

THE CHALLENGE

Bethlehem Methodist Church

Volume 13

Issue 3

March 2025

From the Pastor's Desk

Matthew 6:33 Matthew 6:19 Ephesians 2:1-13

We were at my mom and dad's house the other day and A.G. chose a book to read that immediately took me back to childhood with just a glimpse of the back cover of the book. Bringing back all kinds of memories, dreams, hopes, good times, warm and fussy times, a few not so good times, grandparents, Saturday morning cartoons, and the cereals that would have prizes in the box.

Some of those prizes could seem awfully elusive at times, especially when Mom or Dad were not looking, and trying to find it and dig it out before they caught me. Digging for the prizes was a "No, No."

However, Lucky Charms was one of those cereals that had the leprechaun, the rainbow, and instead of the pot of gold, a bowl of delicious marshmallow treats.

The pot of gold thing always was fascinating even as a superstition-this elusive pot of gold at the end of a rainbow that you could never quite get to or even touch.

But, thankfully as God's children, God's creation, we can have something that is not an illusive thing. His great love for us, a gift for those who seek it and open their hearts and their lives to receive it. For, God sent Himself to us, not for us to have to chase it, but to receive it by God's Great Grace; God's Great Peace on the here and now, eternal life with God in God's Kingdom to come.

May we each and every day continue to renew our love of this precious gift God has given us and reach out every day to encourage others to quit searching the world over for happiness in earthly treasures, which are of the devil's scheme to distract us, that are illusive, and will perish and fade away. Instead, they should be still and open their hearts (as we continue to open ours) to help them see the beauty of opening their lives to the Grace of God, to an eternal treasure that will forever stand. This is a treasure we can have and hold, one that holds us, and that will never let us down or forsake us.

Be Blessed and a Blessing
Pastor Joseph, III



Bethlehem Methodist Church

Our Mission at Bethlehem Church is to share the love and spirit of Christ, be a welcoming fellowship for all, nurture followers of Jesus and send them, as servants, into the world in need of God's grace.

Pastor

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Pianist

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Childcare Director

Erica Shanahan
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Custodian

Ovido Sorbito

Webmaster

Kylie Russell



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Visit our Website at

bethlehemmethodist.org

STEWARDSHIP REPORT-January 2025

Budget – Revenues & Expenses

\$587,106.75 Total Budget's Fund Balance as of January 1, 2025

+ 23,153.93 Money Received in January

- 20,896.76 Money Spent in January

\$589,363.92 Budget's Fund Balance as of January 31, 2025

For the month of January, 2025, the Church Budget received \$2,257.17 more than it spent.
For the year, the Church Budget received \$2,257.17 more than it spent.

Designated Gifts

Major Maintenance & Repair Fund – this designated money will be used to pay for major maintenance or repair projects to the Church building, parsonage or parking lot. The Board of Trustees must recommend all expenditures from this fund to the Church Council, and the Church Council must approve all expenditures from this fund. This is a perpetual fund and a minimum balance of \$2,500.00 shall be maintained at all times. This fund was created by a vote of the church council on March 13, 2011 and was established with \$12,000.00.

\$146,628.46 MM&RF Money Available January 31, 2025

Other Designated Gifts – occurs when the Church receives money for a designated purpose and the Church shall only spend this money for the purpose that it was given.

Camp Tekoa	\$ 781.88	Arbor Fund	\$ 863.43
Food Pantry	\$ 1,279.68	Handbells	\$ 160.52
Discretionary Fund	\$ 1,497.95	Scholarship-Religion Ed	\$ 1,983.22
Records & History	\$ 581.56	Missions-Undesignated	\$ 16,297.35
Alpha & Omega Youth	\$24,832.82	Cemetery Fund-Maint.	\$ 34,143.85
Children & Family Ministries	\$ 4,049.47	Choir Fund	\$ 286.26
Helen Grady Endow. (\$800 History)	\$ -2,171.15	Flowers	\$ - 7.00

Total Other Designated Gifts \$84,579.84

Total Designated Gifts Collective Fund Balance as of January 31, 2025 \$231,208.30

Trust Funds

\$101,800.00 Perpetual Care Cemetery Fund

In order to plan and provide the necessary funds for the care and upkeep of our cemetery, a Perpetual Care Cemetery Fund was created. This fund was a non-expendable trust fund in which the principle (donations) cannot be spent but the interest earned on the principle can be spent for the care and upkeep of the cemetery. The Perpetual Care Cemetery Fund was capped as of January 17, 2016 by the Church Council and is no longer taking donations.

