

FROM THE PASTOR

I love Maya Angelou, the great poet and author because like me, she had a love of words – no, not just written words, by which she made her living, but words that are full of life and vigor, which pulse with passionate feeling.

In her autobiography she writes, “Words mean more than what is set down on paper. It takes the human voice to infuse them with shades of deeper meaning.” I believe this is true, and this is why I’m not fond of email or text messages. To some degree, a scribbled note is far better because you can occasionally tell if it was written with gentleness or scrawled in anger. But words which are merely typed on a screen lose their nuance and subtlety which the human voice provides, becoming utilitarian tools rather than things of beauty.

Well, as much as I love words, I crave silence at times. I ache for a space in which words, spoken or written, are set aside and in their place is an opening for God. But when I try to be silent, I become aware of the dull, drone of noise which crowds out God’s heavenly whispers. Sometimes the sound comes from a blaring radio and other times, more often actually, it comes from within. My laundry list of “coulda, shoulda, woulda” block pretty much everything else and in frustration, distract me from God.

I’ve see this tendency in worship, where people often seems uncomfortable if the pace is deliberately slowed to allow time for silent space and thought. Several times I have tried a silence exercise with children and teens, challenging them to be silent for just one minute. Almost without fail, giggles will erupt well before 60 seconds have passed.

Simply being present in the moment and listening for GOD is hard work; it takes a deliberate, concentrated effort to simply be still and wait on the LORD. Yes, my soul may desire to wait in silence, but my mind is consumed far too much with this world and its many demands.

Today I am thankful for Angelou's words of wisdom. Tomorrow I'll try again to leave my words behind and, as the psalmist says, to let my soul wait in silence for the One who meets me there, and thankfully, gives me strength for the journey.

Easter Sunday in the Sanctuary!

Is there a more glorious Sunday than Easter Sunday? Easter worship in the sanctuary of First Bethel Church is a singularly beautiful and magnificent experience for people of all ages! Come and share the exciting news of Jesus' resurrection with family and friends on Sunday March 27 at 9 and 11 a.m. You can be sure that there will be dazzling Easter flowers, incredible music to inspire your soul, and the wondrous story of God's love which burst from the tomb and into the world forevermore!

Easter Sunrise Service!

Celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ in a splendid Easter Sunrise Service in the beauty of South Park! Gather as we did last year, in the field adjacent to the Wave Pool Parking lot on Sunday March 27 at 6:45 a.m. for music, fellowship and the joy of a new and glorious day! There is plenty of parking, no hills, no long walks and all of the anticipation Easter brings forth. Simply drive down Corrigan Drive and follow the signs for the Wave Pool to experience the good news, "Christ is Risen!"

Maundy Thursday Seder Meal

Boruch Haba! WELCOME! With those words we will begin a traditional Jewish Passover Seder on Maundy Thursday, March 26 at 7:00 p.m., sharing the very meal Jesus shared with his disciples in the Upper Room.

About this holiday, it is written: "And you shall tell your child in that day, saying: It is because of that which was done...when I came forth out of Egypt."

We will gather together as a family of families to remember the bondage of our ancestors, so that we, as sons and daughters, may be inspired to cherish the freedom we now have, to recognize the bondage of those who are not yet free, and to encourage our daughters and sons to help in the struggle to free all men and women. On this evening, the bond of love and family will reach out from this gathering to unite us with all believers in remembering and in hope.

We are an old people; our history reaches back over 4000 years. In that history, our forebears have seen bondage and freedom, trial and triumph, high achievements and terrible disasters. Through it all God delivered the people and God's mission continued. Celebrate the power and love of God!

Contact the church office at 412-835-0700 to make your reservations. Seating will be limited so call early and make this a powerful experience for your entire family!

