



Leading people to
Experience God's love
Know Jesus Christ
Grow in His image



At Bethany United Methodist Church, our purpose is to lead people to **experience God's love, know Jesus Christ, and grow in His image.** Our purpose supports the mission of the United Methodist Church: to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. As a community of Christ, we seek to express the love and grace of God through the work of our ministries to those in our community and those beyond our walls.

This newsletter describes how we in the Bethany community work to fulfill this purpose. It illustrates the work of the church through seven distinct ministry groups: **Inviting and Hospitality, Adult Ministries, Worship and Music, Children and Nursery, Student Ministry, Care, and Missions and Outreach.**

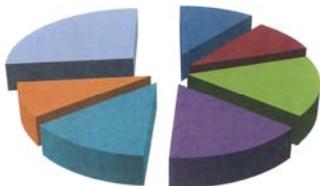
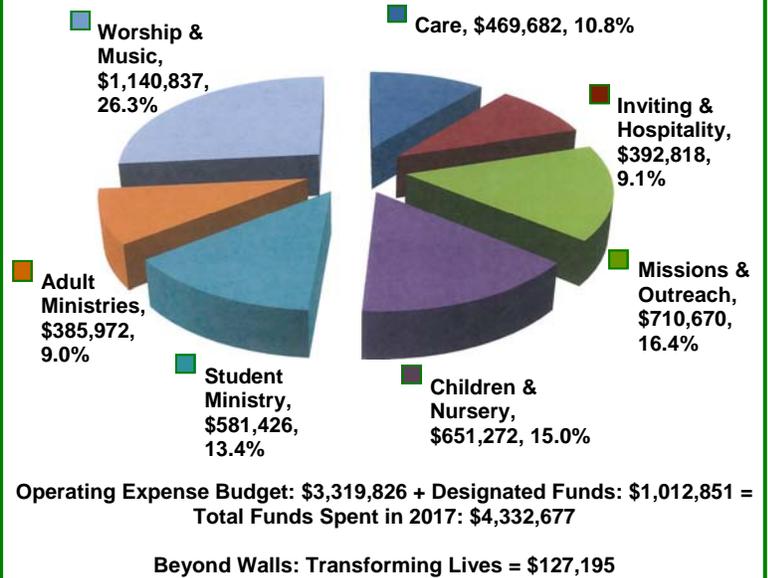
Your support of Bethany enables this church to serve our Northwest Austin community and beyond — reaching across to the region, the nation, and the world.

We hope this brochure will inform and encourage you to prayerfully consider your part in supporting Bethany's vital ministries.

God is generously lavishing this congregation with grace and love and we feel compelled to respond with gratitude. In doing so, we create willing learners of Jesus.

We hope you will join us through generously offering your prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness.

Where Our Money Goes



Worship and Music: \$1,140,837 26.3%

Worship and Music Ministries work together to provide dynamic, intergenerational worship opportunities including two traditional, one contemporary, and a contemplative **Taizé** service on Sundays, a casual Saturday evening worship, a Wednesday night midweek service, and quarterly services of **Healing Connections**. Special seasonal services are offered during Advent, Christmas, Lent, Holy Week, and Easter.



Chancel Choir and Orchestra with Pepper Choplin

Music Ministry helps lead worship for all of our services, providing ways to glorify God and presenting God's Word as a "sermon in song." Eighteen various musical groups include children, youth and adult choirs, vocal ensembles, praise teams, bell and chime choirs, instrumental groups, and an intergenerational orchestra. In addition, these musicians share their talents in concerts, cantatas, choir tours and community events. A special highlight is our annual "**Meet the Composer**" weekend. The Bethany Fine Arts Academy offers professional instruction in music and other fine arts for students of all ages.

Weekly services are supported by teams of staff and volunteers (Worship Planning, Worship Support, and Sound/Media) who plan, help lead worship, and work behind the scenes in leading people to experience God's love, know Jesus Christ, and grow in His image.

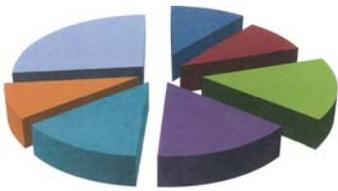


Messengers of Grace

Our youth play a vital role, not only in worship at Bethany, but all over the United States, as evidenced by our PURE SOUND choir. This joyous group of middle and high school youth tours the nation each summer sharing God's love through music.



