

December 2023

Bethel Tidings

Embracing the Season of Renewal: A Christmas Invitation from Bethel United Methodist Church

Dear Beloved Congregation,

As we enter into the festive month of December, filled with the warmth of Christmas cheer and the promise of renewal, we at Bethel United Methodist Church are excited to share some heartening news with you. The Catalyst team, alongside our dedicated congregation, has been actively engaging with our community to understand its needs better.

In our quest to serve and uplift, we've embarked on a journey of interviews, reaching out not only to our church members but also to our secular neighbors and local businesses. What we've uncovered may surprise you, or perhaps it resonates with your own observations - our present worship community predominantly consists of older adults, mirroring the demographics of our broader community. However, what sets us apart is the discovery of a significant number of children aged 14 and younger within our midst.

Recognizing the diverse needs of our community, we acknowledge that resources are limited. Yet, with hearts full of dedication, we are committed to ministering to those who have found a spiritual home in our church. To further strengthen our bonds and lift our collective spirits, the Catalyst team invites you to participate in a special 21-day prayer challenge commencing on December 1.

Titled "21-Day Prayer Challenge: A Prayer Journey for Teams and congregations", this daily devotional promises not only personal growth but also an opportunity for interaction with fellow participants. To join this transformative experience, simply express your interest by reaching out to us or emailing pastor@bethelumchurch.org. Let's embark on this prayerful journey together and usher in the New Year with renewed drive and excitement.

In the spirit of adapting to the needs of our congregation, we've modified our Christmas season schedule this year. Our Advent worship commenced on November 26, allowing us to fully concentrate on the joyous celebration of Christmas on December 24, Christmas Eve.

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We extend a warm invitation to all to participate in the various activities planned during this festive season. For details, please see below or refer to our calendar. As we traverse the path of Advent, let us embrace the season of renewal and joy. May God bless you abundantly on your Advent journey this year.

Peace and Blessings,
Pastor Jim, Bethel United Methodist Church



Church Advent Preparations:

Giving for Children

This year we will be participating in the *Giving Tree* “Compassion” program. It is designed to help release children from poverty in Jesus’ name. A tree filled with “Giving Ornaments” will be present with ornaments (cards) of various denominations to provide various items such as Food for a Child or Seeds, Goats, Water Supply, etc. All checks should be made payable to Bethel UM Church with a **note on the memo line** “Compassion”.

Dec. 3 – 2nd Sunday of Advent –

Caroling at area Nursing Homes

The Pastor will visit Western Maryland Center to lead the service at 2:00 pm. Linda Barnhart will lead us in caroling at Hagerstown Health Care at 3:30 followed by Seaton Healthcare at 4:15. We encourage all to attend all 3 events.

Dec. 10 – 3rd Sunday of Advent –

Movie Night for all ages at Bethel

We will gather in the sanctuary with cozy blankets and popcorn to watch “The STAR” a tale of faith and friendship. This is for entire families.



Coat Closet:

Giveaway Sat Dec 16th

He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none. Luke 3:11

I would like to thank the members of our church for their continued support of our Bethel Coat Closet. We currently have approximately 70 adult coats and 10 children’s coats as well as some adult/teen hats and gloves. The coats are always available to anyone in need in our local area. We will also be giving away coats again this year at: St. John’s Lutheran Church “Cold Hands, Warm Hearts” event in Hagerstown on Dec. 16, 2023. PLEASE CALL THE OFFICE IF YOU COULD HELP. Approximately 8 am to 2pm.

Our church members and our coat closet ministry continue to be a true blessing to those in need.

Diane Stevens

December 16 –

Poinsettia delivery

The flowers will arrive on Saturday December 16th and will be on the altar for the December 17th service. You may take them after that service of if you choose to leave them for the December 24th service, they will be cared for.

We will also need volunteers to help take them to the homebound. Let us know in the office if you can do that. Thank you!



Dec. 17 – 4th Sunday of Advent –

Christmas Joy with Cantata



Sunday evening at 7:00 pm we will be honored with music, singing and handbells.

The theme is “***Behold, Emmanuel, Love is with Us***”. There will be light refreshments following the service.

Dec. 24 – Christmas Eve

normal Sunday School and Church

7 & 11 pm candlelight services

The “**children’s program**” will be a surprise to them as well as you. It will be a short program during the Children’s Moments. Traditional candlelight services will be held at 7 and 11 pm.

All Women Together:

Fall and Winter activities.

New Activities: A **Game/Movie** night will become a quarterly activity.-Next is on Sunday Dec 10th.

A **Pot Luck Covered Dish Meal** will become a quarterly event after Sunday Church Services. Next will be Sunday January 28th.



