
BETHEL CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH
Lynden, Washington



1951-2026
Celebrating 75 Years

Dear Bethel Family,

Please take time to reflect on this anniversary booklet. It was put together to remind us of the great faithfulness of God, which we have tangibly experienced over the last 75 years. In these pages, we see that Bethel CRC is a work of Jesus. He is the reason we meet each week. He has called us and redeemed us through His perfect life, substitutionary death, and resurrection. Through His work, we see the lavished love of God and the value of every member as a beloved part of His church. Not only has Jesus called Bethel together and loved His church, but He also keeps His people. We cannot begin to grasp how much has changed in the world over the last 75 years. Yet as we gather every week, we have a visible testimony of God's sustaining grace that draws and keeps us.

As we mark this 75th anniversary, may we look back with gratitude and look forward with confidence, trusting the One who has been faithful and will remain faithful. May God be glorified in these pages.

In Christ,
Pastor Bryan Dick





Elders: Karl Bosman, Doug Van Andel, Jeff De Jong, Pastor Bryan Dick, Tim Holleman, Ed Ball, John Hiemstra

Deacons:
Rebecca Steiger, Matt Brewster,
Kevin Te Velde, Cheri Rutgers, David Vos



Administrative Team: Rebecca Steiger, Keith Korthuis, Pastor Bryan, Mark De Jong, Jill Sipma, John Hiemstra, Ed Ball

Bethel Congregation,

Sherri and I rejoice with you as you celebrate this 75th milestone anniversary. We were with you as you celebrated your 40th anniversary. We were able to join you when celebrating your 50th anniversary. Now we rejoice as you celebrate 75 years as a church. We are truly reminded of God's blessing and faithfulness leading through these many years.

As we reflect back on those 10 years we were with you, many memories come to mind. We came as a family of 6. Our kids were in grade school and high school. They enjoyed the broad education they received at LC as well as the sports and musical programs in which they were involved and of course attending tournament games in Seattle. They give thanks for friendships made. They still speak of the times they were employed in the berry fields during the summer months. Now they are involved in primary and tertiary education, law and the trade show industry. Each one is involved in their local church in various capacities. We also remember Sherri's implementation and leadership in the NILD program for many years.

We remember many highlights - making friendships, many cards of appreciation, encouragement and thanks, adult sunday school classes attended and taught, morning meetings at Dutch Mothers, men's retreats, the opportunity to serve for 6 years on Dordt's board, the many baptisms (76), professions of faith (53), as well as many weddings and funerals. We were always amazed at Eileen's special and colorful banners. We enjoyed fellowship with the CRC pastors at the monthly ministerial luncheons.

I recall changes implemented such as getting more involved in technology, initiating a "special services" sub-committee to plan special worship services, the updating and remodeling of the church sanctuary, having picnics on the lawn after the beginning of a new church year, and implementing the parish nurse program.

We faced challenges - how to articulate "vision" for the church and then implement that vision, do we buy the house west of the church, do we really need a youth director, how do we incorporate and welcome new members into our fellowship. In addition there were discussions on Women in Office, dealing with AIDs, LGBTQ questions, baptizing adopted children, funerals of family members who were non-believers, ministering to transients asking for help, addictions of various kinds. Through it all we were so often reminded that our God is so dependable for there is nothing too big or great for Him to handle and He was always with us and leading us.

We pray that as you celebrate you can look ahead with confidence. Having faced joys and trials being reminded that our faithful God has shown Himself more powerful than we are and He will use you to proclaim His word and to build His kingdom. We commend you to His care knowing He will always be with you.

Blessings to you. In Christ's love,
Jerry and Sherri Van Groningen

Dear Brothers and Sisters of Bethel Lynden CRC.

It was my privilege to serve as your pastor, with Willie, as my faithful partner in ministry, for some 10 years at the turn of the century. Though we heard little about it, not long before we arrived you had celebrated your fiftieth anniversary. Clearly you were blessed with the gift of hospitality. The house was beautifully remodeled and the cupboards were well stocked. A few weeks after our arrival the youth group and their leaders brought us another cool gift, a truckload of snow from which they fashioned our complete family on the front yard. We continued to be graced with such concern and blessings for the ten years we ministered in Lynden.

