

The Visitor

September 2018

The Newsletter for Bethany Lutheran Church
5303 Madison Avenue
Bethel Park, PA 15102
(412) 835-9221

To e-mail messages to the office: admin@blcbp.org



WORSHIP SERVICE EACH SUNDAY WITH HOLY COMMUNION WILL BE AT 11:15 A.M.

UPCOMING DATES TO REMEMBER AT BETHANY

(Look inside The Visitor for more information on each event)

LEMONADE ON THE LAWN

Sunday, September 2nd immediately following the Worship Service

EVANGELISM COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, September 6th at 7:00 P.M.

RALLY DAY!

BLESSING OF TEACHERS AND BACKPACKS

BE SURE TO BRING YOUR BACKPACKS!

Sunday, September 9th during the 11:15 A.M. Worship Service

BLCW GROUP MEETING

Tuesday, September 11th at 11:00 A.M.

WORSHIP AND MUSIC MEETING

Wednesday, September 12th at 6:00 P.M.

PARISH EDUCATION MEETING

Thursday, September 13th at 7:00 P.M.

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, September 20th at 7:00 P.M.

CARE AND SHARE MEETING

Tuesday, September 25th at 11:00 A.M.

COUNCIL MEETING

Thursday, September 27th at 7:00 P.M.

FAMILY PROMISE

Thursday, September 27th at 5:00 P.M.

LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD!

Choir practice is every Wednesday, at 7:00 P.M.

Please join us!!!



Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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Sackcloth and Ashes – A Response to the Grand Jury Report August 15, 2018

“Look and see if there is any sorrow like my sorrow.”
Lamentations 1:12

On Tuesday afternoon, the Grand Jury Report of clergy sexual abuse in the Catholic Church in Pennsylvania was made public. As I began to read it, I felt what must be the experience of standing in the morgue, having the sheet lifted off a body broken by violence so that the family might identify it. “Yes, that is our brother. Yes, that is our sister,” the family says. And everyone is heartbroken.

The report is a catalog of violence done to children and violence done to the Church. The children are family to us, and the Church is family to us, and we are deeply and profoundly grieved. As Jeremiah cried out over the devastation of Jerusalem, “Look and see if there is any sorrow like my sorrow.”

We sit in sackcloth and ashes today, as God’s people have long done when faced with wrongs they cannot make right, with grief that is inconsolable, when seeking to demonstrate a profound need to repent. Our family has been violated, and we are destroyed.

The Bible is shot through with lament. The prophet Habakkuk asks, “O Lord, how long shall I cry for help and you will not listen? Or cry to you ‘Violence’ and you will not save?” (Habakkuk 1:2) Psalm 74 agonizes, “Your foes have roared within your holy place,” (v. 4) and pleads, “do not forget the life of your poor forever.” (v. 19)

But these same passages always include hope. Lament remembers the faithfulness of God in ages past and asks for right relationships to be our life today as well. And there is hope today, even in the wake of the grand jury report.

Today’s hope includes the Church’s renewed pledge to victims, “We will listen.” And it includes the clear warning to abusers, “We will not tolerate.” In that spirit of hope, please receive this letter as an open door. If the grand jury report has crushed your spirit, call me; let’s talk about that together. If you have experienced abuse within the Church, call me; I will listen. We will lament together, and together we will pray to the Lord, “Restore us, O Lord God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved.” (Psalm 80:19)

With you in Christ,
+Kurt



Sackcloth and Ashes

September 2018 Newsletter Article

I know the calendar says it is September – but what happened to the summer months?

What happened?! I can tell you:

- Seven churches had VBS – Have trailer will travel
- Pastor Beth retired – Look out Erie – here she comes
- Vicar Brenda experienced CPE and began her internship – Look out PLUM, here she comes
- Pastor Jocelyn Johnston joins our ranks – Don't worry – she will get used to us
- The annual PLUM picnic – Tie Dye for all
- **Pastor John Took a Vacation!!!** – and PLUM didn't fall apart while he was gone
- Pastor Paul visited his former congregation in Chicago – and he came back!
- Pastor Liz was the Chaplain for the Synod Assembly – and lived thru the whole thing!
- Pastor Melba took a two-week vacation to the beach – and she CAME BACK!

And many of you went to your camp grounds, vacations, stayed home, or however you got to spend the lazy days of summer. Now it is time to regroup, get the kids back into school (thank goodness) and plan for the fall and winter activities and worship for your congregation.

