

## **BETHEL BIBLE CHURCH**

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# **THE BETHEL CONNECTION**

**July 8, 2020**

## **Bethel's Gathering Update**

The COVID 19 pandemic has been exhausting in just about every way. The growing number of deaths, the avalanche of information, the disagreements regarding appropriate guidelines and the general impact on almost everything we do from school to church to shopping, pandemic fatigue is a real thing.

Weariness, or 'losing heart' as Paul calls it in 2Corinthians 4:1, 16, is a real issue for God's children that requires a church wide response of prayerful encouragement. One important component of loving each other through the wearisome and discouraging seasons of life is gathering with other believers and having a service! A time when together, we sing God's songs to him and each other, read his word together, express our dependency in prayer and hear God's voice through the preaching of his word. Corporate worship is a gift of God's grace for his people to be renewed, reenergized and refocused. It is not only worth doing, it is worth protecting.

God has been good to Bethel in this pandemic. Unlike some churches, we have been able to offer opportunity for gathering in 2 services for the past 10 weeks while offering the parking lot option and audio/video recordings posted online. It is not unusual to have 90-100 attenders in the 2 services and parking lot. We are learning as we go regarding how to do these services, how to arrange the seating, how our church family responds and so forth.

Here are some observations and updates regarding how we can continue to have encouraging and God focused worship services as the pandemic shifts around us.

- Thanks to everyone for your prayer and patience. Many of you have said that the mask in, mask out and distancing guidelines are not quite your preference, but you are happy to comply for the greater purpose of gathering to worship and encourage others.
- This week, we filled the sanctuary with seats similar to how it was arranged before the pandemic. If we use every other row for distancing, we can fit 80-90 people in the room. That means in 2 services we are capable of having our church family together while still broadcasting to the parking lot and posting recordings online. It's not the ideal but it is a blessing in these days where caution is wise.
- For the next few Sundays, we will continue with a 915 and 1115 option, asking you to call to reserve seating so we do not overload one or the other service. Also mask in and mask out will continue. Parking lot attenders at 1115 do not need to call ahead.
- Children's programming will be added on Sunday July 19<sup>th</sup>. A nursery will be available in both services and Junior Church will be available at the 915 service. Guidelines will be shared for these two ministries in the coming days, if you have questions please contact Kelly.

Please continue to reach out to each other with prayer and encouragement. Pray for our leadership as we try to improve our meetings and add to them as it is wise, and we are able.

Blessings,

Don

- ❖ **If you have a group that has typically met at the church for non-church related activities, we are asking that you fill out a new Building Use form as we look to be able to open the facility back up in the coming months. Please contact Melody for a new form.**

### What about the offering?

We encourage you to continue giving generously to the Lord's work here at Bethel. Here are some different options available :

- Mail
- Bank bill pay
- Online giving through the website
- Offering box is available at the back of the sanctuary.

### Office Hours:

We will be in the office Monday ~ Wednesday from 10am-3pm, while still working hours from home.

### HAPPENING THIS WEEK:

#### ▪ ZOOM PRAYER MEETING WEDNESDAY AT 7 PM

You can use the link in the newsletter email to join the meeting or contact the church office.

#### SERVICE TIMES AND PROCEDURES WILL REMAIN THE SAME FOR THIS WEEK.

- Sunday, July 12 service at 9:15 am, sign up with Kelly Hines
- Sunday, July 12 service at 11:15 am, sign up with Kelly Hines
- Sunday, July 12 Drive-in service @ 11:15 am
- Sermon audio available on website by noon on Sunday.

**Congrats to Jason & Maggie Hershman! They are expecting a baby girl to arrive November 25!**

### Men's Meetings

We are planning some meetings for men in the next few weeks and invite any Bethel man to join us. The meetings are pointed at encouraging each other in the Lord and strengthening our walk with God.

The meetings would include a time of reading the Bible together, discussing what we read and praying for each other. Pastor Don or an elder would be responsible to select the passages we read and direct the discussion in a beneficial way. There would not be any outside preparation required. We plan to meet for one hour, weekly for 6 weeks on Monday at 830 PM at the church beginning July 13th.

Contact Pastor Don if you plan to attend or if you have questions. We are open to beginning another group if there is sufficient interest which could meet at a different time or place or even on Zoom. Pray for this effort to get men together to encourage them in this way.

~~~~BBC Annual Business Meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 15. We are offering the drive-in option as well during our annual meeting.

~~~~Mask in/mask out if you are coming inside for the meeting.



Kelly Hines will be hosting water activities for kids outside during the Annual Meeting. Be sure to bring a towel and change of clothes!

### PRAYER

Please continue in prayer for those who have had surgeries recently: Mike Schultz, Paulette Krulik, Connie Davis, Erika Bunger

Pray for the unrest that is facing much of our country. Pray that God, in His infinite wisdom, would use each of us as a beacon of His light!

Pray for our Elders, Council and staff as we continue to assess and decide what is best for our church family regarding meeting together. We recognize that without meeting, many lack the encouragement and teaching God provides through our meetings. We also sense the importance of being wise and loving with our response to the pandemic. Many are experiencing 'pandemic fatigue.' Pray that as a church we will seek hard after God in the midst of our weariness and confusion. Pray for wisdom that we will make good decisions that God can bless with fruit for His kingdom.