\$64,043.68 Helen Grady Endowment Fund

The money was donated to our church from the estate of Helen Grady in 2007 to be used for improvements to the church, community, or the development of an individual. The money is at the United Methodist Foundation of WNC, Inc. and the amount that can be spent annually is 5% of the last three (3) years average end-of-year balance.

Frank Willis, Stewardship Ministry Chair

Friendly Club

Friendly Club will meet Tuesday, March 11th at 11AM in the Fellowship Hall. We are looking forward to Lois and Ron Bazhaw educating us on the Potawatomi Nation Tribe which is a part of Ron's heritage. Lois will bring some pottery, etc. as examples of the Potawatomi artisans. As usual, bring a covered dish to share and enjoy the fellowship of the meeting. All are invited to attend!

March Wordsearch

L	O	T	C	H	I	C	K	E	N	S	T	E	W
E	I	A	R	E	Q	U	I	L	T	T	C	W	S
P	R	C	T	S	M	V	G	A	N	T	O	N	H
R	I	C	I	O	R	L	E	N	T	B	C	T	A
E	S	C	O	L	S	M	L	H	N	E	C	E	M
C	H	L	B	M	L	A	L	I	V	L	L	N	R
H	B	E	I	H	D	C	A	R	E	U	O	L	O
A	O	B	A	L	A	R	H	L	A	C	V	N	C
U	O	N	O	K	R	Y	I	W	E	K	E	S	K
N	N	G	N	T	N	E	E	R	G	Y	R	L	A
S	A	I	N	T	P	A	T	R	I	C	K	A	N
S	P	R	I	N	G	E	N	I	H	S	N	U	S
A	S	H	W	E	D	N	E	S	D	A	Y	R	H
H	B	A	S	K	E	T	B	A	L	L	D	D	R

SAINT PATRICK
RAINBOW
ASH WEDNESDAY
IRISH
GOLD
LUCKY
SUNSHINE
CHICKEN STEW
QUILT
BASKETBALL
LEPRECHAUN
BLOOM
CLOVER
SPRING
SHAMROCK
LENT
GREEN

Play this puzzle online at : <https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/7991148/>



Celebrating 34 Years of Childcare



The creation of our daycare program began with Chuck Rowland, our Pastor at the time, and others as they began to investigate the possibility of having our own daycare as churches around us began to open their own. On May 21st of 1990, Guilford County approved our church property be zoned 1-A which permits daycare facilities. A study committee comprised of Mary Kearns, Alice Price, John Riddle, John Waugh, and Chuck Rowland was formed in early 1990, and in September this committee made a report to the Administrative Council.

The Bethlehem Child Care Center opened on Monday, March 4th, 1991, with two classrooms and twelve children. Director Debbie Reitzel along with Suzie Branch and Laurie Cleary were the first teachers. Kim Garrett joined them by the second week. Jackie Smith soon became the Director and retired in the Fall of 2000 after almost 30 years of building up the program. Erica Shanahan is now the director of our daycare, which has grown from those two classrooms and a dozen children to encompass six classrooms and 57 children.



Fat Tuesday

Shrove Tuesday- Pancake Day

Shrove Tuesday (a.k.a. Fat Tuesday) has been a tradition for some in the Christian church to celebrate or recognize the last day before Ash Wednesday which begins the Lenten Season, the 40 days (not including Sundays) before Easter. Christians believe that those 40 days represent the time that Jesus spent fasting in the desert.

Lent is a season to lean more on God, remember our mortality, and to reflect on being sinners in need of God's Grace. Shrove Tuesday's traditional evening meal included pancakes, going back to days when Lenten fasts were strictly observed and fat, sugar, and eggs were forbidden. Shrove Tuesday began as a way to rid the house of the fatted foods in order to be more ready, faithful, and less tempted for the Lenten fast that ends Easter Morning. It was also a celebration of rich food before the leaner days of Lent began.

