CROSSROADS

BETHANY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 2024

from the pastor...

I'm remembering an election cycle a few years ago when I was pretty actively posting memes and ads in support of my candidate on Facebook. I was even more actively posting stuff that criticized the opposing candidate. Most of my friends share my political views … but not all! Enter Connie (not her real name), Connie was a high school friend of my mother's. She is one of my siblings' God mother (spell check almost corrected that to God monster!). In all of the years that we were "friends" on Facebook Connie had never sent any holiday or birthday greetings, never checked-in, never acknowledged any life achievements. She was only finally moved to engage when I expressed criticism of her candidate. What happens to us during election seasons that this kind of thing happens?

Throughout September we have looked at the different elements of our Sunday worship services and discovered how they are a variety of calls and responses that model and remind us of how to listen to and respond to God's call and how God listens and responds to our call. Basically, how we live in relationship with God. Jesus taught us to remember what true relationship means. Jesus broke bread with those whose worldview did not mirror his. Jesus broke bread with those whose experience and traditions were sometimes not only different, but opposed, to his. He simply offered a place to be, to sit down at the same table, and see what transformation might happen between people.

For the next five weeks - right up to the election - we will be journeying together toward transformation with a worship series created by Marcia McFee called **"Do Unto Others."** By looking at the core qualities of the right relationship; Kindness, Compassion, Humility, Respect, Love; I invite you to spend some time each week focusing on each of these qualities. To help us, Dr. McFee has prepared a guidance journal that will be shared with you via email, posted on the church website (bethanysf.org) and some hard copies will be available on the Welcome Table at church. I look forward to journeying together.

Love, Pastor Rob

COMING SOON

Oct 13 - Vote Forward letter writing

Oct 20 - Sanchez Block Party

Oct 24 - Josh Kornbluth discussion, Citizen Brain

Oct 25 - Labyrinth walk

Oct 27 - Social time with Primeros Pasos

Nov 1 - Ring Out Danger

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Sermon Series: Do Unto Others

Oct 6th: Red & Blue Make Purple: **Kindness**

Oct 13th: The Polarization Within: **Compassion**

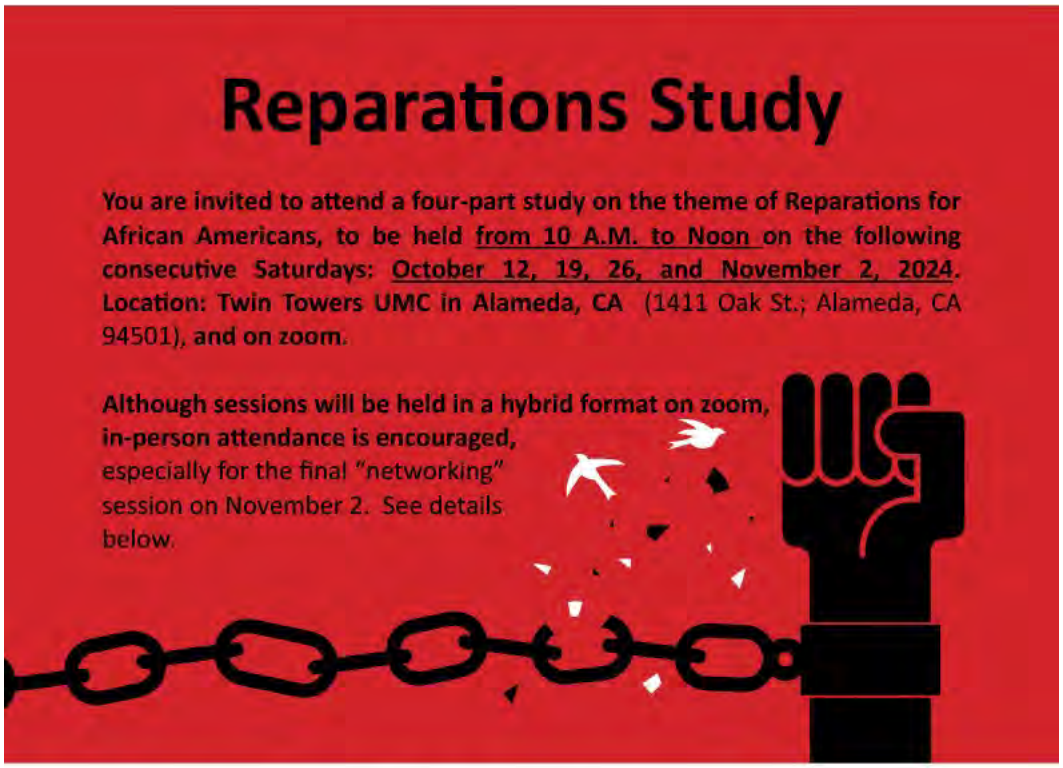
Oct 20th: Listen More, Speak Less: **Humility**

