

GRAPEVINE NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2021

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

bslc@beautifulsaviorlutheran.com

www.beautifulsaviorlutheran.com



Pastor's Ponderings--Walk Dusty? What does that mean?

During Lent this year, we are using a Bible study from Old Lutheran to shape a conversation within our Wednesday worship time. What does that mean? To tell the truth that's not totally clear to me either, but it caught in my imagination and I wanted to explore that concept with you and see what God reveals.

Here's how this phrase has already been working on me with regard to scriptures we've engaged on recent Sundays. Mountain top moments of clarity and certainty of faith might feel convicting. Other times you may feel refreshed and "sparkly" with faith, like when you are coming up out of water after a swim in the sunshine. But most of the time, our lives are spent slogging along in the valleys of everyday life where dusty demands seem to dull our enthusiasm. And then, something happens and we recognize again, the profound import of everyday responsibilities and relationships that give our lives meaning and purpose. Maybe a life disruption (like the year under covid's cloud?) helps you realign your priorities or recognize what is truly important in your life. I'm thinking focus upon walking dusty might have some bearing.

Or, what about the times when life feels "complicated", when we struggle to make sense of what is going on or where we are going and the words of *some* others may play into our worst fears and doubts? But then there comes words of unexpected encouragement and support that give clarity to a way forward, or another is "just with you" as you feel your way forward to a decision, or strengthened resolve, or new sense of joy and you come to realize how someone has been used by the Spirit to help you experience the presence of Jesus for you in your struggles. And then you recognize in yourself new strength and wisdom. And then you come that same Holy Spirit brings you alongside someone else who needs *you* to be that same presence of hope and comfort. I think that's part of walking dusty, too.

I realize that there are a number of you who don't regularly participate in midweek worship or shared faith practices beyond worship on Sundays, or extra zoom commitments, so this opportunity might feel less pressing than all else that keeps you so very busy, or the evening distractions that help you unwind from all the demands upon you. I actually identify with you, and repeatedly need to "hear" the passage that I know to hold truth because it's proven so time and again in my life:

²⁸"Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.

²⁹Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Matthew 11:28-30

So I ask you, even knowing your busyness, to come be renewed and recentered in Christ's community. Join with others who will gather via zoom to center and sing and share conversation exploring

together what it means to walk dusty on the path of Jesus. Use this Lent to attend to relationships—with God, with siblings in Christ, and within yourself. Maybe we will gain some new focus about relationships beyond our doors if we are attentive. I don't know, but want to see what unfolds as we walk together.

If you don't have a way to join the conversation with zoom, what about forming a conversation pod with friends and neighbors? Anyone who wishes to have the whole Bible study sent to them can just let me know—I had to buy rights to use it, obtained permission to use it as we are in online worship, and can send anyone associated with the congregation a link, and would delight in its full use!

Oh—and that sticker with the ash cross that you may have received with your Ash Wednesday ashes (and available to others of you upon request!) is to put somewhere that it will catch your eye and prompt you to consider for a moment how walking dusty happens in your life, or where in the world there is dust calling to you to come and see. Let's see where this year's focus takes us. It might be just the dusty wilderness adventure we need to renew our souls.

Your partner on the journey,
Pastor Jean

P.s., I am going to serve on the synod's RIC Work Team. I'll let you know what that means as I discover that for myself! The team began as a way to explore having the synod become RIC, but may be branching out for other LGBTQIA+ ministry conversation.



Conversation Circles:

Getting to Know One Another

Siblings in Christ,

There have been four circle conversations that have happened before I write this, and two scheduled the day after, so we have a bit of

experience now under our belts. It has been helpful and meaningful to me to engage in these beginning conversations, and I believe has been the same for others who have participated.

As a reminder: I've asked the council members to each host a conversation circle (to include me) to get us started. They will each invite a mix of four people (or four households) to participate with them and me in a guided one-hour conversation using ZOOM—the host and I will learn something of you, and you will get to know a council member and me a bit better. Your input will also ground the council for further work over the rest of the year

Each council member is only being asked to host one conversation circle, so not all will get an invitation this first round—you may signal your interest in being included by letting me know through email pastorjean@beautifulsaviorlutheran.com or by phone 360-254-9243.

Now that some of you have participated, I hope several more people will decide to host a “circle of conversation” with me so that we can continue to build relationships! Thank you.

From Kirsten Larsen, Director of Youth and Family Ministry

Easter Brunch kits!

As with many events, the ELCA National Youth Gathering in Minneapolis was postponed until 2022. Although we cannot eat Easter breakfast together this year to support our youth at the Gathering, we will be selling Easter brunch kits! Each kit will contain all the ingredients you need to make a yummy Easter brunch at home, special recipes from our youth, and other festive treats!

