

Looking For Respite In Lent

We've concluded the Epiphany season and we're now ready for all things Lent. Sunday worship will remain on live-stream for the foreseeable future. This edition contains what we know at this moment from Transfiguration of Our Lord Sunday up to Holy Week.

+ WORSHIP MATTERS CALENDAR +

Ash Wednesday, February 17

Live-stream worship at 6:30pm MST - Imposition of Ashes and Communion. At the church office we have packets of ashes for your household and communion sets. Stop by during business hours to collect these items if you would like to have them for worship.

Lent 2021 - The Voice of God Within

Sundays in Lent are via live-stream worship at 9:30am MST.

Lent 1 - Sunday, February 21

Temptation

Lent 2, 3, 4 - Sunday, February 28, March 7, March 14

'Because You Asked' - Pastor Gary and Pastor Nate will base their sermons on comments they've received through the connection cards in January.

Lent 5 - Sunday, March 21

Discernment

Sunday, March 28

The Passion of Our Lord

Wednesdays in Lent

Live-stream at 6:30pm MST

Wednesdays, February 24 - March 24

You are invited to pause in the middle of your week for a time of worship, music and prayer. This will be a unique style of worship but with the same spiritual grounding that you've grown to expect from a Bethany worship service.

On-Campus Ashes - Your household is invited to the campus for a brief order for Imposition of Ashes on Tues/Wed Feb. 16/17. Sign up on the Lent page of our website for a 20-minute visit in the Bethany Sanctuary. Pastor Gary or Pastor Nate will be available to lead a five minute order for imposition of ashes during your visit. Covid health and safety protocols in practice during these visits.



Facility Re-Opening Update

This Lent, the Bethany campus will likely remain closed to community groups to ensure the health and safety of the Bethany Early Childhood Center and staff. There will be some limited on-campus opportunities for individuals or small family units, with required signups. Call the office (Mon-Fri: 10am - 2pm) for more info at 303.758.2820.

Dear Bethany Family,

We find ourselves, in the beginning of Lent. Lent is a season of repentance, reflection, and prayer. It's often viewed as a depressing time of personal denial and discipline. Personally though, I don't think that's actually the purpose of this season. While many people will "give something up" for the next forty days, the point isn't so much what we are giving up, but rather what replaces that newly vacated spot. The point isn't just giving things up as a personal challenge; no, Jesus is *the reason for the season*. We fast and reflect and repent and observe Lent so that we may better open our hearts and minds to Jesus.

This Lent, at Bethany we are exploring the ways that God speaks to us with a "still, small voice" (1 Kings 17:12). The pastors, staff, and worship leaders have been hard at work designing a number of different opportunities to help you discover and/or re-discover *The Voice of God Within*.

We hope you take advantage of these offerings, but even if you don't, I encourage you to take time on your own to open your hearts to Jesus this Lent. Read through the Gospel accounts of Jesus' life; reserve a time each day for silence and prayer; start each day by singing or listening to a favorite hymn...there are dozens of ways to make the next forty days a time of spiritual growth. I hope and pray that we can all find our own way to make this a meaningful Lenten season. Peace and Grace, Pastor Nate

WORSHIP & EXECUTIVE

Worship at Bethany takes many forms and is essential for our faith's expression and growth. We warmly welcome you to join in serving and share in this fellowship together.

What Have Your Elected Leaders Been Up To? Here's The Latest Update!