I pray you will take a moment to thank God for the time of rest and relaxation that you have experienced during the summer. We do not spend enough time on our knees; we do not spend enough time in prayer; we do not spend enough time listening to our Lord and Savior. We spend too much time worrying; we spend too much time complaining; and we spend too much time away from God. Let's work on that this fall. One way to begin that work is to get into our Narrative Lectionary.

I am looking forward to using the Narrative Lectionary for the next four years. The stories we will learn are wonderful and so important for us to hear and know. It will be a relief to have new readings to preach. We will experience God in a new and wonderful way. And yes, we MIGHT even learn new music! Hard to believe that one, huh?

I also pray that each of you realize just how much your pastors love the work they do and how much they need rest and relaxation also. I realized, after returning home from vacation, that I enjoy my vocation so much and I am so happy when I am spending time in that vocation. I will confess that before I left for vacation, if someone had said VBS to me one more time, I might have gotten ill. But then, after vacation, I watched the children at SAL and RLC (the last two VBS churches) and realized just how important VBS is to the kids in our lives and how easily they love God and believe in the Trinity. No questions asked. They just DO. Besides, VBS is so much fun. I do enjoy it.

I also realized that, before vacation, I was controlling my time, not letting God lead me. I lost my focus on the One that loves me so much. The time of rest and meditation helped me define what was wrong and God got me back into focus. Sort of like getting your eyes examined – things come into focus when you are looking through the correct lens.

As we get busy with our lives post summer, may we be childlike in our love for Christ and allow Him to love us as much as possible. When we allow Him to invade our very being, we can love those around us so much more. I love the saying: "Let Go and Let God". It is so true.

Hope you got rested this summer and enjoyed the lazy days of the hot weather and the rain. And, I hope you will be as enthused as you can possibly become and immerse yourself in all the activities, worship, and fellowship that will be offered this next season as we discover the stories that help form our Lutheran beliefs.

Yours in Christ,
+Pastor Melba



From the desk of the Pastor

Why Be A Worship Leader?

The fall season is fast approaching and we are filling the slots for readers, communion assistants, acolytes, greeter, usher and so much more. Serving as a worship leader can be nerve wracking! Your initial thought might be:

- The whole congregation will be looking at me!
- What if I mess something up?
- I get really nervous speaking in front of people!
- I don't want to make a mistake.

Our congregation is made up of several lay leaders. The pastor is not the only leader and should never be the only leader. As we are all ministers in the Word of God, we all have the responsibility of lay leadership.

Training for the one of the lay leader responsibilities is available and welcomed. Walking through the service a couple of times beforehand, and getting a well-timed nod from the pastor will get you moving and help with your comfort level. Before you know it, you will be volunteering to serve in all of the worship leader roles, when needed.

Serving as a worship leader will give you a different perspective on worship that is different from what you get sitting in the assembly. There are a lot of details in the planning and setup required for a worship service to run smoothly. Someone has to bring out the bread and wine and be sure there is enough. There are candles to be lit readings to mark, bulletins to be assembled and much more. The worship service is carefully planned. Everything about the worship service is designed to engage all of the worshiper's senses in the whole experience. For the eyes, there is the procession and the different colored paraments for different seasons; for the ears, the music, scripture reading, and sermon; for the nose, the burning of the candles and sometimes, incense; for the hands, the water in the baptismal font; and for the tongue, the bread and wine.

You will feel more involved in the life of the congregation as a worship leader. Simply being asked to be a leader makes you feel like you belong. *I must belong here if the congregational leaders think I can do this, right?* Right! While learning new roles, you will get to know other members you might otherwise not have approached, thinking we probably would not have much to talk about. Soon, you will know most of the names of the people attending service.

Serving as a worship leader gives you a way to share your time and talents, which is very important to helping you feel directly involved with the congregation. Your contributions to the life of the congregation are needed and appreciated.

Tips for beginning worship leaders

- Start with the role you are most comfortable with. That might be serving as a reader, or perhaps a role that doesn't involve public speaking, such as greeter, or usher.
- Practice makes perfect - we can match you up with a "seasoned" member until you are comfortable.
- Look ahead in the bulletin so you are prepared for what happens next.
- Be sure everyone can hear you if you have a speaking role
- Don't hurry - this doesn't mean you need to be slow; it just means you don't need to rush
- Look for clues from your fellow worship leaders. For example, if you forget which stanza of the closing hymn is your cue to start the recession as the crucifer, just look for a nod from the pastor or assisting minister.
- And most importantly, if you forget something or make a mistake, stay calm. It happens to everyone. Look for help from your fellow worship leaders and the pastor. As long as you don't act worried, people in the congregation will hardly notice.
- Feel free to ask questions as you go.

