



The Bethel Lighthouse

Season 1 - Episode 10 - December 2013

Shining the Light of Christ to a broken world.

From the Pastoral Staff

Appreciative Inquiry Take Two

was a successful endeavor and from it we discovered three top priorities: 1) Serving generously, 2) Evangelism as a crucial part of adoption and 3) discipleship in preparation for service. Picture these three things as arrows pointing towards a target. Two goals have been defined as our primary targets: 1) Long term growth and stability and 2) Children, youth, young adults and young families. As we consider volunteer time and potential new staff, we need to focus on these two areas.



Speaking of new staff, it has been discussed with the Church Council and the Deacons in consideration of hiring Dr. Mary Hoppa as a counselor for Bethel Church. Take time to read the letter that was sent out this week. A congregational vote on this matter will be taken on Sunday December 29th during the Sunday School hour.

Men & Women of Bethel were able to help wrap Christmas gifts at Delta Community Church on Wednesday December 18th. They also helped put together the Christmas Baskets which were distributed on the following Saturday. Thanks to all who contributed: various AA groups, Girl Scouts, Campfire Girls and Everett Kiwanis as well as generous late donations by Delta and Bethel congregations, we were able to increase the families served from 40 to 60! Everyone's help is greatly appreciated.

The Women In Our Lives

1. Women's Bible Study meets on Wednesday nights starting with dinner at 5:30, which is shared by the men's study group. Donations are collected for the cost of the meal. Julia Youngs and Elaine Dow were guest leaders in the last month.
2. Dinners at the Salvation Army are hosted each month by some of the women. They are every third Monday at 4:00 p.m.
3. The last Second Saturday Sewing Circle was held on Nov 9th from 10:00 – 2:00. We had an additional session on October 26th in order to complete the advent calendar project. Felt advent calendars with tree ornaments in the date pockets were made for the regular attendees at children's church and also for our missionary families with children.
4. At a joint fundraiser for missions and women's ministries, held the Saturday after Thanksgiving, we raised over \$500.00.
5. We helped collect socks for the Trinity Lutheran College "Socktoberfest," which ended October 27th. Socks, hats and

gloves are now being collected for the "Bag Ladies Plus One" to distribute with sack lunches on Thursdays.

Children's Ministry

Some Personal Goals from the Staff

- Pray for each child in our ministry each week.
- Present the plan of Salvation to each child this coming year and to prayerfully lead a child to Christ.
- Make a list of next steps. Currently under preparation are:
 - - A teacher training program with the first two hour session on March 16th, 2014. This will be open to anyone interested or willing to teach and will use materials from Gospel Light.
 - Institute a series of activity fun days for our children. These would be divided according to age group. Each child will be encouraged to bring a friend and earn 100 points for their Children's Church account.

We are in the process of planning the placement and staffing of a sign-up table to be used for registering visiting children. Parents will be requested to fill out the card before sending their child to Sunday School or Children's Church.

Ground Zero Youth Group

"Hang Time" has been suspended for awhile due to lack of attendance.

From the Church Council

Church Council monthly reports are available in a notebook located in the Bethel Parlour. Hard copies are available upon request. Also, the back issues of the Bethel Lighthouse are there to read.

God sent a star to light the night for The Way, The Truth, The Life--His Son. He sent the Light of Life to prove His heart so we would invite His Son into our own. God has given us all the light we'll ever need to find peace on earth, goodwill to men. - *Pamela F. Dowd*

Best of all, Christmas means a spirit of love, a time when the love of God and love of our fellow men should prevail over all hatred and bitterness, a time when our thoughts and deeds and the spirit of our lives manifest the presence of God. - *George F. McDougall*

The Son of God became a man to enable men to become the sons of God. -*C.S. Lewis - (Mere Christianity)*

This is Christmas: not the tinsel, not the giving and receiving, not even the carols, but the humble heart that receives anew the wondrous gift, the Christ. - *Frank McKibben*



A Christmas Reflection - Justin Foltz
Wycliffe Appointee to Papua New Guinea

I am reminded during the Christmas season, perhaps more than any other time of the year, just how much Jesus modeled humility and how little I truly understand it. I think this stands out to me so clearly during this season because of the fact that we are celebrating the birth of Christ. And that is exactly where His modeling of humility really began – at His birth! How incredible is it that the

