

THE CHALLENGE

Bethlehem United Methodist Church

Volume 8

Issue 7

December 2020

From the Pastor's Desk

Once again we find ourselves in the darkest time of the year where daylight is short and the darkness falls early. We put on the lights, pull the curtains and light the fire, shutting out the cold and the darkness. Yet, for Christians it is at this darkest time of year that we celebrate the coming of Jesus and the light that He brings into the world.

Perhaps this year, as never before, we need the message that into the darkness of our days, in our lives, and especially into our world, a Light has already come. Our God comes to us helpless and vulnerable and enters the human drama to show us His love, hope, peace and joy.

During Advent we have the opportunity to gather together as the Body of Christ to encourage one another, to rest in prayer and in the comfort of God's Word. We have the opportunity to receive God's eternal gifts, to grow in our faith and trust in Him, and to share with the world God's great act of salvation in Christ Jesus.

May we enter the holy seasons of Advent and Christmas and also enter 2021 with a renewed commitment to tell the story of God's redeeming love and to bring someone who only sees the darkness into the Light of Christ. For one day, we will see Him return to bring to fruition the final plans of His Father. Until that day, may we forever be looking with the eyes of our hearts to see how we can serve in His name.

And for each of you, I pray that the light of Christ will shine for you this Christmas - leading, guiding and guarding you and your family.

"For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." Luke 2:11

Peace and Goodwill to all.

*Merry Christmas,
Pastor Debra, Jackie and Don*



**Our Mission at Bethlehem UMC
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.**

Pastor

Rev. Debra Short
704-604-1128 (9AM-8PM, M-Th, Sun.)
Revshort@aol.com

Administrative Assistant

Robin Bunton
336-674-0155
bethumclimax@gmail.com

Youth Director

Reba Lamb
336-953-7376

Choir Director

Pingyi (Lesley) Song
304-435-7501

Organist

Jane Reddick

Pianist

Laura Cranfill

Child Care Director

Erica Shanahan
336-674-9879

Custodian

Ovido Sorbito

Webmaster

Debbie Brady



Join us on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/214541575234325/?ref=share>

Visit our Website at

bethlehemumc.org

WORSHIP MINISTRY

Join Us for WORSHIP 10:00am

Advent/Christmas Sermon Series

DID YOU KNOW?

- Nov. 29 John the Baptist - Did You Know?
Dec. 6 Joseph - Did You Know?
Dec. 13 Mary - Did You Know?
Dec. 20 Herod the Great -
Why *Didn't* You Know?
Dec. 24 Do You Know?
Dec. 27 **Andrew Coward Preaching**
Church - REALLY?
-

POSTPONED

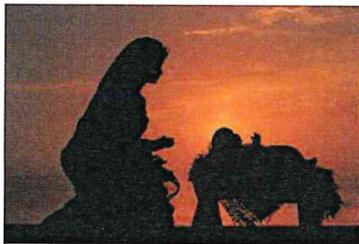
Indoor Worship

Stay tuned for when we will worship indoors

PLEASE read the information mailed to all members so you are informed as to what to expect and what is required. LIMIT 41 inside Fellowship Hall
Drive-In Worship and live stream will still be available options for those who do not feel comfortable coming inside.



Christmas Eve Worship



Bring your family and celebrate the birth of our Lord, Jesus Christ as we gather at 6:00pm Christmas Eve.

Holy Communion will be celebrated.



CHILDREN/ FAMILY MINISTRY

LIVE NATIVITY DRIVE-THROUGH

SATURDAY DEC 19

6:00-8:00 PM

YOUTH LINK

For information on youth events, please contact Reba Lamb, Youth Director at rebaelamb@yahoo.com or call her at 336-953-7376.

