

Bethany Presbyterian

Church Chat



November-December 2023

Dear church family,

Two scriptures to keep in mind for this quarter's newsletter are from Psalm 147:11 – "The Lord takes pleasure in those who fear Him, in those who hope in His steadfast love" and from Deuteronomy 31:6 – "Be strong and of good courage, do not fear nor be afraid; for the LORD your God, He is the One who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you."

Hope and courage go hand in hand. When we are waiting, waiting, waiting for longed-for answers to prayer, it takes courage to continue to hope in God. The world, the flesh and the devil all tell us that it's easier to just give up and give in to disappointment. To keep praying with positive expectation requires a great amount of effort and perseverance. Giving up is easier for the moment; however, an "I-give-up" attitude will always hurt us in the long run. It's well worth the effort to keep our hopefulness alive.

God is well aware of our circumstances, and takes pleasure in helping us cope with them. So let us stand firm in His strength, refusing to give in or give up. In closing, I remind us all of Ephesians 3:20 – "Now to Him Who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us."

Looking for His return, Susan Seber, CLP

Christmas Eve/Candlelight Service

We will be having our traditional Christmas Eve/ Candlelight Service on December 24 at 7pm. Join us for traditional carols, scripture reading, a message by Susan Seber, the celebration of the Lord's Supper, and special music.

There is nothing more beautiful at Christmas than the warm glow of candles and melodious voices singing praises to our God in our elegant

sanctuary celebrate val of greatest love, Jesus our Lord.



as we the arri-God's gift of Christ



PRAYER CONCERNS

Marilyn Barbe, Ruth Ann Swingle, Sharon Gunuskey.



Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord

Join us as we prepare for the advent season on Sunday, November 26th after worship to decorate our sanctuary, the Wilder House, and outside the church.





Rainy Day Turned into a Wonderful Afternoon

Rain didn't stop twenty-five people from attending the church picnic on October 7th. Hosts Marian and Kevin Knapp were able to have it in their garage, so everyone stayed dry. It was a wonderful afternoon spent with the church family....having good food and good fellowship.

Thank you, Kevin and Marian, for doing a wonderful job hosting this event!



Coffee/ Refreshment Hour

Please join us each week after worship, a cof-



fee hour with refreshments is held. There are always interesting conversations and great fellowship during this time.

Account Balances as of Oct 24, 2023

General Account \$28085.52 Rental Account \$3687.72 Capital Account/Living Nativity \$3903.24 Savings Account \$78701.01 Money Market \$40033.66

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 lis as a vendor. On the Bill Pay Page Enter:



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.



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.



Happy Birthday!!! Happy Anniversary!!!

November Birthdays

7-Rick Dulay 11-Sally Rutherford, MaryAnn Swingle 24-Frank Lacey 25-Marchel Paule-Green 28-Linda Malakin 29-Anita Rine



November Anniversaries

23-Jim & Karen Budd

January Birthdays

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



Third Sunday Brunch

A covered potluck brunch is held the third Sunday of the month after worship.



Come join us enjoy fellowship and see what wonderful cooks and bakers we have in our church family.

December Birthdays

5-Craig Olver, Lisa Hutchison 6-Clara Kelly 11-Kevin Swingle 16-Seth Gunuskey 18-Linda Brenner 25-David Seber



February Birthdays

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



February Anniversaries

6-Kevin & Anita Rine



Children's Sunday school classes Have Resumed Each Sunday during worship!





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!

WHAT'S NEW WITH THE LADIES' LUNCHES?



Many ladies from our congregation along with 1 or 2 from other churches have been gathering for lunch during the past few years. Most of the restaurants we have frequented have

been in the local Honesdale area.

God has blessed our group with additional friends to fellowship with each month resulting in getting to know one another better and better. A good church family along with good friends are surely a blessing from God for which we are so thankful.

Care to join us? See Sue Seber for reservations.

