

BETHLEHEM UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH BEACON FEBRUARY 2024

WE LOVE  
BECAUSE HE FIRST  
LOVED US

PITTSBURGH PA 150

2 FEB 2024 PM 3 L

BETHLEHEM UNTIED  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
45 CHAPEL ROAD-BETHLEHEM  
WHEELING, WV 26003-4815



26003-263977



## SESSION MEETING

NOVEMBER 27, 2023

An informal meeting of the Session of the Bethlehem United Presbyterian Church (PCUSA) was held on Sunday, November 27, 2023 in the Church library. The moderator was not present.

Bill Syphers opened the meeting with prayer at 7:00 PM.  
It was determined that a quorum was present.

ELDERS PRESENT: Eydie Garvin, Sue Johnson, Bob Mengeu, Bill Syphers, Bob Young, Jody Werner

TREASURER'S REPORT: The Treasurer's reports for October 2023 were reviewed and placed on file.

MINUTES: Minutes of the October 22, 2023 Session meeting were presented for review. Someone moved to accept, someone else seconded, and the motion passed.

### COMMITTEE REPORTS: OUR OFFERING TO GOD THROUGH SERVICE

ADMINISTRATION/FINANCE: Eydie Garvin

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS: Bob Mengeu

1. Bob reported that the trees have been trimmed, completing the job that was started in the fall.
2. The speakers in the Sanctuary have been adjusted and two new speakers are on order.
3. The new microphone has been in use and is working well.

BY-LAWS: Committee is not active at this time.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION: Sue Johnson

1. Sue continues to insert things into *The Beacon*. Will have something for Advent.

MEMBERSHIP: Bill Syphers

MISSION/OUTREACH: Bill Syphers

1. Bill motioned to donate \$1000.00 to Wheeling Healthright. The motion passed.

NOMINATING: Committee is not active.

PARISH LIFE: Jody Werner

1. There will be "Carols and Cocoa" on December 10 at the Church. Students from Bethlehem Elementary and Ritchie Middle Schools will be participating.
2. Epiphany will be on January 7, 2024.

WORSHIP: Bob Young

1. Bob reported that there was no pulpit supply available for Christmas Eve. The service will be a hymn sing with the Elders doing readings.

### CORRESPONDENCE:

1. Ed Thurmond



**CHURCH RECORDS:**

Communion:	October 22, 2023	22__
Home Communion:		<u>0</u>
New members, Baptism, Deaths		None

**OLD BUSINESS:** none

**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. Session approved the budget for 2024
2. Bill Syphers was elected Clerk of Session for 2024
3. Eydie Garvin was elected Treasurer for 2024
4. Communion dates will be whenever we have an ordained pastor scheduled for pulpit supply.
5. The idea of purchasing and installing a new marquee for the front lawn was discussed with no decision being made.
6. The Session discussed the calling of an interim pastor, or permanent pulpit supply. It was decided to continue with the week-by-week pulpit supply and not have an interim pastor at this time.

**ADJOURNMENT AND CLOSING PRAYER:** Bill closed the meeting with prayer at 8:05 PM. The date for the next regular Session Meeting is January 22, 2024 in the Church library.



## WORSHIP SERVICE

at 10:45 A.M. Communion when we have a  
/ Presbyterian, Lutheran, or Episcopal Minister.

Church Phone & Fax: 304-242-4407

Email: [secretary@bupcwheeling.org](mailto:secretary@bupcwheeling.org)

===Church Staff===

Music Director & Organist ~ Cliff Elliott

Custodian & Grounds Keeper ~ Dan Burns

Treasurer ~ Eydie Garvin

Secretary ~ Sue Lane Johnson



## Leaning on God's Love

Try leaning on God's everlasting love  
In crisis or in soothing calm;  
He'll be our source of strength in weakness,  
And our healing balm.  
The Holy Word states God's our refuge  
Like a lighthouse beam pointing the way,  
Leading us to lush, green pastures  
And a sun-filled, golden day.  
So lean upon the love of God  
And on His promises too;  
You'll never be left stranded –  
In faith God will steer you through.  
Please never feel that nobody cares for you  
Because that simply isn't true;  
Our Heavenly Father is just a whisper away –  
Humbly kneel to say a prayer or two.  
As you speak to Him you're soon to feel  
A peace rising within your heart.  
Leaning upon the love and mercy of God –  
What a way, each day, to start!

