



# The Tower

December 2018

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bethelpc@gmail.com \* www.bethelpresbyterianstaunton.org

## *Greetings from the Pastor's Desk . . .*

*Wait on the Lord...*

Last week a close Christian friend said indignantly, “I do not like Christmas anymore!” I understood her mindset. The anxiety and demands of the holiday are immense and I find myself overwhelmed by the “must dos” of the season rather than peacefully waiting the profound gift and mystery of the birth of Jesus Christ. Why? The observance of the birth of our Savior has been overtaken by consumer wants and corporate profits. The “C” (Christ) is literally taken out of Christmas, leaving us empty, exhausted, and economically depleted after the manger is gifted with Life.



Inserting “Christ” back into Christmas where “secular Christmas” has bombarded our living rooms, our kitchens, and even our churches will not be an easy task. We live in a culture that is mesmerized by the glitz of the season. Christmas decorations are out by October, children, and adults alike are making wish lists for Santa Claus, we decorate religiously, and bake incessantly. The pressure of the consumer culture bears down on us; buying into it just seems easier. Some of us may choose not to budge until after Thanksgiving, only to find ourselves in a stressed out mania, trying to get it all done before the BIG day. We quickly find ourselves far from Christ, acting like a consumer “nut-so,” dragged around by the need to please and the prevailing consumer culture. This mentality makes it very difficult for us to recover the theological riches of Advent and Christmas from the tradition, but we should prayerfully and deliberately try.

One way we can do this is to fully engage the Advent season, a specific time to reflect and anticipate the birth of our Lord, Jesus Christ. During Advent, while we buy, wrap, and stuff the space under our trees, it is important to remember that although “God” is at work, the manger is empty! As Christians, we have an opportunity to observe and live into the Advent of Christ. This Holy time is to be set aside to expectantly WAIT for and prepare for the arrival of God incarnate in Jesus of Nazareth. However, waiting has become less and less fashionable in our impatient age.

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Nonetheless, we are called on to “Wait for the LORD; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the LORD!” (Psalm 27:14) This simple and profound verse is a beautiful starting point to be a mindful Christian in a consumer culture that surrounds Christmas and essentially every day of our lives.

Advent has the potential to combat the flagrant consumerism surrounding Christmas. By fully engaging in the practice of Advent, we can revitalize the “spiritual” Christmas of our faith, quenching our “seasonally” parched souls to be better prepared for all Christmas truly means when it finally arrives.

Expectantly waiting for the gift of the Christ Child can also promote waiting in other areas of our lives. God's provision is said to be right and good; we do not have to succumb to the power and idolatry of consumerism in our lives. The more we acknowledge our need for a Savior, the more we can remove ourselves from the prey of the “dollar” and self imposed demands of the holiday to REJOICE fully when He is finally swaddled in the manger.

It is vital to remember we are dependent on God in all things, and to observe the traditions of our Christianity, while being mindful of a world that seeks to distract us from the true meaning of Christmas. Advent is a beautiful way to focus on the wonderment and anticipation of the birth of the Christ Child and the hope, peace, joy, and love that is offered by a generous and loving God. He is coming, now let's wait...

Pastor Kelly-Ann

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### *December Lectionary Schedule*

*December 2, 2018*

1st Sunday of Advent

Sacrament of Holy Communion

Hanging of the Greens

Advent Wreath “Candle of Hope”

Jeremiah 13:14-16; Psalm 25:1-10;

I Thessalonians 3:9-13; Luke 21:25-36\*

*December 9, 2018*

2nd Sunday of Advent

Advent Wreath “Candle of Peace”

Malachi 3:1-4; Luke 1:68-79; Philippians 1:3-11; Luke 3:1-6\*

*December 16, 2018*

3rd Sunday of Advent

Guest Minister: Rev. Jessica Townes

Joy Gift Offering

Advent Wreath “Candle of Joy”

Zephaniah 3:14-20; Isaiah 12:2-6; Philippians 4:4-7; Luke 3:7-18\*



*(schedule continued on page 3)*

*(December Lectionary Schedule continued)*

*December 23, 2018*

4th Sunday of Advent

Advent Wreath “Candle of Love”

Micah 5:2-5a; Luke 1:46b-55\*; Psalm 80:1-7; Hebrews 10:5-10; Luke 1:39-55\*

*December 24, 2018*

Christmas Eve

Live Nativity at 8:30 pm

Candlelight Service at 9:00 pm

Advent Wreath “Christ Candle”

Isaiah 9:2-7; Psalm 96; Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-20\*

*December 30, 2018*

1st Sunday after Christmas Day

I Samuel 2:18-20; Psalm 148; Colossians 3:12-17; Luke 2:41-52\*

\*These texts will be highlighted during “Soup & Scripture”.

*January 6, 2019*

Epiphany of the Lord

Isaiah 60:1-6; Psalm 72: 1-7, 10-14; Ephesians 3:1-12; Matthew 2:1-12

*Candles of Advent*

During the four Sundays of Advent, Bethel will be illuminated with candles as we light our Advent wreath of evergreen, shaped in a perfect circle to symbolize God's eternity. Advent means "coming," and during the season, we prepare for the coming of the Christ child.