King of the Universe, the Name above all names, the Savior of our souls, was born in a place built for animals instead of humans? Not only that, but His chosen parents were young, humble in finance and position in society, and in many ways totally unprepared to be parents! After all, Jesus was not a ‘planned’ pregnancy for Mary and Joseph. How ironic that our culture has turned the lowliest, most humble of circumstances into a celebration of possessions, material gain, and a race to be ‘totally prepared’ for Christmas. This is strange to me, considering that our Lord, the very person who we are celebrating, was brought into the exact opposite kind of atmosphere. While people are pressured to finish up last-minute wrapping and purchasing, I think of how Mary was hurried to give birth to God’s son wherever possible. When the thoughts of covetousness can arise in my mind when I see others with ‘more’ than I have, I am reminded that my Redeemer fell asleep for the first time on a bed of hay. When I admire Christmas trappings and lights, I think about how Christ chose to come down from heavenly bliss and beauty beyond human comprehension in order to interact with sinners like me. During this holiday season, we can focus on the day itself, instead of the reason for His coming in the first place – to bring followers to Himself in order that they may be saved and transformed into the image of His son. He did not boast about what He had, though He had everything...but chose the epitome of humble earthly living in order to show us that God provides for those He loves in any circumstance. How better to be the example of true faith? During this time, I need to remember where my Lord and Savior was born. And I am so thankful He desired that humility above all else. What will our response be?

Awakenings Prayer Institute

(API Seminars and Retreats)

Upcoming Events.

January 4, 2014 Seminar 4

February 1, 2014 Seminar 5

February 14-16, 2014 Retreat

“Praying Our Triumphs & Challenges”

Cedar Springs, Sumas, WA

Cost: \$260 private or \$230 shared

The cost for each seminar is \$15.00 and includes lunch.

(Books are extra.)

API ONE—first year seminars

will be from 9:00—1:00 ending with lunch

API TWO—second year seminars

will be from Noon– 4:00 beginning with lunch



From the book “Lord, I Want To Know You” - by Kay Arthur

El Elyon - The Most High God

Not only is God our Elohim, He is also our *El Elyon*, the Most High.

El Elyon is the name that designates God as the sovereign ruler of all the universe. It was *El Elyon*, “God Most High, who has delivered” Abraham’s enemies into his hand (Genesis 14:20). It was the Most High God who was and is the Redeemer of Israel (Psalm 78:35). And it is the Most High God who rules today over the affairs of men. (Daniel 4:34-35)

If “the name of the God of Jacob” would “set you securely on high,” if you would trust Him to “send you help from the sanctuary, and support you from Zion” (Psalm 20:1-2), then you must know Him as *El Elyon* the Most High. For if God is not sovereign, if He is not in control, if all things are not under His dominion, then He is not the Most High, and you and I are either in the hands of fate, (whatever that is), in the hands of man, or in the hands of the devil. (pg. 15).

The truth of God’s sovereignty makes it easier to obey those commands in the New Testament that charge us to rejoice in all circumstances of life. God tells us that we are to “be filled with the Spirit...always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God even the Father. (Ephesians 5:18-20) (pg. 25).

Isn’t it easier to give thanks when you realize that your Father, *El Elyon* God Most High, is in control and that nothing can happen in His universe without His permission? Even when we are wronged by others, we can still give thanks. Although we have been given a free will, still God so rules and overrules that no person, angel, demon, or devil, nor any circumstances of life can thwart his plan. (pg. 26).



Weekly Sack Lunch Ministry continues to THRIVE!

The Bag Ladies Plus One every Thursday at 11:00. We can always use volunteers and donations. Thanks to everyone who

has helped us with this exciting ministry. Please continue to pray for Gretchen and her recovery from hip surgery.

Stewardship 2013

Total General Fund Income Year To Date	\$ 195,274.00
GF Budget Needed Through Dec. 15th, 2013	\$ 210,850.00
Percent Surplus / Deficit Budget	7.4 %
Monthly General Fund Need	\$ 18,275.00
General Fund Giving for December	\$ 9,920.78
Designated Fund Giving for December	\$ 3,376.61
Total Giving for December	\$ 13,278.80
Total Giving Year to Date	\$ 239,968.97