Linda C. Grazulis

February 2024

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
JANUARY S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	MARCH S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31				Groundhog Day	
10:45 a.m. Worship Service				8:00 a.m. Men's Breakfast		
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
10:45 a.m. Worship Service			Valentine's Day Ash Wednesday		NEW	
11	12	13	(No Service)	14	15	16
10:45 a.m. Worship Service Deacon's Mtg.	Presidents' Day			8:00 a.m. Men's Breakfast		
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
10:45 a.m. Worship Service				Leap Day		FULL
25	1 p.m. Session 26	27	28	29		



**A RECORD of SERVICE ~ MINISTERS of B U P C:**

1950 – 1951	W. D. Lewis
1951 – 1953	John E. Neff
1954 – 1958	Raymond F. Kent
1959 – 1968	Robert M. Sheehan
1969 – 1973	John E. Karnes
1974 – 1979	Peter Schlichting
1979 – 1986	Andrew H. Gerhart
1986 – 1999	Homer D. Harden
1999 - 2000	David Knapp
2000 – 2001	Cindy Foster
2001 – 2010	David Lawrence
2010 - 2012	James Gear
2012 – 9/30/2018	Philip Keevil
01/06/2019 – 09/30/2020	Mary Jane Knapp
10/01/2020 – 06/30/2023	John Edward Harris

We were discussing previous ministers at coffee hour, so thought I would print a list.

Just a little update regarding how we are functioning without a minister – Worship Chairman, Bob Young believes he has his phone permanently attached to his ear, calling to fill the pulpit!

One of our best services was masterminded by Eydie and Jody for Christmas Eve. It was a service of Scripture and Christmas hymns with the added skill of Alyssa Mengeu and her flute, and concluding with Silent Night and candlelight.

Even when it's short notice, we know we will have ideas, readers and back-up from the faithful few.

Haven't ask the Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) lately how they are progressing. I'll do that for another time.





4<sup>TH</sup> DAN BURNS  
 8<sup>TH</sup> ALLYSON CONRAD  
 10<sup>TH</sup> GARY TIMMONS  
 11<sup>TH</sup> OLIVIA CHARLTON  
 13<sup>TH</sup> DON HINTON  
 15<sup>TH</sup> BOBBY GUY  
 JESSAMINE SCHMIDT  
 19<sup>TH</sup> DOROTHY WERBECKI  
 DOROTHY WILL BE 103 YEARS OLD!!

\*\*\* LET'S HAVE A CARD SHOWER: \*\*\*

DOROTHY WERBECKI  
 CONTINUOUS CARE - ROOM 248  
 236 HULLIHEN PLACE ~ MEDICAL PARK  
 WHEELING, WV 26003

## IN OUR HEARTS and PRAYERS

### General, Long-term, and Special Health Concerns

Dorothy Werbecki, health concerns  
 MaBelle Sligar, health concerns  
 Rev. Homer Harden, health concerns  
 Sara Farley (Helen Roberts' daughter), health concerns  
 Joellen McNeil, health concerns  
 Nancy Elliott, health concerns  
 Carolyn Dye, health concerns  
 Wayne Cunningham, health concerns  
 Gretchen Cunningham, health concerns  
 David Waites, health concerns  
 Camden Brown, eye/health concerns  
 Carolyn Clutter Johnson, health concerns  
**Beckie Habak, health concerns**  
 John Adams, health concerns  
**John Habak, care giver**  
 Nancy K. Mumley, health concerns

*"Love is not a  
 thought, though  
 we think about  
 love—a lot. It is  
 not an emotion.  
 Emotion is how  
 we experience love,*

*but it is not love itself, just as  
 the scent of a rose is not the  
 rose. Love is a state of being."*

*EDWARD GRINNAN, author*

## *Be Thankful for Each Other*

Be thankful for each other,  
 Every single day you live,  
 Yes, thankful unto God for  
 The dear loved ones that He gives.  
 We have our disagreements  
 And differences, quite true;  
 Oh, but all such things aside,  
 We're very similar, too.  
 Life passes much too quickly;  
 It's a gift from God to share.  
 Please make sure your loved ones know  
 How much you love them and care.

Steven Michael Schumacher

### NURSING HOME & RETIREMENT HOME

Dorothy Werbecki, Continuous Care Center, Room 248,  
 236 Hullihen Place, Medical Park, Wheeling, WV 26003  
 Peggy Foster, Good Shepherd Nursing Home,  
 159 Edington Lane, Wheeling, WV 26003  
 MaBelle Sligar, Good Shepherd Nursing Home, Room 347B,  
 159 Edington Lane, Wheeling, WV 26003  
 Craig Garvin, Peterson Healthcare & Rehab Center,  
 20 Homestead Avenue, Wheeling, WV 26003  
 Tom Hostutler, Moundsville Healthcare Center, Room 307,  
 2200 Floral Avenue, Moundsville, WV 26041



# SAMUEL ALPHABETICS

JANUARY PUZZLE



Find these answers in the first two chapters of 1 Samuel (KJV).