Many now choose to give up foods or something they enjoy during Lent as a period of self-denial instead of the traditional fast.

Join us from 5:30PM-7PM in the fellowship hall on Tuesday, March 4th as we eat pancakes, sausage, and bacon....just before we begin our journey through ashes of Ash Wednesday, the prayers, reflections, and fasting that will lead us through the 40 days to the celebration of Easter Sunday!

The meal will be donations only; checks should be made to the Young-at-Heart Sunday School Class. Proceeds will go to the Western North Carolina flood victims.



COME – EAT – ENJOY

Chicken Stew/Bake Sale

The annual Chicken Stew fundraiser for the Arlene Stokes Circle will be Saturday, March 15th. Pre-orders only. Deadline for pre-ordering Chicken Stew is Sunday March 9th at \$9 per quart. Contact Cindy Fields at (336) 430-3715 or Darlene Coble at (336) 709-9283 to order. Desserts will also be available at this time. Lois Bazhaw, (336)549-0621, is taking orders for her cheese braid.

BACK



FRONT



Fran Getner donated a quilt she made. Tickets for the raffle are \$1 each—please see Phyllis Garrett, (336)674-6992, for your chance to own this beautiful quilt. The Arlene Stokes Circle thanks you for your support for local ministries.



Those in Need of Prayer

Active Duty Military

Cory Fields

Kelsey Garrett

Carlie H.

Clyde Land

Barbara Riddle

Sammy Wall

Frank Willis

Our Homebound & Shut-ins

Our printed prayer list includes church members and close family and friends of church members.



Memorials & Honorariums

Since the last newsletter publication, the following gifts have been made in memory/honor as listed. Bethlehem Church gratefully acknowledges each gift received.

MEMORIALS

In Memory of **Jerry McGee**

By Lois Snow

In Memory of **Earl Fields**

By Maysa Downing

By Jane Williams

In Memory of **Daryl Bowman**

By Elaine Bowman

In Memory of **Clem Royal**

By Margaret Royal

In Memory of **Jodi Weatherly**

By Bob Weatherly

In Memory of **Edward W. & Elsie Wilkinson**

By Eddie Wilkinson

HONORARIUMS

In Honor of **Jane Reddick**

By Dave & Ronda Robb

By Jerry & Karon Monnett

By Jackie Smith

By Jane Snead

By Linda, Kim & Cindy Duncan

In Honor of **Our Youth**

By Phala Garrett

In Honor of **Tim & Jana Fields**

By Jane Williams

Lauren Haywood's Exercise Classes

DANCE, SCULPT, & STRETCH

What to expect – 30 minutes of our original low impact / high intensity cardio “DANCE SCULPT” followed by 15 minutes of targeted SCULPTING, and 15 minutes of STRETCHING. With this combo we will be able to torch fat, tone muscles, and release tension ALL in one hour together!

Mondays – 5:30–6:30 p.m. @ Tabernacle (Sculpt-Core focus)

Wednesdays – 6:30–7:30 p.m. @ Bethlehem (Sculpt-Glute focus)

All classes \$5 or \$20/5 classes punch cards available at Bethlehem [only]. Please bring your own mat, bottled water, 1-5 lb. weights (optional), & sweat towel. Open to ALL fitness levels! Zero experience needed. New members WELCOME!

Questions – contact Lauren 336-686-4192 or laurenmstarr22@gmail.com



March


3/5 Amanda Cook
Alan Kirkman
3/6 Brooke Townsend
Erika Braddock
3/7 Pam Jones
3/8 Buddy Fields
3/9 Lois Bazhaw
Darlene Coble
David Robb II
3/10 Beverly Fields
Bob Norris
Lucy McClintock
Carlie Suggs
3/11 Suzie Branch
Kimberly Duncan
Teresa Stevens
3/12 Jay Bowman
Dale Young II
3/13 Heather Robb Adams
3/20 Barry Lineberry
3/24 Tony Bowman
Johnny Riddle
3/25 Jonathan Riddle
Caitlin Sheppard
Henry Wilkinson
3/26 Caleb Hinshaw
Lindsey Wray
3/27 Wanda Woodford
3/28 Joey Bowman
Lorene Wells
3/29 Susan Coward
3/31 Carlton Johnson
John David (J.D.) Peele