PureSOUND



Missions and Outreach: \$710,670 16.4%

Through Bethany's Missional approach, thousands of lives are touched by followers of Jesus sharing his love locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. As Jesus fed the hungry, gave water to the thirsty, visited the sick and imprisoned, taught and healed, so he commands us to go and do likewise, and in so doing, we do it for Christ.

Our members and other volunteers serve faithfully as the hands and feet of Christ within Bethany and far, far beyond our walls. From our preschoolers to our students to adults of all ages, Bethany is on a mission – on many missions, in fact. Literally, this congregation pours out its blood, sweat and tears in service beyond our walls: giving of ourselves through donating blood to **We are Blood**, earning sweat equity through **construction projects** in the heat of summer, and shedding tears of joy and sorrow with brothers and sisters struggling in **homelessness and incarceration** as we offer Christ in situations that seem hopeless.



Mission By The Sea



Food Support Missions

This year saw a celebratory mission trip to Matete as this region in Africa is ahead of schedule in its **Area Development Program**, thanks in part to Bethany's dedicated partnership with this people in Kenya to establish a self-sustaining community with education, health, economic and agricultural services. Our international work continues with **Mobility Worldwide** (PETs),

Our breadth and scope of mission work are extensive. Disaster rescue, relief and recovery have been vital this difficult year of hurricane damage in our state. **The Austin Disaster Relief Network and UM Committee on Relief** have been in great need of volunteers and donations to care for several Texas communities devastated by storm damage.

Nothing But Nets, and **Shalom Home** in El Salvador. Close to home, Bethany members are fully engaged in loving our nearby neighbors. **Backpack ministries** help local students succeed in school with appropriate nutrition and school supplies. **Samaritan Health** offers accessible medical care to keep our neighbors healthy. Our **food ministries** for the hungry reach out in so many ways: **Mobile Loaves and Fishes**, **Feed My People**, **30-Hour Famine**, **Bags of Grace**, **Meals on Wheels**, **Reveal Resource Center**, and **Hill Country Community Ministries** among them. Directly on our campus we offer food support for Benevolence clients and **Fresh Food for All**, where we are able to provide items for complete meals that even include fruits and vegetables.



Easter Basket Assembly

For those among us who are nimble of finger, we have a variety of needlecraft ministries. **Knit-A-Square**, **Prayer Shawls**, **Baby Blankets** and **Easter Butterflies** practice their creative craft for charity purposes.

Our **Sunday School classes** have all made commitments to mission work and set a beautiful example of living out Christ's call in our lives to go and do as disciples! Whether you are young or old, part of a large family or flying solo, experienced or a novice, Bethany has a place for you to support, connect and serve in any number of Mission opportunities.



Inviting Ministries: \$392,818 9.1%

Inviting all to Experience God's love through Welcoming, Outreach, Fellowship and Spiritual Engagement

Loving hospitality is to welcome all as Christ. Our **shuttle drivers**, **greeters** and **Welcome Desk volunteers** seek to create a warm and inviting first impression for all who worship with us. Inviting Ministries has almost 200 people who serve in various ways, in hopes our visitors and members will experience God's love through others.



Our Parking Lot Ministry serves all year — but is festive on Christmas Eve

Connection Celebration happens six times a year and is a time where our continuing visitors can meet pastors and ministry staff, learn more about becoming a member, and take membership vows if they are ready. About 90 individuals join every year through this process. Our **First Steps to Connect** class helps new members get started with information on Methodist History and Spiritual Gifts.

Our **Alpha Course** continues to be a wonderful spiritual engagement and fellowship opportunity. This 12-week course, offered every spring and fall, is for anyone who wants to get beyond religion and find a deeper relationship with God that is life changing.



For 20 years and counting, Alpha is a place of fellowship and faith formation

To promote fellowship and hospitality, we offer **Wednesday Night Meals** (served just before Midweek Evening Worship). In the **Bethany Café on Sunday mornings** you'll find breakfast tacos, doughnuts and UMCOR's Fair Trade Coffee for sale.

To further spiritual growth, community and relationships, we host our **Annual Church-Wide Retreat** at the HEB Camp in Leakey in the spring.



Spiritual renewal and fun at the All Church Retreat

Inviting Ministries plans to start several new fellowship, hospitality, evangelism, and connection programs soon. Stay tuned! We are always looking for friendly faces to share love and grace. Let us know if you want to be that face!



