



March 2023

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

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If you would like ...
and currently don't
receive the church
newsletter
and other important
updates by email, please
send your email address
to Cindy Kite at
office.bethany@gmail.com.



Welcome Spring!

For behold, the winter is past; the
rain is over and gone. The flowers
appear on the earth, the time of
singing has come, and the voice of
the turtledove is heard in our land.

Song of Solomon 2:11-12



From the Pastor's Desk ...

I love spring for a number of reasons, partly because March brings March Madness with it as well as opening day for college and professional baseball. I love the spring because I can begin to wear shorts again and not look like the crazy Floridian that you all have probably figured out by now. But the most important reason I love what that the spring season offers is it bring new life. From the trees that begin to bud new leaves and flowers; from the ground that begins to soften and allow for new roots to sprout; spring reminds me that the cold and frigidness of winter is becoming a mere memory. People tend to be a wee bit more patient and kind; as the days get longer and warmer. Spring reminds us that God is not done with you or me. That God has only just begun making you anew and bold. There is still life and joy in

our bones, no matter how old or how seasoned we might be.

Isiah 61:11 reads, "For as the earth brings forth its sprouts, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to sprout up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to sprout up before all the nations."

One of my favorite spring memories as a kid in Northwest Florida was having to bundle up in the morning, but by the end of the school day I was down to short sleeves and shorts. I would go to my mom's classroom after school and do my homework and play on the computer while she finished up working and doing lesson plans. Then we would heat up leftovers from the night before in her small classroom microwave and she would then rush me from school to the ball fields for spring ball practice. I clearly remember the fresh scent of baseball clay on my pants, shirt, and hands and the


lovely scent of sweaty feet, after taking my cleats off at the end of practice. The ball fields were always a place where the most beautiful

sunsets would occur, and as a child it was my own spring reminder that I was getting renewed by rewashed by God. As this spring has snuck up upon us, I long for the scents and memories of those warm but refreshing evenings at Meridian Park in Tallahassee.

We all have different spring memories that ripen our souls and brings smiles to our faces. My hope and prayer for everyone who calls Bethany their church home and even those who have not yet wandered through those doors; is that this place continues to be a place of renewal and rest. May this place and the people that make it up be a blessing and encouragement to one another; and may we invite others into this space to join us in our spiritual renewal. May this space continue to be a place where people long to be and feel washed clean by God's holy and loving breath. Because if we can be this church; we will continue to be a blessing to our neighbors and our community. So come... and be washed anew in what the Spirit is up to here at Bethany UMC!

In Christ's Holy Love,

Pastor Blaine



Isaiah 61:11
FOR *as the* EARTH
BRINGS FORTH HER BUD,
and as the GARDEN CAUSES
the THINGS SOWN *in it*
to SPRING FORTH,
so YHVH GOD WILL CAUSE

righteousness
and praise

to SPRING FORTH
BEFORE ALL *the*
NATIONS.

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Missions Update by Lori Mooney

March on!!! Happy St. Patrick's Day this month. We are pushing through this month until we hit springtime. Hope everyone has a great month.

A BIG THANK YOU to everyone who donated items for the kits that we made for Kingsway Missions during the Ash Wednesday service. Kingsway will be so excited to see how much we brought in for their people.

Also, thank you for the donations made to the youth for their yummy desserts that were at the Ash Wednesday service. All money donated will be used towards their mission trip at the end of June when they head up to PA to help members in that community. There will be other opportunities to help with donations because the youth have several other events going in the next couple months, so keep your eyes out for these.

We hope that the 30-Hour Famine was a success and thanks to those who made donations to it. The money will go to World Vision.

We will be helping Rosemary Wagoner with kits for Conference in the next coming months. Stay tuned with more information to come.

