

WEDNESDAYS @ BETHANY

SEPTEMBER 23, 2020



BETHANY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Welcome to our weekly newsletter! ***Wednesdays at Bethany*** will include important announcements for the life of the congregation. If you'd like to receive the email without the PDF attachment, please let us know. And if you would rather not receive this newsletter, please let us know and you will be removed from the list. (Note: PDF is at the bottom of the email)



"Fight for the things that you care about, but do it in a way that will lead others to join you." – Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg

My dear Bethany family,

When I was a young flute player, I would hear professional flute players play and I alternated between being inspired and motivated, or giving up. I would see the future I wanted and think either "wow, cool! I'm going to work harder so I can do that!" or "Wow. That's so far from me, I'll never reach it. I should just stop now."

I was reminded of that feeling of approaching the unreachable, this week when I heard of the death of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg.

The loss of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg was the last straw among last straws. I thought I had reached that mark long ago. I suspect that we all have reached that mark at different points along the last four years, or six months. I'm saddened by the loss of her sense of true north, her humor, her strength, her leadership, and the mark of sanity she provided for me even though she wasn't on my daily radar. She died on the eve of the highest holy days of Jewish tradition, Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur this week. Tradition says when someone dies at Rosh Hashanah it is a sign that they were a person of great righteousness, a tzaddik. Framed on her on a wall in her chambers at the Supreme Court, she kept a quote from Deuteronomy, three Hebrew words in beautiful calligraphy: *Tzedek, tzedek tirdof* - "Justice, justice, you shall pursue" (Deut 16:20).

Hearing all of her great work, her stamina, and her always hopeful future-thinking approach, reminded me that I want to fight for justice as fully as she did. As a christian I believe that fighting for justice undergirds all other calls on our lives. And yet, her life and efforts seem so far from what I will ever be able to do, maybe I should just stop trying, just like I considered stopping flute.

At this point in my life I'm a better flute player than I am a justice warrior, but I haven't quit either one. In the midst of all of our chaos in this country, in our states, and in our individual lives we are still always called to keep moving. What we are going through may be unreasonable, but it is happening. There are so many new opportunities to learn from and work with right now. It is more important than ever to use our faith to find hope, use our communities to listen and love, and find the best way we know how to do the work that we can do.

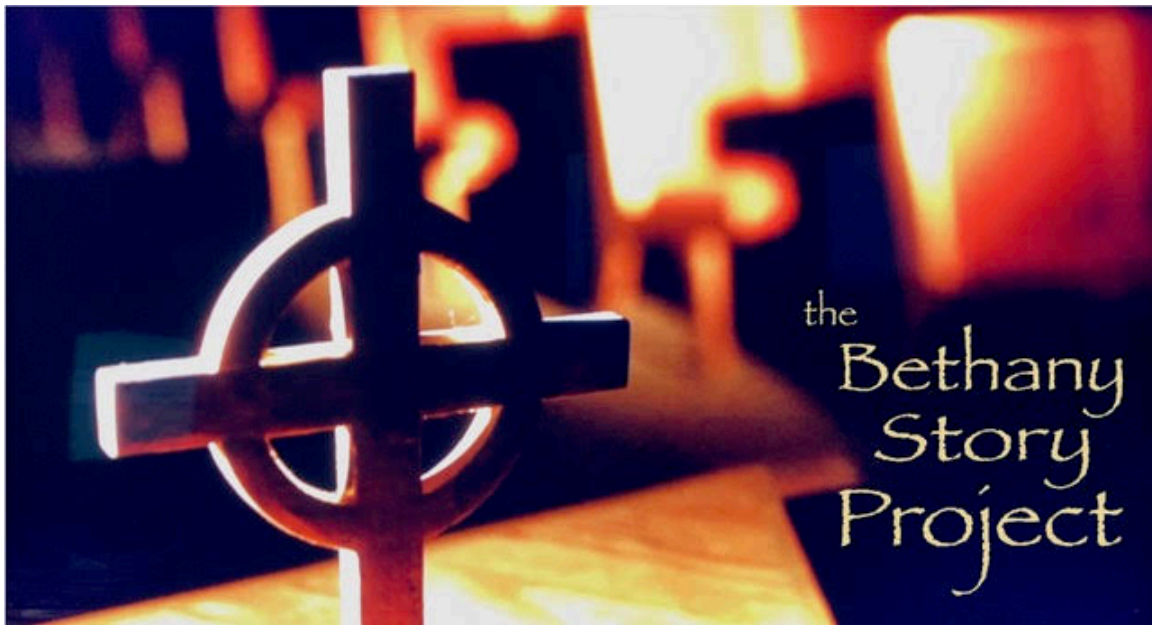
Diana Butler Bass reminds us that "There is so much none of us can control. What we can control is the work we have to do. Our daily work of caring and creating and doing good. Do what you are called to do, what is in your power. And do that with courage and conviction. You are not alone."