Children and Nursery: \$651,272 15.0%

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Family Mission Day

In our **"Discover" Sunday School** program, we seek to help children experience God's love and learn scripture in unique ways. Lessons engage varied learning styles and enable children to have fun while growing in their relationship with God and others. Bethany's summer **Vacation Bible School** gives children from Bethany and the surrounding community a chance to come to know Jesus in a fun and exciting way.



Preschool Sunday School

The **Acolyte** program enables 5th grade students to serve in worship while learning about liturgical seasons, sacraments, and other important aspects of Christian worship. Each year we gift 3rd graders with a **Bible** and equip them to use it, with the goal of encouraging lifelong Bible study.

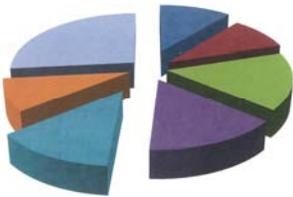
Family Faith Formation workshops, activities, and worship services equip parents to engage in spiritual formation with their children outside the walls of the church. Families and children of all ages can serve others together by participating in **Families Serving Together** projects, which enable parents and kids to serve through local, regional and international projects. The **5th Grade Sexuality seminar** helps children to understand their bodies and facilitates conversation between parents and children on this important topic.

Live Nativity, which allows children and families to participate in bringing the Christmas story to life for hundreds of people, is an annual tradition for many Bethany families, friends and neighbors.



Created by God Sexuality Seminar

The **Bethany nursery** supports other ministries by allowing parents time to participate in worship and other volunteer programs. Our trained and background-checked youth and adult staff provide quality care for children and start them off early with a strong Biblical foundation. **Moms on Mission** provides an opportunity for moms to gather to share, grow and support one another in their efforts to be the women, wives and mothers God created them to be.



Student Ministry: \$581,426 13.4%

In Bethany's Student Ministries, we witness many students come into a relationship with Jesus Christ, become transformed from the inside out, and grow in Christ's image. Student Ministries thanks you for your continued support. Here lives are transformed through our ministry and your generous donations.

Confirmation

Each year Bethany opens Confirmation classes to our middle school students and any high school students who have not yet completed confirmation. The classes offer the opportunity for our youth to learn more about God, more about the United Methodist Church and more about themselves. Upon completion, the students have the opportunity to take their faith on their own...to accept the call God places on their lives and live it out in the world. This year we had 17 confirm their faith in God and join Bethany UMC. Our Faith Friends and Confirmation Coordinators help cultivate those relationships and we are grateful for their leadership.



Confirmation Class at Highland Lakes Camp

Youth Group/MYF

(Methodist Youth Fellowship)

Youth gather each Sunday evening for worship, fellowship, small group and games. Our youth have had the opportunity to Love one another, Grow in their faith and Reach others for Christ. We know this time each week is invaluable. Our youth have stepped into many leadership roles through MYF such as praise band, messages at worship, welcoming students and leading games. We appreciate your donations that allow MYF to continue to be a vibrant part of Bethany.

Mission Trips

During the summer months, we offered five Mission Trips for students and adults in which over 150 people participated. We went to the coast for Mission By The Sea, the mountains with Mountain T.O.P., Central America for El Salvador and Shalom Home



Mission By The Sea

mission, as well as Atlanta with Pure Sound and Corpus Christi and San Antonio with the Mystery Trip. Lives are changed when we are serving others! Without your support, Youth Missions would not be possible. We are blessed by you!

Midweek Programming (Homework/Hangout/ Bible Study)

On Wednesday evenings each week during the school year, we have certified teachers here to help students with homework, we hangout and have fun with games and snacks and we have a Bible Study for both Middle School and High School students to allow them to grow deeper in their faith. What a gift to have so many volunteers who help to make this happen! Thank you!!



Food Pantry Corpus Christi



Care: \$469,682 10.8%

Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.
1 Thessalonians 5:11

Bethany's Care Ministries encourage those in despair and build up members of our church and the greater Austin community. We love to offer support and provide safe places for those who are hurting.

ReWYRE: Rebuilding When Your Relationship Ends is a workshop that helps men and women find healing after the end of a significant love relationship. Each fall and spring we gather for dinner, fellowship, prayer, and learning. ReWYRE participants get to know each other and share our common struggles experienced through divorce, separation, and even death. We find new friendships, growth, and the joy of God's presence in an otherwise very difficult and lonely time.

