The Tower



January 2021 & Sunday, December 20th, 2020

*563 Bethel Green Road*Staunton, Virginia 24401*

*(540)886-6041*bethelpc@gmail.com*

www.bethelpresbyterianstaunton.org

A Note on the Tower & Weekly News . . .

Please Note: The Bethel January Tower newsletter and the Bethel Weekly Message for Sunday, December 20th are both scheduled for distribution this week, and are combined in this publication. Blessings to you in the coming weeks, month, & year!

As This Elder Sees It & The Weekly Message . . .



"Our hope is not in the new year...
but in the One who makes all things new."

Welcome to January 2021 (almost!), arguably the most anticipated new year in modern history. We say goodbye to a tumultuous and trying year, to a disappointing celebration of Thanksgiving, and a celebration of the birth of Christ like many of us have never experienced and wish to never repeat. But with that disappointment also comes the hope that the birth of Christ brings. A reminder that no matter our circumstances God is in control even as we move into this new year, no matter what may happen.

"Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart, all you who hope in the Lord."
- Psalm 31:24

We do know that 2021 brings the 275th anniversary of the founding of Bethel, whose origin is the North Mountain meeting house built in 1746. That Bethel is 30 years older than the United States itself and has played historic roles in defending religious liberties is impressive. It reinforces that God has guided and protected our forebearers through difficult times and is still here for us. So, let us go boldly into the new year proclaiming the gospel with Christ as our shield and protector.

"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever." - Hebrews 13:8

In Christ's Service, Tim Turner, Elder

General Church News & Information . . .

Do you have risk factors that make you more vulnerable in contracting the coronavirus and you can only be around those wearing a mask when indoors?



The Worship Committee has set things up so the worship service (& audio) is streaming on the TV in Memorial Hall. Audio of the service is also available in the Church Kitchen. TV (& audio) streaming of the service will be offered in the Fellowship Hall soon!

The Session wants to keep everyone comfortable but also safe by considering the needs of those with higher risk factors.

GUEST speaker

GUEST SPEAKER DECEMBER 20TH

Bethel welcomes Mr. Mark Wilson as the Guest Speaker on Sunday, December 20th.

Mark is from Augusta Stone Presbyterian Church in Ft. Defiance where he is an Elder and Trustee. He has done pulpit supply for a number of local Presbyterian churches, most recently for Hebron Presbyterian Church.

Please let Mark know how much we appreciate his joining us for worship again!

DECEMBER 2020 WORSHIP LEADER: JILL WEBB



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

(a complete list of who has given poinsettias is on page 5)

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sunday, December 20th

4th Sunday of Advent



11:00 am Worship

3:00 pm Celebration of Life for

Karen Koogler (drive-in service at Riverheads

Elementary & High School)

Monday, December 21st

Happy Winter! - Winter Begins

9:00 am - 3:00 pm Church Office Hours

9:00 am Deadline: Order of Worship

& Weekly News

(December 27th, 2020 &

January 3rd, 2021)

7:00 pm Boy Scouts

Tuesday, December 22nd

9:00 am - 3:00 pm Church Office Hours

Wednesday, December 23rd

9:00 am - 3:00 pm Church Office Hours

Thursday, December 24th

Christmas Eve

Church Office Closed

(for the Christmas holiday 24th - 29th)

Friday, December 25th

Merry Christmas!

Church Office Closed



Sunday, December 27th

Mark Wilson, Guest Speaker

11:00 am Worship



CHURCH ATTENDANCE

DECEMBER 6TH:32

DECEMBER 13TH: 21

Session News & Notes . . .

Bethel has undergone many changes over the past few years and will continue to do so in the coming months and next year. Do you have any opinions or concerns about past and/or future changes and events that have occurred or will occur at Bethel? If so, feel free to reach out to any of the Elders listed below. They would be happy to discuss any questions or worries you may have.

