



May 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.





From the Pastor's Desk

I wanted to begin this monthly article to the Bethany family with exciting news and a grateful heart... I have been re-appointed to Bethany UMC as your pastor for another year! I am so grateful for the Bishop, the District Superintendent, and the Cabinet for seeing the faithful gospel work that is being done here at Bethany. I am so grateful for all of you who make up this beautiful, sometimes messy and chaotic family that is called Bethany. As I begin Year Three of being your pastor, my hope is that you will find the new ways that the Spirit is encouraging me and this church to move and choose to partake in this season as we continue to grow towards being perfect, as our heavenly Father is (Matthew 5:48).

I once had a pastor in my life that said the best way to introduce Jesus to people was through holy friendships, and I wholeheartedly believe that is the way forward. Many people have been hurt, persecuted, and downright appalled by people who call themselves Jesus followers. And even if we did not cause that harm, we must recognize it and be gracious towards those hurt by church people. When people have been harmed by the church or people claiming to be Christians, the chances of getting them back into a

church building diminish greatly. So, we must find loving and grace-filled ways to connect with people and meet them where they are, which likely will not be near the church building. This might be the golf course, or the coffee shops, or the nail salons, or out at our beautiful and scenic parks. Jesus does most of his relationship making out in the world and not in the enclosed church walls. Let us follow this example out into the world, as this is how we are going to grow the Kingdom of God in the Shenandoah Valley, my friends.

A couple of months ago I encouraged you all to think outside the box and think of new ways to build relationships with people in our community; in lieu of the Fresh Expressions Movement. After spending some time thinking about this critical aspect of being the Church, the leaders of Bethany UMC and myself have decided to add

another committee to focus exclusively on how to be better at reaching our neighbors. The Bethany Bridge Builders are going to be a team focused on new and creative ways to reach out to our neighbors in Christian love, to invite them to experience Jesus Christ, but also for us to build new relationships and friendships in our community. I hope and pray that if you are not involved yet in a committee and are creative and welcoming, you will join this new Spirit-led group emerging here at Bethany UMC. If this sounds like something that God is leading you to; I would encourage you to speak with me as we assemble a team that is excited and energized to be bridge builders in our community. Bethany family, I believe this is where God is calling us! Are you in?

In Christ's Love,

Pastor Blaine





Mission Update **by Lori Mooney**

May starts the season of summer trip dreaming and kids are ready to be done with school. It will be done before we know it. Keep those dreams alive and I hope that you get some impressive trips in this summer. Happy Memorial Day at the end of the month.

In March, we had a request from Jackie to purchase gift cards for Food Lion and Sheetz gas gift cards for some of the families at South River Elementary. Jackie is the school counselor and knows the ins and outs of all the kids. There is a lot of need within these families.

One of the stories, just to let you know where some of the mission's money has been going: South River sent home 2 Food Lion gift cards and a gas card to a grandmother that is raising her grandchildren. Their mom died of a drug overdose. Youngest (1st grade) has major behavior issues because of mom's drug use when he was in utero. Grandmother had to have part of her colon removed and she must go to UVA for checkups. She works for an attorney as a secretary, but no pay when not working. Jackie assumes that she is getting some disability pay while she is recovering. She is a very good lady,

but a tough journey. She was very appreciative of the gift cards. So, thank you for your donations to mission to be able to help these families in their time of need. Keep up the excellent work, Bethany.

Mark your calendars to come help at Camp Overlook on Saturday, May 11. They are hosting their Paul Bunyan Clean-up Day. We would love to put together a group to help them do some outside items that need done before campers come. It will start at 9 am. Come out for an hour or two, or half the day, if you like. Lunch will be provided. If you are interested in helping with this event, please let me know. Brownsugarcookie@yahoo.com for email or call/text me at 540-820-7394 to sign up and especially if you want to be counted in for lunch.

We will be putting together kits for Conference that will be coming up in a couple months. We will be doing the hygiene kit again this year and let's see if we can put together at least 25 kits for them this year. These kits are used in a crisis event, and they are a significant help to those that have been affected. Please consider making a whole kit to donate or even donate some of the items needed to make the kit. UMCOR Hygiene Kit - Global Ministries (umcmision.org) A list of items

can be found in the foyer and on the next page.