Good Friday Tenebrae Service

Shadows. Good Friday is all about the gathering of shadows around the one we know of as the Light of the World. On one of the most poignant days of the year, we'll join Jesus as he walks into the shadows for the sake of us all. Be with us on Good Friday evening, March 25 at 7:30 p.m. for our Tenebrae Service as we remember Jesus' last hours and the love which led him to the cross. Retrace his steps, remember his passion, and resolve to keep a faithful watch. Easter Sunday is all the brighter for having walked with Jesus on this sacred night.

Taize Prayer Service

For the last several decades' thousands of Christians and seekers from all parts of the world have experienced the presence of God in fresh and replenishing ways through the contemplative worship services that have grown out of the Protestant monastic community in Taize, France.

Now First Bethel Church is offering a 55-minute Taize Prayer Service beginning Tuesday, March 15 at 7:00 p.m. In the softly candlelit sanctuary, those who gather will have opportunities to experience the presence of God through meditative music, Scripture readings and moments of silence and reflection. The Taizé service is a wonderful way to experience inner stillness and peace in the midst of so much outer activity. There's no sermon or offering taken – rather it seeks to create a place of peace within our hearts for God to dwell and speak. All are invited!

Lenten Study Group!

What would you say if someone asked you, “Why should I follow Jesus?” Hmm...

Our culture tells us that we’re Number #1 and that the best way to live your life is to focus only on ourselves, after all, “It’s all about me!” But that has a very hollow ring to it, doesn’t it? Life lived solely to satisfy MY desires and MY appetites is shallow and meaningless – there has to be more!

Thankfully there is. For the past 2,000 years, millions have discovered that following Jesus is the best way to live, and that this kind of life gives much more satisfaction than a self-centered life ever could, but how do we do that today? It’s not easy. It requires sacrifice. It takes discipline, but it fills the emptiness in our hearts like nothing else.

Join us as we learn to live and love like Jesus beginning Wednesday February 17 from 6:45-8:15 p.m. for Lead Beyond Our Walls, a fresh and challenging opportunity to become the kind of disciple that can make a lasting impact on the world!

Bistros are Back

The first two of five Bistros this year will be done to raise money for church education building improvements. Kings School Kids, along with any other interested parties, will be serving Bistros on February 17th and 24th. If you can provide a dessert for either day or you are willing to help please call the Kings School Kids office and talk to Deb, Lynda or Charlene. We would love to get you involved.

Even if you can't help please come and eat. We have two special events planned:

Wednesday, February 17th – A Picnic in February. We will be serving picnic food in a picnic atmosphere. Get out of the house and come enjoy chicken, potato salad and beans. A great way to feel warm even if the outside is not cooperating!

Wednesday, February 24th – A Day at the Ball Park. Now that the Steelers have gone on break, it's time to start thinking about the Pirates (while still rooting on the Pens!). Come out on the 24th for a ball park meal and fun. You'll love it!

These funds will be used to toward improvements to the Church Education Building.

SAVE THE DATE in APRIL!

*Our First Bethel UMC
Family will honor the Rev.
Deborah Dennick-Ream*



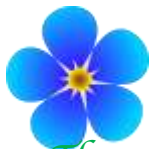
and your presence is requested!!

*We will gather on a Sunday in April in
appreciation of Deb's service & retirement as
Deacon and celebrate the beginning of her
role as Kings School Kids Education
Specialist.*

*Please stay tuned for specifics on date &
details in the Sunday Worship Bulletin in
March or call the church office.*



*We want to make sure all
of Deb's family can join us,
so plans will be announced
when finalized.*



Dear First Bethel,

*Thank you so much for the wonderful gift
that you gave me at Christmas time.*

*I will put that directly into my retirement
account!*

*Your thoughtfulness was greatly
appreciated.*

Sincerely,

Deb Dennick-ream

A Christmas Thank You from Outreach

*The Outreach Committee would like to thank
everyone who gave so much and so graciously to all
of the missions on the Angel Tree and to the Head to
Toe Tree. All of the groups, SHIM, Ward Home,
ASP, the Kitchen workers, Kings School Kids and
the Quilters, have expressed their thanks and
amazement at your generosity. The children and
young people at "the Melting Pot" who received the
gifts on the Head to Toe Tree loved everything!*

*The Quilting Group, who are a direct part of the
Outreach committee, want you to know that the gift
cards you gave to them will keep them going for the
near future!*

First Bethel, You are amazing!





