

Season of Lent

Matthew 6: ¹Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.

²Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. ³But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: ⁴That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly. ⁵And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. ⁶But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

¹⁶Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. ¹⁷But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; ¹⁸That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly. ¹⁹Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: ²⁰But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: ²¹For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. (Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21, KJV)

Ash Wednesday, February 18, is the first day of Lent, the 40 days that precedes Holy Week and Easter. In the Christian Scriptures the number 40 relates to the period spent in the Ark by Noah, the period spent by Israel seeking the Promised Land after the Exodus, and the amount of time Jesus was in the Wilderness after his baptism and prior to beginning his ministry. For us, the Season of Lent is an invitation to 40 days of renewal ("Lent" means "spring"), 40 days to prepare ourselves to take in the Good News of Easter through deeper disciplines of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Ashes are the traditional sign of sorrow and repentance and are also a sign of "mortality". Receiving the ashes reminds us that God's love is triumphant over sin and death, and that God remains "in communion" with us, that in Christ, our mortality is overcome.

Anyone wishing to participate in fasting through the season of Lent, please see Preacher Bobby for information.



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.

Preacher

Rev. Bobby Lorton
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Gloria Austin

Pianist

Laura Cranfill

Youth Director

Layne Downing

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Custodian

Ovido Sorbito

Webmaster

Kylie Russell



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Visit our Website at

bethlehemmethodist.org

STEWARDSHIP REPORT-December 2025

Budget – Revenues & Expenses

\$651,704.01 Total Budget's Fund Balance as of December 1, 2025

+ 51,950.40 Money Received in December

- 48,217.40 Money Spent in December

\$655,437.01 Budget's Fund Balance as of December 31, 2025

For the month of December, 2025, the Church Budget received 3,733.00 more than it spent.

For the year, the Church Budget received \$68,330.26 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 December 13, 2011, and was established with \$12,000.00.

\$84,030.71 MM&RF Money Available December 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	\$ 3,937.84
Food Pantry	\$ 1,279.68	Handbells	\$ 160.52
Discretionary Fund	\$ 2,370.40	Scholarship-Religion Ed	\$ 1,983.22
Records & History	\$ 581.56	Missions-Undesignated	\$ 12,241.63
Alpha & Omega Youth	\$22,016.96	Cemetery Fund-Maint.	\$ 38,177.93
Children & Family Ministries	\$ 4,079.47	Choir Fund	\$ 208.28
Helen Grady Endow.	\$ 512.84	Brunswick Stew	\$ 11,149.31
(\$512.84 History)		Misc In/Out (Sunshine Blinds)	\$ [764.00]

Total Other Designated Gifts \$98,717.52

Total Designated Gifts Collective Fund Balance as of December 31, 2025 \$182,748.23

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 December 17, 2016 by the Church Council and is no longer taking donations.

\$71,116.34 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



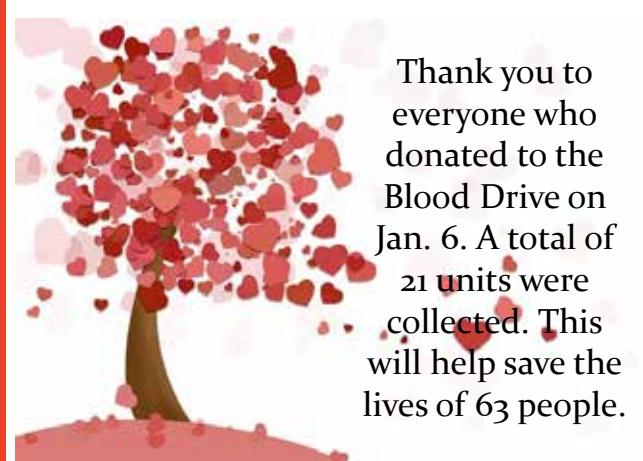
Dear Bethlehem Methodist Church, Arlene Stokes Circle Group,
Thank you so much for your generous donation of \$140 to the Backpack Program at NERMS. Your kindness and support will directly impact our students by helping ensure they have access to food and basic necessities when they need it most.

We are truly grateful for your continued commitment to our school and community. Support like yours makes a meaningful difference in the lives of our students and families, and we deeply appreciate your willingness to give back.

Thank you again for your generosity and for keeping our students in your thoughts and prayers.

With sincere appreciation-

Carla McBee, NERMS Student Advocate



Thank you to everyone who donated to the Blood Drive on Jan. 6. A total of 21 units were collected. This will help save the lives of 63 people.

Thank you for all the support for the Blessing Box. Current needs: paper towels, toilet paper, Mac & Cheese, canned meat, crackers, and peanut butter.

Please watch the bulletins for additional needs.



Hello from
Bethlehem Childcare



Thank you for the staff love offering. I appreciate the gift and the opportunity to work with the Choir.

Gloria Austin

Walking Group, Mondays and Wednesdays
5:30 pm

Come Read to the Child Care Kids

Every Tuesday at 9:30 am in the Parlor

Email Erica at bethchild91@gmail.com to volunteer.



*Books don't teach children dragons are real....
They teach them dragons can be killed.
-G.K. Chesterton*

DEADLINES:
March Newsletter:
February 16

Weekly Bulletin:
Noon each
Wednesday
Thanks!

WONDERFUL WEDNESDAY

WEDNESDAY

February 25

Bus leaves at 9:40 am.

Bethlehem
Methodist
Church

Memorials & Honorariums

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

Memorials

In Memory of **Jodi Weatherly** (x4)
Bob Weatherly

In Memory of **Clem Royal**
In Memory of **Perry and Margie Royal**
Margaret Royal

Honorariums

In Honor of **Julie and Denny Spencer**
Jane Williams

In Honor of **David and Laura Cranfill**
Alice Jones

In Honor of **Jerry and Karon Monnett**
Margaret Royal

In Honor of **Alice Jones**
In Honor of **Lois Snow**
Wayne and Shelia Moser

In Honor of **Linda, Kim and Cindy Duncan**
Margaret Royal

In Honor of **Margaret and Evonne Royal**
Jerry and Karon Monnett



- Pre-orders only. \$9.00 per quart.
- All orders are due no later than **Sunday, March 1**. To pre-order, call or text Cindy Fields at 336-430-3715 or Darlene Coble at 336-709-9283.
- The Chicken Stew will be available to pick up on **FRIDAY, MARCH 6, 4:00 - 6:00 pm** or **Saturday March 7, 9:00 - 11:00 am**.
- Desserts will also be available to purchase during pick-up.
- Lois Bazhaw is taking pre-orders for her famous cheese braid, \$20 per delicious loaf. Text Lois 336-549-0621 or contact the Church Office.
- *Thank you in advance for supporting our mission projects.*

Happy Birthday

February

2/1 Jerry King
2/2 Jamie O'Daniel
2/4 R. Steve Fields
2/7 Thomas Bonney
Emily Hinshaw Peters
Cody Routh
Jackie Smith
Bayne Welborn
Shayne Welborn
2/8 Bud Lauder
2/10 Todd Berry
2/14 Dean Fields
Rod Waugh
2/15 Laura Cranfill
2/16 Libby Fields
Bobby Lorton
2/18 Taylor Cotie
2/19 Pat Lineberry
2/22 David Cranfill
Daniel Hinshaw
Wesley Eanes
2/26 Kelly Bowman
Brian Downing
Katie Lauder
2/28 Kelly Dills
Jan Toler

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 McClintonck
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
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