

BETHELITE

OCTOBER 20, 2021: VOL. 70, NO. 20

THIS ISSUE:

SACRED SPACE

A New Worship Experience

THE NEXT REFORMATION

Embracing Deconstruction

CARING FOR CREATION

Fixing Climate Change with Faith, Hope and Love

ACTJAM BIG READ

An Invitation to Beloved Community

AFGHAN RESETTLEMENT IN WISCONSIN NEEDS YOU

How You Can Help



BETHEL

LUTHERAN CHURCH

Color Bethelite provided in part by
Bethel Endowment Foundation

CLAIM YOUR INHERITANCE

Before her death in January 2020, Cathy Boone had been living on the streets for years, struggling with drug abuse and mental illness. But her father, Jack Spithill, said the tragedy was multiplied tenfold by the revelation that she died without collecting any of the inheritance she was due after her mother's death, an amount that totaled over \$900,000. Her father said, "It just didn't make any sense to me. That money was just sitting there, and she needed help in the worst way. I think it was my failure to recognize her mental health issues. I kind of gave up on her because of the drugs and I shouldn't have done that." Spithill said that after he lost touch with Boone, he was unsure if she even knew she was entitled to an inheritance, or if so, how to go about collecting. Court records say that after her mother died, estate representatives tried to contact Boone via phone and email, spoke to other family members, sent her messages via Facebook, and even ran ads in the newspaper ... to no effect. They even hired a private investigator, but came up empty. By any standard or measure, Cathy Boone's life ended tragically, impoverished and searching for hope but rich beyond her imagination.



Cathy Boone, homeless with \$900,000 unclaimed inheritance

Much the same can be said of the great founder of the Lutheran movement, Martin Luther. Shortly before he died, a piece of paper containing his handwriting was found in his pocket. Among other words on the paper were these: "This is true. We are all beggars." When it was all said and done, Luther concluded that he had lived his life as a beggar, nothing to claim

312 Wisconsin Ave, Madison, WI 53703

608.257.3577 www.bethel-madison.org



Pastor Mike

pastormikebrown@bethel-madison.org

419.345.2836

for himself, nothing that is, but the treasure he had in Christ. It is a well-established fact of history that Luther ignited the Reformation with the publication of his 95 Theses. We celebrate this historical moment as taking place on October 31, 1517, the day before All Saints Day, or All Hallows Eve (Halloween). Tucked carefully in those 95 Theses is the line “The true treasure of the church is the most holy gospel of the glory and grace of God.” Luther lived his life with the awareness that in and of himself, he had nothing. But! Because of the unfathomable love of God in Jesus Christ, he was rich beyond measure. He and all followers of Jesus are inheritors of a great treasure: “since you know that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward; you serve the Lord Christ” (Colossians 3:24).



Coffee arrived in Europe in 1515. Two years later came the Reformation.

It was Luther’s discovery of the true treasure that enabled him to carry-on through his own mental health battles. We do not know what plagued Cathy, but Luther fought mightily with depression and anxiety. His depression was marked by the same features common to many today: a feeling of profound aloneness, tremendous self-loathing, a sense that God was singling him out for suffering, and a struggle to believe that God is good. In a letter to his friend Philip Melancthon on August 2, 1527, Luther wrote: “I spent more than a week in death and hell. My entire body was in pain, and I still tremble. Completely abandoned by Christ, I labored under the vacillations and storms of desperation and blasphemy against God. But through the prayers of the saints (his friends), God began

God stood with Luther in the darkness.

to have mercy on me and pulled my soul from the inferno below.” Luther referred to these frequently-occurring moments as *anfechtung*. It was a spiritual “assault.” Hell, the devil, the shadow of death, and the dark forces of the world were waging an all-out war against him trying to reduce Luther to unbelief, depression, and despair. What saved him from utter defeat was the treasure, the promise of the Gospel, that because of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, God stood with Luther in the darkness, in the pit, in his poverty, and in his death. Luther knew about and claimed his inheritance on a daily basis. And that made all the difference. May you, beloved friends, know and claim your treasure, your inheritance. May the riches of God’s kingdom strengthen you. 🌈

SACRED SPACE

A New Worship Experience

We are excited to introduce an additional weekly worship service, beginning on November 4, and continuing on subsequent Thursdays at 5:30pm. Called “Sacred Space,” this time together will have the spirit and character of evening prayer.

Why do we call this service “Sacred Space”?