The four Sundays preceding Christmas, which is when Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, are recognized for four virtues. The candles on the Advent wreath symbolize hope, peace, joy and love. The candles are lit in that order, beginning on December 2<sup>nd</sup>, the first Sunday of Advent. The fifth and final candle is the Christ candle which will be lit on Christmas Eve to remind us of the light Jesus Christ brings to the world.



**OUR YOUTH NEED YOU!!!**

Calling all Elders, past or present, who are interested in mentoring our upcoming 2019 Confirmation Class participants. This is a vital and important ministry, so beat Pastor Kelly-Ann to the “call to minister,” by calling her before she contacts you!

*Pastor Kelly-Ann's Office Days & Hours*

Tuesday 12:00 pm - 3:00 pm\*

Wednesday 1:00 pm - 6:00 pm\*

Thursday 11:00 am - 2:00 pm\*

*\*The listed office hours may vary due to the daily pastoral needs of the congregation.*

Pastor Kelly-Ann will be on vacation Wednesday, December 5th through Monday, December 17th. If you have a pastoral need please contact the Church Office or any Elder.



## Musical News & Notes . . .

### WEEKEND OF JOY - DECEMBER 15TH & DECEMBER 16TH DECEMBER 15TH - FAMILY CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION PROGRAM & COVERED DISH SUPPER DECEMBER 16TH - JOY GIFT OFFERING COLLECTED

#### \*\*\*"THE FAMILY CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION": Saturday, December 15th at 5:00PM

As part of our Joy Weekend, we have a very special continuation of a yearly tradition at Bethel. On Saturday, December 15<sup>th</sup> is our annual Joy Gift 'Luncheon' with the Joy Gift Offering to follow on Sunday. However, this Saturday event will be a potluck starting at 5:00PM, so it's really more of a Joy Gift 'Covered Dish Supper!'

It is *also* a time of sharing our musical gifts and talents. I've heard that we have bands, singers, instrumentalists, and musically gifted families in this church, and THIS IS THE TIME TO SHARE YOUR MUSIC THIS CHRISTMAS!

Sign-up sheets for music are in the Vestibule, the Church Office, and on the Bulletin Boards in Memorial Hall for you to sign up to share your gifts. PLEASE SIGN-UP ASAP so that I can make a schedule and contact performers to ask what they will need!

Shalom,  
Eli



## Bethel Office News & Notes . . .

The Church Office will be closed Monday, December 24th through Wednesday, December 26th for the Christmas holiday.

The Church Office will be closed on Monday, December 31st and Tuesday, January 1st for the New Year.

The staff of Bethel wishes God's blessings to you during the Christmas season and in the coming year!



#### Church Office Hours

Monday - Thursday 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

Friday 10:00 am - 3:00 pm\*

\*Only Eli in the office

Adrienne will be out of the office on Thursday, December 27th for vacation. Please contact Pastor Kelly-Ann or Eli if you need anything.



#### January Tower Deadline & Tower Mailing Date Adjustment

Due to the Christmas and New Year's holiday the January Tower deadline will be Thursday, December 27th. Please have all articles and announcements to the Church Office by noon. The January Tower will be mailed out on Tuesday, January 8th. 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](mailto:bethelpc@gmail.com). Please remember if you turn in items after the deadline Adrienne cannot guarantee they will be included in the Tower. Thank you!



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 16th, December 23rd 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 9th.

*\*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). Additional order/donation forms will be available in the church vestibule. 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 9th.

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 16th, December 23rd, and on Christmas Eve.*

*\*\*Remember to pick- up Poinsettia(s) following the worship service on December 23rd or following the Christmas Eve Service.\*\**

## *Session News & Notes . . .*

The Session met on November 13, 2018 with 8 elders and the moderator, Pastor Kelly-Ann Rayle, present.

Pastor Kelly-Ann and the Christian Education Committee will offer a church-wide Advent study, "God is in the Manger." Those who choose to participate will use a study guide during the Advent season. Then, they will attend a luncheon after worship on January 6th, 2019 to discuss what they have learned.

The Communications Committee plans to erect two Bethel signs, one at each end of Howardsville Road. They also continue to collect congregational survey forms to use to set up a congregational information-sharing system.

The Outreach and Evangelism Committee will enter a float in the Stuarts Draft Christmas parade and Bethel members will be invited join them.

Pastor Kelly-Ann will be on vacation December 5th-7th and December 10th-16th, 2018.

The December Session meeting has been rescheduled to Tuesday, December 18, 2018.

A congregational meeting will be held on December 2nd, 2018 after worship for the purpose of forming a nominating committee.

A congregational meeting will be held on January 20th, 2019 after worship to elect new officers and to review the 2019 budget.

Bethel's youth will prepare a display for Staunton's Celebration of Holiday Lights at Gypsy Hill Park. They will also hold a live nativity before and after Bethel's Christmas Eve service.