Mission spotlight of the month: Blue Ridge CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate) for Children was established in 1994 and it is a non-profit organization that advocates for the best interests of abused and neglected children in the counties of Augusta, Page, Rockbridge, Rockingham, and Shenandoah and the localities of Augusta, Buena Vista, Lexington, Harrisonburg, Staunton, and Waynesboro. We recruit, screen, train, and support volunteer CASAs who serve as the voice for these children in court proceedings and help ensure they are placed in safe and permanent homes. We work tirelessly to promote the well-being and stability of vulnerable children. Over 300 children in our service area are waiting for a CASA. If you would like to become a CASA, please look up their website to see what it takes to help. If you can make an extra donation, please mark it for CASA.

If you know of someone 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

Paul Bunyan Clean Up Day

Join us at Camp Overlook on May 11 for their Paul Bunyan Clean-Up Day. Come anytime from 9 am-3 pm and stay as long as you can. We will be cleaning up the outside of camp, to prepare for the upcoming Summer Camps at Overlook! Lunch will be provided by Camp.

Let Lori Mooney or Pastor Blaine know if you can make it, so we can RSVP a lunch for you!



Kits for Conference

Here is of Items needed for conference kits. We will be sending these with Rosemary Wagoner to conference in June:

- One hand towel (15x25 - 17x27 inches) - No kitchen, cleaning or microfiber towels
- One washcloth - No kitchen, cleaning, or microfiber towels
- One Comb - Must be sturdy with at least 6 inches of teeth. No pocket combs or picks. Rattail and combs without handles are acceptable but must have at least 6 inches of teeth
- One toenail or fingernail clipper - No emery boards or metal nail files
- One Bath-size soap (3 oz. bar or larger) - No Ivory or Jergen's soap. Do not remove from packaging.
- One adult toothbrush - Do not remove from packaging. Personal advertising not acceptable.
- 10 adhesive bandages (3/4 by 3 inches) - Common household bandages acceptable
- One 1-gallon size re-sealable bag

Assembly instructions ...

1. Lay hand towel flat on a table.
2. Lay the washcloth in the center of the hand towel.
3. Place all remaining items on top of the washcloth (except the plastic bag).
4. Fold the sides of the hand towel to cover the items.
5. Grasp the bundle tightly and roll over the remainder of the towel.
6. Place the tightly rolled bundle in the plastic bag, remove air, and seal.

You can put whole kits together or bring in items and we can combine to make the kits. They will be due by May 19. You can also donate \$12 per kit to have one put together for you. Make checks out to Bethany with a note on the memo line "Kits for Conference" and we'll purchase items to put a kit together.



PENTECOST SUNDAY MAY 19

Not only are we celebrating our graduates, but it is also Pentecost, the birthday of the church.

PLEASE WEAR THE COLOR RED and plan to stay after the service for a reception celebrating our graduates and the gift of the Holy Spirit!

It's going to be a festive day!
Happy Birthday to the CHURCH!



"KICKOFF TO SUMMER" CELEBRATION SUNDAY June 2

We will have a cookout after our worship service featuring grilled hotdogs and hamburgers and ice cream sundaes!

All you need to bring, besides you, is a side (chips, salads, fruit or veggies).

After lunch there will be games for all ages and an **inflatable** for the kids.

What a great time to invite that friend or neighbor! Wear your summer attire and plan to stay for a fun event.





Life in this Church that we call Bethany by Lori Mooney

Thank you for being a part of Bethany United Methodist Church in Weyers Cave. We appreciate seeing all your lovely faces on Sunday mornings, at bible studies, choir practice, children’s church, youth meetings, food pantry, etc. We are a very active church and have events going on all the time.

Let’s talk about some ... Every Sunday, we have our regular service at 9:30 am. Every Monday night, we have our **Food Pantry** for our neighbors from 4:00 pm – 5:30 pm. Recently, we had a **Lenten Bible Study** on Wednesdays at 10 am or 6:30 pm. Once a month, we have **Young at Hearts** meeting on the on first Tuesday of the month to get together for a meal and socializing. **Caring Cards** meets on the second Tuesdays of the month at 10 am to write thank you, get well, and thinking of you cards to those who need them. Pastor Blaine usually has **coffee hours** several times a month to just get together and talk about whatever you want. The third Saturday of the month is **Men’s Donuts and Devotions** at 8 am. We have so many committees that meet periodically throughout the year. Some include Worship, Children’s Ministries, Food Pantry, Lay Leader, Men’s Ministries, Missions, SPPRC, Stewardship, Trustees, Women’s Ministries, Young at Hearts, Young Adult Ministries, and Youth.