Thanksgiving Sharing:

This year we collected food for Thanksgiving meals while partnering with the Lions Club who provided the turkeys. Recipients will be the families supported by Micah’s backpack for 23 students, 16 families were contacted. Nine boxes were given to them. Linda Barnhart found 1 more and a note in the blessing box to call resulted in the remainder being given away by Tue 11-21-23 along with several coats and a car seat. The generosity of Bethel and the Lions is downright amazing!

Women at the Well

The Women at the Well will continue with "The Chosen" bible study on Wednesdays, 10:00 on Dec 2 & 27.



Brunch will be Wednesday, December 13th, 11:00 at Beard's Barn. All are welcome.



Head Start of Washington County partners with local churches to help keep little heads and hands warm during the winter. Please consider participating in this worthy cause by donating hats/gloves for children, infant through 5 years old (hat sizes most needed this year are for both boys and girls ages 3-5). Items will be taken to Head Start the first week of December and again the end of December.



Supporting our Homebound

Bethel Caring Connection

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord all ye lands, come before the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing. Psalm 100: 1 & 2

During this joyful time of year, we give thanks for being part of a generous, loving church community!!!!

Thank you all for the many prayers, cards and visits to our shut-in members and friends throughout the year!!! May you and your family have a blessed holiday season.

If you or a family member or friend need help such as rides to appointments, sitting with a loved one for an hour or two, food, etc. Please call the church office or me at 240-734-1101.

Blessings, Pam

Homebound birthdays...the next will be in January.

Food Pantry/Blessing Box Update

A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed. Proverbs 11:25



Our blessing box has continued to serve many. This has been such a great blessing to our church family to serve others. At this time we give many thanks to our wonderful volunteers. In addition, the blessing box could not work without your love and contributions. Your generosity during Harvest Home was above and beyond. If you have any questions please contact me 301-991-9759.

Your sister in Christ, Elaine Snyder



ALTAR FLOWERS

Please applaud Sandy Hose and Kathy Morrissey and Kellar Smith who have made the fresh flower arrangements for the Altar. The current cost of the arrangements is \$45.00.

Sunday School updates

The **Adult SS class** (in the Parlor) is beginning a new study on Dec 3. It is an Adult Bible Study "God Abides".

The **Pre-teens** have named their class **F.R.O.G.** (fully rely on God) and are redesigning the basement. They also joined in going to see the movie "A Journey to Bethlehem".

The Leadership Board:

VISION STATEMENT

To be the people of God on the move for Jesus to transform the world by the power of the Holy Spirit.



Leadership Board Updates:

The Pavilion is finished. The lights and electric have been installed. A generous donation was received to help offset the cost.

The Financial status was discussed as weekly offerings are not meeting the budgeted amounts. Your Leadership Team is keeping a close watch on this.

Security System is completed to ensure the well-being of our members and visitors, and we continue to monitor and adapt to changing circumstances. This is bringing more updated monitoring as well as providing improved security for building entrances. There will be doorbell access as well as key fobs for frequent building visitors. The system is designed to improve everyone's safety.

A Hospitality Committee remains a much needed concern. Speak up if you can help. A leader or perhaps two to share.

Charge Conference for Bethel was held on Wednesday Nov 15th.

Our District Superintendent John Wunderlich led the discussion about the Board vote to upgrade the Pastor's salary per the vote in the September 18th meeting. That motion also included to make the change retroactive to the date of August 16th when that decision was originally made. This was voted on with all approving. There were zero no's or exceptions. The SPRC will work with the Pastor on how this will occur.

Other discussions informed us of the facts that BWC has a Board of Ordained Ministry that is responsible for making the recommendations on who is to be ordained. The Bishop is required then to follow thru by performing the ordination. This does not explain why the Board did not follow the Book of Discipline rules in the matter of ordaining Gay persons.

Disaffiliation has occurred in 22 charges of the total of 79 in the Baltimore Washington Conference. Eleven of those were in the Hagerstown-Cumberland district. Of those, 3 joined the Global Methodist plan, 4 chose to be independent, 4 unknown.

Communication was noted to be a big concern as the general feeling is that the Conference information does not make its way to the congregation. Pastor Wunderlich agreed this was a major concern and offered to come in again after the first of the year for more discussions like this.

