

## THE CHALLENGE

### Bethlehem Methodist Church

Volume 14 Issue 1 January 2026

<sup>21</sup>And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb. <sup>22</sup>And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord; <sup>23</sup>(As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;) <sup>24</sup>And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons. <sup>25</sup>And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him. <sup>26</sup>And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. <sup>27</sup>And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, <sup>28</sup>Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, <sup>29</sup>Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: <sup>30</sup>For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, <sup>31</sup>Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; <sup>32</sup>A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel. <sup>33</sup>And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him. <sup>34</sup>And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; <sup>35</sup>(Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed. <sup>36</sup>And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity; <sup>37</sup>And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. <sup>38</sup>And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem. <sup>39</sup>And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth. <sup>40</sup>And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.



A New Year is upon us, and as we seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit, let us not forget the gifts of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love that the advent season reminded us of. May we extend the gift of Grace that we have received from God to others, expecting His wonderful harvest of new souls into the Kingdom. Let us approach each and every day with a new excitement of God showering humanity with His blessings by telling our stories of God's Amazing Grace.



### 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  
540-320-3876

#### Church Office

Margot Horney  
336-674-0155  
[bethlehem1825methodistchurch@gmail.com](mailto:bethlehem1825methodistchurch@gmail.com)

#### Choir Director

Gloria Austin

#### Pianist

Laura Cranfill

#### Youth Director

Layne Downing

#### Childcare Director

Erica Shanahan  
336-674-9879

#### Custodian

Ovido Sorbito

#### Webmaster

Kylie Russell



Join us on Facebook  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/214541575234325/?ref=share>

Visit our Website at  
[bethlehemmethodist.org](http://bethlehemmethodist.org)

Paula and I are eternally grateful for the opportunity to participate with each of you in sharing God's ministry with the world, and we are thankful for your well wishes and gifts during the Christmas season. As we wish all a Happy and Blessed New Year, I would like to offer a poem from *Frances R. Havergal*:

Another year is dawning,  
Dear Father let it be,  
In working or in waiting,  
Another year with thee.  
Another year of progress,  
Another year of praise,  
Another year of proving  
Thy presence all the days.  
Another year of mercies,  
Of faithfulness and grace,  
Another year of gladness,  
The glory of thy face.

Another year of leaning  
Upon thy loving breast,  
Another year of trusting,  
Of quiet, happy rest.  
Another year of service,  
Of witness for thy love,  
Another year of training  
For holier work above.  
Another year is dawning,  
Dear Father, let it be,  
On earth, or else in heaven,  
Another year for thee.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!  
With love, Paula and Bobby

*Looking  
Back  
on  
2025  
pt 1*







*Looking Back  
on 2025  
pt 2*

# STEWARDSHIP REPORT-November 2025

## Budget – Revenues & Expenses

\$643,233.29 Total Budget's Fund Balance as of November 1, 2025

+ 33,627.79 Money Received in November

- 25,157.07 Money Spent in November

\$651,704.01 Budget's Fund Balance as of November 30, 2025

For the month of November, 2025, the Church Budget received 8,470.72 more than it spent.  
For the year, the Church Budget received \$64,597.26 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 November 13, 2011, and was established with \$12,000.00.

\$66,633.13 MM&RF Money Available November 30, 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	\$ 3,587.84
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	\$ 12,099.50
Alpha & Omega Youth	\$21,766.96	Cemetery Fund-Maint.	\$ 38,395.43
Children & Family Ministries	\$ 4,079.47	Choir Fund	\$ 286.26
Helen Grady Endow.	\$ 512.84	Brunswick Stew	\$ 11,149.31
(\$512.84 History)		Flowers (Vet Wreath)	\$ 145.00

Total Other Designated Gifts \$99,179.87

Total Designated Gifts Collective Fund Balance as of November 30, 2025 \$165,813.00

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

### **\$69,491.86 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



We are fortunate to have a church member who is qualified and agreed to perform the audit of our church financial records. Whitney Routh Reilly has done this audit for the past several years. Again this year, she has given us a clean audit of our 2024 financial records. The audit provides the church with confidence in our financial processes. Thank you, Whitney, for a very important job well done!

Julia Willis, Treasurer



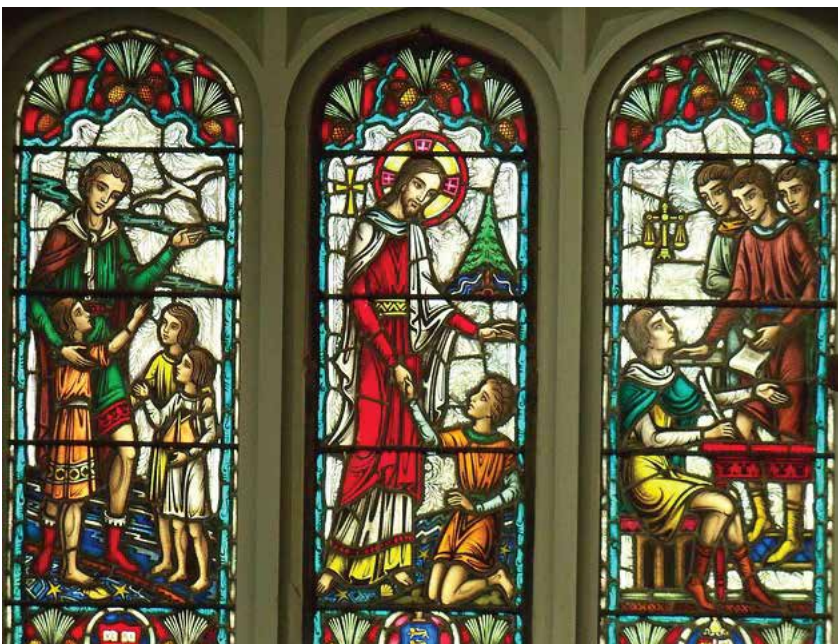
**DEADLINES:**  
**February**  
**Newsletter:**  
**January 15**

