

Bethelite

A publication of Bethel Lutheran Church distributed twice monthly.



bethelmadison.org/bethelite

THE YEAR OF FINDING YOUR TREASURE

2021

Pastor Mike Brown

In her essay, *An Expedition to the Pole*, Annie Dillard describes the ill-fated Franklin expedition of 1845—an English expedition that perished because its leaders prepared poorly.

"In 1845, Sir John Franklin and 138 officers and men embarked from England to find the Northwest Passage across the high Canadian Arctic to the Pacific Ocean. They sailed in two three-masted barques. Each sailing vessel carried an auxiliary steam engine and a twelve-day supply of coal for the projected two or three years' voyage. Instead of additional coal...each ship made room for a 1,200-volume library, a hand organ, playing fifty tunes," china place settings for officers and men, cut glass wine goblets, and sterling silver flatware.... The silver was of ornate Victorian design, very heavy at the handles and richly patterned. Engraved on the handles were the individual officers' initials and family crests. The expedition carried no special clothing for the Arctic, only the uniforms of Her Majesty's Navy. The last sighting of the expedition was two months after

it had set sail." Dillard notes that over the next 20 years search parties discovered remains of the expedition – "...life boats dragged across the frozen wilderness containing chocolate, tea and a great deal of table silver. Skeletons were found, silently gripping settings of sterling silver engraved with officers' initials



Matthew 13:45 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls"

and family crests." This tragic story is a cautionary tale not simply for those planning an arctic expedition but for anyone attempting something where the stakes are high. As followers of Jesus, we know very well what is at stake. There is nothing more important in the universe or in our lives than living in unity with Jesus

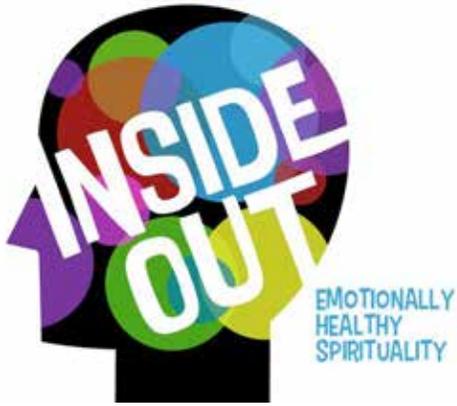
Christ. That is why Jesus invited people, over and over, to join with him.

Along with the invitation, Jesus also emphasized "counting the cost." He wanted people to know what they were getting into. In Luke 14:28, he says "which of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and estimate the cost, to see whether he has enough to complete it?" Jesus calls those who journey with him to count the cost. Salvation is free. But the transformation that comes on the road of following Jesus brings a cost. It will cost us many things like our quick easy answers, our hypocrisy, our self-indulgence, our indifference to the suffering of others, our insisting on our own ways, and more. Offsetting these losses, Jesus produces great gains. With him, we

receive peace, contentment, purpose, power, and inexpressible joy. As we begin a new year together, let us be clear about the journey before us and acknowledge that it will be a challenge in ways we do not yet see. But it will also bring treasures beyond compare for us as individuals and as a church. 🌈

Inside Out Sermon Series

Emotionally Healthy Spirituality



Jan 10 - Feb 7

Let's admit, right up front, that we are emotional creatures. Take a quick look at John Chapter 11, and you'll see that Jesus expressed a myriad of emotions in a very short period of time. When Jesus's friend Lazarus died, we see Jesus expressing both anger and sadness. But with the next breath he is giving praise to God. Emotions are real. They are part of how God created us to experience not only the world but the very presence of God.

In 2015, Disney's Pixar Studios came out with another hit film, Inside Out. The movie enters the mind of eleven-year-old Riley, and personifies five dominant emotions: Joy, Sadness, Anger, Fear, and Disgust. These five characters in Riley's head, led by Joy, run a control panel that guides her through life, forming memories, the strongest of which form islands of personality that define Riley (silliness, hockey, friendship, and family). More than simply being entertaining, the movie helps us all see more clearly how our emotions come together to provide direction and meaning.

As we turn the corner into a new year, still burdened by a global pandemic, with mental health under greater and greater strain, we will spend five weeks hearing from Scripture how to be good stewards of our spiritual, emotional, and mental health. 🌈

Inside Out Treasure Hunt

You've Got to Join Us



Let's just say it out loud, "We're sick of this pandemic!" Yuck! Yuck! Yuck! Even though there is light at the end of the tunnel with the vaccines, our emotions are still all over the place. The days are longer. The nights colder. There is just not nearly enough hot chocolate, cookies, and games to help pass the time. That's why from January 10 through February 17, Bethel invites you to get Inside Out. Literally, we invite you to get the movie Inside Out. And we invite you to move from inside your home to the outside.

