



# Bethany Presbyterian Church Chat



January–February 2026

## Bless This House

THOUGHTS  
FROM THE  
HEART

Dr. Katie

When I was a child Perry Como sang a beautiful rendition of Bless this House that you can still hear on YouTube with Lyrics.

*Bless this house, O Lord we pray, Make it safe by night and day.*

*Bless these walls so firm and stout, Keeping want and trouble out.*

*Bless the roof and chimneys tall, Let Thy peace lie overall.*

*Bless this door that it may prove, ever open, to joy and love.*

*Bless these windows shining bright, letting in God's heavenly light.*

*Bless the hearth, ablazing there, with smoke ascending like a prayer!*

*Bless the folk that dwell within, keep them pure and free from sin*

*Bless us all that we may be, fit O Lord to dwell with Thee,*

*Bless us all that one day we may dwell O Lord with Thee!*

I Love the idea of blessing our homes for the New Year. Some of us have new homes, some of us are in the same home, some are in a dorm room. Wherever we find ourselves this year, I will be passing out chalk again to mark the door post above, not unlike the way the Hebrews spread blood over the door to let the angel know it could Passover their home and spare their first born in Egypt long ago.

*Exodus 12:1-13*

The Epiphany blessing is in keeping with the Passover, written upon the lintel which is the top cross beam in the main doorway of your home. The chalking should look like this: 20 + C + M + B + 26

These are the initials of the three wisemen connected with crosses, with the year on either side. 20 is our millennium and century, the C stands for Caspar, the M for Melchior, the B for Balthasar and the 20 stands for the year or decade as it is this year. It also means in Latin, "Christus mansionem benedicat" (Christ bless this house.)

There are two prayers for this blessing. The first will be said by me at our worship service to set apart this chalk to this special use.

*Bless O Lord this chalk, and let it be a help to humankind. Grant that those who will use it with faith in your holy name and with it inscribe on the doors of their homes the names of the wisemen, Casper, Melchior, and Balthasar, may enjoy health in body and protection of soul through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.*

**Then when you are marking or chalking your door's lintel, say this prayer:**

*Bless, O Lord God Almighty, this home, that in it there may be health, purity, the strength of victory, humility, goodness and mercy, the fulfillment of Your law, and continual thanksgiving to God the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. And may this blessing remain upon this home and upon the hearts of all who dwell therein. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

May this new tradition bring Christ close in your home or apartment and make it a shelter from the storms of this life.

Lovingly, Pastor Katie



## Bethany Presbyterian Church Chat



# Happy Birthday!!! Happy Anniversary!!!

### January Birthdays

9-Mariann Gunuskey  
12-Stacey Goodenough, Samantha Zimmer  
24-Addison Grace Swingle

### January Anniversaries

14-Gary & Angela Mitchell



### February Birthdays

1-Betsy J. Heckler  
2-Joni Stark  
7-Forrest Goodenough  
8-Brad Bates  
9-Susan Seber  
10- Kevin Rine Jr.,  
20-Haylee Goodenough  
21-Leslie Gunuskey  
22-Amanda Gunuskey, Kyler Gunuskey



### March Birthdays

1-Sharon Gunuskey  
2-Mark Zimmer  
4-Janet Oliver  
7-Rev. Dr. Jimmy Hopper  
9-Patricia Watson  
14-Bianca Plastaras  
30-Elle Plastaras



### March Anniversaries

16-Sharon & Glen Gunuskey



### PRAYER CONCERNS

Ruth Ann Swingle, Kathie Dulay, Sharon & Glen Gunuskey, Alyson Dame, Courtney, Anne, Michael, Deanna Sandlin, Steve & Mary Lou Popson, John G., Claire, Mrs. Sanderson.

