



# CROSSROADS

BETHANY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2024

## from the pastor...

Often the sacred journey of Lent is marked by contemplation and repentance, but the season can also unfold with a surprising invitation - to discover joy amid introspection. Often perceived as a time of somber reflection, Lent challenges us to redefine our understanding of joy and recognize its presence even in the quietude of this season.

Lent starts with Ash Wednesday, and the vibrant colors of our Christmas season give way to deep purples, alleluias fall silent, and often we reflect on what practice we can take up or omit during the season. This year we are encouraging you to explore the beauty that emerges when joy is woven into the fabric of Lent.

The exploration begins by questioning our understanding of joy. What is joy, really? It's not a mere emotion; it's a conviction, a practice, and sometimes, it's a promise. Joy is right at home in a season like Lent. It becomes a beacon, guiding us toward God's unfailing presence, even amid fear and pain.

And as we move through the weeks of Lent we will look at various iterations of Joy.

**Joy as a Fruit of the Spirit:** Positioned among the Fruits of the Spirit in Galatians 5, joy is not just an emotion but a habit that can be cultivated. It is rooted in God and leads to freedom.

*(cont'd on next page)*



## IN THIS ISSUE

- Pastoral Reflection
- Super Bowl Sacking Hunger Challenge
- Mustard Seed Grant
- Photo Gallery
- Upcoming Events
- Community Celebration Board

## COMING SOON

**Feb 11th** - Café Bethany does  
Mardi Gras

**Feb 14th** - Ash Wednesday Service

**Feb 15th** - Super Bowl Sacking  
Hunger Challenge

*(cont'd from previous page)*

**Immutable Joy:** Like an inert substance in chemistry, joy endures and remains recognizable even when mixed with powerful emotions like fear or grief. It coexists, enabling us to identify complex experiences without invalidation.

**Ebb and Flow of Joy:** Understanding the transient nature of joy, like Psalm 30:5, that joy, like life's struggles, ebbs and flows. Recognizing these moments sets us free from the expectation of constant happiness.

**Joy as Potential:** Sometimes, joy is just over the horizon, trembling with a not-now-but-soon possibility. This potential lightens our loads, strengthens our hearts, and stirs our hopes, demanding our trust and inviting our faith.

**Embodied Joy:** Easter, the culmination of joy through Jesus' resurrection, emphasizes the embodied dimension of Christian joy. It involves the whole body, showcasing the full presence of God's joy available to us in human form.

**Joy Resisting Oppression:** Joy becomes an act of resistance, a way to reclaim God-given dignity for those dehumanized and marginalized. It is a countercultural movement generated, practiced, taught, and shared within communities.

Our Lenten journey takes a structured path through the series titled "The Seed of Joy." Each week, we will focus on different facets of joy, from "Persistent Joy" to "Glorious Joy," providing a roadmap for nurturing and understanding joy throughout the Lenten season.

As a community, we invite you to share your experiences and perspectives on joy. How has joy manifested in your life, especially during times of hardship or blessing?

May this Lenten season be a time of profound introspection, where the seed of joy is planted, tended, and nurtured, enriching our spiritual journey and deepening our connection with God.

Blessings,

Pastor Sadie

# Super Bowl Sacking Hunger Challenge

Bishop David Wilson of the Great Plains Conference and Bishop Bob Farr of the Missouri Conference have teamed up to invite colleagues in the California-Nevada, California-Pacific and Oregon-Idaho conferences to a friendly competition to see which team's fans can collect the most food for food pantries in their mission fields.

During the time of last year's Super Bowl, the Great Plains and Missouri combined to collect 105,367 pounds of food. Our friends in the Greater New Jersey and Eastern Pennsylvania conferences overcame the loss by their beloved Eagles to gather 74,560 pounds of food.

So we are invited to **bring extra nonperishable food items with us to the church through Thursday, Feb. 15**, the week after the Super Bowl, and then see which conference has collected the most.



