

DECEMBER 2020

CHURCH NEWSLETTER

Monthly Updates from Bethany Presbyterian Church

Pastor Update

BY: PASTOR BILL YOUMANS

Straight on 'Til Christmas. My wife, Nancy, and I sat next to each other in a comfortable quiet. Both busy with work, typing away at our computers, when a chime breaks the silence. The notification alerts me to an email from Nancy, who had also received the same email from herself! She chuckled at her own joke, believing she had pulled one over on the world, "I'm not even at work, but my office email was still sent!" We both agreed that she was brilliant and technology, perhaps, also had a good side.

Having fixed pre-scheduled appointments helps to ground us in the knowledge that wherever we are, whatever we are doing, it will happen. The seasons of the church have been a reliable reminder to stay focused on Jesus for 2000 years...and I like it.

This year, so many of us have felt like we have lost our way. Like sailors navigating rough seas, we are clinging to our lighthouse to stay oriented. This beacon of hope is a reassuring feeling that we will make it through the storm with confidence and a light heart.

Let this Christmas season be your lighthouse. Without fail, on December 25, we will wake up and rejoice at the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Waves may be hitting us from every direction, but we are not lost. Sure, we may need to zig a little here and zag a little there, but if we remain vigilant, and stay the course, God's path will guide us toward the light, steadily, and certainly.

During this season of Advent, I ask you to "Come and See" what God is doing among us. Let us come together to follow the light, which is guiding us toward being a vibrant church, connected and serving more than ever.

Like the shepherds being awakened in the night by the angels rejoicing and announcing the birth of Jesus, let this be our calling to find our way home to Bethany church. Just as the shepherds set course for Bethlehem, let us set a path to reinvest ourselves in church life.

This will look different for everyone, but if we reinvest ourselves, together, we can continue on the course to bless others with the heart of Jesus. I'm glad for the good things that happen no matter what, like Christmas. See you in church!

HERE'S WHAT'S UP!

**2, 3 - ADVENT
CALENDAR, MUSIC
NOTES, AND TEAM
UPDATES**

**4, 5, 6 - PNC UPDATE,
NEWS, UPCOMING
EVENTS**

7, 8 - DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Associate Pastor Update

BY: PASTOR JAE CHO

I hope you had a happy Thanksgiving. I heard the church passed out more turkey dinners to the community than it has ever done before. There is so much to be thankful for and I am deeply humbled by all the ways people served and partnered with Crossroads this year. And our youth group also helping with making boxes as well.

This is an exciting time of the year. Advent is coming soon where we wait expectedly that Christ will be born. This year we will have Advent start on November 29th to December 20th at both services 8:15am and 10:45am. Our Christmas Eve service will be December 24th at 6pm for family service and 9pm for the candlelight service.

With Melina our children's director back we have Kid's on the Move program to help with childcare and children.

For Youth Group in December, we start off by having another BYG movie night showing "Elf" on Sunday, December 6th from 4pm to 6pm.

Our Youth Christmas Party will be on December 13th this year from 4pm to 6pm. We will have a gift exchange so please bring a \$10 gift. Also we will have games and fellowship as well. This is one of our youth favorite events of the year.

The last 2 weeks of December we have no confirmation and youth group on Sunday for Christmas break.

As you may already know, my last days of serving at Bethany Presbyterian Church is coming soon. I have enjoyed serving at Bethany these past several years alongside such wonderful people who have a heart of Jesus and wants to love like Jesus.

Thank you for welcoming our family to the church and all your generosity and kindness towards our newborn son Luke. As we discern our next steps we will be praying for our future in where God is leading us and we will pray for Bethany as God leads the church with the new senior pastor on the way soon.

Advent Season Calendar

December 6 - Second Sunday of Advent

- One service at **10:00 AM**. Congregational Meeting to follow.
- Meet the Pastoral Candidate.
- Service will be in-person and live streamed through zoom.
- See page 4 of the newsletter for more details.

December 13 - Third Sunday of Advent - *Come and See a New Way*

- In person services at 8:15 AM & 10:45 AM
- Live stream at 10:45 AM on Bethany website.

