

Bethany United Methodist Church  
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# THE BETHANY BANNER

April, 2008

## A FUTURE WITH HOPE



Every four years the top legislative body of our denomination, General Conference, convenes in official session to set priorities, approve a budget, pass resolutions, and revise *The Book of Discipline*, our book of church law. General Conference is the only body authorized to speak for the whole church. Its legislative decisions affect in some way all of us as United Methodists. This month General Conference will convene in Fort Worth, Texas, for an intense nine-day session, running from April 23 through May 2. The theme of the conference is “A Future with Hope,” based on the scripture: *For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope* (Jer. 29:11). The logo is a

large green tree in full leaf.

The United Methodist Church today is a global church with approximately 11 ½ million members, 30% of which reside outside the United States. At this General Conference there will be 992 voting delegates, half clergy and half laity, 278 of which will come from outside the United States. The Virginia Conference will be represented by 30 delegates, 15 clergy and 15 lay, who were elected last June at our Annual Conference in Roanoke. For the first time there will be a greater number of females than males in the Virginia delegation. Rev. Tom Berlin, pastor of Floris UMC in Herndon, heads the clergy delegation. Darlene Amon, a member of Monumental UMC in Portsmouth and a former Conference Lay Leader, heads the lay delegation.

One of the tasks of General Conference delegates is to sort through the 1500+ petitions that have been submitted to make changes in our *Book of Discipline* and our *Book of Resolutions*. Petitions are grouped according to topic and farmed out to 14 legislative committees for study and recommendation during the first week of General Conference. Those petitions that survive the legislative committees are brought back to the full body for vote later in the conference. This year, as was the case four years ago, the greatest number of petitions submitted to General Conference has been on the subject of homosexuality--either in favor of retaining our current disciplinary standards or making them more flexible. Currently, our Discipline states that self-avowed, practicing homosexuals are disallowed from serving as clergy in our denomination and that homosexual practice is “incompatible with Christian teaching.”

Other issues coming before this General Conference include a proposal for developing a new United Methodist hymnal to be published in 2013; a proposal to change our United Methodist constitution to make it less American-centered and more global; and a proposal to approve the following four program emphases for the next quadrennium: leadership development, congregational development, global health, and poverty. A different bishop presides at each of the plenary sessions of General Conference, without possessing a vote.

For the curious, it will be possible to follow the proceedings of General Conference live on the Internet. Go to [www.gc2008.umc.org](http://www.gc2008.umc.org) and follow the instructions there.



## RUSSIAN YOUTH INITIATIVE:

The Mission Committee once again will host a group of Russian Youth. Six Youths and an Interpreter will be here June 23, 2008 for 3 weeks. The youth will range in age from 13-15 years old. This program provides BUMC to have a direct mission involvement with these children from Russia.

The children's stay is highlighted by a variety of activities. These activities will include mission work, cultural, educational, and fun activities. Activities will include visits to Virginia Beach, Busch Gardens, Water Country USA, VIMS, Jefferson Lab, and Virginia Air and Space Museum. Other activities will include bowling, watching movies, touring Gloucester High School, visiting the Boys and Girls Club, boating and picnicking at Beaverdam Park, shopping, making their own pizzas at Pizza Hut, and fishing on the York River.

BUMC HOST FAMILIES are urgently needed to lodge and to transport youth to BUMC for these various activities. We need to identify host families by the end of April. The host families need to provide the youth with his/her own bed. The young people can share a bedroom. If you are interested in being a host family, or have any questions, please contact Mike Andersen: H: 642-2582; C: 815-5367. We look forward to sharing God's love with these children.

## Notes of Appreciation

The appropriate words are hard to find to truly express our sincere appreciation for the abundance of prayers, cards, visits and food received during Mary's recovery from her broken hip and surgery on Christmas Day. It has been the warmth and love of our Bethany friends and family that have given us the strength to endure the last two months. We would like to extend a special thank you to Pastor Steve and Susan for their numerous visits and their passion and support for this church. We are so blessed to be a part of such a loving congregation and we pray that each member is blessed with a healthy 2008.

