

FEBRUARY 2014

BETHEL UCC beacon

worship

FEBRUARY 2

Seeking a Way Home
Luke 15:11-32
Rev. Kristen Curlee

FEBRUARY 9

Modern Crusaders
Revelation 21:1-6
Rev. Carolyn Richar

FEBRUARY 16

God with Us
John 1:1-28
Ms. Kim Moeller

FEBRUARY 23

Thankful Humility
Genesis 2:4b-3:24
Rev. Kristen Curlee

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

**10 a.m. Worship
& Sunday School
11 a.m. Fellowship**

Theological Worlds

BY PASTOR KRISTEN CURLEE



This week as I was preparing to lead premarital counseling I pulled Keirseey and Bates' *Please Understand Me* from my shelf. For those of you who don't know it, this is the basic guide for couples—or really anyone in relationships with other people, so all of us really—to help us understand our own personality type as well as that of our partners, friends, children, co-workers and all those we meet. The theory, based on the Myers-Briggs personality types, is that by better understanding our similarities and differences we can look at problems through a more reflective lens and thus reach more creative solutions.

This month in worship and study group we are exploring theological world views. Theology is the study of God, but Karl Barth, and most theologians, would argue you can't study God without also studying humanity and our relationship with God. Thus theology becomes the study of God, in all God's expressions, humanity and our interconnectedness. Just as we each view the world through our own personality types, we also view the world through our own theological lens.

In his book *Theological Worlds: Understanding the Alternative Rhythms of Christian Beliefs*, W. Paul Jones lays out five worlds:

- Separation and Reunion
- Conflict and Vindication
- Emptiness and Fulfillment
- Condemnation and Forgiveness
- Suffering and Endurance

(continued on page 2)

BETHEL UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST

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vision & mission

Our vision is:

To receive and share Jesus' message of extravagant love through compassionate care for our community and the world.

This vision inspires us to be a church of mission where we seek to:

- 1 Know God and one another and open ourselves to be known.**
- 2 Be a church where people are comforted, encouraged, and challenged by God's Word.**
- 3 Serve as God's hands of mercy, affirming justice and peace in the world.**
- 4 Welcome and celebrate the diversity of people and thought, encouraging each individual's relationship with Christ.**

Theological Worlds

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Each world is defined by two extremes, our greatest fear and our greatest hope, and people live within the tensions between the poles. He suggests that we all have one theological world that dominates our experience of God and faith and it is within this tension that we encounter God.

Part of the role of a pastor is to be a theologian within a community helping the gathered members to see God in their own lives, to celebrate the divine encounters and to search through our rich heritage of rituals, practices and language to find comfort and hope amidst life's challenges. But truly the work of theology cannot be done by the pastor alone. We are all on our own individual journeys with God; seeking to know and be known by the one who made us. If we do not each take seriously the work of theology, we risk missing encounters with God.

You are invited to take the 60-question Theological World Inventory, to read the descriptions of the five worlds and wrestle with the tensions that Jones identifies and then worship with us. As we explore each of these five worlds in worship think about how the hymns lift up the deep hope of that world. Listen to the prayers with an ear toward the fear of that world. What scriptures speak to this world? How do these worlds fit your experience? What's missing from Jones' model? Our hope for this series is to gain self-awareness and understanding of those around us so that we might strengthen our community.

The study group on Theological Worlds meets each Wednesday during February at 7 p.m. in the Bethel Library. The Theological World Inventory is available from Pastor Kristen.

Every member of Bethel are the ministers



staff & leadership

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Interim Pastor Emeritus
Rev. Dr. H. Donald Smith



Arts & crafts, puzzles, games and fun for all ages!
PLUS chili and mac'n'cheese!!

Valentine's Game Night

Saturday, February 8th | 5:30-7:30 pm

All are welcome!

2014 AFAC Cereal Drive Off to a Great Start

Bethel is supporting the Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC) in 2014 with an emphasis on donation of low-sugar cereals. We have set a goal of donating 365 boxes of cereal during 2014—and we are off to a greatstart. For the month of January we collected 32 boxes—one more than the 31 days in January. (We need a box a day over the whole year to meet the goal.)

Over one-third of those in need whom AFAC serves are children, and a nutritious breakfast is vital for children to succeed in school. We invite everyone to help us help those in need. Donation boxes are just inside the church's entrance each Sunday morning, and are located outside the church office weekdays.

We are still collecting other non-perishable food items as always—particularly low-salt, low-sugar, healthy varieties of food. Whatever you contribute, we appreciate your generosity!

Bethel volunteers will be bagging food staples at AFAC Friday, February .7 Join us for dinner at 6:00 p.m. at Boston Market on Glebe Road and Columbia Pike or meet at AFAC at 2708 S. Nelson Street in Shirlington at 7:00 p.m. All are welcome!



February 2014 at Bethel UCC

sunday	monday	tuesday	wednesday	thursday	friday	saturday
						1
2 10 a.m. Worship & Sunday School 11 a.m. Fellowship	3	4	5 7 p.m. Study Group in the Library: "Theological Worlds"	6	7 7 p.m. AFAC Bagging (Optional: meet for dinner at 6 p.m. at Boston Market on Columbia Pike)	8 5:30 p.m. Valentine's Game Night
9 10 a.m. Worship & Sunday School 11 a.m. Fellowship 11:30 a.m. Outreach Committee meeting (Library) 11:30 a.m. Worship Committee meeting (Sanctuary)	10	11	12 7 p.m. Study Group in the Library: "Theological Worlds"	13	14	15
16 10 a.m. Worship & Sunday School 11 a.m. Fellowship	17	18	19 7 p.m. Study Group in the Library: "Theological Worlds"	20 12 noon Third Thursday Lunch in the Library	21	22
23 10 a.m. Worship & Sunday School 11 a.m. Fellowship 11:30 a.m. Congregational meeting & potluck lunch	24	25	26 7 p.m. Study Group in the Library: "Theological Worlds"	27	28	