

# GRAPEVINE NEWSLETTER

**JULY 2021**

Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church, ELCA  
12513 SE Mill Plain Boulevard Vancouver, WA 98684  
360/254/9243

bslc@beautifulsaviorlutheran.com

[www.beautifulsaviorlutheran.com](http://www.beautifulsaviorlutheran.com)



---

## **Pastor's Ponderings--**

We are one month into the summer "season" and just survived record heat. How are you doing? The coming back into more interaction potential combined with heat stress has zapped quite a few people's energy, I've noticed, but not that of the children at VBS the last week of June to July 1. Kudos to the team that pulled a very fine VBS off! You did a great job and it was uplifting to experience 12 children all in one place again!

For those who are participating in worship--either in person or online--you know we have been diving into the book of Acts to see how the earliest Christian Church was shaped by the Holy Spirit as they faced various challenges. The purpose is twofold--one is just know some of the stories of this book of the Bible better, but also to help set the stage for conversations I anticipate we will have in the fall, about how we "are Church" going forward. To prepare for our conversations, I'm including some questions to consider and provide input about, followed by an "all congregation" request.

- The earliest Church spent time growing into a deeper relationship with one another. What types of things would help our congregation to grow into a deeper relationship with each other?
- What are spiritual gifts you experience as strong in our community of faith? What spiritual gift is most developed in you, personally? (Or would you like to do some focused work on spiritual gifts before identifying them?)
- What is one practice of the earliest Christian community that you would pick for our congregation to grow in this fall? (To date we've engaged a good portion of chapters 1, 2, 5, and 6, and in the next few weeks spend time in chapters 9, 10, 15, and 16 if you want to ponder with scripture as your guide.)
- What sorts of preparation/further experience would help you to feel more equipped and ready to share from your faith and related experiences of God with people God brings into your life so that you can share the light and love of Jesus with them?
- The earliest Church faced significant challenges, and so do we. Identify one significant challenge we face as Church as we reengage as a faith community. Please share "the" one (ok, if you really must, go ahead and name two) with me via email, phone call, or letter. I'll be compiling a list of these challenges to inform our future conversations.

A more active request: Please walk around your neighborhood (as you are able and whatever you define as your neighborhood) and look around. See what you notice as evidence of the Holy Spirit at work. Where does there seem to be a need for (further?) Holy Spirit action? What barriers might need to be crossed if we were the ones being prompted to respond?

Jot whatever observances you make down and either email them, bring to the building, or send a note as the summer progresses. (The more “data” we can accumulate, the more effective our future discernment process will be) Thank you for contributing!

I am grateful to be your partner along the journey,  
Pastor Jean ([pastorjean@beautifulsaviorlutheran.com](mailto:pastorjean@beautifulsaviorlutheran.com))

---



**From Kirsten Larsen,  
Director of Youth and Family Ministry**

We are looking forward to going to the ELCA National Youth Gathering in Minneapolis in July 2022! This event is held every three years in a different city in the US, and is an opportunity for 8th – 12th graders to gather for worship, play, service,

and grow in relationships with each other and with God.

This year’s theme is “Boundless: God Beyond Measure ” ... The Gathering is a unique opportunity to invite young people into a deeper relationship with a God whose possibilities are boundless. Through one-of-a-kind experiences, this ministry stretches and affirms young people’s gifts and calls. They experience the power of the Spirit within them, that frees them to live in the grace of God’s boundless love in Jesus Christ.”

We are planning on bringing a group of our high schoolers to the Gathering in Minneapolis next summer. 8th-12th graders (in 2021-2022 school year) are eligible to attend. If you are interested in attending, please contact Kirsten ([youthdirector@beautifulsaviorlutheran.com](mailto:youthdirector@beautifulsaviorlutheran.com)). We will also need a lot of support in fundraising, so if you would like to help with organizing the individual fundraisers (Easter breakfast, car washes, etc.), contact Kirsten!