Oct 27th: Living Together on Uncommon Ground: **Respect**

Nov 3rd: Malice Toward None: **Love**

As a follow-up to the legislation on African American Reparations passed at this year's Annual Conference Session, I am seeking your support in publicizing an educational four-part series on Reparations for African Americans, beginning on October 12, 2024 hosted by Twin Towers UMC in Alameda. Your involvement would be invaluable in contributing to the success of this important initiative.

Blessings,
Rev. Sun Hee Kim
Bay District Superintendent
California-Nevada Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church



Topics to be covered include: The Case for Reparations; Broken Promises and the Black/White Wealth Gap; More than a Check: the Components of Reparations; and Being the Change. Sessions will be led by the following members of the planning team: Rev. Myrna Bernadel-Huey, Rev. Angela Brown, Rev. Hubert Ivery, Rev. Mike Friedrich, and Ms. Lynette Lee (Chair of the Buena Vista Community Institute, aka BVCI).

Register by October 5th at **buenavistaumc.org/reparations** to receive the zoom link, and to access the readings for the first session.

For more information, please email CNReparationsStudy@gmail.com

This study is made possible by a grant to BVCI from the Faiths Program at the San Francisco Foundation to, and is supported by (partial list): CA-NV Committee on African American/Black Ministries; Black Methodists for Church Renewal - Bay Area Chapter; CA-NV Commission on Religion and Race; Renewed Hope Housing Advocates; Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity (IM4HI); Bay District; Epworth UMC, Berkeley; Hope UMC, Sacramento; and Buena Vista UMC.

Long Term Planning

by Cathy Personius, Chair Nurture/Outreach Committee

The Covenant Council has been working on developing a five-year plan to insure Bethany's financial stability and ongoing mission in our city. Those of you who came to the Cafe Bethany on May 19th were part of this effort. From the discussions on that morning, the Council has pulled together 5 priorities that we will be working on through the rest of 2024 and 2025 as we continue to refine a long-term plan. These are the five priorities:

1. Connect new people to Bethany through sharing information and developing relationships.
2. Collaborate with our neighbors and existing organizations on local and global social justice issues.
3. Develop ourselves as disciples, through small groups and other efforts.
4. Increase stewardship (aka financial support) through activities across the year.
5. Continue to plan relevant and creative worship services.

We will be discussing these priorities at our monthly Covenant Council meetings, which are open to anyone, and making them a focus of committee work for this year. If you are particularly interested in helping develop one of the priorities, please speak to Pastor Rob or any member of Covenant Council.

Bethany Support its Missions through Memorial Funds

by Michael Eaton, Chair, Board of Trustees

During our September sermon series on the various functions of Bethany, I gave an overview of what the trustees are responsible for. Another function of the trustees is to be stewards of a number of memorial funds that have been set aside for specific purposes and are used for items that don't make it into our annual budget. Some of you may remember some of the people in whose honor these funds were established. All of the funds are available for additional contributions by sending a check to the church, leaving it in the offering plate, or by using the comments field when donating through the church website.