RAM (Remote Area Medical) Clinic will be coming to the Rockingham County Fairgrounds once again, Saturday, May 6, from 6 am to 6 pm and Sunday, May 7, from 6 am to noon. This is a free medical, dental, and vision clinic for anyone who needs it. It is completely free, no

pre-registration needed, or no-insurance needed. People usually start showing up at midnight on Friday to get in line for this event. We have signed up to bring some food items for the people waiting and the volunteers working that day. We will put that list out next month. They are asking for volunteers to help with set up and take down and parking. If anyone is interested, please let me know and I will get you connected with the right person.

Mission spotlight of the month: Kingsway Prison and Family Outreach. It is a non-profit organization that has been offering assistance to the incarcerated, ex-offenders, and their families since 1983. In addition to services provided within the prisons and jails, Kingsway provides a safe haven for released inmates to come for help at the office in Harrisonburg. We help this group every year with the Apple Tree gifts that we collect at Christmas. We just packed the essential kits that we made during Ash Wednesday service for those coming out of prison with nothing. Please keep this group in your thoughts and prayers and if you would like to make a separate donation, please mark it for Kingsway.

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

Lori Mooney, co-chair, 540-820-7394
Brownsugarcookie@yahoo.com

Nancy Colvin, co-chair, 540-910-0272
nwcolvin@gmail.com

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. If you need a

break or can't make it a week, we will have volunteers ready to assist



you.

The church has its 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 (540-234-8880 or office.bethany@gmail.com) 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!! Please help us keep our church lawn beautiful and inviting all summer long!

SMILES FOR LIFE DENTAL CARE'S POP TOP DROP FOR THE RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE CHARITIES



"The mission of RMHC is to create, find, and support programs that directly improve the health and well-being of children and their families." -Ronald McDonald House Charities

Check out how many programs they offer:

380+ Programs

265+ Family Room Programs

40+ Mobile Programs

"RMHC provides more than 1.5 million overnight stays each year, helping families save nearly over \$504 million in lodging and meal expenses."

-Ronald McDonald House Charities



RONALD McDONALD
HOUSE CHARITIES

We have a special connection with RMHC because two of our team members have family who have used their services. Help us make a difference and drop you soda tabs off at one of our offices.

Smiles for Life Bridgewater

115 Oakwood Dr,
Bridgewater, VA 22812
540-828-2312

**DROP OFF AT ONE OF
OUR TWO LOCATIONS!**

Smiles for Life Staunton

502 N Coalter St,
Staunton, VA 24401
540-887-3304

Smiles for Life in Staunton and Bridgewater are collecting pop tabs for the Ronald McDonald House. There is a milk jug in the narthex with a sign on it and whenever the jug is full, Lori Mooney will take it to the dentist office.

Thank you in advance for helping with this project.

Do small things
with great love.

- Mother Teresa -

What is Happening?

by Lori Mooney

I am questioning what is happening in the world today... I have lots of questions about many things, but for this article I am asking "Why are people turning away from God and the church community?"

I know growing up in the 80s, our parents expected us to go to church every Sunday. I knew it was a given. I enjoyed going to church. I liked the sermons, enjoyed visiting with other people that were there, enjoyed youth group, VBS in the summer, and all the activities that we did.

I have read several articles about the declining populations within churches, and it is a cause for concern. I am thankful that we were sent a young and vibrant pastor that is enthusiastic about this church. But when you read a statistic that states 4,500 churches closed in 2019, while only 3,000 were started and that was before Covid hit. We know the numbers have only gotten worse since the pandemic. Also, 41.5% of Americans between 18 and 29 said they never attend services. When you look at most churches, you have the older generations that have been attending all their life, but when they pass away are there going to be enough young people to sit in the pews and take over what the church has been accomplishing for years? So, many churches that have been here for 150+ years and then they must close their doors because they have so few attending or the building needs updates that they can't afford to fix.

