

The Pastor's Notebook

As you know by now, I am a history fan, and so in my reading I came across this story about Franklin Roosevelt, who often endured extremely long receiving lines at the White House. He complained that, as people shook his hand, no one really paid any attention to what he said.

One day, during a reception, he decided to try an experiment. To each person who passed down the line and shook his hand, he murmured, "I murdered my grandmother this morning." The guests responded with phrases like, "Marvelous! Keep up the good work. We are proud of you. God bless you, sir."

It wasn't till the end of the line, while greeting the ambassador from Bolivia, that his words were actually heard. Bewildered, the ambassador leaned over and whispered, "I'm sure she had it coming."

I've noticed something. There are people who offer the same sort of attention to Jesus. They offer respectful words and all, but they just aren't listening to what he says. If they were, there'd be more of his love in more obvious places in the world.



Now I know folks call him Lord and all, but if he's really Lord, then you'd think people would be kinder and more compassionate toward one another. If he's really the Savior then you'd think folks would be more appreciative, and show that gratitude by listening when he says, "Love your enemies." If he's really our Friend then you'd think folks would spend more time with him, enjoy him, and listen to his innermost thoughts as we share ours as well.

Thankfully, I see many listening and acting upon his teaching at First Bethel:

- We see it in youth on Mission Trips as they help people less fortunate and in others who take time to care for the homeless and hungry of Pittsburgh.
- We see it when there's a crisis in a family and all sorts of folks bring them food, care for their kids, offer them rides, and pray for God's strength.
- We recognize it when a stranger comes into our midst and folks reach out in interest and warmth.
- We feel it when we're the ones who've been bruised and battered by life and people surround us with caring hearts and listening ears, reminding us of our worth and encouraging us to press on in faith.

It all begins with really listening to Jesus, and then letting him love the world through us. As we move closer to the holiday of Pentecost – the day the Holy Spirit was given to the disciples - can you hear the Spirit of Christ speaking today?

God bless you!

Mothers' Day is Coming!



Who among us couldn't give a heartfelt testimony to the power and presence of the women in our lives? No doubt we would not be who we are today without their guidance, strength and love.

Don't miss an opportunity to honor the women of First Bethel on **Sunday May 14!** During the service we will recognize the newest mother present, the mother with the most children present, and the mother with the most children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

All women will be given a special gift, too! Join us at 9 or 11 a.m.!

Library News

We have all three of Swedish author *Fredrik Backman's* international bestsellers:



- **A MAN CALLED OVE** – A heartwarming tale about a cranky old man called “the bitter neighbor from hell.” Ove (pronounced Oh-VEH) doesn’t smile. He’s opinionated, set in his ways and thinks he’s surrounded by idiots. But no one knows about the pain and loss in his life. Everything begins to change when a couple with two little girls move in next door and accidentally flatten Ove’s mailbox with their U-Haul trailer. This book is hilarious, and sometimes sad. You’ll laugh, and you might cry.
- **MY GRANDMOTHER ASKED ME TO TELL YOU SHE’S SORRY** – Elsa is going on 8. She’s smarter than most kids her age but life is difficult. She’s bullied at school. Her parents are divorced. Her only real friend is her 77-year-old “Granny,” who tells her strange “fairy tales.” Granny is described in one review as “loony as a bat” but she dearly loves the child. When Granny dies, Elsa is left with a series of letters that send her on a journey that suggests the fairy tales are true. *Kirkus Reviews* calls this one “A touching, sometimes-funny, often wise portrait of grief.”
- **BRITT-MARIE WAS HERE** – This is the story of a 63-year-old woman who finds a happy new life after walking out of a loveless 40-year marriage. Now on her own, Britt-Marie finds a job as caretaker of a rundown small-town’s recreation center where she meets a fascinating cast of characters. She spends much of her time with noisy boys and girls and catches the eye of a policeman named Sven, who is obviously smitten with her. Britt-Marie soon finds

herself doing something she never dreamed of -- coaching a youth soccer team. She becomes a pillar of the community in a journey that illustrates “the unexpected friendships we make that teach us who we really are and the things we are capable of doing.”



- Your Library Staff

Church Directories Still Available!