PRAYER MINISTRY

Our Prayer Concerns:

Ongoing

Vicky Alexander
Martha Boren
Suzie Branch
Edna Coble
Jane Dunham
Ronda Faggart
Cory Fields

Melba Fulghum (Lee Ann Curtis' mom)

Kelsey Garrett
Nancy Golden
Ruby Hockett
Clyde Land
Jamie O'Daniel
Bobby Tew
Our Homebound

Immediate

Rev. Ed Armfield (retired minister from Burnett's Chapel)

James Brownsfield (friend of Marjorie Mabe)

Evelyn Churchill

Fred Cook

Jackie Cook

Elaine Flinchum (Gene Flinchum's mom)

Betty Hull

Wayne & Ruby Kirkman

Marjorie Mabe

Lucille McClintock (hip surgery)

Mildred Moser

Dicky Parks

Paul Routh (our computer/tech person)

Tony Royal and Family

Sandy Russell (friend of Londa Parks)

Preston Ryan (acquaintance of Cindy Franklin)

Francis Snow

Bobbie Westmoreland (Linda Duncan's cousin)

Julia Willis

Military

Randall Shaver (Sherri Bowman's son)

OTHER MINISTRY

FOR YOUR BAKING NEEDS! Arlene Stokes Circle has a limited supply of the following – Pecans (\$10/pound) and flavoring (\$3.50/bottle), call Shirley Hackett (336) 676 – 0485 or Phyllis Wicker (336) 685 – 9322, and for persimmon pulp (\$7/pint), call Cindy Fields at (336) 674 – 6858. Happy Baking!

CLAPPS ANGELS' TREE – For many years, Arlene Stokes United Methodist Women, and many of you, have participated in Clapps Angel Tree. Through support from the community, staff at Clapps ensures that every resident receives at least one Christmas gift. Some of the residents have no family or friends to visit them. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, our supporting this program has to be handled differently. If you would like to again participate and support this program, please send your personal check to: Clapps Nursing Center, Inc., Attention: Kelli Amick, 5229 Appomattox Road, Pleasant Garden, NC 27313. Write on memo/for line: Angel Tree
Thank you in advance for supporting this outreach.

CHRISTMAS POST OFFICE & FOOD PANTRY Once again our Christmas Post Office will be in operation from November 28 – December 18. Simply place/collect your cards on the table at the front of the Arbor. It will be helpful if you will bring them under rubber bands to prevent them being blown around by the wind and alphabetized by last name (it's cold out here!). We urge you not to include anything valuable in the cards because of their location and also because any unclaimed cards will be destroyed on January 4. We will be wearing masks and gloves as we sort and file them so remember to use your best Covid measures as you deliver and collect them.

Also, if you would like to make a food donation to our food pantry as we usually do at this time of year, place your donations on the altar behind the table. Donations of peanut butter and oatmeal would also be greatly appreciated for the Greensboro Urban Ministry. Merry Christmas and stay safe!

MISSION TEAM has Christmas Honor Cards for purchase, \$5/per card. All proceeds go to Urban Ministries. If you would like to purchase, please call Phyllis Dahl at (336)312-5273.



OTHER NEWS & EVENTS

POSTPONED

Indoor MEETINGS

Per the Bishop and Governor, no more than 10 for inside gatherings at least thru Dec.4th
Therefore, there will be no meetings or groups inside until further notice.



FROM THE CHURCH OFFICE

WOW! It's hard to believe it is already December and we are about to celebrate Christmas. Where did the year go? Here is some information from the church office concerning upcoming events.

The planning, as well as the advertisement of events are affected by Covid 19 protocols, so your understanding is greatly appreciated. Some events may be planned on short notice because committees have waited to see if Covid 19 guidelines have changed. We all want to make sure everyone stays safe. The church office will continue to keep you updated via phone trees, emails, and mailings on church events.

Regarding phone trees...the church office endeavors to keep the phone tree calling list(s) up-to-date. However, omissions and mistakes still happen. Please contact the church office if you want to be added, you want a different telephone number listed, or if you want to be removed from the phone tree list(s). At times the phone tree may not leave a message on your voicemail. This is usually due to the number of rings programmed on the voicemail. If this is happening to you, please check the instructions/directions on your voicemail setup to find out recommended number of rings for receiving phone tree calls.

December Dates to Remember...

