Faith in Christ gives us grace to love and serve in gratitude.

THE BETHEL

Bell Tower

January 2015

WORSHIP & MUSIC

“Worship the Lord with gladness; come into his presence with singing.” Psalm 100:2

FROM THE PASTOR

Building Bethel

Unless the LORD builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. Unless the LORD guards the city, the guard keeps watch in vain.

~ Psalm 127:1

Over the last few months, I have heard many thoughts, challenges, reflections, and thanksgiving related to Bethel and our future. In 2014, we celebrated our 125th anniversary, which became a wonderful time to reflect and give thanks for the many people who served to make Bethel what it is today. But we can’t mark such a significant anniversary and not be challenged to look toward the future. Somewhere along the line, it became clear that Bethel’s theme for 2015 should be “Building Bethel: Moving Forward with God’s Mission.”

Of course, there are many questions about this theme: Why “Building Bethel”? How will we Build Bethel? How will we know whether we’ve been successful?

Remember, the church without the people is just a building. So, when we talk about “Building Bethel,” we’re not just talking about building the physical plant of the church or building the institution of the church – we’re talking about building the people who make up the Church. Our call as Christian disciples is to grow deeper in our faith, deeper in our relationship with God, deeper in our trust. For many churches, the goal is “membership.” In other words, people are invited and welcomed into the church and, once they become members, our job as a congregation is done and the new members can just fend for themselves. As we “Build Bethel,” we realize that our responsibility to the people who worship with and are a part of us doesn’t begin or end with membership. Becoming more deeply engaged in the mission of God as we use the gifts God has given us as we minister alongside our neighbors (both those inside and outside the congregation) … that’s how we grow, and that’s how we move forward into an unknown and uncertain future.
Mission Council 2015

Vanessa Blaydes
Rod Burr
Jim Carter
Rod DeSmet, Treasurer
Debbie Donahue, Secretary
Peter Grasis, President
Jim Lowell, Vice President
Kathryn Orta
Eileen Roberts
Mara Schuettler
Larry Shankles

Pastoral Acts for November
Baptisms
11/02/2014 Jasper Pi Semrau, son of Jelena and Jared Semrau.

(Please submit all articles to the church office or email to: belltower@bethelmanassas.org)

PASTOR JEFF WILSON, Senior Pastor
ELIZABETH BURNSIDE, Director of Youth & Family Ministries
DEBBIE MULLINAX, Administrative Assistant
VACANT, Director of Music Ministries
PEGGY SCHILPP, Membership Information Specialist
PETER GRASIS, Council President*

CHARLENE SHEPARD, Preschool Director
JEANNE ENDRIKAT, Newsletter Editor**
SARA JENS, Newsletter Layout**
SHIRLEY SAYLOR, Newsletter Mailing**
FRANK COSTANZA, Webmaster**

* elected
**volunteer

The Bethel Bell Tower is a monthly publication of this congregation.
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WORSHIP & MUSIC
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DEFINING MISSION
Bethel makes disciples of Jesus Christ in our community using our God-given gifts.
Welcome to a New Year

On behalf of the Mission Council, I welcome each of you to a new year with our Bethel family. It’s on to lucky number 126!

I would like to extend Bethel’s thanks to outgoing President Jim Anderson for his leadership in steering us through Bethel’s 125th year. Jim has a lot to show for his tenure: among other things, these include the adoption of Bethel’s Long Range Plan, the acquisition and installation of the pipe organ, and Bethel’s 125th Anniversary celebration. Thank you, Jim, for your steady leadership. Also finishing his Mission Council term is Jim Zech, and Lisa Grill finished her term as Secretary; you both will be sorely missed.

At the Annual Congregational Meeting in November, three new Mission Council members were elected: Eileen Roberts, Jim Lowell and Kathryn Orta. Debbie Donahue was elected Secretary and Rod DeSmet was re-elected Treasurer. They will join the current Mission Council Members: Jim Carter, Larry Shankles, Mara Schuettler, Vanessa Blaydes, Rod Burr, and Peter Grasis. At the December 9th Mission Council meeting, Peter Grasis was elected President and Jim Lowell Vice-President. Please support your Mission Council and keep them in your prayers as they lead Bethel in this New Year.

There is much to look forward to in the coming year, and many opportunities for you to find a place and contribute your talents. As you thumb through the weekly bulletin, opportunities for fellowship and service, large and small, abound. Thus, Bethel is continuing with its implementation of the Long Range Plan, planting the seeds to yield fruit for years to come. Also, I have noticed how active the women’s ministry has become. And our youth programs are fun and well attended. Indeed, this year, a group of Bethel youth will travel to Detroit. They will serve in the local community, and then attend the National Youth Gathering.

As we begin this New Year, I encourage you to get involved. Be an active part of the Bethel community; be a part of the Bethel family.

