

# *The Visitor*

## *July 2017*

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](mailto: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, July 2<sup>nd</sup> following Worship Service

#### **BETHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH WOMEN'S GROUP**

Tuesday, July 11<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 A.M.

#### **EVANGELISM COMMITTEE MEETING**

Sunday, July 16<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 A.M.

#### **STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING**

Thursday, July 20<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 P.M.

#### **PLUM WOMEN'S RETREAT – SEASIDE ESCAPE**

Saturday, July 22<sup>nd</sup>

#### **CARE AND SHARE MEETING**

Tuesday, July 25<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 A.M.

#### **COUNCIL MEETING**

Thursday, July 27<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 P.M.

#### **ANNUAL DIBBLE POOL PARTY**

Saturday, July 29<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 P.M. to 7:00 P.M.

#### **WORSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING**

To Be Announced

#### **FALL FESTIVAL – CELEBRATION OF THE 500<sup>TH</sup> YEAR OF REFORMATION**

**AND ALL SAINTS PAST & PRESENT**

Sunday, November 5<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 P.M. to 7:00 P.M.

## PLUM Pastor's Newsletter Article from Vicar Karyn Kost:

It's July! July might be my favorite month of the year. I mean, what's not to love...it's warm outside, it's often sunny, even if it does rain, the rain is refreshing, school's out for the summer, and vacations are more frequent! Most significant, though, is that July is the month that I most often got to go to Camp Lutherwald...my favorite place in the world!

Now, I am not trying to persuade you into thinking that Lutherwald is your favorite place to go or into thinking you have missed visiting an important place in your life, but to get you thinking about places that are meaningful to you. I LOVE going to Lutherwald because Lutherwald is the first place where I felt God's presence in a very real way. I felt God's presence in a way that I can't really describe to you, but can only say that it was the best feeling I have ever had in my life. It was a feeling of pure joy, love, worth, a desire to return the feeling to others, and so much more. Well...maybe I could describe it a little bit after all.

I know, now you are thinking, "here she goes again, she loves the environment." Hang in there, don't stop reading yet, you might be surprised! For my summer seminary class, I read *Almost Christian* by Kendra Creasy Dean, a book about what the church can learn from the faith of teenagers. In this book, Dean made many important observations and analyses, but one statement especially stuck out to me. Dean wrote, "We are most open to divine reconstruction when we lose our balance, when the Legos® of our carefully constructed selves fall apart so that God can rebuild us in new ways."<sup>1</sup>

"Out of balance...fall apart...do things have to go wrong before I am able to be open to God's presence in my life?", I thought. I didn't feel out of balance or in a state of falling apart when I experienced God so strongly at Lutherwald, so what made my experience of the divine so impactful, so strong? Did I really experience God? Did I imagine the whole experience? What does it mean to lose my balance? Is losing my balance always a bad thing?

Maybe losing my balance provides me a new perspective on my current situation. Maybe losing my balance allows me the opportunity to try again. Maybe losing my balance helps me to grow stronger and become more resilient. Despite my initial thoughts, I was actually out of balance at camp, just not in the way I originally thought. You see, camp is a place, rather, a community that demands authenticity and vulnerability from all of its inhabitants. I lost my balance at camp because I expected camp to be the world I knew, only in the woods, but instead it operated from a different set of operating procedures. It was a world away from the world, which operated as close to the way Jesus lived as I had ever experienced.

I lost my balance at camp because I was encouraged and empowered to be me. To be serious when I felt like being serious or to be goofy when I felt like being goofy. I had lost my balance at camp in a good way. I was in a community where people didn't worry about what I was wearing or how good my grades were or who my friends were, allowing me to refocus my attention away from the worldly distractions towards God and God's creation, and when I was least expecting it, there was God, in my midst, present for me in a way I was able to recognize and to breathe in.

This summer I will not be able to go to camp, but I am privileged to be leading two weeks of VBS where we will be exploring how God is present in our lives through the stories in the Bible. We will explore the stories of creation, how Rahab believes in God's power, how God is with Gideon, how Jesus shows his love through his death and resurrection, and how God used Abigail to bring peace.

Psalm 139, the psalm from which the first day's theme verse originates, celebrates God's presence in our lives and articulates just how well God knows us.