Frequently we pay too little attention to such dates as our 25th or 50th anniversary as a church but we should not. Now as you are privileged to remember and celebrate your 75th year, it is good to look back on the Lord's gracious and loving kindness to you and your faithful service to Him as a part of Christ's body here in Lynden. Now is the time for you to sit and contemplate what God has done among you; how three quarters of a century ago the decision was made to begin a new church that was called Bethel, house of God. And it is indeed fitting that tonight we honor and thank our Lord first.

By God's grace our denomination made it a priority to prepare well those pastors who would serve among you. He was also the one who, by His Spirit, raised up people to serve Him as they served one another. How many elders and deacons faithfully gave leadership in this new church over the years? How many men and women, moved by the Spirit, served as Sunday School, teachers, Gems and Cadet leaders; catechism teachers, committee members all a part of God's plan in the past three generations to use Bethel church to raise up children, youth, adults and encourage the elderly?

Over the past years you were never a self-serving church but as a part of the body of Christ you partnered with the other CRC's in Lynden and together with God's people you played an important role to support and encourage Lynden Christian school; to aid in the development of a place for those who, because of age or other issuers, needed assistance in a kind way. You rejoiced with the whole community when fair day came in the fall and in a host of other ways you let your light shine bringing glory to God.

Your service to the Lord did not end at the city limits of Lynden. By way of various organizations such as CRWRC and World Missions you reached out to others whose homes were damaged by floods or storms. You reached out to faraway places like Bolivia to assist those who went to share the good news of Jesus by word and by deed.

There is of course much more that could be said and I trust you will take time during this special 75th anniversary celebration to do so as you remember what God has done over the years through Bethel Church to build a part of His Kingdom. May He be praised for the past and be glorified as you continue to serve Him joyfully in the years to come.

In Christ,
Pastor John Van Schepen

Dear Bethel Church,

It was an absolute privilege to be your pastor from 2015 to 2021. Our years were filled with warm memories and enjoying fruit from faithful Gospel-centered ministry. Though you called a young pastor, my hope is that you grew to see the beauty of Jesus more.

I remember our journey from McBain, MI to Lynden. Marlo and Carol DeYoung along with Randy and Joan Knutzen showed up to help load and drive our vehicles. We had a grey mini van, which became known as "silver bullet." A moving truck carried our blue Cobalt, which was named "blue turtle." The De Youngs and Knutzens would radio to each other "silver bullet to blue turtle..."

Throughout the years we were blessed by the faith of so many of you. Whether it was through game nights with the Korthuises or Vandenbergs, or watching submarine movies with the Hollemans, or visiting many of you in your homes, at your work places, at coffee shops, or in the nursing homes, we were blessed by your love for Jesus and for us. We enjoyed celebrating Thanksgiving each year with Yuanita and Jana. There were sweet times with our small group that was at the Vos's or De Jongs. We are grateful for "Kee" and "Ham" (what our young kids called Keith and Pam), who invested in our kids. We went trick or treating and did 4th of July every year. We often met up at their cabin as well. They did sleep overs and outings with them.

We have many more memories of others blessing our children, such as the Vandenbergs, Meenderinks, Steigers, TeVeldes, Hiemstras, Van Andels, and Yuanita. Another blessing was joint services with Amor Viviente. Often we would go with Marv Apol and the youth on all sorts of adventures such as biking on the islands, hiking in the mountains, or going to parties filled with great authentic food. We never had a tamale until we were at a graduation party with Amor Viviente. I also enjoyed popping in the youth group that Yuanita led. We played Nerf wars and Mafia. Mandy started Mom's Time Out. It was blessing to serve with people in the church and to get to minister to the community.

Covid was a tough time. It was hard to see people cut off from each other. I would make visits to the elderly outside their window while talking on the phone. It was hard to have services canceled for a time and then to do church with only half the people at first. I remember writing letters to the congregation everyday, doing mid week hymn sing videos, and calling each one of you up on the phone. So there were sweet moments during the hardship. One funny moment was during the middle of an outdoor worship service my chickens started clucking very loudly due to egg laying difficulties.

