

December 2011

Worship Schedule!

Sunday Service Schedule

- 9:00 am – Traditional
- 10:30 am – Contemporary
- 10:45 am – Contemporary
(In Walker Hall)

refresh!
(-ments)



Sundays:

10:00–10:40 ❖ Walker Hall (Gym)

Stop in the gym before or after morning worship for delicious coffee, cookies and pleasant conversation.

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Sermons can be downloaded from our website at or purchased by calling the church office.



Come to My Heart, Lord Jesus

Last month I went to a seminar entitled “Gravity & Gladness on Sunday Morning: The Pursuit of God in Corporate Worship” at Bethlehem Baptist Church in Minneapolis. In the seminar, one thing I learned is in the Old Testament, God laid out clear instructions on how and where the Israelites should worship God. This included how to make the Tabernacle (and later the Temple), with the exact dimensions of each room; what utensils to use, and what they were made out of; which people could go into the inner parts of the Tabernacle (and Temple) and what they should be wearing—they were all outward expressions of worshipping God. Then, when Jesus came, He fulfilled and dismantled the Old Testament structures of worship, and emphasized a New Testament worship that focused on the inside (heart and mind) rather than the outside (when, where, and how):

“... believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain (Mount Gerizim) nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him.” (John 4:21, 23 ESV; see also Matthew 5:21–30, Matthew 6, Matthew 23:23–28, John 2:13–22)

I read a document at the seminar that Bethlehem formed in the midst of a divisive time at their church about 20 years ago. In it, “What Unites Us In Worship,” they wrote a philosophy that would unify the congregation in what corporate worship was. Out of the eleven non-negotiables, I would like to share five with you:

- **God-centeredness:** A high priority on the vertical focus of our Sunday morning service. The ultimate aim is to so experience God that he is glorified in our affections. Come on the look out for God, leave on the look out for people.
- **Bible-based and Bible-saturated:** The content of our singing and praying and welcoming and preaching and poetry will always conform to the truth of Scripture. The content of God’s Word will be woven through all we do in worship. It will be the ground of all our appeal to authority. Preaching (expository exultation) will be central.
- **Head and Heart:** True worship aims at kindling and carrying deep, strong, real emotions toward God, but does not manipulate people’s emotions by failing to appeal to clear thinking about spiritual things based on shareable evidences outside ourselves. Keeping these together is the difference between emotion and emotionalism; and between intellectual and intellectualism.
- **Authentic Communication:** it requires the utter renunciation of all sham and deceit and hypocrisy and pretense and affectation and posturing; no atmosphere of artistic or



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All Church Announcements

Come to My Heart, Lord Jesus Continued from Page 1

oratorical performance, but the atmosphere of a radically personal encounter with God and truth.

- **Undistracting Excellence:** We will try to sing and play and pray and preach in such a way that people's attention will not be diverted from the substance by shoddy ministry nor by excessive finesse, elegance, or refinement. Natural, undistracting excellence will let the truth and beauty of God shine through.

How does all this tie in with Christmas? After all, we can hear this every other time of the year, right? This is true, but at this time of the year, I feel we need to hear this more than "sleigh bells in the snow." As busy as our lives are, the Advent season takes it up another level. Things become more complicated as we try to jive our schedules with Christmas concerts, programs, and family gatherings, while we also tiptoe around the super-high formalities and expectations of what people want to see and receive from each other. Jesus was born into a world, similar to ours now, that had no room for Him—physically or spiritually. Here are the words of "Thou Didst Leave Thy Throne," a Christmas carol that convicts me every year:

*Thou didst leave Thy throne
And Thy kingly crown
When Thou camest to earth for me;
But in Bethlehem's home
Was there found no room
For Thy holy nativity.
O come to my heart, Lord Jesus—*

There is room in my heart for Thee!

God calls us to make every part of our hearts and minds open to Him to be transformed from the inside out. As New Testament Christ-followers, we have a tremendous privilege, whenever and wherever we are, to worship and delight in our great and holy God, through His Son, Jesus Christ (John 4:24, John 14:6, Romans 12:1-2). There are so many ways it could look like—it could be spending time with Him early in the morning, singing praise and praying to Him in the car, clearing out an hour of your busy schedule to sit in silence at His feet, or when we're gathered to worship Him together.

