

JANUARY 2021

CHURCH NEWSLETTER

Monthly Updates from Bethany Presbyterian Church

Pastor Update

BY: PASTOR BILL YOUMANS

MORE THAN THE STARS IN THE SKY

It's Christmas Eve 2020. Feeling a bit fatigued by a week of planning and coordinating a busy church calendar. The fire from the Christ candle is slowly spreading throughout the sanctuary, like Pentecost morning. Suddenly, the lights go out. Each burning candle transforms into a twinkling star and a wave of peace covers my soul. What a great summary of our brief journey together. Spirit filled people twinkling all 'round, creating beauty in the darkness.

Who knew 2020 would become such a dark year! Yet, somehow God had prepared us for it. Practically overnight, we began live streaming worship. Our leaders rose to the task of staying connected in a year of social distancing. With remarkable unity of spirit, we served with the heart of Jesus. In a conversation with a family in the thick of a serious illness I asked how they were doing. I then listened with joy to stories of connection and caring. She ended by saying, "Pastor, I'm feeling it." The 'it' she spoke of is the deep feeling of belonging to God's people through Bethany, the presence of twinkling stars in her dark night.

Your new pastor will soon be here, Reverend Brian Janssen. I am thrilled for the discoveries in store for him- twinkling stars, all 'round. I am so proud of our elders and deacons, and their thoughtful, smart spirits of faithfulness. Brian will soon become a guardian and shepherd of your heritage of spiritual maturity. And you will rejoice in his unique giftedness and preparation to enter this fellowship and lead you on in God's call to be a vibrant congregation. God is adding another star to light your sky.

In the midst of it all, I want to whisper my goodbye and God's speed. What a privilege it has been to minister to and with you. Knowing you has already become a bright spot in my sky! So many fond memories will go with me. Daily jovial conversations with our dear volunteer receptionists and amazing staff. Shared ministry and collaboration with Pastor Jae. The memorial stops at the ninth hole with the guys, to toast the great men who have blessed Bethany Church in the past. The many interesting and engaging people who make up our membership. The teamwork of figuring out 2020 on the fly. All the "yesses" for trying new things. I say my goodbye knowing you are ready and equipped for God's next steps for Bethany Presbyterian Church.

My last day among you is January 15th. God has been kind to lead me to serve another church beginning on February 1st. Pastor Jae is well on his way to his next place of ministry. Pastor Brian is arriving on January 13th. I borrow from the Apostle for my final words: "Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus."

HERE'S WHAT'S UP!

**2, 3 - ASSOCIATE
PASTOR, NEW PASTOR**

**4 -8 - MUSIC NOTES,
NEWS & UPCOMING
EVENTS**

Associate Pastor Update

BY: PASTOR JAE CHO

Happy New Year! It's a new beginning for Bethany in 2021 which means lots of changes too. I hope you are excited for all that God has planned for you in the new year. This is the year of many transitions. We have a new senior Pastor Brian Janssen coming soon. Joan will continue to teach confirmation class with Niki. Our youth leaders Joan, Mark, Alec, Steve and Bethany will continue to help guide the youth group. Our youth group will have lots of fun and wonderful events planned as a calendar have already been sent out for the month of January.

Sunday school will continue the same as last fall so please look at our website for the latest resources.

Here are some of the events happening for the Bethany Youth during January.

- January 17th at 4pm to 530pm BYG goodbye party with Pastor Jae at church.
- January 29th Senior High Youth Lock-In. Please look at the Bethany Youth Calendar for more information.

I had a great time leading worship and preaching for the last time at Bethany Presbyterian Church on December 27th. I even made an attempt to sing one of my favorite Christmas songs "My Grown Up Christmas list." And what surprised me the most was the ending of the service where I received a wonderful goodbye video from the congregation that I will never forget. Thank you for all the ways you have encouraged me throughout my time here at Bethany. Thank you for all the wonderful emails and phone calls I have received from you as well. As I continue to pray and discern God's calling for me and my family I will always be grateful for the opportunity to serve all of you. May God bless you with new hope, love, and joy as he surprises you as well.



Welcome Pastor Brian Janssen

It is an exciting time at Bethany as we prepare for our new senior pastor, the Rev. Brian Janssen, to begin on January 13. We invite you to join us for worship on Sunday, January 17 to welcome him on his first Sunday.