Our heartfelt gratefulness, Mary and Jack Poland

The above-penned words deserve a second from me. Truly the prayers, love and support shown to me and my family at the passing of my sister, Jackie, were instrumental in getting me through a most stressful time in my life. Since last November, with the loss of my brother and facing the future without my sister, without the understanding and support of Bethany members and friends I don't know how I could have had the strength to face this. "Jesus Loves Me This I Know" for he sent many special friends to hold me up on this journey.

- With our love and prayers, Frances and Alton Brown

I just wanted to extend my sincere gratitude to everyone for all the calls, thoughts, prayers, foods, and goodies that were sent after my surgery. It was truly thoughtful and kind of you all. Little things always mean the most - especially when they are unexpected. Love and prayers to all.

-Suzanne Sterling

Lana and I would like to express our sincere thanks to the wonderful Bethany Family for the many cards and other expressions of sympathy we have received since the loss of my sister. We truly appreciate the care and concern shown to us. Thank you again for being there in our time of need.

- Roger and Lana Loring

My heartfelt thanks to all of you for the kindness you showed my family and me during my hospitalization last week. Your prayers and outreach gave us all much needed strength. There's nothing like the love of the Bethany family! Blessings to all of you! -Laura Glaze

I want to give my heartfelt thanks to all who called, sent cards, and came to visit while I was recovering from my recent heart attack. A special thanks to Pastor Steve and Susan for their visits and prayers. Kenneth and I feel so glad we have all of you as our church family

-Sincerely, Irene Hogge

My sincere thanks and appreciation for all of the cards, calls and prayers during my recent hospital stay. The love and support of my church family has meant so much to me. God Bless each of you. -Dean Beach

I appreciate the prayers, visits, and cards received during my recent surgery. I would like to give a special thanks to Ms. Sondra for being there with me during my accident and sticking by me afterwards to two hospitals. Also thank you to Pastor Steve and Susan.

- Matt Sage

## Introducing United Methodist Family Services

Carol Johnson and Vicki Williams are Bethany's representatives on the UMFAMILY Services Committee. That committee is part of the Outreach Ministries. The mission of UMFS according to the website, [www.umfs.org](http://www.umfs.org), "is to provide a broad spectrum of human services to enable children and families to realize their hopes for the future."



Carol Johnson and Vicki Williams will attend an informational luncheon in Richmond on Friday, April 4th. We will learn about what our church is doing to support children and families in Virginia. The luncheon begins at 11:45 a.m. and ends around 1:15 - 1:30 p.m. in the Library at Charterhouse School. There is an optional tour afterwards. We invite anyone interested to join us. Vicki Williams, 642-4548.

## Potato Bar for Missions

The Lacey Martin Fellowship Class will sponsor a potato bar on the 13<sup>th</sup> of April following the 11 o'clock worship service. Proceeds will go toward local missions.



Come and savor the flavor of a delicious potato topped with just about anything you can imagine. If you've never been to one of our potato bars now is your opportunity.

## Our Mission

- To know the love of God personally through Jesus Christ,
- To share the love of God through fellowship as a congregation,
- To spread the love of God throughout our community and the world.



## Eight Young People to Be Confirmed

After completing nine weeks of study and preparation with the pastor, eight young people will be confirmed in the Christian faith on Sunday, April 13, at the 11 o'clock service. The youth are Josh Hasty, David Campbell, Dennisa Booth, Cheyenne Taylor, Mike Sage, Matt Sage, Brandi Westerfield, and Trip Vaughan. Each of these young people are active in our church youth group, under the direction of Sondra Colbert.

## Pastor to Lead Second Confirmation Class

Because there are so many interested youth, Pastor Steve is leading a second nine-week confirmation class for interested 6<sup>th</sup> graders, beginning on April 13, with Confirmation scheduled for June 22. Six sixth graders are planning to participate. Classes will be held on Sundays following the 11 o'clock service.

## Bethany Assists Fire-Ravaged Church

On Sunday, March 30, Bethany received a special offering to assist Coles Point United Methodist Church in Hague, Virginia. Fire broke out in the furnace room of Coles Point Church on the morning of January 3, and several Sunday School rooms and the ceiling of the sanctuary suffered serious damage. Until repairs can be made, worship services are being held in the Coles Point social hall. The church is located on the north end of the Rappahannock District. Donations are being made to the Coles Point Restoration Fund. Twenty-six years ago in January fire devastated the sanctuary of Bethany Church, and long-term members remember the kindness of others shown to Bethany at that time.

