

The Spirit at Bethel



March 2011

Sherwood Park, Alberta

Sharing the love of Jesus with a hurting world



The Journey of Lent

Pastor James

The Word of God is filled with stories of journeys. During the great flood, Noah and his family journeyed through the waters that covered the earth for forty days. Israel journeyed through the wilderness for 40 years. Elijah spent 40 days on his journey through the wilderness to the mountain of God. Jesus also spent 40 days journeying in the wilderness before He announced His public ministry. Some say that our lives are a journey – a journey that is full of many triumphs, challenges, and learning experiences. We are about to embark on a journey through the season of Lent. During this 40-day journey (since Sundays in Lent are not counted as days of Lent), we encounter the truth of our mortality (on Ash Wednesday) and also the truth of life everlasting and the resurrection of the body (on Easter Sunday). Throughout this journey, our focus is on Jesus, our King of Kings and Lord of Lords, who died for us so that we might be the recipients of His grace and mercy.

On Ash Wednesday (March 9) our worship service at 7:00 p.m. will include:

- ◆ a time for both private and public confession;
- ◆ the assurance of our forgiveness through Jesus' death and resurrection;
- ◆ the imposition of ashes as we recognize our own mortality;
- ◆ Holy Communion as we celebrate the real presence of our Lord and Savior.

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The Spirit at Bethel is the monthly newsletter of Bethel Lutheran Church, Sherwood Park, Alberta. Kris Buchholtz and Laila Klaszus are co-editors.

We welcome articles (650 words or less) of people and events relevant to Bethel and the Church. Please leave a copy of your submission with Ann in the office or email it to bucbunch@telus.net with the following SUBJECT LINE:

April Spirit—YOUR NAME.

If possible, also include pictures, preferably as separate attachments. The deadline for the April issue is **Monday, March 21, 2011.**

(...Continued from page 1): The Journey of Lent

The theme for this year's Lenten messages is "The Healing Power of the Cross". On the cross, the King of Glory died and then rose again, and in doing so He made all healing possible. There are many ways that Jesus' journey to the cross and His resurrection have healed humanity. During our Lenten services, we will hear some of these stories.

The Wednesday worship services will be preceded by a light supper. The proceeds of the free-will offering for the suppers will be given to the Canadian Lutheran World Relief for their work in Third World countries.

You are invited to join us for these fellowship suppers and worship services. On Ash Wednesday (March 9), the Men's Breakfast Group will serve us the traditional supper of sausages and pancakes.



(Our) Time for Lent

Amy Ostermayer

The season of Lent is a time to reflect on Jesus' death and resurrection. In order to draw closer to Jesus during this period, some people choose to give up something for Lent. For a few years now, a group has chosen to give Jesus our time for Lent. I would ask you to prayerfully consider committing to a half hour or one hour daily time slot to spend in prayer and meditation in His Word. This prayer time will begin on Wednesday March 9th (Ash Wednesday) and continue until the celebration on Easter Sunday.

Participants in past years have found it extremely encouraging to make this commitment with a community of believers and have seen God work mightily through this time of prayer. If you feel led to join, please sign the bright yellow poster on the bulletin board in the church foyer. If you have any questions please contact Amy Ostermayer at 780-464-6436



Mission of the Month: Kenya School Project

Pastor Marv

Rev. Dennis and Lornah Meeker visited with us in June, 2010. While they were here, they shared with us their vision of building a ten-room school in the Kisumu area of west Kenya. The school will be used to educate orphans – and will, at the same time, teach the children about the love of Jesus. They invited Bethel to come there with a mission team in 2011 and assist by building the initial four classrooms.

We have 13 members of Bethel who are going to Kisumu in August. As part of this school project, we are also installing a playground. This playground was "salvaged" from a school in Calgary and has been refurbished for installation. The total cost for building the four classrooms and installing the playground is projected to be between \$23,000 and \$25,000. If you can assist with this project financially, please make your cheque out to Bethel Lutheran Church and earmark it "Kenya Mission." Each team member pays his/her own way on this trip. Therefore all financial support goes directly to funding the project.

