

August 25, 2015

Beloved in Christ! Grace and peace to each of you. I pray you are well as you read not only this greeting but as you continue to live your daily lives in Christ Jesus.

I have said it before and I still have the feeling that New Year's should be celebrated on September 1st. It always seems as we return from summer vacations we are ready to start new things. And indeed our children start new school years – new teachers, new classmates and, maybe, even new schools. We also begin our new church year by celebrating Home Coming on September 13th! A whole new church season with all its twists, turns, and opportunities is about to start with many wonderful surprises ahead of us!

One of the things I love about small church life is its intimacy. We know each other and yet we continually surprise each other. I hear voices of hope, voices that celebrate God's blessings to Bethany. I hear voices that express a sincere desire to make Bethany's kitchen compliant with Code regulations. Voices that want a kitchen that volunteers are eager to work in. Voices that recognize the ministry of food and gathering around a table to break bread together.

Our *Be Our Guest Suppers* have continued serving the hungry throughout this summer. We have a regular gathering of 40-50 hungry people who attend. As I visit around the tables, I am often greeted with, "Thank You Pastor for having these dinners. It is my only meal today." This is a wonderful mission to our community. But it would not be possible without so many of you working diligently and faithfully.

Because we are a small congregation, many volunteers are needed to accomplish the mission of the church. I am encouraged because people from Bethany are re-structuring their lives so that they can volunteer at the Regional Food Bank on September 5th. People are already thinking about our Christmas/Holiday Fair and how they can help. We are making plans for expanding our children's Sunday School! Stay tuned for this one! It is still a work in progress!

I want to say thank you to all who will willingly wade in and give of your time and talents to help our congregation live into its mission. If there ever comes a time when you feel your work goes unrecognized, please remember you are a blessing. I pray that in your work you will receive blessings in return. And never fear: the One you are ultimately doing this for certainly takes full notice.

After seven years, I can honestly say - I am thankful to be your Pastor.

Pastor Peggy