



The Echo

March 2024

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

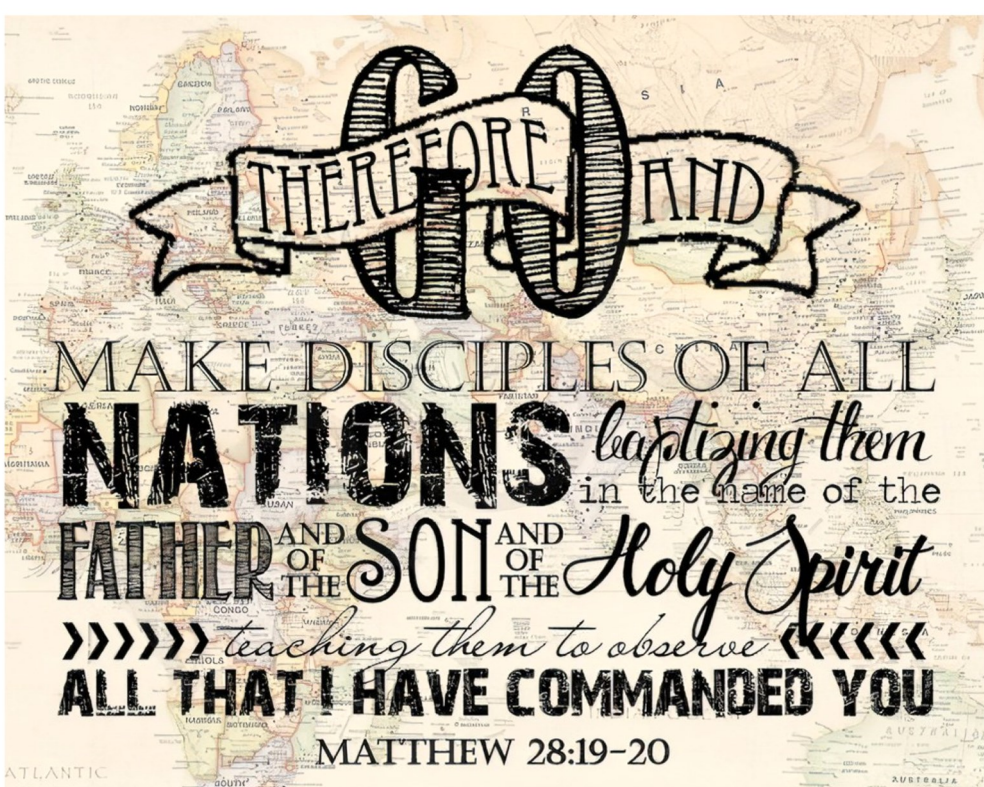


From the Pastor's Desk ...

Dear Beloved Bethany UMC Family,

This past month I ventured down I-81 to Charlotte, NC for the National Fresh Expressions Conference. This conference was jam packed with speakers and pastors from all over the country and all over the UMC connection; sharing their own stories and experiences of what Fresh Expressions is doing in their own context. **Fresh Expressions is a movement to build relationships with people in our community who are longing to be a part of an intentional community.** Some examples of Fresh Expressions are Brew Theology that can happen at a brewery or coffee shop; or Tattoo Church that occur at a local tattoo parlor and reach a community that might not be as comfortable in the church building. Fresh Expressions ought not to try to be mimicked by other types of Fresh Expressions; but need to be open to what our community needs and wants. Fresh Expressions can work alongside the local church and provide an avenue to transform the lives in our community and engage in deeper friendships.

The Great Commission that Jesus gives us is in Matthew 28 says to “go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.” The way we can begin to do this is by beginning to listen and engage in conversation with those who we often pass in our business of life. A Fresh Expression is not about



saving souls, but it is about offering authentic relationships and seeking to transform our community, and if someone comes to Jesus by it, then that is an added blessing.

The first step in investing in our community is to truly listen to people in and around where you live, work, and socialize; to see what our community needs. This is where YOU come in! I want the people of Bethany UMC to begin to step outside of our comfort zones and our circles, to really listen to what those in the community could benefit from. Maybe this means having a legitimate conversation with the person checking you out at the grocery store. Or asking the person who is making your coffee at the coffee shop what they would like to see in our area to enrich their life. If we can start having these conversations with our neighbors, maybe we can begin to transform our area into the place

we want it to be. So, for the next couple months I want to encourage you to engage in these life-giving conversations in our local area; in hopes for us to work together to find a new and creative way to reach our community and provide an avenue for community transformation. I look forward to listening to you all and hearing your ideas, hopes, and dreams for this future way of being the Church and the faithful people of Bethany UMC!