To the leader. Of David. A Psalm.  
<sup>1</sup> O Lord, you have searched me and known me.  
<sup>2</sup> You know when I sit down and when I rise up;  
you discern my thoughts from far away.  
<sup>3</sup> You search out my path and my lying down,  
and are acquainted with all my ways.  
<sup>4</sup> Even before a word is on my tongue,  
O Lord, you know it completely.  
<sup>5</sup> You hem me in, behind and before,  
and lay your hand upon me.  
<sup>6</sup> Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;  
it is so high that I cannot attain it.

---

<sup>1</sup> Kenda Creasy Dean, *Almost Christian: what the faith of our teenagers is telling the American church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 170.

<sup>7</sup> Where can I go from your spirit?  
 Or where can I flee from your presence?  
<sup>8</sup> If I ascend to heaven, you are there;  
 if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there.  
<sup>9</sup> If I take the wings of the morning  
 and settle at the farthest limits of the sea,  
<sup>10</sup> even there your hand shall lead me,  
 and your right hand shall hold me fast.  
<sup>11</sup> If I say, ‘Surely the darkness shall cover me,  
 and the light around me become night’,  
<sup>12</sup> even the darkness is not dark to you;  
 the night is as bright as the day,  
 for darkness is as light to you.

<sup>13</sup> For it was you who formed my inward parts;  
 you knit me together in my mother’s womb.  
<sup>14</sup> I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.  
 Wonderful are your works;  
 that I know very well.

<sup>15</sup> My frame was not hidden from you,  
 when I was being made in secret,  
 intricately woven in the depths of the earth.

<sup>16</sup> Your eyes beheld my unformed substance.  
 In your book were written  
 all the days that were formed for me,  
 when none of them as yet existed.

<sup>17</sup> How weighty to me are your thoughts, O God!  
 How vast is the sum of them!

<sup>18</sup> I try to count them—they are more than the sand;  
 I come to the end—I am still with you.

<sup>19</sup> O that you would kill the wicked, O God,  
 and that the bloodthirsty would depart from me—  
<sup>20</sup> those who speak of you maliciously,  
 and lift themselves up against you for evil!

<sup>21</sup> Do I not hate those who hate you, O Lord?  
 And do I not loathe those who rise up against you?  
<sup>22</sup> I hate them with perfect hatred;  
 I count them my enemies.

<sup>23</sup> Search me, O God, and know my heart;  
 test me and know my thoughts.

<sup>24</sup> See if there is any wicked way in me,  
 and lead me in the way everlasting.

You may not have experienced a camp community like I experienced Camp Lutherwald, but I hope that you are able to find a community that encourages you to lose your balance every once in a while, or even all the time, opening yourself up to God’s presence in your life. I hope that you recognize your ability to be that community, that family, to others, both within the PLUM congregations and outside them. God has created you. You are fearfully and wonderfully made. Wherever you go, God goes with you. Wherever you go, God is searching you and rebuilding you, just as you were promised at your baptism. How will you fearfully and wonderfully create an off-balance community of authentic Christ-followers which points people to the closeness and renewing nature of God?

Dean, Kenda Creasy. *Almost Christian: what the faith of our teenagers is telling the American church*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.

**THOSE WHO SERVE THIS MONTH**

**Greeters:**

<b>11:15 A.M.</b>	Suse Marsh
-------------------	------------

**WORSHIP SERVICE SUNDAYS – SCHEDULE**

Date	Communion Asst. 11:15 AM	Reader 11:15 AM	Acolyte 11:15 AM
7/2	Don McIntyre	Mark Kuehl	Jeremy Blocklin
7/9	Michael Unger	Michael Unger	Julie Brooks
7/16	Jane Scheeser	Nena Kratsas	Nick Usouski
7/23	Don McIntyre	Mark Kuehl	Naomi Yarroll
7/30	Cathy Irwin	Deborah Wanamaker	Jeremy Blocklin

**FLOWERS AND ETERNAL CANDLE**

7/2	OPEN
7/9	Donna Middleton – In Memory of Mae Hayward
7/16	OPEN
7/23	OPEN
7/30	OPEN
<b>Eternal Candle</b>	OPEN

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.

**USHERS’ SCHEDULE FOR JULY**  
Leigh Brooks, Chuck Conn, Nick Kratsas

**OFFERING COUNTERS’ SCHEDULE FOR JULY**  
The Offering Counters for the month of July are Nick Kratsas and Chuck Conn.

**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.



**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](mailto:admin@blcbp.org), or drop it off at the church **NO LATER than Monday, July 24<sup>th</sup> by 10:00 A.M.**, for the **August Newsletter**.

