

THE TOWER

Bethel Presbyterian Church

563 Bethel Green Road
Staunton, Virginia 24401
540-886-6041 or bethelpc@gmail.com
Website – bethelpresbyterianstaunton.org

February, 2014

From the Pastor's Desk . . .

Dear Friends,

What a difference a year makes. Kathleen and I wish you to receive our heartfelt prayers of thanksgiving for your generous “Christmas Gift”. This year, we were excited and moved to worship with you this past Christmas Eve (unlike last year’s ‘storm out!’). Also, it is now almost 2 years we have been among you joining our faith journeys together.

AND it is a New Year that holds lots of hope and promise for Bethel’s New Year. Church Officers have been elected, trained, examined, ordained and installed. And much of the “Interim Pastor” work is completed with one more item. That is to help you get ready for a new partnership in ministry with a new pastor.

I am certain that Bethel will be the best congregation, greeting with great joy and enthusiasm the pastor God has chosen for you through your Pastor Nominating Committee. It will not be long now.

As sure as I am of the warm and grace-filled welcome you will give, there is something I need to say. As you anticipate a new pastor DO NOT call a halt to your planning and carrying out your ministry. Remember a new pastor comes to JOIN you in what you do in the name of Jesus Christ. A new pastor does not come with readymade answers and solutions. With confidence, show and introduce your new pastor to what you passionately do as this loving congregation of Jesus Christ.

And while 2014 probably will end with Kathleen and me not among you, we look forward to all that is to be done in Jesus’ Name between now and whenever our parting comes. God has blessed us through each and every one of you.

Now! There is work and fun and planning and doing and fellowship to be done!
See you in Church. With Love & Peace, I remain, Phil Sommer





As I See It

Have I mentioned humor?

I must admit, when I first started in April of 2012, I didn't find much humor among Bethel folk. Everyone was very serious. And maybe that is how it is with unknown, new pastors. But I suspect it also had to do with the circumstance. Bethel was not a very happy place.

But as we got to know each other; AND as we worked at healing and becoming whole; AND as trust began to be established, HUMOR started peeking out to see if it was safe.

I believe that humor is not only important to churches, but it is the carrier of God's active presence. Now, there is good humor in meetings (even Session Meetings!). There is humor in how people greet each other. There is even some humor in our worship life.

I think it is important that your PNC listed as one of the top characteristics for your new pastor that they "have a sense of humor".

Amen!

Pastor Nominating Committee Report

The Pastor Nominating Committee has entered a new phase of its search for Bethel's new pastor. We are happy to be looking for God's will between two well-qualified applicants. While the road is long between selecting a candidate and completing the hiring process, when we settle on a pastor our beloved congregation will be the first to know! Please keep us in your prayers.



February Worship Schedule

February 2, 2014

4th Sunday after Epiphany

Boy Scout Sunday

11:00 am

Children's Time

Read: Micah 6:1-8 Psalm 15 I Corinthians 1:18-31 Matthew 5:1-12

Sermon: "You Are Blessed"

February 9, 2014

5th Sunday after Epiphany

11:00 am

Children's Time

Read: Isaiah 58: 1-9a Psalm 112:1-10 I Corinthians 2:1-16 Mathew 5:13-20

Sermon: "Completed

Annual Meeting Following Worship

February 16, 2014

6th Sunday after Epiphany

11:00 am

Children's Time

Read: Deuteronomy 30:15-20 Psalm 119:1-8 I Corinthians 3:1-9

Matthew 5:21-37

Sermon: "Finish What You Start"

February 23, 2014

7th Sunday after Epiphany

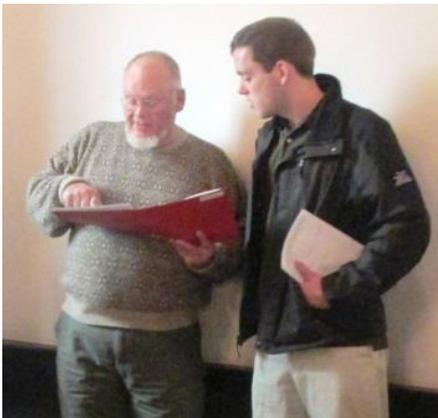
11:00 am

Children's Time

Read: Leviticus 19:1-2;9-18 Psalm 119:33-40 I Corinthians 3:10-11; 16-23

Matthew 5:38-48

Sermon



Boy Scout Sunday will be Sunday, February 2nd, 2014. During the worship service, the Boy Scouts will be recognized for their contribution to the community and to Bethel. All are invited to this special service!

