

Bethany Presbyterian Church

431 Wayne Street Bethany, PA, 18431 570-253-6316

<http://www.bethanypresbychurch.com>

Mission Study Report

June 24, 2022



"Oh give thanks to the LORD, for He is good, for his steadfast love endures forever!"

Psalms 107:1

Table of Contents

Introduction.....-3-

Our Mission.....-3-

Our Vision.....-3-

History of the Church.....-4-

Significant Events Over The Years.....-5-

Our Pastors.....-6-

Our Members.....-6-

The Committees of the Congregation.....-6-

The Church Facility.....-8-

Financial Health.....-9-

The Neighborhood & Demographics.....-10-

Our Church’s Future.....-10-

The New Pastor.....-11-

What is God calling us to be?.....-12-

Mission Study Informational Sheet.....-13-

Sample Church Bulletin.....-14-

Sample Church Chat Newsletter.....-15-

Church Facility Photos.....-24-

Living Nativity Photos.....-25-

Introduction

Bethany Presbyterian Church is a small congregation with large hearts. Steeped in history and tradition, the church has seen much growth and change. We are a historic church. Ours is the first church building to be erected in Wayne County, PA. Three and four-generation families worship here, as they have done since our founding.

In this third decade of the 21st century, the congregation is poised to embrace a new era of opportunities. With the resignation of Pastor William Blackie in December 2021, the church is seeking a new pastor. Ideally, we are seeking a minister who will provide leadership and creativity resulting in improved community relations. We are looking to grow our influence in the community by not only representing God to the nonbeliever but by also helping those of faith find more meaning in their relationship with God.

This Mission Study Report is intended to provide the reader with the background and history of the Bethany Presbyterian Church, as well as help the reader understand who we are today and where we envision ourselves in the future.

Our Mission

The mission and purpose of Bethany Presbyterian Church is to glorify God by outreach, fellowship and instruction through the power of Jesus Christ and the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Our Vision

Our vision is to glorify God by communicating the truth of Holy Scripture to our community while encouraging believers to become fully dependent on Jesus Christ, and obedient to the great commission and to be the “salt and light” to our culture. In prayer and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to fulfill this vision, we:

Worship:

- By encouraging private devotion and prayer
- By encouraging the continued awareness of, and response to God’s presence
- By participating in corporate worship

Evangelize:

- By sponsoring events designed to teach those who are investigating the claims of Jesus Christ
- By building relationships with unchurched people in our community
- By supporting missions locally and abroad

Nurture:

- By equipping members for service and ministry
- By teaching the Word of God in accurate and practical ways
- By helping people discover, develop, and use their spiritual gifts and talents
- By encouraging an atmosphere of love, acceptance, and forgiveness
- By ministering to, supporting, and strengthening our church families

Serve:

- By reaching out to the church and the local community
- By helping people in their immediate needs
- By creating opportunities to present to those not reached by other ministries
- By applying biblical truths to improve the quality of community life

History of the Church

Early Years:

The pioneers who settled in Bethany and Dyberry Township during the early years of the nineteenth century were, for the most part, emigrants from New England. Many of them settled the territory under the charter of Connecticut, which in this area, overlapped the land which Charles II had granted to William Penn. It is not surprising, therefore, that the religious inclination of the area was Presbyterian, with a strong Congregational flavor. For several decades, the scattered settlements in North-eastern Pennsylvania were served by missionaries and itinerant preachers, most of who were either Congregational or Presbyterian.

The Bethany Congregation was without a regular pastor until 1818, when the Rev. Phineas Camp arrived in Wayne County, having been dispatched from the Presbytery of North River (New York). On September 22, 1818, assisted by Deacon John Tyler of the Congregational Church at Ararat, he Organized the First Presbyterian Church of Bethany. The original membership roll consisted of eleven people, seven of whom were women. Thus began the first distinctly Presbyterian Church in North-eastern Pennsylvania.

On August 19, 1823 construction of the Bethany Presbyterian Church building began. Work continued for several years and the beautiful structure, in the classic style of Sir Christopher Wren, was dedicated on December 27, 1836. Its architecture bears out its definite New England heritage, including the small clear windows (many panes of which are still original), and the box pews with doors. It is the oldest church building in Wayne County. In the meantime, the Bethany Presbyterians had come to financial settlements with the Methodists and Baptists concerning any claims those two congregations may have had to the property on which the church building was erected. Total cost for the structure was \$3,560.61. The bell, which weighs over a ton, is rung by hand to this day, summoning the congregation to the morning worship every Sunday.

Through much of its history, Bethany Presbyterian Church was yoked to other congregations, sharing the ministry of one pastor. At one time, Bethany was part of the Pioneer Parish consisting of three other churches – Cold Spring, Rileyville and Dyberry.

In the 1970's, it was yoked with the First Presbyterian Church in Hawley until Rev. William Samford was called to serve there full time. On September 26, 1997, the church contracted with the Rev. Mary Jo Cliff as its first “our own” pastor in several decades. Rev. Cliff served as stated supply and guided the congregation in its search for our first permanent full-time pastor.

In August, 2005, Ryan C. Kraus was called to the ministry of Bethany Presbyterian Church and served us until his resignation to pursue full-time military duty in February, 2011. Then in February, 2011, Rev. William M. Blackie III joined the church and remained until his resignation in December, 2021.