*Blessings,
Pastor Deb*

September 27th we will welcome a special guest to our Facebook live service: Robin Crawford. You probably know by now that Robin and Nancy will be moving to Olympia, Washington at the beginning of October. To honor their years of friendship and Robin's frequent guest preaching over many years, we asked him to be present and participate in our service that day. He agreed, and also he and Nancy will plan to be at Bethany after our service from 11-12 noon to say goodbye to any folks who can drive by Bethany for a safe bon voyage. We will have a table for cards and gifts if needed and perhaps some celebratory treats (don't worry we'll make it safe too!). We know some would love to attend but can't get there easily or in time so we may try to operate our coffee hour zoom for folks to join. Let Pam or Tamra know if you have any questions!

Outdoor Service Rescheduled: Our in-person worship service on September 13 was cancelled due to the terrible air quality. That was a disappointment for many. Let not your hearts be troubled! Worship Committee has decided to move forward with plans for **two outdoor services**, one on **Sunday, October 4 - World Communion and Peacemaking Sunday**, and one on **Sunday, November 1 - All Saint's Day**. Both of these are communion Sundays, so we are asking people to bring their own elements for communion. The service will be held on the patio right outside the church doors, and we will be requesting people to be socially distant and wear masks. The services will also be streamed live on Facebook, as they are now.



The tragic explosion and fire on September 9, 2010 had a huge impact on the San Bruno community at large, and our Bethany community was devastated when three of our beloved members perished that day: Lavonne, Greg, and Will Bullis. We were rocked to the core as we tried to support each other, and sort through the grief that filled our hearts.

One year later, with funds and leadership from Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, filmmaker and documentarian David Barnhart arrived in our midst to chronicle our experience, told in our own words: the Bethany Story Project.

Everyone at Bethany was invited to participate in the project, to tell each of our stories, and 21 of us did so. The resulting film is a stitching together of these stories, including our personal connection to Bethany as home, the event and aftermath, our feelings of loss and healing at the time, the service of remembrance at the one-year anniversary in 2011, and our hopes for the future.

The interviews were done with great care, and the tenderness of the stories are quite moving. There are many images from the history of Bethany going all the way back to our founding, and there is a 5-minute segment which includes some news footage of the event in the 51-minute film. Consensus from past viewings has been that of comfort and hope. When we watch the film, those who were there in 2010 remember; those who had not yet met Bethany learn about our shared experience and become part of the sharing.

In observance of the 10-year anniversary of the event, the Outreach Committee will host a joint viewing of the film via Zoom meeting, on September 26, at 7:00 p.m. All Bethany folk, past, present and future, are invited to be with us as we watch the film together, and will be invited to discuss afterward if we wish to do so. We do hope that you will choose to be with us! An email with the Zoom invitation will be sent out a couple of days before the screening.

If you are interested in seeing the film, but cannot or would prefer not to do so in the context of a Zoom viewing with others, please [contact the church office](#) and we will provide you with a DVD of the film.