In Christ's Love,

Pastor Blaine



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. Order forms are at the Welcome Center and are due back Sunday, March 10.



PALM SUNDAY Brunch

Make plans to join us on
PALM SUNDAY, MARCH 24

for a churchwide brunch
after the worship service.

Please bring a dish to share with all.
There is a sign-up sheet in the foyer!



Sunday, March 24

Palm Sunday Brunch after the worship service.

Bring a dish to share with all. There will be a children's processional with palm branches. There is a sign-up sheet in the foyer for the brunch!

Friday, March 29

A Good Friday service combined with six other churches will be here at Bethany at 7 pm.

Saturday, March 30

A hike through the Blue Ridge Tunnel.
Meet there at 10 am and bring a flashlight.

Sunday, March 31

Easter Sunday!

Sunrise Service at the Community Center at 7 am.
There will be heavy refreshments after worship and then an Easter Egg Hunt for our children.

Join us for one or all of these events.

Invite a friend or neighbor!



Missions Update by Lori Mooney

March on and forward to spring time!! It is right around the corner, hopefully because we can trust Phil, right? Things will start turning green, flowers will start popping out, and then it will keep getting warmer.

THANK YOU to everyone who donated food or money to our Super Bowl fundraiser. Our goal was to get 1,000 items for our Food Pantry neighbors. We appreciate all that you do and help with here at Bethany. With your donations of food, diapers, wipes, etc. plus the money you donated, we surpassed our goal by triple!! And Pastor Blaine got slimed!! Hope you were there to see it!

We hope the youth enjoyed the 30-hour famine weekend that Bridgett put together. There was lots of good things to do during that time together. We know this brings the kids and adults closer and they love to pig out on the meal on Saturday evening, after not eating for 30 hours. Thanks to all those who donated money for the kids to pull it off, food for the meal, or time to help with the event.

Easter will be here at the end of the month. Enjoy this Lenten season and preparing for Easter time. We will also

need your donations of candy to put in the Easter eggs for the hunts that we will have. Please see the sign-up sheet for 100+ pieces of individually wrapped candy that will fit into plastic eggs. Thank you for those donations.

MISSION SPOTLIGHT OF THE MONTH:

Backpack Pals. Clymore Elementary has about 100 students each week that get to take a bag home of food for the weekends while they are not in school and receiving free/reduced meals. This helps tide them over until they come back to school. There are usually 8-10 items in the bag each week. It could be snacks, cans of veggies, tuna/chicken, cereal, milk, juice packs, peanut butter, pudding, macaroni and cheese, etc. These items are purchased through the Verona Food Bank, other stores, and donations from local churches. If a child is hungry, it is hard for them to function. Please donate to Backpack Pals, in order to help keep them fed on the weekends. Thank you.

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 Mark Dunsmore.

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!

When Things Get Difficult . . .

by Maggie Huffer

I have had to remind myself lately that I am not in control—God is. When the world, community, and life seem to stack the cards against us continuously, we must remember that there is a purpose behind everything. Maybe it's because a new door is opening very soon with a bright future. Maybe it's because someone needs to hear the good that's happening around them in spite of all the turmoil. Maybe it's just because we are not all-knowing and God is placing curiosity and trial in front of us to be able to move forward with His guidance and wisdom.

Our neighboring community is going through a transition in leadership in the school system. This change has caused angst and polarization. We have a strong congregation of educators within Bethany, and we've weathered many changes and

challenges in our careers. However, this time it feels different. It's heavy. We show up for our students day in and day out—to love them, teach them, mentor them, coach them, and be a role model in their lives. We

stand strong for our students and shoulder much of the burden. Who do we, as educators, turn to when the going gets tough and we feel out of control?

God. Prayer. As simple as that sounds, it's truly what is needed. I ask our church family to be gentle with educators right now...and pray. We are under constant scrutiny to do what is asked of us, and sometimes

All things are
difficult
before they are
easy.

Thomas Fuller

that goes against our values and core beliefs. Please continue to pray for our education staff in the congregation and the students who attend our local public schools. I specifically ask that you pray for peace, amicable solutions, and grace for all stakeholders. Our students are counting on us.

With love.

