



The Tower

December 2017

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bethelpc@gmail.com * www.bethelpresbyterianstaunton.org

The Session's View . . .

The upcoming holiday season offers all of us so many reasons to gather in celebration and fellowship. I have often said that one of the best attributes of Bethel in the service of Christ is our ability to make everyone in the community to feel welcome through fellowship.

A recent example of this was the Harvest Festival held in late October. Over 100 adults and children attended a joyous gathering with tons of fun and entertainment.

I remember growing up where it was not uncommon for friends and neighbors to “pop in” on each other. My mother always had a stash of her infamous “freezer brownies” on hand to thaw out for just such an occasion. Nowadays if you want to catch up with someone, you whip out your iPhone and send an email or text.

Bethel is at her best when she is playing the role of hostess. And it is the wonderful people of our church that makes this happen.

Our church calendar is filled this Advent season for all of us to feel the warmth of Bethel's fellowship. Just a few highlights include . . .

- Staunton Choral Society concert on Saturday, December 2nd at 4:00 pm
- Advent Workshop following the “Hanging of the Greens” service on December 3rd
- Children's Christmas Program & Covered Dish Dinner on December 10th
- Christmas Eve Service on December 24th at 9:00 pm

“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the day drawing near.” Hebrews 10:24-25

See you at church!

- Mac Williams, Elder



December Lectionary Schedule

December 3, 2017

1st Sunday of Advent

Hanging of the Greens

Guest Minister: Rev. Bernard Bangley

Isaiah 64:1-9 I Corinthians 1:3-9

Mark 13:24-37



December 10, 2017

2nd Sunday of Advent

Joy Gift Sunday

Children's Christmas Program

Guest Minister: Rev. Bernard Bangley

Isaiah 40:1-11 II Peter 3:8-15 Mark 1:1-8

December 17, 2017

3rd Sunday of Advent

Guest Minister: Rev. Bernard Bangley

Isaiah 61:1-11 I Thessalonians 5:16-24 John 1:6-28

December 24, 2017

Christmas Eve

4th Sunday of Advent

Guest Minister: Rev. Joe Condro

Isaiah 9:2-7 Titus 2:11-14 Luke 2:1-20

December 24, 2017

Christmas Eve

Candlelight Service 9:00 pm

(Special Music begins at 8:30 pm)

Isaiah 9:2-7 Titus 2:11-14 Luke 2:1-20

December 31, 2017

New Year's Eve

1st Sunday after Christmas Day

Isaiah 61:10-62:3 Galatians 4:4-7 Luke 2:22-40

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Christmas Eve at Bethel will start at 8:30 pm with special music. The Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols will begin at 9:00 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!





Monthly "Fellowship Following Worship"

The Congregational Care Committee is still looking for someone who would be willing to provide refreshments for "Fellowship Following Worship" one Sunday in January (*you choose which Sunday*). Please sign-up on the bulletin board in Memorial Hall if you can help out in January or any month in 2018. Thank you!

The annual Hanging of the Greens program will be held on Sunday, December 3rd during our regular worship service. Please make plans to attend this wonderful and meaningful service.



Salvation Army Christmas Tree

Look for the Salvation Army tree that is in Memorial Hall. Please take a gift tag off of the tree and sign your name on the sheet next to the tree. When you return your gift please make sure it's wrapped and the tag is attached. (Remember that while elaborate bows on the presents are pretty they get mashed when the gifts are packed for delivery.) Gifts are due Sunday, December 3rd. Contact Doris True if you have any questions. Thanks for your generosity with this annual project!



Advent Workshop
Sunday, December 3rd,
following worship
All ages welcome!

The Advent Workshop will be on Sunday, December 3rd, following worship. All ages are welcome! We will have a light lunch provided by the Bethel Women and then do crafts and activities to take home to celebrate the Advent season. Please contact Barb Gough (540-255-6521 or barbsgough@gmail.com) if you would like more information. Make plans now to attend and join the fun!

