

OCTOBER 2014

BETHEL UCC beacon

worship

OCTOBER 5

WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY
Wisdom for the Way
Matthew 18:15-20
Rev. Nancy Fitzgerald

OCTOBER 12

CONSECRATION SUNDAY
Burnt Offerings
Exodus 25:1-9
Rev. Kristen Curlee

OCTOBER 19

Let Us Worship
Revelation 1:4-20, 4:1-11
Rev. Kristen Curlee

OCTOBER 26

Lamb of God
Revelation 5:1-14
John 11:45-53
Rev. Kristen Curlee

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



Let's Go Fishing!

BY PASTOR KRISTEN CURLEE

At Bethel United Church of Christ we go outside our walls to extend compassionate care to our neighbors in Arlington and around the world. We donate and bag groceries at AFAC (see page 7, Oct. 3rd item) and we join in the CROP hunger walk with Christians from across Arlington (see page 6, bottom). At OAR (see page 6, top) we learn about the injustices of the prison system especially for our black brothers, and we head downtown during DC Pride to show our dedication to an extravagant welcome for our LGBTQ brothers and sisters. We are not an inward-focused church, yet again and again the questions arise: What can we do to reach more people in our community? What can we do to attract more visitors? How do we become, as Jesus calls us to be, fishers of people?

Last month I attended a Next Generation Leadership Initiative week of continuing education. I traveled to meet 30 other UCC clergy in their twenties and thirties at the United Methodist Church of the Resurrection in Kansas City, Kansas for their Leadership Institute. I'll admit that I was skeptical when I boarded the plane. What could I learn from a 20,000-member church on the plains of Kansas to bring back to our vibrant, small, progressive thinking and traditional worshipping church on the edge of our Nation's Capital?

The United Methodist Church of the Resurrection is a young church started by their current Senior Pastor, Adam Hamilton, 24 years ago in the parlor of a funeral home. Pastor Adam's vision and mandate from the UMC was to create a church where "nonreligious and nominally religious become deeply committed Christians." It is an evangelical mission, one that I feared could become focused on growth at all costs, a numbers

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BETHEL UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST

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WEB www.bethelucc-va.org

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.**

From the Pastor *(continued from page 1)*

focused ministry. I was repeatedly surprised with how the Church of the Resurrection lives out its purpose in a way that is humble, honest, questioning, welcoming and missional.

From the time the Church of the Resurrection was started until they reached 500 members, Pastor Adam visited the home of each visitor who left a name and address on a signup sheet. He always prefaced the visit with "I don't want to come in," to help reduce the anxiety for someone he visited, but simply left a coffee mug as 'thank you' for visiting. They found people came back because they learned that their visit was noticed and appreciated. I am committed to live out this practice with each new visitor this fall. Let's buy some UCC coffee mugs.

During Hunger Action Month in the fall, the Church of Resurrection gives each member of their congregation five grocery bags to deliver to five neighbors. They ask members to tell their neighbors the church's name and that they are collecting food for the food drive. When the members come back a few days later to pick up the food, they leave a thank you note on the door with information about that Sunday's service. This not only says, "oh, by the way, there is a church up the street and we'd like you to come," but it also says "this place is a church that lives out their faith through Christian service." Could we expand our mission to AFAC while also spreading the word about our church?

Like many churches, Christmas Eve at the Church of the Resurrection is the biggest night of worship all year. In addition to expensive TV, radio and direct mail invitations, they make signs for their members to put in their windows or on their lawns two weeks before the holidays so that friends and neighbors see information about a nearby service and know there will be a friendly face.

(continued on page 3)

Every member of Bethel are the ministers



staff & leadership

Senior Pastor
Rev. Kristen Curlee
pastorkristencurlee@gmail.com

Associate Pastor
Rev. Carolyn Richar
crichar@capitalhospice.org

Church President
Whit Wheeler

Director of Music
Angie Stevens
angielatte@gmail.com

Interim Pastor Emeritus
Rev. Dr. H. Donald Smith

From the Pastor

(continued from page 2)

On Christmas Eve they advertise a sermon series to begin in January that they call a “fishing expedition.” Jesus calls us to be fishers of people; how do we do that? We think about what questions our friends and family who are “nones” (those who do not affiliate with a church or religion) have and we create a sermon series around that. Then we invite those who come on Christmas Eve to come back. You are here and we have something to draw you back. It’s not just worship, but worship that we know will speak to you, because we’ve listened to our friends and neighbors and hear their struggles. Part of being a place that offers compassionate care is being good listeners and responding to the needs we hear, not just for food and shelter, but also for a Word that feeds and nourishes.

Two years ago on Christmas Eve the Church of the Resurrection advertised a series called “Love, Sex and Marriage” with a short promotional video that talked about the hard parts of relationships and offered some support and guidance for those seeking more. The first Sunday of the series was the largest recorded worship attendance outside of Christmas Eve ever.