---

**Circle of Conversation** Wednesday July 14  
In person at the church building from 6-7 p.m.  
*hosted by Christopher Belisle, Pastor Jean participating*

Join in an evening of small group conversation and connection hosted at church. The goal is to do some collective discernment on our readiness to return “back to normal” and thinking about our identity together. Get to know Pastor Jean a bit as well as your fellow Church-members, and simply enjoy each other’s company.

To express interest or ask questions, please email Christopher Belisle at [belislecr@gmail.com](mailto:belislecr@gmail.com). We will be limited to a small sized group for 1) ease of conversation sake and 2) following social distancing protocols. This invitation is open to all people associated with the congregation– new, longstanding, returning, you name it! (If you have already participated in a circle conversation hosted by a council member, we encourage you to recommend participation to others you know so more people can have their voices heard and Pastor Jean can become more acquainted with them.)

In Peace,  
Christopher





## News from our Social Ministry Committee

Prepared by Cheryl P.

We are blessed to be a blessing to our neighbors, friends and the community! Every month 5% of Beautiful Savior's general fund giving is deposited into the Social Ministry account to be used to support a variety of needs. In addition, we receive generous private and memorial contributions designated to Social Ministry.

Since the COVID pandemic began we have focused on supporting individual requests for rent assistance, motel stays, food and gas money. In conversations with local agencies and how BSLC might help, it was decided that the best help we could offer was individual assistance. Referrals come from phone calls to the church office and from our partner agencies that may not be able to fill a specific need. Cheryl Pfaff contacts the agency or individual to learn about the need and explore other possible solutions. Here's the blessing part: if we have funds and cannot identify another solution to an individual's specific need, the answer is usually "yes".

Since January of this year, we have provided 87 motel nights for people who would otherwise be on the street, many vulnerable to cold or with chronic illnesses. Most stays are short, only a few nights. However, one family whom we have known for many years, received motel stays several times. Working with a community agency, they recently moved back into an apartment. Another family, new to the area, experienced a delayed job start and needed many nights. It was so nice to say, "You do not need to move your seven family members, including children trying to finish remote school into your van". When one of their school laptops stopped working, we were able to find a loaner. They have their first paychecks, but may still need help until they move into an apartment. I pray that we or someone else will be there for them.

Rent assistance from public sources has increased during COVID, reducing the requests for rent assistance. Still, we have provided 8 months of rent for 6 different families. Two times this year we have helped with car repair and reclaiming a stolen car. Both times, the people were able to return to families in other communities.

***Social Ministry is a ministry of relationships, our gift to the community.*** The question was asked during a conversation with Pastor Jean, "What is BSLC known for in the community?" I know we are known for our loving care for those without homes during the winter months. For our safe place to sleep and meals prepared with love by our members. And we are known and appreciated for being a place to call when there is no place left to call. When a member calls out of the blue one morning to say, "We have been talking and would like to help someone, do you have an idea of how we might help?" ... and I have just received a call from a mom with a daughter waiting for an apartment who needs a few motel nights, I feel God's hand in this ministry.

Thank you, Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church, for supporting this ministry year after year! Thank you for graciously allowing Jon to park his trailer on our lot and to those who have helped him. We have explored other options for him and so far this is all he can afford. We continue to work with Jon's friends to keep things tidy!

We are truly blessed to be a blessing! Thank you again! Contact Cheryl Pfaff with questions or interest in joining the Social Ministry Committee



## 2021 Mexico Mission Update:

Unfortunately, the mission was canceled last year due to the pandemic, however we were able to send \$5,000.00 to El Devino which provided jobs to local workers to build two homes in the community. Mexico Mission is a go this year! We are going to Tijuana to build homes for two families. Covid-19 gave us a "bump in the road" as we were not able to have the dinner/auction fundraiser. With limited resources and a reduced team, we will be building two homes instead of our typical three homes. This is the 26th mission and we plan

on making it a success with everyone's help, support and prayers.