We enjoyed being part of worship with Laura TeVelde and Elaine Vos and Amy Vandenberg. I enjoyed playing trumpet with Les Mulder and Eric Steiger while Marilyn Kooiman played the organ.

As time went on the Holy Spirit kept putting church planting on our hearts. We made the difficult decision to say goodbye to a church we loved. The farewell night at the park is something we will remember as well. You made it all about Jesus, which was very satisfying.

Currently, we are planting Sojourn Church in Sterling Heights, MI, which is the fourth largest city in Michigan with not a single Reformed church. Many people are confused about who Jesus is here. So we are doing the work of a missionary to reach the lost, unchurched, dechurched, and underchurched. We are in a difficult area, which is why we chose this place. It will take several more years of tilling the hard soil before we can be fully established. There are no dutch people with one third of the population being Chaldean. Almost everyone speaks a second language. By God's grace we have reached people, and there are a number of conversion stories. Heaven will be "fuller" because of God working through the ministry of Sojourn. Thank you that some of you have given support and continue to do so. We are still in need of support.

Church planting involves the entire family. Mandy is the nursery coordinator, which keeps her and the kids very busy. Mandy and the kids set up communion each week for three years. Mandy also helps with singing. On any given Sunday you will see one of the Van Noorts running around serving faithfully. It is exhausting and burnout is a real thing. Mandy is working part-time for an electrical company. Isabelle is a junior in high school, working, and driving. Aiden just started 8th grade and is full of energy. Carolyn is no longer in our care as her behaviors were too dangerous for the other kids. Please pray as this continues to be a source of grief.

We are grateful for the years we had with you. I have seen how God has grown my preaching and pastoring through our years there. I grew from being a pastor who preached about Christ to preaching Christ as the center of every message showing how we can find joy in him as the treasure of all treasures. We appreciate the loving support shown by so many of you.

To God be the glory, great things he has done!

Steve, Mandy, Isabelle, and Aiden

Bethel CRC: A Timeline of God's Faithfulness

1951

October 26, 1951: A gathering of 64 families plus five individuals met to organize a fourth CRC congregation for the town of Lynden, comprising mainly members of First and Second CRC and counseled by Rev. Steigenga and then Rev. Raymond Haan.



1952

February 1952: Land was purchased for the future church site; a parsonage home was purchased also, at 1015 Liberty St.

July 25 1952: **Reverend Theodore Verhulst** begins his ministry; his son wrote for the 50th anniversary some reflections including worshiping initially in the Christian High auditorium, the construction underway for the new building (which included a Pastor's study with particular encouragement from Mrs. Verhulst to include in the new church building); he also recalled the kindness of the congregation as Rev. Verhulst became ill with cancer in 1954 and passed away.

December 8, 1952: Church construction project moves forward, funded by generous gifts of the two parent congregations, in addition to loans from the church help fund and individual loans.

1953

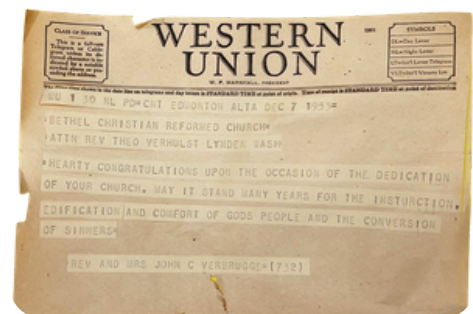


April 18, 1953 : Cornerstone was laid



December 8, 1953: the Dedication Service was held one year after the congregational meeting had been held to vote on moving forward with the building

Congratulatory telegram from a Rev. Verbrugge



1954 The Bethel Hour: An hour-long radio broadcast where the pastor or an elder would give a message, and the choir or smaller group would provide music.