## Mississippi Mission Team to Present Program

Mike Andersen and the other six members of Bethany's fall mission team to Gulfport, Mississippi, will present an informative audiovisual program of their trip on Sunday, April 13, following a potato bar lunch. The mission team spent a week in November helping to repair a trailer damaged during Hurricane Katrina. The meal will be held in the Warren Belvin Fellowship Hall at 12:15 p.m.; donations are encouraged! We will adjourn to the sanctuary for the slide show on our big screen. All interested persons are invited to attend.

## Member of Mattaponi Tribe to Speak



Angela L. Daniel, a.k.a. "Silver Star", a member of the Mattaponi Tribe, will present the message at both services on Sunday, April 27, for our Native American Ministries Sunday. She is a Ph.D. candidate at William and Mary in the field of anthropology, and she has been nominated for a Pulitzer Prize for the book she co-authored: *The True Story of Pocahontas*. She volunteers

with the Healing Eagle Clinic and serves on the Foundation for American Heritage Voices, the cultural school on the Mattaponi Reservation. Also, that Sunday we will consecrate donations given for the Healing Eagle Clinic and receive a special offering for Native American Ministries in our conference.

## The Book Corner

### To Live Is Christ by [Beth Moore](#)

Beth Moore travels on a spiritual odyssey through the life of one of Christianity's most fervent journeymen, the apostle Paul, tracing his story from childhood to martyrdom.

### Couples Who Pray: The Most Intimate Act Between a Man and a Woman by [Squire Rushnell](#)

In this entertaining, highly readable book, couples learn that a fabulous marriage can be the outcome of learning to pray together, a minimum of five minutes a day, causing a 20 to 30% increase in romance, conversation and happiness.

### Blue Heart Blessed by [Susan Meissner](#)

In this sweet contemporary romance, Meissner explores one woman's response to rejection and hurt. This compelling story is about the magnificence of unconditional love and God's impeccable timing in bringing it about.

### Seventh Day (A. D. Chronicles, Book 7)

#### by [Bodie & Brock Thoene](#)

As Yeshua continues his ministry, and is challenged by the religious leaders, his beloved friend Elazar (Lazarus), in Bethany, falls ill. When Yeshua finally arrives, is it too late or is it?

## Church and Society

From the UMC Book of Discipline: 160 I. The Natural World

*"All Creation is the Lord's and we are responsible for the ways in which we use and abuse it." Going Green?!*

In May, Bethany's committee on Church and Society is joining forces with the Children's ministry to bring awareness to ways we can become more environmentally responsible.

On **Sat. May 17<sup>th</sup>**, the children of Bethany will participate in the Paper Parade as a part of VIMS Marine Science Day in Gloucester Point ([www.vims.edu/events](http://www.vims.edu/events)).

While the children are making their costumes for the parade in the Fellowship Hall on **Sat. May 3<sup>rd</sup>**, the rest of the membership is invited to hear **Lorna Lindsey, Gloucester's new Clean Community Coordinator**. Lorna will talk to us about recycling, reusing and reducing waste. Then she will answer questions.



Please mark your calendar! **10AM May 3, 2008 and 10AM, May 17, 2008 at Gloucester Point**

## Bible Study Groups

Women's Bible Study meets Mondays from 7-8:30 p.m. We are a group of women seeking to know God's word for our lives. We invite you to join us for study and fellowship. We meet in the Faith Classroom

Men's evening Bible Study meets on Monday evenings from 7-8:30 p.m. in the Journey Classroom. For more information call David Chapin at 642-6822

Come and savor the flavor of a delicious potato topped with just about anything you can imagine. If you've never been to one of our potato bars now is your opportunity.

# Children and Youth

**Saturday, April 19<sup>th</sup>**



**Today's Special**

Bethany Youth will volunteer and serve to help local organizations by becoming wait staff for the day! The Abingdon Women's Club will sponsor an

exciting luncheon at the Abingdon Ruritan Club with all proceeds will go to Louis B. Puller Society and Riverside Walter Reed Hospice.

This exciting event will not only include a delicious lunch, but you will also have the opportunity to enjoy a Fashion Show and wonderful music! Please come out and let the Youth serve you and help the women's club in making a difference in our community! Ticket are \$20.00 for this event.

