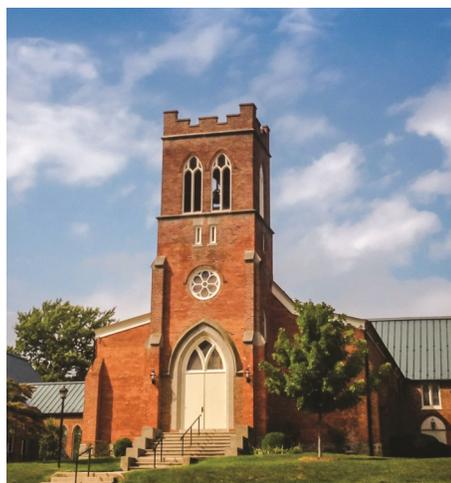




# The Tower

November 2016

563 Bethel Green Road \* Staunton, Virginia 24401 \* (540) 886-6041  
bethelpc@gmail.com \* www.bethelpresbyterianstaunton.org



## The Session's View . . .

For the Christian there is blessed assurance of that heavenly home where there are no more tears and no more sickness. "And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes, there shall be no more death nor sorrow, nor crying and there shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away" (**Rev. 21:4**).

We who live the Christian life can see Jesus through eyes of faith even before we get to heaven. Do you remember the first time you sang this familiar chorus, "Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus", in church?

This is a very moving hymn; here are some of the words that so easily touch our hearts:

***"Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full in His wonderful face.  
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim,  
In the light of His glory and grace."***

The truth is that we can see Jesus in our mind's eye. Our resurrected Lord is alive and always waiting for us to look to Him and search for His ways. These words of encouragement remind us that God does not intend for His children to be encumbered with weariness and troubled thoughts. The things in our daily lives can entangle our minds with fears and anxieties about the future. That is why the first verse begins with a question:

***"Oh soul, are you weary and troubled? No light in the darkness you see?"***

Composer Helen H. Lemmel wrote the words and music for this hymn after her husband left her when she became blind. Helen struggled with multiple heartaches during this midlife shift. The words in this hymn demonstrate her desire to focus on Jesus, so that the earthly things in life would be dimmed by his radiance.

*(The Session's View continued on the next page)*

*(The Session's View continued from the previous page)*

Through this hymn we hear the echo of **Hebrews 12:2**: *"Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith..." He can turn our weariness and trouble into peace and joy.*

Life always seems to present its own challenges and, as Christians, we should remain focused on the promises found in the word. As we begin a new chapter within our church family, let us look to these words for encouragement, strength, and guidance. As a church family, we have been here before and we have found strength in each other. Remember that unity, perseverance, and love are the tenets of a strong foundation. Together with God all things are possible.

Derek Almarode, Elder

### **November Lectionary Schedule**

*November 6, 2016*

32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

All Saints' Service

Guest Minister: Rev. William Painter

Haggai 1:15-2:9 II Thessalonians 2:1-17

Luke 20:27-38

*November 13, 2016*

33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Guest Minister: Jack Wilkers

Isaiah 65:17-25 II Thessalonians 3:6-13 Luke 21:5-19

*November 20, 2016*

Christ the King/Reign of Christ

Sacrament of Holy Communion

Jeremiah 23:1-6 Colossians 1:11-20 Luke 23:33-43

*November 27, 2016*

1st Sunday of Advent

Hanging of the Greens

Isaiah 2:1-5 Romans 13:11-14 Matthew 24:36-44



Communion will be held on  
Sunday, November 20th,  
Christ the King Sunday.



## *Leaning on Friends*

Dear Friends,

In the past weeks, our church once again found itself where we hoped we wouldn't be, dissolving a pastoral relationship. Your elected leadership worked hard to maintain balance while managing a very difficult situation. Successful and timely resolution would not have been possible without two primary factors: The first was the Bethel Congregation's unwavering support, understanding, and goodwill. The second was rapid and wise mediation by our friends at Shenandoah Presbytery.

That's right, Presbytery! We called them for advice and intervention immediately upon reaching an impasse. They responded quickly to negotiate a settlement, sharing their experience, love and grace. We found these men and women, who voluntarily worked with us through this ordeal and those who continue to work with us, to be exceptional. We are very thankful for Friends like them to lean on in times of need.