Thank You – for the work and the message

On behalf of myself and our congregation I would like to thank the cast, crew and directors of our Christmas Pageant for their time and work. Our world these days seems to be having more and more trouble getting along. Instead of spending our energy building on the places where we are alike we pick and pick until there are open wounds everywhere. “A Christmas Present” by Allison deKanell sent the message that Jesus came for the world and that our mission is to keep that message alive and spread it over the earth.

Thank you for sending that message!

Pageant Cast

Liturgist.....	Madison Newman
Dude.....	Julia Pauline
Child 1.....	Ayden Bowser
Child 2.....	Shane Danahey
St. Francis.....	Grace Passios
St. Nicholas.....	Ella Harmon
Signora La Befana.....	Shannon Evans
Spokes-Shepherd.....	James Pauline
Spokes-Sheep.....	Jake Zeminski
Spokes-Angel.....	Lilly Zeminski
Wise Alien.....	Michael Taylor
Magus 1.....	Kadin Gray
Magus 2.....	Michael Spotts
Mary.....	McKenna Spotts
Joseph.....	Owen Newman

Various cast (angels, shepherds, animals, etc) Grayson Bowser, Jessica Evans, Alex Lauver, Caden Powell, Trent Powell, Alyssa Scabilloni, Tayler Spotts, Caroline Taylor

Producers and Directors: Brittany Barnicott, Deb Dennick-Ream, Zane Dennick-Ream, Charlene Phillips, Brenda Sullivan, Briann Thompson, and Amy Zeminski.





Dear First Bethel family,

I wanted to thank you for your patience and support of me during my Eagle Scout Project. I hope that the Outdoor meditation/worship area lasts for many years to come, and that it is very useful for small group worship, Bible study and individual meditation. It was quite a project! I learned some new skills, and also a little something about hard work and perseverance! The project is something that means a lot to me and my family. I also want to thank the Church membership for their generous donations, and for the guidance given during my project!

Sincerely,

*David Zahniser
Life Scout
Boy Scout Troop 215*

***Thank
You!***

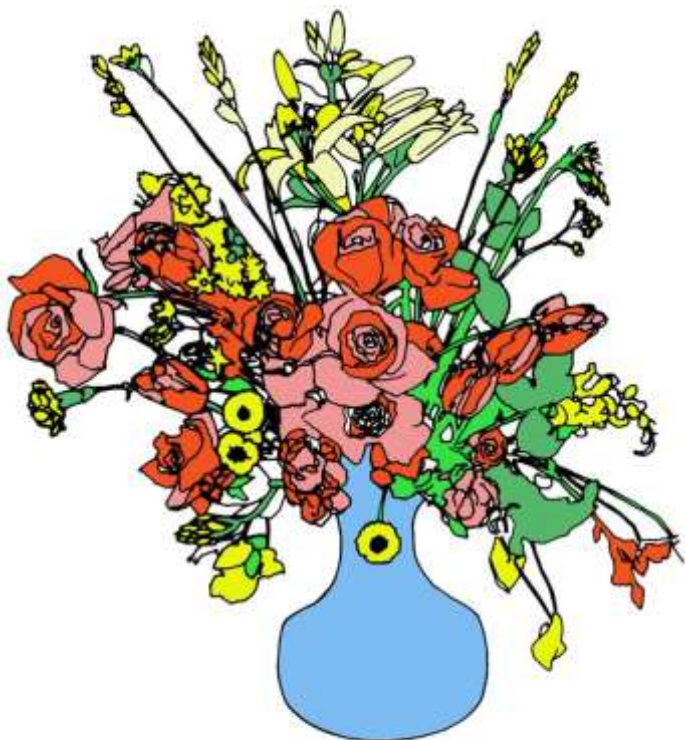


Altar Flowers

Ever wonder what people have to do to get flowers on the church altar on Sunday mornings. It's easy:

- Sign up on the flower chart on the new bulletin board in the entryway.
- Call the church office before Wednesday (412-835-0700) on the week of your gift and let her know what the dedication should be.
- Put \$25 in the offering plate with a note that it is for altar flowers.