I also feel that God calls us to let go of the niceties and pretenses that we all come to expect from people around us this time of year—the usual conversations that deflect what's really going on in our lives, spending hours perfecting the inside and outside of our homes, or spending money on gizmos and gadgets that become ignored over time—and enter into "story", the "atmosphere of a radically personal encounter with God and truth".

Just before Thanksgiving I came across a Rich Mullins

album that I had left at my parents' house a few years back. The album was a collection of live recordings that were compiled after his death. Often before he'd sing to the group he was with, he'd share his feelings of the Christian life that led him to write his music. On one of these occasions, he shared his observation about fellow Christian recording artists putting on entertaining concerts with fans obliging to pay sums of money to be entertained, while their neighbor would not even have enough money to buy a Bible. Hearing Rich speak about this convicted me of how quick I am to spend time and money on fleeing pleasures and ignore those around me who have physical and spiritual needs—people whom Jesus has called us to serve first above our "needs."

Perhaps God is calling you this Advent season to break the "norm" of your typical Christmas. Maybe He's speaking to you about getting less presents and giving more presence; or, most of all, maybe He's calling you to come to Him without any pretenses or excuses.

Advent reminds us that a holy and mighty God, who made Heaven and Earth, sent His Son, Jesus, to earth as a baby. Jesus humbled Himself by suffering a cruel and painful death on a cross with a crown of thorns on His head, and He rose again, conquering death and sin. He wants your head and heart—every part—and He's offering you an eternal life, satisfying Him forever—something that this world can't offer (Isaiah 55).

*Matt Hoage
Director of Worship Ministries*

Come Celebrate Jesus

Christmas Services at Bethesda

Dec. 24th — Family Services, 4:00 pm, 5:15 pm
Candelight Service, 11:00 pm

Dec. 25th — Christmas Day Service, 10:00 am

All Church Announcements

From the Elder Board:

As our congregation continues to pursue its mission and vision, the Elder Board has committed to the following initiatives, summarized below.

We are compelled by grace to see all people of the Chippewa Valley, believers and seekers, and all span of generations, have Christ formed in them, entering greater depth and completeness according to a biblical picture of a believer, portrayed in our C3 vision (knowing & growing in Christ, belonging and caring in Community, serving and sharing His Cause).

Pursuing this vision, after seeking God in prayer and listening to His people, we believe the following goals are essential and wise:

- adding a new, modern worship service in Walker Hall on Sunday mornings
- a foyer expansion project
- developing a more comprehensive small group ministry

As we continue working toward each of these, here are some key updates.

LIFEGroups (Small Group Ministry)

LIFEGroups Bethesda's small group ministry is starting in 2012. We are looking for people who can help. Is

God leading YOU to facilitate and/or host a small group? If you're interested, please contact Pastor Brian at brian@bethesdalutheran.org or 715-835-5073. (A perfect home or a Bible degree are not required.)

For our February launch, we will be developing LIFE-group resources to compliment a sermon series on the person of Jesus Christ. The LIFEgroups curriculum will include elements from John Eldredge's Beautiful Outlaw, as well as additional questions that dive into the Scripture texts from the Gospels. Check out the Beautiful Outlaw materials at www.beautifuloutlaw.net.

Foyer Expansion Project

On January 8th, the elders invite the congregation to stay after the services for lunch, as we reveal the draft plans for the proposed foyer expansion.

We will have drawings and computer models of the proposed space, along with initial cost estimates and financial plans.

Please attend this important informational meeting. This information is crucial preparation for our Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 29th, where the congregational members will decide whether we take the next step to hire an architect.

Salsa

(Salt and Light Single Adults)



Connect and Fellowship with other Single Adults (30s–50s)

This small group is designed to provide supportive Christian fellowship and the opportunity to experience community with other Bethesda single adults.

Saturday, December 10th – 2:00 pm til 4:30 pm
Christmas Caroling

Meet at Carin's @ 1415 Drummond Street and we will head out for caroling and then return for hot chocolate and cookies. Please bring 2 dozen cookies (to share with those we carol to and treats after caroling!) We'd love to have guitar accompaniment-let us know if you can help in this way.

