

January 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5 10am Worship – Pastor Yuri (Phil 4:8-9 – <i>Resolved, to...</i>) 11am Faith Formation (all ages, new adult class: <i>Faith @ Home</i> – Pastor Yuri) 12pm BBYOL	6	7 7am Men’s Prayer Meeting	8 NO BIBLE STUDY 7:15pm Prayer Meeting	9	10 NO FUN NIGHT (but stay tuned – social activities on the way!) 7pm Youth	11 1-4pm Baking Club
12 10am Worship – Dr. Neil Craton 11am Faith Formation (all ages, <i>Faith @ Home</i> – Pastor George on <i>Prayer & Fasting</i>) 12pm BBYOL	13	14 7am Men’s Prayer Meeting 10am Missions Team Meeting	15 6:30pm English Conversation 6:30pm Bible Study Topic: Phil 4:8 – <i>Whatever Is True</i> 7:15pm Prayer Meeting 7:15pm Youth	16	17	18 9am-12pm Membership Class, part 1 7:30pm Union Gospel Mission
19 10am Worship – Pastor Yuri (Luke 2:22-40 – <i>Love at First Sight</i>) Communion 11am Faith Formation (all ages, <i>Faith @ Home</i> – Pastor George on <i>Prayer & Fasting, pt. 2</i>) 12pm BBYOL	20	21 7am Men’s Prayer Meeting	22 6:30pm English Conversation 6:30pm Bible Study Topic: Phil 4:8 – <i>Whatever Is Noble</i> 7:15pm Prayer Meeting	23	24 7pm Youth	25 9am Men’s Breakfast (NB: winter start time is later!)
26 10am Worship – Pastor Yuri, (Luke 2:41 – <i>Love at Home</i>) 11am Faith Formation (<i>Faith @ Home</i> – Ed & Joy Loewen on <i>Lifestyle Evangelism</i>) 12pm BBYOL	27	28 7am Men’s Prayer Meeting 7pm Council Meeting	29 6:30pm English Conversation 6:30pm Bible Study Topic: Phil 4:8 – <i>Whatever Is Right</i> 7:15pm Prayer Meeting 7:15pm Youth	30	31	1 9am-12pm Membership Class, part 2 1-4pm Baking Club



Bethesda Church Newsletter

Congregational letter

January 2025

Dear Bethesda Family,

Happy New Year! How are things going?

2024 was a year of new beginnings for us at Bethesda - especially for me and my family! For one thing, May marked the end of my full time employment as a musician, and June was the beginning of my life as a full-time pastor. In the months since, I have heard the all the possible permutations of *How are things going?* from family, friends, and former colleagues. There are of course many, many things that I am excited about and pleased with. There are so many ways that your caring and kindness have been manifold and manifest. There are so many ways that I see the Lord clearly at work among us!

And yet, I never seem to know how to answer ... every shortish answer seems totally inadequate! So to save time I stick with one (lame) word:

How are things going? ...well ... WELL!

I wish I found myself in situations more often where I could give a longer answer. Because sprinkled amid the joys of ministry there are also the pains and sadnesses. Then there is the fatigue which is a not-always-welcome reminder that the Lord's work only ever truly succeeds when he does all the heavy lifting! No preacher has ever bent anyone's will by the strength of his own voice (or argument) no matter how forceful (or clever). Neither has any pastor ever softened a heart by the tenderness of his care, no matter how faithful. The power to change is the Holy

Spirit's alone. But the preacher is nevertheless called to prepare, hoping – really, expecting – that the Spirit will speak through him. The pastor is called to tend so that when the Spirit "strangely warms" those who have hitherto been frosty to his touch, he'll be there to mop up.

We are all called to stand back and “see what the LORD will do”! As long as he keeps working, there will always be much for us to do, too! So when that work of prepping and mopping feels like it is never done, then I suppose things must be going well!

So far ther’s been a steady flow: newcomers to meet, regulars to encourage, challenges new and old, vistas the Lord is presenting us with to explore and embrace. With him, it's all an adventure, with no real endings – only beginnings! Life, real life, life in Christ, is all just “further up and further in” (as C.S. Lewis put it in *The Chronicles of Narnia*).