Derek Almarode	(540) 280-4940	almarodes@verizon.net
Tammy Barbour	(540) 471-0450	barbour.tamara@yahoo.com
Bill Brubeck	(540) 290-1172	brubeck@mgwnet.com
Brian Lee	(540) 649-3020	grumpybrian1972@gmail.com
Pat Quick	(540) 337-4259	quickp@comcast.net
David Schooley	(540) 255-6070	dschooley05@gmail.com
Kathy Swisher	(540) 885-7397	kwswisher@gmail.com
Tim Turner	(540) 448-1431	timturner@lumos.net
Jill Webb	(540) 294-5770	jlwebb320@comcast.net

December Session Report

The Session met December 13th, 2020 with Rev. Patrick Pettit as Moderator and eight Elders present. The meeting was in the Fellowship Hall with proper social distances and in combination with Zoom.

Wreitham and Denbigh Weekln Iduer

The minutes of the November meeting were approved, and minutes from the Congregational Meeting on December 6th.

The New Hark Climes

The Session voted and approved a motion from the Worship Committee to cancel this year's Christmas Eve Service. In place of the service the Worship Committee will stream a special program organized by the Session with scripture readings and the playing of Christmas carols (instrumental only).

Submissions for the 2020 Annual Reports by committee chairs along with committee and church treasurers are <u>due no later than Friday, January 15th, 2021</u>. <u>ALL</u> reports need to be <u>emailed</u> to Adrienne in the Church Office by the 15th.

In case worship services need to be canceled due to inclement weather, the closings will be posted on WHSV TV-3, their website at www.whsv.com, and on the Bethel Facebook page.

There was discussion about live-streaming weekly services, Jill Webb will be leading this project.

David Schooley, Clerk of Session

ELDER-ON-CALL DECEMBER 2020 & JANUARY 2021

If you have a pastoral need during the month of December or January please contact **Kathy Swisher**.

(540) 885-7397 (call or text) kwswisher@gmail.com





Church Office News & Notes . . .



The Church Office will be closed Thursday, December 24th through Tuesday, December 29th for the Christmas holiday, and then on Thursday, December 31st and Friday, January 1st for the New Year.

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

DEADLINES - WEEKLY NEWS & FEBRUARY 2021 TOWER



The deadline for the Order of Worship & Weekly News <u>for both</u> Sunday, December 27th & Sunday, January 3rd is 9:00 am on Monday, December 21st.

The deadline for the January 24th Order of Worship & Weekly News <u>along</u> with the 2021 February Tower is Tuesday, January 19th, at 9:00 am.

You may leave articles and announcements in Adrienne's mailbox in Memorial Hall or email them to: bethelpc@gmail.com (email is preferred).

As always we welcome and appreciate early submissions before the stated deadlines! All announcements should include: Who? What? When? Where? Why? <u>All announcements should also be fully written out in a concise and understandable format with ALL details included.</u> Please don't send Adrienne a list of words, assuming she will understand what you would like your announcement to say and then expect her to write it out as well. Many thanks for your understanding on this issue!

2020 Annual Reports

The deadline for the 2020 Annual Reports is Friday, January 15th. This date was chosen by the Session to give Adrienne a chance to organize and publish the reports for distribution in February. *If you were a chair of a committee or a committee or church treasurer in 2020 please have your report to the Church Office by the 15th!*ALL reports must be submitted by email (preferably in Microsoft Word or PDF).

Church Office News & Notes (continued) . . .



NEW BETHEL OFFICE HOURS!

Tuesday - Friday 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

(Lunch <u>usually</u> taken 12:30 pm - 1:00 pm)

All information printed in the Weekly News and Tower is sub- Happening ject to editing. Adrienne does not



edit the information but rather has several proofreaders that help with this task for both the Weekly News and the Tower. Please do not be upset if something you wrote has been changed. It may have been edited for any number of reasons and is not anything personal against you. Thank you!

