

**Join Us for the Annual Congregational
Dinner and Meeting!**

January 29th

Dinner at 5:30pm

Meeting to follow at 6pm

Downstairs at Bethany Lutheran

Bethany Free Lutheran Church
451 34th St.
Astoria, OR 97103

Worship With Us

8:45 A.M. Glad Tidings Radio 1370 A.M.

Sunday School 9:30 A.M.

11:00 A.M. Worship Services

Live Stream

We live stream our 11:00 A.M. Sunday worship services on Subsplash. If you prefer Facebook we are still there. Sunday sermons are also posted the same day on our YouTube channel

<https://www.youtube.com/@bethanyfreelutheranastoria3012/featured>. You can find links to all of these on our website at www.bethanyfree.com



SUNDAY SCHOOL

9:30am-10:30am

Kindergarten- Adults

Learning God's Word



Men's Prayer Breakfast

January 3rd, 8:00 A.M. Cooking starts around 7:30am if you would like to help. We would love to have more men join us.

Bethany Sewing Ministry



The ladies of Bethany will be meeting January 15, 22 & 29 at 10am, downstairs at Bethany. All sewing skills are welcome or if you want to bring you other hand work and just fellowship. A lunch is provided.

They are always more than glad for any donations of fabric. Just drop by on one of the sewing days or contact the church and arrangements can be made.

Brown Bag Ministry

Every Wednesday at 11:00 am, we have our weekly Brown Bag Ministry which prepares brown bag lunches that are distributed in the community, we are always grateful for volunteers.



Women's Evening Bible Study



WEBS is the last Tuesday of each month at 6:30 pm location will be announced, eventually will be in new building. We will be using the book "Get Out of Your Head" by

Jennie Allen. It can be purchased on Amazon for \$12, the study guide will be used by the leader but if you want to purchase that as well for your own use you can, that is about \$16 on Amazon.

We have also been collecting personal hygiene products to be donated to the Astoria Middle School, last day to get items to Laura Brown is January 19th.



WMF Meeting

Women's Missionary Federation will meet, Thursday, January 8th, 11am at the church.

All Ladies are Welcome, bring a lunch, dessert is provided.

Deacons & Trustees Meeting

Deacons & Trustees will meet here at church, Thursday, December 15th, 5:30pm.

Old Photos

We are requesting any old photos from church events or church building photos of past years to add to the collection for the "historical photos" page we are creating on the church website. Talk to Kelly Grothe or email them to bethanyaflc@gmail.com attention Kelly Grothe. If you have photos, we can scan them and return them to you when done.

Annual Congregational Meeting

The annual congregational meeting will be January 29th, dinner at 5:30pm and meeting to follow, 6pm

Youth Group

Youth Group for grades 7th-12th meet the last Sunday of every month here at Bethany after church from 12:30-2pm. Lunch is provided.

Looking for Committee Members

We are looking for congregation members interested in being on two committees?

- Committee to review guidelines for use of new building
- Committee to review name of new building

Please let Pastor Rich or Eric P. know if you are interested in being part of either or both of these committees.

Church Decorating

Thank you to all who came and decorated the church for the Christmas season. It looked wonderful.



Why come to Bethany?

It's a good question isn't? Why are you going to church? And more specifically why are you, and others coming to our church? From my Maryland congregation, there were over 50 churches surrounding Hagerstown Maryland. The church I served in Tioga ND had far fewer churches surrounding it, and now I again find myself serving a church that has many other churches in the surrounding area. But the same question should be asked. Why should people choose Bethany Free Lutheran to be their church home?

As a pastor, I want to be a part of a congregation that teaches and preaches God's Word in clarity and with accuracy. I also believe good preaching is typically expository preaching. This is where the preacher takes a section of the Bible and explains it. I heard a preacher explain expository preaching as a sermon where the preacher simply explains the Bible. This is taking a text and digging down into it. It is bringing the truth that was conveyed to people long ago, and showing how those same truths apply to us today. It is not taking a topic and then finding verses that support that topic, it is taking a verse or verses and explaining them in context, in such a way that they become alive to the listener.

But it's more than the sermon, or teaching time isn't? I don't know if there are many people who attend a church only because the sermon is good, or the teaching time is always strong. Fellowship with other believers is very important to the health of a good church. People may be attracted to a church because it is known for its solid preaching and teaching, but they won't stay unless they feel a part of the congregation. We are called to live in the world, and make an impact in this world, and not just with our words, but our actions as well. We need to be involved in the lives of the people that we worship with. This takes work, time, and effort. It isn't easy, and it is sometimes messy. But isn't that part of life? By investing in the lives of the people that we worship with, we show them that we really care for them, and love them. Go out to dinner with others from the church. Invite them to your home, play games together, have fun together.

When we becoming involved in each other's lives outside of church, we build bonds of love that will help us through times of struggles and hardships that are sure to come. You also will begin to see how we as a congregation are more

than just a church function, but a family of believers united in our faith in Jesus Christ. While we are called to build the bonds of family inside the church, we need to also be involved in the lives of people outside the church as well.

Look at your neighbors, your co-workers, the people in your community that are not already part of a Biblically solid church. Don't they also need Jesus? Don't they need to experience the growth, fellowship, and love found only in a healthy Christian church that you have here at Bethany? What are you doing to demonstrate the salt and light we are called to live to others outside of the church?

Some rarely involve themselves with church because of issues. There will always be a boneheaded remark, or hurtful action that occurs inside our congregation that causes hardship. How we deal with those times is very telling of our inner faith journey. We are all sinners in need of a savior. This is as true pre-conversion, as it is after our conversion to faith in Jesus. Some look at the actions of sinful church goers and say they don't want to be a part of that church, because so many people there are hypocrites. One of my favorite answers to the objection of getting involved in church came from the late Rich Mullins who once said, "I never understood why going to church made you a hypocrite either, because nobody goes to church because they're perfect. If you've got it all together, you don't need to go. You can go jogging with all the other perfect people on Sunday morning."

In closing, part of what makes Bethany a place that people will want to come and worship with us is you. Live your life in fellowship with your brothers and sisters of faith here at Bethany, and in this community. Allow the light of God to shine through not just your words, but your actions. And when you slip up and sin, make things right when possible, and realize that you are still a sinner in need of a savior, and that you can find direction and clarity on your life's journey here at Bethany.

Pastor Rich Carr