Christian Care Committee News



Over the last three months we have continued to record the weekly attendance of our congregation. The totals for July through September are as follows:

> July August September

Total	Average
190	38
126	31
145	36

We continued our home communion visitation to Marilyn Barbe when she was feeling well enough to do so. Vickie was contacted to see if Clark would like home communion, but his daughter had arranged it. Vickie appreciated our inquiry. The e-mail prayer chain has continued with each request passed along, recorded, and reported to Session each month. Clark Bonear passed away September 23. Details about the viewing and funeral service were sent via the chain to keep individuals aware. Many different categories of cards were sent to several individuals over the

last three months, namely, get-well and encouragement.

Phone calls were made to check on those who had not attended in a few weeks. Any questions about this committee, contact any member or Sue Seber, chairman.





Session Notes

The Session continues to meet monthly, with Rev. Samford serving as our Moderator. He has been incredibly helpful to the Session in answering questions and keeping us focused on the work of the church. We are very appreciative of Rev. Samford!

Stewardship Sunday is on November 5th. All active members should have received a Stewardship Letter with a pledge card enclosed. We will receive the pledge cards on November 5th and look forward to seeing many of you in church that day. If you are unable to attend, you are asked to return the card to the church through the mail. This will help the Stewardship/Finance Committee prepare the budget for 2024.



It's hard to believe that the Season of Advent is upon us already. Time seems to go by very quickly and we are always looking ahead so we are prepared. The first Sunday of Advent is the first Sunday in December and the fourth Sunday of Advent will be Christmas Eve morning this year. We will be lighting the Advent Wreath each Sunday and we will have a beautiful Christmas Eve service, led by CLP Susan Seber.

We will have our annual poinsettia display in the sanctuary on Sunday, December 17th. You will find the form for poinsettias in this newsletter.

The Annual Meeting for the election of officers and review of the budget will be held on Sunday, December 10th, immediately following the Worship Service. The Ordination and Installation of new officers will be held on Sunday, December 17th, during the Worship Service.

The approved meeting minutes and the Treasurer's Reports are on the bulletin board in the Ladies' Parlor for your perusal. As usual, if you have any questions, or would like to meet with Elders, we are available after church or you may set up an appointment at your convenience.

The flower calendar is on the bulletin board in the Ladies' Parlor. If you would like to place flowers in the sanctuary in honor of or in memory of someone just sign up for any date. Thank you in advance.

It continues to be an exciting and busy time for the Session as we look forward to the future to see what God has planned for the Bethany Presbyterian Church. We ask that you keep the Elders, the PNC and the Congregation in your daily prayers for God's guidance in the future.

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS OF ELDERS! Please call if you need any kind of assistance!

Susan Seber, CLP – 570-352-4136 – Available	in case of emergency
Mark Bartocci – 570-251-4266	Dan Gallik – 570-352-4761
Joan Green – 570-253-3625	Emily Gunuskey – 570-647-9887
Bruce Hutchison – 570-251-2595	Marian Knapp -570-647-9282
Craig Olver – 570-253-4161	Yvonne Plastaras – 267-895-5105
Linda Zimmer – 570-470-0881	





The following people have agreed to lead our Worship Service for the next quarter. Please join us in welcoming them each Sunday.

- 11/5/23 Susan Seber, CLP 11/12/23 - Rev. William Samford 11/19/23 – Rev. William Samford 11/26/23 – Elder Bruce Hutchison
- 12/03/23 Susan Seber, CLP 12/10/23 – Rev. William Samford 12/17/23 – Rev. William Samford 12/24/23 – Susan Seber, CLP – Morning Worship 12/24/23 – Susan Seber, CLP – Christmas Eve Service 12/31/23 – Elder Mark Zimmer

We will continue to observe the Sacrament of Communion on the first Sunday of each month. Many thanks to all of the above named people for sharing their faith and leading us each Sunday.

CAROLING SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16TH



Wanna get in the Christmas spirit? Well, singing carols, giving to others, and being with other believers will most certainly make you feel joyful this holiday!

Join us on Saturday, December 16th serving our Lord and enjoying the life He has given us by singing Christmas carols to shut-ins. After caroling we'll grab a bite to eat, so mark your calendars and bring smiles to others.

