

THE VISITOR



Volume 67, No. 8

August 2017

**“Blessed to serve God
and share our faith with
all!”**

**Join us for Church on Sunday
Summer Schedule through September 3:**

Adult Bible Study	9:15 a.m.
Sunday Worship	10:30 a.m.
Fellowship	11:30 a.m.

CHURCH CONTACT INFORMATION

1312 S. 45th Street; Omaha, NE 68106

Phone: 402-551-1063

Email: blchurch1@q.com

Bethel Home Page - <http://bethellutheranomaaha.org/>
<https://www.facebook.com/BethelLutheranChurchOmaha>

~ Pastors Rich & Rebecca Sheridan ~

~ Pastor Rich Cell: 402-680-3901 ~

~Pastor Rebecca Cell: 402-658-7792 ~

~ Pastor Rebecca: pastor.rsheridan@gmail.com ~

~ Pastor Rich: rich@nebraskasynod.org ~

Church Council Executive Committee:

Jan Kammerer, Pres. (402-210-9870)

LeAnn Ryan, Vice Pres (402-639-7190)

Tom Haskell, Treas. (402-391-7966)

Erica Heiden, Secretary (308-991-7285)

Administrative Assistant: Laura Davis

Choir Director: Stephen Lawrence

Organist: Teri Davis

Custodian: Corey McDaniel

PASTOR'S MESSAGE

At that time Jesus said, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will.” ~ *Matthew 11:25-26*

Often, when I look at our daughter Grace, she’s wide-eyed, checking out everything around her. If I had to give it a name, I’d call that expression “awe and wonder.” Forget about acting upon the world or even forming judgments about it—it’s more than enough for Grace just to take it in. And if you, too, appreciate the incredible beauty of God’s creation, you might also imagine just how awesome it would be to experience for the very first time.

This is how Jesus says we are to see! It’s what he means when he speaks of becoming like a child or seeing like an infant. Seeing with these sorts of new eyes is how we come to know a God we otherwise cannot see. It’s how we develop confidence in God’s grace and God’s promises. Seeing with fresh eyes helps us to be centered in our true identity as Jesus’ disciples and as God’s children, instead of in the noisy kaleidoscope of distractions (visual and otherwise) we encounter out and about in the world—noise which threatens to distract and derail us from awe, gratitude, and thanksgiving toward God, and from the path of faithful discipleship Jesus has set before us.

According to the American Optometric Association, “babies...are not born with all the visual abilities they need in life...[but] learn to see over a period of time, much like they learn to walk and talk. Also, they need to learn how to use the visual information the eyes send to their brain in order to understand the world around them and interact with it appropriately...[An infant’s] eyes [provide] information and stimulation important for... development.”

How *we* see as Christians is critically important, too, and we learn that way of seeing from Jesus. Sometimes that learning even includes some *unlearning* mistaken ways we have come to see the world. And as the quote suggests, learning to see from Jesus helps us to understand and interact with the world as his baptized followers.

And finally, seeing through baptized eyes “provides information and stimulation important for development”—as Christians we might go further and say specifically, “spiritual development.” By practicing this new way of seeing (full of awe, wonder, gratitude, compassion), we gradually become more able to truly believe and live Christ’s way of love and peace. Instead of getting caught up in all kinds of earthly values and ways of seeing, we come to see all of life from the perspective of Jesus’ victory over sin, over death, over all.

It’s hardly simple but this is the journey of faith: Striving to live and embody *Christ’s* way of seeing and living—of loving God, of loving the lost; even the enemy, even ourselves. In doing so, we gradually come to see him more clearly, too. So may Christ help us to see God. And may God’s Spirit help us to believe, give thanks, and proclaim the Good News: Christ has given us new eyes to see!

Pastor Rich

Pastors Out of the Office:

Pastors Rebecca and Rich will be attending a continuing education event, the ELCA Rostered Ministers’ Gathering in Atlanta, August 7-11. Pastor Damon Laaker is on call for any pastoral care emergencies during that time: (402)672-0241 (cell).

BETHEL NEWS

Worship & Education

To wrap up the summer, we will be doing a Bible study on **hunger, economics, and our faith** using an ELCA World Hunger resource July 30 through August 27 from 9:15 to 10:15am. We will meet in Pilgrim Hall. No extra materials required—we will even give you a Bible if you don’t bring your own. Come to one session or all of them!

There will be no Adult Bible study on Sunday, September 3. Sunday School for children ages 3 through 8th grade and Adult Bible study resumes on Sunday, September 10 at 9:15am. Choir rehearsal also resumes on Sunday, September 10 at 9:04am. The adult study will be going through Luther’s Small Catechism as we continue to celebrate the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation.

At the Nebraska Synod Assembly this year, we were asked to pray for another congregation and

ministry in the Nebraska Synod. We are praying for First English Lutheran Church in Kimball, Nebraska, and Good Shepherd Lutheran Community in Blair. Please keep these ministries in your prayers alongside your personal prayer concerns!