If you have any questions please contact Pastor Marv.

Spring Contemporary Choir

Normay Wiebe

You are invited to join our Spring Contemporary Choir, singing songs such as *The Voice of Truth*, *Anyway*, *Praise You in the Storm*, *Give Me Words to Speak* and *This is How It Feels to Be Free*, as well as many other top-charted songs from Christian radio. Practices will be Tuesdays, March 1 through April 12 (excluding March 29), and we will do presentations during Sunday morning worship services on March 20 and April 17.

Please contact Normay at 780-417-7757 or normay.wiebe@bethelchurch.com to receive a CD and book.



How Has God Shaped You?

Puzzles . . . some 500 pieces . . . some 1000 pieces. Some people enjoy putting them together. Yet they can be frustrating at times – because it seems that the pieces just don't seem to fit. What do you do with them?

Some people feel the same in regard to serving. What is my shape? How do I fit in? Where do I fit? . . . Sometimes we may even feel that we “just don't seem to fit.”

Do you realize that God has uniquely shaped you for service? At our stewardship fellowship meals on March 6 and 7 Pastor Marv will help you understand how God has uniquely shaped you and how you, like a piece of a large puzzle, can fit into service for him.

All adults who have financially supported Bethel in 2010 are invited to attend one of the 4 stewardship meals. They will be held on:

- ◆ Sunday, March 6, at 12:30 and 4:00 p.m., and
- ◆ Monday, March 7, at 11:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.

In addition a member of our Parish Planning Council will highlight some ministry items for 2010 as well as opportunities in 2011.

If for some reason you didn't receive an invitation in the mail and you wish to attend, please contact the church office today (February 27) at 780-417-7775. The meals will be catered and reservations are necessary.

Blessings,
Pastor Marv



Consecration Sunday ... March 20!

Pastor Marv

Beginning on February 27, Bethel will embark on a stewardship journey that will teach the Biblical principles of generous giving. This stewardship emphasis is based on the Biblical perspective of the need of the giver “to give” for his/her own spiritual growth, development and well-being. The church, as the body of Christ, is not a social club where members “pay their dues” – we are followers of Jesus who, in response to Jesus' unselfishly giving himself for us, also want to give unselfishly. Therefore, our worship community will be encouraged to move toward proportionate and systematic financial giving. All will be encouraged to prayerfully consider the question: “What percentage of my income is God calling me to give?” This is a discipleship question!

Leading up to Consecration Sunday, we will have a series of Sunday messages based on the following themes:

- February 27: *The Lordship of Jesus*
- March 6: *Denying Self and Taking Up the Cross*
- March 13: *Whose Is It Anyway?*
- March 20: *How God Has Shaped Us (The Body of Christ)*

On March 20 (Consecration Sunday) we will invite all in our worship community to make a financial commitment for 2011 by filling out an “Estimate of Giving” card. This is a voluntary decision – the commitment procedure is done in such a way that no one is personally embarrassed if he or she chooses not to fill out a card.

Lent is the season of the church year when we focus on the cross of Jesus. What commitment he demonstrated by his willingness to die for us! Consecration Sunday is an opportunity to respond so that we can “share the love of Jesus with a hurting world.”



Baptismal Classes

The Psalm writer said, “Children are a gift of the Lord.” (Psalm 127:3) Prepare for the “new birth” of your gift of God through the waters of Baptism by attending the Faith Legacy Baptismal classes during the Sunday School hour on March 20 and 27 in Room #10 upstairs. Parents are invited to attend even before their child is born. It’s never too early to begin to plan for your child’s spiritual future. For more information, please contact Pastor James or Deloyce.



Faith Legacy Founder is Coming To Bethel

Judith Burns

As many of you have noticed, there’s a new emphasis at Bethel. It’s called Faith Legacy. The goal of Faith Legacy is to train parents to be the spiritual teachers of their children. The author of Faith Legacy, Dr. Roger Theimer, is coming to Bethel on Thursday, March 24th from 7 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. for a time of encouragement for parents. Dr. Theimer will be presenting creative yet simple strategies for becoming more involved in the faith lives of your children.