April

4/1 Phyllis Alley
Jeff Neelley
4/2 Madigan Downing
Larry Shambley
4/3 Beth Walsh
Casey Welborn
4/4 Craig Massarelli
4/5 Ashley Neelley
4/7 Eddie Wilkinson
4/8 Doyle Ingold
4/9 Phyllis Garrett
Jane Williams
4/10 Wayne Dunham
Jim Jones
4/11 Louise Bowman
4/12 Frances Jean Fields
4/13 Christopher Bass
Sally Bell
Danny Dunham
Glenna Staley
4/17 April Wreath
4/18 Anna Parrish
4/19 Shirley Hackett
Matthew Young
4/20 Daniel Moser
Craig Smith
4/24 Erica Reed Sypole
4/25 Haley Parrish
Lexie Terry
Jane Reddick
4/27 Julie Spencer
4/29 Rachel Grace Hill
Sandra Southard
4/30 Ruby Kirkman
Parker Robb



March 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1 8AM Bibles & Biscuits @ Climax Firehouse #35
2 Transfiguration Sunday <i>Peanut Butter & Oatmeal Sunday</i> 9:15AM SS 10AM Worship-Communion- 5PM Omega Youth 5PM Alpha Youth	3 Walking Group (Time Varies)	4 10:30AM StoryTime 5:30PM-7PM Fat Tuesday (FH)	5 Ash Wednesday Walking Group (Time Varies) 6:30PM Exercise (FH) 7PM Choir Practice	6 10AM Child. Chapel (Sanct.) 4PM Child. Chapel (Sanct.) 7PM Trustees Meeting (Parlor)	7	8
9 1st Sunday in Lent 9:15AM SS 10AM Worship <i>-Chicken Stew Order Cut-Off-</i>	10 Walking Group (Time Varies)	11 10:30AM StoryTime 11AM Friendly Club	12 Walking Group (Time Varies) 9:30AM Bookmobile 6:30PM Childcare Meeting (Sunshine Classroom) 6:30PM Exercise (FH) 7PM Choir Practice	13 FH Reserved (Chicken Stew Prep)	14 FH Reserved (Chicken Stew Prep)	15 Bake Sale & Chicken Stew Order Pick Up (FH)
16 2nd Sunday in Lent 9:15AM SS 10AM Worship -Noisy Offering-	17 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE Walking Group (Time Varies)	18 10:30AM StoryTime	19 Walking Group (Time Varies) 6:30PM Exercise (FH) 7PM Choir Practice	20 10AM Child. Chapel (Sanct.) 4PM Child. Chapel (Sanct.)	21	22
23 3rd Sunday in Lent 9:15AM SS 10AM Worship 5PM Omega Youth 5PM Alpha Youth	24 10:30AM Arlene Stokes Circle (Parlor) Walking Group (Time Varies)	25 10:30AM StoryTime	26 Wonderful Wednesday  (Bus leaves at 9:40AM) Walking Group (Time Varies) 6:30PM Exercise (FH) 7PM Choir Practice	27	28	29 1PM FH Reserved
30 4th Sunday in Lent 9:15AM SS 10AM Worship	31 10AM Paid Staff Meeting (Conference Room) Walking Group (Time Varies)	April				

GREETERS:

3/2 Byron & Phyllis Dahl
3/9 Susan Coward
3/16 Elaine Bowman
3/23 Cheryl Bazhaw
3/30 Lois Snow

ALTAR FLOWERS:

3/2 OPEN
3/9 Lisa Taylor
3/16 OPEN
3/23 OPEN
3/30 OPEN

ACOLYTES:

3/2 Aubrey Wilson
3/9 Maysa Downing
3/16 Braxton Wall
3/23 Quart Fulk
3/30 Bradon Allen

USHERS:

David Allen
Byron Dahl
Doug Garrett
Terry Franklin

MARCH OPENER:

Jerry Monnett

MARCH CLOSER:

Ron Bazhaw

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