Congregational Meeting February 16th following the morning worship service, for the purpose of presenting the 2013 Annual Reports, approving the 2014 Budget, and the recommendation of the Articles of Incorporation.

Super Bowl Sunday: Souper Bowl of Caring - Bethel Youth ask you to tackle hunger with us on Super Bowl Sunday with the Souper Bowl of Caring. The congregation is asked to bring non-perishable food or make monetary donations on Sunday, February 2nd, 2014. Our young people will collect the food and money for Kingsway after the worship service. Your continued generosity is greatly appreciated in this annual service project.

The Communications Committee will meet on Sunday, February 9th, at 9 am.

Thanks to everyone who submitted logos!

Sermons are available on the Bethel website (www.bethelpresbyterianstaunton.org).

And don't forget to "Like" Bethel on Facebook.

The Worship Committee will meet on Sunday, February 9th, following the morning worship service.

The Christian Education Committee will meet on Sunday, February 9th, at 5:00 pm.

Family Fun Night

The Christian Education Committee will host a Family Fun Night on Sunday, February 16th, from 5 pm to 7 pm in the Fellowship Hall. So get rid of those WINTER BLAHS. Join us and bring your family and friends for a fun filled evening of games and crafts. Hot dogs, popcorn, snacks and lemonade will be provided. We look forward to seeing you on February 16th for this time of fun and fellowship!

The Witness Committee will meet on Sunday, February 23rd, following the morning worship service.

MISSION FUNDRAISER! HOMEMADE PIZZA-PIZZA-PIZZA!

The Folsom family and the Baja Mission Team is hosting an evening of homemade pizza and fun on February 9th beginning at 6:00 pm. A free will offering will be collected. Come out to enjoy an evening of fellowship, fun and good food to support the Bethel Baja Mission Team. We will have traditional favorites, as well as some new topping combinations you've never had (or maybe even thought of)! Please join us!



Baja Mission Trip: Interested in a life changing experience? Would you like to help those less fortunate? Then join us this year from July 20th-26th on our annual trip to Baja, Mexico to build houses and relationships. Registration is open now till March 1st, 2014. Registration is limited to the first 60 applications. If the trip fills up prior to this date, registrants will be placed on a waiting list in the order their registration forms are received.

Anyone interested please contact Laura Barmore [540-462-7794](tel:540-462-7794) or lbarmore@alllabs.com. Bethel's first organizational meeting will be Sunday, February 2nd right after church service. Please plan to attend.

SESSION NEWS

The Session met Sunday, January 19th, at noon after the worship service.

We are happy to welcome three new elders to the Session: Laura Barmore, Dan Gano and Tom Whitaker.

The Bethel Statistical Report for the PCUSA was approved.

The Session re-elected Bill Brubeck as clerk for 2014. The Nominating Committee will appoint a substitute who will fill this position at a later date.

We are delighted to welcome Marion and Martha Simmers into Bethel's membership. They are former members of Ottobine United Methodist Church, and they reside in Stuarts Draft.

The Annual Meeting of the Congregation will be on Sunday, February 16th.

The 2014 budget was approved and will be discussed at the Congregational Meeting on Sunday, February 16th.

The Articles of Incorporation were approved and will be recommended to the congregation at the Congregational Meeting on Sunday, February 16th.

Boy Scout Sunday will be Sunday, February 2nd.

Jill Webb will represent Bethel at the Presbytery Meeting on February 8th at First Presbyterian Church, Harrisonburg, VA.

The Session approved replacing the faulty Manse windows for more efficient heating.