- Wed., 12/2 Walking Group (times vary)
Youth Bible Study (6:30PM)
Child Care Board (7PM)
- Fri., 12/4 Latest Executive Order
From Governor Expires
- Sat., 12/5 Coble Center Luminaries (6-8PM)
- Sun., 12/6 **2nd Sunday/Advent**
Drive-in Worship (10AM)
UMYF (5:30PM)

- Mon., 12/7 Walking Group (times vary)
- Wed., 12/9 Walking Group (times vary)
Youth Bible Study (6:30PM)
- **Sun., 12/13 3rd Sunday/Advent**
Drive-in Worship (10AM)
UMYF (5:30PM)
- Mon., 12/14 Walking Group (times vary)
- Wed., 12/16 Helen Grady Apps **Due 4PM**
Walking Group (times vary)
Youth Bible Study (6:30PM)
- Fri., 12/18 Christmas Card **Post Office Ends**
- Sat., 12/19 Drive Thru Live Nativity (6-8PM)
- **Sun., 12/20 4th Sunday/Advent**
Drive-in Worship (10AM)
UMYF (5:30PM)
- Mon., 12/21 **Winter Begins**
NEWSLETTER DEADLINE (Jan/Feb)
Walking Group (times vary)
- Wed., 12/23 Walking Group (times vary)
Youth Bible Study (6:30PM)
- Thurs., 12/24 **Christmas Eve**
Robin /Vacation Day
Christmas Eve Service (6PM)
- Fri., 12/25 **Christmas Day**
CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED
- **Sun., 12/27 1st Sun. after Christmas Day**
Drive-in Worship (10AM)
UMYF (5:30PM)
- Mon., 12/28 Walking Group (times vary)
- Wed., 12/30 Walking Group (times vary)
Youth Bible Study (6:30PM)
- Thurs., 12/31 **New Year's Eve**
Robin/Vacation Day



THE CHURCH OFFICE Will Be CLOSED
December 24th and 31st

Happy New Year! 🎉 *Happy New Year!* 🎉

HELEN GRADY ENDOWMENT FUND –has approximately \$2,000.00 available for disbursement. Any group, committee, or individual that would like to apply for this money may do so by submitting a **Request for Funds Application**. **This form is available from the church office and must be returned to the church office before 4 PM, Wednesday, December 16.** (Forms also available for pickup from the Lil Library located outside of the church office entrance.)

Pastor Debra will be taking vacation time
December 26th – January 2nd
Please call her, should you have a pastoral emergency.



Contacting the Pastor During Normal Weeks

Should you need to reach the Pastor, please call either the church office or her cell phone, 704-604-1128. If she does not answer, please leave a message and she will return your call.

Please be respectful of her family time and call only between the hours of 9:00am – 8:00pm M-Th, Sun.

However, should there be an emergency, please do not hesitate to call her at any time, day or night.

Pastor Debra's day off is typically Friday and her Sabbath is Friday evening - Saturday 4:00pm



Merry Christmas & Happy New Year

From the Staff at Bethlehem UMC

Robin Bunton

Laura Cranfill Reba Lamb

Jane Reddick Lesley Song

Pastor Debra

Happy New Year! 🎉 *Happy New Year!* 🎉

NEW CHRISTMAS TRADITION

Beginning December 1st,
Read one chapter of
The Book of Luke in the Bible
each evening.

There are 24 chapters.
On Christmas Eve you will have read
an entire account of Jesus's Life
and wake up Christmas Morning
Knowing WHO and WHY
We Celebrate!!

Bethlehem Child Care Center

NOW ENROLLING

Infant thru 12 years
Mon. – Fri., 7AM – 6PM
Call (336) 674 – 9879

or



Email **bethchild@gmail.com** for information

HAPPENING IN OUR COMMUNITY

THE COBLE CENTER luminary program is scheduled for December 5 from 6-8 pm at Hagan Stone Park. You can remember someone you love with a \$5.00 luminary for each name and the proceeds will help support our programs at the Coble Center. Print off a form from our website www.coblecenter.org or our Facebook page. Mail the list of your names to P.O. Box 223, Pleasant Garden or call Mike Jackson at 336-323-1127. You are welcome to drive by and see our display on Saturday evening, December 5.