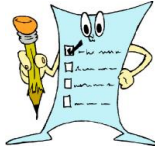
## IMPORTANT INFORMATION



### GRASS CUTTING SCHEDULE FOR JULY AND AUGUST 2017

July 1 <sup>st</sup>	Dan Volpatti	August 5 <sup>th</sup>	Dave Schreiber
July 8 <sup>th</sup>	Leigh Brooks	August 12 <sup>th</sup>	Keith Hartbauer
July 15 <sup>th</sup>	Ron Stowers	August 19 <sup>th</sup>	John Holl
July 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Keith Hartbauer	August 26 <sup>th</sup>	Auggie Burns
July 29 <sup>th</sup>	John Holl		

There are few weeks still open on the volunteer's list. Please take a moment to sign-up and donate a few hours to cut the lawn this season. Your help is greatly appreciated. Thank you!  
If you have any questions, **please call Keith Hartbauer at 724-469-3729.**



#### NEW "Connection CARD" Ministry!

As you may have noticed, located in every pew are "Connection Cards." These are to help keep your Congregation Council and Pastor informed about any members (both active or current or even not so active or current) as well as visitors or friends who may be ill, hospitalized, homebound, or just going through a tough time and in need of a call or visit from Pastor, and a special CARD from the congregation.

Please consider filling out one of these cards and dropping it in the offering plate. Please include as much specific information regarding dates/lengths of hospital stays and location and the situation as possible. (You can use the back of the card!) Or if you are not in church or something comes up that shouldn't wait until the next Sunday, you can also contact the church office with any requests or information as well.

Thank you in advance for taking the time to assist us with "connecting" with our members in need and helping us to stay "connected" with all of our members!



#### PRAYER CHAIN

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

## THANK YOU



*Sheree and I would like to thank our friends, our Bethany family, for your prayers, get-well wishes and the many meals that were delivered after my knee surgery. Your encouragement was instrumental in my keeping a positive attitude during recovery.*

*Thank you all...Mark & Sheree Kuehl*

## FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES



#### LEMONADE ON THE LAWN



The Fellowship and Evangelism Committee invites you to join together for "**Lemonade on the Lawn**" **Sunday, July 2<sup>nd</sup> immediately following the 11:15 A.M. Worship Service.** Take time to experience the joys of fellowship with our members and visitors.

We will serve cold drinks and home baked cookies.  
**Dawn Hanna and Jane Scheeser will be hosting.**

***Our next "Lemonade on the Lawn" will be August 6<sup>th</sup>***

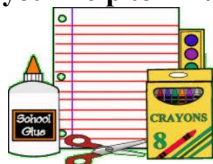


## BLCW SCHOOL KIT PROJECT

Dear Bethany Friends,

Here in America, school vacations are beginning. This time of year always reminds me of the chant we used as we ran out the doors of Bethel Elementary: “No more pencils, no more books. No more teachers’ dirty looks!” We were free to run loose and complain to our parents that we were bored. Being smart parents, that was their cue to put us to work hanging laundry or pulling weeds in the garden.

But today, in many other parts of the world, children are running loose and wishing they could go to school. What’s holding them back? The causes are many: Extreme poverty, famine, war and exile from their homes, temporary shelter in “resettlement camps” with only barest necessities of life. They have no gardens to weed, and getting water for laundry or anything else can be dangerous or impossible. Even if schools are available in some form, there may be fees to pay. Parents who manage to save for them may have no “extra” money for school supplies. They must decide between educating their children or feeding them. We can’t solve all their problems, but we can help. Through Lutheran World Relief, we can send bags filled with the supplies to get a child started in school. This can make all the difference, not only to them, but to parents who want their children to have a chance at a better future. The women of Bethany sent 24 “kits” out into the world last year, and this year we’re hoping to take 40 or more to the distribution center in Zelenople this September. **We’re making the bags, but we need your help to fill them. Each kit must contain the following items:**



- (4) FLAT notebooks, approx.. 8”x10.5”, 100 sheets. NO SPIRALS, PLEASE
- (1) 2.5” eraser
- (1) 30 cm (12”) ruler
- (1) Pair blunt end scissors
- (1) Box (24 count) crayons
- (1) Hand-held pencil sharpener
- (5) #2 Pencils, unsharpened
- (5) Non-Gel blue or black ink pens

**\*Cash donations may be given to Sandy Lutz, BLCW treasurer, and will be used for supplies and shipping expenses.**



The children whose needs you will serve have lost so much, or had nearly nothing to begin with. That’s not their fault! They want to learn. They need to learn and develop critical thinking skills. If they can read and write, they will have a better chance to explore ideas, to decide for themselves what is true and just and to teach others what they’ve learned. Please help us give them a start toward this precious goal.