In the Christian tradition, we draw on some ancient Greek words to highlight the distinctions between different kinds of space – different kinds of time, too. *Chronos* time is linear, the regular ticking of the second hand or the turning of calendar pages. *Kairos* time, however, has some spiritual significance, is a time with a special quality of purpose or fullness. *Topos* points to a specific, measurable, identifiable location, while *chora* is a place where one feels an energizing force, one that engages the spiritual imagination, and asks us to draw connections to other aspects of our life.

During Sacred Space, we will do certain things to encourage an experience of *chora*

and *kairos*. Since evening prayer marks the setting of the sun, there will be candles to give us light. We’ll read psalms, Christian scripture, other sacred writings, and poetry to invoke a spirit of reverence. We will sit in silence and quiet contemplation. We will pray.

Sacred Space will be an exploratory space, too. That is, we’ll be exploring a variety of spiritual practices, such as centering prayer, *lectio divina*, guided meditations, and walking the labyrinth. The practices will be ancient and contemporary, traditional and more experimental – but all with the power to draw us into a deeper understanding of God’s presence within us and God’s purposes for us.

At the end, what will make the space “sacred” will be our felt experience. We will talk together about the questions we have about the life of faith and the time will be sacred, because we’ll gather as an intentional spiritual community, creating deep connections with each other. 🌈



RYAN PANZER

Guest Preacher
Reformation Sunday
October 31

Celebrating the occasion of the Lutheran Reformation, Bethel welcomes Ryan Panzer to the pulpit. Ryan is the author of *Grace and Gigabytes: Being Church in a Tech-Shaped Culture*, a new book exploring the future of church in the digital age. Having attended Luther Seminary while working at Google’s Ann Arbor office, Ryan noticed that the worlds of technology and church were quite different. In conversations with friends and co-workers, nearly all of whom do not attend church, he realized that those who grew up in the digital age are intrigued by and interested in the Gospel message, even as they feel disconnected from some of the ways we do church. *Grace and Gigabytes* explores what it would look like for the church to be more aligned with the culture of the digital age. The book makes the case that the church can make these connections by prioritizing learning through questions, connecting both offline and online, being more collaborative, and celebrating creativity. Learn more about Ryan at www.ryanpanzer.com. 🌈





Bethel's confirmation students, working side-by-side at Confirmation on a Wednesday night.

THE NEXT REFORMATION IS IN FULL SWING

These Confirmation students are naturals at deconstruction. They come by it honestly. They have grown up in a world where their safety at school is regularly threatened, where they haven't had a 'normal' school year since they were in elementary school because of COVID19, where their social lives in part are lived out online—where cancel culture is rampant—where church is an option and not part of our cultural fabric in the way it once was, where the degradation of the environment is a constant and impending threat to their future, and on and on. In essence, these young people are built differently. They are astute observers, critical skeptics, environmentalists, and they are deeply empathetic with social justice causes. Most importantly, God's power and love blazes in their hearts. 🌈



THE REFO

Embracing Deconstruction

Brene Brown is a favorite writer and speaker for many. In one of her books, *The Soul of Shame: Retelling the Stories We Believe about Ourselves*, she examines the practice of reworking the narratives that, through time and reinforcement, have formed the basic structure of our internal worlds. These stories become the guides to our inner-workings, and can often go undetected as we get comfortable in ways of thinking, believing, and being. Brown says, "We have to retell the stories we believe about ourselves," as well as those stories that raised us. As a church, what stories do we tell ourselves and about ourselves that need to be retold? Which stories need to be examined, reworked, and called into question so that we may have a "living faith"?

us into a life of questioning the practical application — or misapplication — of the Gospel, of engaging with our doubt, and of examining and challenging the traditions and culture of the church. Deconstruction invites us into a faith that is active, breathing, a living relationship with God.

We are in the middle of the Next Reformation, a reformation that will be defined, not by another Martin Luther, but by all of us. Many of us deeply sense that we are no longer in the 500th year of the Protestant Reformation, but rather in the thick of a new global religious reformation. The youth of today, and of our congregation, are on the pulse. The youth are doubting, questioning, and examining who they believe themselves to be as a church.



Over 500 years ago, it was Martin Luther's examination of the stories that the church believed about itself that brought us the Reformation. We can call this sacred work "deconstruction". Deconstruction invites

Their insights and questions will give you hope, inspire you, challenge you, and invite you into an upheaval of the stories we once believed about ourselves. 🌈

NEXT FORMATION



Gathering around the candlelight for worship, meditation, and reflection at Wednesday night Confirmation.