Significant Events Over the Years

One of the most significant events that occurred in the history of the church was the raising of the church to accommodate a basement, which included indoor plumbing (!) and bathrooms and kitchen. See the description of this work in the Section entitled **The Church Facility**.

The 200-year anniversary of the formation of the Presbyterian Congregation in Bethany was a Joyous occasion held on September 22, 2018. Over one hundred people were in attendance. We started off with a special worship service at 11:00am in the church sanctuary. Margaret Hartman, a lay preacher and our former liaison with the Presbytery of Lackawanna, offered a meaningful and timely message that spoke to each of us. Her message was, “we are stronger when we work together for the Lord”. After worship, our children conducted a tree planting to commemorate the event. Following the tree planting a luncheon was held at Camp Ladore in their Carousel Building. And finally, in 2018 the church family buried a time capsule in the side garden of the church. It celebrates who we were at that time and honors our past. It points toward our future by preserving the faith of those who worship at Bethany.

Other significant ministries performed are:

- Food baskets for the needy on holidays
- Services at Wayne Woodlands Manor
- Caroling to shut-ins
- Adopt-A-Highway bi-annually for approximately seventeen years
- 3rd Sunday brunch
- Dyberry Day Camp serving ice cream sundaes
- Easter Sunrise Service community breakfast
- Gave money for helping local prison ministry
- Handyman outreach program

Our Pastors

As mentioned previously, Bethany Presbyterian Church historically shared pastors with other churches in the area. In 2005, Ryan C. Kraus became our full-time pastor. He and his wife and young family were well-loved and attracted many new members. Upon his resignation, the Presbyterian congregation at Bethany came together to determine God's purpose and call. As a result, the Rev. William M. Blackie III was called to our church in 2011. His great organizational and leadership skills were a great asset to our congregation. He wrote our 100-p-age operation manual and our committee by-laws.

Bethany Presbyterian Church Today

Our Members:

Our membership is comprised of 83 active members as of 2021. Of those, 67% are women and 33% are men. A congregational survey showed 50% of the congregation are between the ages of 55-75 and 31% being over 75. 71% are married with the remainder either widowed or single. Given our rural community, 21% of our members drive over 20 minutes to attend worship.

As perceived by the active members, the church's top core values are the following

1. Warmth and welcoming attitudes toward newcomers
2. Fellowship events and activities
3. Relationships and teamwork among clergy, staff, and members
4. Traditional style worship, preaching from the Gospel
5. Care and concern for members/attendees during times of life stress

Our congregants share the values and traditions of a small town and rural community. We are hardworking and committed to our church and to each other. In times of need you will not find a nicer group of people. We pride ourselves on our honesty, ethics, and social etiquette.

The Committees of the Congregation

➤ Building and Grounds

Responsible for providing for the care of the church's properties, including preventative maintenance, emergency maintenance, improvements of present facilities, supervision of custodial services, and the upkeep of the grounds. They also transform the grounds and provide parking assistance for church and community events. This committee is responsible for recommending to the Stewardship and Finance Committee the short- and long-term fiscal needs of present facilities.

➤ **Christian Care**

Sets up and maintains a system whereby our congregation ministers to the physical needs within the congregation, by showing love and concern at special times such as hospitalization, new births, deaths and sickness by ministering to people who are not actively involved in church life and worship, by serving Communion to shut-ins and the sick, by providing transportation to and from church for individuals needing this service, monitoring attendance of members and contacting absentees. They also perform the important role of maintaining and activating the prayer chain, organizing funeral and new member luncheons, as well as arranging meals as needed for church members.

➤ **Christian Education**

Oversees the Christian educational development and spiritual growth of the congregation, including Sunday School, Adult Studies, Vacation Bible School, instruction for children preparing for confirmation and Communion, and the search for other programs to enhance the spiritual growth of the congregation.

➤ **Fellowship**

Responsible for planning events that bring our congregation and community together as God's people, including the organization of all fund-raising and events such as the annual church picnic, coffee hour each week after Sunday worship and a third Sunday brunch. A group of people meet at the Wilder house to share, coffee, a dish and enjoy fellowship. We also hold an annual church picnic in the summer at the home of one of our congregants to enjoy each other's company and have fun.

➤ **Information Technology**

Responsible for the church website and Facebook page, including making updates, recommending to Session ideas about uses for these medias, and monitoring their usage. Additional responsibilities include recording and uploading weekly worship services, repair and supervise all video and electronic equipment, and update the church's new electronic sign. Thanks to the efforts of our Information Technology our church members and the community can participate in church activities and events via our website, Facebook, Zoom and a smart phone app. This was very helpful in staying connected during Covid.

➤ **"Journey to Bethlehem" Living Nativity:**

For the past 15+ years our church grounds have been the scene of the greatest event the world has ever known. The church grounds are beautifully lit with 3 bonfires, numerous torches and about 70

➤ **Mission and Service**

Supports and educates the congregation on mission opportunities, as well as monitoring the mission programs of the church (both local, national, and international), choosing a mission emphasis for the church each year, supplying mission speakers when possible, presenting to the

Congregation a “Minute for Mission”, being the church’s contact with PCUSA Mission Conference, and handling mission and service in the Bethany community and in the United States of America. We are proud to support: Bethany 4-H, Wayne County Children & Youth Services, Honesdale Emergency Pantry, Honesdale Food Pantry, The Children’s Christmas Bureau, Dyberry Day Camp, The Victims Intervention Program, Bethany Presbyterian Church’s Ralph Taylor Scholarship, our local fire companies, One Great Hour of Sharing, Bethany Public Library, Dessin Animal Shelter, and Missionary Joyce Johns who is serving in Cambodia. A collection was underway during Lent to support the Disaster Relief Fund in support of the Ukrainian effort. We are actively exploring opportunities to help disadvantaged children in our area.