## *Christian Education Committee News & Notes . . .*

As we draw near to Advent, please consider joining one of Bethel's diverse Christian Education opportunities to enhance and nurture your spiritual growth.



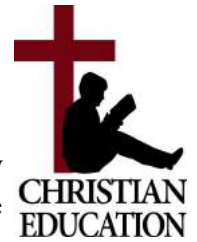
### **Adult Christian Education Opportunities**

#### *The Women of the Church (Presbyterian Women)*

The PWCT meets the first Sunday of each month following the worship service. They meet to discuss programs, service projects, and outreach organized by the Women of the Church. They have Chairs for the areas of Spiritual Growth, Community Outreach, World Outreach, and Together in Service. There are also two circles that meet the 2nd Tuesday of each month for Bible Study and fellowship. The Afternoon Circle meets at 1:30 pm and the Evening Circle meets at 7:00 pm.

#### *Men of Bethel*

The Men of Bethel meet once a quarter (in January, April, July, and October) at 6:30 pm for dinner and a program.



*Prayer/Bible Study Group*

The prayer and Bible study group meets in the Bumgardner Classroom on the Tuesday afternoons (except for the 2nd Tuesday of the month) from 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm. The group is currently studying the book of Mark and is led by Jeannie Lee. They then confidentially pray for Bethel, the community and world concerns.

*Soup and Scripture*

Join Pastor Kelly-Ann as she studies and wrestles with the upcoming Sunday's scripture readings!! The group meets each Thursday from 12:00 pm to 1:15 pm in the Church kitchen for fellowship, discussion, and delicious soup prepared by Kelly-Ann.

*Sunday School*

*Youth (Pre-K-6th grade)*

This class meets downstairs in the Christian Education wing and discusses a variety of age appropriate topics and focuses on building a foundation and knowledge of the Bible for children. There is a story, crafts, and activities each week and the class is taught by Donna Bush.

*Adult Study #1 – Seekers Class*

This class meets in the Seekers Classroom at 9:45 am most Sundays. They are currently studying The Acts of the Apostles and the class is led by Ken Wilkinson.

*Adult Study # 2 - Conversations in Faith*

This class meets in the Bumgardner Classroom at 9:45 am. The class is multi-generational and tries to live up to its name, being a class that engages in conversation as they learn together what it means to be a Christian in the world today. The class is led by Derek Almarode.

*COMING IN JANUARY . . .*



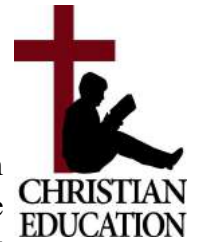
*“Table Talk” Theology*

People have been gathering in public spaces for ages to talk about life, philosophy, faith, and deep questions of meaning. Increasingly, faith leaders are rediscovering that off campus outings are a safe and open space where folks of all ages, varying religious traditions, philosophical perspectives, and life experiences can explore and express their own doubts and questions and learn from one another.

The format is simple: food, beverage, conversation, and God. The group will meet at 7:00 pm on the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month and the topic/discussion facilitators Steve and Kelly-Ann Rayle. *The first meeting will be on Thursday, January 17th.* Before each scheduled meeting Steve Rayle will email participants a gathering location and discussion topic based on a current news event to review and ponder. Then, Come!!! Bring your questions, your curiosities, and pull up a chair at the table!

*“Good things happen when we sit down at the same table together and talk honestly about things that matter.” - Pastor, writer, and pub Theologian Bryan Berghoef*

## Christian Education Committee News & Notes (continued) . . .



### Confirmation of Faith Program

This year Pastor Kelly-Ann, along with other adult volunteers will welcome all youth grades 7-12 to participate in this year's confirmation program. The program will serve as an overview of the Christian faith, church, and life to prepare our youth to consider and make their own personal commitments of faith.

The youth will participate in an Adult guided confirmation class during the Sunday School hour beginning January 6th, 2019 and will continue through March ending with an overnight faith review retreat (TBA). In addition, the youth will be matched with an elder in the church with whom they can explore the nature of Christian discipleship. The program culminates with an invitation to youth to personally profess faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior and be commissioned as a disciple. This will take place at an April meeting with the Bethel Session and in a worship service on the first Sunday of May.

### Youth Christian Education Opportunities

Bethel seeks to provide a welcoming youth ministry that nurtures a strong sense of community with others, where each individual is valued and nurtured, and all are accepted as God's unique creations. Our offerings seek to enable young people to understand and recognize who Jesus is, and what it means to live for him. This is accomplished in numerous ways, providing youth with many opportunities for spiritual and personal growth. We are blessed at Bethel to have a committed group of adult volunteers dedicated to working with our youth and encouraging them in their walk of faith. Youth gatherings will take place throughout the year, September through June with many opportunities for learning, fellowship, and service.