Please Contact Sondra Colbert @ (804)642-0467 or Carol Schultz @ 694-0250 or Jean Haywood @ 642-2333 for tickets or further information. Hope to see you there!

~ ~ ~

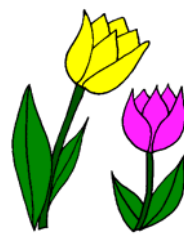
I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the following wonderful people

...the Polk Family for providing and serving a delicious homemade meal for the youth! It was greatly appreciated and blessed many stomachs and hearts! You are such a blessing to all who know you!

...John Hasty, Ray Doggett, and Abigail Woodhouse for being so thoughtful and generous. You truly showed Christ like behavior in helping one of our youth! May God bless you all!

...David Chapin, Michael Booth, and Patricia Kidd for not only giving of their weekend to help chaperone 19 teenagers, but also for being Angels not only to me, but to all our youth during a very challenging weekend at Blackstone. You are all God sent! May God bestow a special blessing on you for your kindness.

Helping Hands will receive \$7,500 Grant from the Washington Redskins! Youth from Bethany along with several Churches in Gloucester are being recognized for their hard work in their community during a week long mission camp this past summer! The youth will travel to Asburn, VA on April 5th to the Redskin's practice field. The youth will take part in the ceremony with other precipitants from different organizations. The grant will cover materials and other resource for the upcoming 2008 Helping Hands Mission Camp!



**Spring Fling  
And  
Beautify Bethany Day!**

**April 19, 2008**

**9:30 AM-**

**11:30AM**

Attention all preschoolers through fifth graders!!  
Wear your overalls, gardening gloves  
and grab your rake— you'll be sprucing up  
the grounds of Bethany!

After the pruning and planting we'll go inside for a  
game or two, spring time craft and light snack.

**Moms and Dads: We'd love your help too,  
so please bring your tools and gloves!**

**Remember: Think green and beauty will be seen!**

For more information contact  
Kris Kent at 642-6438 or  
[kentcrew@cox.net](mailto:kentcrew@cox.net)

**COWABUNGA!!  
VBS is approaching!**

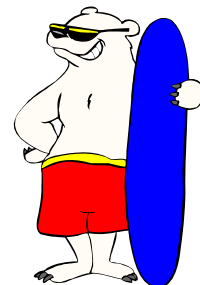
The sun is getting stronger and  
the sand is getting hotter.....YIKES! It's almost time for

**THE VBS BEACH PARTY!!  
(VBS week is 7/14-7/18)**

Are you a parent, retiree, grandparent, lover of children,  
musician, quilter, crafter, baker  
or candle stick maker?

Do you generally seek activities to  
uplift your spirit?

Well, look no further!!  
Grab your goggles and head to the



**VBS Planning Meeting  
Thursday, April 24th at 7:00 pm.**

See ya then Dudes and Duettes!!  
~Kris Kent~  
VBS Director  
[642-6438/kentcrew@cox.net](mailto:642-6438/kentcrew@cox.net)

**ATTENTION BIBLE BUDDIES !!**

We'll be meeting at 5:30 pm on Sunday, April 6th and  
April 27th. In honor of the Red Sox Home Opener on April  
8th, all Buddies are requested to wear their sneakers, and  
bring your baseball gear (along with your Bible and a  
friend!) on the 6th! See you then!

~Miss Jane and Miss Kris~

## Pastor's Column: "One to One Evangelism"



The next day John was standing with two of his disciples and as he watched Jesus walk by he exclaimed, "Look, here is the Lamb of God!" (*John 1:35*). One of the two who heard John speak...was Andrew...He found his brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah." (*John 1:40-41*). Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found him about whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote..." (*John 1:45*).

The most effective form of evangelism, of bringing people to faith in Jesus, is the witness of one convinced person who shares his or her faith with another. The most effective evangelism is not a revival service; it is not an evangelistic sermon; it is not an altar call; it is not an evangelistic tract; it is not an advertisement in the newspaper or an ad on the radio or TV. The most effective evangelism is one convinced believer sharing his or her faith with another person. That was the case in Jesus' day, and that is the case today, as well.