As Pastor Mike begins a new series of messages in January based on the movie, we also invite you and any children and youth in your life to a treasure hunt. Each week, this treasure hunt will take you from location to location where, at each stop, you get one more clue. Each piece of the puzzle gets you closer and closer to the treasure. At the end of your journey, you and any children and youth you share the adventure with will be thrilled, uplifted, and equipped to grow closer to Jesus.

Register by Jan 6 at: www.bethel-madison.org/hunt 🌈

Congregational Meeting

January 24

Bethel's annual meeting will take place on the fourth Sunday of January at a time yet to be determined. It will be an online Zoom meeting and will follow the agenda prescribed by Bethel's constitution. Please join us for this event. 🌈

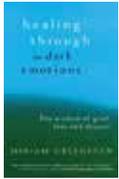
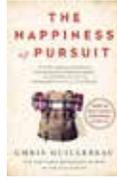
The Road to Well-Being

Bethel Staff Favorites



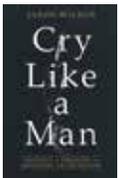
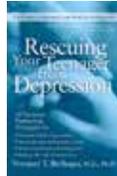
Feeling Good,
by David Burns

The Happiness of Pursuit,
by Chris Guillebeau



Healing Through Dark Emotions,
by Miriam Greenspan

*Rescuing Your Teenager
from Depression,*
by Norma T. Berlinger, MD



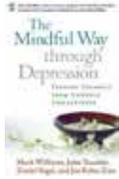
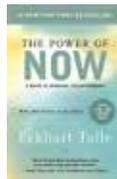
Cry Like a Man,
by Jason Wilson

The Body Keeps the Score,
Bessel van der Kolk, MD



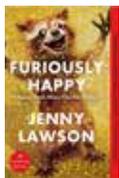
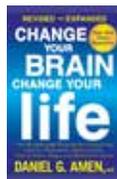
Pleased to Meet Me,
by Bill Sullivan

The Power of Now,
by Eckhart Tolle



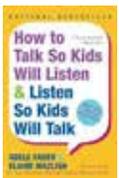
*The Mindful Way Through
Depression,*
by Mark Williams, John Teasdale,
Zindel Segal, & John Kabat-Zinn

*Change Your Brain
Change Your Life,*
by Daniel G. Amen, MD



*Furiously Happy: A Funny Book
About Horrible Things,*
by Jenny Lawson

*The Whole Brain Child: 12
Revolutionary Strategies to
Nurture Your Child's Developing
Mind,* by Daniel J. Siegel MD &
Tina Payne Bryson Phd



*How to Talk So Kids Will Listen and Listen
So Kids Will Talk,*
by Adele Faber & Elaine Mazlish 🌈

Reaching Out Reaching In

Bethel Crafts New Welcome Statement



There is something special about Bethel. And there has been for over 165 years. In recent years, Bethel has found itself at the geographic, political, and cultural center of a community that has fractured. Competing groups develop lists of insiders and outsiders. In view of this situation, the Bethel joint council decided that it was time to reassert Bethel's special character in the community. The council believed that Bethel needed to be clear not just to ourselves but also to the community about exactly who is welcome.

To this end and for more than a year, a special steering team has been networking, connecting, and talking with members of Bethel to identify the key ingredients of a Bethel welcome. The results are lovely and beautiful. Please read and pray through the following welcome statement that was accepted and approved with joy at the November meeting of the Bethel Joint Council.

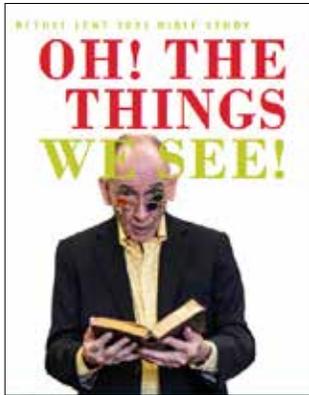
We welcome you to Bethel. We see you as we see ourselves, vulnerable to the challenges of human relationships, and deeply beloved by God.