We would like to bring you the pastoral dissolution status - most importantly, the dissolution terms are settled.

As most of you know, the congregation approved a severance offer in a September 25 meeting. The Pastor appealed the congregation's offer to the Presbytery Committee on Relational Ministry (CRM). In an emergency meeting, the Session prepared a rebuttal to the appeal and dispatched a delegation to a CRM hearing on October 13. The delegation asked CRM to uphold the Congregation's offer and negotiated a successful resolution.

The agreed terms are:

- The Pastor will receive 4 months' full severance, as approved by the congregation.
- To close out growing concerns about the Manse, the delegation agreed to continue the pastor's medical and annuity benefits through March 2017. This was in return for assurance that the Manse will be vacated in appropriate condition by November 30, 2016 instead of January 31, 2017.

We thank our congregation, our Presbytery, and CRM for their support. We are blessed to have a wonderful and trusting congregation and Presbytery leadership.

In Christ's Service

Bethel Session

*"The difference between who we are and who we want to be is what we choose to do."*

In times like this, it is important for our congregation to know we are doing everything possible to get our church back on track and focusing on our mission. One of the first steps in this process is an evaluation/questionnaire by the congregation on their perception of the church's spiritual health. You will be hearing more about this first step called the CAT Scan (Congregational Assessment Tool) in the coming weeks. A small committee has been formed of myself, Barbara Gough, and Tammy Barbour to be trained and work with our Presbytery contact, Anne Ross. In the meantime, if anyone has any questions, please feel free to call or email me directly (540/462-7794 or [laura@alllabs.com](mailto:laura@alllabs.com)).

In His Service,  
Laura Barmore

## Congregational Assessment Tool



### Bethel Events & News for November

#### All Saints' Sunday - Sunday, November 6th, 2016

On Sunday, November 6th, Bethel will be observing "All Saints Sunday" during the worship service. This is the Sunday in the church calendar when we celebrate all the saints, who have served their Lord faithfully on earth and now live eternally in God's presence. During the worship service we will honor all who have gone before us in past year. Please make plans to attend this special service.



*"Fellowship Following Worship" will be held on Sunday, November 6th.*

The Congregational Care Committee is changing "Fellowship Following Worship" to once a month. We will still have a sign up sheet on the bulletin board in Memorial Hall and will ask individuals to sign up for a Sunday they choose, perhaps taking into consideration meetings which may be held after Sunday services. November and December are taken care of for this year so January 2017 will need volunteers. We all are so grateful for your willingness to help with project for the past two years. Thank you and may many blessings be in your lives!

#### Operation Christmas Child 2016

IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR - OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD SHOEBOXES! Since 1993, Samaritan's Purse has been distributing shoebox gifts to boys and girls around the world in Jesus' name through Operation Christmas Child. Each shoebox gift can bring joy and the good news of Jesus Christ to a child in need. Please be a part of this effort by filling a shoebox this year. Brochures on how to pack your shoebox are available in the vestibule and Memorial Hall. All shoeboxes will be due by Sunday, November 6th. Thank you for all the past support of this project!



Stewardship Season & Stewardship Sunday



School is back in session. Thanksgiving is almost here, and it is time again for Bethel to make plans for next year. Yes, Stewardship Season is here. Stewardship Sunday is scheduled for November 13th, 2016. If you cannot be present on Stewardship Sunday please use the copy of the pledge card below and mail it to the attention of the Receiving Treasurer (Church Address: 563 Bethel Green Road; Staunton, VA 24401). You may also place the pledge card in the offering plate any Sunday. Bethel needs all of you to help if we are to reach our goals. Please carefully and prayerfully consider your pledge for next year. Thank you for your continuing support!

NAME(S) \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

**FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP COMMITMENT FOR 20\_\_\_\_\_**

Grateful for God’s love in Jesus Christ, I (we) make the following commitment to support the mission of the church through our congregation, presbytery, synod, and General Assembly.

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ per  week  month  other \_\_\_\_\_

*(This commitment may be increased due to changing circumstances)*

I (we) wish to receive information about giving through Estate Planning

Keep this portion as a record of your financial stewardship commitment for the year 20\_\_\_\_\_.

