



BETHANY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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PITTSBURGH LUTHERAN UNITED MINISTRIES

Pastors

Rev. Brenda Henry, Rev. Susan Devine,

Rev. Alexander Sumo and Rev. John Gropp

MAY NEWSLETTER 2023



“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Matthew 28: 19-20

Alleluia! Christ is Risen! He is Risen Indeed, Alleluia! Our Lenten journeys are over and now we celebrate our Lord's resurrection. On April 9, 2023, our congregations held their Easter services which were well attended. Our sanctuaries were adorned with flowers and we raised our Alleluias. On April 16th, we heard the words of the Great Commission. We have been commissioned to go and make disciples, to baptize and to teach. And Matthew concluded his gospel with a reminder from Jesus, “And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” What a blessing and promise! Whatever we are facing, whether joy-filled or sorrowful, our Lord is with us.

My Lenten journey was one filled with joy, sorrow, fear, anxiety, anticipation, hope and vulnerability. It all began on the Monday before Ash Wednesday. I woke up with a cough, stuffy nose, aches, all the symptoms of Covid. I thought, “Please no God, Lent begins this week. I have services to lead, studies to prepare, work to do on my final papers for my training with the Pneuma Institute. I did not have time to be sick! By Wednesday, my symptoms included ear pain. I took three Covid tests. All negative. Thank God for that, but I was still sick. A virus, the doctor said. I had no idea that it would lead to hearing loss and an illness that would last almost two months.

During this time, I learned a lot about being vulnerable, about asking for and accepting help when needed. We are so blessed in PLUM to have a team of pastors who can step in to help at a moment's notice. We are blessed with Lay Leaders who can step in and lead worship. We are blessed with members who pray for each other, and I can attest to the fact that prayer works.

At this same time, I was finalizing my studies with Pneuma Institute. I had two major papers to write. Writing papers always brings a sense of anxiety to me. I was worried that I wouldn't do my best writing because I wasn't feeling well. But, I was also anticipating my graduation which is scheduled for May 6th. This will be a joy-filled day, celebrating almost

two years of study. I will be certified as a Spiritual Director and Spiritual Leader. I hope to use the knowledge and skills that I gained as another part of my ministry here at PLUM.

One of the greatest joys that I anticipated was the birth of my newest grandchild. My grandson was born on April 12, 2023. This is also the day that my right ear finally cleared and my hearing was completely restored. Alleluia!

I tell you all of this, because the words of Matthew ring true. I felt our Lord's presence with me throughout all of it. Whatever we face, we do not face it alone. We have God's promise that our Lord is with us always.

We are still in the Easter season. As we continue to celebrate the Resurrection of Our Lord, the pastoral team is planning our visits to our homebound members. A letter has been mailed out to our identified homebound members with a request to respond with some information. First, if anyone, homebound or not, wishes a visit from a pastor, please contact us! Our Gracious God has blessed us with many talents, but mind reading is not one of them! You will notice that our email addresses are changing. We are switching over to business email addresses in order to keep personal and pastoral messages separate. These new email addresses are included in this newsletter.

We would like to invite you to three summer gatherings. These will happen on the fourth Thursday of the month in June, July and August. The event will begin at 5:30 pm as we gather for food and fellowship, and it will conclude with evening prayer at 7:30. Look for the details of each of these gatherings on our PLUM website. Last year, we had a great time at each of the gatherings. It was great to have time to fellowship with our sister congregations. Please join us for one or all.

Our Southwest Pa Synod Assembly is being held on June 16th and 17th. Each congregation is asked to recruit two members to attend the assembly. The June 16 gathering will be on Zoom. The Saturday, June 17 session will be held in person at Penn West (formerly California University). There is also the option to attend by Zoom on Saturday. Your pastoral team has been invited to take on the role of chaplains for the assembly. We are very excited to do this and ask for your prayers as we prepare to lead the assembly in prayer.

Please continue to check the website (www.plumofpa.com) for updates on Bible studies, worship services and congregational news.

May you feel God's presence with you always,
Pastor Sue and your Pastoral Team

“Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.”

Isaiah 41:10



NEW EMAIL ADDRESSES FOR THE PLUM PASTORAL TEAM

Rev.John.Gropp@plumofpa.com

Rev.Brenda.Henry@plumofpa.com

Rev.Sue.Devine@plumofpa.com

Rev.Dr.Alex.Sumo@plumofpa.com



BETHANY NEWS

MAY BIRTHDAYS

5/2: DENISE KLOTZ

5/3: ZACHARY HUTCHISON

5/5: MATTHEW WILLIAMS

5/12: CHARLENE MILLER

5/14: PASTOR JOHN GROPP

5/18: TARA WILLIAMS

5/20: PASTOR BETH SIEFERT

5/27: CHASE PINDEL

5/28: PASTOR PAUL KOCH

5/30: KARL OHLIGER

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL!!!



