

WELCOME TO BETHEL CHURCH as we honor Jesus the King on this Palm Sunday! Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

We hope a lot of you were able to connect last week to our YouTube service and will be able to connect again this week. We hope the link will be up and running by the time you wake up on Sunday morning and sent to your email. You can also check on Bethel's facebook page as the link will be posted there. Go to: <https://www.facebook.com/BethelCRCDemotte/> to find more. This week's message will be on Jesus' Triumphant entry, from Mark 11:1-11

If anyone would like to share anything via video, a scripture reading, ministry of music in the weeks ahead, please let Pastor Rick know and we can figure out a way to share things. We love having a wide variety of participation!!

Please stay tuned to your emails regarding upcoming Good Friday and Easter Sunday Worship Services.

All in-church activities here at Bethel are cancelled for the time being. We may not be able to physically gather because of coronavirus concerns and shelter-in-place directives, but we can pray and connect with each other through telephone, and social media.

PLEASE KEEP IN PRAYER:

- *Our Bethel Church family.
- *God's protection on our family, loved ones and members of our church.
- *Protection for the elderly and those with health concerns and that we live by faith not fear.
- *government leaders, local, state, and federal as they continue to deal with the coronavirus crisis. Pray for wisdom, truth, compassion!

OFFERINGS FOR APRIL

- April 5 Ministries of Bethel and DMC Inc
- April 12 Ministries of Bethel and RESONATE Global Ministries
(CRC home missions and world missions)
- April 19 Ministries of Bethel and MARGHAM
- April 26 Ministries of Bethel and GEMS

We wanted to inform you that the online giving tab is now secure, and is live! We're thankful that it's finally active! We have partnered with an online giving group called Tithe.ly. To get to the giving page, you need to go on our website, www.bethelcrcdemotte.org. Click on the particular giving tab: <https://www.bethelcrcdemotte.org/giving/>. You will see a green button that says: give. clicking on that button will bring up a pop up window. At this point, on the upper right, you can sign up for an account. You will need to use an email address, come up with a password, and a 4-number pin. Creating such an account will allow you to store some information, such as bank account or card information. And after signing up, you can then log on using your account information you created. But this is optional. If you want, you can also make each donation as a guest without signing up or logging on. But you will still have to input an email address and card or account information each time.

Then, you have the option of choosing to make a donation via a credit or debit card, OR, via your bank account. You can make that a onetime donation, OR, you can also choose to make it a recurring donation: once a week, once a month, etc. There are no fees for you to use this service. But simply for your information, if you give through a debit or credit card, the church is charged 2.9% of your total transaction for a fee, plus 30 cents. If you give through your bank account, the church is charged 1% of the total transaction, plus 30 cents each transaction. Other than that, there are no monthly fees charged to the church. We look forward to seeing how the congregation makes use of this service. It provides an electronic and online giving option for those who may find this convenient because they do a majority of their banking and bill paying this way.

If you have any questions about how to use this service, please call Pastor Rick, Suzanne VanSchouwen, or one of the deacons.

Second, the deacons also wanted to inform you that there is also a box in the council room that is available if you wanted to drop off any offerings or tithes at the church. And mailing a check works fine as well.

God bless you all....and thank you for being a praying, caring and giving congregation!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Just a reminder to everyone:

There is a massive shortage of the N95 masks. These masks are used by lots of people for construction work, painting, sanding, etc.... I just found a box we had in basement. There are several people in our congregation and many co-workers in ER's in our community who don't have enough to work safely. I have to reuse mine at work until it falls apart.

We are reaching out to the congregation to see if anyone has extras or know people who do and we can collect them and give to those who have a real need for them right now.

If you have any you can bring them to church Tuesday thru Friday from 10am to 3pm. Place in the blue bin by the east entrance. Thank you to everyone for your help!

Andrea Zickmund, My contact information is:

Cell: 262-705-7280 Email: andreaaffemt@yahoo.com

A reminder to help the Service Team update their list of those willing to help in times of need. All we are asking for is if you feel that you can help please email me, text me or call me and I will be making a new list of updated contact information and what you may be able to help with. Right now I see a huge need for picking up prescriptions or small groceries for the elderly and high risk members that still need their medications and food, but are not leaving their house. **If you know anyone who is in need of help, please let us know.**

Please email me with your:

Name:

Best Contact Phone Number:

Best method of contact: Phone call, text or email

Email:

How'd you be willing to help:

A meal when needed for those sick, recovering from surgery, or in need. (You do not need to deliver it and you can coordinate with Service Committee to have them deliver it and best time that works for you to make it. I know everybody's schedules are so different.)

Willing to drive someone to an appointment when needed

Willing to help with small house chores or maintenance, or yard work if needed.

Or anything you feel you are led by God to help with or have a special skill that you would like to share with others.

Thank you for prayerfully considering how you may be willing to help those in need. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Service Team. Again, please email me (Andrea), text or call and I will be making up a new spreadsheet, if you are willing to be added to the list.

My contact information is: Cell: 262-705-7280 Email: andreaaffemt@yahoo.com

Thank you from the Service Team, Wes & Judy Van Bruggen and Mike & Andrea Zickmund

Here is an Easter Activity you can plan ahead for next week! Children's Message: Lifted by Jesus

Give kids some time to reflect on what Jesus did for them personally.

