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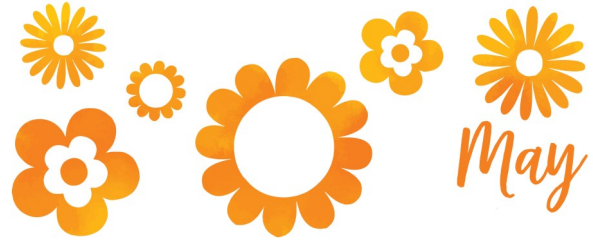
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Its May! Yay.

I need a new month, because it seems like April has overstayed its welcome. The calendar only gives it 30 days, but it has used up many more, maybe 90. Have your days begun to run together? Rather than checking the time, you check the day, lest one slips by without being noticed.

New rhythms are forming in this strange time. Hours and minutes used to pull us through our day, but now we have other measures and motivations. Bed times and wakeups are no longer governed by the clock. Meals happen when they should, not when they must.



New rhythms are emerging in our church life. For me, worship time has risen in prominence. It spreads throughout my days, as I think of you, and prepare to lift up your hearts. Then the days become like stepping stones to our livestream experience. Then the afterglow continues in conversations and responses, as it slowly moves toward anticipation of our next worship time. I like that cycle much more than clocks and calendars.

Enough abstraction, let's talk about May church experiences you can set your clock by.

Throughout the month, prepare to "Lift Up Our Hearts." Have a candle available to light with me, and get a stone, and paint or draw your heart on it. We will use those things to commit ourselves to resurrection life.

May 3<sup>rd</sup> is Youth Sunday. Be sure to join in worship and hear the Word through young voices.

We will enjoy virtual communion on May 10. Please get a dinner roll sized piece of bread to break with me during worship, and a cup of juice to share with those present in your worship space.

On May 17, we will recognize celebrate our graduates, lest they become the forgotten class of 2020!

And in it all, let's remember to "be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle." I can't wait till I can see you in church.

Pastor Bill

*Our Pastors and leaders are monitoring developments daily in state guidance during the COVID-19 crisis. We are considering circumstances wherein we can reopen our sanctuary for services, and our building for daily operations and activities. Until the way is clear, the facilities remain closed until further notice. Leave messages on the church answering service or email/text to contact staff. Thank you for understanding.*



We had a wonderful time together as a family for Easter as we celebrated Holy Week watching the virtual worship services together. Here is a family picture we took on Luke's first Easter.

We are excited for Youth Sunday on May 3<sup>rd</sup> as we have more youth than ever getting involved in this worship service to lead us in worship from their homes through our virtual Sunday Worship. Also our youth group is continuing to grow through our google hangouts on Sunday's at 4pm and Wednesdays prayer lunch at Noon. We are excited to meet youth where they are in the comforts of their home and the technology that is part of their everyday lives with school now being online.

We want to continue to help them grow closer to God through prayer and in the word while sharing our highlights and lowlights to be connected in fellowship through virtual means. Our youth teachers are contacting our youth every week to make sure they are doing ok and if they need anything such as a listening ear or a prayer.

Our discipleship team is thinking about new ways that would help our children, youth and adults continue to grow in their relationship with Christ at this time. For example, Sunday School is continuing to update our group curriculum and right now media discipleship resources that are available on our website at [bethanypresby.org](http://bethanypresby.org).

You will also notice that we are now introducing Children's worship and messages from our young families with Children and Sunday School teachers in our virtual worship service. The worship bulletin will now include a children's worship sheet to help our children be more engaged in worship than ever before.

I'm so glad that the sermon in March on an "Invitation to Obedience" was well received by our church and friends all over the world. I will continue to pray for God's protection upon our church, family, friends, and all nations. The next sermon I'll be preaching will be called the "Heart of Faith" on April 26<sup>th</sup> be sure to check it out on our website or Facebook live to be inspired by God again. Let's continue to pray for one another as God can move mountains even with a faith of a mustard seed. If you need anything from the church please contact us as we are called to serve. Let's always remember that we are the church wherever we are.

- *Pastor Jae*



### **Musical Notes** *by John Henninger*

## **Worship in a Challenging Time**

As I write this article, people have been in the 'stay home' mode for over 6 weeks. We are all uncertain how long this will be necessary to maintain public health safety.

