

THE HISTORIC BETHANY UNION CHURCH OF CHICAGO

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The Unifier March 2025

Therefore, Since We Are
Receiving A Kingdom That
Cannot Be Shaken, Let
Us Be Thankful, And So
Worship God Acceptably
With Reverence And Awe,

Hebrews 12-28

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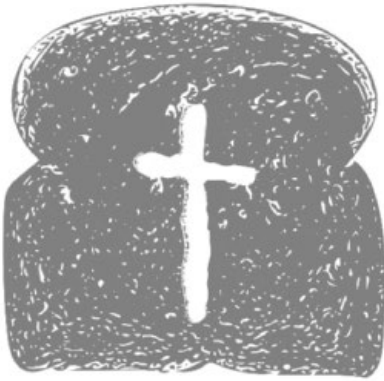
Dear ones of the Lord who are called Bethany Union,

I greet you with love and peace in the Lord Jesus Christ. This edition of our church newsletter, the Unifier, is our March 2025 edition. In this month right towards the very beginning (March 5, 2025) we enter the liturgical season of Lent. This is my 40th Lenten season that I will lead a church as its Pastor. It never gets old or dull. I am always excited and anticipate our journey together towards Pascha (Easter). During this season of Lent, our devotional life and spiritual quest sharpen and become even more enlivened as we intentionally commit time and effort to our faith.



This year, I am making daily devotionals available to aid us in achieving our intentions. You can read more about this in an article elsewhere in this newsletter. I pray that you will be here to

receive one on the first Sunday of March (March 2) so that you will have it to begin your daily devotions for the beginning of Lent on Wednesday, March 5. The devotional is entitled "Not by Bread Alone,"



MATTHEW 4:4

JESUS ANSWERED, "IT IS WRITTEN: 'MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT COMES FROM THE MOUTH OF GOD.'"

Prayer for God...

Since I was a young child I remember a quote concerning the season of Lent; "40 lean days, crossed by 6 Sabbaths, beginning in ashes and ending in life." The 40 days of the Lenten season give us the opportunity to adjust our lives and living (repent) in such a way that our focus is greater upon the Lord and His presence in our lives. A discipline from the ancient times involves each of us giving something up for Lent that will be difficult and will help us be more

intentional upon our spiritual reality. Some choose to give up meat and others give up chocolate or some other sacrifice for this spiritual exercise. I invite and encourage each of us to do this for this year's Lenten journey. Make it something that is a pleasure for you but not a necessity of living. This practice helps us focus and hone in on our reliance upon the Lord. Let your Lent be worthy of your life this year. Let's make it count.

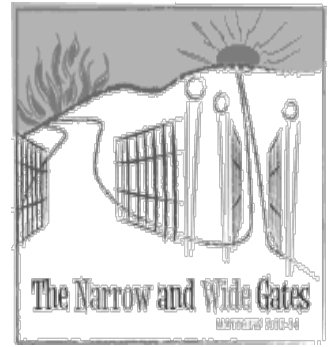
As we travel through March, I hope to see each of you return to regular attendance at Worship each Sunday morning. Church is only church when the saints gather to worship and seek the Lord together. I pray that this Lenten season will see a full return to regular worship and a great commitment to being the people of God called Bethany Union.

Grace and peace, and I'll see you in worship,

+Pastor Larry Cameron

*PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR...

Sunday March 2, 2025 "2 Gates, 2 Houses, 2 Trees". Life and freedom are all about making choices. In our Lord's teachings, He makes this very clear. One way leads to life mediocre and ruin while the other leads to life abundant and eternal. How do we decide, and what do we choose? Does Jesus suggest that very few go into the Kingdom of Heaven? Jesus contrasts the two ways and asks us to decide. Not to decide is a decision as well. What will we do? Matthew 7:13-27



- ✓ Communion Sunday
- ✓ Congregational Meeting following Worship

Wednesday, March 5, 2025 Lent 2025 Begins; Friday, March 7, 2025 World Day of Prayer

Sunday March 9, 2025, 1st Sunday of Lent: "Why Did Jesus Have to Die?" If you ask five people this question you will probably get a dozen different answers. Did Jesus die for us? And if that is true - why? And why do we die? And does His death have anything to do with ours? What does His death mean, if anything, for our lives and living? Is there a connection? What does Scripture have to say about this beyond the dogmas? Genesis 3:1-24, 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, Romans 5:6-8, 1 John 2:1-2 and Hebrews 2:9