Happy New Year.

Peter Grasis
We need to be reminded periodically that learning in the church extends beyond our confirmation classes. The pursuit of adult education in the church presents us with the opportunity to develop and enrich our faith and understanding of the gospel. The main reason for lifelong learning resides in the gospel itself. The gospel calls Christians to learn and to teach. The Word, as we learned in our earliest studies, is proclaimed in preaching and in the sacraments. Learning is a response to hearing the Word, and we should continually hear the Word to sustain our faith.

In today's post-Christendom society, a theological foundation in the gospel is essential for the full breadth of Christian education. We will look at several themes of lifelong learning.

**Baptism**
Baptism calls us to life in this world, a life of sacrificial service to our neighbor, ministering to the world and serving God wherever we are called to be. The baptized need to learn of God’s work in Christ, the privileges and responsibilities of the people of God and the life of service to which we are called. Learning is incumbent upon all who are baptized.

**Priesthood of All Believers**
Lifelong learning is also embedded in our understanding of our priesthood, part of Luther’s teaching. We need to learn the Word, reflect upon it, and then prepare to communicate it effectively to others. Fulfilling the role of priest through interceding for others and serving others requires learning about prayer and service. We are called upon to minister; we should know why.

**Christian Vocation**
God has always called people to serve God and to serve their neighbors. He asks them to use the gifts He has given them. Justification by grace through faith means that all Christians have a vocation to speak the Word and serve their neighbors in daily relationships and stations of life. Most people have a variety of settings for their vocation in daily life: home, family, congregation, wider church, workplace or school, leisure, volunteer work and others.

**The Word of God**
The definitive written word is the Bible, which has its center in the gospel. This is the focal point for our study of God. An aspect of the theological foundation of lifelong learning is to consider the Word of God as God’s self-expression, self-impartation and self-revelation. The Word of God is an event by which God shows us who God is. The primary way in which God has spoken to us is in Jesus Christ. In the Gospel of John, Jesus Christ is manifested as the Word made flesh.

**Upper Story, Lower Story**
It is fitting to borrow from our study of ‘The Story’ that we pursued this last year. As Luther would put it, we live and serve in two kingdoms or as we studied, the upper story and the lower story. We need to understand the law-gospel distinction and how it applies to our current ministry.

*Rod Burr*
December was a magical time at the preschool. The children performed the annual Christmas Program for their families. They also had a great time decorating gingerbread houses at the class parties. The preschoolers had a surprise visitor (Santa) stop by to see them as well; we would like to thank Charlie Proctor for making this possible.

It is hard to believe, but it is almost time to begin registration for the 2015/2016 school year. Registration will begin on February 8 for church members, alumni, and current students; on February 22, it will be open to everyone. Registration forms should be available on the bulletin board next to the Church Nursery by the first of February.

Come Share Your Smile and be a Greeter at Bethel!

There is great joy in giving a smile and receiving one in return. We give smiles, handshakes and/or hugs to all who enter our doors as we greet them on their way to worship.

There will be a Potluck Breakfast on Saturday, January 10, 2015 at 9:30 AM for all those who wish to learn about and be a part of the Greeters’ Team. It's a time to get to know your fellow greeters and put a face to the name! Being a greeter at Bethel is an activity that is an integral part of all services as we formally welcome both the new and the not-so-new worshipers to our Worship Services. Greeters play a significant role in personally promoting Bethel Services and the various activities and opportunities Bethel has to offer. It's an opportunity to greet and get to know your fellow parishioners and visitors as we welcome them through our doors!

Please join us for fellowship, fun and a tasty breakfast!

E-mail me at: lucomignani@aol.com or call me at: 703-369-7420 to volunteer to be a greeter.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you!

Your Fellow Parishioner and Greeter Coordinator,

Lucille Comignani
Day of Service
Come to the St. Matthews Lutheran Church Day of Service in Lake Ridge on January 19 (MLK holiday) to make community and world quilts. People are needed to cut material, organize, iron, and sew. You do not need to be a quilt maker to participate.

Contact Jeanne Endrikat 703-361-3695 jeanne.endrikat@verizon.net to help.

Thank you, Bethel!
Thank you for being so generous in providing food for our community families to enjoy special gatherings on Thanksgiving and Christmas. However, the need does not end with 2014.

Please continue to bring any non-perishable foods throughout the year. In addition to food, other items needed are toilet tissue, dish detergent, hand soap and cleaning supplies. Large containers of powdered laundry detergent are needed. They will divided up into plastic bags and distributed to families.

Did you travel during the holidays? All of those small samples of shampoo, conditioner and lotions you pick up in your travels are perfect for use at the shelter. If you need additional information, please contact Grace Shultz.