Trinity Training Fund. This fund was started when Bethany and Trinity UMC merged in the 1990s. It has been used to pay salary of interns from Pacific School of Religion, train lay people on church matters, and provide education for volunteers and staff.
Archibald Mission Fund. Irene Archibald was a long-time member of Bethany who had a passion for mission work. This fund has supported Bethany members on mission trips to Nicaragua, New Orleans, and the Philippines.
Reconciling Fund. Dedicated to the memory of Fritz Schultz, a Sunday school teacher and devoted member of Bethany, is used for members to attend Reconciling Ministries Network conferences & to support other LGBTQIA+ inclusion, equity, and diversity efforts within the United Methodist Church.
Wild Bill Hinson and Dan Johnson Memorial Fund. In honor of Wild Bill Hinson and Dan Johnson, the fund is used for children and youth outdoor adventure programs, such as church camps and youth group outings.
Bruce Pettit Memorial Fund. This fund is in honor of Bruce Petit, a long-time Bethany member who had a passion for music and the arts and was very active in Bethany's music programs. It supports supplemental music, programs, and equipment for Bethany's music programs. In 2024, some of the funds are being used to support Bell Appeal's contributions to worship during the Advent season.

A PEEK AT RECENT ACTIVITIES IN THE BETHANY COMMUNITY!

PHOTO GALLERY

HAPPY BIRTHDAY PASTOR ROB!

We celebrated Pastor Rob's birthday – officially on September 26th.

SERMON SERIES: DO UNTO OTHERS

On Sunday, October 6th, we started the Fall Sermon Series: Do Unto Others.

COOKING PARTY

Many thanks to those who showed up Saturday, October 5th, on the hottest weekend of the year, to prepare meals for the migrant families working with Faith in Action. We were able to prepare two different recipes and fill 13 frozen food containers. Each of those containers will feed 3 to 4 people.

The meals will be stored in a freezer in the Faith in Action office in the Mission District. Families who have been given hotel vouchers can take meals back to their rooms to microwave. Families sleeping in cars can come in and heat up a meal to eat. Shelter residents, who are only given breakfast and dinner, will come into the office for a meeting and then share a container of food before heading out to afternoon jobs.

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PHOTO GALLERY

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BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

On October 6th, we held our annual Blessing of the Animals service. This is a much-loved Bethany event where we come together to offer gratitude for the companionship and love they bring into our lives.

BUDGET UPDATE

by Steve Wereb, Treasurer

Through September, we have received $99,446 in donations and $127,306 in rental income for a total of $226,752. Our expenses through September were $227,640. In the coming months, we expect significant repairs, including for our bell tower which is estimated to cost over $28,000 and for which we've received an insurance payment of $7,145. Our budget for the year is $293,618 in donations and rental income, and $320,895 in expenses, which would result in a deficit of -$27,277 and be funded from our cash balance.

This month we've included additional giving information. The distribution of pledges is shown below. Overall, our total average pledge amount is $5,670 per person. We have 13 people giving between $1 and $6,000, 3 people giving between $6,001 and $9,999, and we have 3 people giving over $10,000. Total donations through September have been $99,446 across 48 people (for both pledgers and non-pledging donors) which results in an average gift of $2,072 person. For perspective, to have a balanced budget and eliminate our budgeted deficit of -$27,277, we would need 27 people pledging $5,670 versus the 19 people we have pledging today. Our available cash at September 30th is $112,831.

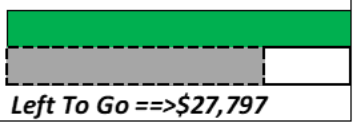
We are very fortunate to have the financial support of our community which helps to sustain Bethany and fund our staff and programs.

