



The Bethany Bullet is a weekly capsule of worship highlights and big information that your brain may or may not have 'downloaded' from the prior Sunday. The purpose is to bolster you in faith, build you up in the key Biblical themes shared the previous Sunday in worship, to bring to mind the important issues on Bethany's plate and to broaden your awareness of opportunities of service to your Lord, your church, and your community. Tell a friend about **The Bethany Bullet!** (www.bethanylutheran.org)

FROM WORSHIP:

Sermon: "But..."

Text: [Matthew 5:13-16](#)

Growing up as a kid in the '70s meant that most Saturday mornings was spent in front of the TV eating Captain Crunch cereal and watching cartoons. In an effort to infuse a little education into the minds of children up at the crack of dawn ABC Television created a series of cartoon shorts called **Schoolhouse Rock!**

These educational episodes covered a myriad of topics including grammar, science, economics, history, mathematics, and civics. The series' original run lasted from 1973 to 1985. Unlike my childhood, you can watch them today on the internet anytime you wish.

I give thanks to these tidbits of wisdom for teaching me the preamble to the constitution, how a bill is passed in Washington, how three is a magic number, and how we all are victims of gravity.

One video that is forever etched into my long term memory was called "Conjunction Junction." It first aired in 1973 and in word and song asks the question, "Conjunction Junction, what's your function?" It goes on to describe the function of conjunctions such as "and, but and or." Here is a link so you can watch the video: <https://youtu.be/4AyiKgZ9tKg>

The function of a conjunction is to connect phrases, words and clauses to make complex sentences or to make comparisons. This Schoolhouse Rock! Video used a train car analogy to describe how the parts of the sentence are connected by the conjunction.

Why do I say all of this?

Last week Pastor Kevin dropped a big "but" on us. He connected a counter proposal to what the world would say.

He introduced evidence from scripture that overwhelms the hypothesis of the masses.

The cross is a big but! Now, I know that sounds kinda silly, especially to my often immature ears. It's not like I'm asking, "Does this robe make my butt look big?"

It's the counterproposal to what the prince of this world wants you to hear. The cross is a big but, not anatomically, but grammatically.

The cross, the tool of torture and death should have been the end of Jesus at least that is what the Pharisees and religious leaders thought.

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Yeah, but...the the cross is the beginning of life and the tool by which we are freed from sin and set apart for service. In the cross we see the power and the wisdom of God for us!

It is an outlandish position to take that when God is at His weakest and His lowest—that is hanging on a cross—there He is the strongest as He brings to all humanity grace, mercy and forgiveness of all our sins.

In his ministry that led to the cross of Calvary Jesus himself dropped some big “buts.” We see them over and over again in Matthew’s account of the Sermon on the Mount.

For the next few weeks our assigned Gospel readings will focus on Jesus teaching words from this event and we will see some big buts.

Let’s dig into our text (from Sunday), from Matthew, the 5th chapter, ***“You are salt for the earth. But if salt loses its taste, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled on by people. You are light for the world. A city cannot be hidden when it is located on a hill. No one lights a lamp and puts it under a basket. Instead, everyone who lights a lamp puts it on a lamp stand. Then its light shines on everyone in the house. In the same way let your light shine in front of people. Then they will see the good that you do and praise your Father in heaven.”*** (Matthew 5:13-16)

Notice what Jesus doesn’t say. He doesn’t say that we are “to be” salt and light, but that we “are” salt and light. It is an important distinction. He has done the work for us and He simply releases us into the world, to connect with the world.

Jesus answers the question many have, “What is my function in this world?”

It would be very easy to simply stick around and relish in the victory of the cross. Yes, the victory over sin, death and the devil has been won, BUT, Jesus pushes us forward into service.

Salt is useful, not just as a seasoning as we think of it today, but when Jesus walked the earth, the only real way to preserve food, especially meat, was to use salt. We are also useful in this world. We can serve as a preservative in this corrupt and sinful world as we give glory to God and connect others to Jesus. It is our function this side of heaven.