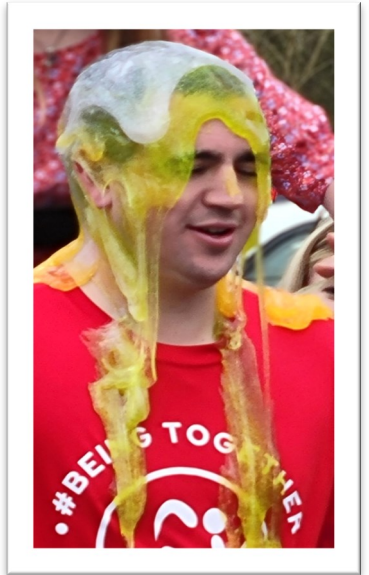
Don’t get me started on all the events that we just had leading up to Easter. There was the Songs and Stories with Brent Vernon and Sam on Saturday night 3/16 at 6:30 pm, Palm Sunday Brunch (Yummy!), Good Friday Service, Saturday’s Blue Ridge Tunnel hike, Easter services (Sunrise Service at Community Center with other local churches and the main service here at the church at 9:30 am), and then we had the Easter egg hunt for the kids after the service. We also did an Easter Egg hunt for the Food Pantry kids on Monday night.

In January, we had 17 new members join the church and had a welcoming brunch after that service.

We started a plea for help with food donations for the month of February and “Souper Bowl Sunday”. We gave you 3 weeks to come up with 1000 items in money donations or actual canned/boxed goods. Pastor Blaine decided that if we hit the mark, then he would be slimed. Well, we blew that goal out of the water times 4. Bethany people are so amazing in their giving. So, then the first

Sunday in March, Pastor Blaine was so ready to be slimed and you all did a great job, even if the slime was a little more solid than we wanted. Cool air can change items state of matter. Thanks to Mrs. Julie, for making the slime. It was a magical time had by all.

The last weekend of February was the youth’s 30-hour Famine. They eat lunch on Friday and then don’t eat again until Saturday evening. The youth and some adults stay the night at the church and do all kinds of crazy activities. Bridgett had a full schedule for things the kids asked to do. It is always a fun time for them to be together to eat and break their fast with some yummy food provided by our members of the congregation.



This church has so many things going on and we need you ALL to be a part of it. We have so many committees and teams, if you would like to volunteer for any event or join any of our committees/teams, please let Pastor Blaine know. When we all work together, we can accomplish many things and we have over the years. Keep up the good work of volunteering and doing your part when we ask for help. You all are so amazing. Give yourselves a pat on the back. THANK YOU!!!

“YOU ARE AMAZING, YOU ARE IMPORTANT, YOU ARE SPECIAL, YOU ARE UNIQUE, YOU ARE PRECIOUS, YOU ARE LOVED.” -unknown

“You are an original, an individual, a masterpiece, celebrate that; don’t let your uniqueness make you shy. Don’t be someone other than the wonder you are. Every star is important to the sky.”
-Douglas Pagels





Finance Update by Jane Elkins

There's so much to be thankful for. The bills are paid, nothing major is broken and there's money in the bank. Our budget for 2024 is just over \$226,000 so we need to take in just about that amount. The first quarter of the year is over and we are behind \$11,317.79, 16.3%.

We do a great job of managing our expenses and had a mild winter, so we are not in bad shape at all, but we do need to be mindful of where we stand. Attendance varies week to week, but also season to season. The amount of giving varies according to attendance, but it doesn't have to be that way. Consider giving online. You may be out of town, but your financial support can continue. Please check out the website or contact Cindy for information or help on setting up your giving online.

One other practical piece of advice that doesn't apply to everyone, but if it works for you, it can save you money. If you are 70 ½ years of age or older and are taking a distribution from an IRA or SEP, you can make a Qualified Charitable Distribution. Normally you pay taxes on IRA distributions, but when the money is paid directly to a charity, it tax free. Your IRA service provider will know how to handle this. Check with me if you aren't familiar with this.

Bethany does a great job of providing financial support for all kinds of activities many of which fall outside of the budget. We donated food and raised \$3,000 for the food

April 21, 2024 - Week 16		
Budget	226,345.00	
Where We Should Be		69,259.36
Where We Are		57941.57
Deficit of		(11,317.79)
Net Percentage		-16.3%

pantry, supported families with Food Lion gift cards, donated candy for Easter Eggs, bought flowers for Easter, supported the 30 hour Famine, contributed to the Pastor's Discretionary Fund and other activities. Thank you for your generosity, not only your hard earned money but your many hours of selfless service and dedication.