Thank you for your support and generosity.
Kind regards, Steve Wereb, Treasurer

Summary of Donations

Expected Giving for 2024 ==> $127,243

Actual Giving thru 9/30/24 ==> $99,446



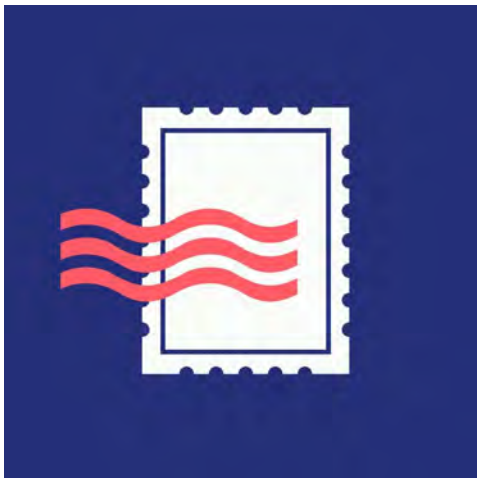
Left To Go ==>$27,797

Actual vs. Budget	Actual thru 9/30/24	Budget for 2024	Actual vs. Budget
Donations	$ 99,446	$ 127,243	$ (27,797)
Rent	127,306	166,375	(39,069)
Total Income	226,752	293,618	(66,866)
Staff & Programs	112,926	153,410	(40,484)
Tithe	19,500	29,362	(9,862)
Building Costs	65,870	100,081	(34,211)
Building Repairs	29,344	38,042	(8,698)
Total Operating Costs	227,640	320,895	(93,255)
Insurance	7,145		7,145
Net Result	**$ 6,257**	**$ (27,277)**	**$ 33,534**
Cash Balance, 9/30/24	**$ 112,831**		

Distribution of Pledges			
Gift Amount	Number of Households	Pledge Amount	%
$1 to $2,500	8	$ 10,330	10%
$2,501 to $6,000	5	$ 23,900	22%
$6,001 to $9,999	3	$ 21,500	20%
$10,000 & Above	3	$ 52,000	48%
Total	19	$ 107,730	100%
Average/person		$ 5,670	

YTD Donations Received		%
YTD pledges received	$ 74,598	75%
YTD other donations	$ 24,848	25%
Total donations	$ 99,446	100%
Total number of givers	48	
Average gift/giver	$ 2,072	

UPCOMING EVENTS



Sunday, October 13th, after service, Lyra Halden has organized a letter-writing party via **Vote Forward**: https://votefwd.org/

Vote Forward enables us to write letters to likely-Democratic voters in swing states (or anywhere) encouraging them to vote. This strategy is proven to be effective at increasing voter turnout. It would be fun to all write letters together after service on Oct 13th. If you're planning to participate, let Lyra know so we have an idea of how many letters to print.

Open Studio Art Exhibit by Bob Armstrong – Bob will be doing an Open Studio art exhibit at the Hunters Point Shipyard artists colony on **Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 19 and 20, from 11am to 6pm in Building 101, Studio 1211.** There will be free parking, food trucks, live music and over 130 artists opening their studio doors to visitors. Please come see!

https://www.shipyardartists.com/artist/bob-armstrong/

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

Small Groups – Sign-up at bethanysf.org

Group options:

-2nd Saturdays each month @ 8:30am

-2nd Wednesdays each month @ 7pm

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Sanchez Street Block Party – Sunday, Oct 20th from 12-3 pm
For the fourth year in a row, Bethany will be hosting a Block Party on Sanchez Street, between Clipper and 26th Streets, in collaboration with Primeros Pasos (our preschool tenant), Friends of Slow Sanchez, and Noe Café. Across San Francisco, the city will be sponsoring over 30 block parties and Sanchez is one of the most popular.

There will be live music by the Liberty Street band, Rabbit Hole Theater will once again provide children's activities at round tables on our patio, and there will be a special dance show by the Polynesian Dance Club from James Lick Middle School. The Fire Department will visit with a firetruck, and there will be lots of arts and crafts for families. Noe Café will be providing expanded food and drinks for purchase.

