

May 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 6:30pm English Conversation 6:30pm Bible Study Topic: Holy Spirit 7:15pm Prayer Meeting	2 7am Men's Prayer Meeting	3	4 1-4pm Baking Club
5 10am Worship – Pastor Mark 12pm BBYOL	6	7	8 7:00pm AGM – Fellowship Hall	9 7am Men's Prayer Meeting	10	11
12 10am Worship – Pastor Mark 12pm BBYOL	13	14	15 6:30pm Bible Study Topic: Holy Spirit 7:15pm Prayer Meeting	16 7am Men's Prayer Meeting	17	18
19 10am Worship – Pastor Yuri 12pm BBYOL	20	21	22 6:30pm Bible Study Topic: Holy Spirit 7:15pm Prayer Meeting	23 7am Men's Prayer Meeting	24	25 8:30am Men's Breakfast 1:30pm Ladies' Tea: "The Goodness of God"
26 10am Worship – Pastor Yuri 12pm BBYOL	27	28 7:15pm Council meeting	29 6:30pm Bible Study Topic: Holy Spirit 7:15pm Prayer Meeting	30	31	1 1-4pm Baking Club



Bethesda Church

Newsletter

Congregational letter May 2024

“Then everyone came whose heart was stirred, and everyone whose spirit was willing, and they brought the LORD’s offering for the work of the tabernacle of meeting [...] They came, both men and women, as many as had a willing heart [...] Then Moses called Bezalel and Oholiab, and every gifted artisan in whose heart the LORD had put wisdom, everyone whose heart was stirred, to come and do the work.”

Exodus 35:21-22; 36:2 (NKJV)

From the very beginning, God has called his people to “work and take care” of the places he meets with us (Genesis 2:15). At first, that place was the Garden of Eden. Later on, as in the quote above, it was the Tabernacle. Then, it was the Temple. Since Jesus came – since he died, rose, ascended to the right hand of the Father, and sent his Spirit – God no longer designates any particular place on earth to serve as his dwelling place. Instead it is we, the gathered people known as The Church¹, who “are the temple of the living God” (2 Corinthians 6:16). So God’s relationship to the building where we gather is not the same as it used to be, whether we’re thinking of the travelling tent of Sinai and Shiloh, or of the artful edifice of gold, bronze, cedar, and stone that once crowned Jerusalem.

Nevertheless, we still “work and take care” of his Holy Place. Together, we are Mount Zion. When we trust in Jesus, his Spirit descends and dwells in bodies that bear his image, charged with divine dignity. His presence sanctifies bodies and spirits; we are entwined with him,

entwined with one another: holy, whole. Still, our destiny is physical as well as spiritual. We are bound to time and space as much as we are bound for glory! So we interact with objects and places now and forever in God’s Creation, the universe that bears witness to his goodness and grace. We are ever called to share and steward it, remembering Eden even as we anticipate the New Heavens and Earth.

For now, post-Fall, the stuff we handle and hold is subject to the ravages of time, in “slavery to corruption” (Romans 8:21). This is true of the bodies that are such an integral part of who we are. It is true also of the special structures where we come together to worship and which are a visible testimony of his goodness and presence among us. It is right and sensible for us to do our best to care for our bodies even though they are falling apart. It is one way of bearing witness to the hope and dignity we have as creatures specially made in God’s likeness. Similarly, it is right and sensible for us to continually renew and refresh the land and the building where we

¹*Ekklesia*, the original Greek word we translate as “church”, means “the gathering”.

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BETHESDA
CHURCH

gather. It is one way of bearing witness that God is specially among us! When God is present and at work among his people, we will – quite rightly – be inclined to hallow the space in which we expect him to meet with us. On the other hand, if God does not go with us, when our expectation that God will meet with us evaporates – that is, when we cease to be The Church in its truest sense – the physical space, too, will inevitably fall into neglect.

This is not the whole story, obviously. For one, it does not follow that that you are more likely to encounter God in the most attractive of places, whether that’s an impressive cathedral or a gorgeous face! There are many reasons – good and bad – that humans cultivate beauty. Still, we expect that a church building and its grounds, no

matter how humble, will be lovingly looked after when the people who inhabit and use it are filled by the Holy Spirit of God. He “stirs our hearts” to be generous with our time, our talents, and our treasure. He gives us spirits “willing” to do the work (see the passage cited above).

Since his people are his dwelling place, the work he calls us to is of course not only physical. We are called, first and foremost, to worship God and to take care of one another! But in this time of transition for our church, and in this season of the year, the theme of caring for our church building and grounds is much on my mind. Over the winter, you may have noticed our spaces getting organized and cleaned up. There have been upgrades, too: enhanced security and newly painted walls as well as new taps and other

plumbing fixes that will help us save water (and money!) Outside the building, you may have noticed the spring clean up work on the flowerbeds by the main entrance. Exciting things are happening! But, of course, it isn’t happening by itself. It is being done by YOU, God’s people, in celebration and in expectation of his presence among us in the coming weeks, months, and years.

This week, you will see an even more obvious change: **the Upper Lounge is now closed for renovations!** Painting is already underway, and by June we will have new flooring and furniture that will make it an even more inviting and comfortable place for Bible studies and prayer meetings (not to mention chatting, book browsing and reading!). Many thanks to our Facilities Team leader, Kate Craton, for her research and consultation as well as Ruth Rennie for her careful stewardship of the budget.

