



# The Echo

March 2021

A publication of Bethany United Methodist Church, Weyers Cave, VA

## WHAT'S INSIDE

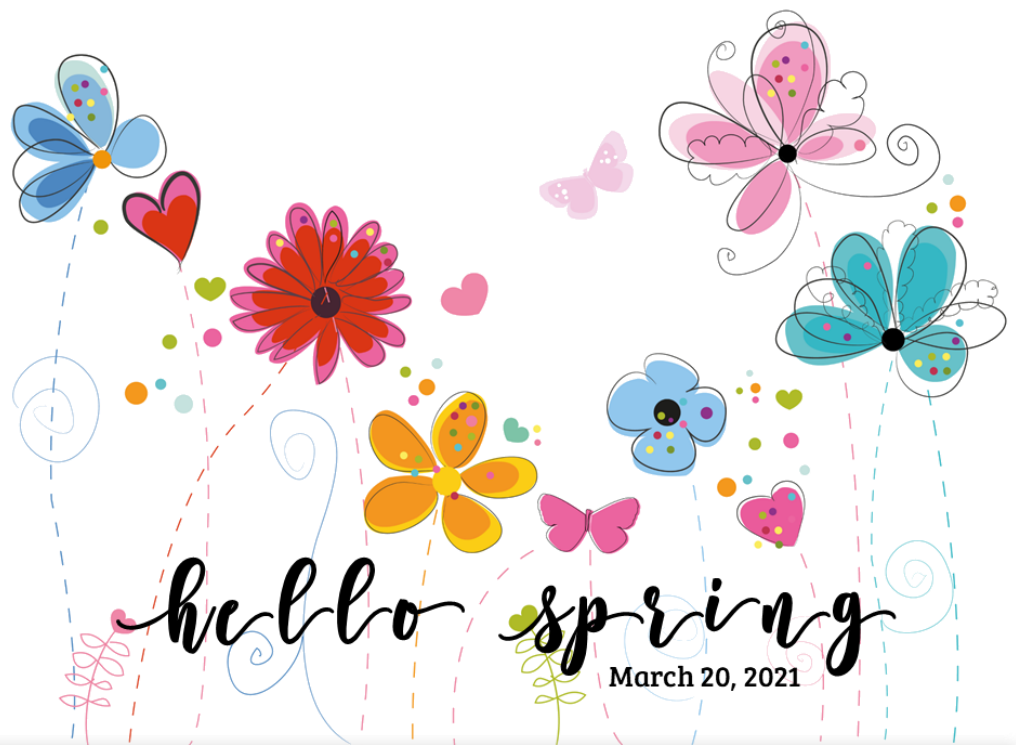
- 2 From the Pastor's Desk
- 3 Letter from Pastor Susan
- 3 Good Friday Info
- 4 Mission Update
- 5 A Member's Thoughts
- 6 Financial Update
- 7 Birthdays & Prayer List

If you would like ...  
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receive the church  
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and other important  
updates by email, please  
send your email address  
to Cindy Kite at  
[office.bethany@gmail.com](mailto:office.bethany@gmail.com).

## charming spring

by Patricia L. Cisco

Reminiscent melodies serenade the morning breeze.  
Feathered creatures nest with care in cherry blossoms pink and fair.  
Perfumed scent of roses flow. Tiny blades of green grass grow.  
Misty showers soak the earth, glorious colors come to birth.  
Gathering clouds come and go, rain, sun, and vibrant bow.  
Dainty petals, fancy flair, dancing in the warm, sweet air.  
Violets, yellows, purest white, graceful, gentle, welcomed sight.  
Thank you, oh sweet lovely Spring,  
patiently waiting the charms you bring!