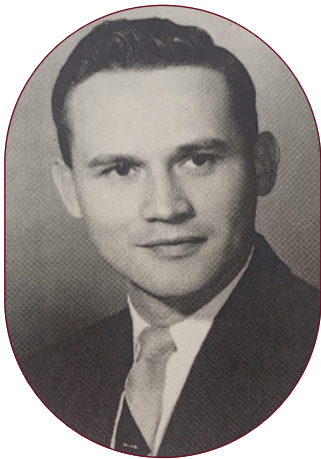
1954

1955

1955 **Reverend Alfred Hannink** begins his ministry: his service at Bethel included the enthusiasm of the young bustling church in a new building, celebrating many baptisms and weddings as well as heartaches of illness within the congregation. His own illness prompted his retirement from Bethel.



Cadets program is started as an organization in 1952, and Calvinettes program 1958, giving opportunities for the young boys and girls. (Bethel's Calvinettes group started in 1967).



1958

1958 **Reverend Andrew Zylstra** begins his ministry: his memories include being very active with preaching twice on Sunday, pastoral calls and family visits, Catechism, Men's Society, Young People's, meetings with consistory, elders, Sunday School teachers, a weekly radio broadcast "Bethel Hour" and time also to enjoy fishing.

1964

The pipe organ was installed and dedicated September 3, 1964.

1965

1965 **Reverend Farquar F. J. MacLeod** begins his ministry: his reflections include changing to 8:00pm Sunday evening service which served as a dating excuse outing for many local teens; broadcasting one weekly service on radio with Sid Baron's help.



1968

1968 **Reverend John Hofman Jr** begins his ministry: his memories share about many Friday night weddings, decisions about juice or wine for communion, and enjoying the blessing of a beautiful new parsonage.



Ministries associated with the Lynden Layman's League: Hope Office, Rest Home visitation, One to One Prison ministry, Concerned Christian Citizens, and Wiser Lake Chapel ministry.

1971 Mountain View congregation is organized as a daughter church out of Bethel.

1971

1973

1973 **Reverend Robert Vermeer** begins his ministry; he served for 8 years and returned after retirement to join the congregation with his wife Ann as members of Bethel.



Social & Discipleship Groups: Men's Society, Naomi Circle, Bethel Circle, Lydia Circle, Young Couples Club, Choir, Cadets, Calvinettes, Older Couples Club, Young People's Society, and Cottage Groups

1978

1978 Sonlight congregation is organized as a daughter church out of Bethel

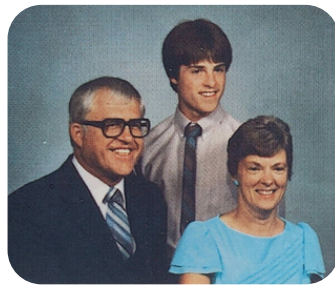


1980

Basement remodel early 1980s (this photo from 2005 shows how well that carpet was holding up!)

1983

1983 **Reverend Ken Havert** begins his ministry: his reflections show great fondness for the Bethel community, the Christian school, and the beauty and abundance of the Lynden area.



1984

Coffee Break Ministry begins with Joan Knutzen leading. Carol De Jong, Sherry Vos, and Bev Nunnikhoven were leaders in the years to follow.

1980s: Many hours of Church League Softball and even a few championship teams in 1985 and 1989. Bethel also had outreach efforts including Highland Home worship time, and Prayer Warriors began.



1991

1991 **Reverend Gerard "Jerry" Van Groningen** begins his ministry: he recalls the joy of the Bethel welcome in the midst of an ice storm; some daring ministry attempts and successes such as an outreach aerobics class for women, a youth choir, additional staff of a youth director, re-writing procedures for electing elders and deacons, purchasing the Visser house property, starting the Christian Education Fund, KOA summer services, lunch on the lawn, and sanctuary remodel discussions.



Bethel Women's Retreats: Weekends of refreshment and discipleship were enjoyed at many different locations, including Baron Suites Quality Inn, Jacob's Landing in Birch Bay, many years at Cedar Springs, The Firs, and much later at the James Circle Clubhouse.

1992



1992-1993 Sanctuary update



1993



Groups: BASIC, FORCAST, Koinonia, Bethel Boomers, BEAT (aerobic time), Open Door

Bethel Quilting: Started as an official group by Thelma Terpstra in the 1990s to create quilts for Lighthouse Mission, Hope Office, Great Expectations and other ministries over the years – even to Haiti and other natural disaster sites served by CRWRC (later World Renew). Other Ladies' societies had hosted quilting opportunities in the past.