Christmas Bethel Emergency Relief Donations (BERF) & Christmas Poinsettias December 2020

In Memory of Danny & Louale Almarode, Nathaniel Almarode, and Richard Whitesell by Derek & Cindy Almarode

In Memory of Laurence & Ann Arehart by family

In Memory of A.W. Cash Jr and Nancy Marie Cash by Wade & Phyllis Cash

In Memory of Ray Diamond by Stephanie Rivers family

In Memory of Charlie & Sara Ann Lamb (aka Papa "Pops" & Mom) by Ann, Tommy, Ashley, Matt, Kinley, Havyn, Asher, and Ava Ann

In Memory of Elmer Kyle and Betty Kyle Ott (Steve's parents) and R.W. & Moggie Moffett (Mo's parents) by Steve & Mo Kyle

In Memory of John Liptrap by his family

In Memory of Allen W. Quick, Mr. & Mrs. Carlisle Neff, Mrs. Katherine Quick and Mr. Wesley Quick by Pat Quick

In Memory of Milton & Carol Schooley (Dave's parents) and Margaret Cobb (Dave's grandmother) by Dave & Betty Schooley

In Memory of Mitch & Antha Swisher (grandparents), Don & Bettie Swisher (parents), Wayne Swisher (brother), and Abby (furbaby) by Kay Swisher

In Memory of Bill True and other family members by Doris True

In Memory of the Webb family by Jill Webb

In Honor of Nancy Diamond by Stephanie Rivers family

In Honor of the Glory of God by Bill & Sally Brubeck

In Honor of Sue Whitesell and Ashlyn Almarode by Derek & Cindy Almarode

If you ordered a poinsettia please pick it up following the worship service on December 20th or December 27th. A BIG THANKS to Jill Webb for compiling all the above information and thanks to both Jill and Kay Thompson for keeping track of the payments and donations.

Church Office News & Notes (continued) . . .

If you have a mailbox in Memorial Hall please check it and clean it out periodically. Many of the mailboxes in Memorial Hall are starting to pile up with mail again. Time sensitive information along with bills may be placed in your mailbox for approval and/or your reply may be needed.

Congregational Care Committee . . .



Celebration of Life - Karen Sue Koogler

Weather permitting, Karen's celebration of life service has been scheduled for Sunday, December 20th at 3:00 pm. It will be a drive-in service at Riverheads Elementary School with overflow parking at Riverheads High School. There will be a FM transmitter setup that people can listen through their car radio.

The service will also be shared live on Facebook for those who are unable to attend. It's encouraged that all former students, co-workers, and friends share memories and favorite stories on the tribute wall (guest book) on the online obituary at the Coffman Funeral Home website: https://www.coffmanfuneralhome.net/.

Congregational Care Committee (continued) . . .

(reprinted with permission by Ken Koogler - Karen's brother)

I want to thank the entire congregation of Bethel Presbyterian Church for the prayers and friend-ship for my sister, Karen Koogler. Over the last two years, she fought a courageous battle with cancer that was a daily struggle but the prayers and love that everyone expressed allowed her to keep up the fight. Although a tragic and incomprehensible loss, God had a plan for Karen. During the six and a half weeks that she was missing, more people talked to each other, more people prayed for each other, and more people realized that God was more important in their lives than ever before.

Having moved from the area in 1981, I never knew how many lives Karen had touched during her 31 years of teaching. She knew and taught generations of many families. Everyone knew Karen and loved her. Her friends and neighbors say she always smiled, was never too busy to stop and talk, never too busy to help, always made their day brighter, and even made them a better person. Now, many more people are aware of Karen and how she transformed lives. I believe that she will continue to touch lives through God's work as people follow Karen's example in their own lives. I believe that I can, and I will be a better person now that I've truly learned how Karen changed people's lives for the better.

Everyone's prayers were answered when Karen was found on December 6th, 2020. Many searches had been conducted by friends, family, and law enforcement officials with no sign of her. The reality that she might never be found began to linger in our thoughts. But a miracle occurred on that Sunday when a family that was not planning on being on the Blue Ridge Parkway that particular day or time, were sent there by God. By divine intervention, the family's seventeen-year-old son spotted Karen's car while the family was headed home from a Christmas Tree Farm. There is no way that the vehicle could have been spotted as their car drove along the parkway. God gave the son the knowledge that there was a car over the embankment. He convinced his father to turn their car around and they found Karen's car was 200-300 feet off the road in a heavily wooded area. Somehow the father and son managed to climb down to the car and found Karen. They prayed over her and then they summoned help. This family's day began with a church service that included a specific prayer that Karen would be found that day. This was God at work.

The entire Koogler family thanks you from the bottom of our hearts for helping us through this unimaginable period in our lives. Our only regret is that we didn't spend more time with Karen.