We'll also be having a gift exchange — if you would like to participate bring a small wrapped gift.

Please RSVP to Carin or Mary so we can get you further details! Contact Carin at carin-rae@hotmail.com or Mary at mary.robinson@ahss.org

Bethesda Choir presents . . .

Where Shepherds Kneel

Saturday, Dec. 10th. 6:00 pm

You are invited to a Christmas concert of celebration and worship on Saturday evening, Dec 10 at 6:00 pm. Choir anthems range from familiar carols to spirituals, classical to contemporary, and feature several solos. Along with our own Katie Thews and Orvella Bystol, is guest pianist, Anne Kubiawicz, several instrumentalists from UWEC and Bethesda's Children's Choir directed by Hannah Olson.

Jim Jarvise and Mary Roesch will present scriptures that complete the flow of the concert.

A free will offering will be received and divided between APPLE and Unmet Needs (helping wounded veterans). Child Care will be provided.

All Church Announcements

Check it Out!

The honor of your presence is requested in Bethesda's church library to come and choose among the many enriching gifts of Biblical education, edification, and enjoyment. The books, videos, CDs, and more were chosen with you in mind to check out, return and share them with others. Here are a few suggestions:

- *Jak and the Scarlet Thread* (book for youth to adult) by Nathan J. Anderson, local author. ". . . a thrilling adventure. And beneath it all swells the current of another, even bigger story . . . get ready to be transported with Jak to amazing places . . . where you'll see wonderful new things . . . as well as some familiar things in a profoundly new way." says R.K. Mortenson, author of the *Landon Snow* Series. (F, AND)
- *Faith Lessons: The True Christmas Story* (DVD) by Ray Vander Laan/That the World May Know series. Archaeological evidence is woven with Biblical teachings and the historical record to contrast two kings: Herod and Jesus. (232.92, FAI)
- *Best Christmas Pageant Ever* (DVD) by Barbara Robinson. The Herdmans are absolutely the worst kids in the history of the world. No one is prepared when the Herdmans invade church one Sunday and take over the Christmas pageant. (F, BES) Also available as a book. (YF, ROB)
- *Purse-driven Christmas* — *So, what did you get me?* (book) by Anita Renfroe. A light-hearted look at the fun, challenges, and just plain insanity of the most wonderful time of the year. (263, REN)



Deacon's Corner

October Food Drive

John 6:9

"Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?"

How far indeed . . .

\$1,710 and 60 boxes of food were donated by our Bethesda congregation for the October Food Drive. "Buckets for Hunger" matched the funds at 35 cents per dollar. That adds up to \$2,308.50. Feed My People has food resources that can purchase 7 pounds of food per dollar. This was all put to work so that approximately "9 tons" of food was made available to our local food pantries by your generosity. *THANK YOU* so much for showing God's love for your neighbors by helping to feed the local hungry during these overwhelming times.

May God Be Praised!

Rod Ruesch
For the Deacons at Bethesda

Stephen Ministry

"Are You Experiencing The Christmas Blues?"



The joy of Christmas can turn into a time of painful loneliness and emptiness for those who have suffered a loss or who are going through a difficult time. But help is available. Our Stephen Ministers are ready to provide confidential, one-to-one, Christian care. They will listen, care, encourage, pray with and for you, and support you through the holidays and as long as your need persists.

If you or someone you know is hurting, find out more about Stephen Ministry by talking with one of our Stephen Leaders: Paul & JoDea Green at (715) 839-9468, Judy Draper at (715) 831-0189, or Pastor Venberg at the church office, (715) 835-5073.

Our Stephen Ministers will be meeting this month on December 12th

Our Stephen Ministers are there to care!

From the Trustees:

We have recently heard requests for online or electronic giving opportunities. Although we periodically consider this, the Trustee Committee has not found an adequate service that does this for free and is committed to using your offering for ministry, rather than service fees.

If an electronic giving option is best for you, please contact your bank about using their electronic payment options. These tools are often free to use and do not reduce the amount of your donation to cover transaction fees. When you set up your electronic donation, please include your giving number in a memo or description field.