In the midst of this time, we have been so fortunate to be able to meet every Sunday virtually. It has been both a challenge and a pleasure for me personally, to work toward engaging services of worship that are live streamed into your home.

Pastor Bill, Pastor Jae and I meet virtually at least once a week to plan and bring these worship services to you.

We are very grateful to all those that help make this happen; the staff; elders and deacons, the Worship Team and a host of others. Connie and Mike Segeleon and Shaun Martinec have been hands-on each Sunday helping with the technology and music.

Please keep one another in prayer during these times, knowing that we will, when it is safe, gather together as the Body of Christ!



## Session Notes:

- ⇒ Bell ringing on May 3. We have received a request from the Bridgeville Mayor's office, that originates from the Pennsylvania Mayors Association, asking all churches that have bells to ring them on May 3rd at 7pm to honor all first responders and healthcare workers. Bethany's bell will be ringing loudly, with Mike Suchoza as our bell ringer. Take a moment to hear the bells ringing and to offer a prayer for all those keeping us safe.
- ⇒ UPCOMING MEETING SCHEDULE – Because of Memorial Day, Session Team meetings are scheduled for next Monday, May 4, and the Session meeting is scheduled for May 18. A reminder, that due to the Covid19 situation and virtual meetings, team meetings may be held at another time, other than next Monday night.
- ⇒ If you are not currently receiving emails from Bethany Church, and would like to be, please contact the church office.
- ⇒ Jeana Dollear has been hired as a part-time Media and Communications Specialist. She will be helping us to manage our live stream events and social media platforms; and to develop more effective communications and outreaches to our members. Her email address is [marketing@bethanypresby.org](mailto:marketing@bethanypresby.org).

*Please pray for these members or family of members who have recently passed.*

- John Nowak, father of Jeff Nowak on April 11, 2020
- Jerry Kohlmyer on April 13, 2020
- Betty Talerico, mother of John Talerico on April 18, 2020
- Fred Gossic on April 21, 2020

*"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him,  
who have been called according to his purpose."*

*Romans 8:28*

A food bank collection will be taking place this weekend. We are offering a pick up option and a drop off option. If you would like your food picked up please call the church office and someone will come to your home on **Saturday, May 2nd**. For those wanting to drop off their own items, this can be done on **Monday, May 4th from 11:00AM-2:00 PM or 5:00 PM –7:00 PM at the church.**

**Food Bank Items Needed:** CEREAL, CANNED SOUP, CANNED FRUIT, CANNED VEGGIES, PEANUT BUTTER, TUNA, BOXED JELLO'S/PUDDINGS, "HAMBURGER HELPER" TYPE MEALS, ENVELOPE/BOXED RICE/PASTA (ie RICE A RONI, KNORR), MEAL KITS, MAC & CHEESE.

The Bridgeville Community Food Bank is needed now more than ever. For our April 18<sup>th</sup> distribution we assisted 105 families which included 48 children, 84 adults and 76 elderly. An additional 18 families were helped with emergency provisions.



### ***A message from the Stewardship Team:***

To our Bethany family – we miss you but hope you are staying safe! The Stewardship Team wanted to take a minute to remind you of the importance of your continued giving to Bethany Church. Although these are uncertain and unprecedented times, the mission opportunities and needs continue for Bethany. Each month, Bethany continues to pay our staff and our ongoing expenses – in addition to providing comfort and support to our community in this time of need. Unfortunately, contributions have dropped off significantly since we have stopped gathering in the church for Sunday service. We understand that many have been impacted financially or are fearful that they will be impacted before things return to normal. This is certainly understandable but we must continue to trust in The Lord during the difficult times. I look to the scriptures for comfort at a time like this and I always return to one of my favorites – Psalm 23.

“The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name’s sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.”

So please trust in God and remember how blessed we all truly are...and continue to support Bethany Church so we can continue to do God’s work! Please consider joining the growing numbers of online givers that have signed up and successfully contributed to the church through our new online giving platform available at [www.bethanypresby.org/give](http://www.bethanypresby.org/give).