And it's done! You can even take the flowers home after the 11 a.m. service. Try it! You'll like it!



Flowers This Week



Confirmation 2016

Confirmation Class for the youth in seventh and eighth grade began on Sunday, January 17th. The class meets at 12:30 on Sunday afternoons. Please keep these young people and their teachers, parents and mentors in your prayers. We

ask for your prayers for their field trip on Saturday, February 13th. The class will be traveling to Camp Allegheny for a day-long retreat. They will be stopping at the Flight 93 National Memorial as a part of that day. The class will be confirmed on Palm Sunday, March 20, 2016.

Thank you in advance for your thoughts and prayers

Sunday School

Sunday School is doing quite well. We do, however, need people to substitute teach when the regular teachers are not available. If you are interested, please contact Deb Dennick-Ream 412-212-1414 or dream2514@Comcast.net. You could also stop in (Bay 5 in the Education Building) and talk to Charlene Phillips on Sunday morning.



What's an offering envelope, anyway?

Stephanie Alstadt

That may seem like a silly question, but maybe it's silly to assume that everyone knows what the envelopes are, and how to use them. So here's some Q & A:

1. Who gets envelopes? Envelopes are issued to anyone who pledges and identified givers.
2. What's an identified giver? Anyone who's given either by check or in a labelled envelope in the past calendar year.
3. What's with the envelope number in red? Each giving unit (person, couple or family) is assigned an envelope number. That's how your giving is tracked, so you don't have to put your name on the envelope.
4. What are the categories for giving? These are listed in red at the top left:
 - General Ministries funds the church budget (salaries, utilities, insurance, etc.)
 - Fulfilling the Faith pays the loan that funded our remodeling (notably the ramps, Foyer, Parlor & Founders' Hall.)
 - Other is for Designated Giving to the area you specify (like ASP, Children's Ministries, VBS, Trustee's, etc.) Funds that are Designated are ONLY used for the specified area.
 - Total enclosed is just what it says—check to make sure that it matches the amount of the check or cash enclosed.
5. What happens to my envelope after the ushers take up the Offering? This is when the Counters' work begins. Loose cash is separated from the envelopes. Then each envelope is opened and the Total enclosed is matched to the check or cash enclosed. Then the cash & checks are deposited at the bank. This means that ONLY your envelope is seen by Karen Betler, our Finance Administrator. So it's very important that you fill out the envelope carefully—the memo line on your check will help you remember BUT Karen won't see it.

6. Why use the envelopes? It's the most efficient way for us to record your giving. You'll be issued quarterly reports of your giving, and an annual report (for tax purposes.) If you've pledged, it will help you keep track of your goal.
7. What if I wasn't issued envelopes? If you'd like to receive envelopes, please contact Karen at the church office.

I think this about covers it, but feel free to ask me, or contact Karen if you have any other questions.



Lenten Giving Calendar

A Lenten Giving Calendar that will benefit Home of Hope and Home of Hope Orphanage can be found in the Narthex. This calendar will guide children, youth and families through the days of Lent helping them learn more about the children of Zimbabwe. At the same time, they will find that they might appreciate what they have a little more. Please pick up your copy. After Easter bring any funds you collected into church and put it in the offering plate. First Bethel will make sure it gets to the Nyadire Connection.

Thank you in advance!



Kings School
Kids
Preschool
Registration
for the
2016/17 school year is
going on now. Please
contact the KSK office
for more information.
Hurry, classes fill up
fast!