Bethel Mission Council

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January Celebrations

**Birthdays**

01/01 Joy Weschler, Sophia Young  
01/02 Alexander Irvin, James Stevens  
01/03 Ken Morgan, Matthew Watson  
01/04 Hans Endrikat  
01/05 Blake Cooper, Ruby Dionne, Holly Donahue, Betty Mason  
01/07 Payton Balsis, Maxwell Mayes, Freda Whetstone  
01/08 Danielle Devere  
01/09 Dave Potts, Jean Riis  
01/10 Owen Duncanson, Jason Houtz  
01/11 Alexander Jang, Carol Krumm, Jacob Sellers  
01/12 Donna Flebbe  
01/13 Mason Balsis, Gerda Proctor, Jay Shaw  
01/14 Mike Burlovich, Ryan Kern, Jaime Ramos, Steven Rice  
01/15 Debra Bulick, Michael Cintron, Cindy Louey  
01/16 Maryann Lesnick, Emily Pineda  
01/17 Debra Clark, Sienna Duncanson, Maureen Schilpp, Maria Schuller  
01/18 Sara Jens  
01/19 Harry Clark, Pastor Jeff Wilson  
01/21 Scott Donahue, Madeline Miller, John Rice  
01/22 Tyler Kern  
01/23 Aiden Francis, Katie Lowell  
01/24 Lilly Mayes, Andrew Rodriquez  
01/25 Melody Encarnacion  
01/26 Amy Hickey, Bob Jacobs, Samantha Wood  
01/27 Kim Devine, Sheryl Straub, Jason Stubler  
01/28 Maya Garzon  
01/29 Chris Devine, Caroline Morgan, Andrew Riddoch

**Wedding Anniversaries**

01/06 Stephen and Diane Entremont  
01/12 Ken and Caroline Morgan  
01/12 Rob and Cheryl Scribner  
01/14 Kevin and Liz Selby  
01/17 Curtis and Janet Ziese  
01/19 Wesley and Michelle Blue  
01/19 Jeff and Debbie Mullinax  
01/22 Larry and Karen Shankles  
01/25 Bob and Pam Shon  
01/26 Gerry and Patsy Noll

**Special Anniversary:**

Gerry and Patsy Noll celebrate 52 years on January 26.

**MORE BIRTHDAYS**

01/30 Angelina Testa  
01/31 Carter Devine, James Dickson, Clara Lange, Mark Ventura

**Special Birthdays:**

Ruby Dionne turns 84 on January 5.  
Jean Riis turns 87 on January 9.  
Jay Shaw turns 84 on January 13.
Advent and Christmas at Bethel has been a reflective and joyous time but what I personally saw was an amazingly faithful church, obedient to the Word of God, loving, sacrificial, worshipful, joyful, generous, exemplary and evangelistic. Bethel is a remarkable church.

"The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ" 
Ephesians 4: 11-12

On my way to church on the 4th Sunday in Advent I thought about the number of people who would bring together the four Christmas Eve services and on Christmas Eve I saw the fruits of the love and labor of a minimum of some 90 people who so willingly gave time and service to God, church and community.

For all of you we give thanks. "Go Tell It On the Mountain" and during these next weeks thank anyone you see at Bethel for being part of this loving service to others.

"He made me a watchman
Upon the city wall,
And if I am a Christian,
I am the least of all.
Go, Tell It On The Mountain,
Over the hills and everywhere;
Go, Tell It On The Mountain
That Jesus Christ is born."

Connie Houtz,
Chair Worship and Music Ministry Team

Building Bethel Christmas Bazaar

We held the first annual Building Bethel dinner event on Saturday, December 6th, and it was a great success! Appetizers and dinner were provided by Chef George Richa; 13 direct sales vendors, over 40 silent auction items, and the fabulous Bethel-made crafts comprised the Christmas shopping court. Over 100 people attended the event. The decorations were wonderful, and the whole church looked beautiful. We raised over $5,000 for the LRP Facilities Task Force to benefit maintenance and enhancement of our church home, but most importantly – we had so much fun!

Plans are already underway for our second annual Building Bethel event, to be held in November of 2015. If you were unable to attend this year, you won’t want to miss next year’s event!
Faith in Christ gives us grace to love and serve in gratitude.

January 2015

“We declare to you what we have seen and heard so that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.” 1 John 1:3

Breakfast with Santa 2014

On Saturday, December 13th, ten youngsters from Bethel and a few of their friends came for a breakfast with Santa. The Moats and Oakes children, along with friends of the Oakes family, attended. Barbara Kuehni brought her grandkids. Santa talked with the kids as they finished breakfast and then assembled all for a reading of the “Twelve Days of Christmas.” Everyone had a good time and each child left with a candy cane and memories of a special occasion.
**YOUTH NEWS**

**Friday January 2, 7:00PM-Saturday January 3 8:00AM | HS Lock-In**

It’s an all-night game night. We’ll enjoy a fire pit down by the creek, play a lot of games including a Nerf Fight, set up gaming rooms, and play some good group games as well. There will be food, movies, and if you need to get some rest, a place for you to do that as well.