HomeStars

A Homeschool Support Ministry of Bethesda Lutheran Church

What an exciting year! With many new faces coming each time we meet, families continue to connect at our HomeStars activities. In November, we had the opportunity to welcome homeschool families throughout the community to an informative seminar related to homeschooling through high school. December is looking like another encouraging month of activities. Our monthly Tuesday activities on December 13th at Bethesda will again include our family activity in the morning (10:30–11:45) with Christmas crafts, our classes (12:30–3:10) for all ages, and our parent support meeting with a Christmas theme as well. Our monthly devotional with our own Linda Swenson will be on self-control.

Our planned field trips for the month will include a visit to the Eau Claire Children's Museum on December 22nd. Middle school activities are planned for December 9th at Bethesda (details will be at our website). Finally, our after school club continues every other Tuesday afternoon (6th and 20th) with activities related to the Odyssey of the Mind competition.

If you are homeschooling, join HomeStars and take part in all the activities and encouraging fellowship. If you have any questions, contact Linda Swenson at 715-834-0713, or check out our website at www.homestars.me.



Women's Ministries



Christmas Tea
Saturday, Dec. 3rd
10:30 am

Ladies! Join us on Saturday, December 3rd, at 10:30 am in Walker Hall for our annual Christmas Tea! Our theme this year is "Christmas Warmth."

This event will feature a brunch, special music, and our speaker, Ellen Cedarblade.

There is no charge for this event, but we will be receiving an offering for the missionaries that we support. We will also be collecting mittens, hats, gloves, scarves and other winter wear on the day of the Christmas Tea. These will be distributed locally to those in need.

Reservations are needed. Please make your reservations with Mandy Heard at "mandyheardu@gmail.com" or at 715-834-5246.

Childcare will be offered during this event. Please invite a friend! We can't wait to see you there!



Youth Ministries

Haiti Missions Trip 2012



All parents of students currently in 8th grade through 12th grade, plus other interested adults, are invited to a Misison Trip Meeting Sunday, Dec. 4th at noonish (after Eleeo service) in the Youth Room regarding the trip to Haiti next summer. I understand there still are many questions and concerns at this point, and I welcome the chance for you to voice them and have them addressed. Please feel free to contact me directly on my cell or through e-mail if you want some further clarification, or chat with me in person. I'm excited to see what God will do in us and through us as we take a step of faith to learn from and help the hurting in Haiti!



It's time to dive deep into discipleship, 24:7/66 living the word! Students will be laughing, learning, and worshipping with hundreds of others their age. At PlanetWisdom, you will walk away trained and equipped to:

- articulate the evidence for the credibility of Scripture
- understand the basic structure of the Bible
- use three approaches to studying the Bible on your own

Plus, we will experience the thread of redemption woven throughout the Biblical narrative, be inspired by what God is doing around the world to provide scripture in every language, and challenged to read the scripture each day.

Musical worship by Dutton (awesome!), drama by The Skit Guys (hilarious and moving). This event is open to all MS and HS students and friends! We'll leave at 3:30pm Friday and return by 7:00 pm Saturday. The cost is \$60 plus 1 meal. We'll be staying overnight at Oak Hill Church with many other LB Church students! Bring Bible, pen, sleeping bag, pillow, extra clothes and deodorant!

Sunday school teachers

We just wanted to let everyone know that we now have Sunday school teachers for both hours of the middle school class. A big thanks to those volunteering; these classes could not happen without your help. Please continue to hold up our Sunday school teachers and Wednesday night volunteers in your prayers.



Make sure to come on December 7th from 6:45-8 PM for a pirate-themed night. How do pirates relate to the Bible? Come and find out!

The Bridge will be having a Christmas party on Wednesday, December 14th from 6:45-8:00 pm. This will be our last meeting of the month, as we will be taking the following two weeks off. The Bridge will resume meeting normally on January 4th.