With all of this in mind, may I invite you to join the worship team with your talents and desires to help. Call me anytime!

+Pastor Melba Dibble

THOSE WHO SERVE THIS MONTH

Greeters:

11:15 A.M.	Joan Anthony
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WORSHIP SERVICE SUNDAYS – SCHEDULE

Date	Communion Asst. 11:15 AM	Reader 11:15 AM	Acolyte 11:15 AM
9/2	Michael Unger	Dawn Hanna	Alison Hanna & Lauren Hanna
9/9	Jane Scheeser	Nena Kratsas	Jason Turske
9/16	Sydney Litzenburger	Sydney Litzenburger	Hunter Weigand
9/23	Don McIntyre	Michele Dowell	Nick Usouski & Lauren Hanna
9/30	Rich Dowell	Mark Kuehl	Arlo Yarroll

FLOWERS AND ETERNAL CANDLE

9/2	OPEN
9/9	OPEN
9/16	OPEN
9/23	OPEN
9/30	OPEN
Eternal Candle	Carolyn Hirschman – To the Glory of God

You may either take the flowers with you after the service, or if you prefer, you may leave them on the altar. Cost of **flowers** is **\$60 (\$30/arrangement)** per Sunday. Cost of the **eternal candle** is **\$20** per month.



FLOWERS AND ETERNAL CANDLE

There are several dates still available for flowers and the Eternal Candle.
Please check the Flower Chart in the Narthex.
The cost per arrangement is \$30.00.

USHERS' SCHEDULE FOR SEPTEMBER
Nick Kratsas, Joan Anthony and Leigh Brooks

OFFERING COUNTERS' SCHEDULE FOR SEPTEMBER
The Offering Counters for the month of September are Sandy Lutz and Sydney Litzenburger.



PRAYER CHAIN

Anyone wishing to be on the Bethany Prayer Chain, please contact Cathy Irwin by email at cirwin77@hotmail.com, or Terry Simony in the Bethany Church Office by phone: 412-835-9221.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION



CHURCH LIBRARY

Over the years, excess reading materials have collected on BLC Library shelves and surrounding space. Council has approved reducing and re-organizing these items onto the existing library shelves.

If there are any materials you would like to add to your personal home library, please feel free to do so at this time.

Sydney Litzenburger and Sandy Lutz will be working throughout the summer to consolidate and re-organize the Library for your reading/borrowing pleasure.



GRASS CUTTING FOR 2018

The grass is still growing and Bethany's sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board in the narthex just waiting for your name!! Please take a moment to sign-up and donate a few hours to cut the lawn this season. Your help is greatly appreciated.

If you have any questions please call Auggie Burns at 412-303-8820.

PARISH EDUCATION



RALLY DAY – SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 9TH VBS REVISITED!!!

(Immediately following worship)

Come one, come all to kick off our Sunday School year!

Our Sunday School serves everyone. Infants through adults are welcome.

The Rally Day Sunday School hour will feature traditional VBS fun – lesson/puppet show, music, and crafts.

Everyone is invited to attend! Please bring food to share. There's a sign-up sheet in the Narthex.



BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS!

Are you headed back to school? Maybe you've already started? YOU need God's blessing! Bring your backpack to church on **SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 9TH AT THE 11:15 AM WORSHIP SERVICE** for a special prayer to God and God's words of love and care for you during this upcoming school year!



TEACHER COMMISSION

Have you responded to God's call to help with Sunday School during our upcoming year? Anyone who plans to participate during the upcoming school year is invited to be commissioned on

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 9TH AT THE 11:15 AM WORSHIP SERVICE!

We give thanks to God for your gifts and service!



NURSERY NEWS

The Children's Nursery is Available During the 11:15 A.M. Worship. The nursery will open at 11:00 A.M. each Sunday. Bethany's Nursery is not staffed but available for children ages 6 and under.

We ask that you please accompany and supervise your little ones in the nursery.

Parents can feel free to take their children to the nursery immediately following the children's sermon.

FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES



LEMONADE ON THE LAWN



The Fellowship and Evangelism Committee invites you to join together for our next **“Lemonade on the Lawn”** on **Sunday, September 2nd** immediately following our Worship Service.

Take time to experience the joys of fellowship with our members and visitors.

We will serve cold drinks and home baked cookies.

The event will be hosted by Linda Plesniak and Grenith Fisher.



FAMILY PROMISE/HOMELESS DINNER

Bethany members will be serving Family Promise homeless families on **Thursday, September 27th** at **5:00 P.M. at the John McMillian Church in Bethel Park.**

Anyone willing to serve or contribute food items, please contact Cathy Irwin at 412-854-1729 or cirwin77@hotmail.com.