God Bless,

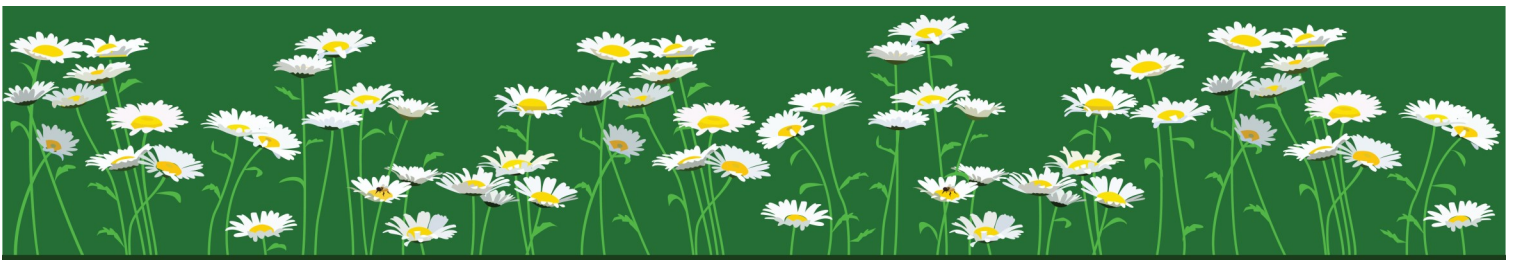
*Barb Mours*

### **Pastor Nominating Committee Update:**

We are in the midst of completing the Ministry Information Form (MIF) to be posted on the Church Leadership Connection (CLC). For those of you that don't know, the MIF provides prospective applicants information about our church and the type of pastor we are seeking for our call. CLC provides the forum in which to connect to those potential applicants.

Prior to the pandemic, the PNC was making great strides at completing the MIF. The congregational survey provided great insight into the needs of our church and has been analyzed. Thank you to all who responded! Now, we are using that information to finalize the MIF. We hope to have the MIF submitted to the by the end of the month.

The pandemic has presented some challenges in meeting because of various personal demands but we are still trying to move forward. Please keep the members of this team, Pam Petrow, Becky Yanak, Judy Davidson, Sarah Paviol, Jim Myers, Tim Nagy and Bob Julius, as well as our work and the church in your prayers.



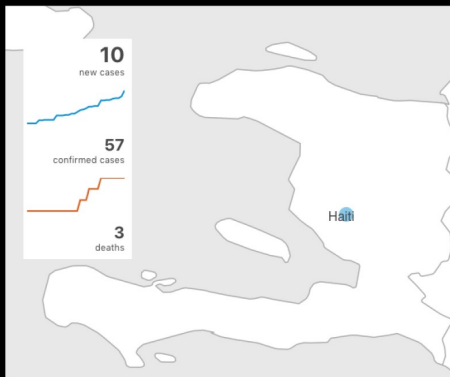


# Mission Team Updates

contact us at:  
[mission@bethanypresby.org](mailto:mission@bethanypresby.org)

## SCRIP GIFT CARDS

If you would like to purchase giftcards please contact our mission team at:  
[giftcards@bethanypresby.org](mailto:giftcards@bethanypresby.org)



## COVID-19 has hit Haiti!

So far, not in the Lacroix area. Pastor Pierre said 25 cases in the Port Au Prince area so far. However, this will most likely change daily just as in the US. Please pray for our brothers and sisters in Christ that do not have the ability to socially distance from one another. The largest public hospital in Haiti is still under construction after the earthquake in 2010 further complicating the already fragile health-care system in Haiti.

## Mission Team Supports Bethany's Diaper Bank

With a donation of \$250 to be used for diaper replenishment. In preparation for increased demand during the COVID-19 crisis the Mission Team is also giving the Diaper Bank a monthly allocation for long term support of this ministry. To request diapers contact Barb Crawford at: [barbandjack1964@hotmail.com](mailto:barbandjack1964@hotmail.com)

Your 2020 Team: Nina Morse-Chair, Connie Segelon-Secretary  
Deb Pyle, Bill Pitzer, Dick Pyle Carl Suppo, Barb Crawford, Laura Dugan,  
Deanna Lambert, Laurie Sysak, and Jim Davidson

## Bethany Helping during the COVID-19 Crisis

A team of three sewers were able to provide Chartiers Mental Health Center with 70 reusable masks that will be used by staff and patients in the residential program.