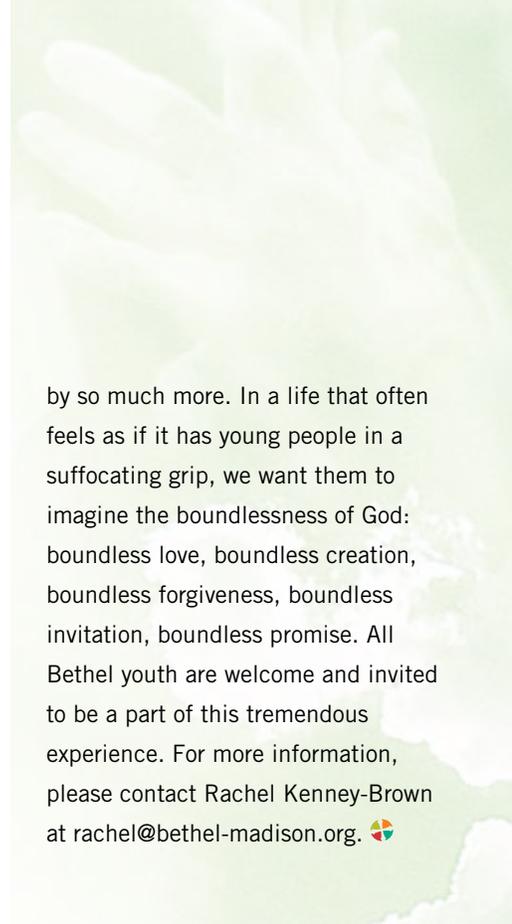
YOUTH TO HEAD TO NATIONAL GATHERING July 24-28, 2022

The ELCA Youth Gathering takes place every three years on a national level. 30,000 high school youth and their adult leaders from across the ELCA gather for a week of learning, worship, Bible study, service, and fellowship. In 2022, the Gathering takes place in Minneapolis around the theme “God



Beyond Measure.” The primary scripture is Ephesians 3:17: “I want you to know all about Christ’s love, although it is too wonderful to be measured. Then your lives will be filled with all that God is.” We are bound. Bound by our sin, by the expectations of others, by poverty, by -isms that try to divide us, and

by so much more. In a life that often feels as if it has young people in a suffocating grip, we want them to imagine the boundlessness of God: boundless love, boundless creation, boundless forgiveness, boundless invitation, boundless promise. All Bethel youth are welcome and invited to be a part of this tremendous experience. For more information, please contact Rachel Kenney-Brown at rachel@bethel-madison.org.





LWR PROJECT A GREAT SUCCESS

Saturday, Sept 18, 2021, six SUV's showed up at the "crack of dawn" in the Bethel parking lot to load up 88 boxes filled with 479 Lutheran World Relief kits. The volunteers transported the results of Bethel's 2021 LWR drive to a boxcar at the railroad tracks off East Washington.

Special thanks go to the organizing team headed by Mary Anne Smith and ably supported by Patty Saxe, Betty Pohlman, Jo Thomley, and Kris Fansler. In thinking ahead to next year, any Thrivent member can apply up to twice a year for grants to help defray expenses for church projects.

Thanks to all the individuals, families, women's circles, and men's groups who helped in this effort. You made quilts, purchased items for fabric, school, hygiene, or baby kits, or donated to the shipping fund. This was truly an all church project! 🌈



AFGHAN RESETTLEMENT IN WISCONSIN NEEDS YOU



Many of us are wondering how we can contribute to the 'Welcome to Wisconsin' to our new Afghan neighbors. Nonprofits, NGOs, and religious organizations are collaboratively leading item collection and gathering volunteers to work directly with refugee resettlement.

Jewish Social Services (JSS) is the only Afghan resettlement agency in Dane County. Nationwide, Team Rubicon, an international NGO of U.S. veterans, will draw on its long history with disaster relief to facilitate logistics & organizational needs of refugee resettlement.

Jewish Social Services: www.jewishmadison.org
JSS is expecting 25 refugees. With their warehouse at capacity, they are currently accepting only new items and no furniture or large items. Volunteers are needed to provide the one-on-one family assistance required to help with apartment set up, community orientation, government paperwork, interpretation and language learning, mentoring and driving services, etc. A recurring need will be donations of 10-ride metro bus passes, gift cards to Woodman's, Walmart, Target, etc.