Our friends and neighbors who are not part of a church community have questions and longings. What questions have you heard on the hearts and minds of your friends and neighbors? I’ve asked you what questions you have about faith and the Bible, but now I hope you will help us plan a series that isn’t about us, but about our friends and neighbors who are not religious. What might speak to them? What would you be willing to invite them to come to hear?

Thank you for giving me the time away to be with other Christian leaders, to study scripture, to worship and to learn about our call as Christians to reach outside our walls, casting our nets wide so that we might be fishers of people.

SAVE THE DATE

**Bethel’s Fall
Congregational
Potluck Luncheon
and Meeting
Sunday, Dec. 7th
following worship**



We celebrate with Nhi Nguyen as she and John welcomed baby John Mason into the world Sept. 18th.

Also from Pastor Kristen...

COMMUNITY MINISTRY 2.0

Thank you to everyone who took time to fill out Survey Monkey about our August Community Worship Series. We received feedback from more than 45 people! The theme was overwhelmingly positive. You loved worshiping in a space filled with voices. You liked meeting new people and learning about other traditions. You thought the series created positive energy for all our churches. Though you are excited about the way the Spirit is at work in our midst, you worry about losing our own identity, about over-extending ourselves with too many new programs, about visitors or members who missed worship this summer because they didn’t know what was happening or that the logistics were overwhelming. We hear your concerns and seek to move forward, carrying the energy of the Spirit, in a positive, intentional way. Your feedback, support and prayers are welcome!

World Communion Sunday is October 5th and we will celebrate the multi-cultural, ecumenical service by welcoming the Rev. Nancy Fitzgerald for a pulpit exchange. In order to continue to learn about one another, but to minimize the logistical challenges of moving congregants, the clergy of our three churches are exchanging pulpits. I will be worshiping and preaching at Arlington Forest United Methodist Church while the Rev. Mike Vess will be at Arlington Church of the Brethren. If you are interested in helping with worship that day, we are looking for extra support including scripture readers, liturgists, and a children’s message. Please let me know if you willing to participate.

Looking ahead, in November we will welcome all three churches into our sanctuary for the Thanksgiving service on Wednesday, Nov. 26th at 7 pm. I hope you will join us.

Neighbors in Need Offering Received this Month

Neighbors in Need (NIN) is a special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States.

One-third of NIN funds goes to help the work of the Council for American Indian Ministry. The other two-thirds of the money raised is used by the UCC's Witness and Justice Ministries to support a variety of direct-service and advocacy projects.

Through the gifts we bring to church on Sundays, Oct. 5th and 12th we help to share in this important work. Please help the UCC to support and care for all of us who are in need.



ADULT FAITH FORMATION COMMUNITY SERIES



The Book of Revelation: Not to Be Left Behind?

A three-part series for adults exploring the Book of Revelation's role as it evaluated the political and social culture of John's time and how it challenges us today to speak truths to power.

Friday, Oct. 17 at Bethel United Church of Christ
Friday, Oct. 24 at Bethel United Church of Christ
Friday, Nov. 7 at Arlington Church of the Brethren

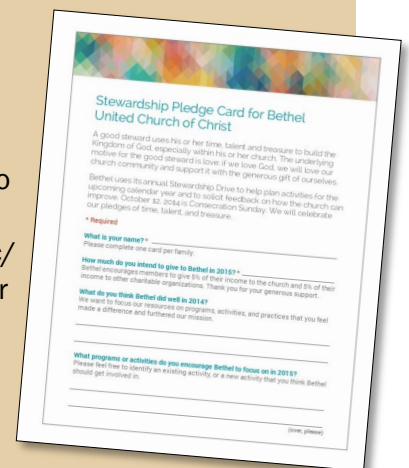
6 to 8:30 pm starting with a dinner for all ages

Child care will be offered during the class

STEWARDSHIP DRIVE

Our annual Stewardship Drive runs through Sunday, Oct. 12th. Please consider how you can support and participate in Bethel's ministries in 2015. Your completion of a pledge card will help us plan for the upcoming year. There are three ways to complete a pledge card:

- (1) through the link emailed to members,
- (2) visiting tiny.cc/Bethel on your computer, smartphone, or tablet, or
- (3) completing a paper pledge card available in the lobby and dropping it in the offering plate.



Please join us on Sunday the 12th, Consecration Sunday, to celebrate our gifts of time, talents and treasure. The Finance Committee will provide lunch following worship.

BY LISA PETERSON

Thus far, the feedback has been positive. As part of the added language, we propose specifically including gender expression and identity, as well as changing our existing language around disability in order to focus affirmatively on the different abilities all may bring to our congregation. The Spiritual Council will discuss this language at a meeting in early November. If there is agreement to proceed at that point, we will

Bethel United Church of Christ affirms and celebrates that we are all children of God, acknowledges that we all are in need of God's grace, and welcomes diversity in race, ethnicity, mental and physical ability, age, sexual orientation, gender expression and identity, family structure, religious upbringing, and interpretation of scripture. We invite all to share in the full life, ministry, and responsibilities of our church, including: worship, sacraments, rites, covenants, fellowship, leadership, (employment), commitments, blessings and joys. All are welcome as we follow Christ's example of unconditional love and welcome, and seek to serve one another in faith and love.

