

THE VISITOR



Volume 67, No. 6

June 2017

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

Join us for Church on Sunday:

Choir Practice	9:04 a.m.
Sunday School for all ages	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://bethellutheranomaha.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

“[God] destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.” ~ Ephesians 1:5-6

Enthusiastic “hellos” and “It’s good to be backs!”—this is what we said lots of since returning from parental leave just a couple short weeks ago. People said that they missed us and were glad to have us back, and we missed Bethel, too—our energetic worship, our joy in service and learning, the warmth of the connection I think we all feel in Christ, and as a closely-knit church family.

As you might imagine, “family” is a thought fresh in my mind and on my heart these days, having celebrated the growth of ours with the birth of our second daughter, Grace. On top of that, we’ve been able to share our growing family with Pastor Rebecca’s family, even as we entertained the Sheridan family for a visit to Omaha. During our leave, we celebrated Mother’s Day on both sides, and we’re anticipating Father’s Day, which is just around the corner! Finally, during my parents’ time here, we visited the Holy Family Shrine along I-80 in Gretna. That sacred space prominently features an icon of the holy family (Jesus, Mary, and Joseph) and alludes to the importance of the Christian family—and ultimately, to an understanding of the cultivation and maintenance of healthy family life as a *ministry*, just one more way we can live out our faith.

Luther, too, spoke of family life as part of our Christian *vocation*, or calling, as disciples of Jesus Christ. In fact, he’s even quoted as saying that changing a baby’s diapers is an integral part of that sacred work! In other words, family life is a sacred thing, given and blessed by God, and certainly worth celebrating! At the same time, it’s important to note that when we speak of healthy Christian family life as part of faith or as an ideal for which we strive, we do not intend to privilege the married life over life as a single person, nor the decision to have children over the decision not to do so. Families come in a variety of “shapes and sizes,”

and that's okay! But tragically, marriages fall apart, couples struggle with infertility, and many folks have memories of others or fathers whose lives they struggle to celebrate. Our hope and prayer in such situations is that God can continue to work healing and redemption, no matter the makeup of the family or the brokenness present in our human relationships.

Even more, though, is the realization that our Trinitarian God is a relational God who works out Divine purpose through such flawed families as ours, such imperfect people as us. When we look to the scriptures, we see all kinds of families: Adam and Eve; Noah's family; the families of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph; Zechariah and Elizabeth; Jesus, Mary, and Joseph—even some of the original apostles were related! And throughout all their family stories, God knows, we witness a whole host of family dynamics! But most importantly, throughout, beyond, and sometimes even in spite of the internal life of families, we see God's work being done.

So whatever your family life looks like, I invite you to look for signs of God's presence and activity in the midst of your family. May God continue to work in and through your family, just as God worked through that holy family from Nazareth so many years ago—and continues to work in and through our Bethel family and the worldwide Christian family today of which we are so blessed to be a part!

Pastor Rich

Pastors Out of the Office: Pastors Rebecca and Rich will be attending a wedding in Chicago Thursday, June 8 through Tuesday, June 13. Pastor Peggy Hall of Immanuel Communities will be preaching and leading worship on Sunday, June 11. Pastor Frank Kerkemeyer will be available for pastoral care emergencies while the pastors are away. His number is (402) 415-7078 (cell).

The pastors will also be in New Orleans for their annual Director for Evangelical Mission Region 4 retreat June 27-29. Pastor Jan Peterson will cover while they are away. Her phone number is (402) 689-7201.

Crossroads Clothes Closet

Partners and Friends:

As you know, Crossroads maintains a men's and women's clothes closet for our worshipers and

because of your generosity we are able to keep a supply of clothes. However, the need is great especially as the seasons change and is ongoing.

We are always in need of men's work clothes of all sizes. Jeans, long and short sleeved shirts, light weight sweat shirts and jackets (of course that changes in cooler and winter months) and the same for women. Men's work gloves, as many do outside work and if anyone has gently used work boots of any size, they are always needed. Men's white cotton socks, all sizes are always in demand. There is also a need of gently used clothes that could be used for interview purposes.