Maggie



BUM BITES by Bridgett Crawford

The youth have been busy in February! We started off with Bible Exploration and learning more about Jesus' life with his disciples. Next, we made desserts of brownies and cookies for Ash Wednesday Service.

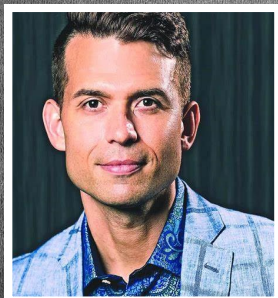
The big event this month is the 30 Hour Famine. This is where the youth fast for 30 hours to not only bring awareness for hunger around the world, but learn the spiritual meaning and significance of fasting from a biblical view. Activities for 30 Hour Famine include team building games, devotions, cosmic bowling, polishing in sanctuary, couch-arama in Grottoes, roller skating, and watching Jesus Revolution. We break our fast by having a potluck dinner! Thank you to everyone who made food and helped to set events up for this event. Thank you also to Laura Lucas for volunteering her time to be with us. Thank you also to Jac and Autumn for coming to Cosmic Bowling.

Your support of our youth is much appreciated! We couldn't do everything without the support of our church family.

The Songs & Stories of

BRENT VERNON

Special Appearance by Sam



FREE

Family-Friendly Concert

The Songs & Stories of

BRENT VERNON

Special Appearance by Sam



Brent Vernon is a singer-songwriter, ventriloquist, author and illustrator. This is a family-friendly evening of laughs and singing. And a special appearance by SAM.

Bethany United Methodist Church
Saturday, March 16 @ 6:30 pm

3700 Lee Highway, Weyers Cave, VA 24486
540.234.8880 / www.mybethany@gmail.com

A love offering will be collected.

He will have a merchandise table set up with his books, CD's, etc.



While we won't be sponsoring the Community Easter Egg Hunt at the Community Center this year, we still have a need for candy to fill eggs!

We will be handing out goodie bags to all children

at the Brent Vernon concert.

Plus, we'll be having an Easter Egg Hunt for

Bethany children Easter Sunday after the worship service and again on Easter Monday for our Food Pantry children.

That means we won't need as much as usual ... only 8 bags of 100+ pieces of individually wrapped candy small enough to fit in plastic eggs. There is a sign-up sheet at the Welcome Center if you would like to donate candy!

We need by March 10.



Young at Hearts

will meet on Tuesday, March 2 at 12 noon at Mrs. Rowe's in Staunton. All folks 55 and over, or a little younger, are invited to join this fun group for good food, fun and fellowship! Please contact Leslie Wagener if you have questions.



Youth Silent Auction



The youth are sponsoring a silent auction of three gorgeous, hand crafted bird houses during the month of March. Earl King has shared his talent and gift with us by donating these exquisite birdhouses to help the youth raise money for our upcoming summer mission trip. Colors are purple/berry, blue, and green with a copper roof. Bird houses can be seen in the church narthex along with a silent auction sheet to write your bids. Check back weekly to see if you need to raise your bid! If you have questions, please see Bridgett Crawford. Thank you for your support in our silent auction for these unique birdhouses you will not see anywhere else!

Calling All Young Adults

All young adults from ages 18-30 are invited to join us at Jalisco Mexican Restaurant in Harrisonburg on Saturday, March 9 at 5 pm for dinner and fellowship. Come on out



and enjoy getting to know your fellow young adults. We'll have good food and fellowship time, plus a few laughs. Oh, and did we forget to mention ... IT'S FREE!! Yes, free. Your meal will be paid for!

Bethany Travel Mugs

There are still a few Bethany UMC travel mugs commemorating our 70th year anniversary!

This is one way to remember our church's history and hopefully will also be a wonderful starting point to invite others into our Bethany family. Those who recently joined the church and will join the church in the future will get one free. We are asking for a \$20 donation for these 30-oz travel mugs. Please place your money in the basket on the table with the mugs. If you have questions, talk to Cindy Kite or Pastor Blaine.



Financial Update by Cindy Kite

2024 started out with us missing the very first Sunday due to a power outage! That means we missed an entire Sunday of giving. And most of the time, we don't think about making up a missed Sunday offering. And most of you didn't. Even though we missed a Sunday in January, we did amazingly good. We went from a deficit of 100% to only 12.1%.