We welcome you who have ever felt excluded by the church because of race, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, physical or mental ability, family or economic status, or for a reason known only to you. We welcome you whether church life is familiar to you or your faith journey is new, whether you are certain in your beliefs or unsure what you believe.

We invite you here because God is inviting you to be here. Striving to create a place where all feel safe and can find peace, let us share the unconditional love of God and, in the power of the Holy Spirit, work together to extend grace, mercy, and justice – within Bethel, in our communities, and the world. 🌈

Small Group Round Up

Oh, the Things We See



If you have ever had a group of people to “do life” with, then you know how important and powerful it can be. This year for the six weeks of Lent which begins February 17, Bethel encourages all members to become part of a Bethel-wide Small Group Bible Study. The Bible

study, *Oh, the Things We See* written by Pastor Mike, is focused on the Gospel of Mark and is full of fun and learning. If you are already part of a group, a women’s circle, a men’s group, or other, please let Pastor Mike know by email to pastormikebrown@bethel-madison.org. If you are not currently plugged into a group then please let Pastor Mike know. New groups are forming now and looking for members. 🌈

Caring for Creation Webinar - Everyone Has a Role to Play: Dane County’s Climate Action Efforts

Kathy Kuntz, Director, Dane County Office of Energy & Climate Change
With Remarks by Joe Parisi, Dane County Executive

Jan 12, 2021 at 7:30pm – Online

In April 2020 Dane County issued an ambitious community-wide Climate Action Plan to cut all greenhouse gas emissions in Dane County in half by 2030. It is consistent with the goals of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change on actions needed to avoid catastrophe. The priority now is to implement the plan—to reduce emissions from buildings, transportation and other sources.

As the County’s implementing officer, Kathy Kuntz is leading the efforts to turn the plan into action. She will discuss the overall plan, early signs of progress and the challenges ahead for local leadership to accelerate progress. Kathy has suggestions for individuals and businesses to do their part to help achieve the ambitious goal for greenhouse gas reduction. We are fortunate to have County Executive Joe Parisi to explain his high level commitment to addressing climate change in Dane County.

Kathy Kuntz has almost 30 years of experience helping people adopt sustainable practices. As Director of Dane County’s Climate Action Plan, she strives to facilitate choices that help achieve our climate goals for everyone in Dane County. The previous ten years Kathy led Cool



Choices where she worked with governments and private businesses on sustainability efforts. Before that she led Focus on Energy, Wisconsin’s statewide energy efficiency and renewable energy program. Kathy has a Bachelor’s degree from the University of Minnesota, a Master’s from UW-Madison, and a reputation for getting results.



Joel Parisi, In 2017, County Executive Parisi established the Dane County Office of Energy and Climate Change and the Council on Climate Change to further the county’s efforts. The Office leads public and private efforts to implement strategies in the community. It issued the county’s comprehensive Climate Action Plan (CAP) in 2020. The Office is now engaging stakeholders and implementing CAP recommendations.

Register here: <https://tinyurl.com/yc438w4p> 🌈

Calling all Grandmas

Life was tough when my son was a baby. As a single mom working a demanding job, I was just trying to survive. I ached to hold him during the 60 hours a week he was in childcare. When I did have time to be with him, nothing else could capture my attention. The one exception was one hour a week I set aside for myself to attend worship. My family lived hundreds of miles away and I was aching for community, for love, and for something to fill me up enough to get through the next week.

As I dropped him off in the church nursery, I felt my stomach tighten. Every single day that I left him, at daycare or at the church nursery, he cried and cried. I steeled myself and walked out the door as I had hundreds of times, but this was one time too many. I stood just outside the line of sight the nursery and rested my head against the painted concrete block wall of the church basement with tears streaming down my face. I stayed there long past the start of the service.

An old woman, a complete stranger, stood beside me and put her arm around me. She silently squeezed my shoulder. In a matter of fact voice she said, "He is going to be fine. You need a cup of coffee." She marched me over to the nearest round church-basement table, pulled out a metal folding chair and sat me down. She poured a hot cup out of the large, ancient carafe into one of those tiny Styrofoam cups. It was the best coffee I have ever had. It was terrible coffee, but I drank in the love, the warmth and the understanding. She helped me to see that the adversity we were facing wasn't going to break my baby and it certainly wouldn't break me. She allowed no room for me to feel sorry for myself, but she gave me the permission I needed to take care of myself. I never saw her again, but I never forgot what that encounter taught me about church. God uses ordinary people and weak coffee to deliver his most potent doses of his healing love, acceptance and wisdom.