➤ **Personnel**

This committee oversees the human resource function of the church by maintaining all personnel position descriptions and the “Personnel Handbook” for the church by recommending salaries and benefits for all church personnel, and by overseeing performance evaluations of church personnel

➤ **Stewardship & Finance**

Responsible for oversight of fiscal planning and management of the church’s financial assets, including planning year-round stewardship and autumn pledge programs, preparing a proposed detailed budget, collecting, distributing, and managing the church funds as designated by the budget or the Session, and providing for an annual audit of the financial books with a report to Session.

➤ **Worship and Music**

Responsible for all worship services, including the order of worship (in consultation with the minister). Special worship services, baptisms, communion, Director of Music, choir, greeters and liturgists. This committee also handles pulpit supply in the pastor’s absence. Under the direction of our pianist and choir director, the choir has transformed the worship service with its lovely and harmonious anthems. Occasionally special music is arranged with members of the congregation who have special tale

The Church Facility

Although still maintaining its original appearance, the church building has been renovated several times during its long existence. In 1939, through the generosity of Mrs. Hortense Strongman Miller, the interior was completely restored and the oil lamps in the beautiful chandeliers were replaced with electric bulbs. In 1984, during the pastorate of the Rev. Richard Bauder, it was determined that the church's joists, sills, and other supporting timbers had deteriorated to the state that the structural integrity of the building was threatened. There had been no basement under the building when it was constructed, and exposure to moisture over the years had taken its toll. As a result, the small congregation was confronted with the most daunting building project since the erection of the church itself. After careful consideration of the various options involved, it was decided to follow the most extensive (and expensive) course of action which had been proposed - that of constructing a full

basement under the original building. In addition to ensuring the long-term stability of the church structure, the full basement would provide much needed space for Sunday School rooms, kitchen and restroom facilities. The project would involve the actual jacking up of the church building, and it was lifted into the air for over six weeks while excavation took place and the foundation was poured. After lowering the building, a well was drilled, and a new septic system was installed. The overall cost of the improvements was \$110,000. Not one Sunday worship service was missed. The project's successful completion is a testimony to the faith and work of the church members, as well as evidence of their love and devotion to the sanctuary which is so special to them and their community.

Over the years, the high steeple which is an area landmark has been struck by lightning several times. After the most recent strike in 1995, a new steeple cap and weathervane was installed. Another improvement to the property was an expanded parking lot in 1997.

In 2009, the Bethany Presbyterian Church finalized the purchase of property next to the church. The property is comprised of 8.65 acres, which included 8 acres of cleared land and a house which resides on .65 acres. The spacious house is over 4,000 square feet, has 9 rooms + 2 baths, eight fireplaces, and an attached 1-car garage. The house has undergone extensive renovations, although more work is needed. The property also includes a large 2-level barn. The congregation was eager to increase classrooms and meeting space which would be accessible from ground level, to expand parking, to provide a larger church office and Pastor's study, larger accommodations for the Living Nativity and summer yard sales, and additional land for community and church events. The house has been named the David Wilder House.

As a result of a bequest from a former worshiper, the congregation was able to pay off the mortgage on the Wilder House. A joyful mortgage-burning celebration was held on July 15, 2012.

Financial Health

The church has been relatively stable financially. However, downturns in the economy affect the church, as it does any other business. Our financial summary is below.

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Income	\$ 149,300	\$ 183,479	\$ 175,640	\$ 178,155	\$ 178,125
(Non-/Pledge envelopes, plate offerings)					
Expenses	\$ 122,509	\$ 142,984	\$ 153,515	\$ 154,228	\$ 178,400
Liabilities	\$ - 0 -	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
Assets Savings	\$ 410,883	\$ 430,343	\$ 507,388	\$ 486,526	\$ 551,585
(incl. investments and bequests)					
Assets Property	\$1,211,500	\$1,211,500	\$1,211,500	\$1,211,500	\$1,211,50

Assets

The assets of the church are primarily property assets. Obviously, they consist of the church building, the David Wilder House and 8 acres of land, including the “Carpenter House”, which provides rental income. Other assets include investments through financial products, such as stocks and other funds.

Liabilities

The church currently has no liabilities.

The Neighborhood & Demographics

Bethany is located in Wayne County, Pennsylvania, just north of historic Honesdale, PA. Wayne County is located in the Northeast region of the Pocono Mountains, an area of the state celebrating four seasons. According to the United States Census Bureau, Bethany Borough has a total area of 0.5 square miles, all of it land. As of the census of 2020, there were 241 people residing in the borough. The racial makeup of the borough was 94.6% White. Other races make up the remainder. Median age is 55.7 years for Bethany residents.

While the Borough of Bethany is relatively small, there is also the United Methodist Church just down the road from the Bethany Presbyterian Church. Honesdale, the county seat, is approximately three miles south of Bethany.

The population of Honesdale is 4,258, racial makeup 99.34% white. Other races make up the remainder. Median age is 44.9 for Honesdale residents. Honesdale is the home of Wayne Memorial Hospital and the county’s Area Agency on Aging and its other human services. There are many opportunities for outreach given our proximity to the county offices and their resources. In the immediate Honesdale area, there are approximately 14 churches, although none are affiliated with PCUSA .