Of course Jesus is also the light of the world. He said so Himself. He came to overcome the darkness of sin, wickedness, ignorance and unbelief. We are called as light in the world and to reflect the light of Christ just as the moon reflects the light of the sun.

It is the nature of light to shine. There is no such thing as light that does not shine. That would be impossible, it would be like cold heat or dry water, but (there is that word again) light can be covered up. This is what Jesus is warning us about.

In the old Sunday school song, “This little light of mine,” we are reminded to let that light shine, let it shine, all the time!

But I know there are times when I want to hide it, extinguish it, or deny it. But it is precisely for those moments that Jesus came. In our weak and lowly moments He is strong and is there to remind us that His grace is sufficient for us and He came to connect us to the source of the light, and to connect us to the one who gave us life now and for eternity.

He desires a deep and abiding connection with us.

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We might try to go our own way at times, BUT, our good and gracious God pursues us with His mercy. And He sends you and me, as salt and light to the world, even when we might argue, yeah, but, “I’m not very good at this”, or “But I don’t know what to say”

As salt and light we are called to interact with others, to help others get connected to the true light. As His light shines through us, it is God our Father who is praised.

Often times, we get uncomfortable talking about what we are to do in our life of faith. We know that Jesus has done it all, our salvation is secure.

BUT this is not an issue of our salvation; it is an issue of our sanctification. Jesus sends us out into the world to bring His light to others.

We must never forget what God has done. But we must never think we had anything to do with our redemption, and that does not mean that we sit on our hands and do nothing.

We are His hands, we are His feet, you have been called to action, called to serve passionately, to give proportionately, and to share intentionally.

That is what it means to live as salt and light in this world, always keeping Christ and the cross in our sight and giving glory to God —BUT—remember that we have been released for service that will connect others to Jesus. It is our function until he returns.

-Pastor Seth Moorman

FROM THE CHIMES:

Looking for more information? Bethany's website contains up-to-date information on all programs and upcoming events! www.bethanylutheran.org



Upcoming Dates to Note:

- **ReFuel begins at 6:45PM in the Sanctuary.**

ReFuel is a gathering of God's people here at Bethany in which we share what God has been doing in our lives, seek the support from one another through prayer requests and reflect upon a portion of the Word before approaching the table of the Lord. ReFuel ends about 7:20PM and the sanctuary remains open for 15-20 minutes for personal prayer and reflection. ReFuel meets on the first & third, the next Refuel is **Wednesday, February 15.**

- **All Together Sunday School Event**

Sunday, February 19 will be our next All Together Sunday School; join us in the Parish Lounge at 9:30AM. This event is for ALL generations of our congregation.

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What is ALL TOGETHER? A few times a year when there is no regular Sunday school, you will see an event for **ALL** members of Bethany to come together for intergenerational Sunday school. Did you know that intergenerational relationships are one key to building lasting faith in students? (See more at: <http://stickyfaith.org/articles/the-church-sticking-together#sthash.jdLFKkHI.dpuf>.) We want to be more intentional in bringing the generations together. Join us on **Sunday, February 19 from 9:30-10:30AM** in the Parish Lounge. ALL ages are welcome and families are encouraged to work together. Remember individuals and families of all ages are welcome!

Questions? Contact DCE Intern Nathan Linehan (nlinehan@bethanylutheran.org)

- **Mission Alaska Update**

Applications and deposits (\$500) for Mission Alaska 2017 are **due Sunday, February 19**. Trip dates are June 24-July 3. Need an application or more information? Contact Pastor Seth Moorman (smoorman@bethanylutheran.org).

- **Church Office Closed**

Monday, February 20 – Presidents' Day holiday



Capital Funding Campaign for our Renaissance Project...Tax Deductible Gifts

"On coming to the house, they saw the child...bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with their gifts." (Matthew 2:11). This event is known as The Epiphany of Our Lord. During this upcoming Epiphany season Bethany will begin a Capital Funding Campaign for our Renaissance.

