

September 2024



Bethesda Church

Newsletter

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 10am Worship – <i>Howard Moore (Matt 20:1-16 – Parable of the workers)</i> 11am Sermon Q&A 11:30am BBYOL	2	3	4 No Bible Study 7:15pm Prayer Meeting	5	6 6:00 Wilcoxsons Appreciation Dinner (Kum Koon)	7 10:30-12 Safe Relationships Training 1-4pm Baking Club
8 10am Worship – <i>Dr. Neil Craton (Luke 15:11-32 – Parable of the prodigal son)</i> 11am Sermon Q&A 11:30am BBYOL	9	10	11 No Bible Study 7:15pm Prayer Meeting	12 7am Men’s Prayer Meeting	13	14
15 FALL KICKOFF! “Want a Friend?” 10am Worship – <i>Pastor Yuri (Pr 17:17)</i> 11:15 Faith Formation (all ages); Sermon Q&A 12:00pm BBYOL	16	17	18 6:30pm Bible Study Topic: Prayer 7:15pm Prayer Meeting	19 7am Men’s Prayer Meeting	20 7:00 Bethesda Fun Night (TBC) Youth (TBC)	21
22 10am Worship – COMMUNION <i>Pastor Yuri (“Want a Friend?” pt 2)</i> 11:15 Faith Formation (all ages); Sermon Q&A 12:00pm BBYOL	23	24	25 6:30pm Bible Study Topic: Prayer 7:15pm Prayer Meeting 7:15 Youth (TBC)	26 7am Men’s Prayer Meeting	27	28 8:30am Men’s Breakfast
29 10am Worship – <i>Tim Noble</i> 11:15 Faith Formation (all ages); No Sermon Q&A 12:00pm BBYOL	30	1	2 6:30pm Bible Study Topic: Prayer 7:15pm Prayer Meeting	3 7am Men’s Prayer Meeting	4 7:00 Bethesda Fun Night (TBC) Youth (TBC)	5 1-4pm Baking Club

Congregational letter

September 2024

“Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you [...] This is my command: love each other.”

– John 15:13-15,17

“Want a friend?”

This is the theme of this year’s Fall Kickoff, on September 15, when our new ministry year begins. It was suggested to me by one of you, and to me it seemed perfect for this time of year! We are all gearing up for new experiences: for some a new grade or even a new school, for others (like me) a new role or a new job, for all of us a new season that always comes with a new rhythm and energy. But all that newness can be scary as well as exciting. Having a friend – or a few – can be the difference between coping and caving, between feeling hopeful or despairing.

Sadly, more and more people feel like they don’t have anyone around them that they can count on. According to the World Health Organization, loneliness is a “global public health concern”. Some call it an epidemic. Finding friends, making friends, is not as simple as it once was – even at church.

Addressing this problem is tricky, since our culture has trained us to value individual freedom above community, that friendship is

mostly based on shared interests and personal chemistry. In other words, the world reinforces our instinct that feelings are what’s most important, and that a true friend is someone with whom we feel an instant connection.

But look up. Up to the top of the page.

Read the quote again – Jesus’ words – slowly.

Jesus’ thoughts on friendship are ... different.

Who is a true friend, according to Jesus? Is it someone with whom you have a lot in common? No, it’s someone who puts the needs of others first and obeys his command to love. Is a friend someone you know so well you never feel awkward? No, it’s someone who knows the Father’s “business” and gets down to doing it.

So what does this mean for our church?

It means Bethesda ought to be a place where people practice loving one another well. It means that we communicate that Jesus expects us to share life together. It means we provide opportunities for people to come together. It means we foster deep and tender friendships by

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BETHESDA CHURCH

first making everyday, “glancing” interactions possible. What do I mean by that, exactly?

Deep friendship blooms when you are least expecting it. It germinates in between other things. That is, lasting friendships grow bit by bit, usually not when you’re consciously trying to make friends but when you’re doing stuff – serving, learning, playing, worshipping – together. As you put others’ needs before your own, friendship can’t help but flower: slowly but surely, what seemed like throw away gestures and dustings of conversation actually enrich the ground of trust so that the deeper friendships that we all hunger for take root ... and bear fruit.

To put it another way, we all need to abandon the search for the people we think will meet our needs, and focus on how we can best love the people that God brings across our path, no matter who they are. We need to trust God to

bring us friends who will put us first just as we put them first. Our fear, of course, is that our needs won’t be met, that we might give more than we receive. But indulging that fear is the main reason we are so lonely: when we put ourselves first we push others away; we make sure that we will be alone in the long run. Instead, we need to lay down our lives. We need to remember that *Jesus* said “it is more blessed [literally, *happy*] to give than to receive”!

So, again, what does this mean for our church? For you? It means – for the sake of *your own happiness* (no less than your holiness) – that you participate in the life of our church – even when that seems scary, or dull, or unappealing.

And so this fall I invite you to make the church’s activities your weekly priority. Our Sunday morning worship services will now be about an hour long so that we can regularly bring the

whole worshipping community together at once. But don’t stop there, come at other times as well! Like when we plan special events: the dinner in appreciation of Pastor Mark and Shelly on September 6, or Bethesda’s 80th Anniversary Celebration on October 20th, or youth activities, or the new Friday Bethesda Fun Nights! Come to the activities we are continuing from last year, like Fellowship Meals every Sunday after church, or Baking Club, or Men’s Breakfasts, or Men’s Prayer Meeting, or the new Sunday morning Faith Formation class called *Faith @ Work* which is designed to help us all get to know one another better while encouraging one another too! And of course, I *strongly* encourage you all to attend the Wednesday Bible Study and Prayer Meeting. This is Bethesda’s small group, the best

place to grow and bloom together, as we learn and pray for one another week after week.

