

SEPTEMBER 2015

BETHEL UCC beacon

worship

SEPTEMBER 6

Beggar at the Banquet
Mark 7:24-37
Rev. Carolyn Richar

SEPTEMBER 13

OPEN HOUSE SUNDAY
Follow Me
Mark 8:27-38
Rev. Kristen Curlee

SEPTEMBER 20

Being First
Micah 6; Mark 9:30-37
Mr. Jason Thompson

SEPTEMBER 27

How Much Is Enough?
Mark 9:38-50
Rev. Kristen Curlee

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

BETHEL UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST

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Beyond the Statements

BY PASTOR KRISTEN CURLEE

We've done it! We've created a vision and mission statement around which we can all agree. So now what? How does that statement help us build up God's kingdom? It is the focus around which we build our programs, our ministries and our worship. As we plan and organize we need to ask ourselves, how does Sunday School or Bible Study or AFAC Bagging share Jesus' message of extravagant love and compassionate care? Does it fit with our vision and mission? Vibrant churches always have focus that gives direction just as we do, but as we live into our mission we must also be effective. Anthony Robinson, an ordained minister in the UCC who teaches and writes about leadership and church vitality, suggests some guidelines in "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Churches."



The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Churches

1. Strive for excellence in service to Christ.

Effective churches are churches where people enjoy what they're doing and do it well. Give God your best whether in the care of church grounds, the soup you prepare for the homeless shelter dinner or the hymns and anthems you sing in worship.

2. Cultivate a spirit of innovation and experimentation.

Make the "Seven Last Words of the Church," i.e. "We've never done it that way before," a distant memory. Be open to new ideas that advance your mission. Free people to develop and try new ministries. Just remember, if you're not failing at something, you're probably not trying anything.

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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.**

From the Pastor

(continued from page 1)

- 3. Take the initiative to build relationships with people and groups in the wider community beyond your congregation.**

Refuse to be isolated. Take to the streets, the coffee shops, library and parks of your community. Be curious about what's going on. Get involved in community events. Meet people. Introduce yourself as a member of the church. Invite people to "come and see."

- 4. Accept responsibility for mistakes, learn from them, and in all things, let grace abound.**

Christians aren't perfect; they are forgiven. So making mistakes is not the worst thing that can happen. Besides, we often learn the most from our failures. In the end, and in the beginning, it is about God's grace, not our achievements. Cut others some slack. While you're at it, cut yourself some, too.

- 5. "Always be prepared to give an account of the hope that is within you." (1 Peter 3:15)**

Look for where the love, energy and life are flowing and focus on that. And recognize excuses for what they are: a sign of insufficient commitment. Be people of hope, trusting in God to find a way even when we can't.

- 6. Be willing to let people go in order to stay focused on your core mission.**

It is more important for your church to be clear and steady about its core mission than it is to make everyone happy. Some people may be better off in another congregation. When folks are unhappy, connect, talk and pray. If things remain stuck, let them go with your blessing, giving priority to your mission.

- 7. Splash it on!**

A hospice nurse told the story of bringing an elderly woman home for the final days of her life. Noticing a large bottle of perfume on the woman's dresser, the nurse asked, "Would you like me to dab a bit of that behind your ears?" "Honey," said the woman to the nurse, "Why don't you just splash it on!" God loves cheerful givers. So spend money wisely, well and freely in God's cause.

Some of these habits are engrained in whom we are at Bethel, but others are a growing edge for us. Some of these habits come easily to some of us, but are very difficult for others. Together we can encourage and challenge one another to be more effective church disciples in God's kingdom.

Take some time to reflect on this and our vision and mission statement printed in the box at left.

Bethel Church Open House

WORSHIP

FOOD

DOOR PRIZES

Invite friends and neighbors to our "Open House" Sunday, Sept. 13, to join us for worship, food, programming tour and door prizes! Printed invitations are



available in the narthex. Unsure how to invite? See Pastor Kristen or Donna Zadnik, chair of the Outreach and Evangelism Committee.

Adult Faith Formation Class

We are excited to offer a four-week faith formation class for adults on Sunday mornings from 9:10 to 9:40 am (childcare provided). This class is called "Telling Our Stories" and focuses on encouraging us to share our stories of God's work in our lives. It will begin Sunday, Sept. 20, and continue through Sunday, Oct. 11.

In addition, our Wednesday evening Bible study resumes on September 9. The group meets at 7 p.m. in the church library and will explore the lectionary texts which are the focus of worship on Sunday. No preparation is needed; everyone has something to offer.

SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN

Church School resumes for our children on Sunday, Sept. 13. This year we will have four classes:

- Nursery - under 2 years
- Toddlers - 2 and 3 year olds
- Pre-kindergarten and kindergarten
- Elementary and middle school

Thank you to all our dedicated teachers who created this program for another great year of learning.

Every member of Bethel are the ministers



staff & leadership

Senior Pastor
Rev. Kristen Curlee
pastorkristencurlee@gmail.com

Associate Pastor
Rev. Carolyn Richar
crichear@capitalhospice.org

Student Pastor
Jason Thompson
jason7thompson@outlook.com

Church President
Whit Wheeler

Director of Music
Angie Stevens
angielatte@gmail.com

Interim Pastor Emeritus
Rev. Dr. H. Donald Smith

Nearby Children Go Back to School with Needed Supplies

Thank you for the many “back to school” supplies donated for children at nearby Whitefield Commons. We delivered 18 backpacks as well as numerous other school supplies needed for a successful school year.

The following was a response from Marissa, our contact person at Whitefield Commons, to Jason Thompson:

“I just wanted to touch base and say thank you for thinking of Whitefield and its residents in providing school supplies for the children. They were beyond thankful and happy. The whole room was lit up by smiles!”



SAVE THE DATE: FRIDAY, OCT. 2 AFAC BAGGING

Join Bethel volunteers in bagging food staples at Arlington Food Assistance Center, 2708 S. Nelson St. on Friday, Oct. 2 at 7 p.m. Meet for an optional dinner beforehand at 6 p.m. at Boston Market on Columbia Pike.

395

boxes of cereal
donated to AFAC
thus far this year
(36 in July &
42 in August)



600

boxes altogether is
our goal for 2015—
“Thank you” to
everyone for your
generous donations



Scenes from Summertime Community Worship



September 2015 at Bethel UCC

sunday	monday	tuesday	wednesday	thursday	friday	saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6 10 a.m. Worship & Communion 11 a.m. Fellowship	7	8	9 7 p.m. Bible Study (Library)	10	11	12
13 OPEN HOUSE - invite friends & neighbors 10 a.m. Worship / Sunday School 11 a.m. Fellowship	14	15	16 7 p.m. Bible Study (Library)	17 12 noon Third Thursday Lunch (Library)	18	19
20 9:10 a.m. Faith Formation Class 10 a.m. Worship / Sunday School 11 a.m. Fellowship	21	22	23 7 p.m. Bible Study (Library)	24	25	26
27 9:10 a.m. Faith Formation Class 10 a.m. Worship / Sunday School 11 a.m. Fellowship 11:30 a.m. Consistory meeting (Library)	28	29	30 7 p.m. Bible Study (Library)			