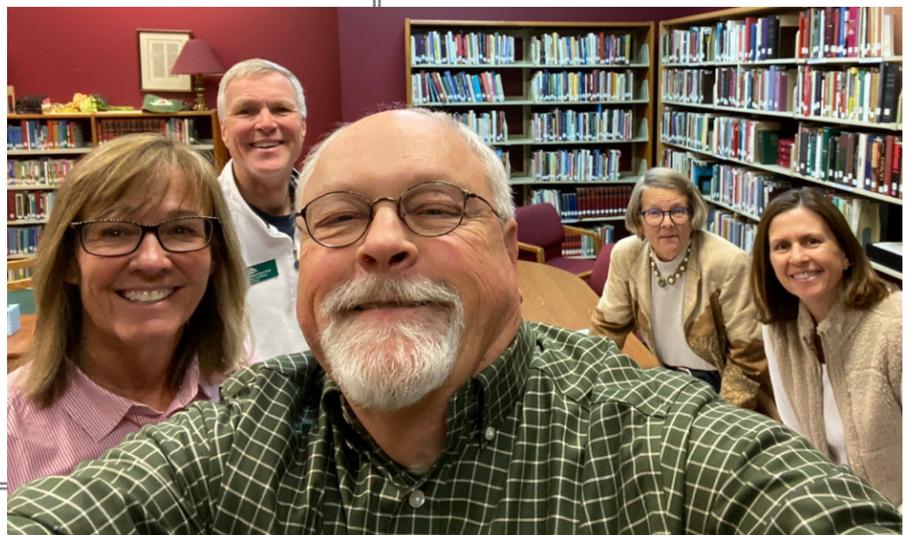
Although 2020 was a challenging year, your Congregation Council continued to meet and to function as normally as possible given the circumstances. The Executive Council formed a communications committee that rebuilt our web site. Our worship video capabilities enhanced the work of our Worship Team in bringing creative, engaging worship into your homes. This was an ongoing effort of the *Renewal for Growth* campaign, as was the project of the Hospitality Team to complete the furnishing of the Fellowship Hall. The Outreach Team adapted to our partners' new ways of fundraising to which the people of Bethany responded with abundant generosity. The Faith Formation Team worked with our staff to draw in our families and youth, as sharing the Bible together is always an important part of ministry.

In 2021 leadership will continue to enhance the worship experience with sound and lighting. Your councils will work with the Synod and local health agencies to open our Sanctuary as soon as it is safe to do so. Even as our ministry has expanded this past year, this summer will bring an opportunity of visioning for Bethany's future. Stay tuned for updates from that retreat!

Bethany's Nominating Committee is now taking nominations for the lay leadership positions whose terms will begin on July 1, 2021. If you believe your gifts would serve our congregation and its ministries, please contact Jack Lindsey at drjacklindsey@comcast.net. If you know of someone whose gifts would be valuable to our mission, please submit their name (with permission). A member of the Nominating Committee will reach out to you or your nominee to answer questions and discuss the process. In these interesting times Bethany is strong and evolving into a greater presence in the world, so it's a great time for you to experience the gratification of servant leadership!

Positions Available:

- President Elect**
- Treasurer**
- Council representative for Worship**
- Council representative for Hospitality**
- Council representative for Outreach**
- Council representative for Faith Formation**
- 2022 Synod Assembly Representatives**
- Nominating Committee (2)**
- Bethany Foundation Board of Directors (3)**



Interested in Playing Handbells?

For Adults, contact director Nolan Oltjenbruns at Nolan@Bethany-Denver.org.



For Kids, contact the director for both groups (Alpha Ringers or ReBELLion), Alex Rodasti at Alex@Bethany-Denver.org.



BETHANY FOUNDATION 2020 GRANTS

Awards are granted yearly for special Bethany needs and to other Christian Community organizations.



- Bethany Lutheran Church - \$5,307: To purchase a moveable wireless camera unit for use in the Sanctuary and throughout the Bethany campus.
- Bethany Lutheran Church Benevolence Ministry - \$1,000: For distribution as needed for the Veteran Servant Corps, Inner City Health Center, and Warren Village.
- CENTUS Counseling, Consulting, Education - \$10,000: Support of spiritually integrated behavioral health services to low income, uninsured, underinsured residents.
- Karis Community - \$2,500: Support of care community-model residential program serving individuals with serious and persistent mental illness.
- Lutheran Family Services - \$12,000: Support of case management, parenting education and foster care.
- MOPS (Mothers of Preschool Children) - \$2,500: Support of groups of relationship evangelism acting as outreach for Bethany Lutheran Church.
- St. Mark's Lutheran Church - \$8,400: Support for the OHANA youth pastor position.