Young Peoples Society is changed to SHINE in 1995. A year later, the Calvinettes group adopts the GEMS name change. Liturgy Class is added to the 1st Grade Sunday school program to prepare the youth for worship in 'big church.'

1995

1999

Parish Nursing Ministry begins with Dorothy Greenough and Dolores Bosman heading up the effort of this healing ministry.

Chad Van Ginkel hired as part-time Youth Director after a year of filling the role as volunteer: SHINE youth program Wednesday nights, and weekly support for the youth of Bethel, including a SHINE praise band.

2000

Bethel families camping at Osoyoos in July, a favorite summer pastime for many years.



2001

2001 **Pastor John Van Schepen** begins his ministry with Willie at his side and served Bethel until 2012.



2003 Homework Helpers began.



A Small Group meets at Meadow Greens for music ministry in 2004.

2005



2005 WOW (Women of Worth) met under Willie's leadership to enjoy time in women's fellowship. "We had fun events, a tea party, a nursery came and showed plants, speakers, best one was we all wore our wedding dress - walked down the aisle and then talked about our wedding. Janna Mulder wore Jeanette's dress. We had craft nights & game nights."

2006

2006-2020 Yuanita Gitamara begins her work as Director of Youth and Discipleship. Some of the rhythms that we had are Bible study, fellowship, and service. Some highlights include the development of student leader ministry teams, annual kick-off camping trips, mission trips, small groups, faith stories, and many more fun and meaningful activities on- and off- campus.

High school Conventions: SHINE students met in the summer with other CRC youth groups from all over the US to attend sessions and worship together.



Bolivia trip (one trip happened, one ended sadly in the airport in Florida)



Cary, Mississippi was a service trip destination in for many years in the 2000s - 2010s. Many happy memories serving at the Cary Christian Center!



Majestic View service trip 2003



Hattiesburg 2006 CRWRC team

Singing lyrics switched from overhead to the projector in the mid-2000s



2008 Men's Retreat with Dr Jim Schaap at the Mt. Baker Chalet

2008

2009

Women's retreat at Cedar Springs



2010 Story Hour and Coffee Break

2010



2010 SHINE fun

2011



2011 Bethel Quilters Retreat

2014



2014 Parsonage Remodel



2015 **Pastor Steve** and Mandy **Van Noort** arrive with Isabelle, Aiden, & Carolyn to begin their ministry at Bethel. They serve until Pastor Steve took a church plant call in 2021.

2015



2016 Worship style continues to balance old, new, and newer yet: we enjoy drums, guitar, piano, and voices in our praise team leadership, while including the organ regularly.

2017

Rock the Block outdoor kids' day camp at Isom Elementary School for two years: July 2017 & 2018



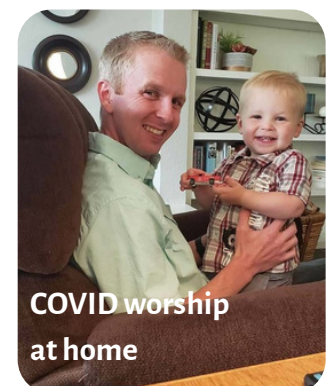
2018 – Our current logo was adopted

2018

2018 Moms' Time Out Ministry grows with Mandy Van Noort & Dee Hiemstra shepherding the women upstairs with topical study and discussion, crafts, & relationship-building for Bethel and other local moms; and many volunteers in the basement leading and tending the babies and kids.

2020

2020 the COVID Pandemic affects our worship time March - June, before resuming creative in-person worship. Our YouTube livestreaming services capabilities are born out of this challenge. The Evening Worship Service was dropped at this point, with the exception of occasional praise & prayer services or joint services.



2021

2021 Extreme fall flooding in Sumas jumpstarts updates to the Quilt House and SHINE House so we can temporarily aid those needing housing.

2021 Sunday School K - 5 learn to make music in a new way: youth handbells for holidays and regular Sunday worship occasions.