**Students, please bring:**
- Snacks & drinks for the evening
- Nerf supplies

**Adult & Parent helpers needed to**
- Assist Lisa Duncanson with breakfast (breakfast at 7:00 AM),
- Help for a few hours, stay the entire evening, or come in the morning to help clean, and
- Set up the projector & gaming consoles.

**Sunday January 18, 6:00-8:00PM | Pre-Trip Gathering for Youth Gathering**

All participants attending the gathering need to be at this meeting. We’ll do a few group challenges, games, eat some dinner, talk about our trip, and have lots of fun. We will meet at Bethel in the Fellowship Hall.

**Saturday February 21, 5:30-8:30PM | Spaghetti Dinner & Silent Auction**

Come bring your family and friends to enjoy the Annual High School Spaghetti Dinner. Dinner tickets are $8/adult, $4/kids, and children under 3 eat for free. This year we are pairing our Dinner with a Silent Auction. We will have a broad selection of items that appeal to all ages & interests. Tickets will be available for purchase beginning February 1st and may be purchased at the table in the narthex by calling Elizabeth Burnside at church or emailing at Elizabeth@bethelmanassas.org.

**Donations for the High School Youth Gathering Fundraiser Silent Auction**

*Help us make this auction a success by donating items to be sold at the auction!* Be it a piece of artwork, jewelry (hand-made or store bought), floral arrangements, gardening supplies, coffee or wine baskets, or a dessert-a-month club, everything is welcome. You can team up with another person or a family and offer tickets for a sporting event or concert, or offer a specific number of hours towards a service such as babysitting, lawn care/mowing etc, pet-sitting, etc. Please let us know what you are donating by completing a donation form. Forms are available outside Elizabeth Burnside’s office and on the cart in the narthex. Donations may be dropped off at the church office and to Elizabeth Burnside.

**Mark Your Calendar!**

**Saturday April 25, 7:00AM-1:00PM | Bethel Yard Sale**

Collection of Items – Friday April 17-Friday April 24

*Helpers of all ages needed!* We will need helpers the week before the sale to sort and price, and helpers the day of the sale to help sell items inside & outside, to help load items into vehicles, provide lunch for the Yard Sale volunteers, and clean up. Set-up will begin on Friday and resume Saturday at 6:00AM for bringing staged items to the front lawn. With enough helpers, clean-up should wrap up around 4:00PM. All proceeds benefit the 2015 Youth Gathering to Detroit.
FAMILY MINISTRY NEWS
Sign-up sheets are on the bulletin board across from the water fountain/nursery. Please contact Elizabeth Burnside if you would like to help with various events during the year.

Friday Play Together 1st and 3rd Friday’s, 9:30-11:00am.
Come play together with our youngest friends, ages birth through pre-school ages. While we recommend bringing those special items your babies may love, we have plenty of toys for the older kids. We will meet in the Fellowship Hall. No sign-up necessary.

WOMEN’S MINISTRY
Saturday January 10, 6:00-8:00PM | January Book Club
Our read for January is All the Light We Cannot See by Anthony Doer. We will meet at the Burnsides on Saturday January 10, 6:00-8:00PM. Bring your book and a dish to share. Please sign up in advance so we have a headcount. About the book club: This is an open book club, so please come as you are able. We meet three to four times a year, rotating leader and house each time we meet. Contact Elizabeth Burnside or Vicki Wilson.

Thursday January 22, 6:00-8:30PM | Women’s Ministry Dinner Gathering
Join us for dinner and a guest speaker, Kathleen Meier, the President of the Southern Women’s Organization. Dinner is Soup & Salad. Please sign up to bring a pot of soup, salad, dressing, bread, or dessert. Contact Megan Pomfret, Katie Lowell or Elizabeth Burnside.

Saturday January 31, 9:30AM-12:00PM | Bunco & Breakfast
If you've never played bunco, don't worry; it's a fun and easy-to-learn dice game. It's a great way to meet other members, to share delicious breakfast treats, and to get involved in the Women's Ministry! Contact Katie Lowell.

Mark your Calendars for February!
Wednesday February 25, 5:30-7:15PM | Women’s Ministry Hosts Lent Soup Supper
Women’s Ministry is hosting this first Lenten Soup Supper. Many helping hands are needed. Ladies are asked to help by coordinating paper products, cups & utensils, setting up tables and chairs, providing soups and/or breads, or cleaning up in the kitchen and fellowship hall.
Faith in Christ gives us grace to love and serve in gratitude.