Our Church’s Future

We continue to see a decline in the number of young people and families with children who attend worship and Sunday School. At the present time, we have three children of Sunday School age. This demographic change is also reflected in the local community. That combined with other churches in the area already offering some wonderful youth programs we have realized that through our gifts we would be able to make the biggest impact by focusing our efforts on an older portion of our community. We will continue to welcome young families with open arms and to work to grow our youth program, but our focus will be using our experience and talents to support an older group within

the community often overlooked. We will be contacting the Wayne County Area on Aging to see how we can help the elderly members of our community.

The New Pastor

On January 3, 2022, a Future Needs Survey was conducted. While the survey focused on the characteristics and behaviors desired in our new minister, we also explored the type of worship most desired by the congregation — traditional or contemporary. 85% of the worshippers' preference was a traditional style of worship and a topical style of preaching.

The definitions were provided, as follows:

Traditional worship: The worship service flows between music, prayer, scripture and proclamation. This service, more formal in style, includes both lively congregational singing as well as special music, usually of the great hymns of the church.

Topical preaching: This preaching style uses several Scriptures of the Bible to address an issue or discuss a topic. This is the most used style of preaching.

The characteristics that are required by our new minister as determined by the congregational survey are:

- **Preaching and Teaching:** "The ability to deliver sermons that relate to the congregation's current lives." (56.5%)
- **Delivery Style:** "Extemporaneous style sermon topic and basic structure are determined and prepared for in advance so that they are able to be presented using a minimum of notes or outline. (73.3%)
- **Spiritual Development:** "Delivers sermons on living a life for God, based on teachings in the Bible". (84.4%)
- **Administrative Leadership & Organizational skills:** Two behaviors received the most and same number of votes. They were "Ability to communicate with session and employees" and "Takes initiative". (5 0 %)
- **Counseling:** "Helping individuals and families with personal hardship, such as unemployment, substance abuse etc." (59.1%)
- **Pastoral Care:** "Visits the sick and elderly in their homes". (5 6 %)
- **Leadership:** "Shares the decision-making with group members by promoting the interests of the group members". (84.1%)
- **Charisma:** "Has a great sense of humor and likes to include humor with the worship". (71.1%)

Bethany Presbyterian Church is made up of families that have attended for generations as well as new members. Our multigenerational families can recount our previous failures and successes while our new members help to share their ideas and views for the future. At times this presents a challenge, and we are looking to our new pastor to bridge this gap.

What is God calling us to be?

A congregational meeting was held after worship on Sunday June 26, 2022 to consider this very question. After prayerful consideration it is our belief that the Lord is leading our very friendly congregation to become a light to our community. We will resist the temptation to compare ourselves to other churches in the area and through continued prayer seek only to understand God's plan for us.

Although this will take further exploration on our part to determine community needs, we were able to identify immediate areas to start. We will begin by reinstating Missions that either due to Covid or lack of leadership have fallen by the wayside. As a congregation will be exploring how our church buildings may be offered to the public for use and the possibility of providing transport to Sunday services and events for those in need. A member from the congregation will be contacting the Wayne County Area on Aging to see how we can help the elderly members of our community. We have had recent discussions with Bethany Public Library, Bethany Village Assisted Living Facility, and our neighboring Methodist church on how we can work together in the future. It was encouraging to meet other people who wish to make a positive impact on the local community.

Armed with this new God led vision we are excited to welcome a new pastor who can guide and lead us as we seek to fulfill God's purpose for Bethany Presbytery Church.

Bethany Presbyterian Church

Mission Study Informational Sheet

June 24, 2022

Committee Chair: David Czapnik

Members: Bruce Hutchinson

Marian Knapp

Janet Olver

Yvonne Plastaras

Action Taken-

1. The previous Mission Study Report dated July 19, 2012 was reviewed and sections like church history were updated.
2. A Fullsite Report prepared for the Presbytery of Lackawanna for a two and a half and ten-mile radius surrounding the church was reviewed providing a greater understanding of Bethany Borough and the surrounding communities.
3. A congregational survey in January, 2022 was designed and mailed to all church members. It consisted of 29 questions about service style preferences, characteristics preferred in a pastor, their spiritual health and where it comes from, use of technology, perceived strengths and weakness of the congregation and demographics. 109 surveys were mailed and 46 were received back. The responses were then tabulated and added to the Mission Study Report.
4. A review of the report by session and discussed at the May 2022 session meeting highlighted the need for further discussion with the congregation as to the church's vision for the future among other minor changes.
5. A congregational meeting was held Sunday June 26, 2022 to answer the question: *"What is God calling our church to do in both mission and ministry in the future."* An agenda and a handout answering, "What is a Mission Study?" was distributed. Two very important questions were asked. The first for prayerful consideration was *"If your church were to close its doors today who in the community would miss you?"* The second which was openly discussed was *"What is God calling us to do in the future?"* The Mission Study Report was updated to reflect this new God lead vision.
6. On July 5th, 2022 the session met once again to review the Mission Study Report.
7. The Mission Study Report was then forwarded to the Committee On Ministry for consideration and will be reviewed at their July 13, 2022 meeting. We eagerly await their guidance.