Presbyterian Women: February 2014 ; Emphasis: Witness Season, Lent

***The Afternoon Circle** will meet at the church on February 11th at 2:30 pm.

***The Evening Circle** will meet at the church on February 11th at 7:00 pm.

February 2nd - PWCT Meeting

Thanks so much to the Bethel Friends and Congregation for your generosity in donating gift cards for the Presbyterian Children's Home of the Highlands for the Christmas holiday season. Bethel collected a total of:

\$180.00 - Gift Cards to McDonalds

\$265.00 - Gift Cards to Walmart

\$445.00 - Gift Cards Total

The following is a letter from Billy Rice, Executive Director of the Presbyterian Children's Home of the Highlands:

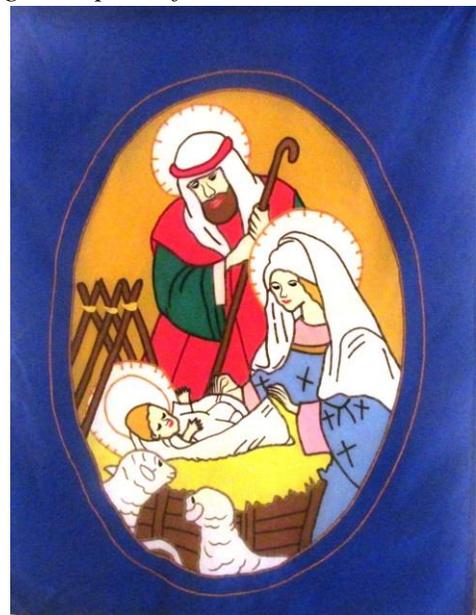
Dear Friends:

Thank you for the Walmart and McDonalds gift cards sent to the Presbyterian Children's Home of the Highlands. Your support during this special time of the year means so much to us.

One of the real joys of our ministry is the opportunity to teach our children the true meaning of Christmas. For many of our children, Christmas has been about how many toys they would get and a vacation from school. Others have horrible memories about holidays gone sour due to an unstable home environment. While we cannot erase these memories, we can fill their hearts with the true meaning and spirit of Christmas. Our Christmas celebration will teach our children the true meaning of the birth of baby Jesus and will show them how to start healthy traditions that they can pass on to their children in years to come. We will also let them know that there are people like you whose generosity ensures that there is always "room at the inn" when children need help. Your love and support makes our mission, "giving children hope and purpose for the future", a reality.

Thanks again for your support of the Presbyterian Children's Home of the Highlands. I hope you experience the true joy of Christmas as you share the holiday season with our children.

*With hope,
Billy Rice, Executive Director*



Deacons' Notes:

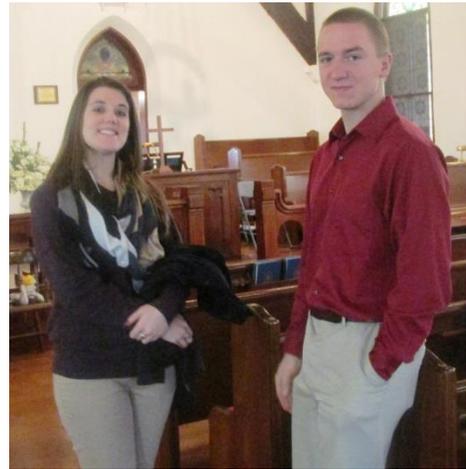
The Deacons in January continued with a focus on a few key issues for the Congregation. With the conclusion of the Pastoral Nominating Committee's work anticipated within the next six months, the Deacons have formed a committee to plan for transition to a new pastor. This process will include much more than the preparation of the Manse for a new family, but the integration into our Congregation as a whole and the announcement of a new pastor to the community at large. The Communications Committee is heavily involved with this messaging as well.

The Deacons have also been focused on the conclusion of the initial phase of the 21st Century Renovations Committee. As the tower and north side moisture infiltration projects wrap up, the Deacons are planning for the next phase of work. We are considering multiple options, including more moisture infiltration work, painting inside and out, lighting and audio improvements in the sanctuary and handicap accessibility improvements throughout the Church.

Finally, the Diaconate is committed to 2014 as the year of focus on the Congregational Care charge for our group. We anticipate this will be a big year for Bethel and have challenged each other to invite friends and family to service, to reach out to existing Congregational members regularly as we transition to a new pastor and to help get the word out into our community about the changes at Bethel.