Ask Sondra Colbert how she grew the youth group at Bethany, and she'll tell you how one young person told her friend, and that friend told another friend, and this friend told another friend, and that friend told another friend. And before you knew it there were 25-30 people at UMYF meetings on Sunday night! The Christian faith spreads most readily and naturally from friend to friend.

Now some of us are a bit hesitant about sharing our faith with other people. We're afraid of treading on their turf. We're afraid of being politically incorrect. We're afraid of offending others. We don't need to be. Dr. Amy-Jill Levine, professor of New Testament at Vanderbilt Divinity School and an orthodox Jew, by the way, was asked if a Christian could be true to the New Testament mandate to make disciples. She asked rhetorically, "Should the Christian evangelize?" "Of course," she answered. A Christian can say to another person (even a Jew): "I'd really like to share my faith in Jesus with you." But if the person responds, "That's nice, but I'm really not interested," the Christian should be willing to accept "no" graciously.

If you're not quite comfortable talking to your new acquaintances explicitly about your faith in Jesus, may I challenge you to consider asking this question sometime during your conversation: "Do you have a church home?" That question is inoffensive; it allows the other person to reveal something about their practice of faith, if they choose; and it allows you, depending on their answer, to follow up with a warm invitation to visit Bethany UMC.

May I ask you: Has anyone in your circle of acquaintances ever come to faith in Jesus through your witness? Have you ever pointed anyone in the direction of Christ? If not, would you consider becoming a John, an Andrew, or a Philip for the sake of the gospel of Jesus Christ?

A servant of Christ,  
Pastor Steve

### Sermon Topics for April

**April 6** "Eternally Devoted" based upon Psalm 116  
**April 13** "Not Just Any Old Life" based upon John 10:1-10  
**April 20** "Keeper of the Garden" based upon Genesis 2:4-15  
**April 27** Native American Ministries Sunday: Angela Daniel "Silver Star" speaking

### A Message from Clara Biswas

Dear partners of God's ministry in Cambodia,

Warm Easter greetings to you all! On behalf of the communities touched by my ministry, I send you love and thanks for your continued moral, spiritual, and financial support. Without your assistance, our work would not be possible in this part of the world.

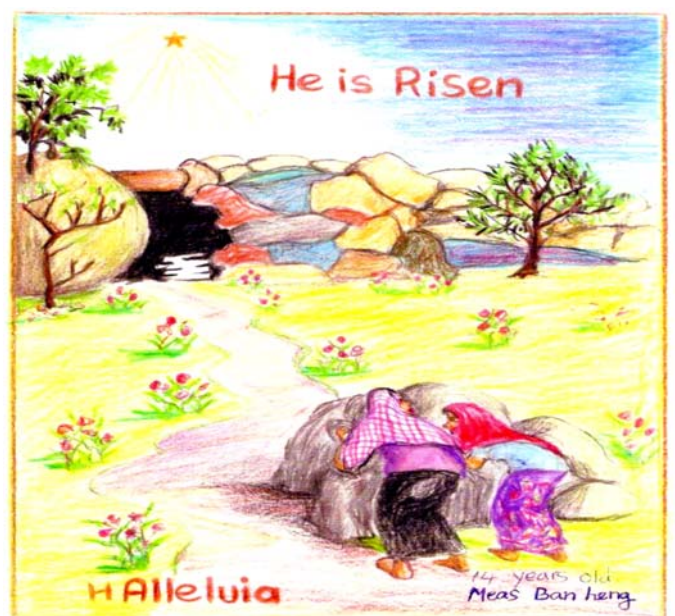
Currently we are celebrating Easter in different orphanages and "street children" communities: Bassac, Kien Kleang, New Phnom Penh, and the Dumpsite. At each celebration the children will sing songs in English and Khmer, perform an Easter drama, and receive new school uniforms. It is a special time for everyone involved as we celebrate and remember Christ's sacrifice for us.

I have attached a drawing done by a child from the Bassac community. I hope you all enjoy their expressions of joy and gratitude and know that their lives are touched by your loving support.

As a missionary, I am always grateful to know that you, God's people around the world, are supporting me in my ministry to build his kingdom in Cambodia. My prayers are with you for your well-being this Easter season.

Love in Christ,  
Clara Mridula Biswas

Note: Clara's brother Benedict unexpectedly died in Bangladesh of a heart attack on February 15. Clara was able to return to Bangladesh for the funeral service. Expressions of sympathy may be sent to Clara at P.O. Box 2493, Phnom Penh, Cambodia.