## From the Pastor's Desk

### The Blue People of Troublesome Creek

Blue people? It sounds like a fairytale or something out of science fiction but for the Fugates of Troublesome Creek, Kentucky it was much more serious than any made-up story. Martin Fugate, an orphan of French origin, came to Troublesome Creek near Hazard, Kentucky around 1820. He married a pale skinned beauty named Elizbeth Smith and together they had seven children. Four of them were blue. Blue. And being blue was hard. The blue family members were ridiculed and taunted because of the color of their skin. It became a thing of shame. Troublesome Creek was already a remote location, difficult to get to. The shame surrounding the skin color of some members caused the whole Fugate family to retreat from society at large. This shrank the number of prospective suitors for the Fugate children to marry. Many of them married cousins or aunts and these close kin marriages led to more blue children in the next generation, which in turn caused the family to retreat further from society.

As it turns out, Elizabeth and Martin both carried a rare recessive gene for the methemoglobinemia (met-H) gene. This genetic condition affects the blood's hemoglobin in its ability to carry oxygen throughout the body. When normal hemoglobin carries oxygen, the blood is bright red. Methemoglobinemia restricts the blood's ability to carry oxygen and the blood takes on a purplish bluish color. It would take about 120 years before a doctor was finally able

to discover why many of the Fugates were blue.

The family came to the attention of a nurse, Ruth Pendergrass and a hematologist, Dr. Madison Cawein, III in the 1960's. Cawein deduced the cause of the Fugates' blueness after reading about the phenomena occurring among Alaskan natives and he was able to treat the condition and return the last blue Fugates of Troublesome Creek to a more normal skin color.

The plight of the Fugate family reminded me of something I witnessed on my grandparents' farm. You may have witnessed the phenomenon yourself. One of my Grandma's chickens was injured. The rest of the usually innocuous hens turned on the wounded one. They pecked at the spot of blood on the wounded bird. Chasing the hens off seemed to have no effect. They came right back and the wounded bird became bloodier as it struggled to evade its attacker.

I have always wondered why the chickens attacked one of their own. Long ago, the blue Fugates experienced something similar. Call it original sin or tribalism or herd mentality, human beings still attack people who are different. Perhaps we assume someone who looks different from us cannot feel as we feel. I remember teaching a Junior High Sunday School class, mainly because no one else wanted to. One boy had been diagnosed as autistic. He was incredibly bright but also as is often

the case, socially awkward. It broke my heart to hear how he was treated at school. His only friend was one of the other boys in the Sunday School class.

Empathy is being able to put yourself in someone else's position both intellectually and emotionally. When we try to imagine how someone else is feeling we are practicing empathy. Empathy and compassion are at the heart of Jesus' ministry. He gave sight to the blind, healed lepers and the sick. He fed the hungry and he told the story of the good Samaritan. Jews were not supposed to have things in common with the people of Samaria as they were considered unclean and heretics by Jews. But in the telling, the Samaritan is the hero, the good neighbor, who stops to help the man who has been beaten and left for dead. We are called not just to have empathy for others, Jesus calls us to love others, no matter how different. In the Gospels, love is a verb and we demonstrate our faith through putting love in action. Even if that means loving someone who is blue.

*Pastor Susan*

BE SOMEBODY  
WHO MAKES  
EVERYBODY FEEL LIKE  
A SOMEBODY



Dear Friends,

In our peculiar way of doing things, we United Methodist pastors agree to serve wherever the Bishop appoints us. I have been asked to serve Asbury United Methodist Church, in Harrisonburg when the new appointment year begins in July. This is not as they say “a done deal” but a projected appointment. Things could change. However, it is most likely that I will not be serving at Bethany UMC as of July 1.

I would like to thank everyone who has welcomed and encouraged me here. This congregation can be proud of the ministry it carries out. I know that the time I have been here has been challenging for all of us given the constraints put on us by the pandemic, but I could not be prouder of everyone who has worked to meet those challenges.

The process of assigning clergy to churches will continue from now until April or May. Jane Elkins and the rest of the Staff Pastor Parish Relations Committee will keep you informed as more details are made available to share. In the meantime, I hope we will continue in ministry together as we begin the process of a likely transition.