Total Grants Awarded in 2020: \$41,707

The Hospitality Ministry at Bethany equips and helps each of us find ways that we can gather together in Christian fellowship. Join one of the meetup groups for dinners, men's, women's, seniors or welcome team groups and continue to make Bethany hospitable and welcoming for all worshippers.

HOSPITALITY



Vitalant Blood Drive in the Fellowship Hall on Sunday, Feb. 28 @ 8:00am- 12:00pm

Vitalant will be in the Fellowship Hall on February 28 in the morning for a blood drive. There will be many safety protocols in place due to COVID-19. Please only arrive to donate if you are feeling well and be sure to wear a mask.

Appointments can be made online at www.vitalant.org using the site code **0377** or by calling 303.363.2300 and using the same code. The need for blood donations continues for everyday medical issues including surgeries, traumas, cancer and blood disorder treatments, and there is an emergency need for convalescent plasma donations to help critically-ill COVID-19 patients. All completed blood donations are currently tested for COVID-19 antibodies which can help identify future convalescent plasma donors.

The December blood drive was very successful – in fact the best drive of 2020. Vitalant's goal was to collect 17 units and they actually collected 27 which included 3 first time donors, which was awesome! Those units collected had the potential to enhance and/or save the lives of 81 individuals. Thank you to all those who donated in December and throughout the year!

If you have questions, please contact Janet Mortensen at Janet@Bethany-Denver.org or by calling 303.300.3317.

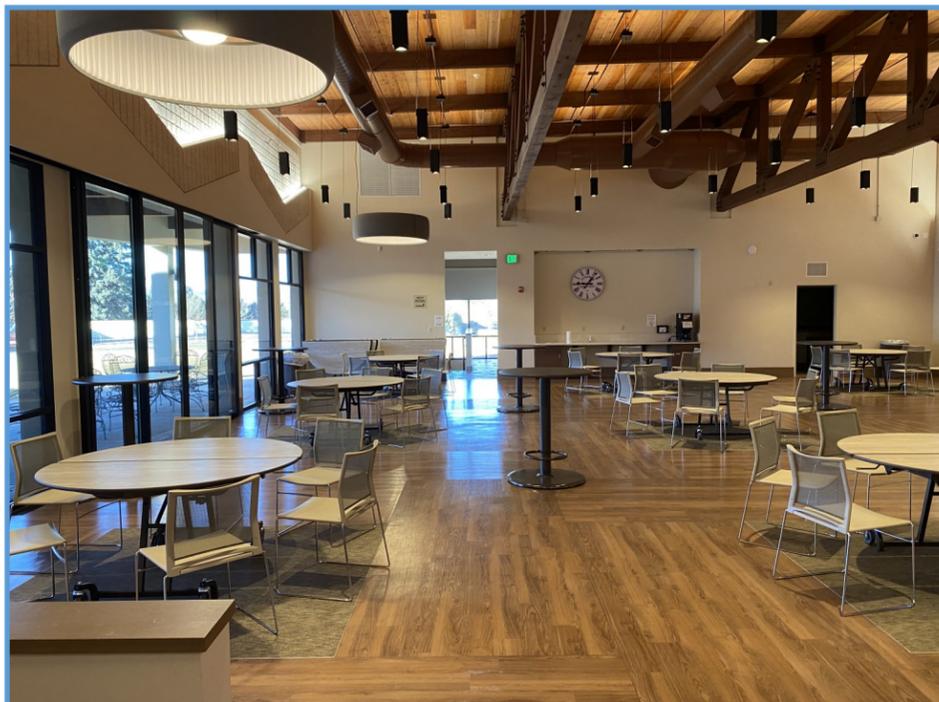


Can't Wait Until You Can Sit Here!!

Using your *Renewal for Growth* dollars, the Hospitality Ministry team formed a committee to purchase new furniture for the Fellowship Hall. It looks great, and they can't wait to have you all back in person to use them.

They wanted to make sure that there would be flexible options to fill the space. There are round tables that fold in half easily and can be wheeled around. High tables perfect for standing. Stackable chairs, and accompanying dollies for easy use. There are plenty of chairs and tables, or space for auditorium seating. Additionally, there is new lounge seating in two areas. Some of this seating can be used as part of the planned 'Newcomer Nook' currently being coordinated by the Good News Team.