Bethany Presbyterian Church

431 Wayne Street
Bethany, PA 18431

June 19, 2022

10:00 AM

APPROACH TO THE WORD

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude/Meditation

*Call to Worship

Thus says the high and exalted one who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in a high and holy place,

But I also live with those who are broken and humble in spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, to restore the courage of the broken.

*Hymn

"This Is My Father's World"

#293

*Prayer of Confession:

God of grace, love, and community, we confess that we have failed to love you with all our heart, soul, and mind; and to love our neighbor as ourselves. We ignore your commandments, stray from your way, and follow other gods. Have mercy on us. Forgive our sin and raise us to new life that we may serve you faithfully and give honor to your holy name.

Time for Silent and Personal Confession

Declaration of Pardon:

The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting. May the God of mercy, who forgives us all our sins, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life. Friends, hear and believe the good news of the Gospel.

In Jesus Christ we are forgiven. Thanks be to God! Amen.

*Gloria Patri

Passing of the Peace

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts. To this peace we are called as members of a single body. The peace of Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

Let us greet one another with peace.

Overhead

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

Responsive Reading

Psalms 22:19-28

Page 786

Epistle Reading

Luke 8:26-39

Page 1474

Sermon

"Beyond Healing"

Rev. David A. Choate

*Affirmation of Faith

The Apostles' Creed (Traditional)

p. 14

*Hymn

"Dear Lord and Father of Mankind"

#345

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

Offering

*Doxology and Dedication

Overhead

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

*Hymn

"Faith of Our Fathers"

Overhead

*Charge and Benediction

*Congregational Response

Overhead

* Please stand if able

Bold text – Congregation Responds.

The Session

Class of 2022

Janet Oliver

Pat Rine

David Czapnik

Dan Gallik

Class of 2023

Alan Haviland

Marian Knapp

Joan Green

Class of 2024

Yvonne Plastaras

Linda Zimmer

Bruce Hutchison

Clerk of Session – Joan Green

Church Secretary – Marian Knapp

Pastor – Rev. David A. Choate

Cell: (937) 581-7414

Email: Rvdac@yahoo.com

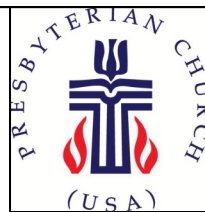
Church Treasurer – Pat Rine

Planist/Choir Director – Tim Bell

"It is your duty to believe and teach what the Bible teaches, and not what you would like the Bible to teach."



Bethany Presbyterian Church Chat



May– June– July 2022

Devotional

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Spring is finally here! Yes, I know, Spring came on the calendar over a month ago; but here in NE Pennsylvania, Spring finally arrived about one week ago. The warmer weather is much more to my liking. The greening grass, growing flowers, and buds on tree branches are lovely. Wildlife is more visible. I've noted several species of birds, squirrels, bunnies, and deer. I have yet to see a bear, and I'm not sure I want to come face to face with one.

We celebrated Easter in the Western Church April 17; our Orthodox kindred on April 24. And, just as Spring is a Season, so is Easter. Easter will last until Pentecost, which we will celebrate Sunday, June 5. Beyond that, every Sunday, every Lord's Day is a celebration of Easter. Even during Lent, as we make our way to Jerusalem and the Cross, we observe Sundays in Lent, not Sundays of Lent. The preposition is significant. Remember, every Sunday is a celebration of Christ's resurrection from the dead.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is not a holiday that comes once a year, like the 4th of July. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is God's sign to the world that Death is defeated and God's promise of new, everlasting, and abundant life in Jesus Christ.

I know, we're a rather staid bunch of people. We're traditional Presbyterians. Our worship is formal; and a lot of folks come to our church because our worship is traditional. I'd be as surprised as anyone if I saw people clapping and dancing Sunday morning at Bethany Presbyterian Church.

At the same time, please remember that we are Easter People! We can celebrate! We can experience joy, even in church on Sunday morning!

So, see you in Church! Let's keep the party going!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Pastor David



CHRISTIAN CARE COMMITTEE NEWS

The Christian Care Committee continues to forward email prayer requests whenever we receive them and are more than happy to do so.

We, as Christians, certainly do not have all the answers about God. One thing we do know, however, is that He answers prayer! Each of us in Bethany Presbyterian Church has received answers to prayer many, many times. When God answers our requests, passed along through email, we report that for two reasons.

First and foremost, we want to glorify God for what He has done by answering our prayers. The second reason to pass along good reports is to rejoice with those who have received the answered prayer as well as to encourage those who have prayed. We each need to be encouraged from time to time and the realm of prayer is no exception.

So, keep those requests coming and we will continue to pass them along and to pray. You may contact me (Sue Seber) directly or leave a request with David Choate, who will forward it to me.



Bethany Presbyterian Church Chat



LADIES' LUNCHES HAVE RESUMED



The ladies' lunches have resumed and are more popular than ever.

February's lunch was served at the Stourbridge Bistro with 11 in attendance.

March found 12 of us at Gretchen's Grotto with three different churches represented.

In April we traveled to The Tsunami Asian Restaurant where we enjoyed a variety of Asian delicacies.

On May 12th we will be gathering at the Cherry Ridge Airport where we previously have had many delicious lunches.

In June we will, once again, enjoy our annual dessert party at Gretchen's Grotto. This is always well-attended, so be sure to contact me early to reserve your spot.

If you have never joined us for one of our lunch get-togethers, why not give it a try?