You'll need:

- Yarn
- 1 plastic coat hanger per child
- * small stones or pebbles
- * 2 paper cups per child



Show kids how to poke three evenly spaced holes through the tops of their cups and use the yarn to hang one cup from each side of their hangers. Give each child a handful of small stones or pebbles.

Read aloud [Hebrews 12:1](#).

Say: **Let's see how Jesus lifts us up. We'll pretend these**

stones represent sins that weigh us down: telling a lie, for example. Add a stone to one cup on your hanger. Have kids each add a stone to a cup on their own hangers. Lead children through a few other examples of sinful things kids might do, each time having kids add stones to the same cup they started with. Say: **Take time now to talk to Jesus about some things you know you've done wrong.** Allow time.

After kids' hangers are weighed down on the side with all the stones, say: **When Jesus died on the cross, he took on all of our sin. He took the weight of any lies we've told.** Lead kids to each take a stone and transfer it to the other cup on their hangers. **Take some time now to transfer each of your stones to the other cup, thanking Jesus for taking on each sin when he died on the cross.** Allow time.

Say: **Notice the weight shifted. All the weight is now in the Jesus cup, and your cup lifts up. When you believe in Jesus, your balance will always look like this. Jesus' death and resurrection lifts you forever!** Allow time for kids to silently pray and reflect on what Jesus did for them.

SCHOOL and COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

IMPORTANT DMCS SOCIETY MEETING UPDATE! The DMCS Society Meeting will now take place online on Wednesday, April 15, at 7:00pm. If you have not received this updated information, contact the DMC office at 219-987-3721 or dmcsecretary@dmcs-in.org by Monday, April 13.

Phil's Friends Celebration of Hope Dinner - Date change due to Covid 19!

Please join us at our annual Indiana Hope Dinner **THURSDAY, October 8th, 2020** at 6:00pm at The Avalon Manor, Merrillville, IN. Learn more about our mission through stories from those we serve. Find out how you can get involved to make a difference for those dealing with a cancer diagnosis. Enjoy a delicious dinner, fantastic raffle items and an opportunity to give toward our mission. Tickets are NO CHARGE - you must RSVP to attend. For more information contact Judy [219-869-3152](tel:219-869-3152), or RSVP at: philsfriends.org/event/the-indiana-hope-dinner/.

The following was sent out as an email to the congregation. We would also like to share it with those who might reach out to our website and pray it will be a blessing to anyone who might read it or share it.

Hello church family.

It's already been quite a month, with news of an escalating spread of a virus that suddenly became OUR reality with new terms like "social distancing", "shelter-at-home", "self-quarantine" and "essential business" becoming part of our vocabulary. It was also during that time we experienced the tightening noose of restrictions on social gatherings, from 250 people, to 100 people, then 50, and then no more than 10. In some areas of the country, they've even limited it to 5. Needless to say, it was the first time that we've put a message on our sign that says: "Church services cancelled til further notice."

Every time I see it that message, it's a painful reminder of the reality in which we now live, for a while at least. And now, since President Trump has extended the "stay at home" order through the entire month of April, it's likely we won't be meeting as a congregation for public worship until May. Some churches have been defiant, saying that worshipping together is an "essential service", and continue to hold public worship in defiance of state guidelines. Several pastors have even been arrested. Yet the determination to keep meeting together, especially during a time when the virus seems to be sweeping through society and the numbers of infections, and even deaths of people who get COVID-19 are escalating, is not wise, I feel.

Some people might think: "what could it hurt? Well, we need to actually recognize that it could hurt several things. First, our Christian witness. While it's true that our first obligation as Christians is to witness to a strong triumphant faith in a Sovereign Savior, the idea of putting our neighbor at risk is not a strong

witness to our faith in a LOVING Savior who calls us to love each other. And that pretty much leads to the second thing: Defiance could hurt our neighbor. It would be a terrible thing to bear that because our desire to worship physically together, a member became sick, and God forbid, even died. To risk that is not loving our neighbor.

This article, written by Mark Galli, seems to me to be a well thought-out response to some of those who continued to meet, publicly, and even defiantly, when all other larger gatherings have compliantly ceased. I don't like that we're not meeting...but I get it. And for now, it's the loving thing to do. Here's the link: <http://markgalli.com/?p=587>

In the meantime, I do want to encourage you, that while the Lord is allowing us to go through these interesting, challenging, and frustrating times, you...WE... do not go through this alone. Remember the words from Isaiah 43:2-3 - When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze. For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.

Knowing that God is with us doesn't mean there will necessarily be a quick way out of this pandemic. But it does mean we need not fear. It does mean that we can have peace because God holds us, and God is with us. And it does mean that we can model for our children in our homes the joy of continuing to love each other and spending this extra time with each other. It does give us an opportunity to show what serving each other in love and with patience looks like. It does give us the opportunity to pray more during these unhurried days. And it does mean that though society has changed, for now, how we interact with each other, it changes NOTHING about who we are as children of God. Still loved. Still forgiven. Still HIS, with an eternal hope that spills over into our lives with strength for today.

If you need to talk some of these things through, please, please call myself or your care group elder. If there is a need you have, please connect with the deacons or a member of the service team. If you want prayers, I or any elder would be glad to do that over the phone with you, or if you want to drop by the office, (keeping our social distancing), we'd be glad to pray with you here as well. Though we can't do church AS USUAL, we are still the church, we love you and want to continue to encourage you as we can. And we want to encourage you to be an encouragement to each other as well.

God bless you all! With love in Christ, Pastor Rick Vanderwal along with the council - elders and deacons.