The Rev. Dr. Brian Janssen, better known as Pastor Brian or PBJ, comes to us with nearly fifteen years of experience in ordained ministry. Brian began ministry in Harrisburg and has spent the past 12 years at Heritage Presbyterian Church in the North Hills of Pittsburgh. He is married to his amazing wife Lisa who works in finance for American Eagle Outfitters. Together they have a dog named Buddy and currently reside in Wexford, PA. Rest assured, they are looking forward to crossing rivers and bridges soon as they look for a new home close to Bethany Church.

Brian and Lisa are excited to begin a new chapter in ministry and in their lives at Bethany Presbyterian Church. The call of God has been made readily apparent in all of the conversations with the PNC and Brian is looking forward to getting to know the congregation, engaging in ministry and mission, and begin prayerfully discerning with the church the direction God is calling us as we move into His future. It was important to Brian to find a call where the people were friendly and passionate about sharing the love of Jesus with their neighbors.

Brian and Lisa love traveling, spending time with family, exploring the amazing city of Pittsburgh, and rooting for the Steelers, Pirates, and Penguins. They can't wait to begin ministry at Bethany and look forward to meeting you all and sharing the love of Jesus with people in Bridgeville, and around the world.



FIVE FUN QUESTIONS WITH PASTOR BRIAN:

1. What was the last book you read? *"The Forgotten Man: A History of the Great Depression"*
2. What's your favorite color? *Blue*
3. Where is the best place you visited? *St. Lucia*
4. What are you looking forward to the most about moving to the South Hills? *No McKnight Rd.*
5. Who is the person you most admire? *Besides Jesus, my wife Lisa Janssen.*

Music Notes

BY: JOHN HENNINGER

A NEW DAY

As we turn the calendar, and the page, on 2020, we remember the numerous challenges that faced all of us throughout the year. We had to learn to do so many things in a different way, we had to discover new, safe ways to worship during a pandemic, we scaled back family and friends gatherings, many of us became accustomed to new ways to work remotely.

Our prayers for 2021 are lifted as we have a glimmer of hope in medical intervention and the promise of a vaccine.

As we move into 2021, a few opportunities for your considerations. As the risk of singing in groups is still high, we will explore new technologies where we can sing in the safety of our homes, and bring these singers together virtually. I invite not only Bethany Choir members to take part, but anyone who might be interested in helping lift our voices in these challenging times.

Session Update

The presbyteries, synods, and General Assembly of our Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) annually make financial assessments, called Per Capita, of members. Our session is committed to paying the full assessment for all the members on our roll because we treasure our relationship with the wider church, and the congregation benefits when members contribute their share to the whole.

Why do we pay this assessment known as per capita? Because we value our Presbyterian heritage and identity. As a congregation we derive many material benefits from our Presbyterian association, including the oversight of preparation for ministers and the mechanisms for calling new ministers, and the maintenance of the wonderful Presbyterian historical collection in Philadelphia. Our per capita also supports the nation and global outreach of Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA).

Our per capita assessment for 2021 has remained unchanged from 2020. It is \$34.79 per member. We look forward to your participation in per capita giving, an expression of your commitment to ministry both within our congregation and beyond.

Upcoming Events

**All events subject to change. Please look on the Bethany website for the most up to date calendar of events.*

CHURCH LEADERSHIP MEETINGS FOR JANUARY:

- Session Teams – January 18, 2021 at 7:00PM
- Deacon – January 18, 2021 at 7:00PM
- Session Meeting – January 25 at 7:00PM

UPWARD BASKETBALL

The 2021 season of Upward Basketball is coming up soon. Practices are scheduled to start the week of January 18th, and our first game day is Saturday, January 30. We have made changes to the program this year that we hope will provide our players and coaches a safe place to play. Some of the changes include shortening the game and practice times by a few minutes in order to allow time to sanitize the gym and equipment between groups. Spectators will be limited and by invite only. There will not be a concession stand this year. Referees will be using hand buzzers instead of whistles. Additionally, we only have 30 teams of K5 through 2nd graders, which is fewer teams than we have had in the past, so we will be able to space out some of the practice time and game time options.

If you are looking for an opportunity to help this year, we are in need of referees, game day and practice day cleaning/traffic flow monitors, and game day devotion leaders. Please contact Beckie Price at upward@bethanypresby.org, or 412-427-5941, if you are able to help. Thanks!



GOLDEN OLDIES

The monthly luncheon is scheduled for January 21, 2021 at noon. We hope that we will be able to hold the event. Please look on the church website for the latest updates. Or call the church office.