Pre-order your kit starting March 15 (pre-ordering closes March 31). Cost will be released in an e-blast. Pre-order yours at this link: <https://forms.gle/mMqm9M6h8TsfNAjo6>

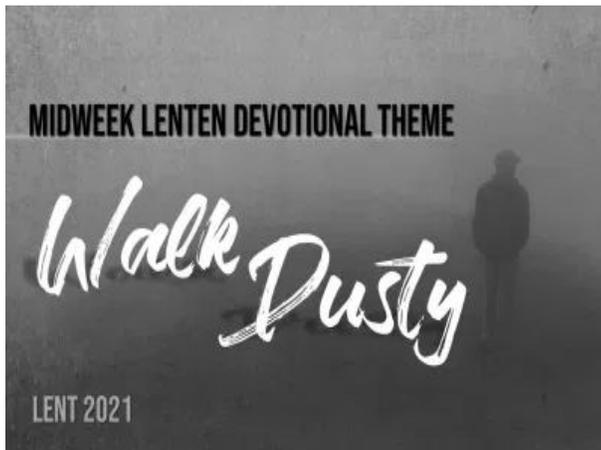
Email Kirsten – youthdirector@beautifulsaviorlutheran.com

Or, call the church office to pre-order. (360-254-9243) Consider gifting an Easter brunch kit to a friend or neighbor!

Easter brunch kit will be available for pick up on Good Friday, April 2 and Saturday, April 3, time TBD. All proceeds will go to the National Youth Gathering fund.

God's Doors!

Our incredible youth have taken on a wonderful project to promote how welcoming and inclusive our church is to LGBT+ folks. We are looking for donations of old doors of all sizes to be painted and displayed in front of our building. We need at least 6 and up to 11 doors. If you have any old doors, please contact Kirsten before you drop them off at church. We plan to paint them later this spring. Thank you!



Lenten Wednesdays on Zoom:

Walk Together in Dusty Community

As is our tradition, we will structure worship in Holden Evening Prayer, with interactive time to explore various texts nestled within it's familiar rhythms. Because our gathering continues to be restricted from being in person, we will worship virtually.

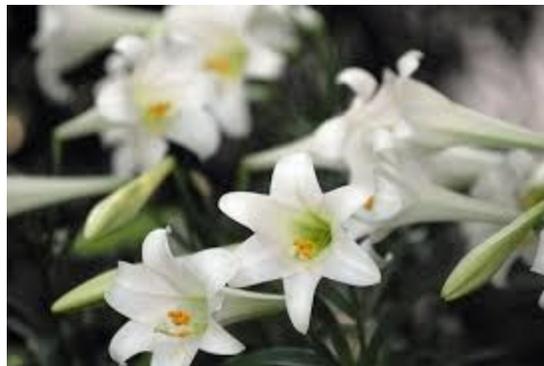
This year we are exploring what it means to *Walk Together in Dusty Community*, adapted from a resource available on Old Lutheran (permission pending). Teasers from the resource: "Just as we

walk wet in recognition of our baptism and the promise that it holds" we also walk dusty in the messiness of life. "Let us also remember that it is this dust we call life that shapes and forms us into resurrection people.... In brokenness, we are healed" because "resurrection promises are greater" than whatever "dirty road we must travel." From PJ: The whole idea of walking dusty has caught my interest and I look forward to discovering with you what this means!)

NOTE: If you know of people who aren't able to utilize technology to gather, please invite them to join you if you are able to do so safely (limit of two households represented, distanced and masked! Outside best) once the governor gives the OK to do so. Stay tuned!

Holy Week and Easter Sunday:

This information will be shared closer to the time, in order to flex to whatever will be the current conditions. Looking ahead we hope to have worship on site under the tent--possibly for both Palm Sunday and Easter, both at 10:00. Maundy Thursday and Good Friday will likely be offered virtually, and Pastor Jean is playing with an idea that merges an Easter program with Easter Vigil. Stay tuned!



BSLC Return to the Building Task Force Update



The Return to Building Task force is excited for Clark County to be in Phase II and therefore considering the possibility of trying in person services by the end of March. Early survey results show a wide spectrum of comfort in gathering together, some ready now and others that will wait a long time for safety. There is still a risk of gathering together and we encourage you to use good judgement regarding your own health and safety while being in person with others.

In our planning, we will need volunteer Greeter/Temperature takers and Ushers, similar to the process used this past summer under the tent. Six foot distancing, masks, no hugs or handshakes still apply. Online services will absolutely continue (you'll just see a few people in chairs).

Watch for the SignUp Genius link to volunteers for key roles coming soon. A list of those willing and able to worship in person has begun, please email: bslc@beautifulsaviorlutheran.com and let us know what volunteer role you're interested in helping with. Rejoice and pray on moving toward gathering carefully!