Weekly Schedule

High School Youth Group: Sundays 7:30-9:00 pm

The Bridge: Middle School Youth Group: Wednesdays 6:45-8pm

Chad Shiffer
Director Youth Ministries
chad@bethesdalutheran.org

Ryan Rico
Middle School Youth Director
ryan@bethesdalutheran.org

High School Calendar

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| December 2-3 | — Planet Wisdom, Eden Prairie.
Cost \$60.00 |
| Sunday, Dec. 4 | — Haiti Mission Trip Parent Meeting |
| Sunday, Dec. 4 | — One23: "Media Masters" |
| Sunday, Dec. 11 | — One23: "Movie Maniacs" |
| Saturday, Dec. 17 | — Haiti Trip Fundraiser:
"Parents and Presents" |
| Sunday, Dec. 18 | — One23: Progressive Dinner |
| Sunday, Dec. 25 | — Christmas! No One23 |

Children's Ministries



Sunday School Christmas Program and Practice

Please note that the Sunday school Christmas program for both the 9:00 and 10:30/10:45 Sunday school children will take place on Sunday, December 18th, during the 10:30 sanctuary service. Please bring your children to their normal classrooms by 10:30 that morning. They may be picked up from their classrooms after the 10:30 service.

It is also very important that they attend a practice the day before on Saturday, December 17th, at 10:00 in the sanctuary. The practice should last approximately an hour.

Thank you for bringing your children to the practice as this is the only time that we will be practicing in the sanctuary. We look forward to hearing from your children through word and song about the "Gifts of Christmas"! If you have any questions please contact me.

Dawn Rico — dawn@bethesdalutheran.org

Bible Camp Credit!



Yes, it feels like winter, but we're already thinking ahead to next summer at Inspiration Point Bible Camp! Your child can earn up to \$100 off the camp price by memorizing Bible verses. This memory work is done at home and a parent needs to fill out the recording sheet. We will collect these in mid-March and let you know how much credit your child earned. You can print off the verses and recording sheets from the church website — go to Our Ministries, Children, and then Wednesday Night Activities. Camp will be posting dates for next summer's camps in January on their website at www.ipoint.org.

Schedule Notes

Sunday school will not be meeting on December 25th or January 1st. Wednesday night activities (including Children's Choir) will not be meeting on December 21st or 28th.

Merry Christmas to all the families of Children's Ministries! Our prayer for you is that Jesus and His message of joy, peace, light and love would permeate your home and lives. May you lead your children to a better understanding of what a relationship with Christ is all about as you live out your faith each day!

Ministry Membership
PERKS Card

Ministry Perks at Family Christian Stores

Bethesda's Children's Ministry benefits when you use your Ministry Perks card at Family Christian Store. Just pick up a card (if you don't have one already) at the store and designate Bethesda as the receiver. Every time you shop and show your card we accrue a percentage of the sale. Every quarter we receive a check which we turn around and use toward the purchase of curriculum for our Sunday school classes. Thank you for helping us out in this way!

Programs

Sunday School Bethesda offers two hours of Sunday School, during the 9:00 am and 10:30/45 am services.

Wednesday Night Activities

Children's Choir: 6:00–6:45pm

Kids of the Kingdom: (K–3rd Grade) 6:45–8pm

Bible Explorers: (4th–5th Grade) 6:45–8pm

Dawn Rico

Children's Ministries Director
dawn@bethesdalutheran.org

Karen Ratering

Children's Ministries Assistant
k.ratering@sbcglobal.net

www.bethesdalutheran.org
(715) 835-5073

Small Group Opportunities

God Sightings Small Groups

Each week (typically by Friday morning) we are posting discussion questions to our website to help groups discuss the text from the sermon. If you are leading a group that is discussing God Sightings, please contact Pastor Brian at brian@bethesdalutheran.org, so we can include you when we have additional resources, support, and encouragement.

Women's Studies

Solid Rock Café

Monday Nights, 6:30–8:00 pm
Rms. 311 & 313 (Bethesda)

We are currently in a 12 week Bible study by Rebecca Pippert and Ruth Siemens entitled *Evangelism — A Way of Life*. If you would like to learn how communicate the gospel effectively, please join us.

Contact: Jane Loudon, 715-835-6064 or janelouden@sbcglobal.net

Solid Rock Café

Tuesday Nights, 5:15–6:45 pm
Room 313 (Bethesda)

"Decisions — Seeking God's Guidance," is a nine-week study on how to make decisions wisely, confidently, and in harmony with God's will. E-mail or call if you would like to join us and to order a study guide.