December 20 - Fourth Sunday of Advent - *Come and See a New Love*

- In person services at 8:15 AM & 10:45 AM
- Live stream at 10:45 AM on Bethany website

December 24 - Christmas Eve

- Services at 6:00 PM & 9:00 PM
- 6:00 PM - Family Service - In person and livestreamed
- 9:00 PM - Candlelight Service - In person only

December 27

- One service at 10:00 AM, In person and live streamed



Music Notes

BY: JOHN HENNINGER

Remaining Constant. During these 'pandemic days', it seems we are really challenged in so many ways. We have had to do so many things so differently this year, the way we learn, the way we worship, the way we visit family. We are used to traditions. One of those that we have had to forego this year at Bethany is the Advent Cantata. Early on in the pandemic, we learned that singing in groups of any size was one of the most risky things we can do. We have found ways around that in our weekly worship. We have a dedicated group of song leaders who help lead our hymns each Sunday for those gathered in person, and those worshipping remotely. The words from the third and fourth verses of "O Little Town of Bethlehem" have been visiting me these past few days, and they help put things in perspective for me:



How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is given! So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heaven. No ear may hear his coming, but in this world of sin, where meek souls will receive him still the dear Christ enters in. O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray; cast out our sin, and enter in; be born in us today.

We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell; O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel.

Church Updates

STEWARDSHIP: There is Still Time to Share with the Heart of Jesus

It's not too late to return your 2021 commitment card! It's critical that we hear from everyone so we can accurately plan our programming, mission activities and church life for the next year. Please mail in or return your commitment card to the church or as soon as possible. You can also complete an online form at www.bethanypresby.org/stewardship

MEMBERSHIP: Bring Your Friends to Bethany

Do you know someone who is interested in joining Bethany or are you new to the Church and are looking to get more involved? The Membership team is hosting a Welcome Meeting to learn about Church opportunities, meet fellow new members and enjoy fellowship with our membership team. Contact Bill Paviol, membership chair, to attend: 412-722-3102 or membership@bethanypresby.org.

PASTORAL NOMINATING COMMITTEE: Meet the Candidate; Candidating Service and Congregational Meeting

The Pastor Nominating Committee has met frequently over the last year, both as a committee and with several pastors from around the country, in the search for a new pastor for our church. We are thrilled to share that God has revealed his candidate for Bethany's next Senior Pastor to us and we are ready to share that good news with all of you!

Meet the Candidate

On Saturday, December 5, 2020, the PNC will be hosting a series of brief Zoom calls for members to virtually meet the candidate and his wife. Space will be limited in order to provide quality time with the candidate and answer questions. If you'd like to register, please call the church at 412-221-5132 or sign-up online at www.bethanypresby.org/pnc-zoom-meeting

Candidate Service

On Sunday, December 6, 2020, the Session of Bethany has approved our candidate to preach at one service to be held at 10:00 a.m. This service will be both in-person and virtual. Unlike our normal virtual service, this service will not be live on Facebook but will instead be accessed via Zoom. Log in instructions are as follows:

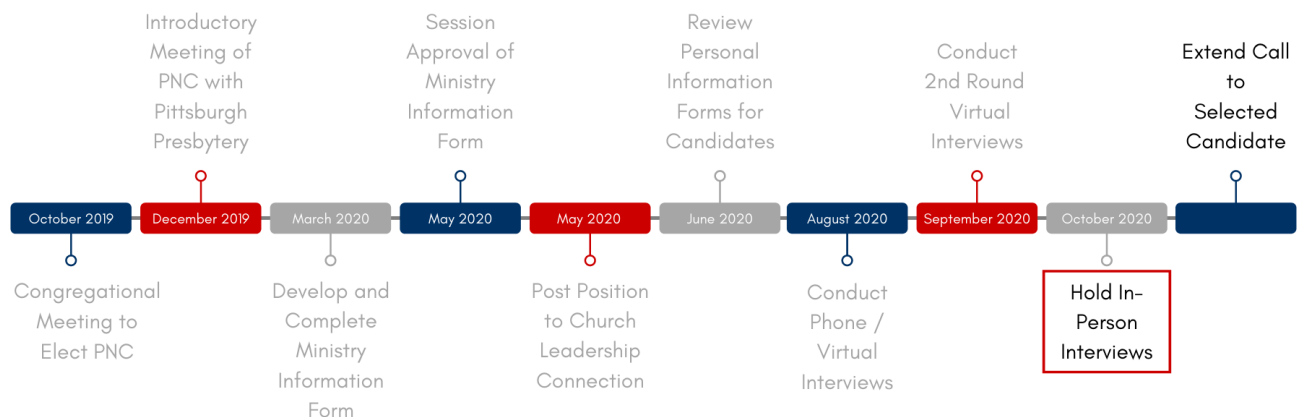
Join Zoom Meeting <https://zoom.us/j/92268872309> Meeting ID: **922 6887 2309**

or Dial **1-929-436-2866** Meeting ID: **922 6887 2309**

For those who choose to join us in-person, we will be following our Covid19 guidelines – temperatures will be taken, masks are mandatory and social distancing will be enforced.