**Weekly Bulletin:**  
**Noon each**  
**Wednesday**



**Blood**  
**Drive**  
**Tuesday,**  
**January 6**  
**1:00 - 7:00 pm**  
**Fellowship**  
**Hall**  
**Gifts available to all**  
**donors.**

Thank you for all the support for the Blessing Box. Currently needed: paper towels Mac & Cheese canned meat Please watch the bulletins for additional needs.



CHILDREN'S WORSHIP is the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month, at 10:00 am and 4:00 pm.

Volunteers are needed for the 10:00 am services. Email Erica at [bethchild91@gmail.com](mailto:bethchild91@gmail.com) for more information.

*But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven.*  
*Matthew 19:14*



Please make sure the Church Office has your current phone number. We don't want members to miss any of the announcements. Call the office at 336-674-0155 or email [bethlehem1825methodistchurch@gmail.com](mailto:bethlehem1825methodistchurch@gmail.com) to update your number if it has been changed. Thanks.

FINANCE COMMITTEE MTG:  
Thursday, January 15, 7:00 pm  
Conference Room

CALLED CHURCH COUNCIL MTG:  
Sunday, January 25 following  
service. Budget discussion.



Friendly Club will meet Tuesday, January 13th at 11:00 am in the Fellowship Hall. We will be playing Bingo with the chance to win prizes! Please bring a covered dish and join us for good food and fellowship. All are invited for a fun time!



Sneak Peek, Friendly Club on Tuesday, February 10th at 11:00 am in the Fellowship Hall. Bring scissors!



Thank you for all the donations to Toys for Tots. The two collection boxes were filled to overflowing!

"THANK YOU to the acolytes and ushers for your service this past year. Also, if anyone would like to be a communion steward, please contact me."

Fran Getner

THANK YOU



Church Office will be closed Monday, January 19 in observation of Martin Luther King Jr Day.



## *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 **Herman and Scott Hackett**  
Shirley Hackett

In Memory of **Ralph Kirkman**  
Betty Kirkman

In Memory of **Wayne Kirkman**  
Russell Hill

In Memory of **Robbie Monnett**  
Margaret Royal  
Jerry and Karon Monnett

In Memory of **Steve Reddick**  
Martha Allred  
David and Laura Cranfill  
Shirley Hackett  
Jerry and Karon Monnett  
Ronda and David Robb  
Margaret Royal  
David Sillmon  
Steve and Cindy Fields  
Carol Fields

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

In Memory of **Bill and Bobby Waugh**  
Helen Waugh

In Memory of **Mary Lynn Smith**  
Jim Smith

In Memory of **Clem Royal**  
Margaret Royal

In Memory of **Phil Smith**  
Brenda Fields

In Memory of **Lucy Jennings**  
Phala Garrett

In Memory of **Travis Norris**  
Barbie Norris

### *Honorariums*

In Honor of **Wayne and Phyllis Alley**  
Barbara Riddle

In Honor of **Laura Cranfill**  
Buddy and Jane Reddick

In Honor of **David and Laura Cranfill**  
by Jane Williams

In Honor of **her family**  
Phala Garrett

For the **Choir**  
Shirley Hackett  
Steve and Cindy Fields

In Honor of **Roy, Evonne and Brenda**  
Margaret Royal

In Honor of **My Family**  
Todd Garrett

In Honor of **Gene Flinchum Family**  
Judy Rees

In Honor of **Bob Weatherly**  
Jerry and Karon Monnett

In Honor of **Arnold and Joyce Ingold**  
Carol Fields



# Happy Birthday

## January

1/1 Stephanie Garrett  
1/3 Clark Hinshaw  
Lois Snow  
1/5 Dottie Tew  
1/6 Phyllis Wicker  
1/7 Sharon Welborn  
Kimberly Garrett  
1/8 Ron Bazhaw  
Sally Sipes  
1/10 Todd Garrett  
1/12 Bryson Windsor  
1/14 Ronnie Grimes  
Stacy (C.S.) McClintock  
Beth Coble Pulliam  
1/15 Eddie Sipes  
1/16 Krista Neelley  
1/18 Melanie Robb  
1/21 Alice Jones  
Lisa Taylor  
1/22 Pat Waugh  
1/23 Linsey Fields  
Linda Grimes  
1/24 Angie Routh  
Jane Snead  
1/26 Gale Bowman Berke  
1/29 Judy Norris  
1/31 Sharon Good

## 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