

A Changing World and an Unchanging Savior

We usually don't like change much. We get comfortable with the way things are and nervous when change is proposed. I was with a group of youth once and suggested we get a new type of pizza. The response was: "But we always have pepperoni."

We may resist it and not like it, but change still comes. It is an inevitable part of life in this world. Things don't stay the same.

Change is coming in my life and in the life of our congregation. I'm getting married to Cathe Erhardt on May 29 in Lake Stevens, Wash. Going from single to married is probably one of the biggest changes that can happen in a person's life. It is a change I am very much looking forward to.

Along with my marriage another change is coming. I'll be ending my time as pastor at Bethany and moving from Astoria. In May I'll begin serving as pastor of the AFLC congregation in Ferndale, Wash. My last Sunday in Astoria will be April 18.

Moving from this congregation and community that I dearly love is going to be hard. Part of what makes change hard is it involves a lot of unknowns and uncertainty. What will it be like in a new place with new people? What does the future hold?

As we deal with the fears and uncertainty of change, we find comfort in the unchanging nature of God. "I the Lord do not change. So you, O descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed" (Malachi 3:6). God's promises to forgive us, protect us, care for us, do not change. We have hope that we will not be destroyed, but we will persevere, even

though we're not sure what awaits us in the future. Our hope for uncertain times is based on the certainty of God's nature and Word.

In an ever-changing world we give thanks that we can look to God and see comforting stability. God is not in a constant state of flux like the world. "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows" (James 1:17). Shadows appear for just a moment, until the light changes and they go away. The world's gifts are like that. The happiness and peace the world gives lasts only for a moment.

God's gifts are different. They are not like shifting shadows. They are light that never dims. The gifts of God's grace are always useful, always relevant, always what we need, always the best.

God's greatest unchanging gift is Jesus. "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8). Jesus never changes. He never has to move. He keeps on loving us and saving us and holding us close. In the midst of the changes of life, we give thanks we can rest in the unchanging nature of Christ.

—Pastor Craig

Worship With Us

Our 11:00 a.m. in building Worship Services continue. To comply with the state regulations regarding COVID-19, everybody is asked to wear a facial covering and observe social distancing by sitting six feet apart from other families while in the pews. Free masks are available on the entryway table.

We also live stream our 11:00 a.m. Sunday worship services on Facebook Live. Devotional videos are also posted on our congregation's YouTube channel. Links to both of those sites can be found on our website: bethanyfree.com.

Lenten Soup Suppers

We'll have soup suppers before Lenten services, starting at 6:15 p.m. each Wednesday.

Lenten Services

Lenten services will continue on Wednesdays in March at 7:00 p.m. Lenten services are times of worship and reflecting on Jesus' sacrifice on the cross and His great love for us. We won't have a Lenten service on Wednesday, March 31, but will have a Maundy Thursday Communion service on Thursday, April 1st at 7:00 p.m. We also live stream the services each week on our church's Facebook page.

WMF Meeting

Women's Missionary Federation (WMF)



Thursday Mar. 11 at 11:00 a.m.

Everyone is asked to bring a sack lunch. All ladies are invited.

The Pacific Northwest District Women's Missionary Federation will have a spring rally at Calvary Lutheran in Everett, Wash. on Sat. March 20 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The National WMF President Lavonne West will be the guest speaker.

Men's Breakfast

Sat., Mar. 13 at 8:00 a.m.

If you'd like to help prepare the breakfast, please contact Pastor Craig.



Family Movie Night Double Feature

Join us for movie night on Sunday March 14 at 6:00 p.m. We'll show two animated films that are part of the Torchlighters series. One tells the story of a missionary to CHINA: GLADYS AYLWARD. Hers is a story of God's miraculous help as she cared for orphans during World War 2. The other short film is the story of ST. PATRICK. It tells of God's work in his life and through his life as he became a missionary to Ireland.

Easter

We will celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus on Easter Sunday, April 4. Our Sunday school family time will be at 9:30 a.m. and will include an Easter breakfast and a sharing time. The men of the church will prepare the breakfast. The celebration of the Resurrection worship service will be at 11 a.m. Easter morning will begin with an Easter Sunrise community service at the Astor Column at 7:00 a.m.



We'll be having a rummage sale and fundraiser for the youth group on Saturday April 10. You're encouraged to begin collecting things at home to donate for the sale. You can talk with Pastor Craig, Bev Hoofnagle or one of the youth group families for more information.

Coming This Month...

March 3, 10, 17, 24 Soup Supper & Lenten Services

March 11 WMF

March 13 Men's Breakfast

March 14 Family Movie Night

March 20 WMF Rally