## Bethany Helping Those In Crisis

The mission team hosted a virtual team meeting in mid-March in response to the developing COVID-19 pandemic. The team felt called to support our local homeless shelters. The mission team requested Session Mission funds in the amount of \$3,000 to be used for City Mission in Washington, PA and \$3,000 for Family Promise in Crafton, PA. Both of these organizations are local and facing increased needs related to social distancing guidelines and food insecurity. A motion to the session requesting these funds was presented at the March session meeting. This was voted on and approved. We would like to thank our session for their support. We want to let you all know we are so very proud to be a part of such a generous and loving congregation.



## Haiti Child Sponsorship Update

As of today, we have 50 sponsored children. Two additional children were sponsored last month. Thank you! We would love to get at least ten more sponsored before the Haiti Summit in September. The Mission Team is now sponsoring a child. If you would to sponsor a child, please contact Deb Pyle at 412-680-2028 or [dfp0630@gmail.com](mailto:dfp0630@gmail.com)

# MAY

## Birthdays

05/01 Joseph Mizia	05/11 Roberta Gerstacker	05/20 Macario Gonzalez-Perez
05/01 Alice Eiszler	05/12 Jim Davidson	05/20 David Verduci
05/02 Jackson Gullo	05/13 Alyssa Padula	05/21 Connor Schultz
05/02 Helena Brickner	05/13 Karen Talerico	05/21 Austin Stitch
05/03 William Youmans	05/13 Brittany Edney	05/21 Evan Stitch
05/04 Phyllis Matthews	05/14 Sandra Gastgeb	05/21 Linda Manzini
05/04 Bethany Orosz	05/15 Brett Ambrose	05/22 Logan Smith
05/06 Brenda Woleslagle	05/15 Amy Gastgeb	05/22 Faith Ruehle
05/06 Ann Doty	05/16 Liam Edney	05/22 Lara Bizzack
05/07 Russell North	05/16 Colleen Heasley	05/23 Katelyn Morelock
05/08 Tom Harold	05/16 Susan Nagy	05/24 Samantha Hartnett
05/08 Timothy Gastgeb	05/17 Dylan Nock	05/25 J. D. Cellone
05/08 Valeria Lorenzi	05/17 Kathryn Evans	05/25 Ian Suppo
05/08 Kara Julius	05/17 Denise Leigh	05/25 Wendi Duffill
05/08 Jody Romanelli	05/17 Maximilian Nagy	05/26 Peggy Walsh
05/08 Jenna Foltz	05/18 Carolyn Morelock	05/26 Margaret Bolam
05/09 Alex Harbison	05/18 Angela Holzworth Tournay	05/27 Anna Jackson
05/10 Brandon Orosz	05/18 Susan Witwicki	05/27 Rebecca Findley
05/11 Norbert Ndamira	05/18 Elaine London	05/28 Robert Montagna
05/11 Larry Gastgeb	05/18 Judy Vietmeier	05/29 Cindy Lamberti
05/11 Jacquelyn Nixon	05/19 Patricia Frye	05/29 Sara Sunderlin
05/11 Kaycee Nelson	05/20 Joseph Szallar	05/29 Terri Berton

**It is time to think about Summer Camp!** Bethany offers a scholarship to youth members who are attending a Christian Summer Camp. We will cover \$100 of the registration fees. Below you will find some local camps with as much information as we could find about their Summer 2020 plans. Covid-19 is a moving target, so please check the individual websites for the most up to date information. If

there is a camp that you would like to attend that is not listed below, please email [discipleship@bethanypresby.org](mailto:discipleship@bethanypresby.org) with the details. For scholarship application and requirements go to: <https://tinyurl.com/bethanycamp2020> !



- **Cresfield - Slippery Rock, PA**— As of 4-20-20 Crestfield is still planning on-site summer camps.
- **Ligonier Camp - Ligonier, PA**— As of 4-20-20 still prayerfully discerning whether there will be on-site 2020 camps. Developing a refund policy that reflects the uncertainty of the time. More info will be available on their website after May 1.
- **New Wilmington Mission Conference - Virtual in 2020**— The conference has decided to go digital for this year. More information will be made available on their website as details are worked out. This is a great “camp” experience for people of all ages (attendees range in age from weeks old to adults in their 90s!) Consider tuning in this year and joining hundreds of others from around the world on the campus of Westminster College in 2021!
- **Jumonville - Hopwood, PA**— As of 4-20-20, all of Jumonville’s grounds are currently closed to the public, but they are still accepting registrations for summer camp. More information will be made available on their website.
- **Pine Springs - Jennerstown, PA**— All June camps have been cancelled, but July camps are still being evaluated. More information will be made available on their website
- **Camp Lambec-West Springfield, PA**— On-site summer camps are scheduled to begin on June 28. If camps must be cancelled, all payments including deposits will be refunded.

