CROSSROADS

BETHANY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH NEWSLETTER AUGUST 2025

from the pastor...

I thought for this month's article I would offer some detail about the special constitutional amendments that we voted on at **Annual Conference** this year. We, along with every annual conference, voted to ratify four sets of constitutional amendments which have been approved by at least a 2/3 majority of delegates to the 2024 General Conference.

Ballot 1 covers all of the amendments related to regionalization. Ballot 2 addresses two changes made to Paragraph 4, adding "gender" and "ability" to the list of categories that cannot be used to exclude persons from membership in The United Methodist Church. Ballot 3 is for a new Article V, which places the denomination's commitment to the eradication of the sin of racism in all its forms into the constitution. Ballot 4 involves several changes to Paragraph 35 intended to provide a uniform basis for eligibility for clergy to vote for clergy delegates to the General Conference and jurisdictional or central conferences. Further information about each of these items is available here: **https://www.resourceumc.org/en/churchwide/general-conference-2020/legislation/amendments-to-united-methodist-constitution?_gl=1*jysk7z*_gcl_au*MTM4MDEzMjA0OS4xNzU0OTQ1NjA2**

The results of these ballots was not announced at the time of the vote. Instead, the voting results were sent to the Council of Bishops. The Council will tally and announce the aggregate results of each ballot at their fall meeting. This process ensures that all annual conference members have the time to vote without being influenced by the results of votes in previous annual conferences.

(cont'd on next page)

IN THIS ISSUE

- Pastoral Reflection
- Photo Gallery
- Annual Conference Report
- Budget Update
- Upcoming Café Bethany
- Upcoming Events
- Community Celebration Board
- Birthdays

COMING SOON

Sept 5	Ring Out Danger
Sept 14	Bagged Lunches
Sept 20	Sound Bath
Sept 21	Café Bethany
Oct 3	Ring Out Danger
	Labyrinth Service

(cont'd from previous page)

Each ballot item will be ratified if at least 2/3 of the votes cast by all annual conferences worldwide approve its ratification. Ratified constitutional amendments go into immediate effect along with other legislation passed by the general conference that depended on the passage of the relevant amendments.

Shirley Perkins served as your lay representative and has prepared a report printed elsewhere in this newsletter.

Blessings, Pastor Rob

PHOTO GALLERY

A PEEK AT RECENT ACTIVITIES IN THE BETHANY COMMUNITY!

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY PASTOR ROB!

On July 6th, we celebrated Pastor Rob Herrmann's 1 year anniversary of being appointed to Bethany.

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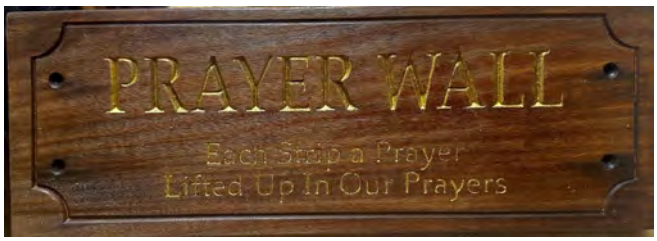
PHOTO GALLERY

PASTOR ROB 1 YEAR ANNIVERSARY-CONTINUED

PRAYER WALL REFURBISHED

Bethany's Prayer Wall, which is heavily used by the neighborhood, was in need of some refurbishment as the sign was faded and the hanging screen had some damage. Many thanks to George Lipp for the restoration!



Annual Conference Update

by Shirley Perkins

Thank you for the opportunity to represent you at the California/Nevada Annual Conference in Sacramento in June. The theme of the Conference was **"Thriving in Community"** and we were a community indeed, from my first night dinner with Pastor Rob and his pastor friends to my last night dinner with Rev. Dr. Tony Ubalde and his wife Carol who served at Bethany over 50 years ago. I was able to spend time with Rev. Sadie Stone again and chat with Rev. Susan Foster and Rev. Carolyn Talmadge who, like Pastor Rob, are both former Bethany members who have gone on to serve as clergy. Many of us from Reconciling Churches came together at the Reconciling Ministries luncheon.

On a larger scale, we gathered together every morning for inspiring worship and song. We celebrated the ordination of pastors and lay ministers and honored retirees, among them our own Rev. Angela Brown. And we honored the lives of those who have passed on.