CHRISTMAS EVE CROCK POT CREAMY HOT CHOCOLATE

1.5 cups Heavy Cream

1 can sweetened condensed milk

2 cups milk chocolate chips

6 cups milk

1 tsp. vanilla

Put all in crock pot on high for 2-4 hours or low 6-8 hours. Enjoy

BETHANY'S CHRISTMAS IN THE VILLAGE

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9TH



This year's Bethany's Community Christmas in the Village will be held on December 9th.

Plans are being made for our participation in the event. Sarah Williams has graciously offered to bring her sheep for petting in a fenced-in area in the park. We will have costumed shepherds in the pen, too. Each child will be given an ornament with information about our church on the back and along with copies of the Christmas story.

Free refreshments will be served. More information will be given about what the Bethany Library will be doing as the event approaches.

Help will be needed that day, so mark your calendars to attend this community event!

Taste Buds Were Rejoicing



People's taste buds were rejoicing as ice cream sundaes were served in October during Coffee Hour.

Terry Lawrence's homemade hot chocolate syrup and hot peanut butter sauce were enjoyed over Breyer's Ice Cream. If you miss that Sunday, we'll be having it again, so stay tuned!





Greeters and Ushers November-December 2023

<u>November</u>

5 Kevin & Marian Knapp 12 Dave & Sue Seber 19 Joan Green 26 Kevin & Marian Knapp

December

- 3 Pat Rine & Cindy Henry 10 Mark & Linda Zimmer 17 Joan Green & Susan Thomes 24 Kevin & Marian Knapp &
- Dan & Lorraine Gallik
- 31 Kathie Dulay & Aaron Haviland

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, Joan Green, 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.

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.

Christmas Is Coming!

On Sunday, December 3rd, we enter the season of advent. Advent means "coming." We celebrate four Sundays leading up to Christmas as a way to prepare our hearts and our homes for the arrival of God's son, Jesus Christ, our Savior.

On December 3rd, 11th, 17th, and 24th, Sunday services will include special readings and the lighting of our advent wreath. Bell choir and singing choir have been working hard practicing songs for the holiday season.

Our Christmas Eve service will be December 24th at 7:00 PM when we will celebrate Jesus' birth with our beautiful Candlelight Service. It will include traditional carols, scripture reading, a message by Susan Seber, the celebration of the Lord's Supper, and special music. There is nothing more beautiful at Christmas than the warm glow of candles and melodious voices singing praises to our God in our elegant sanctuary as we celebrate the arrival of God's greatest gift of love, Jesus Christ our Lord.



Newsflash



If you see a newspaper article or picture of any member or friend of the church, please give it to Terry Lawrence.

It will then be put in the weekly

announcements, and it will go to the church bulletin board. So, keep your eyes open for the news!!





News From Mission Committee

Happy Thanksgiving! It's time again to reach out to those in need. This year the Mission Committee, with your help will offer Turkey dinners to anyone who might otherwise go without. Like last year, Thanksgiving baskets will be given to Children and Youth Services, and anyone suggested by the congregation. We need funds and food items. Check out our display in the Ladies Parlor and see what items are needed. The collection will continue from now until Sunday, November 19th. Should you know of anyone that would benefit from a basket this year, please let us know by November 5th. Thanks to everyone for making this such a successful event last year!

With Christmas right around the corner we begin to think of our friends at Bethany Village. Last year we were able to provide a gift from the church to all residents. They were so well received we thought we would do it again this year. More to come on that in early December.

The Mission Committee meets the first Sunday of each month after church in the Wilder House. We are always open to new members but if a year-long commitment is not possible, you are certainly welcome to help with any project that moves you. Everyone is welcome to attend. No need to tell us in advance.

We would like to thank the congregation for their continued support. With your kindness we were able to collect 25 shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child. You are all so generous in helping to spread God's love for his people. Warm wishes to you and your family for a safe and Happy Holiday season.

God bless,

Betsy, Joan, Linda, Sue and Yvonne

Fun Times with residents at Bethany Village







BUILDING AND GROUNDS

- Adopt-a-highway was done on Sept. 9. Thank you to all that helped.
- The leaves were removed from the ditch and in front of the church. Thank you to all that helped.