Underwood Hills Presbyterian is open from 9 to noon Tuesday through Friday to deliver the items.

Blessings, Diane

The Nebraska Synod Assembly is June 2-3, 2017 in Kearney. Please pray for Bethel's voting members Jan Kammerer and Melissa Hoeman-Carlberg and Pastors Rich and Rebecca as they make decisions for our larger church. This assembly's focus is "We are Lutheran," lifting up the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. We will be adopting amendments to the synod's constitution, electing synod council members, and adopting the 2018 budget. ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton will be one of the keynote speakers and presenters as well.

BETHEL NEWS

All are invited to celebrate Dolores Claussen's 90th birthday. The party will be at Bethel in Pilgrim Hall on Saturday, June 11 from 2:30 – 4:30 p.m. No gifts please. If you would like to bring a card with a favorite memory or story, it would be appreciated. If you are unable to attend, please mail a card to: Dolores Claussen
2820 S. 80th St., Apt. 212
Omaha, NE 68124

On Sunday, June 18, we welcome Weston Reinhardt Mohrmann, son of Amanda and Shawn Mohrmann and grandson of Bob and Patty Shalberg, to our church family through the rite of Holy Baptism. May God bless and empower us all as we seek to raise Weston in the Christian faith and life.

Worship/Education News:

Sunday, June 4 is Pentecost as well as Global Church Sunday. We encourage you to wear red in celebration of the Holy Spirit at work in our lives! Pastor Rebecca will be leading a study on the current refugee situation in Nebraska as well as how Christians have responded to refugees historically from 9:15 to 10:15am, and we will lift up global music and refugees around the world in prayer during worship.

Additional Summer Education Opportunities:

We will be watching and discussing Rick Steves' new travel documentary, *Luther and the Reformation*, in celebration of the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation on Sunday, June 11 and June 18 from 9:15 to 10:15am.

Starting June 25 through July 23 from 9:15 to 10:15am, we will be looking at **five gifts of discipleship**. We will be trying to better answer the question, "what does it mean to follow Jesus?"

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 for every series. All of these studies require no materials – we will even give you a Bible if you don't bring your own. Come to one session or all of them!

Crossroads Prison Ministry:

On June 25, Bethel will be worshipping and serving drinks and desserts to the incarcerated children of God at Underwood Hills Presbyterian Church, 851 N. 74 St.

If you would like to contribute a cake, please let Pat Beatty or Laura Davis know, and we will let you know when to have them at church.

Thank yous:

Dear Bethel Church Family,

Thank you for the prayers, phone calls, and cards of support following Grace's birth. Thank you also for allowing us to take six weeks to adjust to being a family of four especially during such a busy season of church life. We are especially grateful to Pastor Linda, Pastor Glen, Pastor Bob, and Pastor Jan for helping out while we were away. We have had the opportunity to see many family and friends including Erin's godparents, our good

friends from Sweden, family from South Dakota, and family from New Jersey while on leave. We look forward to introducing you all to Grace when we return on Sunday, May 21st.

In Christ,

Pastors Rich and Rebecca, Erin and Grace

Thank you to the wonderful Sunday School students and teachers - Pat Ranney and Anastasia Petersen, and to Connie Mahoney for her assistance. They had their spring program on their last day of Sunday school for the summer on May 21. They did amazing and we so enjoyed it. A reception for the children with cake followed the Church service. Thank you, Sunday school, so much and have a great summer! We hope to see you in church. Sunday school will resume on Sunday September 10, 2017.

Easter 2017

The committee wishes to thank everyone for all the help and support for our Easter Events. At the Easter Hunt - Mr. Easter Bunny is always a hit with the children. The weather was nice so we could hide the 1000 eggs filled with candy and toys outside. Thanks for the candy and cookies and Rich for taking pictures. Pilgrim Hall was full with over 25 children and their parents/families.