<u>A P P E A R</u>	Samuel was to ____ before the Lord, 1 Samuel 1:22.
<u>B E L I A L</u>	Hannah was not a handmaid of ____, 1 Samuel 1:16.
<u>C O A T</u>	Each year Samuel's mother made him a ____, 1 Samuel 2:19.
<u>D R U N K</u>	Eli thought the women was ____, 1 Samuel 1:13.
<u>E L K A N A H</u>	Samuel's father's name.
<u>F L O U R</u>	Samuel's mother took an ephah of ____ along, 1 Samuel 1:24.
<u>G R A N T</u>	Eli said God would ____ her petition, 1 Samuel 1:17.
<u>H A N N A H</u>	Samuel's mother's name.
<u>I N C E N S E</u>	What was burned in 1 Samuel 2:28.
<u>J U D G E</u>	The judge shall ____ him, 1 Samuel 2:25.
<u>K I C K</u>	Wherefore ____ ye at my sacrifice... 1 Samuel 2:29.
<u>L I N E N</u>	The material in Samuel's ephod, 1 Samuel 2:18.

ANSWERS :

<u>M O V E</u>	Eli saw her lips ____, 1 Samuel 1:13.
<u>N O</u>	Nay, my sons; for it is ____ good report... 1 Samuel 2:24.
<u>O F F E R</u>	Samuel's mother came to ____ the sacrifice, 1 Samuel 2:19.
<u>P E N I N N A H</u>	The father's other wife's name, 1 Samuel 1:2.
<u>R A M A H</u>	Where their house was, 1 Samuel 1:19.
<u>S H I L O H</u>	Where the family went to worship, 1 Samuel 1:3.
<u>J E N</u>	Am I not better to thee than ____ sons? 1 Samuel 1:8.
<u>U P</u>	And they rose ____ in the morning... 1 Samuel 1:19.
<u>V O W</u>	The woman made a ____ to the Lord, 1 Samuel 1:11.
<u>W O M B . .</u>	What the Lord had shut up, 1 Samuel 1:6.
<u>E X A L T E D</u>	"Mine horn is ____ in the Lord," 1 Samuel 2:1.
<u>Y E A R L Y</u>	How often the father went to sacrifice, 1 Samuel 1:3.

## RELATIONSHIPS

Match the correct relationships with the names given

1. Adam	____ Husband of Jezebel
2. Timothy	____ Wife of Uriah
3. Moses	____ Son of Ruth
4. Ahab	____ Father of Cain
5. Benjamin	____ Daughter-in-law of Jesse
6. Naomi	____ Brother of Peter
7. Orpah	____ Grandfather of Manasseh
8. Zebedee	____ Grandson of Lois
9. Martha	____ Father of Joshua
10. Bathsheba	____ Sister-in-law of Ruth

11. Andrew
12. Laban
13. Jacob
14. Abigail
15. Dinah
16. Aaron
17. Nun
18. Boaz
19. Eunice
20. Obed

- \_\_\_\_ Aunt of Ephraim
- \_\_\_\_ Great-grandfather of David
- \_\_\_\_ Sister of Lazarus
- \_\_\_\_ Mother of Timothy
- \_\_\_\_ Son of Rachel
- \_\_\_\_ Father-in-law of Jacob
- \_\_\_\_ Father of James and John
- \_\_\_\_ Mother-in-law of Ruth
- \_\_\_\_ Uncle of Gershom
- \_\_\_\_ Son-in-law of Jethro

FEBRUARY PUZZLE



FROM THE "VOICE of the MARTYRS" (VOM), they are begging us to get involved by PRAYING: Praise God for faithful witness of our Christian brothers and sisters in India who have faced increasing hostility and violence! Pray for their strength and endurance as they work to advance the Gospel. Pray that God will replace their fear with His peace and they will know they are loved and prayed for by the global body of Christ! Of course "vom.org" will accept any monetary help for Christians in India who have suffered persecution or whose family members have been imprisoned or killed because of their Christian witness. Also VOM will help equip front-line workers with Bibles and ministry tools they need for discipleship and outreach.

India has escalated from a "hostile area" to RESTRICTED NATION", due to prime minister (PM) Narendra Modi who was elected in 2014 and re-elected in 2019. His leadership has advanced not a law, but an ideology called Hindutva or Hindu purity, that has resulted in persecution of Christians. Hindu nationalism is promoted chiefly by a right-wing paramilitary organization called Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). Founded in 1925, RSS promoted – often violently – the "purity" of India as a Hindu nation. Though banned a number of times for heinous crimes, the affiliated political party, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), had by 1990's gained significant political clout in India government. . .

Modi became an RSS member at 8 years old and 1987 joined BJP, leading to election as chief minister of Gujarat state in 2001. US government denied Modi visa to US in 2005 because of his role in the 2002 Gujarat riots. He openly condoned riots where over 1,000, mostly Muslims, were killed. BUT, because of India's value as trade partner, Modi's travel privileges to US were reinstated, despite continued persecution as cited in reports from US Commission of International Religion Freedom (USCIRF). Since 2014 election of PM, RAA membership has increased 20%. When VOM Vice President for International Ministry, Aaron Miller lived in India, Christians would show him photos of RSS camps with youth wearing RSS uniforms that began as a few, then increased, growing nationwide.

