



The Bethany Messenger

369 Broad Street, Montoursville, PA 17754 570-368-8933

Office Hours: Monday – Thursday 9:00 am–2:00pm

Staff

Ministers: All God’s People
Pastor: Rev. James Bartlett, STS
Organist: Mary Paulhamus
Sexton: Deborah Harman
Secretary: Hope Harrington

Sunday Services

9:00 am Holy Communion
10:15 am Coffee / Fellowship
10:30 am Sunday School

Website: www.bethanylutheran.faith
Email: secyBethanyNALC@gmail.com

Emergency Pastoral Care:
Rev. James Bartlett
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Prayer Chain:
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570-368-2282



Deadline for submission
of material for the Bethany
Messenger is 9 a.m. the 15th of each
month.



Welcome to the season of Advent! At this time in the church year, we anticipate the arrival of Jesus, our Savior and King. This is a time when we can celebrate and reflect on the hope, peace, love, and joy that we find through Christ.

Advent means “the arrival of a notable person, thing, or event.” For us, as Christians, Advent is a four-week season that begins the new church year and is a time when we anticipate the event of Jesus ‘s birth and the ministry that will follow.

While we continue to wait for the advent of his return, we spend this season anticipating with joy the celebration of our Messiah’s birth. The scripture lessons for these four weeks will point to that birth, with the fourth week reading, and hearing, the Magnificat, or Mary’s Song of Praise to the Lord. There Mary sings of how God delights in exulting the poor and the humble, while at the same time humbling the rich and the proud.

(continued on next page)

(From the Pastor's Desk, continued...)

This past season of Lent we used an evening prayer setting that was loved so much that it was requested that we also do this during Advent. So, we will be using Holden Evening Prayer for our midweek Advent prayer services. The Magnificat is used in all of our evening prayer services, however, in this setting the Annunciation and Magnificat are especially appropriate for this time of year. Each week we will hear the Archangel Gabriel announce to Mary that she will be the mother of the Messiah and we will hear her wonderful response, sung to God with praise and gratitude for the gift that He will bring into the world through her.



I know this is a busy time of year for everyone as we prepare for Christmas Day and our family gatherings. I want to take a moment, here, to encourage you to come in for evening prayer during Advent and join us in prayer and praise in anticipation of our Savior's birth. "May God, Creator, bless us and keep us, may Christ be ever light for our lives, may the Spirit of love be our guide and path for all of our days. Amen.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor James

Advent Service-Holden Evening Prayer Schedule

December 4th – 8:00pm

December 11th – 8:00pm

December 18th – 8:00pm



PRAYING FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

Len & Kathy Hinton – Matthew Sharrow – Peter Beguhl – Lori Clauseen – Dennis Smith – Josh Kunig – Larry Conly – Mary Way – Deb Starks – Chris & Dawn Inch – Baby Shady – Marty Gatz & Family – Barb Sherry – Eugene & Marian Harris – Kevin Taylor – Julie Griffiths – Marjorie Fantaskey – Joan Swartz – Margaret Ryan – Biddie & Michael – Louise & Jim – Fay & Harold Sausser – Colleen Davidson – Lou & Emily Bassler – Ann & Tim Long – Evelyn Seaman – Peggy Shultz – Eileen Lauchle – Bebe Bolich – Dave Shipton – Revl. Ray Forsythe & Nancy Forsythe – Pastor Mike Tavella – Dorothy Lee – Kenny Beguht – Family of Roger Heintzleman – Family of Miriam Logan – Kuuipo Tom – Marian Mott – Faye Benedict

Bethany's Mission Statement: Matthew 28:19-20

Go therefore 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 observe all that I have commanded you!

Please pray this prayer daily

Prayer For Spiritual Renewal

Oh, loving Lord. We know You and accept You as Lord and Savior. So, we come to You seeking a fresh, new perspective, not to throw away past lessons but for Your spirit to rebuild and breathe new life into our faith. Show us how to do this. Let us open ourselves completely to Your voice. The voice that tells us God is love and in Christ all things are new. Renew us and restore us in Christ name. Amen

DONATIONS NEEDED

Once again, we are asking for donations for some needed work on our property. We are looking for \$3,000 toward temporary leak repairs to the roof of the education building as well as leaks above the entrance at the glass doors by the elevator. We also have a rough estimate of \$5,000 to fill in the abandoned cesspools under the parking lot. The depth of the cesspools is unknown, so the estimate is assuming they are 8 ft deep. If they are deeper, the price would be higher. If you are willing to contribute to this work, please mark your contribution either "Roof Repairs" or "Cesspools Filling". Thank you!