My (our) financial stewardship commitment

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ per  week  month  other \_\_\_\_\_

*(This commitment may be increased due to changing circumstances)*



## Bethel Events & News for November (continued)

The December Tower Deadline will be Thursday, November 10th. Please have all articles and announcements to the Church Office by noon. Articles and announcements for the December Tower can be left in Adrienne's mailbox in Memorial Hall or you can email them to her at [bethelpc@gmail.com](mailto:bethelpc@gmail.com). When writing announcements for the newsletter please keep in mind the 5 W's: Who? What? When? Where? Why?. Answer all of these in your announcement and you can be sure that your news will be communicated well. Please remember if you turn in items after the deadline Adrienne cannot guarantee they will be included in the Tower. Thank you!

DEADLINE FOR  
NEWSLETTER ARTICLES

### **Presbyterian Women - November 2016**

Special Offering - Thank Offering

\*The Afternoon Circle will meet at Bethel on November 8th, at 1:30 pm.

\*The Evening Circle will meet at Bethel on November 8th, at 7:00 pm.



#### 2016 Thank Offering Recipients

Thanks to your generous giving to the 2015 Thank Offering, 22 projects (14 national and 8 international) will receive grants in 2016, allowing them to improve the lives of women, children and men in need. The recipients will provide an array of services in their communities—a food bank in a remote area of Colorado where employment opportunities are limited, expansion of an English as a Second Language program in Texas, a shelter for abused women in Mississippi, a women's agricultural program in South Sudan, a youth training program in Rwanda, and many more. At least 40 percent of the offering funds health ministries.

The Thank Offering will be collected at the November Circle Meetings.

### **The Presbyterian Children's Home of the Highlands Bethel Presbyterian Women "Together in Service" Project**



The Presbyterian Children's Home of the Highlands (PCHH) is a long-term residential care facility located in Wytheville, Virginia. As a "Together in Service" project the Bethel Presbyterian Women are sponsoring a gift-card drive to benefit PCHH in time for the holiday season. PCHH has a particular need for gift cards from Wal-Mart and McDonalds. If you choose to participate in this mission project you can give the gift cards to Barbara Gough, Jackie Law, Irene Elliott, or Louise Hoy. Although this project originated in the PW organization, all members of Bethel are invited to join in this effort to meet needs at PCHH. In order to assist with the equitable distribution of the gift cards please write the purchased amount on each card or envelope. All gift cards need to be received by Sunday, November 27th so that they can be mailed to PCHH and arrive in time for holiday shopping and outings in December.

Bethel Events & News for November (continued)

Save the Date! The Bethel Diaconate will be having "Bethel Warm Hearts: Blanket & Winter Coat Giveaway" on Saturday, November 19th, from 9:00 am until noon. The Deacons are asking for donations of new/gently used blankets (please label with size) and winter coats (all sizes from kids to adults). Please make sure that all donations are in by November 13th. You can drop donations off at Bethel: Monday through Thursday from 9:00 am until 3:00 pm or Wade's Floor Covering (Rt. 340, Stuarts Draft): Monday through Friday from 9:00 am until 5:00 pm. For more information please contact Tammy Barbour (540/471-0450) or Barb Gough (540/255-6521). Thank you for your generosity with this project!



The annual Hanging of the Greens program will be held on Sunday, November 27th during our regular worship service. Please make plans to attend this wonderful and meaningful service.



Advent Workshop  
Sunday, November 27th, 2016  
following worship  
All ages welcome!



The 2016 Advent Workshop will be on Sunday, November 27th, following worship. We will have a light lunch and activities will include crafts representing each Sunday of Advent. Each family will receive an Advent wreath and calendar to be used at home during the Advent season. Advent is a season of anticipation and preparation for the coming of Christ. Please be part of this Advent Workshop. Hope to see you there!

Salvation Army Christmas Tree

Watch for the Salvation Army tree which will be on the table in Memorial Hall soon. Everyone at Bethel is always so generous with this event that last year some people did not get to participate. This year Bethel will again be helping three families so that more people can take part in sharing with those less fortunate. Additional details will be available in the December Tower.



The Church Office will be closed Wednesday, November 23rd & Thursday, November 24th for the Thanksgiving holiday.

The Church Office will be closed Monday, November 28th through Thursday, December 1st, while Adrienne is on vacation. Please contact Bill Brubeck (540/885-5871; brubeck@mgwnet.com) or Laura Barmore (540/462-7794; laura@alllabs.com) if you have a need. Thank you!