## Super Bowl Challenge

**California Nevada Annual Conference**

(home of SF)

Vs.

**Great Plains Conference**

(Home of KC)

Contribute nonperishable food items to the church  
by February 15th.

Let's come together to surpass Great Plains and make  
a significant impact on our local pantries.

Your generosity can make a difference!

## Bethany Receives \$2,000 Mustard Seed Grant to Aid Vulnerable Migrant Families

Bethany United Methodist Church is happy to announce that it has been awarded a \$2,000 grant from the Mustard Seed program. The Mustard Seed initiative's goal is nurturing churches to have a deeper understanding and care for the most vulnerable in our communities, and this grant will support Bethany's efforts to assist recently arrived migrant families.

Cathy Personius, a dedicated member of Bethany and co-chair of the Nurture/Outreach committee spearheaded the application for the Mustard Seed grant. The focus of this initiative is to provide aid to predominantly Venezuelan migrant families, particularly those without family or friends to assist them. These families, admitted to the United States as part of the political asylum program, often find themselves on the streets without housing, facing an up-to-a-year wait before being granted legal permission to work.

Bethany's objective with the grant is to purchase and store non-perishable ready-to-eat food. Additionally, the church plans to collaborate with Faith In Action to recruit volunteers from other faith communities to help prepare and deliver hot meals to families in need. Recognizing the challenges faced by newly arrived Spanish-speaking children, Bethany also aims to establish a relationship with the city's elementary school to better support these families.

The Mustard Seed grant will play a crucial role in allowing Bethany United Methodist Church to extend a helping hand to those in the community who are most in need. Through this initiative, the church hopes to make a positive impact on the lives of migrant families, offering them support and sustenance during a challenging period of transition.



**Mustard Seed**  
**MIGRATION GRANTS**

Grants of up to \$2000 to United Methodist churches to fund local projects that assist refugees and migrants.



**UMCOR**  
Global Ministries | The United Methodist Church

# PHOTO GALLERY

## A PEEK AT RECENT ACTIVITIES IN THE BETHANY COMMUNITY!

### INTERFAITH WINTER SHELTER MEALS

On January 8th, in collaboration with Noe Valley Ministry, Bethany cook & served 100 meals to the unhoused under the Interfaith Winter Shelter program.



### NIGHT MINISTRY BAGGED LUNCHES

On January 14th, Bethany made sack lunches for our unhoused neighbors in collaboration with the San Francisco Night Ministry. We are in our 8th year of our relationship in this ministry and thank everyone for their contributions and support



# UPCOMING EVENTS

## Café Bethany does Mardi Gras – Feb 11th



**What is Café Bethany?** Café Bethany is an alternative worship experience that is centered on a brunch experience. During our Cafe Bethany worship services you can expect to sit at small tables in the round, a brunch menu is set and served, and the worship service involves conversation around the table based on the week's theme.

**Why Mardi Gras?** Mardi Gras, like many of our Christian traditions, is pagan in origin and dates back thousands of years. When Christianity arrived in Rome the Pagan tradition was incorporated into the Christian tradition. In current times it is generally celebrated on the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday, and in some places is a week-long festival. Mardi Gras is experienced as a final celebration of excess before the Lenten season which is 40 days leading to Lent.

**What to Expect?** Café Bethany won't feel like our typical worship experiences and that's the idea. Community and connection are core values of our church, we hope that worshipping around a table, a place where Jesus did so much of his ministry, will invite you into a deeper connection with one another. We'll still sing, pray, hear scripture, and enjoy a pastoral reflection, but the atmosphere will feel different. The sounds will be different and we hope that you will come with an open heart, open spirit and a hungry stomach and join us in our second Cafe Bethany experience on **Sunday, February 11th at 10:45 am.**

# UPCOMING EVENTS

Save the date for our Ash Wednesday Service on Wednesday, February 14th at 7 pm. Ash Wednesday marks the start of our Lenten season as we prepare for Easter.