Contact: Sue Henneman, 715-552-1378 or suehennemann@att.net; Pat Murphy, 715-839-1219 or patree@cvol.com.

The Rachel Circle

First Tuesday of the Month, 1:00 pm
Fireside Room (Bethesda)

Tuesday, December 6, we will share prayers, Christmas memories and God Sightings with each other. Please bring something good to eat while we sip hot cocoa and coffee. In January, we will start a new interactive bible study based on Life Lessons from Joshua. All are welcome to join us.

Contact: Joan Albricht, 715-830-0221 or Louise Koxlien, 715-552-3873

Moms Study

Wednesday Nights, Room 313

Join us on Wednesdays while most of our children are busy with evening programs — it's a great opportunity to connect with other moms!

Contact: Brittney Malone, 715-878-4366

Lydia Bible Study

Second Thursdays, 1:00 pm
Fireside Room (Bethesda)

We will be meeting for our Christmas luncheon at the designated place, and resuming our Bible Study on April 12, 2012 in the Fireside Room.

Contact: Grace Bailey, 715-214-4344

Rise Up!

Friday Mornings, 6:30–7:45 am
Fireside Room (Bethesda)

We are currently doing a Bible study on the book of Luke, using the Life Change Bible study guide. All women are welcome to join us.

Contact: Jackie Vold, 715-834-5775 or mjvold@gmail.com

Circle of Friends

Friday Mornings, 9:15 am

We will be studying women of the Old Testament. Our study guide will be *Life Principles from the Women of the Bible, Book 1* by Wayne Barber. Child Care will be provided.

Contact: Mandy Heard, at 715-834-5246 or mandyheardu@gmail.com, or Chris Strasburg at 715-835-0721

Adult Studies

Empty Nesters

First and Third Mondays, 7:00–8:00 pm
Fireside Room (Bethesda)

We are meeting on December 5th to start Lesson 8 in our study. On the 19th we will have a potluck dinner. Details at the Dec. 5th meeting.

Contact: Brian & Janet Amundson, 715-835-0521

Common Ground

Wednesdays, 6:00–8:00 pm
Room 204a

We are using the weekly "God Sightings" readings as our basis for discussion. Join us anytime!

Contact: Jay and Andrea Anderson, 715-836-9358

"The Foundations"

6:45–8:00 pm
Room 313

This 12-part video series by Ken Ham examines topics such as the relevance of Genesis, evangelism, the basics of apologetics, etc.

Contact: Nathan Dietsche, 715-835-5073

Wednesday Evenings

7:00–8:00 pm

Fireside Room (Bethesda)

We are meeting every Wednesday evening in the Fireside room at 7:00 pm and are continuing our study of the Gospel of Luke. We would love to have you join us as we continue our study of this book.

Contact: Pastor Venberg, 715-835-5073

Men's Studies

Monday Mornings, 6:30–7:45 am
Fireside Room (Bethesda)

We are currently studying the book of Romans. This is a great time to get plugged into this early morning study to start off your week right!

Contact: Mark Miller, 715-456-8293 or mamaflac@yahoo.com

Tuesday Nights, 5:30–6:30 pm
Room 305 (Bethesda)

Step aside from your fast-paced, "too busy" world, to meet with a small group of men. Learn more from the Bible and how to apply it to a man's daily life. We study different sections of scripture with help, at times, from Max Lucado's books.

Contacts:

Stuart, 715-720-7771, snsbt@charter.net;
David, 715-828-6156, dverhaagh@hotmail.com;
Jeff, 715-563-8489, wilejeff@gmail.com

Band of Brothers

Friday Mornings, 6:30–7:30 am
Room 305 (Bethesda)

We are currently doing a study of the Book of Philippians. Join us as we discover the secret of Paul's joy and experience his triumphant confidence in Christ. Coffee and pastries provided!

Contact: John Lutz, 715-831-0895, johnlutz@ameritech.net



Life Groups

Coming in 2012

Adult Bible Fellowships



Adult Bible Fellowships (ABFs) are groups that meet in order to help us grow in our relationships to God and with each other. ABFs are committed to deepening our relationships, as well as growing new relationships. Bethesda has a number of ABFs available. Although ABF goals are similar, each group has its own identity.