BIRTHDAYS

DECEMBER		JANUARY	
12/5	Gene Flinchum	1/1	Stephanie Garrett
12/9	Cory Fields	1/3	Clark Hinshaw
	Luke Hinshaw		Lois Snow
12/10	Holley Wicker	1/5	Dottie Tew
12/11	Erin Edwards	1/6	Phyllis Wicker
	Dawn White	1/7	Sharon Welborn
12/11	Charles Wells	1/7	Kimberly Garrett
12/13	Wayne Alley	1/8	Sally Sipes
	Karon Monnett	1/10	Todd Garrett
12/15	Jerry Berry	1/12	Sara Kauzlick
	Jerry Monnett		Bryson Windsor
12/17	Nelle Haywood	1/14	Ronnie Grimes
	Jane Chamelin		Stacy McClintock
12/19	Grant Allen		Beth Pulliam
12/21	David Fields	1/15	Eddie Sipes
12/23	Braylynn Adams	1/16	Jimmie Jones
	Leigh Garrett		Krista Neelley
12/26	Amber Cook	1/17	Garrett Nance
	Cindy Franklin	1/18	Melanie Robb
	Leah Fields	1/21	Alice Jones
12/27	Joy Cranfill		Lisa Taylor
	Logan Royal	1/22	Pat Waugh
12/28	Cindy Duncan	1/23	Lindsey Fields
	Lydia Key		Linda Grimes
12/29	Marjorie Mabe	1/24	Angie Routh
12/30	Andrew Coward		Jane Snead
12/31	David Allen	1/25	Betty Hull
		1/29	Judy Norris
		1/31	Sharon Goad



MEMORIALS & HONORARIUMS

Acknowledgement: Since the last newsletter publication, the following gifts have been made in memory/honor as listed. BUMC gratefully acknowledges each gift received.

MEMORIALS

In Memory of **Jack Bowman**
By Arlene Stokes Circle
By Byron & Phyllis Dahl
By Carol Fields
By Jerry & Karon Monnett
By Jane Snead

In Memory of **Brad Fields**
By Byron & Phyllis Dahl
By Patricia Taylor

In Memory **Robbie Monnett**
By Jerry & Karon Monnett

In Memory of **Jerry D. Pugh**
By Randy Pugh

In Memory of **Clem Royal**
By Margaret Royal

In Memory of **A.C. Weatherly**
By Jerry & Karon Monnett

In Memory of **Bette Weatherly**
By Byron & Phyllis Dahl
By Jerry & Karon Monnett
By Dicky & Evonne Parks

In Memory of **Betty Wilkins**
By Byron & Phyllis Dahl
By Dicky & Evonne Parks
By Margaret Royal

HONORARIUMS

In Honor of **Security Team**
By David & Laura Cranfill

In Honor of **Rev. Debra Short**
By David & Laura Cranfill

In Honor of **Kylie Spencer**
By David & Laura Cranfill

Gifts received after the newsletter deadline will be listed in the next issue.

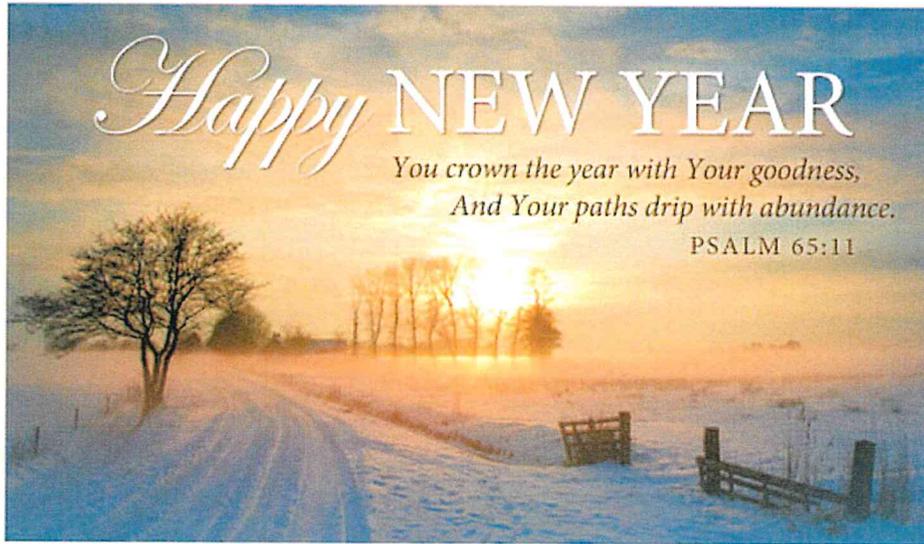
Looking Ahead

January 10th **Baptism of the Lord Sunday**
February 14th **Transfiguration Sunday**
WED. February 17th **Ash Wednesday**