LET US REMEMBER IN OUR PRAYERS

OUR MILITARY: Matt, Josh, Lee, Chase, Cameron, Michael and Bryan.

THOSE THAT PROTECT & SERVE: Craig and Jaco, Sean, Michael, Zach, Tom and John

OUR SHUT INS: Roberta, Mary, Linda, Carol, Jan, and Jean.

THOSE WHO ARE ILL: Carol, Jeanne, Roberta, Karen, Arion, Sharon, Tom, Carol, Ann, Colleen, Alan, Rose, Ryan, Mary, Bud, Joanne, Patty, David, Liz, Vince, Linda, Jim, Ed, Bill, Eric, Paul, Naziario, Ardith, Debbie, Gerri, Joe, Heather, Logan, Pastor John, Jessica, Harvey, Ashley, Beth, Kpannah, Charlie & Kelsey.

THE CHURCHES OF PLUM

ABIDING MINISTRIES

MEMORIAL DAY HOLIDAY

The Church Office will be closed on **Monday, May 29TH** in observance of Memorial Day. Have a safe Holiday!



BETHANY COUNCIL MEETING

Bethany's next Church Council Meeting will be on **Wednesday, May 15th at 7:00pm**. We will be using the ZOOM format. All Council members are asked to attend. Thank you.

BROTHERHOOD

The **Brotherhood Dinner** will be held on **Friday, May 5th, at 6:30pm** here at **Bethany**. Join us for good food and fellowship

KANE GROUP

The Kane Group will meet on **Monday, May 15, 2023 at around 10am**. All are welcome to join us as we make items to share with the residents at Kane Hospital and enjoy our lunch and each other.

BETHANY'S COMMUNITY CUPBOARD

Bethany's Community Cupboard is regularly being visited by our community. Some of our neighbors have assisted us, by leaving items to share with their neighbors as well. The cupboard is replenished at least three times a week. If you would like to donate items, you can drop them off on Sunday during worship services, or call the office to schedule a specific time. Items to consider include any non-perishables, canned food items, paper products, health and beauty aids, soap and detergent and gently used clothing or shoes and toys in good condition. Please no expired food items. Thank you in advance for supporting this community ministry.



COFFEE HOUR

May's Coffee Hour will be on **May 21, 2023**. Summer Coffee hours will be on June 25th, July 23rd and August 27th. We will plan a brunch for one of these dates. Hope you will join us for fellowship.



SUMMER WORSHIP

Weekly Sunday Worship will move to the Social Hall on **Sunday, June 4, 2023**. There we will be able to enjoy a cooler space and worship in a more relaxed environment.



Mother's Day *Happy Mother's Day to all Moms and to all the women who have been a motherly influence in our lives!*

5/14/2023



BETHANY'S VENDOR SHOW

Thank you to all who participated in our Spring Vendor Show, held on April 29th. It was so good to see all those who stopped in and experienced the various vendors, raffle opportunities and good treats. All proceeds went to Bethany's Community Cupboard. Kudos to our Sexton, Becki Bloss for all her hard work and to Bethany's friend Sherry Johnson for coordinating the event. We hope you will join us in October, as we host our Holiday Vendor Show. See you then!



PLUM NEWS

PLUM WORSHIP AND MEETINGS VIA ZOOM

We continue to provide a means to gather as a combined congregation through PLUM's ZOOM site. Sunday Worship, meetings, bible studies and fellowship are all available on the ZOOM format. Just use the information below and you can be a part of all we are currently doing.

Zoom online: <https://zoom.us/j/401596541>

Zoom by phone: (646) 876-9923 Meeting ID: 401 596 541



2023 SYNOD ASSEMBLY: BETTER TOGETHER

The Southwestern PA Synod Assembly will be held on Friday, June 16 and Saturday, June 17, 2023. Synod Assembly is the highest legislative authority of our synod and will be making decisions that impact 151 congregations covering 10 counties in southwest PA. Voting members from your congregation have an important responsibility on behalf of all the members of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

This year’s assembly will begin with an evening of business conducted online via Zoom, followed by a day of gathering together in person to worship, work, and remember that we are always better together. Registration will be open until Monday, June 5th. [REGISTER NOW!](#)

FRIDAY, JUNE 16: 6-9 PM Online via Zoom
SATURDAY, JUNE 17: 9 AM - 5 PM In Person at PennWest California (*Formerly Cal-U*)
For more information, go to <https://www.swpasynod.org/assembly2023>

Cost to register is \$75 per voting member.

