

Not Alone

Single guys are often reminded of the verse from Genesis 2:18: "The Lord God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.'" At the time when God said those words, Adam had the whole Garden of Eden to enjoy for himself. It might seem like he had it pretty good, not having to share the bounty that was available to him. The Lord said all He had created was good, but man's situation of being alone was not good.

When we look at that verse from Genesis we often think first of marriage. My marital status is going to change on May 29. After 58 years, God has graciously provided me with a wife. Cathe is a great blessing and I am looking forward to sharing life with her.

Even though I've been single all these years I don't feel like I've been totally alone. I've been blessed to be a part of this congregation as your pastor for the last 21 years. You have been like a family to me, loving me, caring for me, teaching me, encouraging me, supporting me and welcoming me into your lives. You have been a great blessing to me as you have lived out the love of Christ.

It isn't good for any of us to be alone and not have close connections with others. Each of us needs other people. Each Christian needs to be part of a congregation.

The Bible describes the church as being a body. "Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it" (I Corinthians 12:27). There are various members in the body. They have different gifts and different

functions. One thing each body part has in common, however, is the need to be connected to the rest of the body. The eye and the ear, the hand and the foot; none of them work well unless they are connected to the body. It is the same with each of us. We fulfill our purpose and find life to the fullest when we are seeking the Lord together with others as part of a congregation.

It has been a joy and a privilege to be a member of this part of the body at Bethany. I've been blessed to see I Corinthians 12:25-26 lived out: "... its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it." We have had trials and challenges. We have had times when we have suffered together. Now you have been rejoicing with me in the gift God has given me in bringing Cathe into my life. We have talked a number of times recently of the mixed emotions we are feeling: sadness over the parting, but rejoicing over God's gift of love.

Thank you for showing me such kindness, grace and love over the years. I have not been alone. We have been together on this journey, and even though in the days ahead we may be separated by some miles, in spirit and by God's Spirit we'll still be together, brothers and sisters in Christ, united in the Lord.

—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.

WMF Meeting

Women's Missionary Federation will meet on Thursday April 8 at 11:00 a.m. Everyone is asked to bring a sack lunch. All ladies are invited.



Youth Group

RUMMAGE



Saturday April 10
9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Do you have something you can donate to the sale? Please contact with Bev Hoofnagle or one of the youth group families for more information. Those helping with the sale are encouraged to come at 8:00 a.m. Saturday to help set up.

Quarterly Congregation Meeting

There will be a quarterly congregation meeting downstairs on Sunday, April 25, following the worship service.

Thank You Pastor Craig

We are celebrating Pastor Craig's 21 ½ years of faithful ministry to us. April 18th will be his last Sunday. We will serve a dinner after church that

day. Join us in thanking Pastor Craig for being our selfless, good shepherd these many years.

Beginning in May, Pastor Craig will be serving Triumph Lutheran in Ferndale, Wash. His wedding on May 29 will be livestreamed. A wedding reception



at Bethany is being planned for some time in July.

Help Needed

Help in preparing the Power Point for the worship services each Sunday is needed. Contact one of the deacons or the church office if you can help with that.

Brown Bag Ministry Update

Since the beginning of the year, our Brown Bag Ministry has provided 1,740 lunches to the Astoria Rescue Mission homeless outreach project and the local Helping Hands Organization in Astoria. Thanks to the amazing efforts of Bargain Bev Schumacher, these lunches are made for less than \$1 per bag costing only \$1,286.91 so far this year. Join us Tuesdays at 1:30p.m. to pack bags, enjoy good company and pray. Donations of individually wrapped crackers and chips would be greatly appreciated.

Association of Free Lutheran Congregations Annual Conference June 16-19

Join us at the Free Lutheran Bible College and Seminary in Plymouth, Minn. Many of the conference sessions will be held in the new Student Life Center. Annual conferences are times of spiritual renewal as well as learning about the work of the church body. They are open to all members of AFLC congregations.

Coming This Month...

- April 8* *WMF*
- April 10* *Youth Group Rummage Sale*
- April 18* *Pastor Craig's Last Day*
- April 25* *Quarterly Congregation Meeting*