Calling all children of First Bethel! It's time for our Easter festival. Join us March 26 from 11:30 – 12:30 for activities, stories, crafts, pizza lunch, egg hunt and so much more. Reservations are made by calling Lynda or signing up in the Narthex.

Mark your calendars
for the annual church
outing to a
Pirate Game

on August 21st at
1:30 p.m.

Tickets are
\$24.00/person.

Space is limited.

Reserve your ticket
today by calling Lynda
at 412-835-6141.

Let's Go Bucs!!

Mardi Gras

Life is too short to not join the fun on Fat Tuesday, February 9th at 7 p.m. Bring a finger food to share (snack, appetizer or dessert) and enjoy an evening of fun and fellowship. Sign up in the Narthex or by calling Lynda.





Easter Flowers are now available for order. Please fill in the form below and return to the church office. Orders must be received by March 9, 2016. ALL flowers are \$9 per 6 inch pot. Flowers can be picked up following the 11 am Easter Service. Flowers available for order include:

*Hyacinth
Lily
Tulip
Daffodil*

Order Form:

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Flower(s) ordered: _____
(Please list selected flower(s))

Number ordered: _____

Amount paid: _____ *(all flowers \$9)*

In memory of: _____

In Honor of: _____

LIBRARY NEWS

The First Bethel Church Library staff is looking forward to another great year after adding dozens of books across a broad range of categories in 2015. Among the latest:

In the Unlikely Event, a highly anticipated *Judy Blume* novel. Blume writes of a time when three passenger planes crashed in a span of just 58 days in her hometown of Elizabeth, N.J. It was the early 1950s. The crashes killed 119 people, some in their homes. Each plane went down near a school. What could have caused such a stunning series of disasters? Was this sabotage? The work of communists? An alien invasion? People's lives were profoundly changed. How did the community cope? At the center of the story is a ninth-grade girl named Miri and her family and friends. We also have another of Blume's numerous books, the young adult classic **Are You There, God? It's me, Margaret**.

- **The Oregon Trail: A New American Journey** is another popular 2015 book in the Library. The author, *Rinker Buck*, seeking to experience the dream of the westward pioneers in the 1800s, traveled 2,000 miles in a covered wagon pulled by stubborn mules – in 2011. His brother joined him on the trip. They carried canned goods for food and slept in or under the wagon. Buck said in an interview with the *Wall Street Journal*: “The people we met along the way were tremendously generous and kind. Traveling at 4 mph, you come to realize the country is just fine. Americans are still the way they were.” A review in the *New York Times* said Rinker's book is a “significant work of history and a moving personal saga” with “a heart as big as the country it crosses.”
- **You'll Get Through This: Hope and Help for Your Turbulent Times** by *Max Lucado* uses the *Old Testament* story of *Joseph* to demonstrate how God helps us through life's most difficult challenges -- even when all seems hopeless. Lucado, a minister and top-selling Christian writer of dozens of books, has long been a favorite of First Bethel readers. We now have 26 of his books in our Library. This is one of his latest.

And a reminder: Covers of several of our latest books are always displayed on the Library bulletin board in the hallway leading to Kings School Kids.

Book Club will meet Friday, February 19th, at 7:30 p.m. at Panera's in the South Park Shops. We will discuss *The Wright Brothers* by David McCullough. Here is a description of the book from Amazon.com:

Two-time winner of the Pulitzer Prize David McCullough tells the dramatic story-behind-the-story about the courageous brothers who taught the world how to fly: Wilbur and Orville Wright. On a winter day in 1903, in the Outer Banks of North Carolina, two unknown brothers from Ohio changed history. But it would take the world some time to believe what had happened: the age of flight had begun, with the first heavier-than-air, powered machine carrying a pilot. Who were these men and how was it that they achieved what they did? David McCullough tells the surprising, profoundly American story of Wilbur and Orville Wright.

Join us for a discussion of the book. Even if you haven't read the book, the book club is always a great place to pick up recommendations about books that others are reading. Also, the club is always open to suggestions for new books to read. New members are always welcome. And, anyone who has an interest in a particular book is welcome to join us.

