CROSSROADS

BETHANY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2025

from the pastor...

It's 7:59 am on February 1st as I write this; the first day of Black History month. I've been thinking how to honor this month for a few weeks now. We can look forward to singing some of the spirituals that offered comfort and deliverance to black slaves and readings from black writers during our centering moments.

I'm going to read Zora Neal Hurston's, "*Moses Man of the Mountain*." I've been talking about this in church for the past few weeks and some of you have already expressed interest. Thank you to Jeannette LaFors for offering to place an order for books with Green Apple (support your local bookseller!). Those books will be arriving after the start date that I had anticipated - which gives us some extra time to get reading in time for the first session. Here is the revised reading schedule:

- Tuesday Feb 11 we'll discuss chapters 1-13
  Tuesday Feb 18 we'll discuss chapters 14-27
- Tuesday Feb 25 we'll discuss chapters 28-40

"Moses, Man of the Mountain" is Hurston's re-telling of the story of Moses. Moses, we remember, was called by God to lead the oppressed Hebrew people from their enslavement in Egypt. This month, we will stray from the lectionary and will be looking at the Bible accounts of some of the events that occurred with Moses and the Israelites during their wilderness journey to liberation.

Martin Luther King Jr in his "*I Have a Dream"* speech, delivered from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington DC drew on imagery from the Moses and the Israelites story to offer hope to oppressed blacks in the 60's. The new administration in Washington DC has already begun asserting oppressive policies onto our trans and immigrant siblings. I pray that our entry into the Moses story will offer us hope, encouragement, and inspiration.

Blessings, Pastor Rob

IN THIS ISSUE

- Pastoral Reflection
- Upcoming Events
- Budget Update
- Community Celebration Board

COMING SOON

Feb 7 - Ring Out Danger
- Labyrinth Service

Feb 8, 12 - Small Groups

Feb 11, 18, 25 - Black History Month book discussion

March 2 - Bagged Lunches

April 6 - Interfaith Winter Shelter Walk

PHOTO GALLERY

Sorry, no pictures this month. Because the January newsletter was published later in the month, many photos of January's activities were included in the January newsletter. Your contribution of pictures are always welcome for sharing.

UPCOMING EVENTS

February 7th @ 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.

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

Join us for a service of music and movement, Friday, February 7th at 7 pm.

Each first Friday of the even numbered months will be an evening of chants and contemplative music inspired by the world's spiritual traditions. You are invited to 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.

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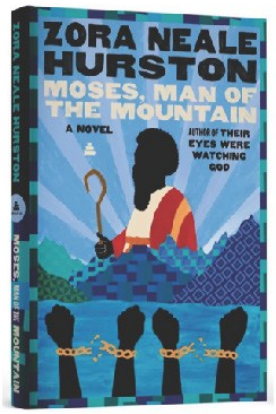
Black History Month Book Discussion Group, led by Pastor Rob Herrmann, meeting February 11, 18, 25 on Zoom at 6pm

"Moses, Man of the Mountain" by Zora Neale Hurston, is a re-telling of the story of Moses. Moses, we remember, was called by God to lead the oppressed Hebrew people from their enslavement in Egypt. In our services this month, we will be looking at the Bible accounts of some of the events that occurred with Moses and the Israelites during their wilderness journey to liberation.

Black History Month
Book Discussion Group



Tuesdays, February 11, 18, and 25 6:00pm
ZOOM link will be provided

READING SCHEDULE
For Feb 11 read chapters 1-13
For Feb 18 read chapters 14-27
For Feb 25 read chapters 28-40

Hymn Festival at St. Mark's Lutheran Church of San Francisco, Saturday, March 1st at 4pm

This event is part of the celebrations commemorating the 175th anniversary of the formation of St. Mark's in 1849 and 130 years worshiping in the beautiful building, consecrated in 1895.