Thank you so much for your generosity that allowed this project to be completed!!



OUTREACH

The Outreach Ministry Team at Bethany evaluates opportunities to assist a wide variety of organizations that help people in need. Throughout the year, we coordinate service projects that support both our local partners as well as the global community. Please join in the work of spreading God’s grace!



NEW WEBSITE

We are thrilled about how the Outreach Ministry page turned out on the new Bethany website. You can find information on the Outreach page about our 22 local partners in ministry and the 15 global mission partners and projects that Bethany supports. From Bethany-Denver.org, use the dropdown from the “Ministries” tab, then “Outreach.”

A sincere thanks to the entire Bethany congregation and friends for your generous care and support of our ministry partners!

- Outreach Ministry Team Co Chairs, Cathy Nixon & Marie Friedemann

40 Days of Giving ELCA World Hunger

Bethany has a tradition of supporting hunger issues in our world during Lent. As a part of your Lenten discipline of generosity, we encourage you to consider ELCA World Hunger. The Global Mission Team has seeded the Bethany giving with a \$4,000 gift. From the Giving tab on our website or through Realm, simply find ELCA World Hunger in the list of funds from the dropdown, or note this on the memo line of your check.



Thank you for your gifts to help those in need!



HEARTS ACROSS THE MILES

On March 7, Troop 563 of the Girl Scouts will be selling cookies in the south parking lot. We have the opportunity to donate cookie purchases to Hearts Across the Miles through the Veteran Service Corp Project. Donated cookies will be packed and sent to active duty military throughout the world.

Hearts Across The Miles is an all-volunteer, nonprofit organization whose goal is to ensure that deployed United States Service Members from all branches of the military and their families do not feel forgotten. It is our hope that with community support, we are able to lift morale and provide our troops with a better quality of life while overseas.

Last year, we shipped 8,000 boxes of Girl Scout cookies! We are currently collecting addresses of deployed troops and could use help with the cookie packaging. We don't know what day "cookie day" will be yet – usually third week in March – but if you would like to help or have addresses for deployed troops, let us know at Melissa@Bethany-Denver.org or hatm@gmx.com. Overseas addresses must be valid through April 20.

Please send a tax-deductible donation to Hearts Across the Miles at PO Box 102853, Denver, CO 80250. Visit our page (<https://www.facebook.com/HeartsAcrossTheMiles>) to see more info and lots of smiling faces. Shipping cookies is expensive but we believe our troops are worth it! HATM is a 501c3 nonprofit organization. Your help and support is appreciated!



OUTREACH



Donate Your Time! Metro Caring is seeking volunteers to help ensure that our community continues to have access to healthy and nutritious food. Three shifts are available M-F for in-person service; 9:00am - 12:00pm, 12:00pm - 3:30pm & 5:30pm - 8:00pm

Bilingual English/Spanish volunteers are also needed! For questions, please email Jose Navarro at jnavarro@metrocaring.org.

Sign up to help at www.metrocaring.org/volunteer.



NOTES OF GRATITUDE

We are very humbled and grateful for the generous Bethany support of our ministry partners in 2020 and 2021. In Dec/Jan, we delivered over 148 blankets, plus socks and jackets to the Denver Rescue Mission. They were so grateful for all of your contributions for warmth during the winter!

- Outreach Ministry Team



FOOD & DIAPER DRIVE-THRU

In 2021, Outreach will feature one or two outreach partners a month. Next month, on March 7, from 11:00am - 1:00pm, we are pleased to support Integrated Family Community Services (IFCS), Inner City Health and There with Care by hosting a food and diaper drive. Please participate by donating much needed nonperishable food and all sizes of diapers. Simply drive up under the south portico of Bethany and we will help you unload those much appreciated donations. Thank you for supporting these partners!