Congregational Meeting

The Session has called a congregational meeting to begin immediately following the 10:00 a.m. service on December 6, 2020 to vote on the recommendation of the PNC regarding the candidate. In-person attendees will be asked to stay, and virtual attendees will remain on the same Zoom meeting. In-person attendees will be voting by paper ballot. Virtual participants will be voting via Mentimeter, a secure anonymous system being provided by the Pittsburgh Presbytery. Instructions for these voting methods will be provided during the meeting.



News and Announcements

Food Bank Angel Tree - Drop Off Gifts by December 13

Angels for the Food Bank Angel Tree will be on a table near the rear doors of the church. Angels can be picked up on Sunday or during church office hours. (M-Th 8:30-3, F 8:30-12) If the doors are locked please ring the bell to be let in. Please sign the sheet with your name. Please return your gift to the church NO LATER than Sunday, December 13th. Please DO NOT WRAP THE GIFT! - You may include wrapping paper or a gift bag. Thanks so much and blessings to all!

Printed Offering Envelopes - New Schedule for 2021

Bethany will be transitioning to a quarterly mailing schedule for printed offering envelopes in 2021. You will receive your three-month supply of envelopes, including special offering collections, in December 2020, March 2021, June 2021 and September 2021. If you have any questions regarding this change, or if you'd like to stop receiving printed envelopes and change to online giving, please contact Kim McCann in the Finance Office (finance@bethanypresby.org) or any member of the Stewardship team.

End of Year Notice: Submit All Contributions by December 31

With the end of the year quickly approaching, please remember that all 2020 contributions must be received by the church no later than December 31, 2020. IRS general rules state that checks placed in the offering plate in January 2021 cannot be recorded as a 2020 contribution, even if they are dated in 2020. The only exception to the rule are checks dated and postmarked in 2020.

New Blog Post: First Annual Drive-Thru Trunk or Treat Highlights



The first annual drive-thru Trunk or Treat defied expectations and proved that hard work plus consistent faith in God is a recipe that will never fail. Special thanks to our 30+ volunteers, including event coordinator Sharon Salvini, for organizing this wonderful event enjoyed by more than 250 local children! Read more testimonials and see photos: www.bethanypresby.org/trunk-or-treat

Amazing Thanksgiving Meal Delivery



Bethany Church and Crossroads teamed up for their annual Thanksgiving Meal Delivery for the 7th year. This year 1150 meals were delivered. That number was almost 400 more than last year. This year many families are having hardships due to the pandemic shut downs and people were not travelling. Bethany and Crossroads were able to help those in need by providing a warm and hearty meal. Thank you to all the volunteers to make this years dinner delivery a success!

Upcoming Events

VIEW CHURCH CALENDAR

The Church calendar is a great resource to see the on-going events that are taking place at Bethany! To see a list of upcoming events, as well as a daily breakdown of other meetings, gatherings and groups, please visit: www.bethanypresby.org/events

MEN'S GROUP: JOIN US FOR LUNCH

The Men's Lunch Group will resume their regular lunch schedule at the Bob Evans restaurant in Bridgeville. The group gathers at 12:00 p.m. on the second and fourth Friday of the month. Joe Oyler will be leading a short Bible study, which will then lead into a discussion on current happenings over lunch.

KIDS ON THE MOVE: JOIN US FOR A CHILDREN'S FELLOWSHIP HOUR

We're so excited to welcome you and your children back to the nursery! We've put in place several protocols to make sure that your family stays safe and healthy. As a reminder, the nursery will be open for both church services at 8:15 and 10:45 a.m. Learn More and Volunteer: www.bethanypresby.org/nursery

BYG EVENT: HOLIDAY PARTY - DECEMBER 13

Join the BYG for their annual Christmas party at 4:00 p.m. on December 13. We would like to make this a memorable night for all. If you'd like to volunteer to help with decorations or refreshments, please let us know. This year, we will also be hosting a White Elephant gift exchange - to participate, please bring a gift. Register Today: www.bethanypresby.org/events/byg/holiday-party