- ✓ Daylight Saving Time begins... Turn your clocks ahead

Sunday March 16, 2025, 2nd Sunday of Lent: "What is Eternal Life?" Most people think that eternal life is all about what happens after we die, but is that what Jesus taught? Does the Bible teach us anything about eternal life lived in the here and now? And if so – what does it teach, and what does it mean for us in our lives? What does it look like and what is it all about? Genesis 2:4-9 Revelation 21:1-5 and John 17:1-5

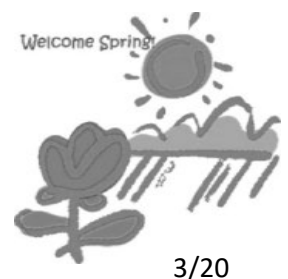
- ✓ Southside Irish Parade – plan your trip to Worship accordingly!

Monday, March 17, 2025 St. Patrick's Day; Thursday, March 20, 2025 Spring is here!!!

Sunday March 23, 2025, 3rd Sunday of Lent: "We Are Not Alone!" What does the Bible teach us about other creatures or other realms? Who are the spiritual beings that share creation with us? This will be Part 1 of a three part series on Spiritual Beings. This first message will look at Angels, Demons, and Satan. Psalm 89:5-11, Isaiah 6:1-7, and Ephesians 6:10-17

Sunday March 30, 2025, 4th Sunday of Lent: "We Are Not Alone" Part 2 will critically look at beings of the spiritual realm and how the Bible describes their interaction with humanity. Deuteronomy 32:15-18, Genesis 6:1-5 and Matthew 4:23-25

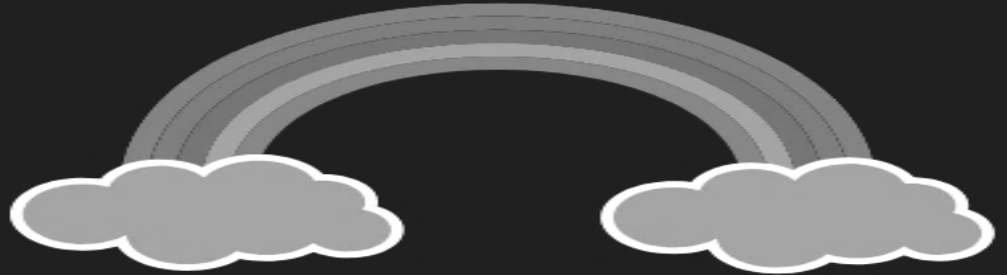
***There are April Events you'll want to check out later in this Bulletin.**



March Milestones

Birthdays

01	Curt Villanova
11	Quinn Avery Bingaman
17	Weston Taylor
18	Dorothy Syler
19	Mark Linnerud
22	Aracely Brooks
23	Ozzie Radue
25	Toi Ann Bailey
30	Joan Rumel



COUNCIL CHAIR REPORT

As we move into the month of March, I want to take a moment to reflect on the blessings and challenges we have faced together in this new year. Lent begins on Wednesday, March 5, 2025. Lent is a special time for all of us to renew our commitment to our faith and to our shared mission as a church. It is a time for introspection but also for action as we seek to live out Christ's love in our community and beyond.

As the days grow longer and the promise of spring approaches, we are reminded that change and growth are essential parts of our faith journey. Just as nature undergoes a season of renewal, we, too, are invited to grow and refresh our hearts. This month, let us embrace the opportunities that come with Lent to deepen our spiritual practices, whether through prayer, fasting, or acts of service.

With earth experiencing renewal so too Bethany is in a season of renewal. Our focus this year is on Church growth. We are researching resources to assist us with several aspects, including Church growth, community outreach, and increased social media presence, to name a few.

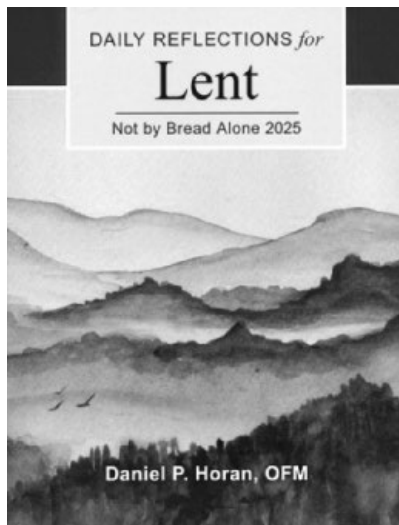
I ask for your continued prayers for our church's growth, and hearts that are open to the things God has in store. It is an exciting time for our church. Thank you for your ongoing support, passion, and commitment to our church's mission. Together, we are planting seeds for a flourishing future in Christ.

