columbia Pike (at N. Glebe Road) beginning at 6:00 pm. The volunteers finish dinner and then head over to the AFAC warehouse at 7:00 p.m. where they bag supplemental groceries to Arlingtonians who cannot afford to purchase all the food that they need. The need continues at record rates at the food bank. Please contact Judy Lipmann if you have any questions or suggestions. ■

Monthly Service

Saturday, Feb. 25

10 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Arlington Church of the Brethren
300 N. Montague Street
*Emergency Preparedness – How to
Serve Your Community*

With Arlington County's Director of Emergency Management leading one workshop, and the Bluemont-Boulevard Manor – Arlington Forest CERT Neighborhood Team Coordinator leading another, we'll learn how to be better volunteers to our community.

Each workshop will be repeated after the coffee break, so you may take them both.

Sign up for once a month Service Project announcements by sending e-mail to: monthly-service-project@googlegroups.com.

Next month, we'll capitalize on the Ecumenical Days of Action, which this year will focus on sustainability. Details to come. Many thanks to all who turned out for the January project, when we made 50 fleece scarves for A-Span Homeless. ■

Helping Hands

Bethel has started off the year with a total of 175 pounds of food for Arlington Food Assistance Center. We are well on our way to our goal of 1500 pounds for 2012. Thank you for your generous support.

A large bag of hotel size toiletries donated to Bethel was delivered to Arlington Street Peoples Assistance Network (ASPAN). The need is great. If you have an excess of hotel size toiletries (no mouth wash) you may leave them at the church and they will be delivered to ASPAN. ■

Fellowship

Join us Saturday, February 11 for Game Night starting at 5:30 pm. It's potluck. Bring your favorite dish to share. All are welcome to enjoy board games, puzzles and more. If you have a game you love or something you want to learn, bring it with you and you'll find others willing to join in. ■

A Growing Church...

New Members at Bethel

Within the tradition of the United Church of Christ the church is its members. The people gathered are Bethel UCC. If you are interested in become part of this growing fellowship, please let Pastor Kristen or Pastor Carolyn know. We will welcome new members on March 4th or 11th. ■

sunday	monday	tuesday	wednesday	thursday	friday	saturday
			<p>1</p> <p>6 pm Yoga</p> <p>7:15 pm Bible Study</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p> <p>6 pm First Friday Dinner</p> <p>7:30 pm AFAC</p>	<p>4</p>
<p>5</p> <p>10 am Worship</p> <p>11 am Fellowship</p> <p>11:30 am Outreach Committee</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>8</p> <p>6 pm Yoga</p> <p>7:15 pm Bible Study</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>11</p> <p>5:30 pm Game Night</p>
<p>12</p> <p>10 am Worship</p> <p>11 am Fellowship</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>15</p> <p>6 pm Yoga</p> <p>7:15 pm Bible Study</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18</p> <p>2 pm Jeane Frey's Memorial Service</p>
<p>19</p> <p>10 am Worship</p> <p>11 am Fellowship</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>22</p> <p>6:30 pm Soup and Worship</p> <p>7:30 pm Ash Wednesday Worship Service</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p> <p>10 am Monthly Service Project</p>
<p>26</p> <p>10 am Worship</p> <p>11 am Fellowship</p> <p>11:30 am Congragational Potluck & Meeting</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>				