

Bethelite

A publication of Bethel Lutheran Church distributed twice monthly.



bethelmadison.org/bethelite

MY VERY BOLD PREDICTION

Pastor Mike

We should always be wary of predictions of the future.

Here are some doozies. In 1903, the president of Michigan Savings Bank warned Henry Ford's lawyer Horace Rackham to protect his money, saying "The horse is here to stay but the automobile is only a novelty—a fad." In 1906, composer John Philip Sousa warned the world about "The Menace of Mechanical Music" in an article attacking machines that brought symphonies into people's homes. In 1962, Decca Recording Music said of the Beatles, "We don't like their music, and guitar music is on the way out." Thomas Watson, Chairman of IBM, once said in 1943, "I think maybe

there is a world market for maybe five computers." Obviously there have been a lot of predictions that were very wrong. So, why would I want to venture in the land of prediction?

told the New York Times, "It will soon be possible to transmit wireless messages all over the world so simply that any individual can carry and operate his own apparatus." Debit cards became widely used in the

late 1980s, but in 1888, writer Edward Bellamy described a similar concept in his utopian novel *Looking Backward, 2000-1887*. In chapter IX, Dr. Leete explains to Mr. West that in the new world "A credit corresponding to his share of the annual product of the



nation is given to every citizen...and a credit card issued him with which he procures at the public storehouses, whatever he desires." Sometimes predictions are right on the money.

Well, I would say because sometimes bold predictions are right. More than 60 years before the first cell phone and 90 years prior to the introduction of "wi-fi," Nikola Tesla, a gifted electrical engineer and former right-hand man of Thomas Edison,

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Here is my prediction. Actually, it's more than a prediction. It is a certainty. When the season of COVID-19 has passed, whether that is in 8 months, 18 months, or 28 months, Bethel Lutheran Church will be stronger and more resolute than at almost any other time since its beginning in 1855. Rather than being something that is going to drag us down, it is going to be a period where we are going to innovate, adapt, grow deeper, and heal.

Innovation. If there is one thing that is clear it is that this coronavirus has created one of the most unprecedented situations since the birth of Christ. People, nations, states, companies, and organizations everywhere are scrambling, searching, groping for answers and solutions. Right now, there are none. That is true for churches as well. Churches have never been in a situation like this. The way forward is unknown. We are forced to come up with new ideas and new solutions. This is something that is a part of Bethel's DNA. This church has a history of innovation. The first Norwegian immigrants who formed Bethel were innovators and entrepreneurs. Changing languages from Norwegian to English, relocating to a new site, Radio Programs, the Bethel Bible Series, TV Broadcast ministry, Horizons Camp, international missions are all fruit of a spirit of innovation.

Adaptation. Life constantly changes around the world, in this country and in this great city. Bethel has lived through WWI, the Great Depression, WWII, Vietnam, farming crises, political upheaval, 9/11, and now COVID-19, and broken through language barriers. Adaptation has been a way of life. Churches don't get to be 160 years old if they can't roll with the punches. We are going to roll, and weave, and adjust to this new world.

Grow Deeper. Bethel has a deep history and great teachings from great leaders of the past. Pastors Wee, Swiggum, Borgwardt, Hanson, and White helped Bethel develop strong roots in Christ. During the season of COVID-19, we are going to push these roots even deeper. Like some tree roots that push deeper and deeper during a drought, we will go deeper in prayer, deeper in Scripture, deeper in faith, and deeper in our commitment to things that are important. In times of struggle like this, our values often get clarified.

Healing. Bethel is going to experience a kind of healing that is only possible in times like this. Yes, I said it. Even in times of sickness and death, God brings healing. Healing for individuals and healing for communities. It is no secret to anyone that Bethel went through a period of turbulence over the previous 2, 3, or 8 years. Some relationships became stressed. Some frayed. Some broke. But now, in this new COVID-19 season, we reach down and hold dearly to Jesus. We hold tight because we are reminded every day how important it is to be part of a worshiping community, singing together, praying together, laughing together, giving together, loving together, drinking coffee together, and yes – eating donut holes together. As we experience this separation and distance from each other, the Spirit of Jesus enters the void and helps mend hurt feelings, and misunderstood situations, and anxious hearts.