*Youth Bible Study - 4th Sunday of the month at 1:00 pm*

*Youth Fellowship/Mission Activity - 2nd Sunday of the month, meeting time and place varies depending on the activity*

*Confirmation of Faith Program - Sundays in January - March at 9:45 am*

***\*\*If you have a Christian Education area of interest that is not covered in the slated offerings above, please see Pastor Kelly-Ann to pitch your idea!\*\****

## Communications Committee News & Notes . . .

### Communications Committee Survey

If you have not returned the Communication Committee Survey please do so as soon as possible! A copy was in the November Tower and additional copies are in the vestibule. You can return completed surveys to the Church Office. *We are asking everyone who receives any communication from the church to fill this survey out.* The information you provide will help us in determining the best ways to communicate news to you. Thanks to those who have already returned their surveys!

- Communications Committee



## Congregational Care Committee News & Notes . . .



### 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](mailto:barbsgough@gmail.com)) if you would like more information. Make plans now to attend and join the fun! - Congregational Care Committee



### Bethel Prayer List

Mildred Barmore, Catherine Bryan (*friend of Stephanie Rivers*), Reese Burdette (*great niece of Debbie Callison*), Lorine Caldwell (*Dean Caldwell's mother*), Betty Cash, Jarod Davis & Family, Ronnie Davis (*Joyce Davis's son*), Martha Dubyk (*niece of Faye Brown*), Kenny Earman (*friend of the Williams's*), Irene Elliott (*death of her brother David Patton*), Family & Friends of Henley Gabeau, Don Hanger, Laurin Henderson & Family, Gail Hord (*heart issues, Steve Hord's mother*), Jack (*newborn who is suffering from seizures*), John Jennings & Family (*friends of Joe Williams*), Bill Klitzman (*nephew of Louise Hoy*), Karen Koogler, Matt Koogler, Sara Ann Lamb, Evelyn LaPorte, David Law, Jeannie Lee, Olivia Lewis & Family (*best friend of Emily Rayle*), Margaret Liptrap, Meade Loomis (*sister of Anne Jones*), Pam Massie (*friend of Faye Brown*), Preston McCallister & Meredith McCallister (*friends of Drury Whitaker*), All Military Leaders & Personnel, Family & Friends of Dan Miller (*brother of Betty Heizer & Shirley Heizer*), Family & Friends of Bob Moody, Family & Friends of Tim Moriconi (*friend of the Rayle family*), Family & Friends of Judy Olson, Maggie Peterson (*diagnosed with cancer; friend of Ashlyn Almarode*), John Pilson, Roy L. Pilson, Wallace Pilson, Van Pirkey, Carly Pond (*great-niece of John Pilson*), Police, Firemen, and EMS workers and volunteers, Bob Robinson & wife Shirley (*friends of Stephanie Rivers*), Devin Scott (*nephew of Kelly-Ann*), Tara Perrotti & Family (*Devin Scott's mother & Kelly-Ann's sister*), Michael Somers, Parker Staples (*student at Hugh K. Cassell Elementary School*), Jill Webb, Bill & Marguerite Whitaker (*Tom Whitaker's parents*), Alice Wooddell, victims of the hurricanes, MISSIONARIES - Michael & Rachel Weller & the people of Ethiopia

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

## Outreach & Evangelism Committee News & Notes . . .



**VOLUNTEER  
BELL RINGERS  
NEEDED!**

*Ring a bell...help change a life*

### Calling for Bell Ringers!

The Bethel Outreach & Evangelism Committee needs volunteers to help with ringing the Salvation Army bells at the Staunton Wal-Mart on Friday, December 7th, from 12:00 pm to 8:00 pm. You will be stationed at the Pharmacy entrance and each shift lasts about two hours. Please call Dean Caldwell at (540) 292-0646 as soon as possible to schedule a time to "ring in the holiday season" for those in need.

## Outreach & Evangelism Committee News & Notes (continued) . . .



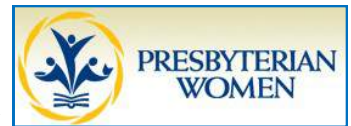
### Stuarts Draft Christmas Parade!

The Bethel Outreach & Evangelism Committee will be decorating a small camper to tell the community about Bethel in the Stuarts Draft Christmas Parade! The parade will be on Saturday, December 8th, at 4:00 pm. If you would like to help decorate or walk in the parade (we especially need members willing to walk with the camper!), lineup will begin at Hollister at 3:00 pm. The holiday theme for the parade this year is "Christmas at the Movies". Please contact Dean Caldwell if you are willing to walk in the parade or if you have any questions (540) 292-0646.

## Presbyterian Women News & Notes . . .

### Presbyterian Women

December 2018



The Afternoon Circle will meet on Tuesday, December 11th, at 11:00 am (*note the time change!*). The meeting will be at the home of Libby Smith (180 Howardsville Road, Staunton) and there will be a light brunch served. Please contact Libby at 540/337-2058 if you have any questions.



The Evening Circle will have a Christmas Party on Tuesday, December 11th, 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 2nd - PWCT Meeting

December 30th - PWCT Meeting

## Stewardship & Finance Committee News & Notes . . .

### General Fund Monthly Report

Estimated Budget through October 31st: \$153,854.00

Actual Budget Receipts: \$136,120.00    Actual Budget Expenses: \$132,875.00

FINANCIAL UPDATE

### Update on 2019 Pledges . . .

23 pledges for a total of \$94,120.00 have been received. Many thanks to those who pledged. *If you have not already pledged, please prayerfully consider pledging now for 2019 - it is never too late!* Pledge cards are available in the vestibule and Memorial Hall if you need one. 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. Thank you for your generosity in helping Bethel spread the good news of Jesus Christ!



