

CALENDAR FOR THE WEEK

December 15th - December 21st

Today: 3rd Sunday of Advent
9:45 - Sunday School
11:00 - Worship
12:00 - Evening Circle

Monday: 6:30 - Cub Scouts (Fellowship Hall)
7:00 - Boy Scouts

Wednesday: 5:45 - The Bells of Bethel
7:00 - Adult Choir

Thursday: January Tower Mailing

Saturday: Winter Begins

Next Sunday, December 22nd: 4th Sunday of Advent

9:45 - Sunday School

11:00 - Worship/Four Cents A Meal Offering

*12:00 - Potluck Luncheon/Joy Gift Offering followed
by Christmas Caroling*

Greeters: Wade and Phyllis Cash

*The poinsettias in the sanctuary are given by the congregation and friends of Bethel.

*Good morning and welcome to Bethel! Whether you are a member, a friend or a visitor please take a moment and fill out the attendance pad at the end of your pew. Don't forget to give the attendance pad to others to sign when you are done. Thank you!

*We welcome to Bethel this morning the Rev. Malcolm Brownlee. Malcolm Brownlee grew up in Rockbridge Baths, Virginia and moved back there five years ago. He has been a pastor of churches in Hazard, Kentucky; Riverdale, Georgia; and Huntersville, North Carolina, and interim pastor of churches in Lexington, North Carolina; Beckley, West Virginia; Shady Spring, West Virginia; and Rockbridge Baths, Virginia. From 1973 till 1984 he and his wife Sarah were Presbyterian missionaries in Indonesia, and Bethel Presbyterian Church was one of their supporting churches. Let Rev. Brownlee know how much we appreciate him being with us this morning!

*ADVENT. In the ancient world, various peoples lit fires to mark the turning of the light into winter's season and to pray for the return of the light. The church has Christianized that practice in lighting of the Advent wreath. To us, these candles are signs of the growing light of Christ who is coming again in all fullness into the darkness of our world. Until the dawning of that Great Day, we watch and wait in Holy Spirit for Christ's coming into the darkness of our world, lighting candles of hope, peace, joy, and love; and remembering the promises of God with prayer. This Sunday's Advent wreath candle lighting varies because it is Gaudette ("rejoice!") Sunday. As a break from the heaviness of Advent's penitential preparations, this Sunday offers a reprise from our dark longings to offer joy's glimmer of light. The Latin word Gaudette is grammatically imperative, reminding us that even in the midst of darkness, we are called to rejoice. This is also why we light a pink candle—the color of joy in the penitential season of purple. Only the Christ candle is white, also a color signifying joy in many cultures, because the fullness of joy is in the Lord.

*The Evening Circle will meet in the Fellowship Hall right after church today, Sunday, December 15th, for our Christmas Party. Please join us even if you didn't bring food or a gift. There will be plenty!

*The Stonewall Brigade Band, Staunton's 80-member community concert band, will present their annual Christmas Concert tomorrow evening, Monday, December 16th in the sanctuary of St. Paul's United Methodist Church, 2000 Shutterlee Mill Road, just off the VA 262 "loop". The Stonewall Flutes of the Shenandoah will play at 6:30 pm, followed by the full band concert at 7:30 pm. Admission is free. An offering will be taken to benefit The Valley Mission and The Salvation Army. The SBB is the oldest-continuous among over 2,000 community bands in the United States and includes members from the local area and throughout Virginia and West Virginia.

*If you have any announcements for the bulletins for December 22nd or December 29th please have them to me by this Wednesday, December 18th at 9 am. I need the announcements early since the Church Office will be closed the week of Christmas. Thank you!

- Adrienne Barker, Bethel Office Manager

*The Potluck Luncheon and Joy Gift Offering scheduled for last week has been rescheduled for next Sunday, December 22nd, following the worship service. After the meal we will go Christmas Caroling to the homes of our members who are homebound (note the change in time of the caroling from 4:00 pm). Make plans now to come for the meal and then as we join together to make the Christmas Holidays more special for our homebound members!

*Our annual Christmas Eve candle lighting service will be held at 9 pm. The service is always a moving and beautiful experience as we hear the Good News both read and sung. Come and take part as we sing, as we pray, and as we praise God for the birth of our Savior!

*On Sundays, on the video monitor in Memorial Hall, the Bethel congregation can see proposed Bethel logos that have been submitted to the Communications Committee. The Communications Committee will be putting copies of the submitted logos in the bulletin in January and there will be a contest at that time to choose our new logo. Thanks to everyone who has submitted possible logos!

*The Bethel congregation has received a Christmas Card from our former pastor Rev. Joel Thornton wishing Merry Christmas and blessings to all of you!

*Many thanks to everyone who provided a shoebox for Operation Christmas Child this year. Twenty-six shoeboxes were collected for needy children. Thanks for all the support for this worthwhile project!
- Peggy Smith

*We had around 50 attend the Advent Workshop. I would like to thank everyone for all of their help and support! Thanks to all the workers, thanks to all who brought food or supplies, and thanks to all who participated! I have more Advent calendars and Advent candle wreaths, so if you would like to have one please let me know. Thanks again for all the support!!! - Peggy Smith, Coordinator

*Special thanks to Bill Francisco for donating our beautiful Christmas tree and thanks to Justin Swisher and Laura Swisher for decorating the tree!

*If you would like to join Bethel Presbyterian Church, please feel free to contact a Session member. We would love to hear from you.

November 24th

Attendance: 92

Weekly Budget: \$3,657.00 Received: \$3,736.00

Four Cents A Meal: \$193.00

December 1st

Attendance: 126

Weekly Budget: \$3,648.00 Received: \$5,192.00

December 8th

Weekly Budget: \$3,648.00 Received: \$2,725.00

Estimated Budget through 12/1/13: \$171,879

Receipts: \$145,388 Expenses: \$146,759

Financial Stewardship

Offerings 2013: It is requested that offerings for 2013 be made no later than Sunday, December 29th, 2013. Thank you for your continued support.

Pledges 2014: 34 pledges for a total of \$96,260 have been received. Thanks to those who pledged. If you have not already pledged, please prayerfully consider pledging now for 2014 - it is not too late. Pledge cards are available in the vestibule and Memorial Hall. Send completed cards to the church (Attn: Receiving Treasurer), or put in the Receiving Treasurer mailbox in Memorial Hall or in the offering plate any Sunday.

Offering Envelopes 2014: Beginning today numbered offering envelopes will be available in the vestibule. If you received numbered envelopes in 2013 you will have the same number reserved for 2014. If you do not currently use envelopes but would like to, please contact the Church Office with your request.