- Congregational Care Committee



Children's Christmas Program December 10th, 2017

The Children's Christmas Program is scheduled as part of the 11:00 am worship service on December 10th, 2017. Also, during this time the congregation will sing beautiful and traditional Christmas hymns. Invite grandparents, neighbors, and friends to share in this Advent season.

Joy Gift Sunday & Fellowship Meal December 10th, 2017

The Joy Gift Offering will be collected on Sunday, December 10th. A covered dish meal will be held immediately following morning worship, so bring your favorite dish to share!



What Is the Christmas Joy Offering?

A Presbyterian tradition for almost eighty years, the Christmas Joy Gift Offering is one of the four special offerings designated by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to provide congregations direct ways of supporting specific causes that help those in need.

The receipts for the Joy Gift Offering are distributed equally to the Board of Pensions for assistance programs and to National Ministries of the General Assembly Council to help support Presbyterian racial ethnic education.



Bethel Christmas Poinsettias or Donations To BERF Form

You may order Poinsettias at a cost of \$10.00 (tax included) each or you may make a monetary donation to BERF (Bethel Emergency Relief Fund). The Poinsettias purchased and the donations made to BERF will be acknowledged in the bulletin on December 17th and Christmas Eve. Please fill out the form below, attach the check or cash and place in the offering plate or mail to the Church Office: Attn: Church Office; 563 Bethel Green Road; Staunton, VA 24401. If you are purchasing a poinsettia please make checks payable to Bethel Presbyterian Church. If you are making a donation to BERF please make the check payable to Bethel Emergency Relief Fund. The deadline is Sunday, December 10th.

**Note: Please fill out the form completely. Sometimes forms come back not completely filled out and it can make things difficult when compiling them for the bulletins. Also, if you would like to order a poinsettia and make a donation please use two forms (one for the poinsettia and one for the donation). Thank you!*

Christmas Poinsettias and BERF Donations Form

Please fill out the form below, attach the check or cash and place in the offering plate or mail to the Church Office: Attn: Church Office; 563 Bethel Green Road; Staunton, VA 24401. If you are purchasing a poinsettia please make checks payable to Bethel Presbyterian Church. If you are making a donation to BERF please make the check payable to Bethel Emergency Relief Fund. The deadline is Sunday, December 10th.

Number of Poinsettias _____ Check or Cash Total _____

or

Donation to BERF _____ Check or Cash Total _____

In Honor Of : _____

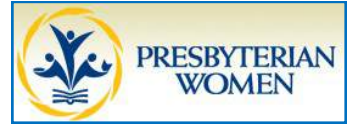
Given By: _____

In Memory Of: _____

Given By: _____

Poinsettias will be on display in the church on December 17th and on Christmas Eve.

****Remember to pick- up Poinsettia(s) following the regular worship service on Christmas Eve or at the Christmas Eve Service that evening.****



The Afternoon Circle will meet on Tuesday, December 12th, at 12:30 pm (note the time change!). The meeting will be at the home of Libby Smith (180 Howardsville Road, Staunton) and there will be a light lunch served. Please contact Libby at 540/337-2058 if you have any questions.



The Evening Circle will have a Christmas Party on Tuesday, December 12th, at 6:30 pm (note the time change!) at the church. We will eat dinner together and exchange gifts. Please bring a dish to share and a small gift. If you have any questions, please contact Irene Elliott (540/885-3554) or Louise Hoy (540/886-3314).

December 3rd - PWCT Meeting



The January Tower Deadline will be Thursday, December 14th. Please have all articles and announcements to the Church Office by noon. Articles and announcements for the January Tower can be left in Adrienne's mailbox in Memorial Hall or you can email them to her at 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!

CHRISTMAS CAROLING - December 17th, 2017

EVERYONE "Let's go Christmas Caroling", on Sunday, December 17th! Following the worship service we will have a light lunch and then carpool to the homes of our members who are homebound. Let's join together to make the Christmas Holidays more special for our homebound members!