Friends of Barnabas

Due to an uncertainty in team leadership when this year's trips were being planned, there is not a team traveling to Honduras from this area. On the positive side, Pastor Blaine and Gary Lucas have joined another team, and will be traveling to Honduras in September. The team must raise \$11,500 to cover supplies, and we would appreciate Bethany's help. Checks can be made to Bethany UMC and put FOBF in the memo line. Or you can go to <https://www.mightycause.com/story/September2024>. This is a direct link to the team funds. Thanks for your support.

WE CAN DO THIS!!! FOOD WITH INTEGRITY. COMMUNITY STARTS HERE. TASTE: MADE WITH FRESH. GOODNIP. TIP: EVER. GENEROUS. CAN CHANGE. HELPING. THING DAY. FOOD.

DO GOOD WITH CHIPOTLE

CHIPOTLE FUNDRAISER FOR
VALLEY PASTORAL COUNSELING CENTER
25% OF EVENT SALES GET DONATED TO THE CAUSE

SATURDAY, MAY 4TH | 4-8PM
1960 ROSSER AVE, WAYNESBORO, VA, 22980

ORDER ONLINE FOR PICKUP USING CODE **V99CYKY**
OR SHOW THIS FLYER IN RESTAURANT

For online orders to count towards the fundraiser, they must be placed for pickup only from the restaurant location of, and during the hours of, the fundraiser. Delivery orders and gift cards do not qualify. \$150 minimum event sales required to receive any donation.



CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

Children's Church

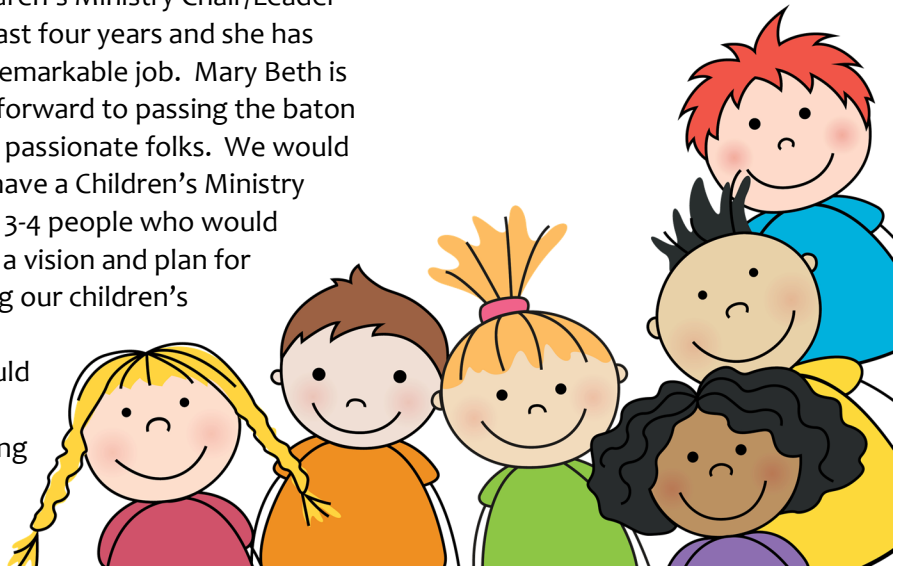
As many of you know, we give our Children's Church teachers a well deserved summer off, so they can have time to rest and rejuvenate. We are so grateful for our Children's Church teachers! This summer as they rest, we would like to continue providing a Children's church type experience for our kiddos. In order to make this happen, we will need NEW and willing teachers who could sign up for a week or two or maybe even a few over the summer. The first part of the time is going to be spent on shorter and more hands-on lessons that will be provided to our teachers, and then the second half will be supervised outside time for our kids to play and to enjoy the summer season. Beginning May 5th there will be a weekly sign-up in the Narthex for folks to sign up weekly to lead over the summer. Please consider offering

your time on a Sunday morning to provide a safe and Christ-centered opportunity to share with our Bethany children.

Children's Ministry Chair Needed!

Mary Beth Hill has served faithfully as our Children's Ministry Chair/Leader for the last four years and she has done a remarkable job. Mary Beth is looking forward to passing the baton to other passionate folks. We would love to have a Children's Ministry Team of 3-4 people who would develop a vision and plan for nurturing our children's faith. This would include organizing and

facilitating Children's Church leaders during the school year as well as planning occasional extra children's activities during the year. If you have a heart for children and a heart for playing a pivotal role in the life of our children at Bethany UMC and our community, then please reach out to Pastor Blaine.



Honoring Our Graduates

Sunday, May 19 will be Graduate Sunday.

We look forward to recognizing our high school and college graduates and celebrating with them at a reception immediately after the service.