This is our future, good friends. Our future, even while the path is not clear, even while the answers are not yet here, even as we struggle and cry for the life of our beloved church community is a future of promise. When you add the Bethel DNA of innovation, adaptation, deep spirituality, desire for wholeness with the presence and power of Jesus Christ, you understand why I say these things are a certainty. In Romans 8:11, it says *“The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you.”* The same Spirit, the same power, that raised Jesus from the dead, now lives in you. Now Lives In Us, Bethel!

The certainty is this, dear friends, when we emerge from this (and we will), we will emerge stronger, healthier, more in love with each other, more focused on Jesus Christ, and more full of his Spirit than at any other time in Bethel's history. People from the community won't simply drive by other Lutheran churches to join us but will drive by every kind of church to be a part of this beautiful new life. Now, let's get to work. 🌈

–Mike Brown
Lead Pastor

Thank you to Medical Personnel

With Heartfelt Thanks



We join the community at large in our gratitude for you, members of the Bethel family, who work in health care settings. The sick and the well and the worried all depend on you.

We know that whatever your role is in a facility or in homes, on the front lines or in support, you face challenges, yes, and fears, that exceed any you've experienced or even imagined.

We thank God for you, for your skills, your compassion, and your dedication. We pray for your health and your safety. We ask God's blessings on you. And we ask God to be with those who love you and share your life, and thus your concerns, with you.

God will "be there at [your] labors" to give you ... strength at the noon of the day" and through the nights as well.

Thank you, each and every one. 🌈

Bike-a-Thon Update



Due to the current situation, the Bethel Horizons Bike-a-Thon scheduled for June 6 has been postponed. With the effect of the ongoing shutdown on Bethel Horizons, the Bike-

a-Thon will be critical to camp navigating through this crisis. By postponing, the event may be able to happen at a later date. We will also be able to spend more time recruiting riders and helping them to raise pledges for the important work of Bethel Horizons overall. To sign-up to be a rider for this event, please go to www.bethelhorizons.org/get-involved/bike-a-thon. 🌈

New Member Spotlight

Dave & Barb Parminter



We are re-joining Bethel having both been members for many years, and we were married at Bethel in 1991. Barbara's (late) parents were members, father a head usher, and mother sang in the choir for many years. We are both lifelong residents of Madison, and both of us are retired, and reside on the near west side of Madison. We are pleased to be welcomed back to the Bethel congregation. 🌈

Community Picnic Update

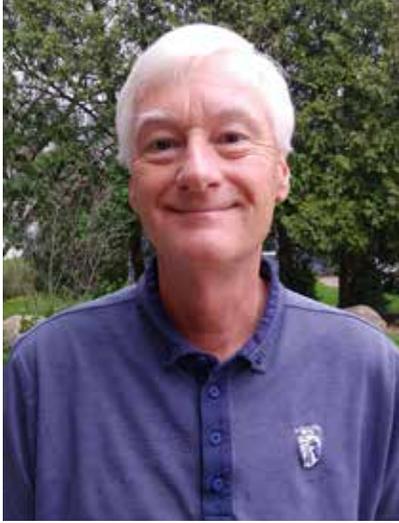


Bethel Lutheran Church's annual picnic at Bethel Horizons has been POSTPONED

due to the coronavirus restrictions in place. As we are able to determine a safe and responsible way to hold the picnic, we will send out a new date. What a joy it will be when we can gather all together at Horizons and celebrate with one another in God's creation! 🌈

My COVID-19 Journal

With Thanks to Charles Dickens



“It was the best of times, ...”

My wife and #1 favorite golf buddy, Sharon, and I are spending February in Tucson and March in Scottsdale Arizona. We play a collection of fabulous golf courses in each city. The Tucson Rodeo is great and Scottsdale; well it is Scottsdale!!!