I promise that you won't be disappointed! Contact Sue Seber for reservations or for answers to any questions you may have.

Account Balances

The account balances as of April 26:

General Account \$40,065.76

Wilder House/Rental Account \$209.28

Capital Account \$1846.51

Living Nativity Account \$1597.60

Savings Account \$62,413.07

Disaster Relief Account \$728.99

ONLINE BANKING FOR GIVING OFFERING



Some of our local banks and our national banks are offering "Online Banking" to pay our expenses or bills, but did you know that you can also use

Online banking to pay your "Estimate of Giving Offering?"

Payments online can be made on a weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly from Your bank by listing our church as a vendor.

On the Bill Pay Page Enter:

BETHANY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

431 Wayne Street

Bethany, PA 18431

Phone #570-253-6316

Account Number: *(would be your church envelope number)*

Amount to be paid: *(List the frequency that you would like it to be paid)*

The bank will forward your payments, on your behalf to the church following your requested frequency.

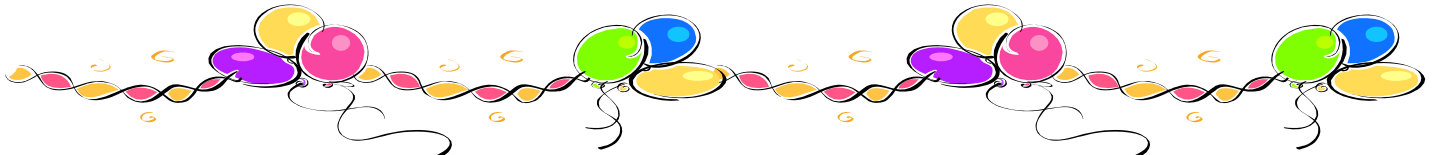
If any additional information is needed please talk to Pat Rine.

New APP for the church

We have a new APP for the church and all you have to do is go to the app store and download, type in Bethany Presbyterian church at app store. Give it a try and let David Czapnik know what you think.



Bethany Presbyterian Church Chat



Happy Birthday!!! Happy Anniversary!!!

May Birthdays

9-Bill Bell, Janet Lienert
11-Aaron Haviland
16-Ron Lawrence
18-Odilia Dyer
19-Pat Plastaras
23-Kristina Gonzales
30-Bob Murray



May Anniversaries

2-Dan & Lorraine Gallik
9-Lee & Ruth Ann Swingle
20-Kevin & Marian Knapp
30-Craig & Janet Olver, Darren & Lori Thorpe

June Birthdays

3-Kathie Dulay
10-Debbie Gottshall
17-Zachary Hopkins
19-Shayna Dyer, Emily Mitchell
21-Tim Rine, Karen Budd
24-Lori Thorpe
25-Susan Darville



June Anniversaries

2-Pat & Yvonne Plastaras
10- Jeanne & Mark Bartocci, Bruce & Lisa Hutchison
24-Keith & Mariann Gunuskey
25-Mark & Linda Zimmer

July Birthdays

7-Terry Lawrence
10-Julia Hopkins
11-Kaitlyn Gunuskey
12- Gary Mitchell, Lee Swingle
16- Marilyn Czapnik



July Anniversaries

30-Helen & Frank Ward

Greeter/Usher List

May

1-Marian & Kevin Knapp
8-Jim & Karen Budd
15-Helen & Frank Ward
22-David & Sue Seber
29-Pat & Yvonne Plastaras

June

5-Cindy Henry & Dick Erk
12-Kathleen Noonan & Gary Heller
19-Mark & Linda Zimmer
26-Marilyn Czapnik & Jill Goodman

July

3-Craig & Janet Olver
10-Joan Green & Susan Thomes
17-Forest & Stacy Goodenough
24-Lorraine & Dan Gallik
31 Kathie Dulay & Aaron Haviland

Ice Cream Social This Summer



On a hot day in summer, nothing beats a **REFRESHING** bowl or two or three of ice cream.

Join us on Sunday, July 24th after worship for **DELICIOUS** ice cream desserts!



Bethany Presbyterian Church Chat



GUESS WHO? Can you guess who this person is?

This person:

- Was born in Hancock, New York.
- Grew up Baptist.
- Lived in West Damascus growing up.
- Graduated from Damascus School.
- After graduation went to computer school.
- Is married.
- Has 3 children.
- Has 6 grandchildren.
- Has 3 greatgrandchildren.
- Traveled by car from Pennsylvania through various states to get to Virginia, Montana, Maine, Louisiana, Michigan, and Florida. Also, went to Washington state, Alaska, and Bahamas.
- Favorite scripture: John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.
- Has a serving heart: Has been on Building and Grounds Committee, Pastor Nominating Committee two times, Mission Committee, Co-chairman of the Fellowship Committee, Sunday school teacher. This person sings in the choir and played the bells, was an elder many times, wrote up church's weekly announcements for years, helped with yard sales, VBS, road clean-up, and nativity, worked on the church's steeple and does odd jobs around the church.
- Loves to camp, tinker in his garage, and to be with grandchildren.
- Gutted and remodeled the family's home when living in Honesdale, remodeled apartments in Seelyville and in Carbondale, and designed and built present home in Beach Lake.
- Siblings- 9
- Previous Occupation- Contractor
- Current occupation: Retired Contractor



ANSWER IS ON PAGE 7

Personnel Committee

Personnel Committee members include Chairman Craig Olver, Forrest Goodenough, Mark Zimmer, Joan Green, Lorraine Gallik, and Reverend David A. Choate (ex-officio). Joan Green joined the Committee last fall following John Stepto's move to North Carolina.