I was reminded of her this week, during the Family Conversations zoom meeting. Family Conversations is a group open to everyone at Bethel, as we all come

from or are part of a family. But in practice, we are a small group of moms in the thick of parenting. The support of these moms as we laugh and struggle together has been invaluable.

But this week, a great-grandmother joined us. You should have seen our faces light up as she entered the meeting. I can't tell you what it meant to us to have her take an interest in us and to ask with genuine concern "what is it like for your children to be doing school during the pandemic?" She shared some of her own experiences of family and parenthood. It gave us a glimpse of the difference between what seems important now, and what will matter as we look back on this time. We begged her to come again, and to bring her friends.

In this time in the history of the church, I have to ask "what can church offer that I can't get somewhere

else?" Nothing compares to the experience of being in the church, with other believers, reciting the ancient words, listening to the stirring music and reflecting on the sermon. But people looking in from the outside might argue that beautiful music, inspiring architecture and stirring preaching is simply a website away. I would answer that there is nowhere else that we can be in meaningful relationships

with people outside of our "circle." Whether it is embracing someone of a different generation, different ideology, or different life experience, church is a place that we can bust out of our circle of like-minded friends and experience the breadth and depth of God's love and wisdom. Being family is one of the hardest and most important things we will ever do. We all have a story to share, a lesson to teach and love to give. Won't you join us?

Family Conversations

First Sunday of each month, 9:45am

January and February: What is love? A study of First Corinthians 🌈

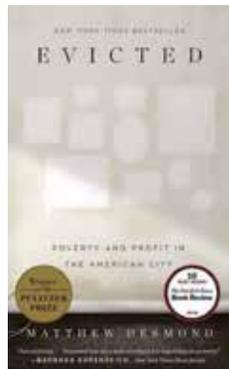


—Heather Moen

Welcome to the ACTJAM Big Read for January



Welcome to our January Big Read of *Evicted* by Matthew Desmond, sponsored by Bethel's Homeless Ministry and Bethel Builds, Bethel's Habitat for Humanity volunteers.



What is home? Many of us are having an up close and personal experience with our homes. We're like turtles, said one Bethel member, pulling in and hunkering down.

The pandemic is driving many under the covers. But it's also driving many out the door.

In the U.S., the Census Bureau reported in December that 1 in 5 adult renters (14.3M) were not caught up on rent, including 29 percent of Black renters, 26 percent of Latino and 14 percent of white renters. Further, 1 in 4 renters living with children are not caught up.

Housing – or lack of - in Wisconsin and Madison is an equal opportunity crisis. Like the coronavirus which shows no partiality by race, more of our Black neighbors are suffering from the worst effects of the housing crisis. Improving it for all will disproportionately improve it for our Black neighbors.

Eviction is just one piece of the problem. For many, being shown the **door out** is the result of policies and practices that go way back. To fix the problem at the root, we have to understand how we got here.

Bethel Elves

Santa's shop had a bit of drama in getting 12 Days of Christmas mailing out on time. Santa's trusty printer attempted to go on strike at the busiest time of year - needing repair, being very picky about the paper, and then finally printing at snail speed. Santa's elves at Bethel were getting a little cranky to say the least and he was trying to think of ideas that would help... eggnog? Cookies? And then...the elves had a brilliant idea, let's ask our village for help! They dashed to their cell phones and found 8 families of elves who were excited to be a part of the project! We are enormously thankful to all of these elves and more who helped get the 12 Days of Christmas present to you this Christmas.



Ironically, we're using eviction as the **door in** to the story of what happened in Madison, in Wisconsin and the upper mid-west to create segregated pockets of housing, cycles of poverty and extreme wealth gaps today. For example:

- Madison was 'red lined' in the 1930s, resulting in racially segregated neighborhoods. That legacy persists today.
- Many Madison neighborhoods had racially restrictive covenants, the language of which remains in deeds although no longer enforceable.
- In Wisconsin today, more than 70 percent of white families own their homes while just 27 percent of Black families do. We have the 8th largest home ownership disparity gap in the nation.