If you are able, please send in donations for the mission to the church with Mexico Mission noted on the memo line of your check. We will continue to raise funds after our return to supplement vehicle rentals and lodging. I mentioned a reduced team this year for various reasons, primarily Covid-19. Ten volunteers will be crossing the southern border on July 10th, please keep all of us in your prayers; Chad Hertel, Ray Smith, Jim Mansfield, Phil Yorkers, Rebecca and Brent Bafus, Landon Snyder, Jim Montgomery, Laurie Langeum, Kathy Esparza.

Regardless of lack of funds, a reduced team, and Covid-19, the team is excited about going. The families are anxiously waiting for their homes to be built. Each of us receives more than we give helping our neighbors. El Divino Lutheran Church is our family. Afterall, we are connected. Thank you for always thinking of the mission.

*Submitted by Kathy Esparza*

---

## Peace & Justice Group

For the first time since the start of the pandemic, the Peace and Justice Group met in person, this time enjoying a warm night under the tent at the church. For the benefit of our newcomers, we explained the history of our group, and we filled each other in about our latest advocacy projects and passions. Terry Eaton circulated a petition to put I-1362 on the ballot to make health care available to everyone in the state of Washington. She also reported to us that Faith Partners for Housing is working on a project to pair people who have space in their homes with people in need of housing.



Kathy Esparza invited us to join her for a rally in front of Patty Murray's office on Officer's Row at 3:30 on June 29<sup>th</sup>. The rally is sponsored by One America to encourage Patty Murray to follow through with her promise to support legislation to allow DACA recipients to become citizens.

It was decided that our booth at the Peace and Justice Fair on Sept. 11<sup>th</sup> this year will highlight our painted doors. We discussed distributing postcards with a picture of the doors and making an opportunity for visitors to have their picture taken in front of a replica painted door in front of our booth. Our plans are not finalized and we welcome input and ideas. We also hope to update our brochure for distribution at our booth.

Leslie Quigley encouraged us to look into joining Ridwell in order to recycle waste that cannot be put in our Waste Connection recycling bin. Information is available on their website.

Mary Allred has been in contact with members of the Vancouver Police Dept. about police reforms, and she will invite someone from their department to talk with us about current legislation at one of our meetings in the near future.

**Our next meeting is planned for Thursday, July 22nd at 6 pm at the church** under the tent if weather permits. It was great to see some new faces at our meeting, and we are hoping to expand our numbers even more. Consider joining us in July! Contact persons: Sonja Vegdahl & Linda Anglin.

---

## **The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) Position on The Death Penalty**

*This statement was adopted by more than a two-thirds majority vote at the second biennial Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA, on August 28-September 4, 1991.*

***The ELCA opposes the use of state executions, aka the death penalty.***

***“The Death Penalty*** stands in the Lutheran tradition recognizing that God entrusts the state with the power to take human life when failure to do so constitutes a clear danger to the common good. Never-the-less, it expresses ELCA opposition to the use of the death penalty, one that grows out of ministry with and to people affected by violent crime.”

The 4-page statement created in 1991 does “acknowledge the existence of different points of view within the church and society on this question and the need for continued deliberation, but it objects to the use of the death penalty because it is not used fairly and has failed to make society safer.” Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. “Death Penalty.” ELCA. 2021.

<https://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Death-Penalty>.

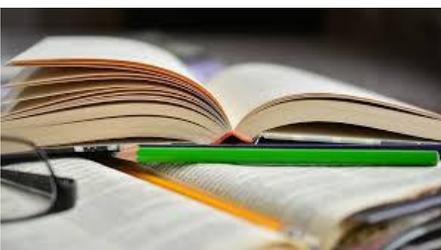
Access to the 4-page statement that includes topics on violence, justice, and restoration:

[https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Death\\_PenaltySS.pdf?\\_ga=2.88035867.2096231049.1624167946-2079000619.1624167946](https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Death_PenaltySS.pdf?_ga=2.88035867.2096231049.1624167946-2079000619.1624167946)

*Submitted as a part of an ongoing BSLC Peace and Justice Ministry study on the published social positions of the ELCA by Bev Questad.*

---

## **BIBLE & BOOK STUDY OPPORTUNITIES**



**Wednesday Morning Bible Study** with Pastor Jean meets via Zoom at **10:30 AM**. Current focus: Genesis. To receive a Zoom link email Pastor Jean [pastorjean@beautifulsaviorlutheran.com](mailto:pastorjean@beautifulsaviorlutheran.com)

**Thursday Gather Bible Study** meets in person at BSLC, **10:00 AM**. For more information contact Nancy K. (her contact information is available through the church office).