Please consider donating these frequently requested items: **Bar Soap, Beans, Body Wash, Chili (canned), Conditioner, Cookies, Crackers, Deodorant, Fruit (canned), Granola Bars, Jelly, Juice, Oatmeal, Pasta, Peanut Butter, Potatoes (boxed), Ramen Noodles, Shampoo, Soup, Spaghetti Sauce, Toilet Paper, Toothbrushes, Toothpaste, Tuna, Tuna Helper, Vegetables (canned)** - Please no glass containers.



FAITH FORMATION

The Faith Formation Ministry Team at Bethany supports a caring, committed and Christ-centered community for all ages. We work with BECC, Confirmation, Sunday School, Bible Studies, Youth Gatherings, Cross Generational Faith, special worship services and creating events that foster the growth and kinship of our Bethany family!

Adult Education

Wednesdays @ 7:07pm MST via Zoom

Pastor Nate and Pastor Gary will continue leading Adult Education discussions via Zoom. Feb. 24 - Mar. 24 during Lent, they will discuss the many ways that God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets, and continues to speak to us today.

Mondays @ 9:00am MST via Zoom

Pastor Gary and Pastor Nate explore the scripture readings for the upcoming Sunday every Monday morning. All are invited to join in this lively discussion.

Deborah Circle

Women looking for fellowship, lively discussions and thoughtful reflections please join us every Wednesday from 5:00-6:00pm via Zoom. The excellent WELCA magazine, "Gather" www.gathermagazine.org is the resource for our Bible study. We begin in September and continue through the 1st Wednesday of May. For Questions contact Gail Scott at 303.503.7841.



FAITH FORMATION OPPORTUNITIES THIS LENT

"and after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice." – 1 Kings 19:12

God speaks to us in various ways. Sometimes it is with a loud and obvious booming voice. Other times it is the faintest whisper that we only sense within. This Lent we are going to spend time focusing on that whisper of God; the still small voice of the Spirit. The Faith Formation Team is pleased to offer a wide variety of opportunities to help you discover new ways of discerning this Inner Voice.

- **Adult Ed:** Join Pastor Gary & Pastor Nate for a 5-week exploration of biblical characters who were guided by an internal sense of God's voice. Each week we will look at two scripture stories about God's inner voice. But wait there's more! We will also briefly discuss a specific Lenten practice each week that can help you better discern the inner voice of God in your life. Join Zoom starting on Wednesday Feb. 24 @ 7:07pm.
- **Devotionals:** Pastor Nate has created a new Lenten devotional booklet called "A World In Need" that you can pick up from the office. This daily devotional will also be posted on the Lent page on Bethany-Denver.org.
- **Podcast:** Different spiritual practices will be posted weekly on our "Together 4 Good" podcast.
- **Respite:** You can sign up for "respite time" on-campus. This will give you the chance to walk our prayer labyrinth and explore over a dozen different prayer stations that will engage your heart, soul, and mind in unique ways (Sign up on the Lent page of our website.).

Lenten Retreat - Mar. 12 & 13. If health and safety guidelines open up by mid-March Pastor Gary and Pastor Nate will lead a Lenten Retreat on the Bethany Campus. Fri/Sat: Friday night 6:30-8:30pm; Saturday 9:30am-3:00pm. We can accommodate up to 12 household or bubble units. Reserve your place on the Lent page of our website. By March 10 we will determine if health/safety guidelines will allow this retreat to proceed.