Stewardship/Service

Crossroads Connection Prison Ministry:

On Sunday, August 20 we will be hosting Crossroads Connection Prison Ministry at Bethel at 6pm for worship in our sanctuary, followed by a meal at 7pm. We strongly encourage everyone to attend this event! Please contact Pat Beatty or Laura Davis if you are able to help serve or prepare the meal. Crossroads Connection allows prisoners at Omaha Community Corrections who have earned the privilege of a four hour pass to worship in a church setting along with their families, and enjoy a home-cooked meal.

Environmental Stewardship:

If everyone would properly recycle as much as they could, it would be a much greener environment. Landfills wouldn’t fill up so fast and soil wouldn’t be contaminated. You would be surprised at how much actual “trash” you **wouldn’t** be putting out each week. For example, I brought home an empty tin foil box from a friend’s house, cut off the metal cutting strip and recycled the rest. She was just going to toss the whole thing in the trash and it only took a minute to cut off the strip.

Cross Recycling accepts anything with a cord, battery or motor; as small as a cell phone ~ as large as a car ~ and everything in between.

www.crossrecycling.com. When you click on the residential link, you will notice a few items that are underlined. These are items you have to pay a small fee to dispose of. As one of the head people explained to me, they have to charge a small disposal fee to the consumer, because the facility themselves has to pay a fee to properly dispose of the items, and state laws and regulations play a part in it also. After clicking on the residential link, if you look at the right side of the screen, there will be another link that shows the actual disposal fees as well as the hours of operation, etc.

Caring for God’s creation is an ever evolving topic in this world, especially with each new natural or human-made disaster. As stewards of this world, we are called to examine our behaviors

toward creation. While we need to take from the land for food and sustainability, we also need to be careful that we maintain good stewardship and do not exploit the wonderful things the earth provides.

The environment continues to be a focus of ELCA teachings and the church's advocacy work. There are many resources to help discern, learn and act on the different aspects of caring for creation. Search the following resources to learn about ELCA-related social teachings, resources for study and education, and ways to get involved in actions that sustain and protect our environment and the resources God has entrusted to our use and care.

Thank you:

Dear Bethel Lutheran,

Thank you for your continued partnership and shared ministry together through your mission share participation. We are grateful for you, and are holding you in our prayers this month. God's blessings and peace from the whole Nebraska Synod staff.

Dear Bethel Lutheran Church,

Thank you for your gift of \$270.00 towards our Tanzania Hunger/East Africa Drought Relief Fund 2017. These funds will be used for drought relief in South Sudan and Tanzania. You can be sure that lives are being changed through your generous support of God's work in our world. Thank you for your generosity!

*Sincerely,
Ted Asay, Development Director
Nebraska Synod*

We would like to thank Darlene Boehnke for finding and printing from the internet a copy of the instruction manual for our new programmable thermostats in the sanctuary and in Pilgrim Hall. They were installed in August of 2016 along with the new air conditioning units. Now we know how to program them to work for us! Thanks Darlene!

The Property Committee

OTHER NEWS

Tai Chi:

Monday Tai Chi classes are cancelled until October 2nd.

Free Concert Schedule Change:

The free concert by the Papillion Area Concert Band at the Sumpstur Amphitheatre, 108th Street & Hwy. 370, Papillion, NE has been re-scheduled for Sunday, August 20, 2017, at 7:30 p.m. This is a change from the previously announced date.

Morton Meadows Neighborhood Association is having an open house at their new community garden for National Night Out on Tuesday, August 1 from 6:30-7:30pm. They will be showing off the work our neighbors put in building the new space and getting to know everyone. There will be some light snacks and drinks available. This is a family friendly event so bring everyone! The garden is located at 4845 Pierce, behind the car wash at the corner of Saddle Creek and Pierce.

SERVING IN WORSHIP

SERVING AFTER CHURCH FELLOWSHIP

****Please sign up to host after-church fellowship. The calendar is in the kitchen. Thank you****

ALTAR FLOWER DONATIONS:

08/06	Pat Beatty
08/13	Laura Davis
08/20	Dan & Kathy Vacek
08/27	Sam & Ellen Schroeder

READERS/COMMUNION ASSISTANTS

08/06	Laura Davis
08/13	Jan Kammerer
08/20	Melissa Carlberg/Mike Harald Pat Beatty/Rosemary Huetter (6 pm)
08/27	Anastasia Petersen

COUNTERS

08/06	Corey McDaniel
08/13	LeAnn Ryan
08/20	Corey McDaniel
08/27	Tom Haskell

BIRTHDAYS

08/05	Shelley Williams
08/06	Ardith Johnson
08/11	Eugenia Convey
08/11	Kristin Muller
08/11	Klayton Welch
08/17	Nick Kammerer
08/19	Pat Beatty
08/19	Julie Payzant
08/20	Sandy Jech

08/27 Luella Mason

ANNIVERSARIES

08/04 Rich & Bev Kjar

08/31 Sam & Ellen Schroeder



You may contribute to the ministry that happens here at Bethel via credit or debit card. Use your smartphone to scan this QR code, which will take you directly to our homepage and click “Donate here”

SCAN THIS QR CODE TO GIVE