

## Bethany Lutheran Church Council Report

1. Reported By: Pastor Ronald T. Glusenkamp
2. Organization: Church Council February 22, 2011 Meeting
3. Date: February 22, 2011
4. Report Purpose and Scope:
  1. March 19
  2. March Opportunities
  3. Narrative Eucharist -March 6, 2011
  4. Lent 2011
  5. BE THE BLESSING -May 22, 2011
  6. AVENUES of Hope- 9 10 11
  7. Sabbatical Committee
5. Summary for Council:
  1. Save the date invitations have gone out for the event with Pastor Rouse on March 19<sup>th</sup>.
  2. March Opportunities- Lenten Retreat; Bible in 90 Days
  3. Narrative Eucharist- March 6<sup>th</sup>. Members of the Worship and Music Ministry team have written a script which will provide a "pray by pray" commentary
  4. Lent 2011  
At the beginning of the Ash Wednesday service one of the pastors reads the following words:  
INVITATION TO LENT

"Friends in Christ, today with the whole church we enter the time of remembering Jesus' passover from death to life, and our life in Christ is renewed.

We begin this holy season by acknowledging our need for repentance and for God's mercy. We are created to experience joy in communion with God, to love one another, and to live in harmony with creation. But our sinful rebellion separates us from God, our neighbors, and creation, so that we do not enjoy the life our creator intended.

As disciples of Jesus, we are called to a discipline that contends against evil and resists whatever leads us away from love of God and neighbor. I invite you, therefore, to the discipline of Lent—self-examination and repentance, prayer and fasting, sacrificial giving and works of love—strengthened by the gifts of word and sacrament. Let us continue our journey through these forty days to the great Three Days of Jesus' death and resurrection."

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This is officially or technically called "the Invitation to Lent." It's really quite amazing that on the day we reflect on our culpability and mortality that we invite one another to participate in a deepening of our faith journey. The discipline of Lent is spelled out for us: "self-examination and repentance, prayer and fasting, sacrificial giving and works of love—strengthened by the gifts of word and sacrament."

You might note that our our Lenten experience echoes our congregation's theme this year, "Blessed to be a Blessing." Our journey on Sundays and Wednesdays will focus on the following:

- The Blessing of Fasting
- The Blessing of Solitude
- The Blessing of Community
- The Blessing of being Unplugged
- The Blessing of being Plugged in
- The Blessing of Feasting

There is a lovely interplay and connection between the "discipline of Lent" and what we have planned for our community.

I have often referred to Lent as "Spring training for Christians." In other words, it is a time to stretch and activate our spiritual muscles. We go "deeper" into the mysteries of Christ's passion in order to gain a deeper sense of gratitude, hope and peace.

As leaders of the congregation you can "let your lights shine" by joining in the journey. In fact, as leaders of the congregation you can receive energy and support by making a commitment to "be the blessing" at home, at work and in the community.

5. BE THE BLESSING- May 22

Here is an email from Intern Jess to her BTB committee:

From: Jessica Daum

Sent: Monday, February 07, 2011 11:07 AM

To: 'Jeannie Bennington'; 'Friedemann, Marie'; Sarah Hulslander; 'Heather Kekstadt'; davenesslage@comcast.net; 'stlax@comcast.net'; 'Susan Pfabe-Wiggans'; 'Scott Wiggans'; 'Kristin Deal'; 'Brian Tennien'; 'Witt, Karen L.'; 'tenniens04@comcast.net'

Cc: Ron Glusenkamp; Ruth Ann Loughry; Rhonda Merritt; Janice Lyon

Subject: Blessings Team

Thank you all for agreeing to be a part of the Be The Blessing Service Team!

I'm very excited to have such a fabulous group of people supporting this event, and I believe that all of your gifts will be put to good use. I can't wait to see this team in action!

I've put together a plan for our meetings. As I've communicated to most of you, we will do a lot of work by email since everyone is adding this commitment to already full lives. With that said, it will be important that you make it to as many meetings as possible. However, if you aren't able to make it to some meetings, it will be

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understood. If you think you can't participate because of the meeting schedule, please let me know as soon as possible.