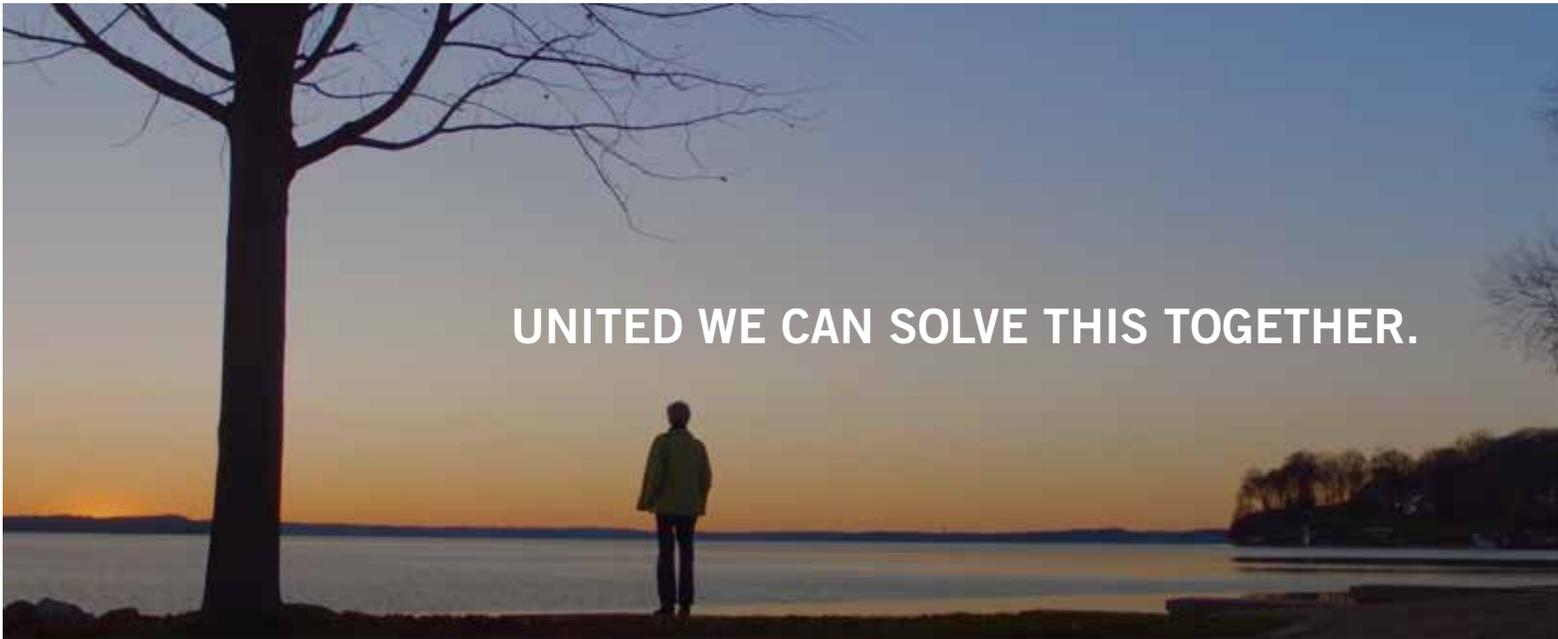
(Send to 6434 Enterprise Lane, Madison, WI 53719). If you are interested in volunteering for more personal contact with the refugees, email lauren@jssmadison.org.

Team Rubicon leverages the unique skill sets of veterans and first responders (leadership, logistics, management, technology, confronting chaos) to help disaster victims around the world. The veterans themselves benefit in their transition to civilian life by using service and camaraderie to help them gain a sense of community and purpose.

Team Rubicon has set up a detailed WishList on Amazon with items needed now in specific brands and sizes for adults and children that can be ordered right from the list. See <https://tinyurl.com/zbfmd9m>.

Salvation Army: Accepting gently used, clean clothing. Dispersed locations for donation drop-offs.

Please consider contributing to "welcome the stranger" and serving the needy as Christ has commanded us. 🌈



UNITED WE CAN SOLVE THIS TOGETHER.

CARING FOR CREATION

Fixing Climate Change with Faith, Hope & Love

Nov 9, 2021 at 7:30pm via Zoom Webinar

In 2004, Republican Representative Bob Inglis joined a congressional delegation visiting Antarctica, where he watched a researcher bore deep into the polar ice, extracting cores clearly marked by the carbon dioxide spike that began with the Industrial age. In 2008, he made a second visit to the Great Barrier Reef and recalls the day as a revelation. “The Australian oceanographer who was also our guide surfaced with unbridled joy, clutching the wonders of the world’s largest reef system in his hand. He was preaching the Gospel,” said Inglis. “I could see it in his eyes, I could hear it in his voice. I could see it written all over his face—that he was worshiping God in what he was showing us.” Inglis a devout Christian was deeply moved



Bob Inglis, Executive Director, republicEN.org

and disturbed to learn that spiking ocean temperatures were bleaching and killing the once rainbow-hued coral.