We don't want to miss anyone, so if you have a graduate in your family to be included, PLEASE contact the church office at 540-234-8880 or office.bethany@gmail.com.

Caring Cards

will meet on Tuesday, May 14 at 10 am at the church. All are invited to join them on any Tuesday as they fellowship together while writing cards and notes of encouragement to members.

Men's Donuts & Devotions

will meet on Saturday, May 18 at 8 am at the church.

Young at Hearts

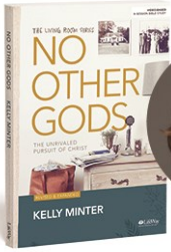
will meet on Tuesday, May 7 at 12 noon at Thomas House in Dayton for their monthly luncheon. If you are 55, or older, and still "Young at Heart" you are invited to join this fun group!





May 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2 National Day of PRAYER	3 happy friendship day	4 2-4 pm - Fellowship Hall Reserved
5 Throw kindness around like confetti	6 4-5:30 pm - Food Pantry	7 12 pm - Young at Hearts (Thomas Dayton) 7:30 pm - Softball Game	8 	9 9:30 am - 12 pm Coffee Hours 	10	11
12 Mothers DAY	13 4-5:30 pm - Food Pantry 7:30 pm - Softball Game 	14 10 am - Caring Cards	15 WE RISE BY LIFTING OTHERS	16	17	18 8 am DONUTS & DEVOTIONS
19 Meet our GRADUATES Pentecost Sunday	20 4-5:30 pm - Food Pantry 6:30 pm - Softball Game June Newsletter Articles Due!	21 6:30 pm - Softball Game 	22	23 3:30 - 5 pm - Coffee Hours 	24	25 be silly. be honest. be kind.
26	27 NO FOOD PANTRY Office Closed! MEMORIAL DAY	28 8:30 pm - Softball Game 	29 8:30 pm - Softball Game 	30	31 volunteers plant seeds of love that help countless hearts to grow. 	



KELLY MINTER

NO OTHER GODS

8-SESSION BIBLE STUDY

Ladies Summer Bible Study

No Other Gods, by Kelly Minter, will be offered this summer. We will meet at the church on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 pm, beginning June 20. Come and explore what our modern-day idols might be. We hope you will join us. A sign-up sheet will be coming soon. Questions? Talk to Barbara Somers or Becky McCarty.



May

- 2nd Katherine Dornon
Harrison Dornon
- 6th Stanley Houff
Camden Huffer
- 9th Pat Lynn
- 10th Mark Dunsmore
- 11th Karie Dornon
- 15th Brian Shifflett
- 17th Gary Lucas
- 22nd Layla Unger
- 23rd Zac Hittie
- 26th Jay Frizzelle
- 28th Tom Thacker
- 30th Isaiah Bentley (Gibson)

June

- 3rd Becky Hawkins
- 5th Bettina Ruleman
Pastor Blaine
- 7th Lucy Huffer
- 9th Jac Bridges
- 15th Terri Shifflett
- 18th Jonathan Northrop
- 20th Maggie Huffer
- 23rd Jim Miller
- 26th Dianna Eicher
Mae Houff
- 28th Dave Williams
- 30th Pete Richards

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



Prayer List

Members

Phil & Ruth Ann Mikesell, Libby Riddle, Laura Hittie & family, Eddie Lynn, Carolyn Swartz, Tom Gorden, Laura Lucas

Extended Members

Carl - brother of Gary Ruleman,
Layla - niece of Charlotte Sauffley,
Maria - friend of Lorna Frizzelle
Neese Spitzer - uncle of Barbara Long
family of Katie Williams Fox - daughter of
Dave & Elizabeth Williams
family of Jon Roller - son of Randy &
Annie Roller

Office Hours



Our office hours have changed! Cindy will **ONLY** be in the office on Wednesdays from 9 am - 3:30 pm. She will be working from home on Mondays and Thursdays from 9 am - 3 pm. You can reach her by the church email (office.bethany@gmail.com) or by her mobile number (540-820-5604) at any time during those hours. Pastor Blaine will be in the office on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. He can be reached through his email address (blaineoliver-thomas@vaumc.org) or by mobile phone (850-508-7245).

Bethany United Methodist Church

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www.mybethanyumc.org



"The Echo"

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Blaine Oliver-Thomas, Pastor

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Dale Roller, Music Leader

Bridgett Crawford, Youth Leader

Cindy Kite, Secretary/Treasurer

Danny Perry, Sexton

June Newsletter Deadline: May 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