T

**he Anti Racism Zoom Study Group** every other Sunday over the summer at 3:30  
*July 11 & 25; August 8, 22, and probably the 29 in lieu of Labor Day.*

**Dear Church: A Love Letter from a Black Preacher to the Whitest Denomination in the US .** (The book is available at the library for those who do not wish to purchase a copy.) If you are interested in joining the discussion, but aren't yet on the email list to receive the zoom link, contact [pastorjean@beautifulsaviorlutheran.com](mailto:pastorjean@beautifulsaviorlutheran.com).

---



**BSLC Bike Ride -  
Saturday, July 10 at 10 AM**

Let's ride our bikes together on the Padden Parkway bike path!

Meet at Cameo Cafe (7703 NE 72nd Ave, Vancouver, WA 98661) at 10 am, park along the north side (78th street). Bring your bike, water bottle, and helmet for a fun adventure! RSVP to Kirsten ([youthdirector@beautifulsaviorlutheran.com](mailto:youthdirector@beautifulsaviorlutheran.com))

---

**Worship Updates for Moving Forward**

- With our lovely canopy and a number of folks still uncomfortable gathering indoors in groups, we will worship under the canopy as weather permits for most of the summer. If we hear that folks are ready to gather if only indoors, then we can see about alternating.
  - When outside we will not require masks for people who are vaccinated and we can reduce distancing to a recommended three feet apart. Indoors distancing may also be reduced to three feet apart but you are asked to continue to mask until vaccination levels in the county reach 70%.
  - The current plan is to wait until **September** to go back to **two services**. While subject to change, this will likely start Sept. 12, when Sunday School/regular programming begins.
  - In order to fit into our larger family's schedules, I will be gone for my mother's memorial and internment just as the program year begins--not the best timing, but appreciated time in which to finally honor and remember her with other loved ones. This means a planned interactive worship and fellowship event will move from "Rally Day" to the 26th of Sept. We will have only one worship service that day and children and youth are strongly encouraged to plan to participate in this cross-generational activity, too!
  - **Addressing Transportation Challenges** To respond to an increase in the numbers of people unable to drive themselves to worship, please consider becoming part of a transportation pool, or "adopt" someone to bring with you when you come to worship, and/or work with others to explore the possibilities to make possible the purchase and support (e.g., insurance, gas, maintenance) for a group transport option (i.e., handicap accessible van or bus). There is no point person yet, for this initiative, so also considering becoming that person--maybe in tandem with another?
-

## “WORDSMITHING” with Kathe Yokers

A few weeks ago (just before school was to let out for the summer) Kirsten talked to “all the children of God” contrasting the word vocation with vacation. This got me thinking about the largeness of this word: vocation. Let’s consider these two words some more.



**Vacation** includes the word “vacate” in it’s meaning; you vacate school or your job when you go on vacation. You leave it, perhaps to come back to it later. The dictionary says “freedom from duty.”

**Vocation** includes the word “vocal” in its construction. Vocation isn’t merely your job (including schooling, especially when you are a kid), vocation is your calling. We Christians are the “called out ones.” God gives us interests, abilities, and talents, and calls each of us to our vocation whether schooling or a job. For Christians, it is the recognition that God is calling us to our work, whatever that involves, and that means we do our best and pray that it is blessed. And we grow in understanding that as we continue to be part of the beloved community wherever we find ourselves, we live and act in justice and care so that each “other” may know Jesus and God’s great love for all of them, too.