Want a friend? Be a friend! And ... *bring* a friend on September 15 who needs to hear the Good News of Jesus Christ. Let’s put one another first and be about our Father’s business,

TOGETHER in Christ, *Patn You*

September 2024

Bible Reading Plan

- *Revelation 1:1-8
- 2 Ch 31:2-21
- Lev 20:1-8
- Pr 22:6-7
- Is 6
- 2 Ch 32:1-23
- Is 7:1-9
- Pr 22:8-10
- Lev 20:9-21
- Rev 1:9-20
- Is 7:10-8:10
- Lev 20:22-27
- 2 Ch 32:24-33
- Pr 22:11-13
- Rev 2:1-11
- Is 8:11-9:7
- 2 Ch 33:1-13
- Lev 21:1-15
- Pr 22:14-16
- Rev 2:12-17
- Pr 22:17-27
- 2 Ch 33:14-20
- Is 9:8-10:4
- Lev 21:16-24
- Rev 2:18-3:6

- 2 Ch 33:21-25
- Lev 22:1-16
- Pr 22:28-23:1
- Is 10:5-27
- Rev 3:7-13
- Rev 3:14-22
- Lev 22:17-33
- 2 Ch 34:1-13
- Pr 23:4-9
- *Is 10:28-11:9
- Is 11:10-16
- Lev 23:1-3
- 2 Ch 34:14-33
- Pr 23:10-14
- Rev 4
- Rev 5
- Lev 23:4-8
- 2 Ch 35:1-19
- Pr 23:15-21
- Is 12
- Rev 6:1-8
- 2 Ch 35:20-36:4
- Is 13
- Pr 23:22-28
- Lev 23:9-14

- Pr 23:29-24:4
- Lev 23:15-22
- 2 Ch 36:5-10
- Is 14:1-2
- Rev 6:9-7:17
- 2 Ch 36:11-23
- Is 14:3-23
- Pr 24:5-9
- Lev 23:23-44
- Rev 8:1
- Rev 8:2-13
- Is 14:24-27
- Ezra 1
- Lev 24:1-9
- Pr 24:10-14
- Ezra 2:1-20
- *Pr 24:15-18
- Is 14:28-32
- Lev 24:10-23
- Rev 9:1-10:7
- Rev 10:8-11:14
- Ezra 2:21-35
- Is 15-16
- Lev 25:1-7
- Pr 24:19-22

- Lev 25:8-55
- Ezra 2:36-40
- Pr 24:23-27
- Is 17:1-6
- Rev 11:15-19
- Lev 26
- Ezra 2:41-54
- *Pr 24:28-34
- Is 17:7-8
- Rev 12:1-9
- Rev 12:10-17
- Lev 27
- Ezra 2:55-58
- Is 17:9-14
- Pr 25:1-5
- Rev 13
- Ezra 2:59-70
- Is 18
- Numbers 1:1-16
- Pr 25:6-10
- Ezra 3
- Num 1:17-25
- Is 19:1-15
- Pr 25:11-13
- Rev 14:1-5

***Memory Verses:**

- #1: Rev 1:8 – *“I am the Alpha and Omega,” says the Lord God, “who was, who is, and who is to come, the Almighty.”*
- #2: Isaiah 11:1-9 – *“A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him – the Spirit of wisdom and understanding...”*
- #3: Pr 24:17-18 – *“Do not gloat when your enemy falls; when he stumbles, do not let your heart rejoice...”*
- #4: Pr 24:33 – *“A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest – and poverty will ...”*

Announcements

SAFE RELATIONSHIPS TRAINING:
Saturday, September 7, 10:30-12. Required annually for anyone working with vulnerable people.

PASTOR MARK APPRECIATION DINNER:
Friday, September 6, 6:00, Kum Koon Gardens. Pick up a flyer from the back table or talk to Rose or Philip for more info.

FALL KICK OFF: Sept. 15 – “Want a Friend?”
Invite your family, friends and co-workers to come check out what we at Bethesda are all about! Hear the Gospel clearly preached, and have an opportunity to ask questions after the service. The new Sunday schedule will also begin:

- 10-11am worship service (all: adults and kids)
- 11:15-12 Faith Formation/Q&A/food prep
- 12pm BBYOL (lunch!)

All midweek activities will also resume.

“PERSPECTIVES” ONLINE CLASS:
Tuesday nights, September 3 to December 3
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

Prayer & Intercession

- Venus Côté (hospital w/infection)
- Shirley Mercer
- Pat Hill (recovery from surgery) *New items!*
- Students (& parents!) ... Back to School!
- Kick off Sunday (9/15: “Want a Friend?”)
- World: conflicts Israel/Gaza, Ukraine, etc
- World: U.S. election race
- Bethesda Church (BC): 2024 Ministry Year
- BC Children’s Ministry
- Afghan Families
- E’s brother in prison
- Gail Barnes
- Mona Behrens
- Betty Campbell (Personal Care Home)
- Mike & Sunny Cheon (financial support)
- Lawrence & Selma Churchill
- Ron De Hoff (Patti’s brother)
- Bernice Gruenke (health)
- Edwin & Kamala Henry (Esther’s parents)
- Marion Hill (Susanne’s Mom)/Susanne
- Pastor Yuri
- 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)
- Cheryl Warax (Pastor Mark’s sister)
- Chris Wilcoxson
- Pastor Mark
- Andrea & Rick Wittebolle