“it was the worst of times, ...”

On March 15, our daughter Lindsey, an ENT Resident in Manhattan, calls: “You must go home, NOW(!) Do not visit Laurel (our oldest daughter) in Boulder, drive straight home. The country should have been locked down two weeks ago”. Laurel, a human immune cell researcher, urges me to read *Spillover* by David Quammen (2012) for an explanation.

Spillover message: Animal “hosts” share the earth with viruses who live within them. There will be a global pandemic; a pathological zoonotic virus will spill over from an animal host “reservoir”, where it peacefully resides, into a human host where it wages war. It has happened in the past: Spanish flu, SARS-1, MERS, HIV-1, Ebola.

“it was the age of wisdom, ...”

It is happening again. Our daughters recognize the threat and are protecting us from it. We speed home. A novel virus SARS-CoV-2 has spilled over from bats to humans in Wuhan China, spread to Europe and is now on U.S. soil. It is extremely contagious with a disturbing fatality rate. SARS-CoV-2 is not alive. Viruses are tiny protein molecular “machines” that can only reproduce when in the cells of a host, i.e. us. Outside a host viruses disintegrate unless they find another host. The SARS-CoV-2 virus jumps from person to person like hikers jump from rock to rock when crossing a shallow stream. The small distance between rocks allows hikers to cross and the small distance between human hosts allows the virus to spread. To stop the virus spread,

separate the human hosts to farther than the virus’ stride. If you touch something and pick up the virus, wash your hands and dissolve it. And do not touch your face.

I have my epiphany. This viral pandemic is growing EXPONENTIALLY through the population. This is how a nuclear fission chain reaction works. Neutrons dart from uranium nucleus to uranium nucleus causing them to fission and shed more neutrons. If controlled, it is a nuclear reactor. Uncontrolled, it is a nuclear bomb!!! The mathematics describing pandemics is exactly the equations I solve every day. I write a computer program to solve the pandemic equations. It takes me an hour. Modeling is easy, getting the correct answer is hard. I cautiously tell my friends what I learn.

“it was the age of foolishness, ...”

Early March reports in Dane County, when there are only a few COVID-19 cases, reflect uncontrolled exponential growth. Of course they do. Exponential growth is intrinsic to the virus’ transmission from person to person. Infections are multiplying by a factor of seven weekly. Without intervention a few infected people on March 1 become 50 which become 350, then 2,400 and 17,000 by April. And it does not stop. By June, 385,000 Dane County residents are infected. It slows because the virus runs out of people to infect!

There is no clear guidance from our government leaders. Yet medical professionals “get it” and urgently go about preparing. There is a disconnect between our leaders and the medical infrastructure. My model shows the uncontrolled exponential growth in Dane County spans March 1 to March 17. By March 17, even with few cases, it is like stopping a nuclear explosion after it starts. The best we can hope for is: slow it down.

“it was the epoch of belief, ...”

German Chancellor Angela Merkel is ahead of the curve by emphasizing testing. Not surprising for a PhD Quantum Chemist. She gets it. She knows “observables” are necessary for understanding the microscopic world of quantum mechanics and combating an invisible, incurable virus. In the U.S., our leaders are beginning to get it. Scientists are finally being heard.

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Dane County residents practice social distancing and stay at home. I update my model daily with albeit imprecise data. The transmission rate from March 17 to April 15 dramatically decreases. Good! The transmission rate from April 15 to April 24 remains roughly constant. The decrease stalls. My model matches the past and predicts the future. The growth of infections from March 17 to April 24 is NOT the disastrous exponential increase that early data predicts. Instead I predict infections peak in late March and the knee of the curve for total infections bends in late April; close to the “official” predictions. Dane County’s curve is “flattened”.

“it was the epoch of incredulity, ...”

The human suffering and economic price paid for the “lost two weeks” of March 1 to 14 is unprecedented. People over 65 are 90% of deaths. Attribute this tragedy to failure to recognize exponential growth when it stares us in the face. Today, as COVID-19 cases decline to manageable numbers, the next step is ubiquitous testing, individual tracing and isolation of those infected. We combat an invisible, incurable enemy by first locating it. The alternative is to remain in hiding.