Voting members are required to have a smart phone or tablet to download the Vevox app as your voting device.

Who can register? St. Andrew can have 2 lay voting members and one pastoral voting member.

Login links and passwords for both the online portion of assembly and caucus meetings will be in the registration confirmation email.

For help with registration, contact the Registrar: Pastor Ellen Lundie, 412 440-7672 or registration@swpasynod.org

Non-voting members and the public may view the assembly live on the synod’s [Facebook page](#).

FYI: Serving together in the role of chaplain—and embodying our theme of Better Together—are the pastors of **Pittsburgh Lutheran United Ministries (PLUM)**. Pastors Sue Devine, Brenda Henry, Alexander Sumo and John Gropp cooperatively serve ten ELCA congregations in the Pittsburgh area.



PLUM WORSHIP COMMITTEE

The PLUM Worship Committee will meet on **Wednesday, May 10, 2023 at 7pm** via ZOOM. Join us as we discuss and plan our ZOOM worship services.



PLUM BOARD MEETING

The next PLUM Board meeting will be held on **Monday, May 22, 2023 at 7pm**. All Board members are asked to join us via ZOOM.



WHAT'S NEXT? PLANNING MEETING

The **What’s Next?** Committee will be meeting on the third Wednesday of each month. Their next meeting will be held on **Wednesday, May 17th at 7pm on ZOOM**.



AT HOME TAIZÉ PRAYER SERVICE

Prayer is a source of Comfort. Please join us in Taizé Prayer from the safety of your homes **on Friday, May 5, 2023, at 7pm**.



RISE AGAINST HUNGER

Save the date! Our annual "Rise Against Hunger" food packaging event will be held on **Saturday, September 9, 2023**. More information will be published when it becomes available.



WE CRY JUSTICE: READING THE BIBLE WITH THE POOR PEOPLE'S CAMPAIGN EDITED BY LIZ THEOHARIS

Easter is a season of rebirth and renewal. A reminder that Jesus restored and redeemed humanity's relationship with God. Jesus commanded us to love God and to love our neighbors. Yet so many around us are in need. Join us as we reflect on the command to love your neighbor by discussing select scripture passages in Matthew guided by *We Cry Justice*. *We Cry Justice* is a collection of devotions designed to provide hope, strength, and inspiration for those in the margins through a reimagining and reexamination of Biblical texts. Thursdays in May @7pm on Zoom

May 4 th	Is Ending Poverty Possible?	Matthew 26:1-16
May 11 th	Jesus was a Poor Man	Matthew 25:31-46
May 18 th	Give us this Day Our Daily Bread	Matthew 6:9-13
May 25 th	The Power to Cry Justice	Matthew 5:1-12 (Acts 2:1-21)



















PLUM SUMMER PICNICS AND VESPERS

PLUM Summer picnics will take place once again this summer. They will take place the 4th Thursday of the summer months: **June 22nd at Dormont Park, July 27th at Settler's Ridge and August 24th at White Oak Park**. Additional information will come at a later date.



Bethany Ev. Lutheran Church

May 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1  May Day	2 	3	4  Bible Study BIBLE STUDY 7PM ZOOM	5  BROTHERHOOD 6:30PM TAIZE SERVICE 7PM ZOOM	6 
7  WORSHIP 9:15 ZOOM 3PM	8 	9 	10  WORSHIP MEETING 7PM	11  Bible Study BIBLE STUDY 7PM ZOOM	12 	13
14  WORSHIP 9:15 ZOOM 3PM	15  KANE GROUP 10AM BELC COUNCIL 7PM ZOOM	16  ELECTION DAY	17  WHAT'S NEXT MEETING 7PM ZOOM	18  Bible Study BIBLE STUDY 7PM ZOOM	19 	20  Armed Forces Day
21  WORSHIP 9:15 COFFEE HOUR ZOOM 3PM	22  PLUM BOARD MEETING 7PM ZOOM	23	24 	25  Bible Study BIBLE STUDY 7PM ZOOM	26 	27 
28  WORSHIP 9:15 ZOOM 3PM	29  MEMORIAL DAY	30	31	