



MARINERS NEWS

A LETTER FROM THE PASTOR

Written by Rev. Dr. Rebecca Collison

Jesus said to him, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Matthew 22:37-39 (NKJV)

Friends,

Who do you love?

That line reminds me of rock and roll music. Back in 1956, Bo Diddley came out with the song, "Who Do You Love" and based it on one main guitar chord. There were some flourishes based on the vocals, but one solid theme that went through the song. In 1978 George Thorogood and the Destroyers represented the song in their own style. The song actually received a Grammy Hall of Fame award in 2010.

Now in the month of February, that phrase takes on a relational and personal meaning. When asked, "Who do we love", we may respond that it's our sweetheart, children, parents, friends, our favorite football team or even the pet dog. Love is the one main theme that runs throughout the month of February - from Super Bowl Sunday on Feb. 11 to Valentine's Day on Feb. 14, and - this year, also marks the beginning of Lent. For love as God defines it is like a box of chocolates - because (as Forrest Gump said it) "you never know what you are going to get."

Lent is all about understanding God's love for us. We talk about giving things up for Lent; making a sacrifice or offering that is more than just foregoing chocolate or social media. During the month of February, as we leave the lessons learned in our study of Elijah, we will shift to a study on "The altar/altered life." For once we KNOW God's love for us, we GROW by taking that love on the GO wherever life takes us. See what I did there 😊

During the month of February, we will be showing God's love through various ministries within the church...On Feb. 11 - Super Bowl Sunday - all in attendance are encouraged to wear their team jerseys or shirts (or colors) to show that even with our different opinions and preferences we are One Body on One mission - a legacy we need to leave to the next generation. On Feb. 18 we will recognize Scouting Sunday because we love our scouts and seek to support them in serving others as we emphasize the importance of putting our words into action. Also on Sunday, Feb. 18, I will begin the sermon series on "The Altared/Altered Life" while Pastor Leo teaches the coordinating Bible Study on the following Wednesdays - all to show the transforming power of surrendering to God's amazing love.

We as the church are called to make loving God and others the common thread through all we do, every day and all year long. The challenge comes in loving the unlovable, grumpy, discontented, and judgmental as well as the nice, cheerful, and gregarious folks; and if you don't know what that kind of love is (or isn't), check out 1 Corinthians 13. Brotherly (and sisterly) love-also known as the Greek word "philos" - is why we come together in a community to encourage one another when we are "not feeling that loving feeling."

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Church Office Hours
Monday - Friday
9:00 am - 3:00 pm

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I encourage you this month to show God's love to someone different than you - someone who doesn't hang out in your social circles - or isn't quite your cup of tea - or who may talk, walk, or look different from you. If you truly do this, seeking God's guidance each step of the way, you will see love in a whole new realm. You may even find a new response to the question: who do you love?

Philos,
Pastor Becky

LENTEN STUDY - THE ALTARED LIFE

Written by Rev. Leo Park



Lent is the 40-day period beginning on Ash Wednesday and ending the day before Easter Sunday. Sunday is not included because it is Lord's Day, the day Jesus rose from the dead, and is always a feast day. Lent is a time of repentance, remembering that Jesus died on the cross for our sins as the sacrificial Lamb of God.

In the Old Testament, the most important thing to the people of Israel was sacrifice, and the most important part of sacrifice was an offering. An offering is called "קָרְבָּן (kor-bawn')." In the original Hebrew language, it means "something brought near the altar, that is, a sacrificial present." In order to approach God, the Israelites had to bring an offering, and that offering had to be offered on the altar. In other words, Israelites couldn't approach God without bringing an offering to the altar.

The Old Testament "sacrifice" became "worship" in the New Testament. The Apostle Paul says in Romans 12:1 "Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God-this is your spiritual act of worship." Whereas in the Old Testament an unblemished animal was offered on the altar, the New Testament says we are to offer our bodies as "a living sacrifice" on the altar. What does it mean for us to offer our bodies as a living sacrifice? In this Lenten Study, we want to explore the answer to that question together.

In this Lenten study, we will be studying:

1. the Biblical concept of the altar,
2. the Biblical concept of (spiritual) worship,
3. the sacrificial system: The five types of offerings in the Old Testament, and
4. how Jesus fulfilled each of the 5 sacrifices and how they apply to us today.