Numbers were declining before Covid hit, but with churches having to stop in-person services and having to go to

online services, then trying to recover from that has been exhausting. One survey said that a typical church is now 85% of pre-pandemic levels. Lifeway surveyed young adults, aged 18-22 who attended church regularly and the firm found that 7 out of 10 had stopped attending church on a regular basis. Their research team stated, "The younger generation just doesn't feel like they're being accepted in a church environment or some of their choices aren't being accepted." We need to accept them for who they are. What is the United Methodists trademark phrase "Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors." Let's think about this, are we really doing this right now in our congregations?

One in 4 Americans said in 2022 that they attend church regularly. Congregations are struggling. Ponder on this quote from Religion News Service- "The focus should be, how can we become a better church-rather than how do we re-create what we used to have?"

For us to turn this around, we need to attract all ages to our church to keep it going, but especially the young people. Come back to church if you are still staying at home on Sunday mornings, we need you. Pastor Blaine wants us all to become a better church. So, put your best foot forward and keep living the life you are and plan on trying to bring others into our flock. Show God's love to everyone and in all that you do. From James 4:12 "There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the one who is able to save and destroy. But you-who are you to judge your neighbor?" Let's open our hearts and arms to all those that need Jesus Christ in their lives. We need to put people in the pews to listen to what Pastor Blaine has to say, and we need people to go out and be the hands and feet of Jesus Christ and help our neighbors. After all, the Bethany vision statement is: CONNECT with God in community, GROW in our likeness to Jesus Christ, and SERVE our neighbors.

Yours truly, Lori



Men's Prayer Breakfast

will be held on Saturday, March 18 at 8 am.

All men in the church are encouraged to join us for breakfast followed by a time of prayer and fellowship.

Questions? Contact Eddie Moyer at

canesfansfan@aol.com or 540-294-6616.

Make this your something "new" this year!

HEY KIDS!

You're Invited

Sunday,
APRIL 2
2 - 4 PM



Community Easter Egg Hunt

Weyers Cave Community Center

EGG HUNT, CRAFTS & SNACKS

EASTER EGG HUNT DONATIONS NEEDED



We will be hosting a community-wide Easter Egg Hunt at the Weyers Cave Community Center on Palm Sunday, April 2, from 2-4 pm. Candy donations or small toys that will fit in eggs are needed. Also, we will be needing all hands on deck to help make this an awesome outreach event for our community. We had such an overwhelming outcome last October when we hosted our Trunk or Treat event at the Community Center, we hope to encourage all to come out again to help. More info will be coming soon on where help will be needed.

Please make plans to help on Palm Sunday afternoon. A basket will be out front for donations of candy and toys for the eggs. Thank you in advance for your generosity!

EASTER FLOWERS

You will once again have the opportunity to order Easter flowers to place in the sanctuary in honor of or in memory of a loved one. Watch for order forms soon!



Make plans to join us on
PALM SUNDAY, APRIL 2
for a churchwide brunch
after the worship service.
Please bring a dish to share with all.

Young at Hearts

will meet on Tuesday, March 7 at 12 noon at Mrs. Rowe's in Staunton. All folks 55 and over are invited to join this fun group for good food, fun and fellowship! Please contact Carolyn Swartz at 540-820-9798 or swartz1204@gmail.com. The April luncheon will be April 4 at Thomas House in Dayton.



Want to talk with Pastor Blaine outside the church? Maybe get to know him and a little more about what makes him tick? **He will be at Valley Pike Rumor Mill on Tuesday, March 9 from 9:30 am - 12 pm.** Come by and say hello. Enjoy a cup of coffee or tea and some good conversation!

He will also be having dinner at El Charro's on Main Street in Harrisonburg on Monday, March 27 from 6-8:30 pm. You are invited to join him and Ashley for dinner. There will also be lots of laughing and fellowshiping! You don't want to miss it.

Did you enjoy singing with the Christmas Choir? Or did you sit back and listen and wish you had joined? Here's your chance ... **an Easter Choir will begin rehearsing on Wednesday, March 8 at 6 pm.** The choir will sing Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday. We invite and need you to join us!





Attention Ladies! Looking for something “new” to get involved in at Bethany this year? Something that won’t take up too much time? Why not try Women’s Ministries?