Our meetings are held the second Monday of the month in the Wilder House.

The Committee is responsible for reviewing staff contracts and salaries as well as the Minister's statistical report, study leave and vacation time. Staff contracts have all been updated and signed for 2022.

BIBLE STUDY



Our new study of the book of Jeremiah started Wednesday, May 4th, at 6 PM. It will run for 6 weeks. You can join us either in the Wilder house or via Zoom. The Zoom link will be sent in a few days so watch your email!

We will be using the book *Returning from the Abyss* by Walter Brueggemann. Free copies are available now in the Wilder House on the Blanche Heller room table. A free will offering of \$12.50 covers the cost of the book for those wishing to contribute. Join us Wednesdays at 6 PM.



Bethany Presbyterian Church Chat



Worship and Music Committee

We have welcomed our transitional pastor, Pastor David Choate and his wife Brenda. Our committee is looking forward to working with Pastor David as we develop our worship and music plans.

Two mikes have been placed in the sanctuary to enhance the sound. One mike will make sound from the choir more prominent, the other will amplify voices from the congregation for prayer requests etc.

Preparation for the Lenten season included an Ash Wednesday service with the placing of ashes on congregant's foreheads as well as communion, Palm Sunday with distribution of palms, and Maundy Thursday with communion. An Easter sunrise service was held at 6:30 A.M. on April 17th outside the church. A 10:00 Easter service with communion was held in the sanctuary to also celebrate the resurrection of Jesus.

Attendance will again be taken during our worship service by passing the "sign-in" folder.

Welcome packets are being revised and improved.

The greeter/usher responsibility page is revised.

The committee determined that they will meet the second Sunday of each month.



Respectfully submitted,
Helen Ward, Chair

RE-CREATION

This committee has been busy for months preparing for a gospel concert to be presented by Re-Creation, a dynamic group of young people who sing religious and family oriented music. The volunteer group was founded in 1976 and serves hospitalized veterans, civic clubs, schools, churches and more. They came with state of the art sound and vibrant vocals. Their sacred program is structured with a sensitive presentation of an enduring faith in the Christian message. The concert was held April 30th at 7:00 P.M. at the Thrive Church in Honesdale since our church does not have the electrical capacity to handle their sound and light systems. We are grateful to Thrive Church for the use of their sanctuary. Not only has each member of this committee done an enormous amount of work in preparation for the concert, but also many from our church family have generously given of their time and talents to make the concert possible. It truly has been a team effort! Thank you to everyone who helped bring this talented group of young people to our community.



Bethany Presbyterian Church Chat



Notes From the Session

The Session met in January, February and March to conduct necessary business, to welcome our Transitional Pastor and to prepare for the Lenten and Easter season. Rev. Choate began serving as Pastor on February 1, 2022. Again, we thank Susan Seber and Mark Zimmer for their leadership in the month of January.

Again, this year, there are a few changes in Committee Chairpersons. If you have comments or suggestions to be addressed by any of the Church Committees, please feel free to contact the Chairperson. They are as follows:

Buildings and Grounds - Kevin Knapp

Christian Care - Susan Seber

Christian Education - Yvonne Plastaras

Fellowship - Ron and Terry Lawrence

Media Outreach - David Czapnik

Mission and Service – Susan Thomes

Personnel – Craig Olver

Stewardship and Finance – Lorraine Gallik/Janet Olver

Worship and Music - Helen Ward

Presbytery Commissioner – Dan Gallik



We thank the Chairpersons and all the Committee members for their dedication to the church family.

At this time, there is also a Mission Study Committee working to complete the Mission Study that will be approved by Session and the Committee on Ministry of the Presbytery. Following approval, we will be ready to form the Pastor Nominating Committee to search for an Installed Pastor. Please keep this committee in your daily prayers.

The Congregation and Corporation Meeting to receive reports was held and the report booklet is available for anyone who was unable to attend the meeting. Please contact the Church Office if you would like to receive a copy, either by email or a printed copy.

This year we began Lent with an Ash Wednesday Service. People were able to receive ashes if they so desired.

Our Palm Sunday service had the congregation moving outside with their palms to then re-enter the sanctuary waving the palms and singing a hymn.

On Maundy Thursday we had a very moving Communion Service celebrating the Last Supper, followed by the Final Seven Words of Christ on the cross. Everyone left the sanctuary in silence.

We rejoiced together on Easter Sunday, at either a Sunrise Service or 10:00AM Service, to the sounds of “He is Risen, He is Risen indeed.” Alleluia and Alleluia!





Bethany Presbyterian Church Chat



BUILDING AND GROUNDS

- Adopt-a-Highway was on April 23 .thank you to all who participated. **The church has been participating in the Adopt-A-Highway program for 30 years!!!!**
 - Mary Evans & Pat Plastaras has joined the committee.
 - We are working on getting prices to paint or put siding on the church.
 - The church emergency lighting will worked on soon.
 - We had light breakfast after Easter Sunrise Service at the DWH.
- If anybody knows of something that needs to be addressed, please feel free to contact a member of the building and grounds committee. Or you can use the Suggestion box ,located in the vestibule.
- Submitted by Kevin Knapp-chair.



