

APRIL 2014

BETHEL UCC beacon

worship

APRIL 6

Back to Life
John 11:1-45
Rev. Carolyn Richar

APRIL 13

PALM/PASSION SUNDAY
Matthew 21:1-11;
26:14-27 & 66; 27:11-54
Ms. Kim Moeller

HOLY WEEK
See page 3

APRIL 20

EASTER
John 20:1-18
Rev. Kristen Curlee

APRIL 27

Alleluia! Lift your voice and sing
Psalms 98
Rev. Kristen Curlee

SUNDAY SCHEDULE
10 a.m. Worship
& Sunday School
11 a.m. Fellowship

BETHEL UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST

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Meet Joshua!

Joshua is a 7-year-old child attending Arlington Academy of Hope (AAH) in Uganda whom Bethel is officially sponsoring by a commitment of financial support.

"As a child sponsor, you are demonstrating your commitment to providing a child with a high quality, well-rounded education, as well as helping to meet his basic health and nutritional needs," says AAH founder and director John Wanda, who formerly attended Bethel and returned to update us on the program in January. "We are very grateful for your participation in this program and hope you will find this to be a rewarding experience."

Joshua resides in the rural Ugandan village of Bunatsimi. He lives modestly in a household of four, including his mother and father. He helps his family care for their cow and sheep. Other chores Joshua does are to help wash dishes, fetch water and sweep and clean the compound.

*Joshua has already
sent us a letter -
see page 5*

As a child sponsor, Bethel is giving Joshua the opportunity to attend AAH and reap all the benefits that go along with that privilege, explains Judy Lipman, co-chair of Bethel's Social Concerns Committee. Prior to AAH, no students from the village schools in Uganda had done well enough to go on to the better secondary schools in the country. Currently, because of AAH, there are over 100 children attending some of Uganda's best secondary boarding schools.

Joshua shares with his new friends at Bethel that he likes to read books and wants to learn English. Besides English, favorite school subjects in-

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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.**

Through Our Tears

BY PASTOR KRISTEN CURLEE



As our Lenten journey draws to a close we are challenged to face death; to weep; to grieve. Death is surely coming, how do we prepare? How do we face the loss of a loved one? How do we face our own mortality? Where do we find hope?

The scriptures these last weeks of Lent invite us to experience the emotional pain, loss and grief. We are welcomed at the bedside with Mary and Martha as they weep over the death of Lazarus (John 11). Jesus' dear friend is dead. He did not get there soon enough and he did not get to say good-bye. Jesus weeps. Lazarus is dead and Jesus is overcome with grief. Yet, Jesus works a miracle and raises him from the dead, not to overcome his own grief, but as an act of compassion for Mary, Martha and the disciples. In John's Gospel it is this act of compassion that assures Jesus' own death at the hands of the authorities.

As we enter Holy Week we lift our voices in praise on Palm Sunday, yet through the celebration we can sense a tension, a shadow, foretaste of what is to come. We gather with Jesus and his disciples as he kneels before them, a servant king, and washes their feet before breaking bread together in the upper room. We sit in the dark shadows of the garden fighting to stay awake, but failing Jesus. We watch as they take him away. We listen as he is condemned. Our heart breaks as he walks out of the city and up the hill. We feel the pain as he is nailed to the cross. We crumble to the ground consumed with grief as he dies.

This is the Passion of Jesus the Christ. It is real. It is terrible. It is sad. It is not the end.

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Every member of Bethel are the ministers



Head Usher for April
Lisa Peterson

staff & leadership

Senior Pastor
Rev. Kristen Curlee
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Associate Pastor
Rev. Carolyn Richar
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Seminary Intern
Kim Moeller
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Church President
Whit Wheeler

Director of Music
Angie Stevens
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Interim Pastor Emeritus
Rev. Dr. H. Donald Smith

Holy Week 2014



Bethel will hold two special services during Holy Week on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. On Maundy Thursday we will gather for dinner at 6 p.m. The service will begin at 7 p.m. and include communion and hand-washing. The Good Friday service (also at 7 p.m.) will be a community ecumenical service to be held here at Bethel with members of other nearby churches invited. If you would like to sing in the Community Choir for this service, please arrive at 6 p.m. for rehearsal.

Order forms for Easter flowers are posted outside the church office. Sign up in honor or memory of someone as we decorate the altar in praise to Christ's resurrection.

WEDNESDAY EVENINGS DURING LENT

Wednesday evening Lenten worship focusing on sacred practices concludes this month:

April 2 - Taze (Matthew 6:25-34)

April 9 - Silence (Matthew 6:5-8)

We begin with a light dinner of soup at 6 p.m. then move to the sanctuary at 7 p.m. Child-care is provided from 6:30 p.m. through the end of worship.

ROY LOF

Long-time Bethel member Roy Lof passed away April 1 in Florida. Once funeral arrangements are finalized, details will be shared with the congregation.

Roy, 93, was very dedicated to Bethel, holding nearly every church officer position at one time or another. His wife Bernie, equally important to the life of Bethel, predeceased him five years ago.

"They were most always the last couple to leave church on any given Sunday," recalls one member.

All of us extend our deep condolences to his family.



Roy Lof at the 2012 Strawberry Festival with Jean Rentch (left) and his daughter Kendra Szabo.

Through Our Tears

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

During Lent we have experienced the sacred practices of confession, studying the word, generosity, silence and musical chants. We have prayed the psalms together; sacred prayers Jesus himself said. This Easter Sunday we hear the joy and hope that comes after death. As we wrestle with our own grief and loss may we find hope in the Easter promise—Christ is Risen! God's love for the world is greater than the power of death. Hear the words of this ancient prayer and rest assured in our salvation.