New Board positions for 2024:

Council Chairperson – Keith Hoffman
Finance Chairperson – Teresa Rossiter

Lead Trustee – Tim Smith
Nominations Chairperson – Celia Ausherman

Bethel Tidings

Treasurer (for banking only) – David Wagner

Attendance – Nov. 2023

Date	In person Church	Special Events
Nov 5	63	20 @ WMC
Nov 12	56	
Nov 19	66	
Nov 26		

Lay Readers – December 2023

Dec 3	Roni or Duane
Dec 10	Jeanne Dinterman
Dec 17	Lori Shifflett
Dec 24	Drew Ross
Dec 31	Elaine Snyder

Call Elaine to sign up! 301-991-9759.



Dec. Anniversaries:

16 – Frank n& Kathy Morrisey
20 – Frank & Heather Rucci
23 – Rick & Debra Hose
30 – Barry & Penny Sprecher



Dec. Birthdays:

2 – Diane Stevens
3 – Penny Sprecher
3 – Elizabeth Johnson
5 – Dan Rishell
7 – Paul Boyer
13 – Karen Keefer
14 – Deb Wagner
16 – Kaelii Boyer
17 – Jensen Bachtell
20 – Madison Bachtell
22 – Bret Leisinger
23 – Grayson Belella
23 – Jackson Belella
26 – Holly Gelsinger
28 – Tom Edwards
30 – Joyce Belella
31 – Ruth Clevenger



* Homebound
- see caring
connections for
addresses
*** none until January



Want to walk with us?

The Family Life Center is open from 8:30am to 8pm daily. Kellar and Deb walk from 8:30 to 9:00 before work. Open to community.

Please note that in January the Anniversary and Birthday lists will change to reflect the updated membership roster.

Bethel Tidings

Dec. 2023						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday 1	Saturday 2
3 Communion 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 a.m. Sanctuary & Virtual Service Worship 2:00 pm Western MD Hospital 3:30 Caroling	4 5:30- VB/FLC	5 6pm – Lions/FLC 10:00 W@W/Parlor 5:30- VB/FLC	6 5:30- VB/FLC	7 5:30- VB/FLC	8 6:00 Girl Scouts/Parlor & upstairs x 2 5:30- VB/FLC	9 1:00 Girl Scouts Cookie Rally/FLC
10 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 a.m. Sanctuary & Virtual Service Worship 7:00 Movie Night	11 5:30- VB/FLC	12 5:30- VB/FLC	13 10:00 W@W/Parlor 5:30- VB/FLC	14 5:30- VB/FLC	15 5:30- VB/FLC 6:00 Girl Scouts/Parlor & upstairs x 2	16 Coat Give away @ St. Johns
17 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 a.m. Sanctuary & Virtual Service Worship 7:00 Cantata & Handbells	18 Newsletter Deadline 5:30- VB/FLC	19 7:00 Leadership Board/ Parlor	20 11:00 W@W /lunch 7:00 Leadership Board/ Parlor	21 7:00 Leadership Board/ Parlor	22 7:00 Leadership Board/ Parlor	23 Poinsettia delivery
24 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 a.m. Sanctuary & Virtual Service Worship- with Children's program 7 & 11pm Candlelight Services	25 CHRISTMAS DAY (office closed)	26 Pastor starts vacation 4:00 Ausherman/FLC	27 10am W@W/ Parlor	28 10am W@W/ Parlor	29 10am W@W/ Parlor	30 10am W@W/ Parlor
31 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 a.m. Sanctuary & Virtual Service Worship	Jan 1 NEW YEARS DAY (office closed)	Jan 2 Pastor returns				

Bethel United Methodist Church Chewsville

Our Mission: To be the people of God on the move for Jesus and to transform the world by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Our Vision: To be the Church of Jesus Christ to all God's children through discipleship grounded in God's Holy Word. We pledge to God and each other to accomplish our mission: Through prayer, worship and education, we will be seekers of God's will. Through witness, we will kindle the fire of spiritual and physical growth. Through Christian community we will love, nurture and support each other and those in need throughout the world.

Church Office:

Phone: 301-733-8387

Email: secretary@bethelumchurch.org

Pastor: Jim Johnson

Email: pastor@bethelumchurch.org

Administrative Assistant:

Deb Wagner

301-733-8387

Office hours: 9 am – 1 pm Mon.-Fri.

Email: secretary@bethelumchurch.org

Sunday Service Times:

Traditional mixed with Contemporary

Worship @ 10:00 am

Sunday School 9:00 am

Online Sun 10:00 am @ www.bethelumchurch.org

Family Care Ministry:

Please let us know if you or a family member wish a pastoral visit during a time of grief or hospitalization, including the birth of a child. We will pray & minister to you.

Newsletter Editor:

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Telephone Prayer Chain:

Beverly Miller

Phone: 301-739-6270

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Bethel Connect:

Be connected; join our Google Group, search for Connect @ Bethel.



Bethel Tidings



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