Three primary tactics of RSS and other groups to persecute Christians: Legal opposition through anti-conversion laws that criminalize changing religions; mob behavior with groups of Hindu radicals attacking churches, pastors and congregants; and organized, planned attacks against Christians. Evidence of these tactics was confirmed by an RSS training manual VOM obtained. Manual included instructions on undermining and attacking the work of Churches as well as suggestion of poisoning Christians water supply. One most chilling recommended tactic was sexually assaulting daughters of pastors who refused to stop their work!

During Modi's first term as PM, Christian charities with Western ties or receiving foreign funds, came under scrutiny. In three year period, 6,600 charities were denied to receive foreign funding by India, including US-based Child-development ministry Compassion International! Regardless of their explanation, was step toward purging nation of anything not Hindu. Two



years after Modi's 2019 re-election, Mother Theresa's Missionaries of Charity was refused permission to accept foreign funding due to a falsified allegation.

Christians in India are experiencing similar type surveillance to that seen in communist nations, especially with informants. Hindu nationalism has even incorporated into country's public school curriculum. (Sounds like the communist attempts to take over our beloved USA!) Additionally radical Hindu groups are resorting to ground campaigns. September 2023, a subgroup of RSS called Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) announced nationwide campaign to "re-energize" society on "Hindu dharma" (Hindu moral and religious law). The VHP plans to recruit "dharma yoddhas", or religious warriors to monitor what THEY consider anti-Hindu activities, including conversion from Hindu to another religion. Also how individuals are to be converted, forcibly, back to Hindu. Christians in India know what this all means. The word "warrior" implies violence.

While India's constitution includes laws to protect religious freedoms, their enforcement is difficult when the nation's leader is RSS member and proponent of Hindu nationalism. As a result Christians are arrested for dubious crimes like communal disharmony. January 1, 2023, a pastor was enjoying fellowship in his home with 20 Christians when large group Hindus showed up and began beating the Christians. Next day another group vandalized several churches, overwhelming police who were powerless to stop them. Eleven pastors arrested and charged with disrupting communal harmony. When lawyers arrived, someone at the hotel informed police and the lawyers were forced to leave. One social-media video brought to VOM's attention shows a Hindu threatening a Christian man, telling him he cannot distribute his literature nor allow other Christians to visit his home—all the time the Hindu menacingly waves a bamboo stick at the Christian.

While all Christian pastors in India are now at risk of persecution, that hasn't stopped their faithful witness. Front-line workers are preparing them for persecution, training them in how to respond if accused and arrested. Some pastors arrested, are embracing their time in prison as a ministry opportunity. Even if Modi and BJP are ousted from power in an election in April or May, no new government can undo the pervasiveness of Hindu nationalism. Still our Christian brother and sisters in India are willing to pay the price to proclaim the saving grace of the Gospel and VOM remains committed to supporting them. VOM is responding to persecution by helping Christians who lost jobs/homes, or suffered bodily harm in violent attacks. They also provide encouragement assuring persecuted believers they are remembered and PRAYED for by the global body of Christ. In 1967, VOM founder Richard Wurmbrand wrote, "The message I bring from the Underground Church is: "Give us the tools we need! We will pay the price for using them!"

*IN THIS MONTH OF "LOVE", WHAT BETTER WAY TO SHOW LOVE TO OUR FELLOW CHRISTIANS THAN PRAYING FOR THEM?*





### FOR MORE LOVE

*Father, as I draw near to Thee in prayer, I  
am aware of the poverty of my love for Thee.*

*I have often given my heart to unworthy causes.  
I have loved money and sought my security in it.  
I have loved comfort and ease.  
I have loved power and influence over others.*

*How strange it is that of all the things we  
humans love, our Lord, who is love and goodness  
and grace, should Himself receive so little love.*

*Yet I cannot manufacture the love I should  
bear Thee, even as I have not manufactured the  
love I feel for others. Thou art the giver  
of love. Except Thou bestow it, I cannot have it.*

*And so, my Father, wilt Thou give me the  
gift of love? Then I shall love Thee, and  
loving Thee, shall love other men—and compassion  
shall rise within me, warm and sweet.*

*But I ask not merely to love those easy to  
love. Help me to love those who are hard to live  
with. Give me a concern for the needs of others,  
not on the basis of barter or exchange—not love  
given for love received—but love given to the  
unlovely for Christ's sake.*

*Then shall my love partake of Thine, who dares  
to own me still. In the name of Him who is the  
King of Love.*

*Amen*

By Peter Marshall