### EPIPHANY STAR SUNDAY

January 11 is the first Sunday in Epiphany and once again we will be giving each person an Epiphany star. These stars have words on them like serving, gentleness, discipleship, etc. They are designed to be one more way that God can spiritually nudge us into remembering that we were created to respond to his calls and to love our neighbors as our selves. Once person who was having a particularly difficult year at work, found that their word, gentleness, reminded them regularly to respond with gentleness, diffusing many unnecessary escalations of conflict. These words are a gift.

**If you still have last year's star, please bring it to the church and deposit it in one of the baskets near the door so that a different person can be given that star word this new year.**

### 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?

Contact our wonderful Clerk of Session, Linda Zimmer, and she'll be glad to give you a copy of the notes. A set of them are on bulletin board in the Ladies' Parlor.



## Bethany Presbyterian Church Chat



### Christian Care Committee News



During the months of October and November we have continued to record the weekly attendance of our congregation. The totals are as follows:

|          | <u>Total</u> | <u>Average</u> |
|----------|--------------|----------------|
| October  | 133          | 33             |
| November | 179          | 36 (5 Sundays) |

We served communion to our Ellen Memorial Healthcare residents who continue to attend our monthly hymn-sings.

On November 26<sup>th</sup> we provided a time of fellowship and refreshments after the memorial service for Alice Martin. An assortment of cookies, pumpkin rolls and other baked goods were served to the guests who remembered Alice and shared stories of her life with her granddaughter and friends who attended.

The e-mail prayer chain has continued with each request passed along, recorded and reported to Session each month. Please contact Pastor Katie or Sue Seber to have a prayer request sent along the chain. Any questions about this committee may be directed to Sue Seber.

### Ordination of New Elders

January 18th we will celebrate a special service of ordination and installation of our new officers for the year. We are excited to have new elders Todd Watson and Sue Seber. Join us as we welcome their leadership. Church members are being invited to join one of ministry teams. The elders deeply desire to have more involvement from the congregation in the life of the church.

You don't have to wait to be asked to volunteer for this special form of discipleship. Come be a part of the life of your church.

### Lenten Wreath Devotional Leaders Needed

Beginning Sunday the February 22nd we will be starting something very special in our worship services for Lent. Like the advent candles and devotions that are done by families and clusters of good friends each Sunday of advent, we will be using a crown of thorns-like wreath and 5 purple, one red, and one white candle for Lent.



Instead of lighting them each week. We will extinguish one each week. There are readings provided for each Sunday.

Please talk to Pastor Katie to sign up and be given the readings.



### Sunday School

Round up all the kids you know for Children's Sunday School which is held each Sunday after Pastor Katie's youth message.





## Bethany Presbyterian Church Chat

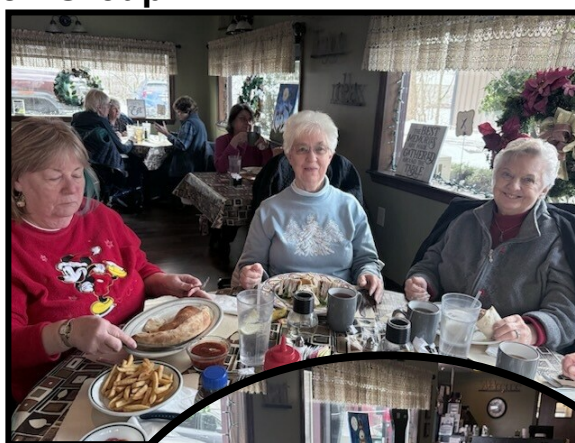


### Pumpkin Painting Party

The Mission Committee paid a special visit to Bethany Village to host a pumpkin painting party. Pastor Katie shared a Pumpkin Prayer, and the residents got busy with paint, stickers, stick-on jewels, and ribbon, creating some beautifully decorated pumpkins. Thanks to Sue Seber for making this happen. Sue was vigilant in keeping the pumpkins healthy in the days leading up to the event, moving them inside and outside as the temperatures changed.