*Pastor Susan*



## REAL FOLLOWERS - JOURNEY TO THE CROSS

Please join us on Friday, April 2, Good Friday, as we contemplate Jesus' journey to the cross and our own journey as real followers of Christ. Come anytime between 5-6:30 pm to

walk through five “come and go” interactive stations in the sanctuary focusing on the last 24 hours of Jesus' life. Individual communion will be included. In addition, there will be a brief virtual service beginning at 6:30 pm that will be broadcast on Facebook Live if you would like to watch at home and in the sanctuary if you would like to remain at church. We encourage you to bring your entire family to participate in this personal and reflective experience. As always, masks will be required and social distancing will be observed.

*blessed is  
he who  
comes in the  
name of the  
lord.*

Matthew 23:39



**Are you tired of being cooped up in the house? Would you like to get outside in the fresh air? Do you like the smell of fresh cut grass?** If you answered yes to any of these questions, have we got the perfect opportunity for you to serve at Bethany.

The Trustees are looking for volunteers to mow the church lawn this summer ... yes, it's almost that time of year! The easiest thing, if you're interested, is to sign up for an entire month from April through October. We already have a volunteer for the month of July; however, all the other months are wide open! If you need a break or can't make it a week, we will have volunteers ready to assist you.

The church has it's own zero-turn mower and you will be reimbursed for any gas you need to provide for the mower. And you can mow at any time, any day of the week ... with the exception of course, Sunday mornings!

If you would be willing to help out this summer, please contact Cindy at the church office (office.bethany@gmail.com or 540-234-8880) to sign up. If you have any questions, please contact Scott Williams.



We also need people to volunteer to be a fill-in when needed!!

## Missions Update by Lori Mooney

Can you believe that it is March and we have been dealing with Covid-19 for about a year now? Sometimes, time seems slow and sometimes it flies by. Hope everyone is staying healthy and safe. Wishing all our Bethany family the best. Springtime should be coming around the corner. I think February with all the snow and ice should be banned from our memory forever. Think flowers, budding trees, growing grass, etc. Come on spring with some milder and warmer weather.

We will still be taking donations for the Green Hanger Project year around and I will do drop offs when needed. Right now, my basement bedroom is almost full of boxes and bags of all the donations that you have been leaving at the church for this worthwhile project. Hopefully, next month, I will

have a picture for you to see how much we have donated. I plan on making a trip the beginning of March (due to the bad weather the last couple of weeks) for drop off at the Green Hanger Project in Fishersville. I will have to use my husband's truck to get it all loaded up. THANK YOU to everyone who contributed old hand me downs, new underwear/socks, and personal hygiene products. Make sure to label your box or bag with "Green Hanger", if you plan on dropping off more.

Happy St. Patrick's Day. Hope you have good luck.

Be on the lookout for our next mission project. We hope to have something in place for Easter. Still working on the logistics of it all.

Mission Project of the Month: RISE of Harrisonburg. This is a faith community-based church that welcomes everyone. Our faith community is called RISE

because it has many meanings: renewal, transformation, and resurrection (just to name a few!) RISE also means different things for different people. For some, it could be to rise and be love in a hurting world. For others, it could be a challenge to simply rise and face the day. RISE conveys passion and is a call to action and mission. That's who we are and who we are becoming in Christ. This was taken from their webpage. We have helped with RISE for many years here at Bethany. Please help support this group and send in donations so the LOVE can be shown to EVERYONE.

If you know of anyone who needs help, please let us know.

Co-chairs: Lori Mooney,  
[Brownsugarcookie@yahoo.com](mailto:Brownsugarcookie@yahoo.com),  
820-7394

Maggie Rhodes,  
[r.maggieanne@gmail.com](mailto:r.maggieanne@gmail.com), 383-4752

## The Mission Team will be joining Valley Missions for their Easter Mission Project this spring.



They need donations of sandwich & lunch bags, Lysol wipes & spray, window & bathroom cleaner, laundry detergent, aluminum foil, umbrellas & ponchos, work gloves and thermal underwear. These donations can be brought to the church and Lori Mooney will take them to Valley Mission. They are also asking for monetary donations to help replace their playground. Checks should be written out to BUMC with "Vm Playground Fund" in the memo line. Donations will be taken through Easter Sunday!