We are in need of 3 pounds of pasta, rolls and butter, salad and dressing, parmesan cheese, milk, ice tea and desserts



SOUTH HILLS INTERFAITH MOVEMENT (SHIM)

South Hills Interfaith Movement (SHIM) is a human services organization dedicated to improving the lives of people in need across the South Hills area. SHIM's mission is to empower individuals and families to achieve stability and self-sufficiency by offering short-term help with basic needs, including food, clothing and utilities.

Long-term assistance to help people build and sustain promising futures includes employment, financial planning, youth programs, and family support.

Through the years, Bethany Lutheran Church and SHIM have had a long standing relationship.

We have collected food, Angel Tree items, clothing, and monetary donations.

Now more than ever SHIM needs our support.

Each Sunday we will be collecting a certain item to be donated to SHIM.

We have found that when people are given something specific to shop for, the mission is much more successful.

The following items will be collected in the Bethany Lutheran narthex:

The following items will be collect in the Bethany Lutheran narthex:

SEPTEMBER 2: Cereal (Low Sugar)



SEPTEMBER 23: Syrup



SEPTEMBER 9: Oatmeal



SEPTEMBER 30: Tea



SEPTEMBER 16: Pancake Mix



Together we can make a difference in the lives of many of our South Hills neighbors in need. Together we bless the lives of our brothers and sisters in Christ, and God smiles.

Peace,

Bethany Lutheran Church Liaisons to South Hills Interfaith Movement



Bethany Evangelical Lutheran Church in Dormont is considering starting a joint Handbell Choir with the fellow churches of P.L.U.M. Bethany-Dormont would like to see if there is an interest from our members to join them. If you would like to be a part of a joint choir such as this, please contact Karen in the Church Office-Dormont (412-531-9363 or bethany-dormont@verizon.net). Please see the detailed information posted on the bulletin board in the Narthex.

CELEBRATIONS WITHIN OUR CONGREGATION IN SEPTEMBER



Happy Birthday to the following individuals:

1-Sept. Laura Harrison	20-Sept. Dan Volpatti	26-Sept. Mathilde White
2-Sept. Arlo Yarroll	21-Sept. Bryan Hucko	26-Sept. Diane Usouski
14-Sept. Richard Petrovich	21-Sept. Ralph C. Litzenburger	30-Sept. Kylie Hartbauer
15-Sept. Bertie Yarroll	25-Sept. Katelynn Hartos	
16-Sept. Kaitlin Hartbauer	26-Sept. Patrick J. Corbett	



Happy Anniversary to the following individuals:

15-Sept. Alisha & Daniel Wolford	18-Sept. Jane & Ron Scheeser
15-Sept. Linda & John Plesniak	22-Sept. Becky & Alexander Hartos



NEWSLETTER

If you have information that you would like to appear in the newsletter, **please** either e-mail the information to Terry Simony at admin@blcbp.org, or drop it off at the church **NO LATER THAN MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 17th BY 10:00 A.M.**, for the **OCTOBER NEWSLETTER**.



**THE CHURCH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED SEPTEMBER 3RD
IN OBSERVANCE OF LABOR DAY.**



Bethany Lutheran Church

September 2018



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 11:15am: Worship  LEMONADE ON THE LAWN	3 LABOR DAY  CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED	4	5 7:00pm: Choir Practice 	6 6:00pm: Scout Mtg. 7:00pm: Evangelism Meeting 	7	8
9 RALLY DAY <i>Blessing of Backpacks</i> Teacher Commission Rally Day Picnic 9:45am: Parish Ed. 11:15am: Worship 	10	11 12N: BLCW Meeting  6:00pm: Scout Mtg.	12 6:00pm: Worship & Music Meeting 6:30pm: Scout Leader Mtg. 7:00pm: Choir Practice 	13 6:15pm: Scout Mtg. 7:00pm: Parish Ed Meeting 	14	15
16 9:45am: Parish Ed. 11:15am: Worship 	17 Newsletter Items Due By 10:00 a.m. 	18	19 7:00pm: Choir Practice 	20 7:00pm: Stewardship Meeting 	21	22
23 9:45am: Parish Ed. 11:15am: Worship 	24	25 11:00am: Care & Share 	26 7:00pm: Choir Practice 	27 5:00pm: Family Promise  6:15pm: Scout Mtg. 7:00pm: Council Meeting 	28	29
30 9:45am: Parish Ed. 11:15am: Worship 						