If you were to ask a Christian parent what is their greatest wish for their children, many of them would say, “Seeing my children have a saving relationship with Jesus for the rest of their lives.” But statistics tell us that less than 10% of church families are talking about their faith in the home. And yet church leaders agree that parents are the most important person of influence in one’s faith formation. We also know that 70% of young people who grow up in the church stop attending church once they leave home. Some return to the church after they have children; most do not.

It doesn’t matter how old your children in the home are, or even if they’ve already left home. There are things that you can do to share your faith with your children in meaningful ways. If you’re one of the many parents who feels as though there “must be something more I can do” to make faith an everyday part of your family’s life, then this is the evening for you! Please plan to attend this special opportunity.



Welcomed into the Kingdom

Welcomed into God’s Kingdom here on earth by the rite of Baptism was the following saint:

Bastian Scott Twele -
son of Scott and Shaylene Twele



Connecting with Bethel

Pastor Matt

In the book *This Beautiful Mess*, the author uses the metaphor for the Church of a compost heap. Sometimes it’s messy and smelly and in decay, but it’s also fertile ground for life and growth. It’s a great metaphor, and it’s also been my experience.

A couple of times each year we have a three week class called *Connecting with Bethel*. It’s a way for people new to Bethel to hear about the story of Bethel and to find out more about what goes on here. The three weeks focus on Belonging, Growing and Serving. The next sessions are March 10, 17 and 24 from 7:00 – 8:15 PM.

Bethel is a beautiful mess because it’s made up of people whose lives are beautiful messes, and I’m glad it’s not something we have to hide. The kindness of Jesus has unnerved us and invited us to be together on this journey. Please join us if you’re interested in finding out more about Bethel.

“Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.”

~ Ephesians 5:25-27 ~



Kid's Spring Musical: "Happily Forever After"

Normay Wiebe



We all know that kids love knights, castles, swords and tiaras – all the elements of our favorite fairy tales. This year's kids' musical, *Happily Forever After - A Musical for Kids*, is no fairy tale, but is actually about the Kingdom of God. It's a story complete with a brave knight, a beautiful princess, a dangerous dragon, and a prince. This son of the king shows up as a carpenter (sound familiar?) who comes to help people who have built their castle — in fact their very lives — on sandy ground, far away from the king. The simple carpenter leads the way down the "narrow road" into a different kind of life lived in a whole new kingdom, taking on the Dragon Doom along the way. While their lives change along the way, it is their connection to the king's son that gives them entrance into the Kingdom. Obviously, this is no fairy tale. This is the gospel, set in an engaging allegory.



Boys and girls alike will enjoy being in this cast, wearing these costumes and singing these cool songs! It is our heart's desire that the whole world would learn how to live happily forever after in the Kingdom of God!

Our musical is open to everyone in Grades 1 through 6, and practices will be held on Saturday mornings from 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM, from March 12 through May 7 (omitting March 26 and April 23).



Dress rehearsal will be held Saturday, May 15 at 3:30 PM, with a performance at 6:00 pm. As well as two more on the morning of Sunday May 16 at 9:45 and 11:00 AM.

For more information or to register for the Spring musical, contact Normay Wiebe at 780-417-7757 or normay.wiebe@bethelchurch.com.



A Whole Lot of Fun... and Exercise, Too!

Laila Klaszus

Who says seniors don't have fun? The pictures below prove otherwise! After enjoying a delicious ham dinner prepared by Hermann and Sharon Bernhardt and their crew of helpers and viewing a fascinating lecture by Dr. Paul Maier, the seniors whooped it up by making use of the entire Activity Centre for exercise accompanied by moans and groans (just kidding).



In the games department, Mel had us pass the marbles (no pun intended) - not an easy feat, but it was fun. We had invited seniors from Concordia and Redeemer Lutheran churches, who were great sports—they joined right in.



The next meeting of the Recycled Teens will take place Monday, April 4. Bring a potluck dish and be prepared for a rewarding afternoon of fellowship!