Cheryl A. Diddia-Bernstein

Council Chair



LENTEN DEVOTIONALS FOR OUR LENTEN 2025 JOURNEY



On Sunday March 2, 2025 (Sunday before Lent begins) copies of “Not By Bread Alone” will be available on the back table in the Sanctuary for members and friends to take home with them and use as their devotional for the season of Lent. There is a prayer, a scripture passage and a reflection for each day of Lent and you are invited to use this devotional and walk with us during this holy season of preparation for Easter. These are free but we ask that you only take one for yourself as there are limited copies available. Come and enjoy this season of devotion with us, your Church family, as we travel the sacred path to the cross and resurrection of our Lord.

HOUSE UPDATE

Unlike last year, this season’s snowfall has been sporadic, but we've had snow removal five times to keep our walks and driveways, including the parking lot, safe for use. For a Chicago winter, that isn’t bad, but pray, for the sake of our budget, it’s the end. We also took a hit on our water bill when a seldom-used toilet was left running for two months. The plumbers resolved that, only to have pipes on the outside wall in the Garth Garden freeze and a connection burst. Pipes are fixed, but the solution – turn off the outside water for winter! We’re learning, Chuck!

TREASURER UPDATE

The first two months of 2025 have been quite typical. We have had a couple of maintenance issues; some significant heating bills, insurance payments, building use income shortfalls, and cashflow issues. So far, in 2025, it has been necessary to withdraw \$10,000 from our Vanguard investment account to meet cash flow needs. I cannot overemphasize the importance of staying current with your financial commitments if you have made one. We are very fortunate to have this fund to fall back on when needs arise. We are looking forward to better days and improved cash flow.

Andrew B Greene

PRAYERS AND CONDOLENCES TO THE FAMILY OF MICHAEL RUDD, SCOUTMASTER TROOP #607



A good and faithful friend of Bethany Union Church and our Boy Scout Troop #607, passed away on February 6th. Please keep his family and Troop #607 in your prayers. Michael became Scoutmaster following the death of Earl Syler in 2019; Ed Hollinger is Scoutmaster, now. Michael Rudd was buried from Donnellan Funeral Home and St Barnabas on February 22nd.

EASTER FLOWERS, NOT MUCH TIME!

Please consider purchasing some spring plants to beautify our sanctuary for Easter Sunday. You're welcome to take them with you after Easter Sunday Worship – beautify your home and spring garden! Complete the order form and return it to the Church by April 6th. Thank you.

For plants not going home, can we plan on a day to beautify our garden and planters? Gardeners, call the office and let us know what day and what supplies you'll need to get our plants in the ground!

Resurrection Day Plant Sale 2025

*Please add to the beauty of our Sanctuary this Easter.
Just fill out this form and return to the Church office by April 6, 2025.*

Hyacinths \$26.00

Tulips \$26.00

Azaleas \$30.00

Total Number of Plants _____

Total Amount Enclosed _____

In Honor of _____

In Loving Memory of _____

Given By _____

Do you wish to take a plant home? *Yes* _____ *No* _____





See dynamic works from both professional and amateur African American artists from around the country. This longest-running exhibition of African American art has been displayed annually at Griffin MSI since 1970. *Black Creativity Juried Art Exhibition* features paintings, drawings, fine art prints, sculpture, mixed-media, ceramics and photography by African Americans, including youth artists between the ages of 14 and 17.

This exhibition is now open through April 27, 2025 and is included in Museum Entry.

Our own Chloe Charles, daughter of Lisa & Mario Butler-Del Rio, was selected out of hundreds of students as one of the top 30 Teen Artists to be exhibited. Her piece, “Powerful Moon,” is a collage done in acrylic, watercolor, color pencil and oil pastels. Congratulations, Chloe! Job well done!



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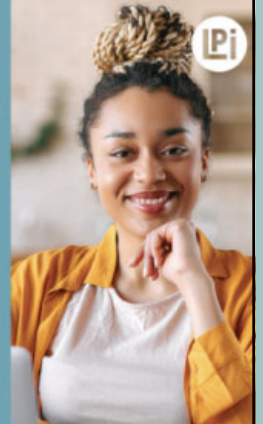
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