The deacons wanted to offer the opportunity to contribute to the deacons' fund. As reported sometime earlier, this year our hearts felt led to support social justice and reconciliation and contributed to the Insight Prison Project, a nonprofit that operates an innovative restorative justice program to reduce recidivism, promote reconciliation, and focuses on transformational re-education for prisons and parolees. IPP has now partnered with, and are under the umbrella of, Five Keys Schools and Programs, launched by the SF Sheriff's Department in 2003 as the first charter school for incarcerated adults in the country. The deacons also contributed to Iglesias Brasiliana congregation to support them during this time of extreme need, and we have reached out with good cheer to our own congregation members.

Our account now rests at \$288 and we would like to build our reserves so that we may further support and uplift our community where and when there is need. We are researching ideas to support local endeavors that lend a hand and lighten the load, if only a little. We would be most grateful if you would answer this call to express your generous nature. It is only through your own generosity that we are able to reach out to others. You may send your contributions to Bethany Presbyterian and include a note that it is for the deacons' fund. We know it's not as convenient as using that little envelope in the pew in front of you and we thank you. We would also appreciate learning of any people, local groups or causes that speak to your heart where our contributions may have some impact. Please send your ideas along or let your deacon know.

Thank you again for being an instrument of God's peace and love on earth,

Bonnie on behalf of the Bethany Deacons
Bonnie Morgan, Kathy Fogle, Roxane Wales, and Tamra Hollenbeck.



There will be a Zoom Memorial Service for John Grant on Sunday, October 4th. If you are interested, please contact Pam Matthews and she will get the information to you. You can get in touch with Pam via email: Fpmatthews@aol.com, or on her cell phone: 650- 922-2354.

We are Partnering with Igreja Brazilia, a Church In Need!

Rev. Janet Bower talked to Rev. Deb McGuire and Lyn Hughes about Igreja Presbiteriana Brasileira (Iglesia Brasilia), one of the churches we have been praying for. This church worships in leased space at First Presbyterian Church of San Mateo, as a New Worship Congregation (NWC).

This church is struggling. With a congregation of approximately 140 families and 85% unemployment amongst the congregation, it has been difficult to maintain their households. There have also been new babies born and baby supplies are in short supply. Rev. Bower, on behalf of the Committee on Ministry, has asked that we partner with this church and help in any way we can.

In our discussions with Janet, here are the items needed by the congregation:

- Household goods – Towels, blankets, sheets and pillow cases, kitchenware, dishes, glasses, pots and pans, silverware, etc.
- Baby clothes – Newborn or 3 mons, new or clean, used
- Diapers – Newborn or 3 mons
- Food – rice, dry beans, canned goods, any items with a shelf-life
- Toiletries – all kinds
- Target gift cards
- Checks payable to Braziliansa Iglesias (any amount) **(To send a check, make your check payable to Igreja Brasilia and mail it to 194 W. 25th Avenue, San Mateo, CA 94403)**
- Continued prayers for the congregation

The Financial Trustees also found money in the Memorials account that could be donated to the church. We reached out to families who had Memorials for their families and obtained permission to give the money to Igreja Brasilia. Bethany Church will provide them with a check in the amount of \$2,800; the Deacons will also provide a check in the amount of \$200.

Looking to the future, you can bring any items to be contributed to Braziliansa Iglesias and we will ensure they are delivered to San Mateo. You can also call Lyn Hughes and we will arrange for any items to be picked up. Place items under the coat rack in the entryway.

We will keep you informed of the progress of the congregation and their ongoing needs. There was also mention of starting the discussion now on how we can help at Christmas with toys for the children and a Target gift card for each family, possibly for \$25.

Donations for San Bruno Hospitality House: There will be a plastic bin outside the door closest to the lower parking lot at Bethany for Peter Stiehler's shelter donations so people can continue to donate for the shelter. The box will be periodically checked and items taken down to Peter's Second Ave. shelter. Any questions about this please contact Rina Ranahan at 650-291-6979. **A full list of current shelter needs can be found on our website**

Prayers of the People: At a recent worship committee meeting it was decided that since the folks who are watching our services on Facebook live at 10:00 on Sundays can see and read the announcements and prayers, Deb will not repeat them aloud during the service. Please read each other's prayers then as we all will keep them in our hearts. **Prayers that are relayed to me throughout the week at dmcguire@bethanypcusa.org or through secretary@bethanypcusa.org will be read during the service, unless I am asked not to share them.** At that time in the service I will read any prayers that I have received, and offer an intercessory prayer before the Lord's Prayer. **Prayers will also be included in the weekly Wednesdays@Bethany.**

Prayers in community are at the heart of what it means to have a church family. Writing them in the comments section is one way to share with the community. Attending our **Zoom Prayer Service at 6:30 on Wednesdays** will be a designated time for praying with whomever attends. Wednesday prayers will be kept confidential among attendees unless Deb is asked to include the prayer on Sunday morning.