### Ladies Lunch Group





## Bethany Presbyterian Church Chat



### Ash Wednesday Service February 18 at 6:30 PM

This year we will observe Ash Wednesday with a powerful service of scripture and song that like Lessons and Carols, uses the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm to tell the story of our Shepherd Jesus Christ.



Come join us for this moving presentation and receive Holy Communion and the option of Ashes to remind you of your mortality to grasp the full importance of the resurrection in your life personally. It really hits home.

### Eyeglass Collection



What would happen if you didn't have your glasses to read this Newsletter or if you didn't have your glasses to read the signs along the road.? It would be tough!

One of our outreach missions is to collect corrective lenses and usable glasses for those in need.

A box has been placed in the Ladies' Parlor for all the glasses you longer wear.

We will then give them to our local Lions' Recycle for Sight Program who partner with other non profit organizations to distribute them to those at the poverty level who cannot afford eyewear.

Daylight saving time will begin at  
2:00 AM on Sunday, March 8



### Church Supports Salvation Army Food 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.*

The account balances as of December 17:

General Account \$ 20839.42

Rental Account \$12755.87

Capital Account/Living Nativity \$2698.47

Savings Account \$34308.60

Money Market Account \$40557.24





## Bethany Presbyterian Church Chat



### NOTES FROM THE SESSION



The Session was unable to meet in person in November due to scheduling conflicts, so we tried something new—an email meeting. All were present, and business was conducted as usual.

We looked forward to welcoming two new Session members at the Congregational Meeting on December 21. We would like to thank outgoing Session member Emily Gunuskey for her service for the last three years. As a college student, Emily has many irons in the fire, and she has been squeezing our meetings into her busy schedule as often as possible. Thank you, Emily! We will miss you. The next Session meeting was held December 21. Please feel free to speak to a Session member with any questions or concerns you may have.

In early December, under the direction of Pastor Katie, church members gathered in the Blanche Heller Room to create Chrismons to decorate the church's Christmas tree. Chrismons are gold, silver, and white ornaments in the shape of Christian symbols. Some of the symbols include the Ichthus (fish), doves, crosses, crowns, and angels. We cut them from Styrofoam and covered them with glitter. Truth be told, the Chrismon makers were also covered with glitter. Special thanks to Pastor Katie for finishing those half-finished Chrismons and to Pat Rine for cleaning the glittery mess we left behind.



### Annual Healing and Wholeness Service

On the 15th of February we celebrate our annual Service of Wholeness and Healing at Bethany Presbyterian Church.

Scripture says that "if anyone is sick, let us call the elders and anoint them with oil." We have already been doing this on a case by case basis when someone is about to have surgery or has received a cancer diagnosis or other prayer concern. This will be a special Sunday Service of Wholeness and Healing.

Pastor Katie will have a special message on this theme. This is a wonderful, touching service that allows us to be anointed for our own healing or for the healing of someone we love.

Our Stephen Ministers and Pastors Katie and Jimmy will be available for prayer and anointing during worship. Join us and bring a friend. Let us start the New Year with healing and wholeness and Shalom, God's peace.



## Bethany Presbyterian Church Chat



### Greeter/Usher List 2026

#### January

January 4- Dave and Sue Seber

January 11- Kevin and Marian Knapp

January 18- Cindy Henry and Pat Rine

January 25- Mark and Linda Zimmer

#### February

February 1- Joan Green and Betsy Lacey

February 8- Frank and Helen Ward

February 15- Craig and Janet Olver

February 22- Morgan Delemarre, Linda Malakin & Sally Rutherford

#### March

March 1- Dave and Sue Seber

March 8- Kevin and Marian Knapp

March 15- Cindy Henry and Pat Rine

March 22- Mark and Linda Zimmer

March 29- Annie Dame and Joan Green

#### Winter

#### Congregational Meeting

January 18th will be our annual Winter Congregational Meeting, following worship that morning.

There are a number of things we approve at this meeting.

