CROSSROADS

BETHANY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH NEWSLETTER MAY 2025

from the pastor...

Something very obvious happens every spring -- rebirth, renewal, refreshment. Warmer weather brings us outside more. Longer stretches of daylight encourage us to be active longer. This is a season that seems to encourage us to action. We emerge with the world from under the blanket of winter out into the activity of spring.

I'm thinking of John Wesley, who on May 24, 1738, attended a Bible study with a group of Moravians who he had connected with during his time in America. According to his journal, he didn't want to attend. He had recently returned from America, where he had spent some time teaching and organizing in Georgia and was experiencing feelings of doubt about his call to Christian faith and ministry. I think he may have felt under a cloud. Yet, something compelled him to attend. It was there, while someone was reading from Martin Luther's Preface to the Epistle to the Romans, that he felt that his heart was "strangely warmed" – a feeling that helped him emerge from under the cloud that had been plaguing him.

Last week, on May 1st the Council of Bishops of the United Methodist Church released a new vision statement:

"The United Methodist Church forms disciples of Jesus Christ who, empowered by the Holy Spirit, ***love boldly****,* ***serve joyfully****, and* ***lead courageously*** *in local communities and worldwide connections.*

The statement comes to us a year after a momentous General Conference set the denomination on a new path after years of infighting. In other words, the Bishops are attempting to lead us out from under the blanket of the past into a fresh new vision.

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COMING SOON

May 11	Bagged Lunches
May 28	Book Study Starts *"Warmth of Other Suns"*
June 6	Ring Out Danger Labyrinth Walk

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Perhaps spring is call each of us (individually and as a community) to examine what is weighing us down. What are the things in our lives that prevent us from experiencing the refreshment of spring? How can you (we!) open up to the Holy Spirit's being all that God created us to be?

You can read more about the vision statement here:
https://www.umnews.org/en/news/bishops-unveil-vision-for-united-methodist-church

Blessings, Pastor Rob

Pastor Rob will be on vacation May 12 - 20. In the event of a pastoral emergency, please contact Rev Staci Current at pastorstaci@umcpeace.org

A PEEK AT RECENT ACTIVITIES IN THE BETHANY COMMUNITY!

PHOTO GALLERY

EASTER SUNDAY

The Bethany Community celebrated Easter Sunday on April 20th.

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PHOTO GALLERY

EASTER SUNDAY CONTINUED

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PHOTO GALLERY

BIBLES DEDICATION

On Sunday, April 27th, we dedicated new bibles.

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PROTEST IN THE CASTRO

On Saturday, April 26th, Pastor Rob and Cathy participated in a Castro protest calling for the return of Andry Hernandez Romero.

MAY THE "FOURTH" BE WITH YOU

On Sunday, May 4th, we celebrated worship with a Star Wars theme. And we reflected:
"The Force will be with you, always. We know our God is guiding us through the challenges of life."

BUDGET UPDATE

by Steve Wereb, Treasurer

Through April, we received $41,428 in donations and $60,231 in rental income for a total of $101,659. Our expenses through April were $94,260 and we increased our Reserves by $1,500. Our budget for the year is $307,067 in donations and rental income, and $313,538 in expenses along with an increase to our Reserves of $6,000 which would result in a deficit of -$12,471 and be funded from our cash balance.

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 April have been $41,428 across 43 people (for both pledgers and non-pledging donors) which results in an average gift of $963 person. For perspective, to have a balanced budget and eliminate our budget deficit of -$12,471, we would need another 3 people giving $4,200. Our available cash on April 30th is $127,361.

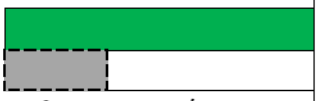
We are very thankful to all our financial donors who provide the means to sustain Bethany and fund our staff and programs and support our community. Bethany would not exist without your financial commitment and making Bethany a priority.