**KROGER DONATIONS TO BETHEL**

The Kroger family of stores donated \$66.00 to our general fund in the quarter ending August 31st, 2018. THANK YOU to the nine congregation families who were linked to Bethel through their Kroger Plus Cards. When their card was used at the register, Bethel received a percentage of the sale.

Instructions for participating in this program, if you shop at Kroger:

- If you do not have a Kroger Plus Card, please acquire one at your local Kroger store.
- If you already have a Kroger Plus Card, and it is not yet linked to Bethel, please register, using Bethel's new number, **MC546**, at: **www.KrogerCommunityRewards.com**.
- **As a new online customer:** click on "Create an Account".  
Enter your email address, create a password, enter your zip code, click on favorite store, and agree to the terms and conditions. You will receive a message in your e-mail inbox with a link to activate your Kroger account. If you have questions during registration, you may call Kroger's help number: 800-837-4483.
- **If you have an existing account:**  
Enter your email address, your password, and click on "Sign In".  
Click on Community, then on Community Rewards  
Enter Bethel's number (**MC546**), then click on "Search".  
Select Bethel and click on "Save".  
To verify that you enrolled correctly, you will see Bethel's name on the right side of your account settings page.
- **Once you are linked**, you start earning rewards for Bethel immediately. The message saying that you are supporting Bethel through the Kroger Community Rewards program will start printing on your receipt about 10 business days after you link your card.
- **View your Rewards Details**  
Go to [www.KrogerCommunityRewards.com](http://www.KrogerCommunityRewards.com)  
Click on "View Your Rewards Details"  
The amount you have earned for Bethel will update at the end of each quarter.
- Kroger has a simple policy to never share a customer's personal information.

For your purchase to count, you must swipe your registered Kroger Plus Card each time you check out. If your card is linked every year, you will continue to reward Bethel through this program. Thank you for participating!



## Stewardship & Finance Committee News & Notes (continued) . . .

*Offering Envelopes for 2019:* ATTENTION OFFERING ENVELOPE USERS – Beginning Sunday, December 16th, numbered offering envelopes will be available in the vestibule for those who used offering envelopes in 2018. 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.



*Offerings 2018:* It is requested that offerings for 2018 be made no later than Sunday, December 30th. Thank you for your continued support.



The Christmas Joy Offering will be received as part of the “Weekend of Joy!” on Sunday, December 16th, during worship.

### *What Is the Christmas Joy Gift 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.

## Witness/Mission Committee News & Notes . . .



### *Christmas Alive Program at Riverheads Elementary School*

The Witness/Mission Committee is asking for your help in providing gifts to children in need at Riverheads Elementary School. Starting on Sunday, November 25th, there will be a tree in Memorial Hall with gift tags attached. Please choose a tag, put your name on the list that will be provided (so that the committee will know who has taken the tag) and purchase the gift requested on the tag. Please return your gift wrapped and with the tag attached to Memorial Hall by Sunday, December 16th! Contact Kathy Swisher at (540) 885-7397 if you have any questions.

The Witness/Mission Committee would like to thank you for the stuffing and gravy donated to Kingsway this past month and for your continued support in all of Bethel's mission projects. Here is a list of projects that you have supported this year.

- February-- Souper Bowl of Caring that went to Kingsway in the amount of \$340.
- March-- A brunch was served at Valley Mission.
- July--Supported the Baja Mission to put addition on home and build school cafeteria \$2050.
- July-- Supported the Summerlee Mission in West Virginia to repair homes in the amount of \$1500.
- August- A brunch was served at Valley Mission.
- September--”Share the Bounty” where garden produce was given to Kingsway.
- September-- Food on Fridays at Riverheads Elementary School where needy students are given food for the weekend - \$3000.
- September--\$400 given to buy needy students snacks at Craigsville Elementary School.
- September--\$3000 given to Presbyterian Disaster Relief.
- October--\$325 given to ICARE.

Every week donations of food and clothing given to Kingsway from the congregation.

## Worship Committee News & Notes . . .



### Hanging of the Greens

Make sure to join us on Sunday, December 2nd, as Bethel celebrates the traditional Hanging of the Greens during the worship service. The Bethel youth and children will be hanging the Chrismons and lighting the Christmas tree to kick off the Advent season! (Pre-decorating will be done on Saturday, December 1st, at 9:00 if you would like to come and help the Worship Committee get ready for the holiday season!)

### Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

“An Evening of Lessons and Carols,” our traditional candlelight Christmas Eve service, will go on at 9:00 pm on December 24th. Come starting at 8:30 pm for a Live Nativity put on by our Youth Committee! There will be plenty of Music and Celebration as we traverse the biblical history leading to the Birth of Jesus in Bethlehem and the start of His life on Earth, the promise of our Salvation!