God Bless, Ken Koogler

Cards & Messages of Condolences

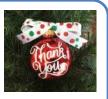
If you would like to send cards and/or messages of condolences to Karen's family please send them to Karen's mother's address:

Annabelle Koogler 4319 N. Lee Highway Lexington, VA 24435



Missions Committee . . .

Thanks to everyone who purchased gifts for the children in the Christmas Alive program at Riverheads Elementary School. The families appreciated the gifts and their gift cards to Sharp Shopper. Bethel has helped to make three families Christmas' a little merrier.



- The Mission Committee

Nominating Committee . . .



Nominating Committee Members

At the Congregational Meeting on December 6th the following congregation members were elected to the Nominating Committee:

Penny Lee Cindy Almarode Beth Miller Betty Schooley

Mo Kyle

Many thanks to you all who have agreed to serve on this essential and most important committee!

Presbyterian Women . . .

The Presbyterian Women appreciate the generosity of the Bethel Congregation, who donated \$345.00 in gift cards for the Presbyterian Children's Home of the Highlands. The children received them in time to use them for Christmas. Thank you!



Stewardship & Finance Committee . . .

Weekly Financial Report

Estimated Weekly Budget: \$4,317.00

Offerings December 6th: \$20,480.00

Offerings December 13th: \$1,705.00



November Financial Report

Estimated Monthly Budget: \$18,702.00

Offerings November 2020: \$9,088.00



Four Cents A Meal Offering will resume next month (January 2021).



The Stewardship & Finance Committee would like to welcome Lois Stogdale as Bethel's new Disbursing Treasurer. Lois will be taking over this important role on January 1st, 2021. We would like to thank Lori Miller for her work and dedication as the Disbursing Treasurer for many years.

"My name is Lois Stogdale, I was born and raised in Stuarts Draft and still live there to this day on a small farm with my husband, Ricky. I have three wonderful children, two boys and a girl, and I was blessed with a precious grandson last January. I am a member of Old Providence Church, where I am on the flower committee and in charge of keeping the church clean. I enjoy spending time with my family and cooking. I am very excited to be starting this position and getting to know the congregation."

Worship Committee . . .

January Lectionary Schedule

January 3, 2021

2nd Sunday of Christmas Guest Speaker: Jill Webb

Jeremiah 31:7-14

Ephesians 1:3-14

John 1:1-18

January 10, 2021

Baptism of the Lord

Sacrament of Holy Communion

Guest Minister: Rev. Melissa Harmon

Genesis 1:1-5 Acts 19:1-7

January 17, 2021

2nd Sunday after Epiphany

I Samuel 3:1-20 I Corinthians 6:12-20

John 1:43-51

Mark 1:4-11

January 24, 2021

3rd Sunday after Epiphany

Jonah 3:1-5, 10

I Corinthians 7:29-31

Mark 1:14-20

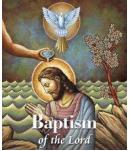
January 31, 2021

4th Sunday after Epiphany

Deuteronomy 18:15-20 I Corinthians 8:1-13

Mark 1:21-28

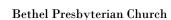
WHAT IS BAPTISM OF THE LORD SUNDAY?



At the beginning of his public ministry, Jesus presented himself to John to be baptized in the Jordan. Jesus' ministry to bring in God's rule was inaugurated in his baptism. As he came out of the water, the Spirit rested on Jesus and a sign of God's approval was heard. On this day, we celebrate not only Jesus' baptism but our own as well, for our baptism is rooted in Christ. Baptism joins us to Christ and his church, and with all the baptized we are called to share in Jesus' ministry. In the waters of baptism, we are

buried with Christ, cleansed of our sins, and raised to share in his resurrection. The Spirit is given to us and we are declared the children of God. This Sunday also foreshadows the season of Lent, as Jesus was immediately driven into the wilderness for 40 days after his own Baptism.

Baptism of the Lord Sunday will be observed during worship on January 10th, 2021.