## SIMPLY EXTRAORDINARY!

BY JACKIE DUNSMORE

It's almost a year! Social distancing, masks, cancelled events, postponed celebrations and virtual everything has become a norm. Fear, frustration, anger, anxiety and loneliness are the result. We see the manifestation of the uncomfortable emotions all around us and we feel them within us.

As followers of Jesus, what does God say to us about the last year? I've been asking that since March 13 ... the why's, the what's, the where's. I don't think it's been a coincidence that in searching, praying and quiet times the theme of "appreciating the ORDINARY, simple things" has been a continuous theme. It's been amazing to see and experience God's calming presence and the blessed assurance of His promises to be with us in all circumstances once I started to focus on what "is" rather than what "isn't." (Just wish I would stay in that place, but that's another time of reflection.)

I've seen God in these simple things ...

- Shenandoah Valley sunrises and sunsets
- The sound of a child laughing
- The beauty of a flower
- A card from someone that says "I miss you," "I care"

- The smell of a newly cut field of hay
- The twinkling eyes of a church family member smiling behind a mask
- Making a choice to turn the news OFF
- The loving dedication of our Food Pantry workers
- The creativity of our Worship technological wizards
- An Ice cream from Smiley's
- The singing of birds in the early morning
- Enjoying Marguerite's beautiful piano preludes on Sunday morning
- A newborn calf nursing from its mama
- A rainbow after a summer rain shower
- A good joke
- The peaceful quiet of a gently falling snow
- A phone call with family or friends
- Music ... any and all
- The taste of a homemade chocolate chip cookie
- A drive in the countryside
- Observing our Bethany youth doing mission projects locally
- White fluffy clouds
- Enjoying a McDonald's hamburger sitting in our old truck with Mark and our 2 dogs (yes, we get them a hamburger too)
- The faithfulness of a Bethany church family who longs to gather together without restriction

As we anticipate the slow but certain return to normal we will rejoice, but I pray that we don't forget to appreciate the ordinary. This season of Lent is a wonderful time to pause, reflect and see God's hand in the world around us. God seems to always reveal himself in the simple things. He makes the ordinary into something that is truly extraordinary. May we prepare to once again gather, all of us, in worship, in nurturing our children and youth and in being the active hands and feet of Christ in our community. Surely God is ready to do something extraordinary!



## Treasurer's Report by Cindy Kite

As I sit here and think about what I want to say, I'm looking out the window at the sunshine ... although not yet warm ... and am just wishing for spring to hurry up and arrive! No more snow, ice, cold wind or just plain cold and dreary days. When I think of spring, it makes me think of new beginnings. With restrictions easing up a little, I can only hope it will be a new beginning for Bethany post pandemic.

I want to walk into Bethany and see smiling faces, hear laughter, give hugs and handshakes, share a cup of coffee as we catch up on our lives, and end with a "see ya next Sunday!" It seems like it's been forever since we've gotten to do those things ... those little things ... like Jackie mentioned. Those little things that we take for granted. I want to sit next to a friend. I want to hear the P&W band sing again. I want to be able to sing along with them. I want to see more children than the steps can hold come up front for Children's Moments. I want to hear the chuckles from the congregation and see parents squirm, never knowing what their kid might say! I want to hear the excitement in Maggie's voice as she talks about upcoming mission projects. I want to be able to share communion with my church family. All these little things that I will never take for granted again!

February 28, 2021 - Week 9		
Budget	221,259.00	
Where We Should Be		38,294.82
Where We Are		24,796.67
Deficit of		(13,498.15)
Net Percentage		-35.2%
Expenses as of 3/03/21		28,769.35

*Give from  
your heart...  
for God loves  
a cheerful  
giver!*

*2 Corinthians 9:7*

I would like to encourage you to not take the church offering for granted either. I'm sure many of you have thought ... if I'm not attending, I'm not giving. Someone else will do it. But what if ten or fifteen others are thinking the same thing? I urge you to continue giving regularly if you are doing so, and if not, to think about once again beginning to give your weekly, monthly or quarterly giving. As of the end of Week 9, we are 35.2% behind where we had hoped to be at this time. It sounds bad, but it's not a huge concern today because we aren't doing much other than keeping the utilities and staff paid. But once we begin our programs and ministries back up later this year, we want Bethany to be financially healthy and able to continue all the wonderful ministry programs we had before the pandemic. Let's begin the month of March by making a commitment to begin giving once again. Don't forget you can always give electronically by going to the church website and clicking on "GIVE" or you can mail your check to the church.

