



# THIS WEEK AT BETHEL:

## Office hours:

Monday-Wednesday, 9am-12pm.

Pastor Dave's office hours:

Monday, 9am-12pm.

**Altar Flowers:** The Altar Flowers are given in memory of Terry Frye by David Look. If you are interested in providing altar flowers for a special occasion, please contact Kathryn Carpenter

**Want to assist in worship?** A "Sign Up" genius link for greeters, readers, prayers, etc. is available in the weekly e-news. Please look for this link where you can sign up to participate in worship when it is convenient for you.

**Winchester Royals Tickets** are available in the Church Office. Pick up your FREE tickets after worship, during office hours, or contact Kristin Siebert for more information.

**WOW:** Worship on Wednesdays continues this week at 6:00 pm at the picnic shelter. Bring a lawn chair and a friend! Worship will be held in Discipleship Hall if weather is not favorable.

**Emmanuel 9 Commemoration, Thursday, June 17 at 7:00 PM:** Two years ago, at our churchwide assembly, the ELCA voted and approved a resolution to set aside June 17th as a Day of Remembrance and Repentance for the Emanuel 9. Acting on this resolution, the Virginia Synod's Tapestry team is hosting its 2nd Annual Zoom worship service on Thursday, June 17th, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. for a time of remembering the Emanuel 9, prayer, speakers, and an Affirmation of Baptism centered in racial justice. The time to take steps toward healing the deep wound of racism in our country is now. Please check the Bethel website for the link as the date gets closer.

**LGBT Pride Month Community Worship Gathering Sunday, July 27<sup>th</sup>, 3:00 pm at Bethel:** All are invited to join us for a special community gathering as we close out Pride Month 2021 with a celebration of the lives and ministry of LGBTQIA+ in all their diversity. Several open and affirming congregations will be joining us for a time of worship and celebration and we invite you to join us and help spread the word to others to come and join us for uplifting music and fellowship.

**Bethel Week at Camp:** Join us for another exciting week at Caroline Furnace Lutheran Camp and Retreat Center! Each year we do our "Bethel Week at Camp" and again this year, after Covid-19, we are excited to offer this again. Pastor Heidi will be serving as the chaplain at camp during our week together. There is scholarship money available, so please talk with Pastor Dave if you are interested in attending and would like some assistance.

**Nursery Workers Needed:** Volunteers over the age of 18 need to be "Safe Gatherings" certified. Please see Kristin Siebert for more information.

*For more news and updates on what is happening at Bethel, checkout our Facebook Page and Website: [www.bethelwinchester.com](http://www.bethelwinchester.com)*

## The Mystery of Growth

In elementary school, when children learn about plants they inevitably plant a small seed in a clear plastic cup and watch it grow. This helps as they learn the parts of plants: leaf, stem, roots. As we get older we get more sophisticated in our ability to explain the details of the plant and the growth we see, but on some level the growth itself remains a mystery. Why do some plants thrive and others fail? Was it the soil? Too much water? Too little? And what of those plants growing in the tiny cracks in between slabs of concrete?

The growth of faith is a similar mystery. We can do the best we can to provide good soil, in the form of teachers and mentors, parents and pastors. Still, the faith seems to take root and grow in some people and not in others. And then there are people raised in the worst conditions who grow to be strong people of faith.

Jesus reminds us that faith is a gift which comes to us from God. We cannot control it in ourselves, and we cannot control it in others. We can plant, we can water, and then we can sleep and wake until the plant grows. In the end it is God who brings the growth and the Holy Spirit who gives us faith. As people of God we are called to be good soil. As people of God we are called to trust that God will do what we cannot. Faith will grow, and the church will flourish, not because of our grand schemes and plans, but because God will have it no other way.