MAKE A JOYFUL NOISE UNTO THE LORD. REJOICE AND SING PRAISE. - PSALM 98:4



The Church Office will be closed Monday, December 4th through Thursday, December 7th, while Adrienne is on vacation. Please contact Bill Brubeck (540/885-5871; brubeck@mgwnet.com), Rhonda Johnson (540/292-4441; crkjohnson@ntelos.net), or Kathy Swisher (540/885-7397; kwswisher@gmail.com) if you have a need. Thank you!



The Church Office will be closed Monday, December 25th through Monday, January 1st for the Christmas and New Year's holiday and while Adrienne is on vacation. Please contact Bill Brubeck (540/885-5871; brubeck@mgwnet.com), Rhonda Johnson (540/292-4441; crkjohnson@ntelos.net), or Kathy Swisher (540/885-7397; kwswisher@gmail.com) if you have a need. Thank you!

Financial Stewardship



Offerings 2017: It is requested that offerings for 2017 be made no later than Sunday, December 24th. Thank you for your continued support.

Pledges 2018: 7 pledges for a total of \$22,340.00 have been received. Thanks to those who pledged. If you have not already pledged, please prayerfully consider pledging now for 2018 - it is never too late! A pledge card is included below, and they are also available at the church. 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 for 2018: ATTENTION OFFERING ENVELOPE USERS – Beginning Sunday, December 17th, numbered offering envelopes will be available in the vestibule for those who used offering envelopes in 2017. If you do not currently use envelopes but would like to or have been using them but no longer want them, please contact the Church Office with your request.

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)





Please send your announcements for the weekly bulletin to the Church Office by noon each Wednesday (*unless otherwise noted in the bulletin*). Feel free to email the information to: bethelpc@gmail.com or you can place it in Adrienne's mailbox in Memorial Hall. Please remember that all announcements are subject to editing. Thank you!

Bethel Congregation and Friends:

Please submit any changes to your address, phone numbers, email, etc. to the Church Office. If we do not have your correct information, you may miss out on Bethel events and news. You can send update information to the Church Office at bethelpc@gmail.com.



Volunteers Needed!

Many of you know long-time Bethel members Jon & Donna Bush. Not only are they the Bethel Custodians, they also volunteer at many church events, and Donna teaches the Children's Sunday School Class. They would like to attend worship one Sunday a month and are looking for someone who would be willing to stay with Donna's mother, Margaret Liptrap at their home. If you would be willing to stay with Margaret so Jon & Donna can attend worship please see the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in Memorial Hall. Circle the Sunday you would be willing to serve along with your name and phone number. Donna will contact you with more details before you are scheduled to serve. Thank you for your consideration in volunteering!

Church Inclement Weather Information

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. If church is cancelled a congregational email will also be sent out to all active members.



For weekday activities please follow the Augusta County Schools. If school is cancelled, all events for that afternoon and evening at the church are cancelled.

The Church Office may also be closed due to inclement weather if Augusta County Schools are closed (*Monday through Thursday*). If the Church Office is closed due to inclement weather and you have a need please email bethelpc@gmail.com. Adrienne will be checking email messages throughout the day even if she is not in the Church Office. Thank you!



General Fund Monthly Report

Estimated Budget through October 31st: \$146,388.00

Actual Budget Expenses: \$104,863.00

Actual Budget Receipts: \$141,272.00



Flower Schedule December 2017

December 3rd & December 10th -
Bettie Swisher

December 17th & December 24th -
Christmas Poinsettias

December 31st - Libby Smith

Deacon's Offering
Schedule
December 2017

Wade Cash
D. W. Miller
Alex Sproul
Joe F. Williams



Nursery Schedule December 2017

December 3rd - Brian & Penny Lee
December 10th - Joyce Davis, Louise Hoy
December 17th - Cindy Almarode,
Karen Koogler
December 24th - Mary Ann Anderson,
Maggie Rivers
December 31st - Eloise Moore,
Elizabeth Mulcahy