The Easter breakfast was great. We appreciate everyone's help with setting up, serving, making the pancakes and cleaning up. Thank you for the coffee cakes and the decorated hard boiled eggs. The free will offering for the breakfast was deposited in the youth account. Left over pancakes, syrup and coffee cake was taken to a shelter by Mike and Shanna Harold. Mary Kay Smith applied for funds from Thrivent to help with the cost of the Easter Egg Hunt and the breakfast.

Thank you, Dr. Lawrence, the choir, all the musicians and Pastor Linda for the inspiring Easter services. Thanks also to the altar committee, the ushers, and the audio-visual volunteers for their assistance. And lastly thanks to everyone who provided the Lilies this Easter and for those who took them to our members that are not able to come to church anymore. Bethel sure does Easter right!

God Bless,

Worship and Music committee

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

We on behalf of the Lost Generation of South Sudanese in Nebraska want to express our deepest gratitude for your generous donation supporting our organization. This speaks volumes to our hearts beyond words and we want to say thank you for the gift of \$500.00. Your donation assured us that what we are doing is truly bigger than us and we should continue to build our future generations through our community. We are filled with hope and are inspired because of your donation. The gift was used to feed children during our last month's meeting, and we will use what is left over to advance our program. We thank you not just for the donation but for also believing in our vision.

Lost Generation of South Sudan of Nebraska

OTHER NEWS

Camp Carol Joy Holling is hosting a day camp for seniors on Tuesday, June 27 from 9am to 2pm.

The cost is only \$10 per person and includes lunch and sno cones! You may register by calling (402)944-2544 or going to CJHCenter.org/Seniors. There are also several volunteer opportunities at camp. Mission Builders is looking for groups of 3-5 adults to help with construction on Monke Lodge at Springs for one or multiple days, and all skill levels are welcome. The 2017 Service Project for the campers is focused on food insecurity. Volunteers are needed to assist in teaching campers how to garden, make reusable bags from old t-shirts, and pack emergency food kits. You can volunteer for half, full, or multiple days by visiting NLOM.org/Volunteer or calling (402)944-3544.

Tai Chi:

There will be no Tai Chi classes on May 29, June 12, 19, 26, and July 3. See you on July 10.

Lutheran Women of Omaha:

Lutheran Women will meet at Bethel Lutheran Church, 1312 S. 45 Street on June 13, 2017 at 12:00 p.m. Send your reservations to Mardelle Gocek at (402) 292-1328 by June 11.

Scandinavian Midsummer Festival Omaha 2017

Celebrate the Scandinavian tradition of the summer solstice at the Scandinavian Midsummer Festival on Sunday June 11, 2017 from 1 – 4 p.m. at Elmwood Park Pavilion.

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:

06/04 Tom & Marlene Haskell
06/11 Patty Shalberg
06/18 Laura Davis
06/25 Steve Kraft

READERS/COMMUNION ASSISTANTS

06/04 Melissa Carlberg/Jan Kammerer
06/11 Anastasia Petersen/Steve Kraft
06/18 Mike Harald/Mary Kay Boschee
06/25 Bev Smith

BIRTHDAYS

06/01 Wesley Anderson
06/02 Elisabeth Haskell-Voris
06/07 Kathy Kussman
06/07 Rich Sheridan
06/08 Ellen Dasher
06/08 Evelyn Davis
06/08 Teri Davis
06/09 Gina Riva
06/10 Kevin Dasher
06/11 Dolores Claussen
06/13 Don Jellsey
06/14 Rebecca Abersfeller
06/16 Marguerite Mueller
06/17 Bob Shalberg
06/18 Ron Marsh
06/20 Karna Hartung
06/21 Tom Peterson
06/26 Meg Garnett
06/29 Adam Vacek

ANNIVERSARIES

06/01 Mr. & Mrs. Mike O'Brien
06/07 Mr. & Mrs. Tom Haskell
06/07 Mr. & Mrs. John Voris
06/13 Mr. & Mrs. Don Jellsey
06/14 Mr. & Mrs. Matthew Smith
06/14 Mr. & Mrs. Dan Vacek
06/15 Mr. & Mrs. Jerry Munch