CHANCEL FLOWERS FOR 2021

If you are already on the schedule from 2020 for flowers, you will automatically be put on for 2021. If you are attending church virtually and do not wish to order flowers this year please call Jill in the church office. She can put your flowers on hold for the year. Flowers are \$30 for a vase. All of our flowers are ordered from local florist Broniak & Kraf in South Fayette.

Youth Group Update

Exciting things are happening in BYG land. We ended 2020 with our annual Christmas Party. This year we were entertained by "Magic Dan" and his magic show. He had many crazy assistants, but everyone's favorite was, Tyler "Bubbles" Nicholson.

Following the magic show was the "white elephant" gift exchange. Things were a little different this year. Not everyone was able to participate in person due to the pandemic. Not to worry! Technology allowed those students to be a part of the gift exchange and "Santa" Joan delivered their gifts after the party. Ashley Farabaugh loved the hat she received for her gift!

After our holiday break, we came back together on January 3, 2021. It is time for New Beginnings! To kick things off, we split into teams - youth vs. adults - to try our luck at a Nativity Escape Room. Are you are wondering who could solve the mysteries of the nativity and escape first? It was a close competition, but in this case, age won out.

The BYG is always eager to see new faces. Please join us every Sunday in January from 4:00-5:30 in the youth lounge. If in person is not an option at this time, please reach out to Joan Kundra at joankundra68@gmail.com to have youth group activities sent your way.

Hope to see you all soon!!

Joan, Mark (Orange Man), "Smart" Alec, Bethany and Steve O



Membership Updates

CONDOLENCES

- Lou Cimarolli died on December 3, 2020.
- Bob White, father of Megan Smith, died on December 3, 2020.
- Beverly Lytle died on January 2, 2021

Please keep all of the family and friends of our recently departed members in your prayers.

**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.*



January Birthdays

1/01 Payton Jackson	1/12 Gladys Kennell	1/22 Pamela Postler	1/28 Cathy Smith
1/04 Matthew Colton	1/13 Diane Dal Bon	1/22 Jason Smith	1/28 Richelle Sommerfield
1/04 Martha Del Conte	1/14 Michael Ruehle	1/23 Jerri Davis	1/30 Lisa Jo Colwell
1/04 Stephen Snyder	1/15 Joan Kerlin	1/23 Daniel Gillis	1/30 Robert Dal Bon
1/05 Richard Radzik	1/15 Marilyn Richards	1/23 Lorrie Just	1/30 Philip Gossic
1/06 Tammy Dady	1/16 Timothy Nagy	1/24 Joseph Findley	1/30 Hudson Venum
1/06 Raymond Gilmore	1/16 Emily Pyrdek	1/24 Terrence Kohlmyer	
1/06 Nathaniel Goff	1/17 Owen Morse	1/25 Cynthia Richards	
1/06 Huck Julius	1/17 Judith Wolstoncroft	1/25 Jenna Valentine	
1/07 William Miller	1/18 Gunnar DeRoss	1/25 Joseph Verducci	
1/07 Jane Venum	1/19 Barbara Mours	1/26 Roland Drugmand	
1/07 William Woods	1/19 Karin Nass	1/26 Collin Galbraith	
1/08 Richard Tessmer	1/20 Carol Visser	1/26 Eric Gregory	
1/10 Patricia Nowak	1/21 Abigail Byers	1/26 Matthew Powell	
1/10 Randall Wilkerson	1/21 Patricia Chilton	1/27 Shalyn Muraco	
1/11 Shanan Goerd	1/22 Tyler Evans	1/27 Lori Rastetter	
1/11 Nolan Walsh	1/22 Debra Hayes	1/28 Peggy Daube	
1/11 Eda Woodward	1/22 Lucy Joesbury	1/28 Lisa Schultz	

News and Announcements

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Church staff will continue to work in office and at home during the month of January. The building doors will still be locked. Staff is usually in the office most mornings. Please call the office first before stopping down.

DONATION REQUEST: DIABETES/SMALL MEDICAL SUPPLIES

Jean Roemer has learned of an upcoming opportunity to send diabetes and small medical supplies to Malawi. If you have any diabetes supplies and/or small medical supplies that you are not using, we would be grateful for the donation. Donations can be dropped off on Sunday mornings, or contact the church office to make arrangements for weekday drop offs.

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. This new mailing structure has helped the church achieve savings by reducing the mailing schedule while maintaining the same envelope delivery service we have had in the past.

Thank you for your continued generosity! 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.

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