If the Upper Lounge is where you are used to sitting on Sundays, we would invite you to come a little closer! Closeness gives us a greater sense

of being a part of God’s Special Gathering, a physical witness to the spiritual reality that we are The Church: “living stones [...] built into a spiritual house” (1 Peter 2:4-5), the true Temple of the Living God! Stay tuned for more ways to get involved at the church: over the months of May and June we will be talking about other ways that you can “work and take care” of this expression of Christ’s Body that comes together on the corner of Grant and Cambridge!

In Him, 

May 2024 Bible Reading Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Joel 11 Ch 7:1-5Ex 9:8-12Pr 14:16-18John 4:1-6James 3:1-12Joel 2:1-11Ex 9:13-351 Ch 7:6-12Pr 14:19-21James 3:13-18John 4:7-18Ex 10:1-20*Joel 2:12-271 Ch 7:13James 4:1-6Pr 14:22-24John 4:19-26Ex 10:21-291 Ch 7:14-19Pr 14:25-27Joel 2:28- 3:21John 4:27-38James 4:7-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Jonah 1-21 Ch 7:20-29John 4:39-42James 4:13- 5:6Pr 14:28-30Ex 11Ex 12:1-30James 5:7-111 Ch 7:30-40Pr 14:31-32John 4:43-54Jonah 2Ex 12:31-511 Ch 8:1-5Pr 14:33-35*Jonah 3-4John 5:1-9aJames 5:12-20Ex 13:1-161 Ch 8:6-7Pr 15:1-2Amos 1-2:3John 5:9b-181 Thessalonians 1:1-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ex 13:17-14:311 Ch 8:8-11Pr 15:3-5Amos 2:4-5John 5:19-301 Th 1:7-10Ex 15:1-211 Ch 8:12-18Pr 15:6-8Amos 2:6-16John 5:31-401 Th 2:1-6aEx 15:22-271 Ch 8:19-28Pr 15:9-11Amos 3-4John 5:41-471 Thess 2:6b-12Amos 5:1-151 Th 2:13-16Pr 15:12-141 Ch 8:29-34Ex 16*Amos 5:16-6:141 Th 2:17-3:51 Ch 8:35-38	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ex 17:1-7John 6:1-15Pr 15:15-17John 6:16-27Ex 17:8-161 Ch 8:39-9:1aPr 15:18-201 Th 3:6-13Amos 7-8Amos 9:1-101 Th 4:1-12Pr 15:21-231 Ch 9:1-6Ex 18John 6:28-35*Ex 19:1-20:211 Ch 9:7-9Pr 15:24-26Amos 9:11-15John 6:36-401 Thess 4:13-18Ex 20:22-26Obadiah1 Th 5:1-111 Ch 9:10-13Pr 15:27-29John 6:41-51	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Psalm 5**1 Ch 9:14-16Pr 15:30-33Ex 21John 6:52-591 Thess 5:12-28Micah 1Pr 16:1-3Ex 22:1-151 Ch 9:17-34John 6:60-71Psalm 191 Ch 9:35-44Micah 2:1-11Ex 22:16-28Pr 16:4-6John 7:1-13
				<p>*Memory Verses: #1: Joel 2:13 #2: Jonah 3:10 #3: Amos 5:23-24 #4: Ex 2:2(-17) **Psalm to sing! For this tune (“Scarboro Fair”), and tips on memorizing long passages, see website.</p>	

Announcements

Ladies’ Tea – “The Goodness Of God” Saturday, May 25th at 1:30pm

What better way to share together than on “the goodness of God”. It seems a long time since we passed out papers and encouraged you to think of God’s interventions in your life. The idea was to put it on a timeline, looking back. You may have lost the paper and forgotten what you were going to write. Don’t worry, we will have more papers available.

If you missed our March meeting, come and enjoy hearing others tell of God’s goodness- no compulsory sharing!! And you’re welcome to share if you missed the meeting before. We’ll be in smaller groups. Hope to see you there and hear some of your story.

Prayer & Intercession

- Afghan Refugee Families
- Gail Barnes
- Mona Behrens
- Betty Campbell (Personal Care Home)
- Mike & Sunny Cheon (financial support)
- Lawrence & Selma Churchill
- Venus Coté (kidney function)
- Ron De Hoff (Patti’s brother)
- The Friesens (summer place to stay)
- Bernice Gruenke (health)
- Edwin & Kamala Henry (Esther’s parents)
- Marion Hill (Susanne’s Mom)/Susanne
- Valentyna K. (Kathy Clow’s friend; Ukrainian Christian/deportation)
- George Manalang
- Joan McRae (Misericordia Place)
- Debbie Mogilevsky (cancer)
- Laylee, her sons, and her mother
- Andrew Poirier (mental health)
- Patti Poirier (health and strength)
- Marye P. (Kathy Clow’s friend – cancer)
- Don Register (Shelly’s dad)
- Evelyn Smith
- Sean Smith (Evelyn’s son)
- Chris Wilcoxson (mental & heart health; residential program, Seattle)
- Shelly Wilcoxson
- Cheryl Warax (Pastor Mark’s sister: heart; mass on kidney)
- Andrea & Rick Wittebolle (Andrea home!)
- Pastor Mark
- Pastor Yuri
- Bethesda Children’s Ministry
- Bethesda Missions Team
- Bethesda Council, upcoming AGM