Here's the plan...

Our first meeting will be next Tuesday, Feb. 15 from 7-8:30pm in the Soul Schopp (in the basement, end of the hall)

At this meeting I'll present the plan as it is so far, what has been put in place already and what I imagine, so that we have a full picture of the task ahead of our group.

Our second meeting will be Sunday, March 6 from 11:30am-1:00pm in the Soul Schopp, lunch provided

Provided these times work for a majority of the group, we'll continue the pattern by meeting on the 3rd Tuesday and the 1st Sunday of the month in March, April and May.

Tuesday, March 15

Sunday, April 3

Tuesday, April 19

Sunday, May 1

Tuesday, May 17

Again, please let me know via email if this plan won't work for you. Otherwise, I look forward to seeing our team next Tuesday at 7:00pm.

Blessings!

Jess

6. AVENUES OF HOPE- 9-10-11

I have a planning meeting tomorrow morning with Lynne Butler at Metro CareRing

7. Sabbatical Committee

As indicated in Joel's personnel report at the time the call to me was issued by the congregation in 2005 there was the provision for a three month paid sabbatical in the 6<sup>th</sup> year of service. A committee has been established to plan and implement what is meaningful and helpful for the congregation and the senior pastor. As part of this process I will be applying for a grant from the Lilly Endowment. Here is some basic info about the program:

Lilly Endowment Announces 2011 National Clergy Renewal Program  
(Press Release)

Lilly Endowment, an Indianapolis-based, private philanthropic foundation, seeks to strengthen Christian congregations by providing an opportunity for pastors to step away briefly from the persistent obligations of daily parish life and to engage in a period of renewal and reflection. Renewal periods are not vacations, but times for

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intentional exploration and reflection, for drinking again from God's life-giving waters, for regaining enthusiasm and creativity for ministry.

In the 2011 National Clergy Renewal Program, the Endowment anticipates awarding as many as 150 grants of up to \$50,000 each directly to Christian congregations for the support of a renewal program for their pastor. Up to \$15,000 of the grant may be used for congregational expenses associated with the renewal program. Deadline for submission of proposals is May 12, 2011. Notification of grant awards will be made in September 2011.

Lilly Endowment seeks to strengthen Christian congregations by providing opportunities for pastors to step away briefly from the persistent obligations of daily parish life and to engage in a period of renewal and reflection. Renewal periods are not vacations, but times for intentional exploration and reflection, for regaining the enthusiasm and creativity for ministry, for discovering what will make the pastor's heart sing.

Lilly Endowment believes ministry is profoundly important, not only to the people directly served, but also to the larger community and society. The clergy renewal program honors pastors and congregations. We have learned a great deal about what pastors and congregations value in this program. Some of those insights, in the form of comments from previous grantees, are included in this material to help clergy and congregations "think outside the box" in creating a time of refreshment and renewal.

Life-giving experiences – strengthening relationships, renewing a sense of call, meeting and serving the neighbor in a new way, finding joy and purpose in a simplified life, traveling to new lands and unfamiliar territories, creating opportunities where members of the congregation can exercise their gifts for ministry – are common themes of these renewal times. Profound discoveries that pastors and their congregations describe as "life-changing events" occur as they participate in this program.

Pastors serve a variety of roles in their privileged position at the center of congregational life: preacher, teacher, spiritual guide, pastoral visitor, friend, confidant. The responsibilities are continual, and the pace and demands of parish life can be relentless, often leaving even the most dedicated pastors recognizing the need to replenish their own spiritual reservoirs to regain energy and strength for their ministry.

More information is available at [www.clergyrenewal.org](http://www.clergyrenewal.org)

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### 6. Detailed Plans or Next Steps:

1. March 19 -We will resend invites and get intentional about communicating expectations
2. March Opportunities -An email blast is being sent by next Monday
3. Narrative Eucharist -March 6, 2011 -Rehearsal is scheduled
4. Lent 2011- we are just about ready to launch
5. BE THE BLESSING -May 22, 2011- Stay tuned
6. AVENUES of Hope- 9 10 11
7. Sabbatical Committee-next meeting March 3, 2011