#### Officer Training

It's that time of year again, for Officer training. This year we will gather in the Wilder House on Saturday, January 17th for our annual officers' retreat for all Session members.

This is an important time in the life of our church and an excellent way to start out on the same foot as we move forward in faith. January 17th from 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. will be our training event.

Make time for this event. You will have a chance to pick committees within your groups, draw for a prayer partner, and help us dream and pray for God's vision to enfold us for the future.

#### Gift Ideas



Looking for a gift for that special someone who has it all?

The church's cookbook, Country Goodness, makes a great gift. It is only \$10, and the recipes are very tasty.

Copies are available in the Ladies Parlor in the back of the sanctuary. Don't forget to pick one up!

Good quality note cards that have a picture of the church on the front can also be found in the Ladies Parlor. Each packet is \$5.

Honesdale Monopoly games (donated by David Czapnik) are available in the Ladies' Parlor for \$15, originally sold for \$30.....such a bargain!

#### Fifth Sunday Brunch



Bring one of your favorite dishes to share and join us on the fifth Sunday of the month for great food and fellowship with one another.

The upcoming dates are March, May, August, November. Hope to see everyone there.

We'll relax, laugh, and enjoy great fellowship while tasting good food.





## Bethany Presbyterian Church Chat



### MISSION COMMITTEE NEWS

The Mission committee has been very busy over the last two months. November 24th found us in the DWH assembling 25 Thanksgiving baskets to give to those in need. When ready to be delivered we packed them in 4 vehicles and headed out to the different locations. All were received gladly and enthusiastically. There are pictures of the assembled baskets on the church's Facebook page.

During our November regular meeting we assembled 45 Christmas sleighs for our friends at Bethany Village. The other 7 residents will receive sugar-free candy for the diabetics, or soft foods, such as pudding and applesauce, for those who are not able to eat anything crunchy. All gifts were given to them in decorative Christmas bags and delivered to them on December 22nd.

In place of our usual hymn-sing our pop-up nativity was presented to them on Dec. 4th. They always enjoy the birth of Jesus shown to them before Christmas.

A Christmas tree has been placed in the ladies' parlor for the placing of Christmas cards for our church family. This provides a way to share cards without the expense of postage. The tree also displays items to purchase for the Christmas gift bags we provide to our Bethany Village friends. Some residents do not have visits from family or friends so this gives them the opportunity to feel our love and concern for them during the Christmas season. It has been reported that one man who received a gift bag last year is still showing it to everyone and telling them that our church gave it to him. He is extremely grateful for it. Thank you to everyone who has helped make this possible. Our giving does make a difference!

If anyone is interested in joining this committee, you may attend one of our monthly meetings on the 3rd Wednesday at 1:00 pm. We have lots of fun joining together to serve others in the name of the Lord!



On December 4, the Mission Committee took to the road with our Pop-Up Nativity. We presented the Nativity story through drama and song at both Bethany Village and Ellen Memorial. Both events were well attended, and residents and staff at both facilities were more than grateful for our presentation. The cast included Pastor Katie as narrator and an angel, Sally Rutherford as the tax collector, Frank Ward as Joseph, Sue Seber as Mary, Dave Seber as a shepherd, Joan Green as an angel, Linda Zimmer as a wise man, and Helen Ward on the piano.



The Mission Committee organized Thanksgiving baskets for those in our community in need. Although we have done this in past years, this year the need was overwhelming. Last year we prepared eight baskets; this year we made twenty-five! Our church family was generous as always and provided all the needed ingredients. Many thanks to all who contributed money or food items. God's blessings were so evident in the bounty that was provided. Thanks to Joan Green and Sue Seber for keeping all the donations organized and directing the packing of the baskets and to Helen and Frank Ward, Marilyn Czapnik, Dave Seber, Pastor Jimmy, and Linda Zimmer for helping with the packing and delivery.