FAITH FORMATION



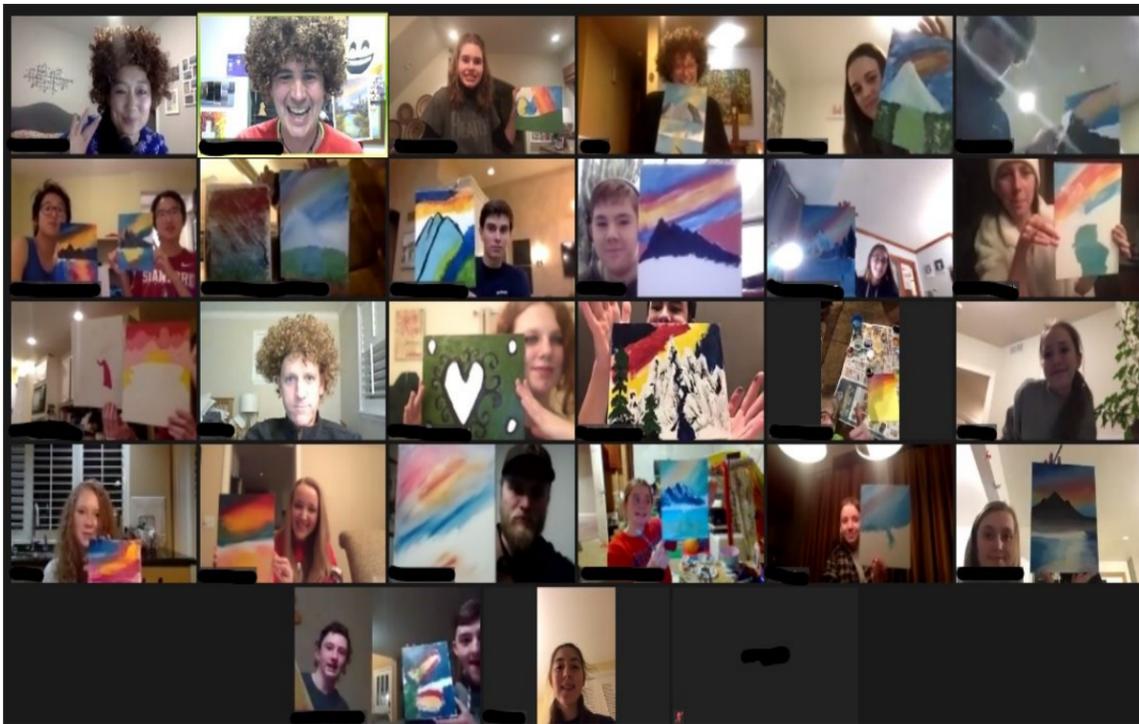
Family Bible Adventures

Family Bible Adventures continues to meet throughout Lent via Zoom. Look in the weekly email blast for updates and meeting links. Contact Gayle@Bethany-Denver.org for any questions.

Curated Faith Experiences @ Bethany Campus

A thank you from a Bethany family "To Jennie Simonson, Hunter Resley, Josie Simonson, Katelyn Jaster, Pastor Nate Preisinger and Bryan Jaster for dreaming up and building the escape room. It was a great space to encounter five escape stories of scripture and have unique family time during the pandemic."

The Faith Formation team has once again created a unique and meaningful personal journey for moments of respite on-campus. During the season of Lent, come experience the 'Voice of God' through the prayer labyrinth and prayer stations. Sign up on the Lent page of our website today!



Bob Ross Paint Pals

Our High Schoolers painted Bob Ross inspired art to send to Bethany folks in hopes of building new relationships. It was a great success as we had over 40 youth do paintings for some of our most isolated members. They have now been connected and will hopefully bring some much needed fellowship and joy throughout these cold months. Thanks so much to all who participated!

Confirmation – HOT TOPICS! During our Life of Faith year we are learning about science, sex, choices, drugs, suicide, war, love and stewardship in the months of January, February and March! Please pray for our middle school youth and families. With small group names like à Sabbath Sunday Gummy Bears, Gynormous, The B.O.B. C.R.E.W, Illuminators, Fettuccini Alfredo Small you a little of the adventure of the faith of our middle school youth and families! Please contact Bryan Jaster if you have any questions or would like information to join. Bryan@Bethany-Denver.org



Confirmation Crew Affirmed Their Baptisms!

These youth JOYFULLY affirmed their call to live and love like Jesus as they were confirmed in faith January 31. All throughout Lent, we will get to hear their faith stories during the live-stream worship. Check out the website to see their Confirmation projects too!





BENEVOLENCE MINISTRY TEAM – FIRST QUARTER 2021

The Benevolence Ministry Team met in early January. There were two guest presentations – Warren Village (a new ministry partner) and Vicky Daub with the newly formed Veteran Servant Corps.