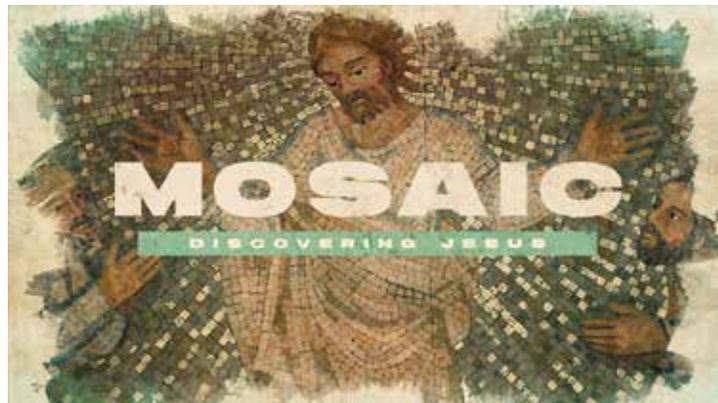
“it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair...” 🌈

—Gregory Moses

New Accountant Joins Bethel Staff

Bethel is pleased to announce the hiring of a new accountant. Laurie Plum accepted the half-time position in March. She brings decades of experience as a CPA. A member of Bethel since 1980, Laurie sings in the choir and was the treasurer for the Hope House, a former outreach ministry of Bethel. 🌈

Sermon Series: May 17-31 MOSAIC: Discovering Jesus



Just as we live in a topsy-turvy world, Jesus’s first disciples had a real roller-coaster experience with the Lord. One wonders if they experienced a kind of spiritual whiplash. In little over a month, they were ecstatic at the miracles, crushed at the crucifixion, petrified by the Romans, overjoyed and incredulous at the resurrection, anointed with a mission, and filled with power from on high. In these separate stories, a picture emerges of Jesus – a mosaic. From May 17-31, Pastor John and Pastor Mike will explore these moments in time to share the good news for our own moments of spiritual whiplash. This three-week series provides a mosaic of Jesus’ appearances to the disciples between his resurrection and the giving of the Holy Spirit. 🌈

2020 AT A GLANCE expenses/income



Bethel is 'Zoom'ing



Fifth Grade Sunday School gathering on Zoom. Many laughs were had with this silly group!



Men's Current Christian Concerns are meeting via Zoom!

Virus + Stimulus = Challenge

We're in this together. But our experiences can be vastly different.

Crisis - or Respite in solitude

Crushingly devastating - or Mostly life as usual

The variances are in family dynamics, emotional realities, as well as in financial matters. And this is true for each and every Bethelite.

If you find yourself in the category of gratefulness for many important things that have not changed in your lives, we invite you to consider this above and beyond gift idea. Tithe - from your Stimulus money received - to Bethel, and when you do, know that your church's Endowment Foundation has agreed to match



Sunday's Virtual Coffee Hour! Join us next Sunday from 10-11:30am. You can join at any time.



Your Bethel Program Staff Zooming 'Brady Bunch' style!



this extraordinary gift up to a total of \$18,000. These additional funds will help offset the loss from planned for Lent and Easter offerings, and Parking Lot income lost.

Either mail your check to Bethel marked 'Easter Challenge' or give online (<https://onrealm.org/bethelmadison/Give>) and chose 'other-special' and write 'Easter Challenge' in the memo line. By July end, we hope to have received 150 or more such gifts.

Thank you for prayerfully considering this, and also helping those in need of a little extra support in this historic time. 🌈

—Alice Mowbray
Director of Development

QUARTERLY GIVING STATEMENTS

Thank you for your generous and faithful giving to Christ's work at Bethel. Giving statements with record of your personal giving will be in your hands soon. Accuracy with financial records are a top priority for us at Bethel. Please review your statement carefully. If there are any questions, concerns, or corrections, please contact Penny Duane at penny@bethel-madison.org. Included with your giving statement will be a Giving Well report that will highlight an important work your offerings help make possible.