The first Sunday in February was great! Our deficit went from 12.1% to only 8.5%, which isn't bad considering the missed Sunday in January. However, that trend did not stick around long in February. At the end of February we have a deficit of 17.2% or the \$5,951.08 as the chart shows. Winter months, especially February for some reason, are slow in giving. Maybe it's because folks don't come out to church as often when it's cold, windy or rainy. And that's a good reason to sign up for online giving. So even when you're not here, you can still give and don't have to remember it the next Sunday. Just go to the website, www.mybethanyumc.org, and click "Online Giving" at the top of the page and follow the instructions from there. If you need assistance, please give me a call at 540.234.8880 or email me at office.bethany@gmail.com.

Let's set a goal to take our deficit down to only 5% by the end of March! You have four Sundays to make that happen! Let's do it.

Week 8 - February 29, 2024		
Budget	225,093.00	
Where We Should Be		34,629.68
Where We Are		<u>28,678.60</u>
Deficit of		5,951.08
Net Percentage		-17.2%

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



March

2nd Jan Gorden
 5th Ken Elkins
 7th Becky McCarty
 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
 23rd Cheryl Richards
 26th Barbara Long
 Libby Riddle
 27th Tim Schnittger

April

5th Trae Elkins
 Sawyer Dunsmore
 7th Jordan Dunsmore
 Matt Caricofe
 9th Phil Mikesell
 Susan Thacker
 10th Chuck Schwab
 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 the correct info. Thank you!



Prayer List

Members

Don & Hazel Truslow
 Nadine Moore, Kathleen Stump
 Sidney & Jean Moyer
 Ramona Garrison, Audrey Bradshaw,
 Phil & Ruth Ann Mikesell

Extended Family

Alma & Neese Spitzer - aunt & uncle of
 Barbara Moore, Rosemary & Leslie
 Wagoner
 Glenda Western - friend of Dale Roller
 Mark Ruffin - mentor of Dave Williams
 Connie Gorden - granddaughter of Tom
 & Jan Gorden
 Sandie Donald - daughter of Carolyn
 Swartz & sister of Cindy Kite

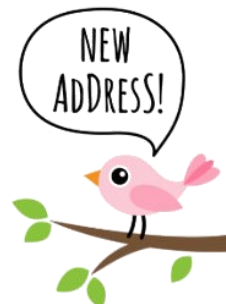


We extend Christian sympathy to Laura Lucas and family upon the death of her cousin, Tim Fizer. If you would like to send Laura a card, her address is P.O. Box 121, Weyers Cave, VA, 24486.

Sidney Moyer

Brookdale Senior Living
 2101 Deyerle Avenue
 Harrisonburg, VA 22801

The family asks for NO VISITORS yet. We'll keep you updated.





March 2024



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4 4-5:30 pm - Food Pantry 6 pm - Worship Meeting	5 12 pm - Young at Hearts Luncheon (Taste of Thai)	6 10 am & 6:30 pm Lenten Book Study	7	8	9 5 pm - Young Adult Fellowship at Jalisco's in Harrisonburg 
10 SPRING FORWARD UMCOR Sunday Bags of Candy Due Easter Order Forms Due	11 4-5:30 pm - Food Pantry	12 10 am - Caring Cards	13 10 am & 6:30 pm Lenten Book Study	14 9:30 am - 12 pm Coffee with the Pastor 	15	16 8 am - Donuts & Devotions 6:30 pm - Brent Vernon Concert
17  Happy St. Patrick's Day	18 4-5:30 pm - Food Pantry	19	20 10 am & 6:30 pm Lenten Book Study Article for the April Newsletter Due!	21  Hello Spring	22	23 11 am - 4 pm Fellowship Hall Reserved
24  PALM SUNDAY Brunch	25 4-5:30 pm - Food Pantry	26	27 10 am & 6:30 pm Lenten Book Study	28	29  GOOD Friday 7 pm - Good Friday Service	30 10 am - Holy Saturday Hike through Blue Ridge Tunnel
31  He is Risen Easter Egg Hunt		 hello SPRING				

Bethany United Methodist Church

3700 Lee Highway
Weyers Cave, VA 24486

www.mybethanyumc.org



Sunday, March 24

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 Oliver-Thomas, Pastor
540-292-4028
blaineoliver-thomas@vaumc.org

Dale Roller, Music Leader
Bridgett Crawford, Youth Leader
Cindy Kite, Secretary/Treasurer
Danny Perry, Sexton

April Newsletter Deadline: Mar. 20, 2024

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