How are things going? ...well ... WELL!

I might also answer that I don't precisely know because I don't feel entirely in control. But then again, I don't think I'm meant to. Paul told the Ephesians “not to get drunk with wine” but rather to "be filled with the Spirit" (5:18). So it's no surprise the bystanders on Pentecost mistook the disciples' ecstatic, incomprehensible words as an overflow of spirits – as opposed to an overflow of the Spirit. It seems that being positively off-balance is a normal sign that he's



**BETHESDA
CHURCH**

Bethesda Church Office Information
Hours: Tuesdays (10-3) & Fridays (9-3)
Phone: 204-987-2890
1350 Grant Ave., Winnipeg, MB R3M 2A7
Email: office@bethesdachurch.ca

present and at work.. That is, it's standard, in a Spirit-filled church, to feel a mite breathless, a touch of Vertigo, maybe even a little "tipsy" on occasion: exhilarated while exhausted, trembling while confident, longing while belonging, overflowing while underresourced.

How are things going? ...well ... WELL!

This month we will be transitioning to a new emphasis in our adult *Faith Formation* classes - from *Faith @ Work* to *Faith @ Home*. This emphasis will seek to apply the Scripture, the Central Truth, and the Title of the first sermon I preach this month, namely Philippians 4:8-9; "Turning aside to follow God's path is the mark of a true Christian"; and *Resolved, to work, rest, and play as a citizen of heaven*. All this will start today (Jan. 5) as I apply my message to the first discipline which is absolutely fundamental for

every Christian: *Making the Bible Your Own*. Over the following two Sundays, Pastor George will challenge you to hunger for a deeper prayer life. Then, Ed and Joy Loewen will teach us how intentional hospitality can facilitate *Lifestyle Evangelism*.

Our next Wednesday Bible study will also spring from the same well. We will dig deep into each of the "things" that Paul tells the Philippians to think about – whatever is "true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, and praiseworthy" – not to mention "put into practice" what we have "learned, received, heard" (or "seen") in him.

Coming back to the sense of exhilaration and overflow I mentioned earlier, I'm absolutely thrilled with all the new people that the Lord has been bringing to us – some of whom are hearing

and responding to the Gospel for the first time! So of course, the course for seekers and new believers, *Faith Made Simple*, will be continuing into the new year. It seems that it may turn into something of a baptism class! I should also make it clear that although I've been calling it a class for "new believers", *Faith Made Simple* is really a class for anyone who has questions. So please consider this your official invitation to pop in anytime and fire away! In addition to this class, I will also be offering a **membership class** over **two Saturday mornings** which are coming up really quickly:

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALLING ALL COOKS!

Do you love cooking, baking, or simply sharing a meal to bless others? We invite you to consider signing up for our "Meal Train" to support fellow Bethesda attendees. Whether it's welcoming a new baby, offering comfort during an illness, or showing care in other special circumstances, a home-cooked meal can bring warmth and encouragement.

How can you help? Sign up to bring a meal to a fellow church member or family—it's an easy and meaningful way to show your support and care. For more details, please reach out to Rose or Ysela.

"PERSPECTIVES" ONLINE CLASS: Tuesday nights, February 11 to May 13 *Perspectives* is a discipleship course that challenges you to consider how you can be a part of what God is doing locally and globally. For more info talk to Patti Poirier or visit: perspectivescanada.outreach.ca

SO LONG FUN NIGHTS, HELLO FUN-TIVITIES!

It seems that Friday nights were not the best time to socialize as a church body, so instead, once a month, we are going to offer an activity which will always be different. To be clear, although activities will be appropriate for kids, the idea is for EVERYONE to get to know one another better, so whatever your situation you are welcome, *encouraged*, URGED to come! Stay tuned for February FUN-TIVITIES!

2025 BUDGET IS ON THE WAY: The Finance Team is working on this year's budget. A congregational meeting will be held after church on a Sunday in February, TBD. Be sure to attend!