The Session met three times during the last month.

On October 9th, nine elders gathered for the regular monthly meeting with Joe Condro, Interim Pastor at Pines Chapel, moderating.

Tammy Barbour gave the Deacons' report: They are going to hold a drive to collect coats and blankets for the needy. David Turner checked the roof and found no evidence of a leak over the Choir Room and two possible leaks in the tower.

The Stewardship & Finance Committee will do a review of the budget to determine any cuts that can be made during the remainder of the year to offset some of the budget shortfall.

A congregational meeting will be held on October 23rd to form a Nominating Committee.

A group of members, including Brian & Penny Lee, Derek & Cindy Almarode and Kathy Swisher, has been making plans to revitalize our youth program. They presented a list of ten activities for youth and all were approved.

The Session also met on October 12th for a called meeting, with ten elders and Joe Condro, Moderator, present.

The Session received notification on October 12th that Pastor Shearer had contested the congregation's decision to set his severance term at four months and had asked for six months of severance. They also learned that the Shenandoah Presbytery's Committee on Relational Ministry (CRM) would meet on the following morning, the 13th, to hear viewpoints from both Pastor Shearer and Bethel as to the appropriate length of severance. The Session met on the 12th to choose representatives to attend the meeting and to prepare a document for our rationale in support of the congregation's choice of a four-month severance. (Note – The CRM decided to keep the severance at four months, with two exceptions: The Shearers will vacate the manse by November 30th and Bethel will pay medical insurance and annuity for two additional months, for a total of six months.)

The Session met again on October 13th for a called meeting, with ten elders and Roy Martin, Moderator and Transitional Presbyter of the Shenandoah Presbytery, present. The purpose of the meeting was to begin the process of transitioning to a new pastorate at Bethel.

Stephany Morgan, our liaison with the Committee on Pastoral Transition and an elder at First Presbyterian Church in Staunton, discussed the steps we will take during the transition period, from completing a congregational survey to hiring an Interim Pastor.

Anne Ross, retired pastor, introduced the Congregational Assessment Tool (CAT). The CAT is a survey of the congregation which is analyzed to determine the church's status and needs. The Session decided to use the CAT and formed a committee to implement it.

Laura Barmore will represent Bethel at the Presbytery Meeting on November 1st at Opequon Presbyterian Church in Winchester.

Photos of Bethel Activities

The Communications Committee would like to remind everyone to take pictures at their Bethel events and activities. The pictures can then be shared with Communications Committee members who will post them to the website and Facebook. Thank you!



**General Fund Monthly Report**

Estimated Budget through September 30th:  
\$143,442.00

Actual Budget Expenses: \$140,997.00

Actual Budget Receipts: \$109,262.00

Kroger Quarterly 5% Rebate: \$164.00



**Flower Schedule**

November 2016

November 6th - Shirley Heizer

November 13th - JoAnn Pendley

November 20th - Eloise Moore (*Communion*)

November 27th - Bettie Swisher



**Offering Schedule**

November 2016

Briana Lawhorne

Brian Lee

Chris Schooley

Joe F. Williams



**Nursery Schedule**

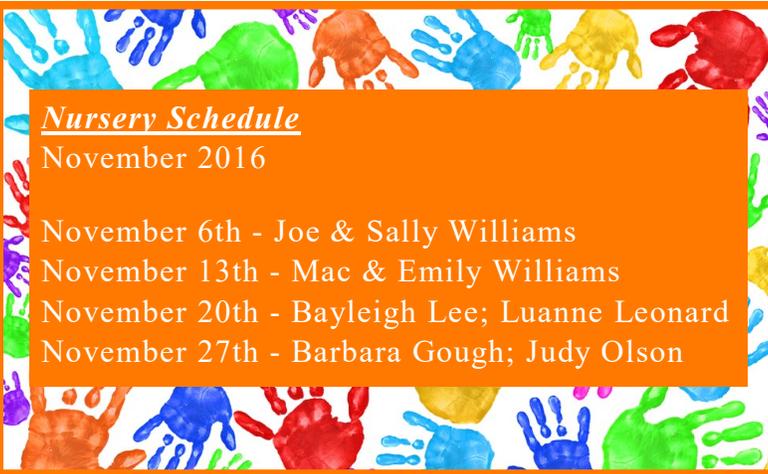
November 2016

November 6th - Joe & Sally Williams

November 13th - Mac & Emily Williams

November 20th - Bayleigh Lee; Luanne Leonard

November 27th - Barbara Gough; Judy Olson



The family of Charles Beard would like to thank the Bethel congregation



for the sympathy and love expressed during his illness and death. We cherish the memories of your concern for him through visits and cards while at Summit Square and all of the condolences expressed to our family. We are so thankful for a caring congregation.