## National Day of Prayer Observance



Bethany UMC will observe the National Day of Prayer on Thursday, May 1, at 7:30 p.m., in the church sanctuary. Pastor Steve will lead us, as we remember the needs of our church, nation, and world. All persons are invited to attend and join in uniting their voices in prayer.

## The United Methodist Church—40 Years Old This Month!

Although there have been Methodists of some stripe around for well over 200 years, The United Methodist Church as an entity is a rather recent creation. It was formed on April 23, 1968, by the merger of The Methodist Church and The Evangelical United Brethren Church. The Evangelical United Brethren Church in 1968 was an 800,000 member denomination whose roots lay in late-18<sup>th</sup> century revivalism among the German-speaking Americans. Their doctrines were quite similar to those of the Methodists. Several Bethany members (including Pastor Steve) were raised in The Evangelical United Brethren Church. When we say “United Methodist” rather than “Methodist” we acknowledge the contribution of the EUB’s to the life of our denomination!

## Bethany Welcomes New Members

Tom Beaudoin and Sarah Boyle were received into the membership of Bethany UMC on Sunday, February 24. Both of them joined by reaffirmation of faith. Tom is a boatswain’s mate with the U.S. Coast Guard, and Sarah is a third grade teacher at Clara Byrd Baker Elementary School in Williamsburg and is working on her master’s degree. Sarah has a daughter, Cailey (6), who is in kindergarten at Abington Elementary School. Tom and Sarah will be united in marriage on June 21 at Bethany. Their residence is 2450 Jacqueline Dr., Hayes (Yorkview Apts.), and they can be reached at 642-9243. Welcome!

## Loreen Paiva, New Lay Speaker

Lorene Paiva attended the Lay Speaking Academy at Blackstone on Feb. 22-24 and completed the ten-hour basic course. She is qualified to fulfill leadership roles at Bethany as a “Local Church Lay Speaker”. Loreen joins others at Bethany who have completed the Lay Speaking program, basic or advanced: Paul Kendall, Marsha Miller, Roy Bauschatz, Dolores Hart, Tina Loase, Loretta Leigh, and Lisa Knowlton. Congratulations, Loreen!



## Worker Bees Prepare for Bazaar

Although Bethany’s Bazaar is seven months away, our ladies (and some of our men) are busy making crafts, cross-stitch items, quilts, etc., that will be for sale at our big November event. It’s not too late to get in on the fun! Please call Janet Chapin (642-6822) or Jeannie Harrell (642-2498) and tell them that you’d like to help! Or come out any Tuesday morning at 10 a.m. when a group of ladies meet in the Lacy Martin classroom to work on crafts!

## Help Us Find These “Lost” Souls

The church office has been unable to contact the following members of Bethany. If you can provide either a current phone number, street address, mailing address, or e-mail address for any of the people listed below, please pass it on to the church office (642-2110). Thank you!!!

Christopher and Charity Bird  
Pascal and Sandra Bourdin  
Elizabeth White Breuer  
Evelyn Smith Cecil  
John and Jennifer Christman  
Brian Fields  
Kimberly Grizzard  
Honor Hughes  
Bruce and Debbie Jenkins  
George and Sarah Joyner  
Jefferson Lanier  
Michael Lewis  
Matt and Jessica Maples  
Ruben Goddard Money  
Brian Paulino  
Dalton Phillips  
Nancy Sanders  
Abigail Smith  
Barbara Stainback  
Jeri Stelson  
Beth Walker  
Martha Susan Bowen  
John and Betty Burns  
Raymond Jordan  
George Albert Parks  
Leo Perk  
Billy Smith  
Dirk Stevens  
Edgar C. West, Jr.



## Work Day Set for April 19

Bethany’s United Methodist Men and UMYF will join forces on Saturday morning, April 19, to spruce up our churchyard for springtime. Come out at 8 a.m. or whenever you can get there. Your help is greatly appreciated!

## Festival of God’s Creation on April 20

Bethany will celebrate a Festival of God’s Creation at both services on Sunday, April 20. We will lift up the world that God has created and our responsibility as Christians to take care of God’s world. Appropriate music will be played and sung.

