



Bethesda Outlook

April 2016

It's no secret that anxiety level heightens during a transition. It appears that most faith communities are fairly high-anxiety anyway, but any kind of change appears to exacerbate the feelings of anxiety. On one level, I understand that, since it was put so eloquently to me a few months ago: "The older people in the congregation probably wonder who will be there to have their funerals." And I get that. It probably is comforting to know that someone who knows you will be there for your final service, although memorial services and funerals are really for the living and not for the dead. Anxiety can manifest in different ways, and one of those ways can be a slide into micromanagement on the part of leadership, elected or called. One early sign of micromanagement can be a turn toward a congregation becoming permission-denying rather than permission-giving.

The desire for control is completely understandable, from both anxiety and human points of view. We all want things to go the way we want them to. Emotional systems seek balance, and we think we can achieve balance through control, but that will last only so long. Bill Easum, who is the president of 21st Century Strategies, is also a church consultant and adviser on congregational health and vitality, and he has excellent advice on being a permission-giving congregation.

"Permission-giving churches," Easum writes in *Sacred Cows Make Gourmet Burgers*, "live to say yes instead of no. . . Making disciples, not making decisions, is their passion. . . Just as the human body does not try to manage everything that happens with the human body, neither do permission-giving churches. Mistakes are made, but leaders learn from their mistakes." He goes on to relate from personal experience that, "Every time I talk about permission-giving churches, someone asks, 'But how do you keep bad things from happening?' It's as if some people would rather see a church die without ever making a mistake than they would to see [the church] thrive and make some mistakes along the way. It is almost as if we have designed our efforts around making sure *nothing* happens in order to avoid the worst possible scenario. Trust and love are at the heart of permission-giving churches. Love lets go and permits

the other to stretch her or his wings. Trust operates on mutual respect. Grace abounds in permission-giving churches."

I've mentioned before that everything to do with a congregation can't be done exactly as it's been done in the past. We live in a different world now, and in some matters we need to learn a new language and a new way of doing things. "Permission-giving churches believe that the role of God's people is to minister to people, in the world, every day of the week, by living out their spiritual gifts instead of running the church by sitting on committees and making decisions about what can and cannot be done." (Easum) This is a great reminder that the church exists for the sake of the world and not for its own sake.

We need to look forward to the future and begin to build church structures that will work for the spread of the gospel with the participation of everyone in any given congregation. Easum writes, "Permission-giving churches encourage autonomous, on-the-spot decision making by collaborative individuals and self-organizing teams. Decisions are delegated to the person closest to the ministry. . . Permission-giving churches develop a flat organizational structure that encourages and facilitates ministry instead of coordinating or managing it. Throughout most of the last half of the twentieth century the role of organization has been to help church leaders manage, control, and coordinate what already exists. Organization has become an end in itself. Being appointed, nominated, or elected to serve on committees is the primary form of lay ministry. Lay people see their primary leadership role to be 'running the church'. They spend most of their time and energy focused on what exists within the institutional church. The permission-giving structure is just the opposite. It is a holistic, organic, self-generating, interactive, horizontal, and chaotic network of peers designed to deliver a unique and customized mission in a timely and consistent manner. . . any place, any time by anyone in the organization."

Change is something that we in congregations are often slow to embrace, if we embrace it at all, but it does happen and sometimes it needs to happen in order to maintain vitality or to revitalize the church.

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People may argue from the standpoint that God doesn't change, because God is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow. This is true, that God is the same always. But I will argue that God changes *in order* to remain the same. If God is an organic being, like we are—and if we are made in God's image then it follows that God, too, is an organic being—then God does not remain static. God's people do not need to remain static, either. We also need to learn to change in order to remain the same—because the message of our proclamation doesn't change. We still preach Christ crucified and risen and we still regard ourselves as servants to the world. As one of my seminary professors put it, "It's hard to preach about sheep and

shepherds to Eskimos." The substance doesn't change, but sometimes the form does. Sometimes the form has to. And just imagine what kind of spiritual fruit Bethesda could be bearing and what a dynamic place this church could be if, first, the council was functional, and second if we gave each other the freedom to pursue ministry ideas as God calls us to do. Being a permission-giving congregation could breathe a whole new life into the place we know as Bethesda Lutheran Church.

Peace,
Pastor Anderson

WORKING WARDROBE

The YWCA has three unique clothing banks offering free, business-appropriate attire to homeless or low-income women in need of clothing for interviews or new jobs. Each location is staffed by volunteers. If you would like to volunteer and empower women to make a good impression, click on volunteer and search for Working Wardrobe.

How it works

Working Wardrobe locations in Seattle and Redmond operate on a voucher system. Clients are referred by counselors or case managers to receive free, work-appropriate clothing. Clients can redeem their vouchers at one of those two locations. Everett Working Wardrobe is open Tuesdays and Thursdays, by appointment only. Clients should call in advance to schedule an appointment.

Donations

Individuals and groups in the community donate all of the clothing in the Working Wardrobe. In addition, some retail stores occasionally donate surplus supplies of nylons, cosmetics and other items. The YWCA greatly appreciates all donations. At times, however, we receive more clothing donations than we can use or store. Please call the locations listed above in advance to see if donations are being accepted and what items are currently needed. We accept office-appropriate, reasonably fashionable clothes, accessories (hand bags, scarves, umbrellas) and shoes, and have a specific need for large sizes. Please make sure that all donated clothing is dry-cleaned and in good condition.