Participants also include SFMTA-Vision Zero program, Friends of Urban Forest, & Noe Valley Books.

We'll be providing a Chipotle lunch in the multi-purpose room for the volunteers helping out.

Come join the fun!

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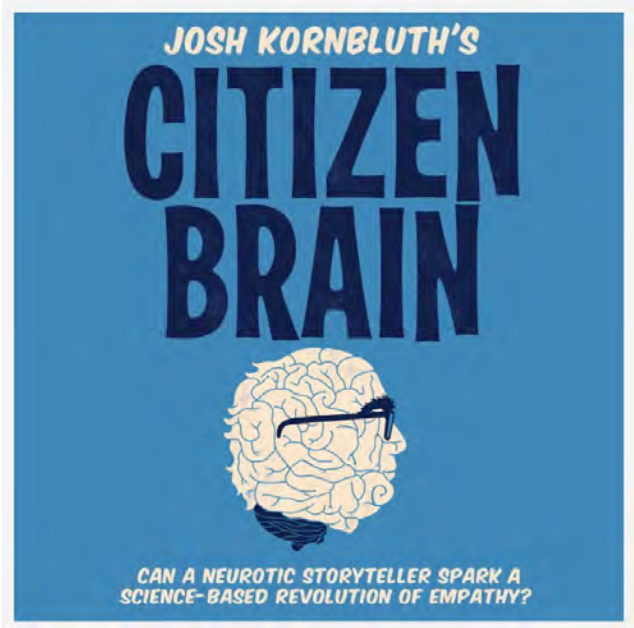
UPCOMING EVENTS

Citizen Brain discussion with Josh Kornbluth, Thursday, October 24th @7 pm, local storyteller Josh Kornbluth shares his latest piece.



November 1st @ 9:30 am, every 1st Friday of the month, we ring our bells in solidarity with ***Ring Out Danger: People of Faith Opposed to Gun Violence*** (**https://ringoutdanger.org**). Please join us, in front of Bethany, no ringing experience is required.

Interfaith Labyrinth Service, Friday, October 25th @7pm – Join us for another evening of contemplative music and explore the deeply centering tradition of walking the labyrinth, a journey inward and then back out. The service is very casual and is designed to be whatever you make of it.

We will play music for about an hour and during that time you can sit and listen, sing along, walk the labyrinth, dance the labyrinth, or do whatever it is that you need in the moment.

Social time with Primeros Pasos, Sunday, October 27th after worship service – we'll be having a social time with our preschool tenant, Primeros Pasos. Hangout and enjoy some lite food & drink, and learn more about their Spanish Immersion Daycare.

Annual Charge Conference, Sunday, November 10th at Noon – Save the date! Our Charge Conference this year is November 10th at Noon. This is a meeting of the church members to vote on official church matters.

community celebration board

In September, Jeannette LaFors traveled back east to Pennsylvania and celebrated her mother's 80th Birtday. Jeannette along with her mom (Nanette), dad (Kary), and brother (Jean-Paul) are pictured, as they gathered at Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church on her birthday.

Thanks to Josh Webster and Cathy Personius for clearing the prayer wall in preparation for the new sermon series! Prayer strips will be red, white, blue, and purple for the series.

Thanks to all who helped prepare meals for the migrant families working with Faith in Action, on October 5th, the hottest weekend of the year!

Thanks to everyone who continues to help out with worship — as Liturgist, Greeter, Fellowship Host, Online Streaming, Music & Bethany Ensemble, and all the set-up. It takes a village!

CONTACT US

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

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Find us online at **www.bethanysf.org**
FB **@bethanyumcsf** and IG **@bethany_umc_sf**

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

2: Bob Armstrong
3: Sean O'Conner
7: Julie Freeman
9: Jeff Friant
17: Angela Brown
22: Shannon Horton
23: Tim Friant-Nelson
24: Walter Thoma