Attention All Men



Join us the first Thursday of every month for breakfast at 8:00 AM and the third Thursday for lunch at noon. See David Czapnik.

Answer to Guess Who.....

From page 4

Ron Lawrence



PRAYER CONCERNS

Robert Dyer, Gretchen Erk, Shirley Oliver, Marilyn Barbe, Walter Schweizer, and Ruth Ann Swingle.

Did You Know We Have A Website & Facebook Page?



We invite everyone to visit our new website www.bethanypresbychurch.com to listen to Rev. David A. Choate's sermon each Sunday.

The sermons can be seen our Facebook page and on all smartphones. UP-COMING EVENTS from the church bulletin are being posted and in the future there may be a photo gallery and video to keep everyone informed of church activities.

Our Daily Bread can be viewed on line and on smart phones along with allot of other great information so check it out and see.

Dave Czapnik is continuing to post our videos on our website and Facebook page. He has noticed using my Google Analytics that the viewership has dropped off and believes the reason for this is people are starting to go back to church in larger numbers.

If anyone has any interesting information that we could put on our Facebook site please reach out to Dave Czapnik by email davidczapnik@yahoo.com or call 570-698-5006 and he will put it on.



BEAVERS AMAZING CREATURES

- Beavers are second largest living rodents in the world (the Capybara the largest) nocturnal and semi-aquatic rodent.
- Beavers live in family groups or colonies made up of a breeding male, female and their offspring.
- There are only two species of beavers the American and the Eurasian.
- Lodges have an underwater swimming entrance door.
- Baby beavers called kits, and can swim 24 hours after birth.
- Their rudder-like tail and webbed feet propel them through the water at 5 mph and can stay under water for around 15 minutes.
- Beavers do not hibernate. They continue to eat and work on their dam and lodge throughout the winter.
- When the beaver is under water, its nose and ears close up and a special membrane covers its eyes.
- The beaver waterproofs its thick fur coating it with castoreum, an oily secretion from its scent glands.
- Castoreum is a chemical compound that comes from a beaver's castor sacks secreted as a brown slime that's about the consistency of molasses and smells like musky vanilla.
- Beavers mate for life, but if one mate dies the other one will find a new mate.
- Beavers mate when they are 3 years old. Male & female take care of their young. They stay with



- their parents for 2 years and can live for 20 years.
- Beavers' front orange teeth are used to gnaw through trees and are self-sharpen as they chew.
- Their tooth enamel contains iron which makes them incredibly strong, sharp and orange color.
- Beavers build dams to insure the water does not freeze solid during the winter, for protection against predators, to float food and building material, provides easy access to dam material and food.
- They are not regulated by government and can build dams, alter wetlands and stream flow.
- Beaver Ponds create fish habitat, purify water

- by allowing sediment to settle out, provide aquatic food for raccoons, bear, deer and muskrats.
- Their diet is of wood from willow, maple, birch, aspen, cottonwood, beech, poplar and alder trees and High Bush Blueberries.
- In the spring they eat cattails, water lilies, and other aquatic vegetation. They do not eat fish.
- As alarm signal beaver will forcefully slap the water with its broad tale to frighten predators and warn other beavers in the area of a possible danger.
- They have poor eyesight, keen sense of hearing, smell and touch, good swimmers but slow on land.



Bethany Presbyterian Church Chat



Just For Laughs.....



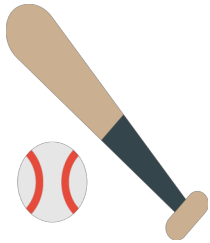
The minister was preoccupied with thoughts of how he was going to ask the congregation to come up with more money than they were expecting for repairs to the church building. Therefore, he was annoyed to find that the regular organist was sick, and a substitute had been brought in at the last minute. The substitute wanted to know what to play. "Here's a copy of the service," he said impatiently "But, you'll have to think of something to play after I make the announcement about the finances."

During the service, the minister paused and said, "Brothers and Sisters, we are in great difficulty; the roof repairs cost twice as much as we expected and we need \$4,000 more. Any of you who can pledge \$100 or more, please stand up."

At that moment, the substitute organist played "The Star-Spangled Banner."

And that is how the substitute became the regular organist!

BASEBALL GAME SUNDAY JUNE 5 AT 1:05PM



Bruce Hutchinson, member of the Fellowship Committee, is organizing a baseball game to see the Scranton Wilkes Barre Railriders play the Lehigh Valley Iron Pigs on Sunday, June 5th at 1:05 PM at PNC Field in Moosic.

Sign up at the front table in the sanctuary.

GOD'S 3 ANSWERS TO YOUR PRAYERS

1. YES
2. NOT YET
3. I HAVE SOMETHING BETTER IN MIND

Church Supports Community Pantry

Non-perishable items continue to be collected for Honesdale's Community Pantry. Items can be placed in the wooden box which is located in the ladies parlor in the back of the church. Donations of non-perishable items are always needed.

Proverbs 19:17- *Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the Lord, and He will repay him for his deed.*

Did You Know?



We have a box in which your questions, suggestions, or concerns can be heard? It is located in the vestibule on the right.

Did you know that you can get a copy of the session meetings minutes? Extra copies of the session minutes are always available in the vestibule.

Take one home or contact our wonderful Clerk of Session, Joan Green, and she'll be glad to give you a copy of the notes.

Church Complex



Rental Home



Church



The Wilder House



Barn

Inside Our Church



Journey Through Bethlehem Living Nativity