December
Greeters
D. W. &
Beth Miller



Staunton Choral Society Christmas Concert

The Staunton Choral Society will present their 2017 Christmas Concert "Tell the News" here at Bethel on Saturday, December 2nd, at 4:00 pm. There is no admission cost but a free-will offering will be taken to benefit the Staunton Choral Society, a 501(c)3 organization. For more information please check out the Staunton Choral Society website at: www.stauntonchoralsociety.org or their Facebook page: www.facebook.com/StauntonChoralSociety. Make plans now to attend this special concert!

Celebrate the Christmas Season at Massanetta Springs!

Saturday, December 2nd, 2017 at 6:00 pm
Massanetta Springs - Harrisonburg, VA

Celebrate the Christmas season with a festive holiday dinner and "Sounds of the Season" featuring the Mosaic Handbell Choir, a group of ten ringers skillfully playing 3 octaves of bells and 5 octaves of chimes - coordinating with each other to craft a magical presentation to enjoy with eyes and ears.



Dinner includes appetizer, salad, main course with sides, and dessert.

\$20.00 adults
\$13.00 children 6-18 years
(Children age 5 and under are free)

Reservations are required! Please contact:
(540) 434-3829 or
nolaa@massanettasprings.org



In appreciation . . .

Thank you so much for the prayers, support and visits during my illness and recent stay in rehab. Also, the beautiful flowers, Rev. Condro's visit to give me Communion and Adrienne for sending the bulletins each week.

Thank you again and God bless,
Betty Cash

Thanks to the following Church Office volunteers who assisted in getting everything done this past year! I am so blessed to have your help!

- Adrienne Barker, Bethel Office Manager

Folding the Tower: Irene Elliott, Barb Gough, Betty Heizer, Jackie Law, Mo Kyle, and Joyce Miller. The Tower would never get mailed without your help! Also, a special thank you to Ken Wilkinson who faithfully proofreads the Tower every month before publication.




The Communications Committee - especially Tim Turner & Jill Webb for all their work on the Bethel website. Special thanks to Penny Lee for all of her help with the graphic art on church publications.

Many thanks to Jill Webb, Irene Elliott, and Barb Gough for all the help you have given me throughout the year with a thousand different tasks including helping with folding bulletins, folding bulletin inserts, getting mailings ready, and getting supplies ordered.

Bethel's Annual Harvest Party was held on Saturday, October 28th, 2017. There was a tremendous response - 120 people attended! Everyone enjoyed pumpkin carving, cupcake decorating, apple bobbing, snacks, and trunk-or-treat. The Christian Education Committee wishes to thank everyone for their support and they are already planning for next year!



 On Friday, November 3rd, and Saturday, November 4th Bethel carried out their twice yearly Howardsville Road trash pick-up and congregation wide church clean-up. David and Betty Schooley, Mo Kyle, Marion and Marty Simmers, Barb Gough, and D.W. and Beth Miller picked up 16 bags of assorted trash from the road leading to Bethel. This number will be reported to the Virginia Dept. of Highways. We are provided orange garbage bags and fluorescent vests by VDOT to make our pick-up day safer for all. Saturday brought Barb Gough, D.W. and Beth Miller, Ellen Fitzgerald, Tammy Barbour, Wade Cash, Joe Williams and Marty Simmers out for a busy, successful morning waterproofing/sealing exterior brick columns at Bethel, and rearranging storage areas. The Advent cabinets were moved into the storage room beside our session room. This large room was rearranged for efficient storage and access to items. The area accessed by the steps beside the kitchen where the rental chairs and tables are stored was cleaned and streamlined. A transportable storage unit will be purchased for better/easier access to the chairs. The Deacons are asking that nothing be placed in this area except the chairs and tables, and road side trash pick-up supplies. Lunch was provided for the workers by Tammy Barbour and Ellen Fitzgerald. Please take a minute and go look at the products of your Deacon's labors.