Christmas Eve Service Cancelled

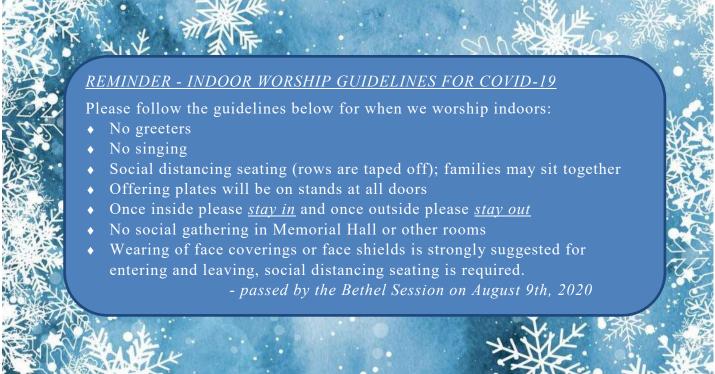
2020 continues to change how we celebrate life and holidays. First, Sunday worship service was canceled, then Easter and now Christmas Eve, the list goes on and on. As the temperature fell and our celebrations moved inside, the virus numbers went higher, making everyone at risk. With higher virus cases, low church attendance, and a scaled down Christmas Eve service, the decision to cancel is in the best interest of all our members. Inside service restrictions are still being observed; no singing, no guest musicians, social distancing, and no candles during singing of Silent Night (face masks). It's not the Christmas Eve service we and our community have come to enjoy and expect.

God hasn't changed, only how and where we meet and worship Him.



Holy Communion will be received during the worship service on Sunday, January 10th, 2021, Baptism of the Lord Sunday.





Winter Weather Cancellations

Now that winter is finally here, Session has changed how we send out church notifications to members that church has been cancelled. The robocall system with emails, text or phone calls has been canceled. We are back to using Harrisonburg WHSV TV3 (along with Facebook). Elders and Deacons are asked to check their Shepherding List to see who needs a phone call.



Worship Committee (continued) . . .



Flower Schedule January 2021

January 3rd Jill Webb

January 10th Libby Smith

(Communion)

January 17th Penny Lee

January 24th Adrienne Barker (Memorial)

January 31st Doris True



FLOWER COORDINATOR NEEDED!

The Worship Committee is looking for a new flower coordinator. If you are interested in taking on this rewarding role please contact Tammy Barbour or Jill Webb. Either one would be happy to talk with you about what the role of Flower Coordinator entails.

January's Happy Birthdays . . .



Mac Williams	January 2	Jeff LaPorte	January 25
Katie McElveen	January 3	Mary Ann Anderson	January 28
D. W. Miller	January 3	Bob Law	January 30
Hayley Morris	January 8	Joyce Liptrap	January 31
Margaret Wade	January 16		
Lois Crosier	January 18	James Tate	February 1
Dale C. Smith	January 19	John Davis	February 2
John Brubeck	January 22	Steve Hord	February 3
Jennifer Callison	January 23	Brad Smith	February 5



January 5, 1992 Myran & Douglas Moore

January 17, 1954 Louise & Bob Hoy

AN ANNOUNCEMENT FROM THE BETHEL YOUTH . . .

Celebration of Lights - Gypsy Hill Park

Staunton's Famous Gypsy Hill Park is Again a Fairyland of Holiday Lights

For the 15th year in a row, beautiful Gypsy Hill Park's 214 acres is again aglow with holiday lights and scenes that have been uniquely created by individuals, families, organizations, businesses and churches from Staunton, Waynesboro, Augusta County and surrounding areas.

Bethel's Youth have participated and won prizes for their past displays. Below are pictures from the installation of this year's entry for the Celebration of Lights. The Bethel Youth would love it if you would go and check it out! The display is massive and incorporates three

elements: the birth of Jesus, his death, and eternal life through his resurrection. It's a beauty and one of the largest displays in the park. Several people stopped while the display was under construction and complimented the youth on it.

Thanks to the Bethel Youth along with adults Mac Williams, Brian & Penny Lee, Dale & Kay Thompson, and Derek & Cindy Almarode for all the help.

The Celebration of Lights is free and open to the public during the month of December from 5:00 pm - 11:00 pm.