## Bethany Presbyterian Church Chat



### Wayne County Children and Youth Thank Bethany Presbyterian Church

At its December 4 meeting, Wayne County Children and Youth formally thanked the Bethany Presbyterian Church for our donations of Thanksgiving baskets. Three of our church members are on the Children and Youth advisory board (Pastor Katie, Joan Green, and Linda Zimmer) and were able to meet one of the youth whose family was a recipient of the basket.

The youth was so grateful for what the church had done for her family. The Office of Children and Youth Services then recognized Bethany Presbyterian Church as the December 2025 Service Provider of the Month for going above and beyond by working with the team and the children it serves.

See their letter and certificate below.

#### WAYNE COUNTY CHILDREN & YOUTH SERVICES

COMMISSIONERS  
BRIAN W. SMITH, CHAIRMAN  
JAMES SHOOK  
JOCelyn CRAMER



JEANNINE F. LATSCH  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
LEATRICE ANDERSON  
SOLICITOR

Bethany Presbyterian Church

Dear Bethany Presbyterian Church

Wayne County Children and Youth Services appreciates the many social service agencies, medical facilities, legal and government entities, educational institutions, and private providers that collaborate with our team in order to address child abuse and child neglect in its many forms. We recognize that this response, advocacy, and support does not happen in a vacuum, but is most effective when many caring professionals work in partnership toward common goals and the objectives of child safety, permanency, and well-being in mind.

It is in this light that Wayne County Children and Youth Services would like to recognize Bethany Presbyterian Church as our December 2025 **Service Provider of the Month**. Without your dedication, compassion, and skillful interventions, we would not be able to provide the quality assistance that is needed for the children and families of Wayne County. Together we can further our mission of: safer children, successful adolescents, stronger parents, sound families, and supportive communities.

Bethany Presbyterian Church, thank you for going above and beyond by working with our team and the children that we serve. Your insight and perspective are greatly valued and respected by CYS staff. We are all honored to have you working with us to provide for so many youths.

Cordially,

Jeannine F. Latsch  
Executive Director

*Jeannine F. Latsch*  
*Jeannine F. Latsch*

#### SERVICE PROVIDER OF THE MONTH

AWARDED TO

*BETHANY  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH*

BY

Wayne County Children & Youth Services



*Jeannine F. Latsch*  
Jeannine F. Latsch, Executive Director





## Bethany Presbyterian Church Chat



Paint & Eat  
Day  
Great  
turnout  
and lots  
of fun  
had by all!!

On September 27 a group of artistic women gathered in the Wilder House for our second Paint and Eat. They created some beautiful fall scenes while enjoying some delicious munchies. A good time was had by all. Thanks to Linda Malakin for arranging this fun event.





## Bethany Presbyterian Church

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

Church email –  
[bethanypapresbyterianchurch@gmail.com](mailto:bethanypapresbyterianchurch@gmail.com)

On the web at:  
[www.bethanypresbychurch.org](http://www.bethanypresbychurch.org)



### ***Class of 2025***

Craig Olver  
Emily Gunuskey

### **The Session**

#### ***Class of 2026***

Pat Rine  
Sally Rutherford

#### ***Class of 2027***

Linda Zimmer  
Annie Dame

**Please inform  
Pastor Katie if you  
are aware of anyone  
in the hospital  
or in need  
of a visit**



Rev. Dr. Katheen (Katie) Kelly Hopper

814-496-9371

Email: [revdrkatie@gmail.com](mailto:revdrkatie@gmail.com)

Clerk of Session – Linda Zimmer  
Church Treasurer – Pat Rine  
Church Secretary – Marian Knapp

Choir practice is usually held Sunday mornings @8:30am September-May. New members are always welcomed and encouraged to join! If you have any questions see Pastor Katie



**Church sermons are  
Now available  
on our website and YouTube  
[www.bethanypresbychurch.org](http://www.bethanypresbychurch.org)  
Audio version will be made  
available every Sunday**