Sundays • 9:00 AM

Branches

Room 204c (Fellowship Hall)

Variety of ages.

Join us as we explore how contemporary life and faith intersect. Coffee & treats guaranteed, lively discussion likely. Dec. 4 we will be focusing on Romans 5:5, the comfort of God's love. On Dec 11 we will hear from one of our elders. On Dec 18 we will have a brunch. Please join us.

Contact: Deb Hubbell at 715-839-0594 or dahshop@yahoo.com

iLess

Fireside Room, Room 102

Ministry for 18+.

iLess is an ABF designed to meet the needs and help in the spiritual growth of young adults in our Bethesda community.

Contact: Pastor Brandon at 715-835-5073 or brandon@bethesdalutheran.org

Sojourners

Room 305

Variety of ages.

Please come and join us as we look into God's word as the apostle Paul refutes the Colossian heresy as we study the book of Colossians.

Contact: Allen or Jeanne Sternke at 715-597-3526 or jeannesternke@yahoo.com

Sundays • 10:30 AM

Kingfolk

Room 204c (Fellowship Hall)

Retired, or nearing retirement.

Dec. 4 — Faye Rose will guide the questions at the end of session II on the story of Esther.

Dec. 11 — Chris Strasburg will answer our questions at the conclusion of the third and final showing of the Story of Esther.

Dec. 18 — A treat almost every Christmas is the singing of Carols led by Roger & Bev Leonard with stories of the origins of the Carols interjected for an enjoyable pre-Christmas session.

Dec. 25th — Christmas! No Kingfolk events this day.

Contact: Augie Wirkus, 715-831-0460

A.C.T.S.

Room 305

Variety of ages

This fall semester we are taking a look at what the Bible says it means to be honest, moral, and a person of conscience, in our personal lives as well as where we work. This will be a Bible study based on the book *Honesty, Morality and Conscience* by Jerry White. One of the central concepts of Christian fellowship is to support and encourage each other. We will hear from business owners, teachers, employees, and managers whose stories of victory and failure can light the path before us. Separate from this study, we will hear testimonies, play trivia, and devote time to praying.

Contact: Steve or Jodi Flaten, 715-832-8312, or Steve Loudon, 715-835-6064 / b4ubuy1217@sbcglobal.net.

Seekers of God

Fireside Room, Room 102

Variety of ages

As a sequel to last spring's study of the life and times of Elijah, we will study the prophet Elisha. This mixed-age group meets at 10:30 am, Sundays in the Fireside Room.

Contact: Beth Smith, 715-875-4553, or Dennis and Diane Peterson, 715-839-8648.

Bethesda World Missions

Praise and Prayer for Bethesda's Family Around the World



Venbergs:

- Praise the Lord for Solomon, a friend of Dan's who has installed a generator at the Welcome Center.
- Praise the Lord that Dan's brother, David, and his daughter, Kayla, are coming to spend Christmas with Dan, Rachel, and the children.
- Pray for wisdom for Dan as he determines when to visit the three Fulbe villages to which he has been invited.
- Pray for wisdom for Dan as he determines where to drill wells with the funds from Bethesda's Advent Conspiracy offering.
- Pray for Phil, Will, and Ian Jacoby as they prepare to leave for Chad on a medical mission. Dan will serve as their guide and translator.

Gronseths:

- Pray that the Coffee House would receive approval from the fire department. Renovation has been halted until this approval is obtained. John and Betsy are unsure as to how to proceed in the system. If they 'go by the book', approval could take several weeks. They have been advised to take a dubious, but much quicker and cheaper route that could allow construction to resume within a week. Things are not clear at the moment. Pray for wisdom and discernment.
- Pray for wisdom in determining an opening date. Early January is being considered, with a grand opening after Chinese New Year in early February. (These dates are dependent on the fire department's speedy permission to proceed with the renovation.)
- Pray for favor with government officials, and that the Coffee House will be a blessing to all involved.
- Pray that the rest of the funds needed for start up would come in.