Getting Started:

- Order a copy of *Evicted* from your library or bookstore. Or, borrow one of Bethel's community copies available at the reception desk.
- Listen to the ACTJAM podcast with Laura Dresser from Center on Wisconsin Studies (COWS) discussing Wisconsin's extreme racial disparities, including housing. <https://tinyurl.com/ybsgpg8g>
- Listen to *Evicted* author Matt Desmond. <https://tinyurl.com/y87xajcx>
- Download the *Evicted* discussion guide and make plans to discuss the book with a friend, your family or Bethel group. There will also be discussions open to all. <https://tinyurl.com/y9wjdo8f> 🌈



Ode to God

by the Kids' Ministry Preschool Class

The preschool class of our Kids' Ministry had a lesson about praise and acting out ways to praise. One of the ways to praise that they talked about was writing odes, like King David did when he wrote the psalms. The kids were asked to tell reasons why they praise God and their teacher, Nicki Poh, would put them together into a poem.

Ode to God

by the Kids' Ministry Preschool Class
written by Nicki Poh

We praise God
For making the world
And everything in it.
My kitty, our pets, and birds.
Praise God for my brother
And the people in our families.
Praise God for the food we eat,
Especially cookies.
We love to make them.
We cut them out
With cookie cutters
And leave them about
For Santa.
Our hearts sing
Thinking of Santa
And the toys he brings.
We praise God! 🌈



Fireside Chats

Pastor Mike will continue to host Fireside Chats on Tuesday evenings. Tuesday Fireside Chats are live-streamed at 7pm on Facebook or viewed on YouTube any time after 8pm. If you have any questions you would like to ask, please send them to christal@bethel-madison.org. 🌈

Grief Support Group Forming



Pastor Mike invites you to join him and John Hueschen, a Bethel Stephen's Minister and licensed therapist and bereavement counselor to a new group for those going through the grief process. Beginning on Wednesday, January 27 at 7pm and continuing on Wednesdays for four weeks until February 24, you will find comfort and hope as you walk through the valley. To sign up, please email Pastor Mike at pastormikebrown@bethel-madison.org or call the church at 608.257.3577. All are welcome. 🌈

Men's Current Christian Concern (Thursdays at 8:30am)

Men's Current Christian Concerns continues to meet each Thursday morning via a Zoom video conference. The meeting starts at 8:30am instead of 7am during this temporary rearrangement.

Jan 7 - Is This the End of College As We Know It?

Jan 14 - Does Bethel Have a Future?

Jan 21 - Gayle Sayers: Fact and Legend

Jan 28 - Saying It's So Doesn't Make It So

If you have questions, contact Larry Larrabee at 608.249.9982.

The **Men's Friday Book Study** currently meets every Friday from 8-9am via Zoom. The group is discussing *Why Does The World Exist?* by Jim Holt. Contact Larry Larrabee at lar3car2@gmail.com or 608.249.9982 for the Meeting ID and Password.

TEXT TO GIVE - Text "BLC" to 73256 to give.

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

VIEW MORE OPPORTUNITIES: www.bethel-madison.org/events



BETHEL

LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Emergency Cell: 608.216.3600

EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD

Pastor Mike Brown - Jan 10 at 7:30am, 9am, & 11am

2 EPIPHANY

Pastor Mike Brown - Jan 17 at 7:30am, 9am, & 11am

SUNDAY, JANUARY 10

- 7:30a Worship Service (live-stream Facebook & YouTube)
- 9:00a Worship Service (viewed on Facebook & YouTube)
- 10:00a Virtual Coffee Hour (Zoom)
- 11:00a Worship Service (live-stream on Facebook & YouTube)

MONDAY, JANUARY 11

- 9:00a Daily Devotion (Email)
- 12:00p Food Pantry Open 1-3pm (MWF)

TUESDAY, JANUARY 12

- 9:00a Daily Devotion (Email)
- 7:00p Fireside Chats (Facebook)
- 8:00a Fireside Chats (YouTube)

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 13

- 9:00a Daily Devotion (Email)
- 6:30p Lord's Supper (live-stream Facebook)
- 8:00p Lord's Supper (YouTube)

THURSDAY, JANUARY 14

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

FRIDAY, JANUARY 15

- 8:00a Men's Friday Book Study (Zoom)
- 9:00a Daily Devotion (Email)

SATURDAY, JANUARY 16

- 9:00a Daily Devotion (Email)

PASTORAL STAFF

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

Pastor Roger Black - Visitation
roger@bethel-madison.org

SUNDAY FLOWERS

Dec 13: Altar Flowers were given in thanks for the many years of service to Bethel by Pastor John Swanson by the Bittner Family.

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JOY

TO THE WORLD, THE

LORD

HAS COME!