Our vocation in this wide sense continues even as we vacate our jobs or schooling for a time.

Think about your vocation. Have you thought about God calling you to do or to continue to do what you do? Vocation takes listening and willingness to grow, too.

God asks us to be alert and ready for new challenges, new thoughts or understandings, and a widening of our vocation in service to God. People all around us are in need of God in their lives. How exciting to think of being part of sharing that great love!

***Think. Pray. Study. Be ready to respond.***

***In Jesus’ name, Happy Vacation/Vocation!***

---

### **BSLC COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS: June 8, 2021**

PRESENT: Sue Calvert, Leslie Quigley, Stacey Benson, Ann Giles, Heide Maize, Ray Smith, Karen Cleveland, Aloria Mercier, Landon Snyder, Laura Snyder, Bill Oman, Nancy Kingston, Bert Alvaro, Pastor Jean, Kirsten Larsen. ***(and we met IN PERSON!!)***

**Strategic Plan Discussion.** Goals #3 & #7 (small groups breakouts) a. What are we trying to accomplish? b. Why is this important? Goal #3 Give each member tools, knowledge to do this Push people out of comfort zone Set good example to other people Tool – Watch Sunday morning service later in day or next/other day The need is great Create unity & peace in midst, world (x,y,z) to spread the word Resilience in our hard times, how we react Speak up at the right time with right words Giving Tools Help them feel comfortable sharing their faith Ripple Growth (personal & spiritual), nurtured Jesus said so! Relationships: with yourself, with God & with other We’re not in the center, GOD IS We live in a broken world, we are broken people Goal #7 Ownership – belonging – so everyone feels a part of the church Have a variety of activities to encourage each member to feel connected in some way Uniqueness – catch peoples’ attention (in a good way) God calls us for fellowship & connection Good communication for everyone Getting back to church = IMPORTANT

Help quell current fears. Wants- get pews back to normal. Talking TO people rather than about people. Regaining a sense of community – in touch with each other. Goal 3. Challenging, equipping and supporting all members in carrying out their faith in their daily lives, congregation and world. Goal 7. Deepening youth and adult members' ownership of BSLC, its mission and ministries. 2 (Goal #7 – continued) Making EVERYONE feel included Faith blooms Tonight's Agenda/New Business:

1. **Property Committee: Outside Updates** – Several items are needing repairs, including siding needs patch & repair (approx. 500), need helping picking paint color for window trim (more windows may need to be done) if you have a preference in color let Ann or Don know, and should the ewe trees be trimmed or removed. Unanimous decision to let the Property Committee make the decisions.

**Pest Control**- motion to go with EcoCare – up to \$1,200 for 1 year. 1st Staci, 2nd Bert, Motion approved. c. COSCO Fire Protection (information only) We rejected a bid from COSCO for replacing a battery and Don went and purchased one instead. **Grounds Clean Up** – We need help with gardening & grounds clean up and a work party in the future. Special thanks to Carol N for all her help with the flower beds!

2. **Recent Audit Report & Recommendations** – Very complimentary report. Audit company was impressed with us. Some recommendations were given and will be sent to the Finance Committee to see what we can do and what is feasible.

3. **Return to the Building Update** - meeting every other week and following guidelines of Synod, CDC and governor.

4. **Sewer Fundraiser Update** – (information only) We have received approx. \$45,000 & have 18,000 in future pledges - great job!

5. **Mexico Mission** – Fundraiser – approved.

6. **Synod Assembly** – good assembly – more information in the future.

Open Business (Items in the works) • **Part-Time Tech Position** – possibility of looking to share this position with St. Andrews • **Affordable Housing Partnership with St. Andrews** – Information gathering this time – see Pastor's Report.

**APPROVAL OF MAY MINUTES:** 1st Nancy, 2nd Sue. Minutes approved.

**Next Council Meeting** – July 13th, 2021 – 6:30pm – In Person @ Church