O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his steadfast love endures forever!

Let Israel say, "His steadfast love endures forever."

The Lord is my strength and my might; he has become my salvation.

There are glad songs of victory in the tents of the righteous: "The right hand of the Lord does valiantly;

the right hand of the Lord is exalted; the right hand of the Lord does valiantly."

I shall not die, but I shall live, and recount the deeds of the Lord.

The Lord has punished me severely, but he did not give me over to death.

Open to me the gates of righteousness, that I may enter through them and give thanks to the Lord.

This is the gate of the Lord; the righteous shall enter through it.

I thank you that you have answered me and have become my salvation.

The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.

This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.

This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

—Psalm 118:1-2 and 14-24

One Great Hour of Sharing

BY DOROTHY LAWRENCE AND BILL GRAVER

One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) is an open invitation for us to help people who are suffering worldwide. Through offerings we collect for OGHS, Bethel UCC joins *nine* church partners working with the Church World Service.

For more than 50 years, OGHS ministry has supported pockets of need in health care, education, job training, shelter, schools, clean water and food. The ministry contin-

ues to focus on crucial problems where disaster, conflict, and poverty exist—and meet the needs that headlines sometimes ignore. Please give generously.

From Matthew 25:40, *“when you do for one, who is the least of my family, you will have done it for me.”*

Joining to help others in need reaffirms *we all are one...in God’s family*.

To learn more, visit the UCC’s



OGHS website: www.ucc.org/oghs

OGHS partners: American Baptist Church; African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church; Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); Cumberland Presbyterian Church; Church of the Brethren; Presbyterian Church (USA); Reformed Church of America; United Church of Christ; United Methodist Church.

CEREAL DRIVE UPDATE

Through the first 90 days of 2014, Bethel has given **172 boxes of cereal** to Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC)—nearly **double** the pace needed to meet our goal of 365 for the year!



Thanks also for your generosity in contributing toiletries during our March drive to help homeless clients of Arlington’s Residential Program Center.



New members Ralph Buglass (center) and Chrissy Waldo (with her son Bryce) joined Bethel Sunday, March 30.

KEEP UP WITH THE CHURCH CALENDAR ELECTRONICALLY

CalendarTree

Do you ever wonder what time Game Night is? Or when Consistory is meeting? Wonder no more! Now Bethel’s calendar can sync automatically with your electronic calendar (google calendar, outlook and iphone applications are available) through CalendarTree for free. If you are interested in using this great technology email Sam Le at samle@gmail.com and he will send you the link to activate your account. The traditional calendar will still be printed in the *Beacon*.

Meet Joshua! CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

clude math, science, music, dance and drama. He also enjoys running and football. Joshua's favorite foods are rice, beans, posho, bananas, cassava and meat.

Through correspondence, Bethel will develop an ongoing relationship with Joshua, and we have already received our first letter from him (see below). "We believe that the correspondence portion of the pro-

gram is as important as the financial support," adds John. Consider corresponding with Joshua! Guidelines are spelled out in the sidebar below.

WRITE TO JOSHUA!

Through correspondence with Joshua we hope to develop an ongoing relationship with him. "Letters are often the most exciting thing that happens to a child in months," says AAH's John Wanda. "Please make sure to write, because the children are devastated when they are one of the few without letters." John says letters should be positive and focus on your daily life—your family, pets, job, interests, hobbies, experiences. What might seem mundane to you is very interesting to them. Letters can be given to Judy Lipman or Bill Graver, co-chairs of the Social Concerns Committee.

The committee also seeks ongoing donations for Joshua's support; these can be included with your offering by writing "AAH/Joshua" on the offering envelope.



A group of youths from two other Virginia UCC congregations worshipped with us the first Sunday in March. The youths and their chaperons, from Oakland UCC in Suffolk and First UCC in Hampton, both in southeastern Virginia, were returning from a retreat at Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and Bethel, which they found via the internet, was a perfect "halfway point."

April 2014 at Bethel UCC

sunday	monday	tuesday	wednesday	thursday	friday	saturday
		1	2 6 p.m. Light dinner (soup and bread) 7 p.m. "Sacred Practices" Service	3	4	5 7 p.m. Bagging at AFAC , 2708 S. Nelson St. Optional: meet for dinner at 6 p.m. (Boston Market on Columbia Pike)
6 10 a.m. Worship/ Communion & Sunday School 11 a.m. Fellowship 11:30 a.m. Finan- cial Committee meeting (Library)	7	8	9 6 p.m. Light dinner (soup and bread) 7 p.m. "Sacred Practices" Service	10	11	12
13 PALM SUNDAY 10 a.m. Worship & Sunday School 11 a.m. Fellowship	14	15	16	17 MAUNDY THURSDAY 6 p.m. Dinner 7 p.m. Worship	18 GOOD FRIDAY 7 p.m. Community Ecumencial Worship (at Bethel)	19
20 EASTER 10 a.m. Worship & Sunday School 11 a.m. Fellowship & Easter Egg Hunt (If you are able to help with prepara- tions, please contact Janna Lipman)	21	22	23	24	25	26
27 10 a.m. Worship & Sunday School 11 a.m. Fellowship 11:30 a.m. Consistory meeting (Library)	28	29	30	<div>Keep up with the Bethel calendar electronically— see page 4</div>		