Musical Meditations

Lent Musical Meditation mini recitals with musician Stephen Janzen will be released on Thursday, March 11; and Thursday, March 25. Please join us via Facebook/YouTube! Links will be sent to you via the e-Blast or by contacting bslc@beautifulsaviorlutheran.com



Red Cross Blood Drive -

Friday, March 5, 1 - 6:30 PM

Beautiful Savior Lutheran's Fellowship Hall

To sign up, go to RedCrossBlood.org and search for BeautifulSaviorVanc or contact Sue N @ nolansuzy57@comcast.net

Community Garden!

The Beautiful Savior Community Garden is starting its 9th consecutive year providing all with garden plots!

A sign up will be held on March 18th at 5:30 - 6:30 pm outside the front doors with masks required. Last year's renters will have the first chance on their existing plots.

Rent is \$20 per plot. Checks payable to BSLC and note: *Garden* in the memo line.

Looking forward to another year of growing organic green and ripe vegetables. A Saturday work day will be scheduled shortly to clean up the "compost" area and rototill gardens.



NEWS FROM BSLC's PEACE & JUSTICE GROUP

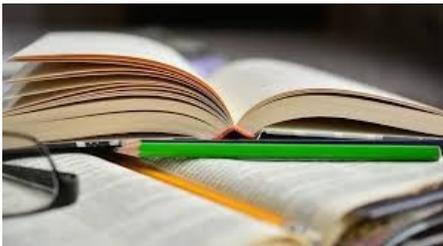
The Peace and Justice Group is reviewing the social statements of the ELCA, which are found on the ELCA's churchwide website. The statement titled "For Peace in God's World" was adopted in 1993, but it still seems relevant in addressing many issues that our country faces today. The following is a very abbreviated summary of their statement:

- Earthly peace means "relationships among and within nations that are just, harmonious, and free from war." God calls us to be peacemakers in all of our relationships. However, "The Church is a disturbing presence when it refuses to be silent and instead speaks the truth."



- “We recognize the awesome responsibility political leaders, policy makers, and diplomats have for peace in our unsettled time... We encourage participation by Christians in the affairs of government.”
- “Wars, both between and within states, represent a horrendous failure of politics...We begin with a strong presumption against all war: support for and participation in a war to restore peace is a tragic concession to a sinful world... The principles for deciding about wars include right intention, justifiable cause, legitimate authority, last resort, declaration of war aims, proportionality, and reasonable chance of success.”
- At times, “Christians need to be prepared to say ‘no’ to wars in which their nation participates...We support members who conscientiously object to bearing arms in military service.”
- “The principles for post-war conduct include showing mercy to the defeated and assisting them to rebuild.”
- “We rejoice where people of different religions work together to overcome hostility.” And we, “Promote respect for human rights.”
- “Insist that peace and economic justice belong together...Support just arrangements to regulate the international economy.” In providing assistance to other nations, “We support continued and increased assistance by the United States, and call for its gradual realignment toward more development assistance and a proportional reduction in subsidies to purchase weapons... Give highest priority to arms control and reduction... Advocate participatory and accountable political structures within nations.”
- “Insist that one of the most important contributions the United States can make to peace is to have its own democracy work for a just and peaceful ordering of its diverse society.”

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

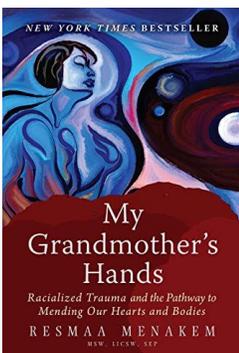
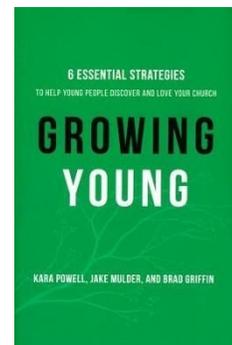
Thursday Gather Bible Study meets on Zoom at 10:00 AM. For more information contact Nancy K. (her contact information is available through the church office).

Growing Young

A leadership book study on 3rd Thursdays at 6:30 PM on Zoom.

You are welcome to join the discussion at any time.

Request a zoom link at youthdirector@beautifulsaviorlutheran.com



My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies

You are cordially invited to join a ZOOM conversation grounded in this book by Resmaa Menakem, each Sunday @ **3:00 PM**. If you have questions or want to join, contact Sonja V. or Pastor Jean pastorjean@beautifulsaviorlutheranchurch.com for a Zoom link.