Our goal is to support and encourage women of all ages in building their relationship with Jesus Christ through spiritual growth, fellowship and missions by providing a safe and relaxing atmosphere that encourages women to be all God intended them to be.

GROW: We want to provide opportunities that encourage women to hunger in their hearts for a deeper understanding of God’s Word and to discover and fulfill God’s purpose for their lives.

CONNECT: Throughout the year we will provide many creative and supportive fellowships which will allow women of all ages to develop new friendships and strengthen existing ones.

SERVE: We will encourage women to take what they have learned through God’s Word and use their time and talents to reach out to people in our church, our community and our world who are in need.

If this group sounds like something you would like to be a part of, please contact Cindy Kite at office.bethany@gmail.com. I would love to have you serve on the Women’s Ministry Team with me!



Thank you for your generous donations to the Ash Wednesday desserts to support the fundraising of our youth mission trip. We are blessed to be in a loving church family who continues to encourage our passion for service. - BUM Youth



Another 30 Hour Famine in the books! We bonded for 24 hours of the 30 hour fast by bowling, serving for Backpack Pals, setting up a nail salon in the fellowship hall, going to the movies and shopping. We broke our fast with food provided by Jay Frizzelle, Sarah Simmons and Lori Mooney. We appreciate all of the time and energy the chaperones put into making this event happen. Each year that we complete this, we are reminded how blessed we are to have access to an unlimited supply of food.

Annual Conference Report

Part 2 by Rosemary Wagoner

The first year I attended the Virginia Annual Conference, I was a senior in high school and I was serving as a youth delegate. I was amazed at all the blankets that the women from the Virginia Annual Conference made to go around the world to those who needed them. Over the years the blankets have transitioned into World Service Kits that we now give. We collect these kits prior to the Annual Conference every year. There have been different kits needed at times. These kits help the UMC respond quickly and many times the UMC is the first to respond to disasters due to the kits.

One year, a missionary talked at the Annual Conference about how the children where she was serving got so excited when the School Kits were delivered. Being a connectional church allows us to have a significant impact around the world. I am pleased to partner with Bethany's missions committee to work on these kits. At this point we will be focusing on Hygiene Kits unless we hear differently from Annual Conference. We will be putting out

information about these kits closer to April. To see more about UMC efforts around the US and the world visit <https://umcmmission.org/>.

The Virginia Annual Conference also has newsgroups to let us know what mission opportunities are available. The form is at the bottom of <https://vaumc.org/>. You can sign up for different communications like Laity Net, the Advocate and several others.

Each mission project gets an Advance Special number. All the projects in Virginia can be viewed here, <https://vaumc.org/advance/>. The Embrace Community Center, which is located in Waynesboro where Wayne Hills UMC used to be, is a local way that our money and funds are changing lives. Wayne Hills UMC had to close a few years ago due to declining membership and attendance, and yet it is wonderful to see something new rise from the ashes, that is serving a big need for families in Waynesboro.

Rosemary Wagoner
Annual Conference Delegate

Financial Update by Cindy Kite

January came and went. February came and went. And now we're entering into March. The year is already moving by fast. However, I am very much looking forward to spring ... the warm weather, the flowers, the trees and grass turning green, and my bones to stop aching because of the cold weather!

January and February may have went by fast, but at least I can say they were positive months for Bethany. Since I have been treasurer, I've not seen us in the black, ahead of our budget by \$1,358.06 in February. January and February are always the two worst months for giving in most churches. But Bethany stepped it up a notch and threw that thought in the trash!! Thank you for being such a generous church! It brings joy to my heart to see us springing forward with a new giving trend. We hope that trend will continue. I feel sure it will because you are such faithful and giving folks. You always step up when we are in need of donations for projects or additional funds. We need donations for kits, you fill the basket to overflowing. We need soup and sandwiches for Ash Wednesday supper, we have an abundance. We need a new roof, and you've almost covered that cost too! There is nothing you can't do when you have a generous heart. Keep up the good work church family!!