A Prayer for Hope After A Hard Year

By Debbie McDaniel



God, Thank you for helping us to make it through this difficult year. Thank you that you've carried us through the uncertainty of deep waters, through the flames of trials, and through the pain of hard losses. We are constantly aware of how much we need you, your grace, your strength, your power working through even the toughest days.

Help us to keep our focus first on you this season. Please forgive us for giving too much time and attention to other things, for looking to other people before coming to you first. Help us to reflect again, on what Christmas is really all about. Thank you that you came to give new life, peace, hope, and joy. Thank you that your power is made perfect in our weakness.

Help us to remember that the gift of Christ, Immanuel, is our greatest treasure, not just at Christmas, but for the whole year through. Fill us with your joy and the peace of your Spirit. Direct our hearts and minds towards you. Thank you for your reminder that both in seasons of celebration and in seasons of brokenness, you're still with us. For you never leave us. Thank you for your daily powerful Presence in our lives, that we can be assured your heart is towards us, your eyes are over us, and your ears are open to our prayers. Thank you that you surround us with favor as with a shield, and we are safe in your care.

We choose to press in close to you today, and keep you first in our hearts and lives. Without you we would surely fail, but with you, there is great hope. Thank you for your healing power, thank you for bringing us into this new season up ahead. We look forward to all that You still have in store. In Jesus' name, Amen.



STEWARDSHIP REPORT

Budget Results for October 2020

\$368,320.05 Total Budget Money Available October 1, 2020

30,420.60 Money Received in October

- 34,616.98 Money Spent in October

\$364,123.67 Total Budget Money Available October 31, 2020

For the month of October, 2020, the Church Budget spent \$4,196.38 more than it received. For the year, the Church Budget received \$25,665.48 more than it spent.

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.

\$30,857.61 Total MM&RF Money Available October 31, 2020

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	Bible Study Books	\$ <72.67>
Food Pantry	\$ 1,964.60	Handbells	\$ 160.52
Discretionary Fund	\$ 5,252.29	Scholarship-Religion Ed	\$ 1,983.22
Records & History	\$ 581.56	Missions-Undesignated	\$ 15,958.32
UMYF	\$21,533.97	Christmas Shoeboxes	\$ 302.85
Family Ministries	\$ 462.40	Cemetery Fund	\$ 24,814.39
Helen Grady Endow.	\$ 800.00	Cemetery/Columbarium	\$ 3,144.05
Flowers	\$ 136.75	Arbor Fund	\$ 935.37
Camp Meeting Fund	\$ <700.16>	Choir Fund	\$ 1,004.46
Pastor Appreciation	\$ 405.00	PPP	\$ <4,569.50>

Total Other Designated Gift Money Available October 31, 2020 \$74,879.30

\$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 October 17, 2016 by the Church Council and is no longer taking donations.

\$53,207.74 **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

Bethlehem United Methodist Church
P.O. Box 56/6103 Appomattox Road
Climax, NC 27233

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

MERRY CHRISTMAS

The True Meaning Of Christmas

In todays' day and time,
it's easy to lose sight,
of the true meaning of Christmas
and one special night.

When we go shopping,
We say "How much will it cost?"
Then the true meaning of Christmas,
Somehow becomes lost.

Amidst the tinsel, glitter
And ribbons of gold,
We forget about the child,
born on a night so cold.

The children look for Santa
In his big, red sleigh
Never thinking of the child
Whose bed was made of hay.

In reality,
When we look into the night sky,
We don't see a sleigh
But a star, burning bright and high.

A faithful reminder,
Of that night so long ago,
And of the child we call Jesus,
Whose love, the world would know.

~ Written by Brian K. Walters