There is still time to purchase a “Glory to God” hymnal in memory or in honor of someone. Order forms and envelopes are available in the vestibule.

### Note from Worship Committee Chair . . .

#### **Family Responsible for Paying Organist for Wedding or Funeral**

Bethel's Session, at its November 13th meeting, passed a motion that the family would be responsible for paying an organist at a wedding or funeral held at Bethel. This policy will become effective January 1st, 2019. Other revisions to Bethel's wedding and funeral policy will be considered in the future.

## Bethel Youth News . . .

### Youth Live Nativity



The Bethel Youth will put on a live nativity at 8:30 pm on Christmas Eve. The live nativity will also continue following the Christmas Eve service. More details about this activity will be available in the coming weeks.



## Schedules & Such . . .



### Flower Schedule December 2018

December 2nd & December 9th -  
Bettie Swisher

(Communion - December 2nd)

December 16th - December 30th -  
Christmas Poinsettias

January 2019

January 6th - Sally Williams (Communion)

### Deacon's Offering Schedule December 2018

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



### Deacon's Offering Schedule January 2019

Brian Lee  
Joe Moore  
Linda Tenney  
Drury Whitaker



### Nursery Schedule December 2018

December 2nd - Jackie Law,  
Stephanie Rivers  
December 9th - Chris & Therese Schooley  
December 16th - Joe & Sally Williams  
December 23rd - Joe & Tabby Moore  
December 30th - Mac & Emily Williams

January 2019

January 6th - Penny Lee, Luanne Leonard

### January Greeters

Katie McElveen  
Pat Quick



### December Greeters

D. W. &  
Beth Miller



### 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](http://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. If the Church Office is closed due to inclement weather and you have a need please contact Pastor Kelly-Ann, Adrienne, or Eli. They will still be available by phone, text, and email even if they are unable to be in the Church Office. Thank you!

## Sympathies & Condolences . . .

Our sympathies and condolences to the family and friends of Wayne Heizer who passed away on October 31st, 2018.

Our sympathies and condolences to the family and friends of Henley Gabeau who passed away on November 7th, 2018.

### CALL TO PRAYER FOR THOSE WHO HAVE LOST LOVED ONES

Dear Bethel,

“Holidays are time spent with loved ones,” this has been imprinted on our psyche from a young age. Holidays mark the passage of time in our lives. They are part of the milestones we share with each other and they generally represent time spent with family. They bring meaning to certain days and we bring much meaning back to them. But since holidays are for being with those we love the most, it is difficult to find JOY "amidst the rubble" of the loss of a loved one. I ask, we as a congregation remember in prayer those who will be aching, missing, and grieving for their loved one for the first time during this holiday season. I ask you to remember, hold close, and lift up in prayer the family and friends of:

*Betty Crosby, Mary Louise Fisher, Henley Gabeau, Everette (Bill) Hanger, Wayne Heizer, Donald Landes, Frank Law, Robert Moody, Timothy Moriconi, Judith Olson, Ersel Rose, Josephine Speck, and D. Wayne Swisher.*

I believe the power of prayer will sustain and offer some solace during this difficult time and although things will not "feel fine" just yet, knowing they have the love and support of their Bethel family will indeed shine the hope-filled loving LIGHT of Jesus Christ into the midst of their "new" normal.

With all the power and strength of the Holy Spirit who reaches farther than we can ever imagine,  
Pastor Kelly-Ann

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## Many thanks . . .



The family of Judy Olson would like to thank you for your prayers, cards and condolences during our time of loss. We were humbled by the stories shared and the care and concern shown to us during this difficult time. We have been truly blessed to be a part of the Bethel family. - Kenny Olson & family

Bethel's Annual Harvest Party was held on Saturday, October 20th, 2018. There was a tremendous response - over 100 people attended! Everyone enjoyed pumpkin carving, cupcake decorating, snacks, and trunk-or-treat. The Christian Education Committee, Youth Committee, and Congregational Care Committee would like to thank everyone for their support and they are already planning for next year!



## Many thanks . . .

The Deacons would like to thank everyone who came and helped with the church-wide and Howardsville Road clean-up on October 13th. Your hard work was appreciated and we were able to get all of the tasks on our list done!



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



Thanks for the lovely tree donated by Francisco Farms (Bill Francisco) that helps make our sanctuary beautiful each year at Christmas. Also, thanks for help in decorating it from Laura Swisher, Justin Swisher and Jesse Resnick. Please come and join us during this Advent season for worship.



Thanks to the following Church Office volunteers who assisted me with getting things done this past year! I am so blessed to have your help and you all went above and beyond! My apologies to anyone I may have missed! :)

- Adrienne Barker, Bethel Office Manager

Irene Elliott, Barb Gough, Jackie Law, Yvonne Goodson, Mo Kyle, Betty Heizer, Jill Webb, Libby Smith, Doris True, Sarah Frances Ralston, Joyce Miller, Ken Wilkinson, Tim Turner, Marion Simmers, Marty Simmers, Ellen Fitzgerald, Lee Ann Heizer, Alex Sproul, JoAnn Pendley, Penny Lee, Tammy Barbour, Sally Williams, Kathy Swisher, and Rhonda Johnson.