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For complete information and tickets visit
vabronze.org.



COMMUNITY HALLOWEEN PARTY!!

BETHEL Fellowship Hall





OAR Toy Drive in October

BY DONNA ZADNIK

Arlington's OAR (Offender Aid and Restoration program), a community-based restorative justice organization, blends compassion and accountability to assist offenders in leading productive and responsible lives, to the benefit of all.

From October 1 to 31 Bethel will join other churches and organizations in helping OAR collect Christmas gifts for incarcerated parents to give to their children. Gifts will have handwritten letters from the incarcerated parent. OAR has set a goal of 1,200 gifts for Christmas.

Please bring new and unwrapped toys for children up to age 12 and gift cards for ages 13-18 to Bethel during October. (Suggested price range in both cases is \$5-\$15). You are also invited to a "gift wrapping party" at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 4000 Lorcom Lane, on Monday, Dec. 15th at 6:30 p.m. To attend, register online after Nov. 1st at www.OARonline.org.

I found myself interested in learning more about OAR as I have a college-educated niece who got herself into serious trouble and has just finished a 17-year

prison sentence. Having addressed a drug addiction while in prison and finally, but only after strong advocacy of her uncle, received treatment to stabilize a mental health condition, she now faces the horrendous challenge of finding a job and housing with a felony on her record.

I attended an OAR panel discussion last month and found that OAR works in behalf of the whole system—including the legal system, to prevent so many folks from being incarcerated; to improve services within jails and prisons; and to assist with the adjustment in coming back into the community. There are

many volunteer opportunities such as teaching a class in the jail and supervising community service young folks, helping in the office, among others. I invite anyone from Bethel UCC to join me for a one-hour tour at 8 a.m. Thursday, Oct. 16th. Another tour will be given at noon Wednesday, Oct. 22nd with lunch included. OAR is located 1400 North Uhle Street, Suite 704, directly across from the Arlington courthouse. (Call Donna at 703-892-6720 to attend or for more information.)



CROP HUNGER WALK SATURDAY, OCT. 18TH

Join the in crowd and walk for CROP! The 2014 Arlington CROP Hunger Walk will be held on Saturday, Oct. 18th at 9:30 a.m. starting and ending at Arlington Forest United Methodist Church. (Registration starts at 9)

The aim of the walk is to help raise money for Church World Service to fight hunger around the world. One-fourth of the money collected goes to the Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC). Last year Bethel's walk-

ers raised **\$7,195**, which means **\$1,798.75** went to AFAC. With more walkers we could raise even more. So far Ralph Buglass, Kristen Curlee, Ward Curlee,

Cheryl Falcone, Richard Lee, Art Lipman, Susan Peters, Lisa Peterson, Carolyn Richar, and Kristen Wheeler have signed up to walk. If you want to walk for CROP, please contact Art Lipman (703-920-6423).

If you can't walk, please sponsor our walkers generously.



October 2014 at Bethel UCC

sunday	monday	tuesday	wednesday	thursday	friday	saturday
<div>5</div> <div>10 a.m. Worship & Communion / Sunday School</div> <div>11 a.m. Fellowship</div>			<div>1</div> <div>7 p.m. Bible Study (Library)</div>	<div>2</div>	<div>3</div> <div>7 p.m. Bagging at AFAC, 2708 S. Nelson St. <i>Optional:</i> meet for dinner at 6 p.m. (Boston Market on Columbia Pike)</div>	<div>4</div>
	<div>6</div>	<div>7</div>	<div>8</div> <div>7 p.m. Bible Study (Library)</div>	<div>9</div>	<div>10</div>	<div>11</div>
<div>12</div> <div>10 a.m. Worship / Sunday School</div> <div>11 a.m. Consecration Sunday Lunch provided by the Finance Committee</div>	<div>13</div>	<div>14</div>	<div>15</div> <div>7 p.m. Bible Study (Library)</div>	<div>16</div> <div>12 noon Third Thursday Lunch (Library)</div>	<div>17</div> <div>6-8:30 pm Adult Faith Formation Series: The Book of Revelation</div>	<div>18</div>
<div>19</div> <div>10 a.m. Worship / Sunday School</div> <div>11 a.m. Fellowship</div> <div>11:30 a.m. Social Concerns Committee (Library)</div>	<div>20</div>	<div>21</div>	<div>22</div> <div>7 p.m. Bible Study (Library)</div>	<div>23</div>	<div>24</div> <div>6-8:30 pm Adult Faith Formation Series: The Book of Revelation</div>	<div>25</div>
<div>26</div> <div>10 a.m. Worship / Sunday School</div> <div>11 a.m. Fellowship</div> <div>11:30 a.m. Consistory meeting (Library)</div>	<div>27</div>	<div>28</div>	<div>29</div> <div>7 p.m. Bible Study (Library)</div>	<div>30</div>	<div>31</div>	<div>Nov. 1</div> <div>5:30-7:30 p.m. Halloween Party (Fellowship Hall)</div>