Council and church leadership is restructured to include an Administrative Team, Shepherding Elders, Administrative Elders, and Service Deacons.

2022

2022 **Pastor Bryan Dick** begins his ministry at Bethel, arriving from Volga, South Dakota with his wife Stephanie and children Carson, Isaac, Lydia, and Josiah.



Bethel Camp weekend in August 2022: Our first year at Bryce Creek church campground outside of Sumas.



2023

2023 Summit Ministries begins using with the old SHINE house building for women's discipleship.



2024 Women's Retreat at James Circle clubhouse



2025

Basement update: asbestos removal, new carpeting, and a paint job

2026

2026 Fireside Room Remodel Project: Opening up the Fireside Room and Kitchen to modernize the upstairs into the new Fellowship Room.



Current Staff



Bryan Dick
Pastor



Sherry Vos
Secretary



Elaine Vos
Worship Coordinator



Marv Apol
Custodian



Pam Korthuis
Bookkeeper

Current Ministries and Groups



Sunday School



Reformed Roots Sunday Night



Men's Tuesday AM Bible Study



Women's Tuesday AM Bible Study



Women's Wednesday PM
Bible Study



Wednesday Morning Coffee group



Bethel Quilters



GEMS



Cadets – (Joint with First CRC)



Youth Group (with Second CRC)

Program

Saturday, October 10 | 6:00pm
Lynden Christian Middle School Gym

Welcome: Mark De Jong

Prayer: Keith Korthuis

Dinner

Charter Member Memories Video

“The Bored Meeting”

Former Pastors' Updates: Jerry Van Groningen,
John Van Schepen,
Steve Van Noort

Song: “Great is Thy Faithfulness”

Closing comments & Prayer: Pastor Bryan Dick



Thank you!

Tim Holleman, MC for Saturday's celebration
Clint Bosman, Video memories filming and editing

Visit Bethel CRC Lynden on YouTube to see our 75th Anniversary Media presentations

www.youtube.com/@bethelcrclynden132

www.bethelcrc.org

75th Anniversary Committee Members:

Doug & Norene Van Andel, Jacob & Donna Steiger, David & Elaine Vos

October 11, 2026
Celebration of Bethel CRC's 75th Anniversary
Called, Beloved in God the Father, Kept for Jesus Christ

Gathering to Worship

Prelude: "O God, Our Help in Ages Past"

Call to Worship (Pastor John Van Schepen)

* Responding in Adoration: (from 1951 dedication) "Praise the Lord, Sing Hallelujah" PH 188

* God's Greeting

* We Greet Each Other

Sunday School Bell Choir: "Jesus, Strong and Kind"

Celebration of God's Faithfulness

Prayer of Praise & Gratitude (Pastor Steve Van Noort)

Scripture: Psalm 27

* Apostles Creed

* Song of Response: "He Will Hold Me Fast"

Offering Our Prayer and Gifts

Congregational Prayer

Offertory — "Find Us Faithful" (from 2001 celebration)

Offering received for Christian Education Fund

*Children are invited forward for a Children's Message as the
deacons come to present the offerings*

God's Word

Children's Message

Children age 3 – 2nd grade are dismissed afterward to Children & Worship

* Song of Preparation: "When Peace Like A River"

Scripture: Jude 1

Message: "Called, Beloved, Kept"

Prayer

* Song of Response: "His Glory and My Good"

Closing

* Benediction (Pastor Jerry Van Groningen)

* Doxology: "Praise God, From Whom All Blessings Flow"

* Postlude: "Lead On, O King Eternal"

Marilyn Kooiman, Organ | Laura Te Velde, piano | Sue Meenderinck & Joan Vander Haak, offertory

Praise team: Kelly De Jong, Stephanie Dick

Brass, winds, & timpani ensemble: Alex Brewster; Gus & Cy De Jong; Isaac, Lydia, & Josiah Dick;

Les Mulder; Jacquelyn, Elizabeth, David & Elaine Vos

Pastor Bryan Dick



Thanks be to God for his glorious grace!





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CALLED
BELOVED in God the Father,
KEPT for Jesus Christ

1105 Liberty Street
Lynden, WA, 98264