Our Lenten journey this year takes a structured path through the series titled **"The Seed of Joy."** Each week, we will focus on different facets of joy, from "Persistent Joy" to "Glorious Joy," providing a roadmap for nurturing and understanding joy throughout the Lenten season.

A graphic for 'The Seed of Joy' Lent 2024. The background is dark purple. On the left, a small green plant with a heart-shaped leaf is shown. The text 'THE SEED OF JOY' is written in a white, sans-serif font, with 'THE SEED' at the top and 'OF JOY' at the bottom. Below that, 'LENT 2024' is written in a smaller font. On the right side, a list of 'SUNDAYS IN LENT' is provided in a white, sans-serif font, listing dates and corresponding joy themes.

**THE SEED  
OF JOY**

LENT 2024

**SUNDAYS IN LENT**

FEB. 18TH - PERSISTENT JOY  
FEB. 25TH - EXPECTANT JOY  
MAR. 3RD - LIBERATING JOY  
MAR. 10TH - TRANSFORMATIVE JOY  
MAR. 17TH - VOCATIONAL JOY  
MAR. 24TH - JOY EVERYWHERE  
& NOWHERE

# UPCOMING EVENTS

Save the Dates for our continued sack lunch ministry with SF Night Ministry. Six times a year we create 100 sack lunches for our unhoused neighbors in San Francisco.



**NIGHT MINISTRY - BAGGED LUNCHES**

**Join Bethany in providing bagged lunches for our unhoused community members**

- Donate food: deli meat, cheese, bread, water, juice, soft fruits, packaged desserts, and chips
- Assemble sack lunches on select Sundays after service at Bethany in 2024:

**JANUARY 14, 12pm**  
**MARCH 10, 12pm**  
**MAY 12, 12pm**  
**JULY 14, 12pm**  
**SEPTEMBER 8, 12pm**  
**NOVEMBER 10, 12pm**



**INQUIRE @ [BETHANYSF.ORG/CONTACT](https://bethanysf.org/contact)**

## Bible Study

**Wednesdays 3-4pm on zoom.** Join to discuss the scripture for the coming Sunday. All are welcome. Email Marilyn for more info [mherand@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mherand@sbcglobal.net)

## Small Groups – Sign-up at [bethanysf.org](https://bethanysf.org) !

Group options:

- 2nd Saturdays each month @ 8:30am
- 2nd Wednesdays each month @ 7pm

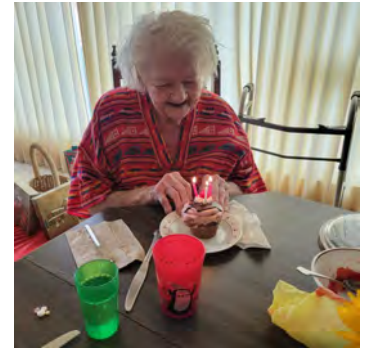
## Zoom Office Hours

Have a question? Want to check in? Chat? Stop in anytime between **12-1pm on Wednesdays** for Pastor Sadie's office hours. <https://zoom.us/j/97919674908>



# community celebration board

Happy Birthday Laura! On January 25th, Jeannette & Shirley celebrated Laura's 93rd with her.



On February 4th, we officially welcomed Lizzy and Lawson as new members of Bethany!

## CONTACT US

If you have articles, photos or announcements that you would like to share, please contact us!

**Bethany United Methodist Church**  
1270 Sanchez St., San Francisco, CA 94114  
(415) 647-8393  
bethanysoffice@gmail.com

Find us online at [www.bethanysf.org](http://www.bethanysf.org)  
FB @bethanyumcsf and IG @bethany\_umc\_sf

## FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

8: Harold Spiva  
15: Melissa Reyes-Pagdilao  
22: Dylan Keleman

