CROSSROADS

BETHANY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH NEWSLETTER JUNE 2025

from the pastor...

Recently a friend of mine received his PhD in Nursing. I wanted to find him a good and meaningful gift. After searching the internet for a long time and focusing on finding something nurse related, it hit me that after a long course of study in the field of Nursing, and now employed in the field of Nursing, perhaps the best gift would be something that would offer a peek outside of the field of Nursing, got him a subscription to the New Yorker.

Perhaps you remember that I mentioned during the sermon on Sunday (June 15) how much I appreciate (and highly recommend signing up to receive her daily "Letters From an American" at https://heathercoxrichardson.substack.com/) the work of historian Heather Cox Richardson, who writes a daily report on the happenings of the day and quite frequently places the day's events within the context of history - she is a historian after all.

It's important to expand our view beyond our immediate spaces. Another recommendation for you is Diana Butler Bass' weekly blog called, The Cottage. You can find and subscribe here: https://dianabutlerbass.com/the-cottage/). She shared this week a reflection on two Rembrandt paintings hanging side by side at the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam. One is of the prophet, Jeremiah, entitled *Jeremiah Lamenting the Destruction of Jerusalem*. The second, entitled *Old Woman Reading, Probably the Prophetess Anna*. Butler Bass contemplates on the different perspectives of these two biblical figures. In contrast to Jeremiah's distress she sees in Anna hope. Remember Anna? She spends her days and nights in the temple awaiting the messiah and then meets him when Mary and Joseph bring Jesus to the Temple (Luke 2:36-38). She casts her view outside of herself and engages with the busy world of the temple. She exposes herself to the varied cultures and backgrounds of the people there. Perhaps she listens in on the conversations of the pilgrims - hearing what they have seen and heard in their travels and all that she encounters combine within her causing her to see beyond her widowhood and beyond the oppression from Rome to feel hopeful. In other words, she pays attention. I recommend we all do likewise.

Blessings,
Pastor Rob

COMING SOON

June 20 - Dinner & Drag

July 4 - Ring Out Danger

July 13 - Bagged Lunches

August 1 - Labyrinth Walk

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June Pride Events

During our June Sunday worship services, LGBTQ+ members of our community will be sharing their sacred stories – how being a member of a loving church community and being connected to God, contributed to their well-being.

And then, on Friday, June 20th, it's time for *"Dinner and Drag!"* We'll be serving dinner at 6:30 pm and having at Drag Show at 7 pm. Come celebrate Pride at Bethany.

ADDITIONAL UPCOMING EVENTS

July 4th @ 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.

Bagged Lunches, Sunday, July 13th @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.

Join us for a service of music and movement, Friday, August 1st 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.

(cont'd on next page)

ADDITIONAL UPCOMING EVENTS

(cont'd from previous page)

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

No More Zoom Office Hours

If you'd like to set up a time to meet with Pastor Sadie in June, please email or text Pastor Sadie. She would love to connect with as many people as possible if needed.

Book Study - *"Warmth of the Other Suns "*

Rev. Angela Brown led a lively three-part discussion about Isabel Wilkerson's book, *The Warmth of Other Suns* which concluded on June 12th. This photo includes nine of the dozen who participated in the series. Thank you, Angela, for your wonderful leadership unpacking such a powerful text about The Great Migration! I **highly** recommend this book! And for that matter, any book that Angela is willing to facilitate a discussion about. Blessings – Jeannette LaFors

PHOTO GALLERY

A PEEK AT RECENT ACTIVITIES IN THE BETHANY COMMUNITY!

PENTECOST & CHILI COOK-OFF

Bethany celebrated Pentecost Sunday on June 8th and also held our first annual "Tongue of Fire" chili cook-off. Lizzy Hull-Barnes offered a liturgical dance during our opening hymn. Winners of the chili cook-off included Pastor Rob with 1st prize and Lizzy & Lawson with 2nd prize.

JUNE PRIDE ALTAR

Bethany's June altar has been decorated for Pride.

BUDGET UPDATE

by Steve Wereb, Treasurer

Through May, we received $49,530 in donations and $73,906 in rental income for a total of $123,436. Our expenses through May were $108,584 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.

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 May were $49,530 across 44 people (for both pledgers and non-pledging donors) which results in an average gift of $1,126 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 May 31st was $130,076.

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 5/31/25 ==> $49,530

Left to Go ==>$87,740

Actual vs. Budget	Actuals thru 5/31/25	Budget for 2025	Actual vs. Budget
Donations	$ 49,530	$ 137,270	$ (87,740)
Rent	73,906	169,797	(95,891)
Total Income	123,436	307,067	(183,631)
Staff & Programs	52,332	139,417	(87,085)
Tithe	7,500	30,707	(23,207)
Building Costs	48,212	117,774	(69,562)
Building Repairs	540	25,640	(25,100)
Total Operating Costs	108,584	313,538	(204,954)
			-
Increase to Reserves	(1,500)	(6,000)	4,500
Net Result	**$ 13,352**	**$ (12,471)**	**$ 25,823**

Cash Balances at 5/31/25	
Operating Cash	$ 130,076
Trustee Cash Reserves	$ 41,697
Memorials	$ 11,721

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	$ 40,988	83%
YTD other donations	$ 8,542	17%
Total donations	$ 49,530	100%
Total number of givers	44	
Average gift/giver	$ 1,126	

community celebration board

Bethany community in Florence, Italy, June 5th
Michael & Van, and Steve & Kevin happened to be in Florence, Italy on the same day! Bethany friendships were celebrated over a drink.

Congrats Dylan!
Dylan LaFors Kelemen graduated on June 8th from Williams College in Massachusetts with a double major in history and environmental studies, and completed his studies with a presentation of his senior thesis entitled, "'*Reshaping Chilean History: Exilic Narratives and Identity in the National Memory Box.*" Lots of proud family members were there to cheer him and his classmates on, including both sets of grandparents. Dylan starts his first full-time job as a policy specialist in Washington, DC and is looking forward to this next life chapter.

Pride Reflection
Carole's daughter gave us tickets to *A Beautiful Noise: A Neil Diamond Musical*. The tickets were for a matinée at the Golden Gate Theatre on the same day as the "No Kings" demonstration. Expecting a large showing for the demonstration and having mobility issues, Carole and I were very anxious about attending. The show was a fantastic musical with a meaningful transforming story! As we waited to enter the theater seating, we talked to an older couple from Benicia. He asked if Carole and I were sisters or long time friends. Carole said, "We are partners." "Oh!" he said. Turns out this straight couple has three family queer members - a grandchild who identifies as bi, another family member who asked to be referred to as 'they/them,' and another who is in transition." We in the queer community are always coming out. When we come out, it is not just for ourselves. - Gloria Soliz

Thanks to Carol Heard (a Noe Valley resident, quilter, & ukulele player), who not only provides prayer strips but helped cleared off the Prayer Wall for Pride Month. Thanks to Carol's husband also who drops off the prayer strip on his prayer strips.

And at the Prayer Wall: *"Why are you cutting off our wishes?" said the preschool girl while I was clearing off the Prayer Wall. "I'm making room for more wishes." I said. "Oh. Could I take one home?" she said reaching for a strip I pulled off. "Of course you can." I said. "Me too?" asked another girl. Our Prayer Wall is meaningful to children as well as adult. Yes, our prayers are often deeply desired wishes.*

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**

JUNE BIRTHDAYS

16: Michael Eaton

21: Elena Fuentes-Afflick

27: Bailey Armstrong