After reviewing our gift requests, the following donations were made:

\$5,000 to Inner City Health Center for pre-natal patient/toddler care and car seats

\$4,000 to Veteran Servant Corp to support two retreats for Veterans and their families

\$4,000 to Warren Village to support their Adult Self-Sufficiency program

Bethany members were very generous in 2020! BMT distributed \$50,050 in 2020 versus \$42,150 in 2019. Warren Village is this Quarter's featured organization. They have been serving low-income, single-parent families in the Denver area since 1974. Their goal is to empower these formerly homeless families by providing self-sufficiency programming that includes onsite college courses, career counseling and life skills courses. For more info, go to www.warrenvillage.org.

If you'd like to join this team and help make a difference through benevolence in the community, contact Kevin Dempsey at kmdmpsy@aol.com or Carolyn Dierks at cadiercks@yahoo.com.

THANK YOU NOTES:

Thank you so much for your gift...we are on the front lines of conquering the residual effects of the pandemic, which would be impossible without you.

Gratefully - Linda Olson, Senior Development Officer for Inner City Health

Generosity

Sacrificial giving is an attribute of God (John 3:16-17). When we give, we grow into *imago dei*, the image of God, in which we were created. Bethany Lutheran Church is one of those God-pleasing ministries where with your financial gifts we strive to make the love of God known throughout the local community as well as internationally.

We ask for you to make a commitment to generosity in 2021 and to share with Bethany your intentions of giving so that we can plan for vibrant ministry this year. The Giving page of the web site (under the Get Involved tab) has all the information you need, including how to submit at pledge on the Bethany Connect App (Realm), or forms to download and submit. Feel free to contact Melissa Russ, the Bethany Gifts Processor, if you have questions: Melissa@Bethany-Denver.org.

Note: If you set up electronic giving last year, you may have to reengage that system for 2021. Sometimes automatic giving carries into a new calendar year, but with some financial systems you may need to initiate that process each year.

From the Editor - Please note the following:

The next edition of the Beacon newsletter (Easter/Spring) will contain info from Holy Week and Easter through the end of May. As a friendly reminder, I've created a simple submission form on the website so you will no longer need to email me. Please find the Media tab > and Beacon button on the website to submit your articles/photos **by March 8**.

The website will be updated regularly to keep you informed of seasonal updates and submission deadlines. We do not have the next publication dates beyond spring yet.

Thanks so much to everyone who contributed content for this issue! - Leo

BETHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH STAFF & LEADERSHIP

Pastoral Team

Gary Sandberg

Lead Pastor

Nate Preisinger

Pastor

Janet Mortinsen

Director of Pastoral Care

Administration

Sarah Hulslander

Executive Assistant/Missional Minister

Tim Caldwell

Senior Ministries Coordinator

Laura Eaton-Ortega

Director of Communications

Shelley Hook

Accounting Supervisor

Mike Johnson

Technology Supervisor

Tom Maes & Josh Patillo

Custodians

Laura Romig

Director of Facilities and Technology

Melissa Russ

Gifts Processor

Faith Formation

Bryan Jaster

Director of Youth Ministries

Gayle Newell

Director of Children's Ministries

Nancy Froseth

Administrative Assistant

Music

Rick Seaton

Director of Music and Organist

Dr. James Kim

Chancel Choir Director

Alex Rodasti

Children's Handbell Choir Director

Zach Rodasti

Cherub Choir Director

Laura Tribby

Children & Youth Choirs Director

Paula Wills

Creative Arts & Dir. Sounds of Praise

Bethany Early Childhood Center

Vicki Hare

Director

- Congregation Council -

Executive Council

Laura Weber-Meyers (President)

Tim Eklund (President Elect)

Jack Lindsey (Immediate Past Pres.)

Arlis Adolf (Vice President - Personnel)

Mary Brook (Treasurer)

Judi Burchfield (Secretary)

Ministry Council

Jim Katschke, Matthew Kersten-Gray
(Hospitality)

Dave Craven, Kristin Hamilton
(Faith Formation)

Marie Friedemann, Cathy Nixon
(Outreach)

Sally Lieb, Kathy Singh
(Worship)