The March selection is *The Boys in the Boat* by Daniel James Brown. That meeting is also at Panera's at 7:30 p.m. on March 18th.



Why are we going to Kentucky?

(by Gloria Stephan)

Our 17th ASP trip is planned for **June 19 – 25, 2016** and we will be assigned to a center somewhere in Kentucky. We plan to send at least two work crews (ideally each has 2 Adults and 5 Youth). Youth age 14 and up (or youth age 13 that have completed 8th grade) are strongly encouraged to participate. **Registration forms are available at the church, get yours in as soon as possible.**

You won't regret it, plus, you get that cool bandana!

ASP is a relationship-building ministry 'with construction on the side'. Each summer, volunteers from across the country go on an ASP trip in Central Appalachia to make homes warmer, safer and drier. More importantly, ASP volunteers build relationships with the families they serve, and with each other.

So instead of sending volunteers away for a week, why don't we just send the money to Kentucky? There are several reasons. Being in service together, and being sent out into the world gives us an opportunity to put our faith in action. It takes us out of our comfort zone, challenges us to be in selfless service to others, and helps us to grow as disciples. It's a week away to be immersed in another culture without the comforts of home. It's a chance to be in relationship with youth and adults from your church and other churches, and it puts things in perspective because you're far away from the normal daily routine with all the distractions and demands. You can't get in your car and go home. You become part of another community for just a little while. You are a small part of something much bigger than yourself, and you being there in Kentucky..... it just might be an answer to prayer.

And why do we send adults on ASP? The short answer is that it is a requirement of ASP and Safe Sanctuary guidelines, but that misses the point. Some adults have not had the opportunity to participate in a life-changing ministry like ASP before. Others may have done mission work as a youth, but not as an adult which sometimes requires more commitment. Relationships that are built and strengthened on ASP are solid and traverse age and other differences. Adults often sacrifice vacation, pay, or family obligations to go on ASP and the cost can be a barrier for some. There are adults that do completely fund their trip, but financial constraints should not hinder an adult that wants to be in service to others in God's name. Adults on ASP are given responsibility for supervising the youth, ensuring their safety, encouraging them, leading them in spiritual discussions, helping them to learn construction and social skills, following the rules themselves, and being good role models and mentors. That's a pretty tall order, but critical to a great ASP experience.

Just watch the interactions of volunteers (youth and adults) after they get back from being on an ASP trip together. You will see that they have built relationships with each other that will last for years.

Thanks for supporting ASP! Watch your bulletin for more opportunities to help again.

Relay for Life

The Relay for Life is June 25, 2016. It will run from 11 a.m. until 11 p.m. The children at Kings School Kids are still planning their Relay for Life Kid's Edition but the church is looking for people to help with the actual relay. If you are interested, please contact Deb Dennick-Ream at

412-212-1414.

FIRST BETHEL STAFF

Lead Pastor, Rev. Tom Barnicott

Deacon, Rev. Deb Dennick-Ream

Finance Administrator, Karen Betler

KSK Office Administrator, Charlene Phillips

Director of KSK and Children's Fellowship, Lynda Pore

Music Director, Ruth Finlay

Organist, Phil Himmler

***For information on events taking place at First Bethel,
please refer to this issue's calendar and articles, our
weekly bulletin, or call the church office
Monday through Friday,
9:30 am – 2:30 pm, at 412-835-0700.***

***THE DEADLINE FOR THE APRIL/MAY ISSUE
OF THE KINGS LIGHT IS 10 AM ON MARCH 23, 2015.***

WE WILL NO LONGER BE PRINTING MONTHLY.

***PLEASE HAVE YOUR ARTICLE IN ON TIME TO AVOID THE DISAPPOINTMENT OF IT NOT
APPEARING IN THE NEXT EDITION.***

CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE AT 412-835-0700 IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS.