This Renaissance will bring vibrant renewal to our facilities, a campus wide Renaissance; at the same time we pray it will bring vibrant renewal to each of us spiritually, a personal Renaissance. During our campaign each of us will be challenged to prayerfully consider making sacrificial commitments over and above our regular offerings to "present to our Lord" through the Renaissance.

While our campaign will not begin until 2017, if for tax deduction purposes you are considering a charitable gift at the close of 2016, Bethany has a Renaissance fund established. **Consult your tax or financial adviser regarding the benefits of making gifts from tax deferred accounts**.

Our campus will be undergoing a Renaissance...

but only so we can through one ourselves; a Renaissance that draws us closer to the God to whom we belong and equips us even better to declare His praises and share His mercy. We will pray that NOT a single individual or household at Bethany will be unchanged by this Renaissance. We also know that every individual and household will be an instrument through which the Lord works this Renaissance.

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Our Renaissance Project Leadership Team is as follows:

Coordinator – Teresa Ivins
Co Directors – Gary McDaniel & John Holmquist
Prayer Directors – Pat Gagan, Mary Kay Esswein, & Kahana Smith
Communications Director – Jeremy O’Conner
RSVP Directors – Bob Lange & Josette Utke
Initial Commitment Directors – Ben Koehlinger, Christi Koehlinger, & Ruth Lopez
Lead Gift Directors – Rick Smith & Lori McDonald
Follow Up Director – Joyce Klenner
Children’s Event Directors – Candy Silverman & Tracy Hunter
School Emphasis Directors – Sara Cerulle & Carrie Evans
Friends of Congregation Donors – Thea Hanna & Randa Pearson
Celebration Event Directors – Marcia Esswein, Lucy Smith, & Paul Muench

Renaissance Slideshow:

Click [HERE](#) for a link to the slideshow document that previews our anticipated Renaissance Project.

If you unable to open link, please copy/paste this into your browser to view the link:

<http://www.bethanylutheran.org/files/pdfs/Church/church%20presentation%20January%202016.pdf>

★ **FEBRUARY 2017** ★

Newsletter & Calendar is ready for Download!

The Newsletter is on the website (www.bethanylutheran.org). *There are printed copies of the current newsletter available in the church office and narthex.* Click on Link Options below - If you wish to go directly to the...

1. [Newsletter homepage](#)
2. This month's [FEBRUARY 2017 Chimes Newsletter](#)
3. This month's [FEBRUARY 2017 Calendar](#)
4. **Articles for the MARCH 2017 newsletter are due by Wednesday, February 15th.** Email articles to Aimee Coleman (acoleman@bethanylutheran.org).

Electronic Giving

By giving electronically, the amount you designate will be withdrawn automatically from your checking or savings account on the date(s) you specify. You can ensure that Bethany gets your contribution on a regular basis, even when you're on vacation. To sign up, go to www.bethanylutheran.org, click on "Electronic Giving" on the left side of the page. Then follow the easy prompts.

Stay Connected!

Bethany Lutheran School

Below is the link to the school's newsletter page.

- Click [HERE](#) or copy/paste this into your browser (<http://www.bethanylutheran.org/716624.ihtml>)

Follow Bethany on...

Week of
2/12/17

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NEW Bethany App

Download the new Bethany Lutheran App on your device from the **App Store** or **Google Play** today and keep up-to-date on what is happening at Bethany.

Twitter:

- Search @Revkevbethany on www.Twitter.com
- Or by going to the church website and clicking on the Twitter button on our homepage.
- (or click here: [Twitter link](#))

Facebook:

- Search "Bethany Lutheran Church, Long Beach" on www.Facebook.com
- Or by going to the church website and clicking on the Facebook button on our homepage.
- (or click here: [Facebook link](#))

Did you know you can hear sermons via pod casts and get congregational information via the Bethany website? Click here for [POD CASTS](#) *If unable to open above link, copy/paste this shortcut to your browser:

<http://www.bethanylutheran.org/620970.ihtml>