Our sympathies and condolences to Robyn Smith and her family on the passing of her father, Russell Duffey who passed away on October 4th, 2016.



Our sympathies and condolences to Charlotte Swortzel and her family on the passing of her sister, Barbara Wagner Lawrence who passed away on October 8th, 2016.



Our sympathies and condolences to the family and friends of Joe Shomo who passed away on October 8th, 2016.



## Prayer Requests



### Bethel Prayer List

Mike Alford (*brain cancer; husband of Mary Alford*), Mike Almarode (*Betty Schooley's brother-in-law*), Faye Ambler (*Sarah Frances Ralston's sister-in-law*), Phil Balsey (*friend of Bob & Louise Hoy*), Mildred Barmore, Barry Blacka (*Joyce Miller's brother*), Catherine Bryan (*friend of Stephanie Rivers*), Lorine Caldwell (*Dean Caldwell's mother*), Alphonse Canning, Ann Christian, Betty Crosby, Jarod Davis & Family, Friends & Family of Mary (Williams) Dransfield, Friends & Family of Russell Duffey (*father of Robyn Smith*), Herbert Hamilton (*Kingsway volunteer - possibly has cancer*), Danielle Hanger, Elizabeth Henkel (*Sarah Frances Ralston's niece*), Bill Kealing (*friend of Laura Barmore*), Bill Klitzman (*nephew of Louise Hoy*), Karen Koogler (*foot surgery*), Sara Ann Lamb, Bruce Lamond, Sr. (*foot problems*), L. Cpl. Bertram Bruce Lamond (*active military*), Evelyn LaPorte, David Law, Friends & Family of Barbara Wagner Lawrence (*Charlotte Swartzel's sister*), Margaret Liptrap, Meade Loomis (*sister of Anne Jones*), John McLaughlin (*Briana Lawhorne's father*), Shane Middleton (*liver transplant; grandson of Bobbi D'Orsi*), Friends & Family of Beverly Lee Mish, Linda Orebaugh (*diagnosed with breast cancer*), Christy Glover Pilson (*John Pilson's niece*), John Pilson, Police, Firemen, and EMS workers & volunteers, Carly Pond (*fourteen year old great niece of John Pilson*), Irene Sarnelle (*has lung cancer - friend of Linda Tenney*), Rev. David Shearer & Family, Friends & Family of Joe Shomo, Michael Somers, Charlotte Swartzel, Sarah Twitchell (*broke her ankle*), Jerry Utz (*on hospice - Cynthia Williams brother*), John Wooddell (*at Baldwin Park*), MISSIONARY: Michael and Rachel Weller and Ethiopian friends

do not be anxious  
about anything, BUT  
in every situation,  
by prayer and petition,  
with thanksgiving,  
present your request  
to God.

Philippians 4:6

Remember the community-wide Thanksgiving Service will be held Sunday, November 20th. The time and location will be announced in the coming weeks.



### **Hospice of the Shenandoah Fourth Annual Quilt Auction** Benefitting the Gifted Care Program

The Hospice of the Shenandoah is having the Third Annual Quilt Auction to benefit the Gifted Care Program on Saturday, November 5th, 2016 at August Expo (in Fishersville). The doors open at 8:00 am for the silent auction and to view and vote on live auction items; a breakfast buffet will be served from 8:00 am - 9:30 am; and the live auction begins at 10 am. Tickets are \$15 per person and \$10 for children ages 6 to 12 years (children five and under get in free). Ticket price includes: admission to the auction and a hot breakfast provided by Kathy's Restaurant. To purchase tickets visit their website at: [www.quiltsofcomfort.org](http://www.quiltsofcomfort.org).