The 2022 giving statements were emailed out at the end of January. If you did not receive a copy by email and need one, please let me know. I will either email you another copy or print a copy out for you.

Happiness doesn't result from what we get, but from what we give. (Dr. Ben Carson)

Week 8 - February 19, 2023		
Budget	425,467.00	
Where We Should Be		34,686.30
Where We Are		<u>36,044.36</u>
Deficit of		1,358.06
Net Percentage		3.9%



March

2nd Jan Gorden
5th Ken Elkins
7th Becky McCarty
9th Marguerite McDonald
10th Bobbie Meek
Lindsay Williams
Steele Caricofe
12th Katelyn McLaughlin
Lily McLaughline
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

April

3rd Easton Moyer
5th Trae Elkins
Sawyer Dunsmore
7th Jordan Dunsmore
Matt Caricofe
9th Phil Mikesell
Susan Thacker
10th Chuck Schwab
11th Tiana Ryan
17th Rick Northrop
Jenifer Williams
Stephanie Caricofe
18th Susan Meadows
25th Carrie Dunsmore
Nash Colvin
28th Sarah Cook
Amelia Simmons
29th Gail Reese
30th Nadine Moore
Sarah Williams

If your birthday is listed incorrectly or not listed at all, please contact the office with



March
BIRTHDAYS



Prayer List

Members

Charlene Michaels
Maggie Huffer, Gary Ruleman,
Peggy Lucas, Linda Byers,
Audrey Bradshaw, Romana Garrison,
Don Truslow

Extended Family

Lisa McCormick - friend of Rosemary Wagoner
Kris Lindsay - friend of Lori Mooney
Brother-in-law of Barbara Long
Donna - cousin of Bill Kile
Grandfather of Amber Casey
Raylon (18 month old recovering from brain surgery)

I've Moved!



Charlene Michael
847 Oakwood Drive
Rockingham, VA
22801



May they never stop
blooming
in you.

Jude 2:1

www.LeahDiPascal.com

March 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 6:30 pm - Easter Egg Hunt Planning Meeting 	2	3 Employee Appreciation Day! 	4
5	6 6 pm - Worship Meeting	7 10 am - Lenten Book Study 12 pm - Young @ Hearts Luncheon at Mrs. Rows 6:30 pm - Lenten Book Study	8 6 pm - Choir Practice 	9 9:30 am - 12 pm - Coffee with the Pastor at Valley Pike 	10	11
12 Daylight Saving Time Begins! 	13	14 10 am - Caring Cards & Lenten Book Study 6:30 pm - Lenten Book Study	15 6 pm - Choir Practice 	16	17 	18 8 am - Men's Prayer Breakfast 
19 Blaine on Vacation - Kathleen Stump Guest Speaker	20 Newsletter Deadline 	21 10 am - Lenten Book Study 6:30 - Lenten Book Study	22 6 pm - Choir Practice 	23 National Puppy Day 	24	25
26	27 6 pm - Dinner with the Pastor at El Charro's (Main Street, H'burg) 	28 10 am - Lenten Book Study 6:30 - Lenten Book Study	29 6 pm - Choir Practice 	30	31 	

Bethany United Methodist Church

3700 Lee Highway
Weyers Cave, VA 24486

www.mybethanyumc.org



Sunday, March 12

The Echo

"The Echo"

A Publication of Bethany United Methodist Church
3700 Lee Highway, Weyers Cave, VA 24486
(540) 234-8880
www.mybethanyumc.org

Blaine Thomas, Pastor
540-292-4028
blainethomas@vaumc.org

Marguerite McDonald, Organist & Choir Director
Dale Roller, Praise Band Leader
Cindy Kite, Secretary/Treasurer
Danny Perry, Sextons

April Newsletter Deadline: Mar. 20, 2023

Please submit articles to Cindy Kite at
office.bethany@gmail.com
Webmaster: 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