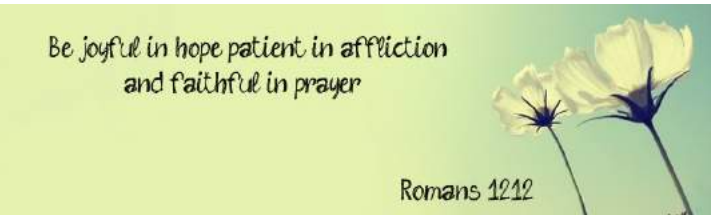
Many thanks to everyone who provided a shoebox for Operation Christmas Child this year. Twenty-four shoeboxes were collected for needy children. Thanks for the continued support of this worthwhile project!

Many thanks to D. W. Miller for sanding and painting the downstairs exterior double entrance doors to the educational building. Looks great, D. W.!



Bethel Prayer List

Tish Amerault (*cousin of Kay Thompson & friend of the Almarodes - has Hodgkins Lymphoma*), Aubree (*10-12 year old with diabetes, plays ukulele with Jill Webb*), Friends & Family of Lucille Baker (*Linda Tenney's mother-in-law*), Phil Balsey (*friend of Bob & Louise Hoy*), Mildred Barmore, Catherine Bryan (*friend of Stephanie Rivers*), Lorine Caldwell (*Dean Caldwell's mother*), Betty Cash, Nancy Cook (*friend of Judy Olson*), Betty Crosby, Jarod Davis & Family, Todd Gibson (*friend of Louise Hoy*), Don Hanger, Mariann Hilenbrand (*mother-in-law of Ben Brown, Jr.*), Bill Kealing (*friend of Laura Barmore*), Bill Klitzman (*nephew of Louise Hoy*), Tate Knick (*2 year old - son of Will & Cassie Knick - friends of Laura Barmore*), Sara Ann Lamb, Evelyn LaPorte, David Law, Sam Leonard, Margaret Liptrap, Meade Loomis (*sister of Anne Jones*), Shane Middleton (*grandson of Bobbye D'Orsi*), All Military Leaders & Personnel, Friends & Family of Wesley Miller (*Shirley Heizer & Betty Heizer's brother*), Bob Olson (*recovering from surgery*), Bob Moody, John Pilson (*recovering at home*), Wallace Pilson, Police, Firemen, and EMS workers & volunteers, Carly Pond (*fifteen year old great niece of John Pilson*), Kristofer & Tracie Ranstrom (*cousins of Beth Miller*), H. O. Sandridge (*diagnosed with cancer - cousin of Betty Schooley*), Alfred Sheets (*relative of John Pilson*), Frank Shiflett & Brenda, Dale K. Smith, Michael Somers, Friends & Family of Kelly Berry Sprouse, Bill & Marguerite Whitaker (*Tom Whitaker's parents*), MISSIONARY: Michael & Rachel Weller and Ethiopian friends



Please continue to pray for . . .

The Stated Supply Pastor that God has already chosen for Bethel, as we prepare for that pastor, and for those who are looking for whom God has chosen for us.

Please call Tammy Barbour @ 540-471-0450, Barb Gough @ 540-255-6521, or the Church Office @ 540-886-6041 with any additions or updates.

Candle Lighting at the All Saints' Sunday worship service on November 5th, 2017.



Recognizing our Veterans during the worship service on Sunday, November 12th, 2017.

Fun at the Bethel Harvest Party & Trunk-or-Treat on October 28th!



Fun at the Bethel Harvest Party & Trunk-or-Treat on October 28th!




December 3rd - First Sunday of Advent
 December 21st - Winter Begins
 December 24th - Christmas Eve
 December 25th - Christmas Day
 December 31st - New Year's Eve