## Around the Presbytery & Community . . .

### *Celebrate the Christmas Season at Massanetta Springs!*

*Saturday, December 1st, 2018 at 6:00 pm  
Massanetta Springs - Harrisonburg, VA*



Let Massanetta Springs put in the holiday mood! Great food, fellowship, and music await you at Massanetta's annual Christmas Dinner and Concert! Following dinner there will be a concert by the Massanetta Brass Quintet.

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

\$20.00 adults

\$13.00 children 4-18 years

*(Children age 3 and under are free)*

*Reservations are required by Monday, November 26th!*

*Please contact: (540) 434-3829 or*

*nolaa@massanettasprings.org to make your reservations!*



## Around the Presbytery & Community . . .



### Staunton Choral Society Christmas Concert

You are cordially invited to the Staunton Choral Society's Christmas Concert "Sing We All" on Saturday, December 1st *or* Sunday, December 2nd. Both concerts will begin at 7:00 pm and there will be a free-will offering to benefit the Staunton Choral Society, a 501(c) (3) organization. The concert on December 1st will be at Calvary United Methodist Church (2179 Stuarts Draft Hwy, Stuarts Draft) and the concert on December 2nd will be at Christ Lutheran Church (2807 N. Augusta St, Staunton). For more information check their Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/StauntonChoralSociety](http://www.facebook.com/StauntonChoralSociety). Come and get in the Christmas spirit while listening to this talented group perform fun and beautiful Christmas songs!

### Christmas Open House



### Christmas Open House

The Church of the Good Shepherd (809 Lee Jackson Highway; Staunton), warmly invites you to a Christmas Open House and Tour on Sunday, December 30th from 12:30 pm - 4:30 pm.

The small English-styled stone church was designed by the noted T.J. Collins & Sons firm and built in 1924. Other Collins designs include the Augusta County Courthouse, St. Francis Catholic Church, the Virginia War Memorial and many homes in the region.



December 2nd - First Sunday of Advent  
December 21st - Winter Begins  
December 24th - Christmas Eve  
December 25th - Christmas Day  
December 31st - New Year's Eve

## MERRY CHRISTMAS

For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. *John 3:16*

*Birthdays & Anniversaries . . .*



William Rivers	December 1	Pamela Prickett	December 17
Jimmy Callison	December 2	Alice Wooddell	December 17
Steve Rayle	December 2	Sam Goodson	December 19
Guy Brooks	December 3	Bob Hoy	December 20
Robert Shultz	December 4	Luanne Leonard	December 20
Paul Thompson	December 4	Mitch Lathrop	December 24
Jackson LaPorte	December 7	Sydney Smith	December 25
Georgeanne Ludt	December 8	Lee Ann Heizer	December 29
Puggie Sprouse	December 8	Shirley Heizer	December 29
Samuel Williams	December 8	James Schooley	December 30
Pastor Kelly-Ann	December 10		
Barbara Gough	December 12	Mac Williams	January 2
Kay Agee	December 13	Katie McElveen	January 3
Rhonda Johnson	December 13	D. W. Miller	January 3
Joy Moody	December 15	Justin Burkholder	January 6
Austin Johnston	December 16	Hayley Morris	January 8
Cynthia Williams	December 16	Emily Rayle	January 9

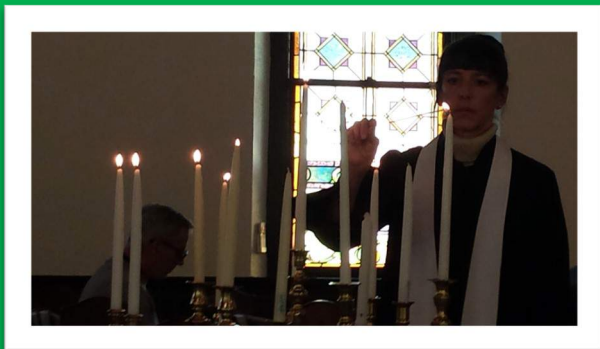


Tish and Keith Folsom	December 7, 1985
Rhonda and Robert Shultz	December 10, 1977
Jackie and Bob Law	December 11, 1959
Tessa and Ben Williams	December 13, 2014
Ginny and Dan Gano	December 22, 1970
Margaret and Steve Kyle	December 27, 1986
Myran and Douglas Moore	January 5, 1992

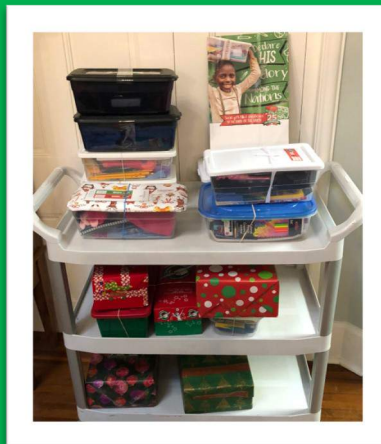


If you have a birthday or anniversary that you would like to have appear in the Bethel Tower and we have missed it please call and let the Church Office know so we can include it in future publications. Thank you!