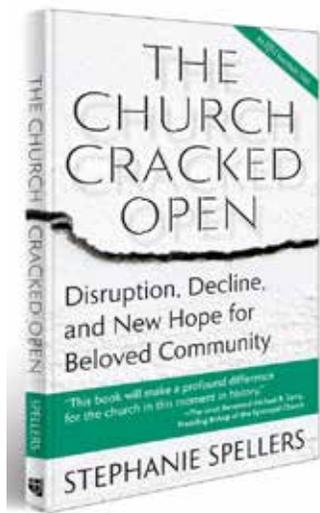
In 2009, Bob Inglis introduced the Raise Wages Cut Carbon Act. He designed the bill to make polluting fossil fuels more expensive, with proceeds from the tax to be handed back to taxpayers in the form of payroll tax cuts. The bill, co-sponsored by Sen. Jeff Flake, R-Ariz., never got a hearing. His proposed tax on fossil fuels was “heresy” to the Party and in 2010 he lost in the Republican Primary, leaving him a “virtual exile in his home state.”

Since his legislative career came to an end, he has increased his effort to address climate change. In 2012, he began promoting free enterprise action on

climate change full time and launched the Energy and Enterprise Initiative (“E&EI”) at George Mason University. A year later, he rebranded E&EI as republicEN.org which is today a 501(c)(3) educational initiative at George Mason University in Virginia and a growing grassroots community of over 10,000. republicEN.org educates, recruits and organizes conservative voices for action on climate change. Inglis’ many honors for climate change work include receiving the John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Award, appearing in the film “Merchants of Doubt” and in the Showtime series “Years of Living Dangerously,” and giving two TEDx talks. A graduate of Duke University and Virginia School of Law, he has served as Resident Fellow at Harvard, Duke and the University of Chicago. Today Inglis continues his dedication to building an #EcoRight movement to apply conservative principles to climate action.

Register Here: www.bethel-madison.org/c4c





BETHEL

LUTHERAN CHURCH

312 Wisconsin Avenue
Madison, WI 53703

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED
DATED MATERIAL: REQUESTED IN HOME BY OCT 22 2021

NONPROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

MADISON, WI
PERMIT 602

ACTJAM BIG READ An Invitation to Beloved Community

Our next ACTJAM Big Read is *The Church Cracked Open* by Stephanie Spellers, an Episcopal priest.

During November we'll explore what it means to be church community now, mid pandemic, racial reckoning and the declining role of the church in society. Pam Shellberg and Ann Leon will co-facilitate the series of three discussions.

The book is honest about this 2021 moment but it doesn't dwell in hand-wringing.

Rather, Spellers points to the light, much like Dietrich Bonhoeffer, whom Spellers cites as witness for us. In fact, we'll build on Pam Shellberg's Bonhoeffer study from October.

As ACTJAM zero'd in on *The Church Cracked Open* as our Big Read, Pam Shellberg was moved to offer a 4-week study of Dietrich

Bonhoeffer. Bonhoeffer spent the 1930-31 school year in New York, much of it in Harlem, in the midst of America's racial reckoning of the day, giving him a radically different vantage point to see what it means to be a church that follows Christ.

Speller's path for us mirrors Bonhoeffer's. Our 2021 is like Bonhoeffer's Harlem, a radically different vantage point. Speller's prayer is that we have courage to open our eyes from this vantage point not of our choosing and see, like Bonhoeffer, what beloved community looks like come alive in Christ's church.

The Church Cracked Open is about becoming God's beloved community in which we love and are loved abundantly. No one race, no ethnicity, no religion, no gender, no

economic status, is the standard. There is no superior and inferior, no upper and lower, no ideal and less than. This is Bonhoeffer's vision too in *LIFE TOGETHER*, a short book of 122 pages.

The Church Cracked Open is also short, 136 pages, because, as Spellers reminds us, God isn't complicated. Perhaps becoming God's beloved community isn't complicated either! How fortunate we are to have two witnesses, Bonhoeffer and Spellers, to show us the way.

Sunday in person discussion dates at 10:15am: Nov 7, 14 and 21

Monday Zoom discussion dates at 1pm: Nov 8, 15, and 22

Community copies of *The Church Cracked Open* are available to borrow from Bethel's Library. 🌈



bethel_madison



Bethel.Lutheran.Madison.WI



bethelmadison



BethelLutheranTV

Worship Times: Sunday at 7:30am & 9am - Traditional; 10:30am - Contemporary
Saturday at 5pm - Acoustic Casual