If you don't already have a copy of our most recent church pictorial directory, there are extra copies available for \$5 each. The photos are a great way to learn the names of folks you see in church and there are also photos of groups and activities that you may want to be a part of. Pick up a copy in the back of the church, or see Melissa Zelinsky in the church office.



New Members!

Have you been attending First Bethel recently and do you feel as though you found a home here? Have you been “testing the water” and have realized that First Bethel is a place for you and your family to grow in faith?

Would you like to become a member?

There will be a new members' orientation on Saturday May 13 at 10:00 a.m. If interested please call Melissa in the church Office at 412-835-0700 or speak with Pastor Tom. Discover more about the United Methodist Church and how God can use you to make a difference!



The Nyadire Connection

by Stephanie Alstadt

Hello! As First Bethel's TNC Coordinator, I'd like to introduce you to The Nyadire Connection. It's a group of churches in Western PA that support the Nyadire United Methodist Mission in the country of Zimbabwe in Africa. Among the Mission's ministries are Medical Clinics, an orphanage (The Home of Hope) and a farm. You can find more information at www.nyadire.org.



As a coordinator, I'll keep First Bethel informed of TNC activities and coordinate sponsorships that support orphans at the Home of Hope and students through the Home of Hope Outreach (HOHO.) Starting this year, sponsorships will be renewed in Sept, so look for details in the July/August King's Light.

TNC's next fundraiser is a Rummage Sale at Christ UM Church in Bethel Park. The "Early Bird Sale" is Fri, May 19th from 5-7 pm, then from 8 am till 2 pm on Sat, May 20th. The First Bethel Men's "Garage Sale" is also on this Sat. so bargain hunters can plan accordingly!

Fill Your Bucket!

David Brooks, author of *The Road to Character*, created a moral bucket list in an effort to develop "eulogy virtues" — the traits praised at people's funerals. Qualities such as humility, dependence and energizing love offer more joy than any "résumé virtues" ever will, he writes.

"There's joy in freely chosen obedience to organizations, ideas and people. There's joy in mutual stumbling. There's an aesthetic joy we feel when we see morally good action, when we run across someone who is quiet and humble and good, when we see that however old we are, there's lots to do ahead."

Youth Group!

First Bethel's Youth group is for young people who like to have fun and are in Grades 6 thru 12!



- **April 29 (Sat) - Roller Skating at Neville Island.** Session is 1:00-4:00. Actual time to be determined. You may get a chance to see some of your favorite adults on skates! See Zeminskis for questions. \$6
- **May 6 (Sat) - Helping with church clean up day!** Let's help take care of our church home and have fun doing it. 8am-12noon (or however long you can help!) This will take place of our Sunday meeting.
- **May 20 (Sat) - Car wash fundraiser.** Lots of help needed! 10:00-2:00 Who wants to make a couple signs that can be seen from Library Road?
- **May 21 (Sun) - Our long-awaited ESCAPE ROOM EXPERIENCE.** See the Charlene or Corey Pauline for more information. Limited space so be sure to sign up! \$12.50
- **June 10 - Crohn's and Colitis walk.** Join Team Jackalope to support our own youth group member, Jack Hatten, as we walk together to raise awareness and funds for a cure. Heartwood Acres. More details to come!

Clean-Up Day



Join your friends from First Bethel Church as we beautify the grounds of the church for Mothers' Day and Spring. Many hands make light work, so lend a hand, enjoy the fellowship, and make your morning special! **MAY 6 from 9:00 a.m. – 12 noon.**

Promises, Promises

By Stephanie Alstadt

Yes, it's me again, and I'm STILL talking about promises. You may be relieved to know that I'm not talking about the promises we made when we joined First Bethel—at least not yet. You know, “to support First Bethel with our prayers, our presence, gifts, service and witness.” Now I'd like us to think about the promises that the **congregation** makes to the new member—and really, to each other.

First, the congregation (that's you and me) reaffirm our membership promises and receive the new members to our love & care. Then, “We will do all in our power to increase their (the new members') faith, confirm their hope and PERFECT them in love.” This means that we're to grow in our own individual Faith, AND grow as a Church Family. We're in this together!



So exactly how do we grow in Faith, as individuals and as a congregation? Well, it's time to go back to the membership promises.