CELEBRATE RECOVERY

Celebrate Recovery is a biblical and balanced program that helps us overcome our hurts, hang-ups, and habits. It is based on the actual words of Jesus rather than psychological theory. 25 years ago, Saddleback Church launched Celebrate Recovery with 43 people. It is designed as a program to help those struggling with hurts, habits and hang-ups by showing them the loving power of Jesus Christ through a recovery process. Celebrate Recovery has helped more than 17000 people at Saddleback, attracting over 70% of its members from outside the church. Eighty-five percent of the people who go through the program stay with the church and nearly half serve as church volunteers. Celebrate Recovery is now in over 20,000 churches worldwide! For more information, go to: www.celebraterecovery.com

Transition Team Report

The team is meeting weekly. Our current task is to streamline some questions to begin surveying people to gather the thoughts of the congregation. We ask that you pray for the Transition Team and Bethesda Lutheran Church.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		<p>APRIL BIRTHDAYS</p> <p>4 - Autumn Minnis 16 - Maxine Helms</p> <p>7 - Joy Halladay 17 - Miranda Currier</p> <p>14 - Shaun Anstice 19 - Jaye Lill</p> <p> Bob Leavens 23 - Tom Ruzicka</p>			<p>1 Girl Scouts 5:00pm—8:00pm</p>	<p>2 Thrivent Meeting 8:40am—9:30am</p> <p>Merle Apitz memorial service 10:30-11:30</p>
<p>3 Worship 10:15am Comm. Table prep. 4:00pm—7:00pm</p>	<p>4 Community Table Tutoring 10:00am—5:00pm</p> <p>Ruth/Miriam Circle 2:00pm—4:00pm</p> <p>Bethesda Community Table 8:30am—8:00pm</p> <p>Girl Scout Leaders 6:30pm—9:00pm</p> <p>Facilities Committee @ Bldg. 3 6:45pm</p>	<p>5 Comm. Table clean up 7:00am—12:00pm</p>	<p>6 Al-Anon Mtg. 7:00pm</p>	<p>7 Girl Scouts 6:00pm—8:00pm</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>9</p>
<p>10 Worship 10:15am Comm. Table prep. 4:00pm—7:00pm</p>	<p>11 Community Table Tutoring 10:00am—5:00pm</p> <p>Sue's Bible Study 2:00pm—3:30pm</p> <p>Bethesda Community Table 5:30pm—6:30pm</p>	<p>12 Comm. Table clean up 7:00am—12:00pm</p>	<p>13 Care & Concern Ministry 10:00—Noon</p> <p>Foodie Book Group 6:30pm—8:30pm</p> <p>Al-Anon Mtg. 7:00pm</p>	<p>14 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE</p> <p>Girl Scouts 6:00pm—8:00pm</p>	<p>15 Girl Scouts 5:00pm—8:00pm</p>	<p>16</p>
<p>17 Worship 10:15am Comm. Table prep. 4:00pm—7:00pm</p>	<p>18 Community Table Tutoring 10:00am—5:00pm</p> <p>Bethesda Community Table 5:30pm—6:30pm</p> <p>Council Meeting 7:00pm—9:00pm</p>	<p>19 Comm. Table clean up 7:00am—12:00pm</p> <p>Community Table Team meeting 11:00am—1:00pm</p>	<p>20 Al-Anon Mtg. 7:00pm</p>	<p>21 Girl Scouts 6:00pm—8:00pm</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23 Men's Fellowship 8:00am—10:00am</p>
<p>24 Worship 10:15am Comm. Table prep. 4:00pm—7:00pm</p>	<p>25 Community Table Tutoring 10:00am—5:00pm</p> <p>Sue's Bible Study 2:00pm—3:30pm</p> <p>Bethesda Community Table 5:30pm—6:30pm</p>	<p>26 Comm. Table clean up 7:00am—12:00pm</p>	<p>27 Al-Anon Mtg. 7:00pm</p>	<p>28 Girl Scouts 6:00pm—8:00pm</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30</p>



Thank
You



To Judy Rasmussen for hand making two new communion linens. They're beautiful!

To Florence Carlson and Judith Hamre for making short work of identifying people and cleaning up the list of current voting members. Thanks to Florence and Judith we have a good working list for the next congregational meeting.

To Joy Degraff and her altar guild, who always make sure that communion is prepared and set out, and quickly cleaned up.

To Sue Rasmussen for leading Wednesday evening Lent services this year.

A note of thanks with appreciation to all who help with the Spring clean-up, and with the preparations for our Easter celebration, year after year.

To Judy Rasmussen and the choir who offer their voices to make a "Joyful noise" to the Lord.

To Cliff Pearson and the kitchen crew who cook, prepare and serve the delicious annual Easter breakfast.

To Joy Halladay and others who create the lovely floral cross (no easy task) and beautify the sanctuary with flowers and banners.

*All done in the name of the Risen Christ!
We are so blessed to have one another in this place called Bethesda.
God Bless Us.*

Bethesda Spring Plant Sale and Raffle ~ Saturday, May 7th 9:00am-2:00pm

Bethesda Lutheran Church Plant Sale and Raffle will be held on Saturday, May 7th starting at 9:00am. There will be many vegetable starts as well as lovely flowers, shrubs, and houseplants. One dollar will purchase a hot dog and soda.

Joan Minnis, plant sale coordinator announced, "The proceeds from the plant sale and raffle will go into the general fund".

Lots of volunteers are needed to help. Please let Joan Minnis or Jeannette Antice know how you will be assisting with this fun event.

- Donations of soil, transplanted plants from your garden (Joan Minnis will be happy to store plants at her home)
- Items for the raffle (gloves, garden tools, garden art, and herb gardens) Raffle chair, Becky Smith, will be accepting the donations for the raffle.
- Set up on May 7th begins at 8:00am
- Helpers on the day of the sale to assist customers
- Volunteers to help with the hot dogs and soda
- Clean up crew

Tell your friends and neighbors about the plant sale and raffle, it's a great event and they will be glad they came!