One of Bethany's most vibrant care ministries is to the elderly and the sick. We consider it a joy and honor to **visit people** in the hospital, pray before surgeries and medical procedures, and form **Stephen Ministry** relationships with the chronically ill. We also enjoy being a presence at assisted living centers throughout the community, bringing the church to people who are unable to be on our campus. Our team visits those in rehabilitation centers, on hospice, and under nursing care. We also lead worship services and Bible studies for them. Finally, we serve **home communion** to our brothers and sisters who cannot attend a worship service here at Bethany. Bethany's care and prayer ministries allow us to be a part of God's healing work as we share in loving connections with Him and one another.



Care Visitation Bible Study



Stephen Ministry Training

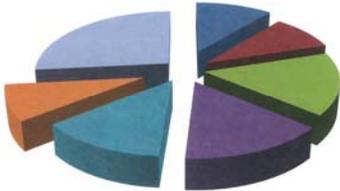
In a church as large as Bethany, it's impossible to escape the experience of grief as loved ones die. We are honored to host **funerals, memorial services, and receptions** for those who are grieving. **Grief Care** then supports those who give themselves permission to grieve and be cared for by their Bethany family. We walk with each other along our journey of loss toward healing, sharing our sorrow and allowing God's presence to restore our joy. Finally, our church's **Healing Touch** ministry offers a year of follow up for all those who lose a loved one to death.

Bethany's ministry to adults with **special needs** offers hope and light in an often troubled world. Every year, we host four large special needs events. Our adults with special needs and their caregivers love to dance and spend time together. Bethany also offers a Sunday school class and hand bell choir for adults with special needs called "All God's People." This class plays games, offers a weekly check-in, and learns a lesson on that weekend's sermon.



Special Needs Ministry

With amazing volunteers, training, and networking, we extend our care far beyond the walls of our church. Thank you, Bethany, for your generous support of God's work!



Adult Ministries: \$385,972 9.0%

Helping people grow spiritually by connecting all who worship at Bethany with a place to grow in community and a place to serve in ministry. We call this **Worship + 2: Worship, Discipleship, and Service**.



FFF Sunday School Class Lunch

Adult Sunday School classes provide community and learning opportunities to help you grow as a disciple of Jesus. We have classes for a variety of ages and life stages at both 9:30 and 11:00 am on Sunday mornings.

Grow Group participants meet weekly at various times and places to discuss how God is working in their lives and how they can grow in love for God and people. These transformational small

groups help people experience the power of the Holy Spirit, transforming their lives in deep ways.

SpiritWalk is comprised of short-term classes offered each spring and fall, which are designed to deepen people in the foundations of the Christian faith. The classes are arranged by the Truth (Beliefs and Doctrine), the Life (Relationship with God), the Way (Living out faith in all of life), and Christian Life Resources (marriage, finances, parenting, etc.).

Women's Groups and Men's Groups meet at a variety of times and locations, inside and outside of Bethany. These groups can help you grow in God's image (as a man or woman of God), while also forming bonds with your brothers and sisters in Christ.

The Bridge Young Adult Ministry is a network of small groups for young adults



Confidential Prayer Team

(ages 21-35ish) throughout the Austin area. These small groups connect young adults to a community that can grow towards God together and learn to live out their faith as they go through life. Events, retreats and serving opportunities also give young adults a chance to share life with one another here at Bethany.

Bethany Primetimers live life to the fullest as they enjoy day trips, plays, luncheons, concerts, games, Sunday School classes and Bible studies. All adults 55 and older may join in these activities. The **Annual Adult Spiritual Retreat**, a three day retreat held every April, encourages participants to build new relationships, reconnect to nature and grow closer to God. Designed to enrich lives with the experience of Christ's love, days are filled with worship, singing, sharing of delicious meals, fellowship, learning and fun.



PrimeTimers

Jump Start to Serve is the new one hour Sunday morning workshop offered at 9:30 and 11:00 am in the Connection Corner of the Worship Center. Explore the ways God has equipped you to serve with joy and passion, while you also discover how your experience, resources, skills, gifts and passions equip you for just the right role. Find serving opportunities in this class, on the Bethany website or chat with a Connection Consultant on Sunday morning in the Connection Corner.