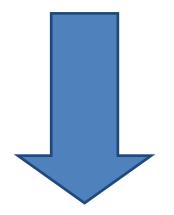




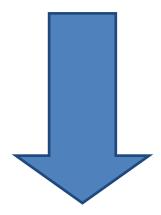
January 1st January 6th January 10th January 18th New Year's Day Epiphany of the Lord Baptism of the Lord Martin Luther King, Jr. Day











JANUARY CALENDAR ON NEXT PAGE

January 2021

	SATURDAY	2	6	16	23	30	
	FRIDAY	Church Office Closed	8 9:00 am - 3:00 pm - Church Office Hours	15 9:00 am - 3:00 pm - Church Office Hours Deadline: Annual Reports 2020	22 9:00 am - 3:00 pm - Church Office Hours	29 9:00 am - 3:00 pm - Church Office Hours	
	THURSDAY		7 9:00 am - 3:00 pm - Church Office Hours	14 9:00 am - 3:00 pm - Church Office Hours	21 9:00 am - 3:00 pm - Church Office Hours	28 9:00 am - 3:00 pm - Church Office Hours	
>	WEDNESDAY		6 Epiphany of the Lord 9:00 am - 3:00 pm - Church Office Hours	13 9:00 am - 3:00 pm - Church Office Hours	20 9:00 am - 3:00 pm - Church Office Hours	27 9:00 am - 3:00 pm - Church Office Hours	
	TUESDAY		5 9:00 am - 3:00 pm - Church Office Hours 12:00 pm - Deadline: Order of Worship & Weekly News (January 10th)	1.2 9:00 am - 3:00 pm - Church Office Hours 12:00 pm - Deadline: Order of Worship & Weekly News (January 17th)	19 9:00 am - 3:00 pm - Church Office Hours 12:00 pm - Deadline: Order of Worship & Weekly News (January 24th)	26 9:00 am - 3:00 pm - Church Office Hours 12:00 pm - Deadline: February Tower & Weekly News (January 31st) 12:00 pm - Deadline: Order of Worship (January 31st)	
	MONDAY		4 Church Office Closed 7:00 - Boy Scouts	11 Church Office Closed 7:00 - Boy Scouts	18 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Church Office Closed 7:00 - Boy Scouts MARTIN CHARTING MARTIN CHARTING MARTIN	25 Church Office Closed 7:00 - Boy Scouts	
	SUNDAY		5 Epiphany Sunday 11:00 - Worship 12:00 - Deacons Meeting	Baptism of the Lord 11:00 - Worship & Communion 7:00 - Session Meeting (Fellowship Hall & Zoom)	17 11:00 - Worship	24 11:00 - Worship & Four Cents A Meal Offering	31 11:00 - Worship

Bethel Church Session

<u>Class of 2021</u> <u>Class of 2022</u> <u>Class of 2023</u>

Derek Almarode Jimmy Callison Tamara Barbour

*Bill Brubeck **Bob Olson Brian Lee

Pat Quick Dave Schooley Dale Thompson

Kathy Swisher Tim Turner Jill Webb

<u>Clerk of Session</u> Dave Schooley

*Serving a one year term **Serving a two year term

Bethel Church Deacons

<u>Class of 2021</u> <u>Class of 2022</u> <u>Class of 2023</u>

Katie McElveenWade CashTom HeizerJoe Moore**Ellen FitzgeraldMitch LathropLinda TenneyCharlie JohnsonD.W. Miller

**Alex Sproul

<u>Co-Chair</u> Wade Cash <u>Co-Chair</u> Charlie Johnson <u>Secretary</u> Linda Tenney

**Serving a two year term

Bethel Church Trustees

Class of 2021Class of 2022Class of 2023Charlie JohnsonBill BrubeckGuy D. BrooksDale C. SmithJames WilliamsLee Ann Heizer

Bethel Church Staff

Adrienne Barker, Office Manager (540) 886-6041 bethelpc@gmail.com
Bethel Office Days & Hours: Tuesday - Friday 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

JoAnn Pendley, Bell Choir Director

Alex Sproul, Sound & Video

Kay Thompson, Receiving Treasurer

Lois Stogdale, Disbursing Treasurer

(beginning January 2021)

Donna Bush and Carol Sprouse, Custodians