Contruccis:

- Praise the Lord for the good outcome from Kent's recent trip to Indonesia, where he presented the Inside-Out Safety Program Seminar.
- Pray for Kent as he makes plans for upcoming trips.
- Pray for Nancy, who would like to have renewed energy for the teaching job that God has provided at Azuza Pacific University.

Wiebes:

- Praise the Lord for the helpful re-entry program that Brent and Sandi recently attended at Wycliffe headquarters.
- Pray for continued adjustment to school for Justin, Daniel and Karissa.
- Pray for continued adjustment for the family to the fast pace of life in America.
- Pray that people will buy and read the Bola Bible, and that God will use His Word to bring many into His kingdom.
- Pray for increased monthly support, so that the family can return to Papua New Guinea next July.

Wiles:

- Praise the Lord for the meaningful relational 'fruit' from John and Kathy's trip to Asia.
- Pray for them as they make plans for upcoming trips.

Marriage Connection

We all desire to have Godly marriages and a family that honors Him but we forget that it takes some effort. Listed below are a few books and a DVD series shown here at Bethesda two years ago that are available in our church Library. Focus on the Family and Family Life have excellent websites that offer information on a variety of topics such as commitment, communication, forgiveness, finances, and drifting apart. Check out the Family Life events for couples and watch for more upcoming marriage events in 2012.

Love and Respect by Emerson Eggerichs

Discover the single greatest secret to a successful marriage. Psychological studies affirm it, and the Bible has been saying it for ages. Cracking the communication code between husband and wife involves understanding one thing: that unconditional respect is as powerful for him as unconditional love is for her. It's the secret to marriage that every couple seeks, and yet few couples ever find.

Marriage Makeover by George Kenworthy

Do you find yourself in a troubled marriage? Do you dare to believe God's word and trust in His spirit? Refurbish your relationship into a thriving marriage by applying God's principles. God understands that it's hard, let him save your marriage.

Focus on Marriage DVD

Focus on Marriage features inspirational messages, powerful worship and biblical truths that will change the way you view your relationship. Begin to understand the divine purpose for why God brought you and your spouse together. The result? Deepened commitment, improved communication and a dynamic change in day-to-day interactions. Discover your relationship through the eyes of God when you Focus on Marriage!

Online Resources:

- www.focusonthefamily.com/
- www.familylife.com



Slow down and reconnect at these Family Life marriage events. You may call 1-800-358-6329 for more information.

The Art of Marriage (one-and-a-half day video event)

01/13/12 thru 01/14/12

Edinbrook Church, Brooklyn Park MN

02/10/12 thru 02/11/12

SS Edward & Isidore Church, Green Bay WI

02/10/12 thru 02/11/12

Life Church, Fergus Falls MN

Weekend to Remember (two-and-a half day weekend getaway)

03/02/12 thru 03/04/12

Radisson Paper Valley Hotel, Appleton, WI

03/09/12 thru 03/11/12

Minneapolis Marriott City Center, Minneapolis, MN

03/23/12 thru 03/25/12

DoubleTree Hotel Downtown Rochester, Rochester, MN



Marriage Weekend

March 2-4, at Inspiration Point

www.ipoint.org/adult-family/marriage-weekend

In order to encourage marriages and family, IPoint will be hosting the FamilyLife retreat "The Art of Marriage." Greg and Janet Anderson along with Tony and Cindy Rogness will be facilitating this event. Please encourage couples from your congregation to come away and be strengthened in their relationship! We can host 32 couples, so pass the word quickly.

BETHESDA

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A vision for clarifying who we believe God is leading us to become.



Advent Conspiracy!

Worship Fully. Spend Less.

Give More. Love All.

Yes, Christmas can [still] change the world and YOU can be a part of it!

By spending less on ourselves this Christmas, and participating in the special offering on December 18, we can show the love of Christ to our neighbors in the Chippewa Valley and in Chad Africa. Let's keep Christ in Christmas by focusing less on presents and more on loving those around us.

This year's Advent Conspiracy offering will be used to help APPLE's "Earn While You Learn" program and to dig several new Freshwater Wells in Africa via Dan Venberg. If you are unable to be in church on the 18th, you can bring your offering to the church office or the Advent Conspiracy table.