- The painting of the exterior of the church is completed and all the black railings were painted as well.
- The window shutters have also been replaced.
- Thanks to Ken Smith for doing the upkeep on the lawn mowing.
- The field behind the barn was mowed and the hay was removed.
- The 2024 budget is being worked on.
- CSI in Waymart has a work release program. They worked on projects at the DWH, such as painting the stairs, railings, doors ,etc. Thank you to Rick Dulay. for overseeing that project.
- We will be setting up the luminaries for Christmas Eve service, weather permitting.
- Thank you to those that do the behind-thescenes projects.
- 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.
- Members are Kevin Knapp-chair, Linda Zimmer, Mary Evans, Pat Plastaras, Craig Olver. Submitted by Kevin Knapp

Taking Care of Our Earth

You may ask does the Bible say anything about taking care of the Earth?

Yes, it does! In Genesis 2:15, it says "The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it."

Following God's word to care for our earth, members of our church participated in Roadside Beautification Program called Adopt-A-Highway.

They picked up trash from the fairgrounds to our church. Praise, God for these dedicated servants!

Stewardship and Finance Committee

The Stewardship and Finance Committee has been working on our annual stewardship campaign in order to prepare the proposed 2024 Church budget.

The pledge cards that you recently received and are also in the church pews will be collected with the offering on November 5th, but we will accept them after that date. Thank you for your support.

Committee members include Co-Chairs Janet Olver and Lorraine Gallik, Patricia Rine, Elle Plastaras, and Mark Bartocci.

COOKIE EXCHANGE!!!!!



Would you like a variety of cookies to serve guests over the holidays, but don't have a lot of time to make lots of different cookies? We can help solve that problem. We will be having a cookie exchange on December 10th after worship. Each person who wants to exchange cookies should sign up with their name and type of cookie they would like to make by December 2nd. Once we have a number count on how many people are interested, we then notify each

person on how many dozen cookies they will need to make; one dozen should be made for each person who signs up. If you have any questions, contact someone on the Fellowship Committee.

The "Meaning" Of Poinsettia

The Poinsettia is known as the "Christmas star" or the "Christmas flower." It is also the December birth flower.

This winter flower's association with Christmas comes from a Mexican legend. The legend is told that a child with no means must take a gift to a Christmas eve church service.

Being penniless, the child picked weeds from the side of the road. The congregation witnessed a miracle when the weeds turned into beautiful red and green flowers on the altar. These weeds, of course, turned out to be poinsettia.

The Poinsettia display will be on Sunday, December 17th. This display not only brings beauty to the Sanctuary but gives the congregation an opportunity to remember loved ones who are no longer with us or honor special people in our lives.

If you would like to purchase one in memory or in honor of a loved one, please complete the section below and return it with payment to Joan Green before or after any church service.

ORDERS MUST BE RECEIVED BY Sunday, November 26, 2023

If you need to mail them, please send to:

Joan Green 599 Bethany Turnpike Honesdale, PA 18431

Checks can be made payable to Bethany Presbyterian Church Donation of \$11.25

Questions? Call Joan at 570-253-3625 or email hgreen@ptd.net

IN MEMORY OF:

IN HONOR OF:

GIVEN BY:

PLEASE PICK UP YOUR FLOWERS AFTER CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE







Update from the Pastor Nominating Committee

The PNC is working hard to find the right person God is calling to this church. We have broadened our search by sending out our "Want Ad" to Presbyteries in more states.

Pastors looking for employment fill out an information form about themselves, their work experience, degrees obtained, and they answer a variety of narrative questions. A computer then matches up our goals and responses to pastors' responses. We have had matches with approximately 20 pastors, and five pastors have seen our want-ad and have shown an interest in our church. The PNC is reviewing all these applications to decide which pastors would be a good fit for our church. Once the PNC feels that they would like more information on a specific pastor, they have zoom interviews with those pastors. We have had some zoom meetings and will continue to do so, until a pastor is chosen.

When we do find someone we like, we will meet with the pastor in person. He/she will come to our area, see the church, and meet with the PNC and the Presbytery's COM committee. Right now, the PNC is thinking ahead (for when they do find someone) and want to have everything ready for an in-pastor visit, whenever that may be.