Come bid with your heart on beautifully quilted items from your community!



# RIVERHEADS

*Weekday Religious Education*

*Children are indeed a heritage from the LORD Ps. 127:3*

Greetings in the name of our LORD and savior Jesus Christ,

This letter comes to you with great excitement, great hope, and with much anticipation around what God is doing and is about to do through your Riverheads Weekday Religious Education.

We are certain many of you are now aware that Augusta County is currently building a new Elementary school on the Riverheads Campus. When the new school is completed Beverley Manor Elementary school will then be closed and the children sent to Riverheads. This means a greater opportunity to reach more children with the Gospel, Praise God!

As great as these opportunities are, and will be, we are also faced with a significant challenge.

Our current Bible Trailer which has served us so well for 40 years will now be too far away from the elementary school to continue to serve us in its current state. We considered moving it, renovating it and even replacing it, but since it is on an easement the property is not large enough by current building codes for us to make the needed improvements.

We have pursued every option that we can think of, and their associated costs. Other options were definitely cheaper. However, when the protracted costs of transportation, staff, and the loss of teaching time was considered we decided that the best option for us is to either build or buy a house in the new Hull Hills Development right next to the new elementary school.

This option will give us more classroom space for the larger class sizes that may result from the school merger, it will give us increased office and storage space, and it will enable us to potentially partner with other Christian organizations working to serve our students and build upon the foundation laid by our WRE program.

We estimate the cost of this project will cost us around \$230,000.00. Therefore, we are asking area churches and individuals to get creative in how we might meet this goal together, and in the process glorify God and build a solid foundation for the precious inheritance we have been given: our children.

Please consider making a contribution to our Building Fund. \$25 - \$250, \$1000 - \$10,000; no amount is too small (or too large) when we work together! Are you or an individual you know, looking for a yearend tax contribution? Please consider Riverheads WRE. Churches, are you preparing your 2017 budgets? Please consider adding or increasing your mission giving to WRE.

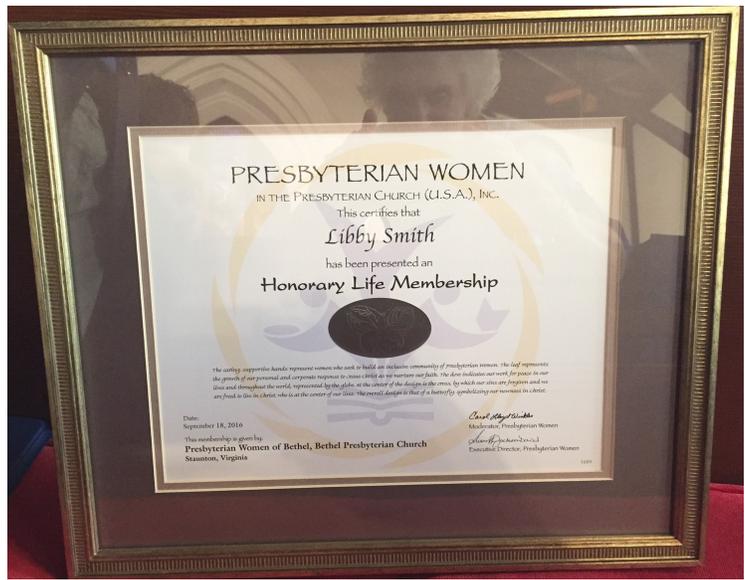
We know that together we can do great things for our children and for the Kingdom!

In Christ,  
Your WRE Board.

Please send donations to: Riverheads WRE Program, PO Box 352, Greenville, VA 24440

On Sunday, September 21st, Libby Smith was awarded an Honorary Life Membership given by the Presbyterian Women of Bethel. This award was given for Libby's contributions and tireless work for the Bethel Presbyterian Women over the years. Congratulations Libby and thanks so much for all you have done and continue to do for Bethel!

The following photos were taken at the reception honoring Libby following the worship service on September 21st. Special thanks goes to Kay and Bettie Swisher for coordinating the reception for Libby!



More pictures of the reception are on the next page. (page 13)

More fun at the reception honoring Libby Smith on September 21st!



- November 6th - Daylight Saving Time Ends
- November 8th - Election Day
- November 11th - Veterans Day
- November 24th - Thanksgiving Day