With Gratitude, Steve Wereb, Treasurer

Summary of Donations

Expected Giving for 2025 ==> $137,270

Actual Giving thru 4/30/25 ==> $41,428



Left to Go ==>$95,842

Actual vs. Budget	**Actuals thru 4/30/25**	**Budget for 2025**	**Actual vs. Budget**
Donations	$ 41,428	$ 137,270	$ (95,842)
Rent	60,231	169,797	(109,566)
Total Income	101,659	307,067	(205,408)
Staff & Programs	42,143	139,417	(97,274)
Tithe	6,000	30,707	(24,707)
Building Costs	45,577	117,774	(72,197)
Building Repairs	540	25,640	(25,100)
Total Operating Costs	94,260	313,538	(219,278)
			-
Increase to Reserves	(1,500)	(6,000)	4,500
Net Result	**$ 5,899**	**$ (12,471)**	**$ 18,370**

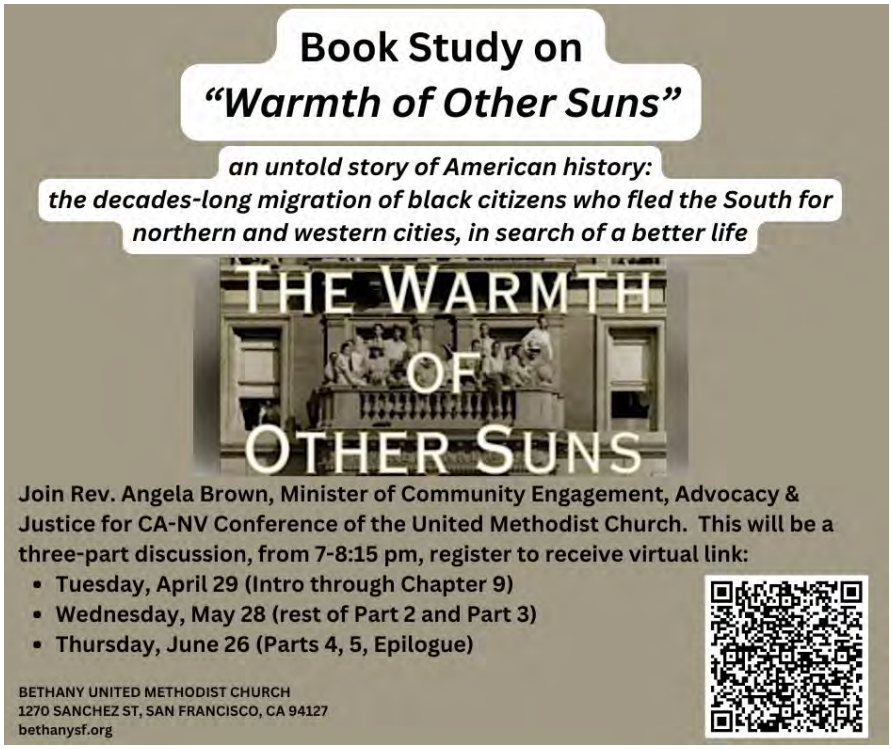
Cash Balances at 4/30/25	
Operating Cash	$ 127,361
Trustee Cash Reserves	$ 41,693
Memorials	$ 11,715

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	$ 33,446	81%
YTD other donations	$ 7,982	19%
Total donations	$ 41,428	100%
Total number of givers	43	
Average gift/giver	$ 963	

UPCOMING EVENTS

Bagged Lunches, Sunday, May 11th @Noon:
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.



Book Study: *"Warmth of Other Suns"* – Join our recently retired Cal-Nevada Minister of Community Engagement, Advocacy & Justice, San Francisco, Rev. Angela Brown, JD, for a three-part virtual book study / discussion group of Isabel Wilkerson's award-winning *"The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration."*

- April 29th
- **May 28th**
- June 26th

from 7-8:15 pm

Scan the QR Code to register

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UPCOMING EVENTS

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June 6th @ 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.

Join us for a service of music and movement, Friday, June 6th 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.

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

community celebration board

Congratulations to Carole Noonan upon being recognized for her 21 years of volunteer service to Doelger Senior Center in Daly City!

Thanks to Walt Yu-Martzen and Thomas MacBurney IV for clearing the Prayer Wall for Easter prayers. Appreciation goes to Carol Heard, a Noe Valley neighbor, who contributes prayer strips.

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**

MAY BIRTHDAYS

2: Camille Personius
4: Steve Wereb
10: Matt Keleman
19: Jeannette LaFors
23: Carole Noonan
Gloria Soliz
29: Lukas Liawidjaja