“I Was Changed Forever”

Arlen Salte

Dear Friends at Bethel,

On behalf of the thousands upon thousands of people who attended Break Forth Canada 2011, please allow us to say a hearty thank you to everyone at Bethel!

Bethel brings more volunteers and Volunteer Committee Heads than any other church . . . anywhere! The majority of the Break Forth Ministries staff also comes from Bethel.

Through your hearts, your hands and your often very tired feet, you were used by God to see eternal transformations in many lives.

While Break Forth Canada is the largest event of its kind in North America (and according to Robin Mark, in the world), it is much more than that. It's more than the concerts, the speakers, the classes, the festivals and the exhibit show.

It's about changed lives.

Hundreds of comments have flooded the Break Forth Ministries office saying how God worked in their lives. Here are just a few:

“The weekend opened my eyes and heart to the love and forgiveness of Jesus.”

“I especially was encouraged by attending the prayer room where two people inspired me to carry on.”

“I arrived at Break Forth beat up and tired, and came home rejuvenated and ready to move forward.”

“It changed my approach to church leadership and pastoral ministry.”

“Break Forth really broke though the wall that I was building between Christ and me, and showed me that I need him to live life, for it is not my life anymore. It is His.”

“A life changing experience that provided me with the knowledge, skills and confidence to go out into the world and share the gospel of Jesus.”

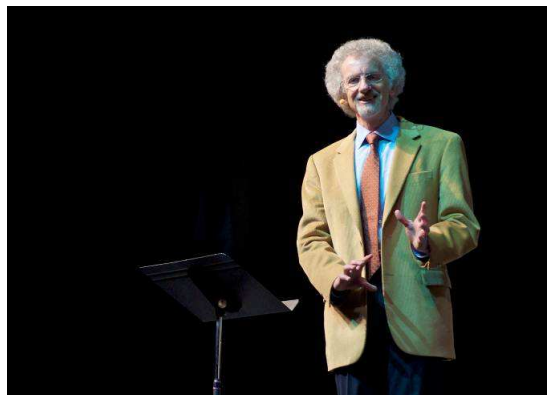
“Frankly, it's a touch of heaven. Gathering with so many people in love with Jesus, praising him, focusing on him, sharing our love for him... I can hardly wait for more.”

“I thank my loving Heavenly Father for meeting me at Break Forth; He truly restored my soul.”

“I love how Break Forth reminds me, every time I go, that I am part of a vibrant, creative, loving, beloved community of believers. It's like coming home.”



Volunteer Committee Heads and staff on Stage



Philip Yancey shares

“What's So Amazing About Grace.”

(...Continued from page 6): "I Was Changed Forever"

"God has always been with me but He has come ALIVE in me. And bring it on! I'm ready to let Him work in me and through me."

"It was one of my top ten life experiences. **I was changed forever.**"

Throughout Break Forth Canada and almost one month later, we are still hearing from presenters, registrants and vendors about how wonderful the event was and how especially wonderful our volunteers were. We credit much of this to the host of volunteers from Bethel. It seemed like there was no place we could go throughout the conference sites where we wouldn't run into Bethel members, faithfully serving with smiles, humility and grace.

As Philip Yancey recently wrote, "My, you guys are organized--the event worked like clockwork. We couldn't have been better cared for. Thank you and everyone for the hard work you do to put together such an inspiring, content-filled weekend. I know nothing comparable in all of North America."

As we work on our preparations for Break Forth Canada 2012 we encourage your prayers, that thousands more would be able to echo the words, "I was changed forever."



Brian Doerksen leads worship with thousands

In Christ,
Arlen and Elsa Salte

You are invited to a

FAMILY EASTER AFTERNOON

at Bethel Lutheran Church
Saturday, March 5th
1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Come and learn about
the true meaning of Easter!

activities

crafts



music

stories

Invite your family and friends!

Please **RSVP** by **Wednesday, March 2**
to the church office (780-417-7775) or
DeJoyce: (dejoyce.elle@bethelchurch.com)