**Thank you all for your help!**

**Genith Fisher, President, BLCW**



### FAITH IN ACTION

#### LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF (LWR) QUILT CAMPAIGN

LWR is challenging Lutherans across the United States to donate 500,000 Quilts to send around the world to people in need. There is a list of container locations behind the sign-up sheet.



#### FOOD PANTRY NEEDS ASSISTANCE

Please remember SHIM regularly each month, especially on the second Sunday, which we have designated SHIM / Tub of Love Sunday. Food items to bring for SHIM: cereal or oatmeal, canned vegetables, fruit, chili & beef stew, snacks, soup (dry & canned), beans (dry), pasta, macaroni & cheese (boxed), flour, rice & sugar, tomato sauce & puree (canned & jarred), tuna fish, mayonnaise, ketchup, mustard, cooking oil, peanut butter & jelly, powdered milk, baby food, formula. Other needed items: diapers, wipes, toothpaste, toothbrushes (individually packaged), **toilet paper, tissues, shampoo, conditioner, deodorant and lotion. Just place your donation in the large basket in the narthex. SHIM also accepts monetary donations for their food bank.**

**Thank you for your donations**



### **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 collect in the Bethany Lutheran narthex:

#### **JULY 2: Flour**



#### **JULY 9: Sugar**



#### **JULY 16: Baking Soda/Baking Powder**



#### **JULY 23: Boxed Cake Mixes/Icing**



#### **JULY 30: Baking Mix (Bisquick)**



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,

*Sarah Currie, Karen Housam, and Sydney Litzenburger*  
Bethany Lutheran Church Liaisons to South Hills Interfaith Movement



**PLUM Women's Retreat  
SeaSide Escape**

Need a day at the beach? A time to slow down, wiggle your toes in the sand, and bask in the warmth of God's presence? Join us at SeaSide Escape. It's a beach-themed retreat you won't want to miss!

**Location:** 1443 Stoltz Road  
Bethel Park, PA 15102

**Date:** July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2017

**Cost:** \$30

It's time for the PLUM Women's Retreat. This year we are at the sea side.  
Come join us and bring a friend.



**ANNUAL DIBBLE POOL PARTY  
1443 Stolz Road in Bethel Park, PA  
July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

**2:00 P.M. – 7:00 P.M.**

**Items to Bring:** Bathing Suit, Towel, Floats, Lotion, Cover-up, Side Dish to Share  
**RSVP: 412-212-8794**



**FALL FESTIVAL  
CELEBRATION OF THE 500<sup>TH</sup> YEAR OF REFORMATION  
AND ALL SAINTS PAST AND PRESENT**

This event will be a ticket only event that includes a catered dinner and entertainment on  
**Sunday, November 5<sup>th</sup> from 4:00 PM to 7:00 PM.**  
More details to follow closer to the event.

**CELEBRATIONS WITHIN OUR CONGREGATION IN JULY**



**Happy Birthday to the following individuals:**

2-July Donna Johnson	21-July Daniel Wolford	27-July Ed Irwin
2-July Dawn Hanna	22-July Kari Hartbauer	29-July Christine Fischer
11-July Benjamin White	24-July Grenith Fisher	29-July Lucy Horvat
12-July Beverly Jordan	26-July Abby Joyce	
14-July Alisha Wolford	26-July Loretta Posch	

\*\*\*\*\*



**THE CHURCH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED TUESDAY, JULY 4<sup>TH</sup>  
IN OBSERVANCE OF THE HOLIDAY**

*In addition, Terry Simony will also be out of the office Monday, July 3<sup>rd</sup> thru Monday, July 10<sup>th</sup>.  
We will resume regular office hours Tuesday, July 11<sup>th</sup>.  
Thank you and have a safe holiday!*