## **Regeneration: the New Birth**

Scripture Reference: John 3: 1 – 8

While my fishing guide was gently polling our boat toward some giant tarpon, out of nowhere he asked me a rather obscure Biblical question. Being caught off guard, I answered that I was not an expert on eschatology (end times theology) but that I would give him an answer when I got home. I have known this guide for about 12 years and as we discussed the Bible he told me he wanted to read it. So I sent him Ligonier's *Reformation Study Bible* along with a reading guide when I got home. Hmmm.....was he born again? Time will tell. His subsequent text messages were encouraging. In this month's article we will see clearly, I hope, that the new birth is both supernatural and scriptural.

The physical birth of a baby is an occasion for excitement and joy. However, a spiritual birth into the family of God is a greater cause for celebration. Knowing Christ is the greatest experience in life. Being used by God to help others know Christ is the second greatest experience in life. I love telling you about my experience with my fishing guide!

Now let's read John 3:3 focusing on the word 'again'. The Greek word for again is *anōthen* and it has a two-fold meaning. This word can mean "again" and it can mean "from above". The use "from above" can be found in John 3:31; John 19:11; James 1:17 and James 3:15,17. When translating "born again" we can understand its meaning as (1) a second birth and (2) a birth from above. This birth from above comes vertically from God acting upon a human soul. It is a supernatural birth that accomplishes what a natural birth cannot. Human tradition, religion, morality and effort cannot bring about the new birth. Now read John 3:6. Jesus emphasizes the difference between a natural birth of the flesh, and a supernatural birth by the Spirit.

Words carry power and the Word of God wields a power unrivaled by any form of human communication. No one is born again independent of the Word of God. Thus, the new birth is a scriptural birth. The Word of God must be planted within the human soul and God must sovereignly tend that seed to bring forth life. Nicodemus addressed Jesus as "Rabbi" which means teacher. Jesus taught by sowing the seed of scripture in the hearts of His listeners, including Nicodemus. Read Romans 10:17. Now turn to Luke 8:5-15, noting that Jesus goes into detail about sowing seeds in various human hearts. Consider 1 Peter 1:23-25. What is important to believers in these verses is the fact that we are **not** born again of perishable seed but of imperishable seed. We are born again through the enduring Word of God. We are born again to eternal salvation.

Turn now to James 1:18. What should be clear in this passage is that the *will* of God is the *cause* of regeneration and the *Word* of God is the *means* of regeneration. A harvest of human souls is the *result* of regeneration.

Finally, one of my favorite examples of both a supernatural and scriptural regeneration is what happened to two men walking with Jesus on the road to Emmaus. Their hearts burned as the scriptures were opened to them by Jesus. Please read Luke 24:13-32.

Now back to my fishing. It sure seemed to me that the Holy Spirit was working in the heart of my fishing guide coupled with his desire to read the Bible! Seemed like a supernatural and scriptural new birth to me! Truly amazing! Worth praying about!

As an aside, I hooked two tarpon, one well over 100 pounds, but I am a neophyte tarpon fisherman and I failed to land either of those two fish. There will be a next time! God is great and so is His creation! To wrap this up, consider the following from John Piper, a contemporary and popular Baptist pastor from Minneapolis, MN.

*God makes the Word his instrument in the new birth, and the way the Word works in the new birth is by awakening faith.*

Yours in Christ,  
Doug Bovard

## ***Bethany Golden Oldies***

It is my wish and prayer that this finds you happy and healthy. We are going through a difficult time right now. Gathering together on Thursday, May 21 has not been decided. I know there are many questions about upcoming trips.

The Wednesday, June 17th trip to Jennerstown will depend on Lenzner Bus Company and the theater we will be attending. I'm fairly certain we will be able to enjoy our picnic luncheon on June 25th. The trip to see Esther has been rescheduled for late August. More details will be available in May.

Continue to stay safe, pray for those who have lost family members since we met in February and pray for those who are sick. Last of all, pray for our country. God Bless America.

-Judy Gardner



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