David Cherwien, Director Emeritus of the National Lutheran Choir, will lead in beloved hymns and an open choir from congregations around the San Francisco Bay Area will sing a selection of choral works. An organ work commissioned to celebrate St. Mark's anniversary will be premiered at the Hymn Festival as well.

No tickets are required to attend the Hymn Festival. There will be an at-will donation with the proceeds directed to the capital campaign funding the restoration of the exterior of the church building. St. Mark's is located at 1111 O'Farrell Street. There is off-street parking available.

Other Upcoming Events:

Bagged Lunches, March 2nd: We will continue with our sack lunch ministry with SF Night Ministry. Six times a year we create 125 sack lunches for our unhoused neighbors in San Francisco.

Interfaith Winter Shelter Walk, April 6th at Noon: A team from Bethany plans to participate once again in the WinterFaith Shelter Walk, a 4.5 mile charity trek around Lake Merced. Help raise funds for this critical program which provides shelter and meals for up to 80 homeless San Franciscans nightly during the most cold and rainy winter months.

BUDGET UPDATE

by Steve Wereb, Treasurer

Our budget for the year is $307,067 in donations and rental income, and $313,538 in expenses, and an increase to our cash reserves for future repairs of $6,000 which would result in a deficit of -$12,471. We have made substantial progress versus the beginning of 2024 with donations and income up, operating expenses down, and a modest surplus in 2024 versus an expected large shortfall. In January, we had total income of $25,203 from donations and rent, and total expenses of $21,562.

Also included below is giving information. The distribution of pledges is shown below. Overall, our total average pledge amount is $5,932 per person. We have 13 people giving between $1 and $6,000, 3 people giving between $6,001 and $9,999, and we have 4 people giving over $10,000. Total donations through January have been $9,756 across 25 people (for both pledgers and non-pledging donors) which results in an average gift of $390 person. For perspective, to have a balanced budget and eliminate our budgeted deficit of -$12,471, we would need another 2 people giving $6,236. Our available cash on January 31st was $126,241.

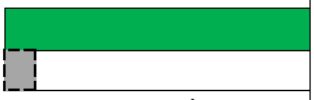
We are very thankful to all our financial donors who provide the means to sustain Bethany and fund our staff and programs, and support our community. Bethany would not exist without your financial commitment and making Bethany a priority.

With gratitude, Steve Wereb, Treasurer

Summary of Donations

Expected Giving for 2025 ==> $137,270

Actual Giving thru 1/31/25 ==> $9,756



Left to Go ==>$127,514

Actual vs. Budget	Actual 2025	Budget for 2025	Actual vs. Budget
Donations	$ 9,756	$ 137,270	$ (127,514)
Rent	15,447	169,797	(154,350)
›me	25,203	307,067	(281,864)
Staff & Programs	8,524	139,417	(130,893)
Tithe	1,500	30,707	(29,207)
Building Costs	11,538	117,774	(106,236)
Building Repairs	-	25,640	(25,640)
Total Operating Costs	21,562	313,538	(291,976)
Increase to Reserves	-	(6,000)	6,000
Net Result	**$ 3,641**	**$ (12,471)**	**$ 16,112**

Cash Balances at 1/31/25	
Operating Cash	$ 126,241
Trustee Cash Reserves	$ 40,175
Memorials	$ 11,689

Distribution of Pledges			
Gift Amount	Number of Households	Pledge Amount	%
$1 to $2,500	9	$ 12,744	11%
$2,501 to $6,000	4	$ 18,400	16%
$6,001 to $9,999	3	$ 23,500	20%
$10,000 & Above	4	$ 64,000	54%
Total	20	$ 118,644	100%
Average/person		$ 5,932	

YTD Donations Received		%
YTD pledges received	$ 6,487	66%
YTD other donations	$ 3,269	34%
Total donations	$ 9,756	100%
Total number of givers	25	
Average gift/giver	$ 390	

community celebration board

You are always welcome to use this space for sharing shout-outs of thank you to others and for any community celebrations.

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**

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

8: Harold Spiva
22: Dylan Keleman