January 18 and February 1 (9:00-12:00). Please let me know if you'd like to attend! As you'll see in the **Announcements** section below, opportunities to make deeper friendships, to bless and help others through your delicious cooking are also in the offing. So...

How are things going? ...well ... WELL!

Patti Yori

PRAYER & INTERCESSION

- Eunice Hill (knee; Concordia Hospital) *New!*
- Shirley Mercer (Grace Hospital)
- Kids Ministry (wisdom/resources: class sizes; praise God for the problem: more age-specific classes means we need more teachers!)
- "Faith @ Home" presenters
- Afghan Families: language, culture, school
- Andrea & Rick Wittebolle
- Andrew Poirier (mental health)
- Betty Campbell (Personal Care Home)
- Bernice Gruenke (health)
- Cheryl Warax (Pastor Mark's sister)
- Chris Wilcoxson
- Debbie Mogilevsky (cancer)
- Don Register (Shelly's dad)
- E's brother in prison
- Edwin & Kamala Henry (Esther's parents)
- Gail Barnes
- Jaeho, Samjin & Eean Cho (Lebanon)
- Joan McRae (Misericordia Place)
- Lawrence & Selma Churchill
- Laylee, her sons, and her mother
- Lori & George Manalang
- Marion Hill (Susanne's Mom)/Susanne
- Marye P. (Kathy's friend – cancer)
- Mike & Sunny Cheon (financial support)
- Mona Behrens
- Newcomers to Bethesda
- Pastor Mark
- Pastor Yuri
- Patti Poirier (health and strength)
- Ron De Hoff (Patti's brother)
- Tania & Valentyna K. (Kathy's friends – housing, immigration issues)
- Venus Cote (kidneys)
- Youth Ministry (Leaders, too!)
- Local: antisemitism (graffiti, posters, etc)
- Canada: political situation
- World Conflicts: Israel / Gaza / Iran; Ukraine / Russia, etc.

January 2025

Bible Reading Plan

- Philippians 1-4†
- *Phil 1-4
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- Num 26:1-18
- Neh 9:38-10:39
- SoS 2:14
- Luke 10:1-24
- Neh 11:1-9
- Isa 36
- Num 26:19-27
- SoS 2:15-3:5
- Isa 37:1-20
- Num 26:28-41
- Neh 11:10-18
- SoS 3:6-11
- Luke 10:25-37
- Isa 37:21-38
- Neh 11:19-36
- Num 26:42-56
- SoS 4:1-8

- Num 26:57-27:11
- Neh 12:1-24
- Luke 10:38-42
- SoS 4:9-5:1
- Luke 11:1-13
- Neh 12:25-47
- SoS 5:2-8
- Num 27:12-23
- SoS 5:9-6:3
- Neh 13:1-14
- Num 28:1-15
- Luke 11:14-28
- Ps 38
- Neh 13:15-22
- Num 28:16-31
- SoS 6:4-9
- Luke 11:29-36
- Luke 11:37-54
- Num 29
- Neh 13:23-30
- SoS 6:10-7:10
- Isa 38
- SoS 7:11-13
- Num 30
- Luke 12:1-12

- SoS 8:1-4
- Num 31
- Ps 64
- Luke 12:13-21
- Ps 147
- Luke 12:22-34
- Num 32
- SoS 8:5-7
- Num 33:1-49
- Ps 78:1-54††
- Luke 12:35-48
- Num 33:50-56
- Ps 78:56-72
- Isa 39
- Ps 79
- SoS 8:8-10
- Isa 40:1-11
- Ps 126
- Num 34
- Luke 12:49-59
- SoS 8:11-14
- Ecclesiastes 1:1-11

*Memory Verses:

Challenge:

How much of PHILIPPIANS can you memorize this month?

Start with these, then find other favourites. Link them with what comes before/after:

#1: Phil 1:21-24

...to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labour for me...

#2: Phil 2:5-11

Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant...

#3: Phil 3:7-11

...whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things...

#4: Phil 4:4-9

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, but by prayer and petition...

† Read Philippians a few times over the first five days (how many is up to you)!
†† Only two readings this day