If you have any questions about prayers please feel free to contact Pam Matthews or Pastor Deb.

Upcoming Meetings

Saturday, Sept. 26, 7 p.m. – Zoom screening of the Bethany Story Project Video

Friday, October 2 - Community Life/Action

Committee chairs/group leaders: please let me know if you have any changes to these dates.

The Financial Trustees would like to remind you to please mail your offerings to the church office. Offerings are being collected and will be deposited once a week. Thank you for your continued dedication and commitment to keeping Bethany financially healthy in this difficult time.

Would you like to have a hymnal at home to use for worship? If you would, just contact your deacon or the church office, leave your name and how we can get in touch with you, and we'll contact you to arrange to either drop a hymnal at your home, or have you pick it up at the church.

Wednesdays@Bethany will be posted on our website a little after the fact, but no later than Friday. To access W@B, go to <http://bethanypcusa.org/members>, and use the password "rosewood".

Due Dates

For W@B: Tuesday morning.

For the monthly newsletter: the Tuesday before the last Wednesday of the month.

Prayers of the People

Prayers from September 20, 2020:

- Thanksgiving that Craig's friend Kevin's tumor is shrinking; prayers for Craig's brother David as he starts chemo (Craig Bray)
- Thanksgiving for the life of Ruth Bader Ginsburg, and the dedication she had to ensuring civil rights for all people (Rina Ranahan)
- Thanks that Kathy's friend Kimmie was able to get to Hong Kong to see her mother before her Mom passed; comfort for her and her family (Kathryn Quickert)
- Prayers for all those affected by the wildfires, here in California and across the West; prayers for our representatives in government (Rev. Christy Pierce)

Prayers from Sept. 13, 2020:

- For Jorie's friend Lucinda, who lost her home in the fires outside of Sacramento, and who also lost her Mom in July (Jorie Abbott)
- Gratitude for the wonderful music today (Lyn & George)
- Thanksgiving for all who are present at Bethany this morning, both in person and virtually (Kathryn Quickert)
- For Molly Lyons and her family, whose father passed away last Sunday – he is at peace and joy with their Mom. Prayers also for her brother and his girlfriend, as they heal, overcome their addictions, and bravely take responsibility for their lives (Molly Lyons)

Prayers from Sept. 6, 2020:

- Thanksgiving that Rina's niece Chana was retested and does NOT have Cystic Fibrosis (Rina Ranahan)
- Thanksgiving that Clarie's angiogram showed no issues (Tamra Hollenbeck)
- Prayers for Craig's brother David, who starts chemo and immuno treatment for his cancer (Craig Bray)
- Thanksgiving and concern for all teachers, firefighters, and "essential" workers; for her Kathy's friend Kimmie, who is trying to get to Hong Kong to see her mother, who is in critical condition (Kathryn Quickert)
- Healing for the Henry's foster dog Tiny, who is having digestive issues (Roberta Henry)
- Thanksgiving and joy for our dear Tamra's birthday (Kathryn Quickert)





MORE LIGHT

PRESBYTERIANS

Bethany's Purpose Statement:

Bethany's purpose is to provide a nurturing and energizing environment to feed the soul so we can go out into the world and reflect the glory of God, the love of Jesus Christ, and the power of the Holy Spirit.

Bethany's Welcoming Statement:

We don't yet know who you are, but we do know that you are a dearly beloved child of God, and you're already welcome here. We invite you, on your unique spiritual journey, to join us in the life and ministry at Bethany.



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