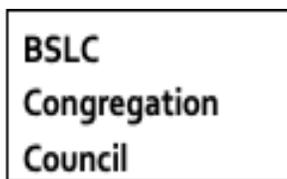


Exploring a Ministry Opportunity: Affordable Housing

Last year, and again this year, BSLC was approached to join with St. Andrew in an exploratory partnership to see what we might have to offer the wider Vancouver community to offset the ongoing and serious deficit of affordable housing. A UMC church has now joined the conversation as well! Pastor Jean and Cheryl P will participate in a preliminary conversation between the three congregations. *We are just exploring possible options at this point.*

This conversation is prompted by work the Synod is doing with congregations, encouraging us to consider ways that we may work with other partners in our communities to increase the availability of affordable housing. There are varieties of ways this might be accomplished, including leasing property for building, partnering with other congregations in support of building upon their property, and so on. This is such a strong and obvious need in our community, that Pastor Jean has been listening in on a few meetings of the synod-wide team, and has found the conversation and the idea of being part of the answer to be quite exciting. Lots of creative ideas are being explored and partnerships developed.

The Synod is so much behind this work, that the creation of a synod-associated 501c3 is in the works. This 501c3 is intended to support congregations participating in providing an answer to affordable housing needs by offering such things as: funding grants, community partner development assistance, building and legal consideration advising, housing management/oversight, and other partnering. (They are looking for active members to help build the infrastructure for that work. If the Spirit is creating some excitement in you toward that work--let PJ know. She's on another synod team so doesn't have time to be an active member of this one, too.)



COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS – February 2021, Council Retreat

PRESENT: Sue Calvert, Leslie Quigley, Stacey Benson, Landon Synder, Ann Giles, Heide Maize, Ray Smith, Karen Cleveland, Aloria Mercier, Laura Snyder, Bill Oman, Nancy Kingston, Pastor Jean, Kirsten Larsen

(Welcome new Council Youth Representative – Aloria Mercier!)

ABSENT: Bert Alvaro

CALL TO ORDER: 6:38pm. *DWELLING IN THE WORD:* Pastor led us in *Dwelling in the Word* (a new addition to Council Meetings to help us get centered) with Mark 9:2-14. What struck you in this story? What may God be telling you?

STAFF REPORTS: Pastor Jean – been busy getting ready for Lent and a couple of funerals. We'll talk about Communication Circles later in our meeting. Kirsten- (SEE ATTACHED) - Just went to virtual

conference last weekend – the ELCA Youth Ministry Network Annual Conference. Getting ready for Lent and Ash Wednesday.

TONIGHT'S AGENDA/NEW BUSINESS:

1. **Conversation Circles**—PJ – update on how the Small Group Conversation Circles are going with the congregation. Copy of questions are attached.

2. **Funding the Sewer Project**—Nancy. Our church is on a septic system (which is currently working fine) but before we can do anything with the building we will need to get connected to the city sewer. There has been many discussions on what to do. Property Committee is proposing to do a separate fundraising appeal (not a capital campaign) for the sewer project. It is proposed that we get the sewer all set to the edge of our property and ready to go but to NOT hook it up until needed, since as soon as we hook up we will have to start paying for sewer. Thinking of fun ways to do a fundraiser for this project. Was asked if the Capital Campaign Committee would be willing to take this on as a special fundraiser (NOT a Capital Campaign). Nancy will take this back to the Capital Campaign Committee to see if this is something they would be interested in taking on with help from other members. Nancy made a motion made for council to approve use of a funding appeal to support the proposed sewer project. 2nd – Bill. Discussion. Motion carried with unanimous approval.

3. **Discussion about joining with St. Andrew's for a synod project** -how we might partner for affordable housing in Vancouver – information only at this time – no commitment – just exploring the possibility with joining other churches on this project. Looking for one or two people to work on the committee exploring this idea. Cheryl Pfaff is interested in volunteering to join the group to find out more information on this project. We could use at least one more person to help with this informational gathering only group – there is no commitment from us at this time. No objection to the exploration with St. Andrew on this project. Pastor will get something in the newsletter about this.

4. **Upcoming Audit** – Time to do an audit on our books and we are in the process in acquiring someone to do an audit. Our last audit was November 2016. Laura talked to the person who did it the last time and estimated to have an audit is \$3,500. Discussion followed. Laura will run this by the Financial Committee to see if they want to go forward with this company or get bids from other companies. Heide made a motion to authorize the Finance Committee spending up to \$3,900 for an audit. 2nd – Ray. Motion approved.

5. **Background Checks** – have you sent your forms into Karen?

APPROVAL OF JANUARY MINUTES: 1 st Stacey, 2nd Bill. Minutes approved. TREASURER'S REPORT -

SEE ATTACHED. OPEN BUSINESS: • Photo Directory – working on way to get new directory done – possible having people send in their own photos or hiring a photographer – future discussions but is a priority. • CPR Training Class (will also need AED training) – on hold • Insurance Presentation to Council – to understand our coverage (future meeting)

MEETING ADJOURNED: 8:28pm