Our contributions to the general fund total \$24,796.67 so far this year. We have spent \$28,769.35 on staff salaries, utilities, repairs, and our mission outreach partners. We are currently spending more than we are taking in monthly. The only way we are able to do this is because of having cash in the checking account that we carried over from last year. We had excess cash because we qualified and received \$20,000 from the Small Business Association's Payroll Protection Plan (PPP) loan provided by the government. However, we will not be able to qualify for it this year, so we can't count on that extra \$20,000 to help us out. Take a look outside. Feel the sunshine. See the grass starting to turn green. Look at the daffodils and crocus peeking up from the earth. **There's a new season on the horizon!! Let's make it a season of giving.**





Spring  
FORWARD

Daylight Saving Time begins  
Sunday, March 14, 2021



## March

1st Jan Gorden  
5th Ken Elkins  
7th Becky McCarty  
8th Ken Shifflett  
9th Marguerite McDonald  
Amanda Hughes  
10th Bobbie Meek  
Lindsay Williams  
13th Kelli Huffer  
14th Chuck McCarty  
15th Lisa Shifflett Cox  
Laura Hittie  
16th Rose Campbell  
17th Jared Kile  
18th Sidney Moyer  
19th Gary Byard  
23rd Cheryl Richards  
25th Camden Herron  
26th Barbara Long  
27th Tim Schnittger

7th Jordan Dunsmore  
9th Phil Mikesell  
Susan Thacker  
10th Chuck Schwab  
11th Tiana Ryan  
17th Rick Northrop  
Jenifer Williams  
18th Susan Meadows  
20th Stella Hughes  
25th Carrie Dunsmore  
Nash Colvin  
28th Sarah Cook  
29th Gail Reese  
30th Nadine Moore  
Sarah Williams

If your birthday is listed  
incorrectly or not listed at all,  
please contact the office with  
the correct info. Thank you!



## April

4th Easton Moyer  
5th Trae Elkins

## Prayer List

### Members

Tom & Jan Gorden  
Lloyd Meadows  
Jean Radocha  
Gary Ruleman  
Phil & Ruth Ann Mikesell  
Ken Shifflett  
Roy Lee Stroop

### Extended Members

Wayne Martlock - father of Dani  
Martlock

We extend Christian sympathy to  
Debbie and Steve Schofield upon the  
sudden death of Debbie's brother.  
If you would like to send a card, their  
address is ... 410 W. Bank Street,  
Bridgewater, VA 22812.

ENCOURAGE  
\* one another \*  
AND BUILD EACH OTHER UP.

1 Thessalonians 5:11

## Bethany United Methodist Church

3700 Lee Highway  
Weyers Cave, VA 24486

[www.mybethanyumc.org](http://www.mybethanyumc.org)



Palm Sunday, Mar. 28

## *The Echo*

### *"The Echo"*

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Marguerite McDonald, Organist & Choir Director  
Dale Roller, Praise Band Leader  
Cindy Kite, Secretary/Treasurer  
Phil & Ruth Ann Mikesell, Sextons

April Newsletter Deadline: Mar. 20, 2021

Please submit articles to Cindy Kite at  
[office.bethany@gmail.com](mailto:office.bethany@gmail.com)  
Webmaster: [bethanyumc.website@gmail.com](mailto:bethanyumc.website@gmail.com)



connect. grow. serve.

At Bethany we ...

*Connect* with God in community  
*Grow* in our likeness to Jesus Christ  
*Serve* our neighbors