Decisions are being made about where they will have their meals, where they will stay, when the PNC will meet with them, and what sights we think would be beneficial for them to see. After a pastor visits us, the PNC will discuss the visit and prayerfully vote to determine if he/she is the one God is calling for us. If the vote is nay, the PNC will continue to evaluate more candidates. If they vote yea, then the pastor will be notified and the next steps will start to happen where the church will meet the pastor, hear a sermon, and will vote to decide if this pastor is the one for us.

The committee is remaining very optimistic that all things happen in God's timing, and He will reveal the right person to serve Him and our church.

Donations Need for Local Food Pantry

The Wayne County Pantry Program is sponsored through County Government. It is operated with a Pantry Board compromised of private citizens and a lead agency-Wayne County Human Services. Board members are also coordinated at each of the pantry sites. The Wayne County Pantry Program has five sites in strategic areas in the coun-

ty to serve eligible residents. Our church has been actively involved with the food pantry program for years, and now food is specially needed with so many out of work. Please donate non-

Place	Times	Location Damascus Township Building 60 Conklin Road, Damascus					
Damascus Pantry	1-3 PM third Thursday						
Honesdale Pantry	10- 1 PM second Tues.	Tri County Beverage 214 Willow Ave. Honesdale					
Lakeville Pantry	11-2 PM fourth Thursday	Paupack Township Building 25 Daniels Road Lakeville					
Lakewood Pantry	12:30 -2:30 third Wed.	Northern Wayne Health Ctr 412 Como R Lake Como					
Newfoundland Pantry	11-1:00 second Friday	Dreher Township Building 899 Main St. Newfoundland					

perishable food items to the pantry by placing items in the box in the Ladies' Parlor in the back of the church.





LIVING NATIVITY



Our Journey Through Bethlehem: A Living Nativity is a mission outreach we have offered the community for eight years. In 2009, about 60 people attended, in 2010, about 200 people, in 2011, between 400 and 500 people (144 were children), in 2012, 588 people (209 were children), in 2013, 440 people, in 2014, 413 people, in 2016, 344 people and in 2018, 459 people attended totaling approximately 2,954 visitors over the years.

In September, twelve people attended a nativity meeting to discuss the possibility of having it this year. Kevin Knapp gave a report about

the barn flooring stating he had a contractor look at the barn floor to see how sturdy and safe the floor system is now. The contractor stated that the floor joists on the left side of the barn were too far apart and would need additional joists and new plywood. The right side of the barn just needed new plywood.

After discussing the time frame to fix the barn floor and modifying the script, it was decided to wait until next year to have the nativity. We will form small subcommittees to look at the various aspects of the nativity. The committees will include decoration, parking, script, food, costume, and advertising committees. It was decided that the script committee will start as soon as possible. We will, also, investigate the possibility of



the Presbytery paying for some of the expenses we incur during this community outreach.

Eyeglass Collection

What would happen if you didn't have your



glasses to read this Newsletters 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 nonprofit organizations to distribute them to those at the poverty level who cannot afford eyewear. Each pair of glasses donated can help give the gift of sight!

Concert

Eighty-seven people attended the Miller Concert on September 16th where three people performed a variety of toe tapping, hand clapping Christian songs. The singers and organized evening were coordinated by Helen Ward. Thank you so much, Helen, for all your hard work and to all the people



Free Baked Goods

The Weis market in Honesdale is donating their "old" baked goods to our church. Each Sunday, Ron and Terry Lawrence

pick up these baked goods and drop some boxes off at the Honesdale Community Church (formerly the Baptist Church) and keep some baked goods for our own coffee hour and, also, to pass out to our attendees. This is such a wonderful way for us to support fellow Christians!

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do					mistletoe															



Class of 2024

Emily Gunuskey

Mark Bartocci

Craig Oliver



Church sermons are available

Clerk of Session – Joan Green Church Treasurer – Pat Rine

Church Secretary – Marian Knapp

In case of a pastoral emergency, please contact Sue Seber CLP 570-253-6881. 570-352-4136 or email susan55@ptd.net