I'm really looking forward to this Lenten study. I invite you to join us!

FEED YOUR BODY & SPIRIT THIS LENTEN SEASON

February 13 - Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper at Mariners Bethel GMC (Ocean View) 4-7:00 PM

February 21 St. George's UMC (Frankford) at Noon - Prayer, Soup & Salad

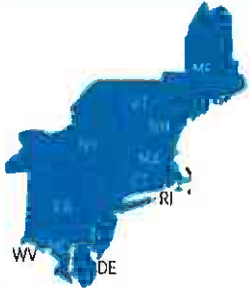
February 28 Ocean View Presbyterian (Ocean View) at Noon - Prayer, Soup & Salad

March 6 St. Matthew's by the Sea UMC (Fenwick) at Noon - Prayer, Soup & Salad

March 13 Bethany Beach Community Church (Bethany Beach) at Noon - Prayer, Soup & Salad

March 20 Saint Ann's Catholic Church (Bethany Beach) at Noon - Prayer, Soup & Salad

All are welcome to attend!



WHAT IS HAPPENING IN THE GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

Written by Dennis Rader

When Mariners Bethel joined the Global Methodist Church (GMC) denomination on September 15, 2023, we became part of a "sub-organization" led by the Northeast Transitional Conference Advisory Team (TCAT). The TCAT was a diverse gathering of 31 people from across the region, from every church size, ethnicity, male and female, young and old, lay and clergy, active and retired, bringing with it an incredible set of spiritual gifts and experience to lead and form the Northeast Annual Conference for the GMC.

On January 1, 2024, this organization was approved by the GMC to become the Northeast Provisional Annual Conference (NEPAC) with the goal to remove the "Provisional" nomenclature at the Northeast Convening Annual Conference in April 2024. Mariners will play a significant role in that Convening Annual Conference. Pastors Becky and Leo are both members of the "Sessions Committee" of the TCAT and have been assisting in the planning and will be part of the set-up team for this event. Pastor Leo also Co-Chairs the Conference Intercessory Prayer Team and has asked Liz Heintzelman to join this team at the conference. Additionally, Rev. Robert Kirby, a Mariners member, also is a member of the TCAT and has been instrumental in the development of the NEPAC. Both he and Dennis Rader have been nominated for continuing roles serving the Northeast Annual Conference.

All these individuals, along with our lay delegates to the annual conference - Elliott Workman and Dorothy Rader, will be attending this Annual Conference. You, as a member of the Global Methodist Church, may also attend. It will be held April 11-13 in Camp Hill, PA. If you are interested in attending this inaugural event, please see Dennis Rader for details. The annual conference will conduct its necessary business but will include celebration, worship, and ordination of pastors. We are looking forward to this landmark event.

A MESSAGE FROM MARINERS CHURCH COUNCIL

Written by Jim Rindfuss, Chair

The Church Council held its first meeting of 2024 on Tuesday, January 16 from 6:30 to 8pm in Fellowship Hall. In addition to the Council, several church members were in attendance.

In addition to normal church matters, the new Council began work on Mariners future vision and strategic planning as we continue our journey in the Global Methodist Church (GMC). The initiative is being led by Pastor Becky along with the Council.

The strategic planning initiative will focus on the five main missional priorities of the GMC which include: biblical teaching, transformational discipleship, ministry to all people, multiplication, and global partnerships. We will begin by taking an inventory of Mariners' current ministries to see where these ministries fit under these 5 pillars/ priorities and identify any gaps we may have.

The Council will be communicating more about this work as we move forward in 2024. It is an exciting time for Mariners and its leadership.

I also want to encourage all Mariners members to attend our monthly Church Council meetings which are held on the third Tuesday of each month from 6:30 to 8pm in Fellowship Hall. And if you have any questions about this strategic planning process or other church matters please feel free to email me at jimrindfuss212@gmail.com or call/text me at (302) 354-3585.

DIVINE FOCUS

Written by Dorothy Rader, Nominations/Lay Leader Development Team

In my last article, I wrote about VISION, our 1st Leadership Principle. It informs our way forward as Holy Spirit-filled disciples and allows change to spark new life. The clearer our vision becomes, the easier it is to guard what God calls us to do. God is on the move within our church – the Holy Spirit stirring is palpable! (Fun fact from the Disciple Fast/Track-New Testament teaching: Did you know that the biblical use of the word “disciple” means “learner?”) We are all growing in our knowledge of Christ’s teachings and feeling the impact! As we continue to embrace our vision*, the “sea-change of leadership” is now fully in place, and praying for DIVINE FOCUS—our 2nd Leadership Principle.