*Dedication of the Scout Hut on October 28th in honor of John Pilson & Wallace Pilson for their dedication to Boy Scout Troop 13 for many years.*



*Lighting the candles at the All Saints Service on November 5th.*



*Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes. Thanks to those who donated!*

*Veterans Day Celebration on November 11th.  
Guest Speaker - Chaplain Cliff Edwards*



**Bethel Presbyterian Church**

Rev. Kelly-Ann Rayle, Pastor

Eli English, Music Director

JoAnn Pendley, Handbell Choir Director

Ken Wilkinson, Receiving Treasurer

Donna Bush & Carol Sprouse, Custodians

Adrienne Barker, Office Manager

Sara Ann Lamb, Organist

Rhonda Johnson, Clerk of Session

Lori Miller, Disbursing Treasurer

**Sessional Ministry Committees**

Christian Education - John Davis

Communications - Tabby Moore

Continuing Education Loan Co-Chairs - Bill Brubeck, Dan Gano

Nominating - Bob Olson

Personnel Committee Co-Chairs - Cindy Almarode, Bill Brubeck

Outreach & Evangelism - Dean Caldwell

Stewardship & Finance Co-Chairs - Derek Almarode, Mac Williams



Witness/Mission - Kathy Swisher

Worship - Marion Simmers

Youth - Derek Almarode



# December 2018

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<p><b>2</b> 1st Sunday of Advent 9:45 - Sunday School 11:00 - Worship/ Communion/ Hanging of the Greens 12:00 - Congregational Meeting 12:30 - Advent Workshop 12:30 - PWCT</p>	<p><b>3</b> Tuesday Club Set-Up (Fellowship Hall) 7:00 - Boy Scouts 7:00 - Young Life</p>	<p><b>4</b> 11:30 - 3:00 - Tuesday Club (Fellowship Hall) 2:00 - Bible Study &amp; Prayer</p>	<p><b>5</b> 6:00 - Worship Comm. 6:30 - Cub Scouts 7:00 - Adult Choir 7:00 - The Bells of Bethel 7:30 - Young Life  <i>Pastor Kelly-Ann on vacation (5th - 8th)</i></p>	<p><b>6</b></p>	<p><b>7</b> 12:00 - 8:00 - Ringing Salvation Army Bell at Staunton Wal-Mart</p>	<p><b>1</b> 9:00 - Decorating for Advent &amp; Christmas</p>
<p><b>9</b> 2nd Sunday of Advent Deadline: Christmas Poinsettia Orders &amp; BERF Donations 9:45 - Sunday School 11:00 - Worship 12:15 - Diaconate</p>	<p><b>10</b> 7:00 - Boy Scouts 7:00 - Young Life  <i>Pastor Kelly-Ann on vacation (10th - 17th)</i></p>	<p><b>11</b> 11:00 - Afternoon Circle (at the home of <i>Libby Smith</i>) 6:30 - Evening Circle (Fellowship Hall)</p>	<p><b>12</b> 7:00 - Adult Choir 7:00 - The Bells of Bethel 7:30 - Young Life</p>	<p><b>13</b></p>	<p><b>14</b></p>	<p><b>15</b> Weekend of Joy! 5:00 - 7:00 - "A Family Christmas Celebration" Potluck Supper &amp; Program</p>
<p><b>16</b> 3rd Sunday of Advent Weekend of Joy! 9:45 - Sunday School 11:00 - Worship/ Christmas Joy Offering</p>	<p><b>17</b> 7:00 - Boy Scouts 7:00 - Young Life</p>	<p><b>18</b> 7:00 - Session</p>	<p><b>19</b> 6:30 - Cub Scouts Christmas Party 7:00 - Adult Choir 7:00 - The Bells of Bethel 7:30 - Young Life</p>	<p><b>20</b> 12:00 - Soup &amp; Scripture</p>	<p><b>21</b> Winter Begins </p>	<p><b>22</b> 2:00 - Wedding (Marshall Bays &amp; Debbie Forbes)</p>
<p><b>23</b> 4th Sunday of Advent 9:45 - Sunday School 11:00 - Worship/ 5 Cents A Meal 12:00 - Lunch &amp; Christmas Caroling</p>	<p><b>24</b> Christmas Eve Church Office Closed 8:30 - Live Nativity 9:00 - Traditional Christmas Eve Service</p>	<p><b>25</b> Christmas Day Church Office Closed </p>	<p><b>26</b> Church Office Closed</p>	<p><b>27</b> 12:00 - January Tower Deadline 12:00 - Soup &amp; Scripture (Adrienne on vacation)</p>	<p><b>28</b></p>	<p><b>29</b></p>
<p><b>30</b> 9:45 - Sunday School 11:00 - Worship 12:15 - PWCT Meeting</p>	<p><b>31</b> New Year's Eve Church Office Closed</p>					<p>for UNTO us a <i>Spud</i> is BORN -Isaiah 9:6</p> 