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A Letter From The Senior Pastor BY REV. BOB KEMP-BAIRD

Dear Friends of the Drive In Church,

There is something about **AUGUST** that feels like a season of transition. All around us, students are heading back to classrooms, teachers and school staff are settling into another year, and families are adjusting once again to alarm clocks, school schedules, homework, practices, and all the routines that come with a new school year. Even if there isn't a student in your household anymore, you can feel the change in rhythm around our community. 

Transition is part of the rhythm of life—and it is certainly part of the rhythm of the church. Believe it or not, preparations are already underway for **Drive Through Bethlehem!** Before we know it, **December** will be here and we will once again welcome hundreds of our neighbors onto our church grounds to experience the story of Christ's birth. There is plenty to do between now and then, and our next **Drive Through Bethlehem Workday is Saturday, August 29, beginning at 8:00 a.m.** Whether you are a Bethlehem veteran or have never helped before, there is a place for you. 

Another familiar rhythm will soon return. Our **Wednesday Evening Potluck and Bible Study begins again September 23.** Dinner is at 6:00 p.m., followed by Bible study at 7:00 p.m. For those unable to attend in person, the study will continue to be available online via Zoom.  

And while we look forward to what is ahead, I also want to *celebrate* something that is happening right now. Through your generosity, our church continues to support the **Port Orange Food Pantry**, helping provide food to our neighbors and friends who find themselves in need. Just last month they served **647** people and added **41** new households.

But our partnership has grown in a particularly meaningful way through funds provided by our **Circle of Generosity Capital Campaign.** Each month, these grant funds allow the food pantry to provide a **"special item"** in addition to the regular food distributed to families. Sometimes that has been a much-needed paper product; other months it has been a special food item - something useful, welcome, and perhaps otherwise difficult to fit into a household budget.

I love being able to share stories like this because they remind us that generosity doesn't end when we give an offering or contribute to a campaign. Our gifts keep moving. They become food on someone's table. They become something a family needs. They become one less expense for someone trying to stretch a paycheck. They become a tangible reminder to our neighbors that someone cares.

Through welcome, study and generosity, we are practicing what it means to be the church. I am grateful to share this ministry with you. 

Rev. Bob

You are Enough.

BY REV. MELISSA FRANTZ

Over these past two weeks, my family and I have been carried in ways that have humbled us. Your prayers, your messages, your meals, your quiet acts of kindness, and the steady presence of this church have met us at every turn. We have felt your care in the small moments and the large ones, and I want to offer my heartfelt gratitude. You have shown us what it means to be held by a community that chooses compassion as its first language.

I also want to speak directly to those in our congregation who have lost someone to suicide. I know many of you carry that kind of grief – sometimes openly, sometimes silently. It is a kind of loss that does not move in a straight line. It brings questions that rarely resolve cleanly, memories that arrive without warning, and layers of sorrow that can feel difficult to name. I want you to know that I see the courage it takes to live with that kind of ache. I honor the strength it requires to keep showing up in your life, in your relationships, and in your faith. Your stories matter here. Your loved ones matter here. And you matter here.

For anyone who may be struggling right now – whether with depression, anxiety, despair, or the weight of circumstances that feel too heavy to carry alone – please hear this clearly: you are not alone. You are not a burden. You are not expected to navigate the hardest parts of life in isolation. If you need someone to talk to, I am here. If you need help finding professional support, I will walk with you through that process. If you need a safe place to speak honestly about what you're feeling, you will be met with care.

There are resources available to support you, including licensed counselors, crisis services, and confidential helplines. Reaching out is an act of strength. And if you ever find yourself in a moment of crisis or feel unsafe, please reach out to someone you trust or call 988, the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, for immediate support. Help is available at any hour, and you deserve to receive it.

Thank you again for the extraordinary love you have shown my family. Thank you for being a community that holds one another through joy, sorrow, uncertainty, and hope. I am grateful for you. I am praying for you. And my door is open. *Rev. Melissa*

Come join us for Choir Rehearsal on Tuesday, August 25th @ 7pm.

There's always room for more voices and we'd love to welcome you. Please stop by and say hello to our Choir Directors Paul & Karen to find out what's involved in joining the choir.



Trunk or Treat
Saturday, October 24th
5-6:30pm

Sign up on the app or scan the QR Code to volunteer!



IMPORTANT DATES

- 8/29 - Drive Through Bethlehem Workday, 8am
- 9/2 - Bridge of Hope @ Hope place 8:30-11:30 am
- 9/3 - Psalm 91 Women's prayer group 10 AM chapel
- 9/5 - Birthday Lunch Bunch 11:30 am Outback on ISB
- 9/7 - Labor Day - Office Closed
- 9/9 - Food Packing for Kids 9am AB
- 9/10 - Women's Bible study 10 am Chapel
- 9/12 - Craft Show for Recovery 10:00 - 3:00 FH
- 9/22 - Men's Prayer Breakfast 7:30 am Mikes Galley
- 9/23 - Potluck Dinner (6pm) & Bible Study (7pm) FH & Zoom

Are you a planner? Volunteer sign-ups are available on our church app to serve as a character during **Drive Through Bethlehem** happening **December 10-13, 6-8pm.**

Search "Drive In Church" in your app store



Download the app