In order “to join God in a journey of bringing new life, reconciliation and the presence of Christ to all people AND to help each person reflect the character of Christ,” the apostle Paul provides a biblical perspective: **“But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.”** [Phillipians 3:13-14]

When focus increases, options decrease, so we need to ask:

- Are our ministries fulfilling a divine/kingdom focus?
- What do we do best?
- What are we doing now that “fits,” and what doesn’t?
- What should/could we be doing that we aren’t?

Additionally, we need to recognize that “good can be the enemy of great.” “As we narrow in on what **great** things we can do – on what God has uniquely equipped and empowered Mariners Bethel to do – what **good** thing(s) should we let go?” All our God-inspired ministries should (must!) be undertaken with joy and delivered with excellence. So, we need to define our “All Hands on Deck” ministry priorities, celebrate them, ensure we dedicate our resources accordingly, and continue the work of assessing from there. We ask all Mariners to be praying for our wisdom, discernment, and God’s clear direction for our path forward. And, may the Holy Spirit continue to reign (and rain down) on Mariners Bethel!

“Divine Focus” is the 2nd of 7 principles shared in Craig Groeschel’s book, “Lead Like IT Matters,” circulating among Mariners’ leadership. I integrate these principles in my articles to reveal key points and inform the greater church community of leadership’s considerations and direction.

MUSEUM OF THE BIBLE

Register for this charter bus trip to Washington, DC on Saturday, March 13. The bus departs Mariners at 6:45 am and returns approximately 5-6:00 pm. Cost for adults \$63; Youth \$60. Includes transportation and entrance to the museum. Register on Church Center or in the lobby.

WOMEN CENTRAL

Mariners Rocks! on Wednesday, April 3 at 7:00 pm. Our kickoff for the spring study is a rock'n'roll party featuring a DJ, sock hop, MINGO, and dance instruction. Refreshments will be included and rumor has it that root beer floats may be available! Our study, **Perfect Love** by Lisa Harper, begins April 10 and will run for six consecutive Wednesdays. Please be sure to look for details in early March and sign up online or in the lobby. All ladies are welcome and we ask you to bring a friend as well.

FINANCE UPDATE

	September - December (4M) Act VS Budget & VS Prior Year			
	Actual	Budget	VS Budget	VS Prior Year
Total Income	\$388,992.30	\$418,591.24	(\$29,598.94)	(\$54,641.13)
Total Expenditures	\$394,513.02	\$418,591.24	\$24,078.22	(\$9,090.82)
Net Income/(Expense)	(\$5,520.72)	\$0.00	(\$5,520.72)	(\$83,731.95)

Income - 7% lower than budget and 12% lower than prior year.

Expenses - 6% below budget and 2% higher than in the prior year.

Hope Center Loan balance as of 12/31/23 - \$153,722.30

The church has seen much change over the last couple of months, including disaffiliation from the United Methodist Church and hiring of our new Associate Pastor, Rev. Leo Park. Both changes will help us to continue our growth to the future that God has planned for us.

Although the church was able to make the disaffiliation payment of \$360,000.00 without borrowing money, our savings are completely exhausted. It was anticipated that the funds would be recovered through higher than budgeted donations. Due to less than anticipated giving, the Church Council and the Finance Committee had to reevaluate all church expenses and reassess the prioritization for spending. For now, no changes will be made to our staff and ministries.

All non-essential spending is being closely evaluated and monitored. To help foster additional giving, we will continue to partner with the community in having events and activities to increase our exposure to the community and, as always, work to bring more disciples to Christ. Without increased giving, future cuts will have to be made.

There are so many ways to donate to the Church, if you have any questions, please reach out to any Church Council or Finance Committee member, they are always willing to help in any way.

Additional financial information is located in the Faith Center mailroom. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to C. Elliott Workman, Finance Chair, or Dennis Rader, Operations Manager.



FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| 2/1 - Patricia Fecko | 2/17 - Oceana Travalini |
| 2/2 - Richard Waughtal | 2/18 - Natalie McClung |
| 2/2 - Michael Sasada | 2/19 - Emmy Wilkerson |
| 2/3 - Matt McCowan | 2/20 - Tony Christopher |
| 2/3 - Paul Adams | 2/22 - Colin Hudson |
| 2/4 - Linda Hudson | 2/23 - Natalie Gano |
| 2/5 - Gary Long | 2/23 - Lee Joy Workman |
| 2/6 - Marybeth Conaway | 2/25 - Scott Resnick |
| 2/6 - Raegan Brasure | 2/25 - Sheila Smigielski |
| 2/11 - Missy Woomer | 2/26 - Evelyn Miller |
| 2/11 - Debbie Gorab | 2/26 - Phyllis Smith |
| 2/11 - Denise Van Buren | 2/27 - Rylie Carey |
| 2/12 - Jim Rindfuss | 2/27 - Pam Morris |
| 2/13 - Mary Reed | 2/28 - Grant Gano |



FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

- 2/1 - Larry & Cathy Blackburn
- 2/16 - Bret & Melinda Shue
- 2/20 - John & Jane McLaren
- 2/20 - Paul & Marilyn Adams



Mariners Bethel Global Methodist Church

Navigating the seas of life together with Christ at the helm

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A WIDOWS JOURNEY CONFERENCE - MARCH 1-3, 2024

By Eileen McDaniel

A Conference organized by Sandy Cove Ministries

Becoming a widow is like becoming part of a club that you never wanted to attend. I have been a widow for 18 ½ years and have attended this conference three times and have enjoyed it and come back renewed to continue reaching out to other widows. It is held in North East, MD at a Retreat Center that overlooks the water. All meals are provided in the conference fee. The speakers have all experienced the journey and there is a small group breakout, as well as some opportunities for fun things. People who attend range from recent widows to those who have been widows for many years. I am available to discuss and help with carpool opportunities for anyone interested. It is a worthwhile opportunity. For more information please contact Eileen McDaniel at 240-595-1322

SAVE THE DATE CALENDAR

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|------|---|---------|--|
| 2/4 | CRASH Spaghetti Dinner fundraiser, Hope Center, | 3/29 | Good Friday prayer room in Social Hall
9 am to 12 noon & 4-6 pm |
| 2/6 | Full staff mtg in Social Hall, 6:30 pm | 3/29 | CRASH Crosswalk to beach, 10 am to 1 pm |
| 2/7 | SESM Ministerium meeting at Mariners
noon - 2 pm.(Social Hall) | 3/31 | Easter Sunrise service 7 am at VFW |
| 2/11 | Communion Sunday/ Launch | 3/31 | Easter Sunday, services at 9 am and 11 am |
| 2/11 | Super Bowl Sunday "Wear Your Team Jersey
colors" | 4/11-13 | Northeast Convening Conference of GMC
in Camp Hill, PA |
| 2/13 | Shrove Tuesday Pancake dinner, Hope Center | 4/14 | Communion Sunday/ Launch |
| 2/14 | Ash Wednesday imposition of ashes
from 7-9 am in sanctuary | 4/20 | Tour of Barratt's Chapel in Frederica, DE
Leave Hope Center at 9 am |
| 2/14 | Ash Wednesday evening service
@ 6:30 pm sanctuary | 4/21 | Youth Sunday |
| 2/18 | Scout Recognition Sunday | 4/27 | Men's Retreat in Hope Center |
| 3/9 | Museum of Bible Trip to DC- 7 am to 5:30 pm | 4/28 | New Member Sunday |
| 3/10 | Communion Sunday/ Launch | 5/12 | Mother's Day Communion Sunday/
Launch |
| 3/24 | Palm Sunday | 5/18 | New Member Voyage |
| 3/24 | Children's Easter event (tentative) | 5/19 | Confirmation Sunday/ Pentecost Sunday |
| 3/28 | Maundy Thurs. service @ 6:30 pm sanctuary | 5/26 | Memorial Day weekend |
| | | 5/27 | Memorial Day Monday - offices closed |

The purpose of Mariners News is to share the message, mission, and ministry of the church. The release date is the 1st of each month; the submission deadline is 10 days prior. All submissions should be sent digitally, if possible, to administrator@marinersbethel.org. Any questions. contact the church office.