Fireside Chats with Pastor Mike - Pastor Mike will be sitting down with you virtually and answering questions you have for him during his Tuesday Fireside Chats live-streamed on Facebook at 7pm (or it can be viewed on YouTube any time after 8pm). If you have any questions you would like to ask him, please send them to christal@bethel-madison.org.

Wednesday Night Live Streamed Lord's Supper - Join us on Wednesdays at 7pm for the Lord's Supper. Just because we are unable to meet in person for worship doesn't mean we can't share the Lord's meal. There are few features more central to the life and teaching of Jesus than the common meal. Every Wednesday until we are able to celebrate in person, a pastor will lead us in a live-streamed Lord's Supper at 7pm on Bethel's Facebook or you can watch any time after 8pm on our YouTube channel. Of course, no Lord's Supper is complete without the bread and wine (or juice). So, everyone is asked to have wine/juice and bread ready for the evening's communion (any type of bread and wine/juice will work). A pastor will lead the blessing over the internet. We will all share the body and blood together and the goodness of God.

Contemplative Scripture Reading on Thursdays (Interactive) - Join Pam Shellberg for a time of interactive, contemplative scripture reading. During each 45-minute period, we will read a passage from scripture and reflect on it by way of the ancient practice of lectio divina. This involves engaging the scripture with our minds, imaginations, and hearts – along with good measures of silence and sharing. This will happen in “real-time,” and you will be able to join in as part of a video conference (if you have a webcam on your

computer) or by phone. Links will be provided in the Thursday Daily Devotion email for joining this group. Send any questions to Pam Shellberg at pam@bethel-madison.org.

Use Amazon Smile and Donate to Bethel - Do you shop online using Amazon? Did you know you can donate to Bethel by doing your regular shopping through Amazon? By using Amazon Smile, they will donate 0.5% of the price of your purchase automatically to Bethel!

How can you set this up? It's Easy!

1. Go to: <http://smile.amazon.com> (we recommend bookmarking this page for easy accessing)
2. Under the search bar click on the word “Supporting” in orange letters.
3. Select “Change your charity”.
4. Type “Bethel Lutheran Church, Madison, WI”
5. Click the Search Button.
6. Click the Select button.

That's it! You will now be donating to Bethel every time you make a purchase. (Remember to use the Amazon Smile web page as that is how Amazon tracks your purchases for donation. If you use the regular Amazon page, your donation won't be recorded.) Your Contact: christal@bethel-madison.org

TEXT TO GIVE - Text “BLC” to 73256 to give.

GIVE ONLINE - www.bethel-madison.org/giveonline

Bethel Now on Instagram - Scan the image below to follow us!





BETHEL

LUTHERAN CHURCH

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5 EASTER

Pastor Mike Brown - May 10 at 7:45, 9am & 11:15am

6 EASTER

Pastor Mike Brown - May 17 at 7:45, 9am & 11:15am

SUNDAY, MAY 10

- 7:45a Worship Service (live-stream on Facebook & YouTube)
- 9:00a Worship Service (viewed on Facebook & YouTube)
- 10:00a Virtual Coffee Hour (Zoom - Interactive)
- 11:15a Worship Service (live-stream on Facebook & YouTube)

MONDAY, MAY 11

- 9:00a Daily Devotion (Email)
- 12:00p Food Pantry Open 12-3pm (M-F)

TUESDAY, MAY 12

- 9:00a Daily Devotion (Email)
- 7:00p Fireside Chats with Pastor Mike (live-stream Facebook)
- 8:00a Fireside Chats with Pastor Mike (YouTube)

WEDNESDAY, MAY 13

- 9:00a Daily Devotion (Email)
- 7:00p Lord's Supper (live-stream Facebook)
- 8:00p Lord's Supper (YouTube)