- We need to pray together—not just in person, but also sharing joys & concerns.
- We need to be there for one another in all kinds of ways.
- We need to offer opportunities to give of time, talents and treasure.
- We need to witness to one another and the world—in what we say and what we do.

Please notice that these are things we NEED to do—not just things we'd like to do! Have you ever thought about WHERE so much of this takes place?

Now I know that the Church is not really a building—it's we Christians that are the Body of Christ in the world. But just like a

house is home for your family, the church building(s) are a spiritual home for our church family. Just as we prayerfully consider how to nurture our church family, we also have to carefully consider how to maintain our church home. Our Church Trustee's oversee this, but they are only able to do what we (the congregation) will support. It's just something I'll think about the next time I pay the utility bills for my family home.

Want To Volunteer?

Ministry Scheduler Pro is an online scheduling program used by First Bethel to schedule volunteers for several ministries. You can



access everything online and there's even an app!

If you're interested in serving as a **Liturgist, Greeter, Coffee Host, Counter, Nursery, Acolyte, Altar Guild or Prayer List Partner**, contact Melissa Zelinsky or Gloria Stephan. You can enter dates when you're unavailable to serve, request subs, and view the published schedules any time. The summer schedule will be published soon

so get your info in soon. Let us know if you want to be a part of these ministries and you don't have Internet access – that works too!

Summer Worship Schedule

Ah, the summer! It's a time for vacations, day-trips, and family gatherings. It's also a time when we gather for one worship service as one family of faith!

**Beginning June 4 and running through September 3
First Bethel Church will worship at 10 a.m. each week.**

**Children's Sunday School and Adult FaithLink
will gather at 9 a.m.**

For those of you who like to get an early start on your day we will also enjoy **OUTDOOR worship at 9 a.m.** in the Hillside Worship Center

Appalachia Service Project News!

Thanks to everyone that helped with an ASP Bistro! There were so many hands and hearts involved with the cooking, baking, setting up, serving, cleaning up, and yes, eating! What joy to see folks of all ages working together and breaking bread to support our 18th Appalachia Service Project mission trip to Perry County Kentucky. The Men's Ministry Group served 122 meals and collected \$744. The results of all five evenings of fellowship, food, and giving totaled 589 meals served and \$3450 raised for 21 volunteers to put "Love in Action" the week of June 18th. You can still contribute to offset the cost of the food and supplies by marking your envelope "ASP Bistro". Thanks again for your support, and....see you next year!



Bistro #1	2017 ASP Volunteers	3/8/17	98	\$536
Bistro #2	Chancel Choir	3/15/17	127	\$761
Bistro #3	Parents Dinner Group	3/22/17	135	\$764
Bistro #4	FB Ladies and Martha Circle	3/29/17	107	\$645
Bistro #5	Men's Group	4/5/17	<u>122</u>	<u>\$744</u>
			589	\$3,450

Twenty-one ASP volunteers from First Bethel will be traveling to Kentucky on June 18, but the official location assignment is now **Boyd County**. The center is on the border with WV and some projects to make homes warmer, safer and drier will be in Boyd County, KY, and some will be in Wayne County, WV. Volunteers will be staying at South Ashland United Methodist Church, in Ashland Kentucky and it is ASP's first time in this location. The Appalachia Service Project theme for 2017 is "Love in Action" so stay tuned for more information!

"No matter how plain a woman may be, if truth and honesty are written across her face, she will be beautiful."

- Eleanor Roosevelt

If you ride for pleasure, commute, or race...

If you ride an old or new bike, mountain or street...

If you have just started or have ridden for years



All are welcome to the Blessing of the Bikes Ride.

Join us in South Park
on June 4th at 3:00 p.m.
by the Ice Skating Rink for some fun &
fellowship

Bring your bike...Invite your friends!!!

*** Please sign up in the Narthex by May 30th ***



First Bethel Day with the Pirates!

Did you sign up in the Narthex for the Annual Church Pirate Game on July 16th 1:35 against the St. Louis Cardinals?

All kids 14 and under get a W.B. Mason Collectible Truck and after the game can go onto the field and run the bases!



Tickets are \$26.00 and space is limited so call Lynda Pore now! 412-835-6141