BETHANY BLOOD DRIVE DONATION - DECEMBER 13

Bethany is partnering with Vitalant to host a "double donation" blood drive campaign, Save Lives - Feed Families. When you sign-up to donate blood, a donation will also be made to the Bridgeville Community Food Bank. Each contribution will feed as many as 25 families experiencing food insecurity. As an added bonus, Vitalant will also be testing successfully completed blood donations for COVID-19 antibodies to find potential donors who could give convalescent plasma in the future. www.bethanypresby.org/event/blood-drive

GOLDEN OLDIES - DECEMBER 17

Bethany Golden Oldies will gather again on Thursday December 17 at noon. Yes, we social distance and we hope that we have a wonderful attendance as we celebrate the Christmas season and the Birth of our Lord Baby Jesus. We prefer that you make a reservation. No reservation - you are still welcome to attend. Our program is Christmas music by our favorite teenage Starlette who has entertained us several times. Come and spend time with long time and new friends. It will do you good to get out, laugh a lot and enjoy a tasty meal. Doors open at 11:00 a.m. You will need a mask and you will sign in. We will follow all the social distancing rules imposed by Bethany and the government.

Membership Updates

CONDOLENCES

- Dorothy Maxwell passed away on November 16, 2020. Services were private. Dorothy was a long time member who volunteered with the Preschool. Please call the office if you would like to send her family a card.

**Please call the church office (412-221-5132) if you have any updates to your family's information or if you have a change of address.*



December Birthdays

12/01 Devin Underwood	12/09 Lynne Cawley	12/20 Anna Grafe	12/29 William Pitzer
12/02 Joyce Bartolomeo	12/09 Elizabeth Lacher	12/20 Kelly Wilhelm	12/30 Lori Calgaro
12/02 Landon Smith	12/09 Barbara Rahr	12/21 Nikolas Krieg	12/30 Gary Casciola
12/02 Nolan Veneski	12/10 Halie Pattison	12/21 Michael Talerico	12/30 Bonnie Miller
12/03 Karen Lucas	12/10 Kelli Pattison	12/22 Haley Anderson	12/30 Tyler Nicholson
12/04 Louella Campbell	12/12 Luke Cho	12/23 Robert Loebig	12/30 Cheryl Smith
12/04 Naudia Lutz	12/12 Edward Ostroskie	12/23 James Myers	12/30 Lynne Suchoza
12/05 Sheri Darpino	12/13 Lauren Butt	12/23 Lane Ramage	12/30 Thomas Willhite
12/05 Mason Gastgeb	12/14 Karl Salvini	12/25 Daniel Hartz	12/31 Charles Edwards
12/05 Jenifer Goff	12/14 Meagan Smith	12/25 Bernard Kramer	12/31 Kris Sabin
12/05 Kristen Grossi	12/15 Douglas Bovard	12/26 Maggie Regan	
12/06 Tera Brickner	12/15 Jonathan Bovard	12/26 Abby Sysak	
12/06 Donna Carman	12/15 Karalee Nelson	12/26 Krista Trimmer	
12/06 Thelma Cimarolli	12/17 Ronin Colvin	12/27 Elizabeth Durocher	
12/06 Karen Harkins	12/17 Beckie Harbison	12/27 John O'Brien	
12/08 Dawn Salerno	12/17 Bridget Schneider	12/27 Pamela Petrow	
12/08 Michael Venum	12/19 Ava Faulkner	12/28 Alexander Furman	
	12/19 Thomas Nass	12/28 Harry Stefanski	

We Three Kings - Pandemic Parody

Words by R. G. Huff, Sung to the traditional "We Three Kings" by John Henry Hopkins Jr.

1. *We three kings are six feet apart. We'll Purell before we depart.*

We've been tested as suggested . Careful are we, and smart!

REFRAIN:

Ooooo Do our masks go with our gowns? Do these face shields hide our crowns?

We've had plenty twenty, twenty! Still we head t'ward David's town.

2. *Melchior is now quarantined! Stuck in Persia, so it seems.*

No more travel, on a camel 'til there's a good vaccine.

3. *Bathasar has lost his taste. Eating food is such a waste.*

How disquieting now he's dieting. Life now is slower paced.

4. *Caspar left the caravan. he postponed his stargazing plans.*

No more roaming, Caspar's homing, scrubbing his reddened hands.

REFRAIN:

Still our masks clash with our gowns! Face shield hide our toppled crowns!

We've had plenty twenty, twenty! Soon we'll head t'ward David's town.



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