



December 2019 ✨

BELOVED EVERYBODY CHURCH

An ability-inclusive community. Following Jesus and celebrating the God-given gifts of people of all abilities.



Thanksgiving Breakfast with some of our Beloved Everybody crew!



Pastor Bethany being examined for ordination at the November meeting of the Presbytery of the Pacific for her work with Beloved Everybody and inclusion in the church more broadly.

BETHANY'S ADVENT REFLECTIONS

Over the past few weeks hanging out with folks from Beloved Everybody, I've been realizing: we have so much to celebrate. God has moved through our intentions to build an ability-inclusive community, and so many new relationships have been born that are beautiful and full of love. I remember a sermon once where the pastor said something like, "If the people you spend time with are pretty much the same people you'd spend time with if you didn't follow Jesus, then how is your faith really shaping your life?" And some of the unlikely (and super fun!) connections that have happened through Beloved Everybody make me realize that the Spirit of God is moving in our community connecting people together who are sometimes kept apart by broken value-systems in the world. And I'm truly grateful for these connections.

At the same time, I know we are just at the beginning of our journey! So in this Advent season of waiting, of hopeful expectation, of being in touch with our longings, there's also the anticipation and wondering of what will happen next for our little community. It's vulnerable and exciting at the same time.

Michael (my spouse) and I are using Walter Brueggemann's Advent devotional *Celebrating Abundance* for our Advent prayers. In reference to Jesus baptizing with the Holy Spirit and with fire, and describes being visited by the Holy Spirit in this way: "...a spirit of openness, generosity, energy, that 'the force' may come over us, carry us to do **obedient things we have not yet done, kingdom things we did not think we had in us, neighbor things from which we cringe.**" I long for a visit like this from God's spirit to all of us this Advent season.

★ Grateful for

- An enthusiastic approval for her ordination by the members of the Pacific Presbytery as Bethany described the vision and practices of Beloved Everybody Church
- A participant being released from the hospital Thanksgiving week after being there for more than 2 months; another w/ helpful information for upcoming brain surgery
- Meeting several individuals and families in our neighborhood through the local Buy Nothing group; many of whom are Christians interested in building more local community
- Several chances to share the mission and practices of BEC with church leaders, college and seminary students, service providers

♥ Prayer Requests

- For our core team of leaders and participants to feel loved, supported, and refreshed as we get ready to begin a new year of being this ability-inclusive community together
- Time to connect with folks inside and outside our community who may not have much family nearby, for whom holiday seasons can sometimes feel lonely or difficult
- Continued opportunities to meet more folks with intellectual and developmental disabilities (and their families and carers, when applicable) who would love to join us
- Discernment about whether Bethany should increase her hours in working on this community, and if so, for needed funding

Upcoming Events

- **Dec 8**, 1-3pm: Monthly gathering at Westminster Presbyterian Church (2230 W Jefferson Blvd, LA 90018). This will be a fun mash-up service of our usual Beloved Everybody gathering and also Bethany's ordination service.
- **Dec 13**, 7-9pm: Dance Party! for folks with developmental disabilities and family/friends. Come get your groove on with us at the Culver City Senior Center (4095 Overland Ave, Culver City, CA 90232).
- **Jan 12**, 1-3pm: Monthly gathering at Westminster. Theme: Trusting God
- **2nd Sunday of every month**, 1-3pm is our monthly BEC gathering time at Westminster Presbyterian.
 - Future 2020 dates: February 9, March 8, April 12 (Easter Event - stay tuned!)....



Donate to Beloved Everybody

Your donations help fund this movement creating opportunities for friendship, discipleship, and mutual thriving between people with and without intellectual and developmental disabilities! It's thanks to your gifts that relationships of faith and prayer across abilities have been created that would have never happened otherwise. Visit our website: belovedeverybody.org and click DONATE. Grateful for your support of all kinds. Thank you!