There were, of course, reports and business items before us, including the approval of the 2026 budget and approving both lay and clergy members to numerous conference committees. The main item of business was voting on the constitutional amendments which were approved at General Conference last year. Pastor Rob is addressing this in another part of this newsletter.

Other issues ranged from environmental to social/political. Among them:

1. It was voted that all Conference boards and agencies investment portfolios be fossil free by 2026 Annual Conference.

2. It was voted that the Conference join the global boycott of Chevron Corp. and divest its pension funds in Chevron.

3. It was recommended that every participant in every congregation spend at least 10 minutes a day in mindful connection with Creation - outdoors if possible.

4. It was voted that the Conference make a commitment to creation care and climate justice.

5. It was voted that the Conference oppose annexation of Palestinian land on the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem and support the establishment of a Palestinian State.

6. It was voted to establish a task force to study the rise of White Christian Nationalism.

In these trying times, I am so grateful for both our larger and smaller church community.

Shirley

BUDGET UPDATE

by Steve Wereb, Treasurer

Through July, we received $70,241 in donations and $105,749 in rental income for a total of $175,990. **Our pledge payments are running behind by about $10,000. If possible, it would be helpful if everyone could be current on pledge payments.** Our expenses through July were $159,525. However, we have only made $1,118 in repairs versus the annual repair budget of $25,640. We have also 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 July have been $70,241 across 46 people (for both pledgers and non-pledging donors) which results in an average gift of $1,527 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 July 31st is $132,522.

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 7/31/25 ==> $70,241

Left to Go ==>$67,029

Actual vs. Budget	**Actuals thru 7/31/25**	**Budget for 2025**	**Actual vs. Budget**
Donations	$ 70,241	$ 137,270	$ (67,029)
Rent	105,749	169,797	(64,048)
Total Income	175,990	307,067	(131,077)
Staff & Programs	74,227	139,417	(65,190)
Tithe	10,500	30,707	(20,207)
Building Costs	73,680	117,774	(44,094)
Building Repairs	1,118	25,640	(24,522)
Total Operating Costs	159,525	313,538	(154,013)
			-
Increase to Reserves	(1,500)	(6,000)	4,500
Net Result	**$ 14,965**	**$ (12,471)**	**$ 27,436**

Cash Balances at 7/31/25	
Operating Cash	$ 132,522
Trustee Cash Reserves	$ 41,760
Memorials	$ 11,734

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	$ 60,222	86%
YTD other donations	$ 10,019	14%
Total donations	$ 70,241	100%
Total number of givers	46	
Average gift/giver	$ 1,527	

Upcoming Café Bethany

by Cathy Personius

Bethany's next Cafe Bethany, on Sept. 21, will feature Matt Alexander from Faith in Action's San Francisco chapter speaking about their work in supporting migrant families. Come learn about the experiences of families who chose SF as their destination because they heard it was a sanctuary city. Hear how they have organized to advocate for improved city services, including participating in a recent campaign to stop evictions from family shelters and add $30 million in housing subsidies to the city budget. They will also bring information on how immigration enforcement activities are affecting immigrant families and what we can do to support the immigrant community.

Faith in Action's goal is to develop leadership among people impacted by poverty and oppression. We are invited to participate with other faith and community organizations in supporting the work of their leaders.

After our Cafe Bethany with Faith in Action, you are invited to participate in a study, "Called to Journey, Called to Welcome", prepared by the Board of Church and Society of the United Methodist church. This study looks at various biblical passages on immigration to develop a theological understanding of the role of immigrants in a just society along with case studies of how immigration policies affect people in the US currently and discussion of how the church might respond. The study will be conducted over 5-6 weeks by Zoom at a time determined by the participants. If you are interested in the study, contact Cathy Personius at **cathy.personius@gmail.com**

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sept. 5th @ 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, Sept. 14th @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.

Sound Bath, Saturday, Sept. 20th @10 am:
Join us for another Sound Bath presented by Urban Practitioner, Laneka Leatutufu.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

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Join us for a service of music and movement, Friday, Oct. 3rd 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 Gloria Soliz & Carole Noonan who celebrated their 7-year holy union on July 29th.

Congrats & blessings to Liam O'Connor as heads off to college at USC in LA and majors in sports journalism, and to Carmela Saguar also heading off to college at Sarah Lawrence.

CONTACT US

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

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FB **@bethanyumcsf** and IG **@bethany_umc_sf**

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

9: Kate Armstrong
11: Meredith Laird
24: Lizzy Hull Barnes
28: Paula Thompson