THURSDAY, MAY 14

- 8:00a Second Harvest Delivery
- 8:30a Men's Current Christian Concerns (Zoom - Interactive)
- 9:00a Daily Devotion (Email)
- 10:00a Contemplative Scripture Reading with Pam Shellberg (Zoom - Interactive)
- 8:30p Contemplative Scripture Reading with Pam Shellberg (Zoom - Interactive)

FRIDAY, MAY 15

- 9:00a Daily Devotion (Email)

SATURDAY, MAY 16

- 9:00a Daily Devotion (Email)
- 9:30a Food Pantry Open 9:30-11:30am

PASTORAL STAFF

Pastor Mike Brown - Lead Pastor
pastormike@bethel-madison.org

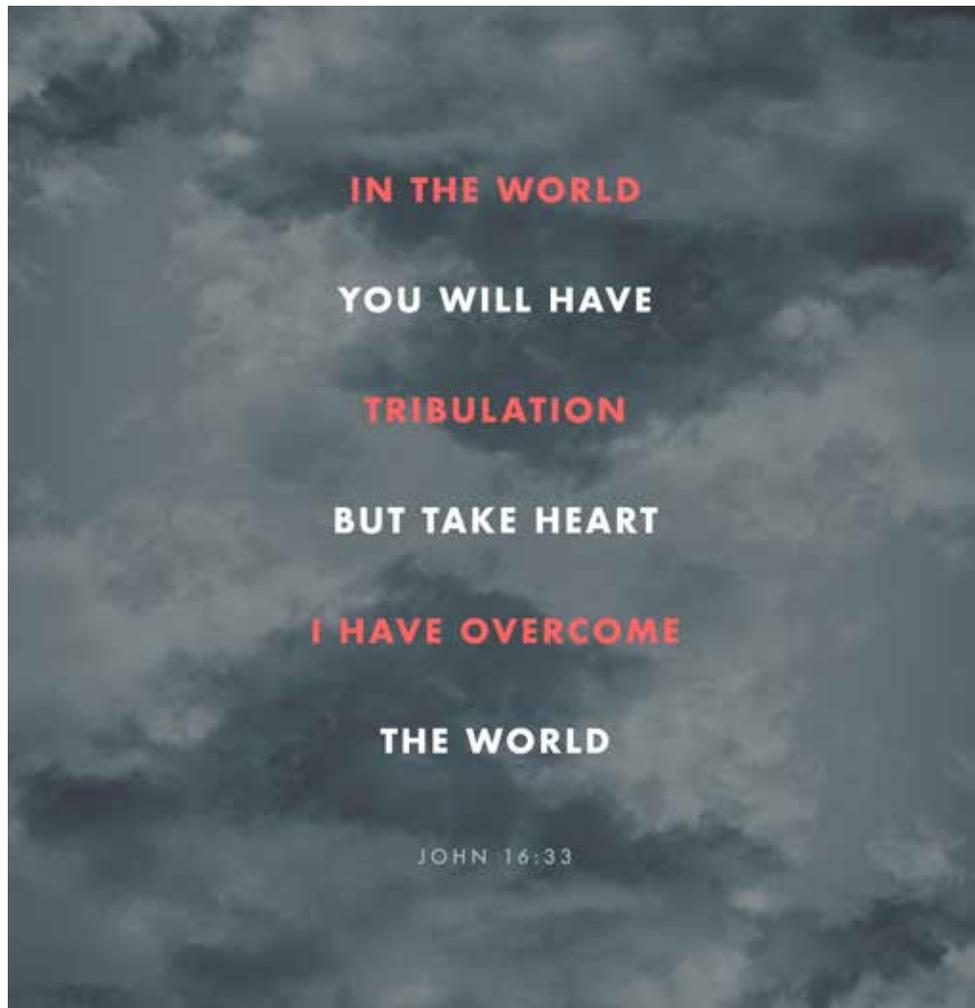
Pastor John O. Swanson - Director of Congregational Life
jswanson@bethel-madison.org

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IN THE WORLD

YOU WILL HAVE

TRIBULATION

BUT TAKE HEART

I HAVE OVERCOME

THE WORLD

JOHN 16:33