

What's Happening at Bethany

May 21, 2020

To keep up with what's going on at Bethany ...

please refer to our Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/BethanyUnitedMethodistChurchWeyersCaveVA/>), and our website (www.mybethanyumc.org). Join us for Facebook Live each Sunday morning at 9:30 am for our worship service. Pastor Susan and Cindy are in the office on Mondays, Wednesdays & Thursdays from 9 am - 3 pm and Pastor Susan is in on Tuesdays.

The coronavirus affects each of us in different ways. Some may be working from home, while others have reduced hours or have lost their jobs. Please remember, your church is here for you in your time of need. Please call us if you are in need of financial assistance, food, someone to pick up your groceries or prescriptions, or if you just need someone to talk to. **Please don't hesitate, please call.**



*Step out in faith to the places God is calling you to go,
even when it's out of your comfort zone!*

Lifting Up the Cross and Lifting Our Community's Spirit

A huge thank you to Cheryl and Pete Richards for the wonderful cross painted on our front lawn. What a joyful sight and reminder that in the midst of this strange and difficult time, God is with us and His promises are TRUE! We hope you have already or will take a moment to come visit the cross, take a picture or spend time in prayer. We may not be able to connect in person, but we can take this opportunity to connect in spirit. If others are at the cross when you visit, please be kind and remember to social distance. **Thanks Pete and Cheryl!!**
And thanks Stephen Metcalfe for the idea!

Sunday's Sermon Title & Scripture

**Being Church When the Building is Empty ...
Called to Hope**

Ephesians 1:15-23



Next Steps

Wednesday I watched a video worship service. The service opened with a soloist singing "Lamb of God" while a video of an altar with lit candles was shown. My reaction was so strong it was like a punch to the gut. It took my breath away and suddenly I was filled with an overwhelming longing to sing in a church with other people, to hear more praise music and more hymns. I admit I am hungry for it.

Much of the state has entered phase 1 in the process of Virginia's 3-stage coronavirus economic reopening plan. Those who desire, can make hair appointments or eat at restaurants with outdoor seating, however; telecommuting is still advised, as is wearing face coverings. Governor Northam's plan also includes allowing churches to meet for in person worship in buildings at half capacity, but United Methodist Churches in Virginia won't be doing that. Just as some people are more comfortable remaining in quarantine, despite the lifting of some restrictions, some churches and denominations are going to be more comfortable with in-person worship than others.

The Virginia Conference UMC's phase 1 will look a little different from the governor's plan. We will be following John Wesley's three simple rules which are: 1) Do no harm, 2) Do good and 3) Stay in love with God. First, we want to refrain from harm by keeping everyone safe and healthy. All of us are made in the image of God, therefore we value the life of every person. Second, we desire to do good by carrying out a well-considered plan which was prayerfully assembled in an effort to spread God's love without spreading anything else. Finally, know that though we all long to be a part of in-person worship again because it encourages us to stay in love with God, it shouldn't happen at the cost of putting others' lives at risk.

When Jesus is speaking to the Samaritan woman at the well, she points out that her ancestors worshipped God on the mountain, but Jews believe in worshipping at the temple in Jerusalem. Jesus replies that the place doesn't matter, "true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him" (John 4:23). In other words, it's not where we worship that matters but how we worship God that really matters.

By now you have probably figured out that life after COVID-19 will not be like life before the virus. What is true for life is true for church as well. God hasn't changed but our circumstances certainly have. What will worship look like? We think, tentatively, for Bethany UMC it will start with drive-in worship in the parking lot. We have a transmitter on order, so we hope to broadcast the service over car radios. We will have to ask people who are not

part of the service to stay inside their vehicles and park in every other parking space. But do take the opportunity to wave to your neighbors through your windows and enjoy gathering. This is the first step in a larger process. You will hear much more about how our drive-in service will unfold as plans become more solid.

In the meantime, we will be forming a health team to oversee a safe transition to in-person worship. If you would like more information you can visit vaumc.org/ return to read the plan for returning to in-person worship. Meanwhile, pray for our congregation, stay safe, and know I cannot wait to see you face-to-face, even if it is thru a car window.

Pastor Susan

Be In Prayer For ...

Barbara Somers, Tom & Jan Gorden, Bill Kile,
Peggy Lucas, Linda Byers, Dale Roller

Mother of Susan Meadows

John Michael - brother of Jean Moyer

Margaret Kisamore (food pantry neighbor)

Father of Kelly Heron

Cofer Family in the passing of Chris Cofer

Janet W. (food pantry neighbor)

Infant son of Alec & Heather (Pence) Miller



Need an Ark? I Noah a guy.

Happy Birthday to ...

23rd - Zac Hittie

25th - Hannah Cook

26th - Jay Frizzelle

27th - Tom Thacker

*Happy
Birthday*