Bethel Prayer List Louale Almarode and Family, Evan Annese (Riverheads Elementary School student), Evie Blacka (great niece of Joyce Miller), Covie Brandt, Polly Bundy, Dr. David Burgess (medical missionary), Lorine Caldwell (Dean Caldwell's mother), Jim and Betty Crosby, Jarod Davis, Bobbye D'Orsi and her daughter and son-in-law Pam and Jim Boone (Jill Webb's neighbor), Jessie Earhart, Reed Hagee (aunt of Laura Barmore), Rich and Marilyn Hansen (PCUSA Mission Co-Workers Ethiopia), Rev. Marilyn Heishman (Pastor - St. John's Reformed UCC), Steve Kyle, Charlie Lamb, David Law, Margaret Liptrap, Meade Loomis (sister of Anne Jones), Moggie Moffett (Mo Kyle's mother), Judy Olson, Howard Pilson (John Pilson's brother), Carly Pond (10 year old great niece of John Pilson), Pam Prickett and her Florida parents, Sue and Charles Reese (Charlotte Swortzel's sister and brother-in-law), Jerry Shultz, Frankie Sours (policeman), Charlotte Swortzel, Isaac Wolfe (son-in-law of Mary Davis), Rev. Rob Woodfin (Pastor - St. Paul's UMC), MISSIONARY: Michael and Rachel Weller and Ethiopian friends, Pastor Nominating Committee, the New Pastor whom God has chosen for Bethel, and Bethel as we prepare for the new Pastor



Receiving Treasurer Report

Pledges 2014: 39 pledges for a total of \$103,900 have been received. Thanks to those that pledged. It is never too late to pledge. Pledge cards are available in the vestibule and Memorial Hall. Send completed cards to the church (Attn: Receiving Treasurer) or put in the offering plate any Sunday.

General Fund 2013: Receipts to Budget \$169,126, Expenses \$172,421

21st Century Fund 2012 and 2013: Receipts \$97,763, Expenses \$38,730

In the event of bad weather on Sunday mornings, please tune into WHSV - TV3 (Harrisonburg) or log onto their website (www.whsv.com) for information on whether church has been cancelled. Thank you!



Schedules, February 2014

Flowers

February 2nd - Evelyn LaPorte
February 9th - Jill Webb - Memorial
February 16th - Jessie Earhart - Memorial
February 23rd - Ginny Gano

Nursery

February 2nd - James and Cynthia Williams
February 9th - Lee Ann Whitesell; Sue Whitesell
February 16th - Mary Ann Anderson; Mason Whitaker
February 23rd - Joe and Tabby Moore

Transportation

February 2nd - James Williams
February 9th - Mac Williams
February 16th - Jill Webb
February 23rd - Dave Schooley

Offering

Tammy Barbour
Tom Heizer
Tabby Moore
Joe Williams



Our sympathies and condolences to the family and friends of Flora Law who passed away on December 19th, 2013.



Our sympathies and condolences to the family and friends of Carol Schooley who passed away on January 2nd, 2014.

The family of Carol Schooley is grateful for all the support and love shown during her decline and recent death. She didn't like those last "Golden Years".

During the time of sorrow we realize how much our friends and family mean to us. Your prayers, calls, cards and concerns during Hugh's illness and passing will always be treasured by his family. Thank you and God bless you. - Sarah Frances Ralston



Congratulations to the Schooley and Csomay families on the birth of Naomi Luca Csomay who was born on December 31, 2013. She is the daughter of Becky and James Csomay and has a big brother Isaac. She is the granddaughter of Charley and Ann Schooley. Congratulations on this new addition to your family!

Doing your taxes?

INCOME TAXES 2013: February 11th, 2014: 7 pm: Middlebrook Community Center

Tax Experts - H&R BLOCK - will explain things you need to know when getting ready to do your 2013 taxes.

Sponsored by: Redeemer Lutheran Church and Middlebrook Ruritan Club

All are invited – Free- Refreshments after the program

Don't Forget!

February 2nd - Groundhog Day
February 2nd - Super Bowl Sunday
February 14th - Valentine's Day
February 17th- Presidents' Day

Church Website: www.bethelpresbyterianstaunton.org

Don't forget to "Like" us on Facebook! 