REMEMBERING THOSE WHO ARE AT HOME



Names and addresses of our homebound members have been redacted for the web version of the newsletter.





PUBLIC OUTRAGE
THE TRUTH ABOUT
THE MURDER OF
P'NUT
THE SQUIRREL

The Death of a Squirrel

*The iconic internet meme

What it is: A pet squirrel named P'nut and his raccoon roommate Fred were seized and euthanized by the New York State government.

Why it's weird: A man named Mark Longo rescued P'Nut after the animal's mother was killed in a car accident. Longo decided to raise him as his own, despite it being illegal to keep pet squirrels and raccoons indoors in the state of New York. Longo wasn't the squirrel's only fan—P'Nut had over 3 million social media followers. News traveled far and wide that the animals had been confiscated, and people were pretty upset. To some observers, the raid of Longo's rural home seemed like an example of government overreach, and it has fueled conversations about what role the government should play in the lives of its citizens.

Continue the conversation:

As Christians, is breaking the law ever morally justifiable? Why or why not?

Well Versed

What it is: Survey data from the American Bible Society (ABS) suggests that Gen Z is the least likely of all living generations to engage regularly with Scripture.

What it has to do with mental health: Anxiety and depression are complicated, deeply personal issues with a wide array of contributing factors. With that being said, the ABS has found a correlation between engaging with the Bible and having lower anxiety levels. This correlation exists among all Americans, but is especially evident among Gen Z, according to the survey. Young people who identified as "Bible Engaged" had an anxiety score of 3.4, while people in that same group who identified as "Bible Disengaged" had an anxiety score of 7.4. This data is drawn from a small sample size, but it does identify the Bible as an enduring source of comfort, hope, and light for a generation who is hurting.

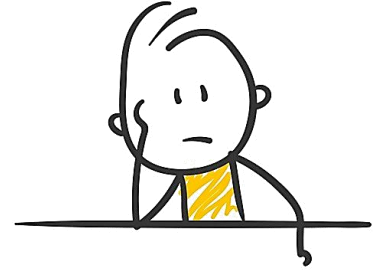
Continue the conversation:

How does reading the Bible make you feel?

(another AXIS article)

Big Boredom

What it is: A recent perspective published in *Communications Psychology* combined a decade of survey responses from US and Chinese students to make the argument that rising boredom rates are connected to increased digital media use.



Why it could make sense: Most of us (including our teens) reach for a digital device when we feel boredom creeping in. We might logically assume that the near-constant stimulation we receive from our devices would reduce our experience of boredom—but the truth might be the opposite. Analysis and discussion based on ten years’ worth of data suggests that while boredom might drive us towards digital media, it isn’t *actually* satisfied by it. Many users find themselves in a loop where the perceived solution to restlessness and boredom actually amplifies those uncomfortable feelings. In other words, the “thirst” of boredom leads us to the “water” of digital media, but the water is salty.

Let's translate this one further...

Many modern men and women have become accustomed to immediately attempting to cover their feelings of boredom with social media, video games, streaming, or any number of other digital pacifiers. But [boredom](#) also can drive us to action, inspire us to try new things, and encourage us to explore new hobbies and interests.

So, if boredom is sometimes a good thing, and this data shows that it’s becoming more common, wouldn’t that also be a good thing? Well, it might be—if we let our boredom direct us toward healthy solutions. Instead, we so very often let our boredom drive us into things that *feel* like they help, but actually *make it worse*. Instead of listening to the deeper call underneath our boredom, we simply *distract* ourselves and believe that we fixed it.

As we disciple the teens in our lives, we need to highlight that what they might define as “boredom” is actually an important part of their faith journey. John Mark Comer [argues](#) that distraction is one of the greatest threats to our spiritual health—and when we turn to the Bible, we see he has a point.

Consistently throughout scripture, God meets with people who seek Him in silence and solitude—things modern teens (and adults) avoid with alarming regularity. The prophet Elijah [waits](#) until after the noise passes to hear God’s voice. David in [Psalm 62](#) highlights the connection between hearing God and silencing our souls. Jesus himself prioritized finding space to be in solitude to pray.

1 Kings 19:9-14 ESV

⁹ There he came to a cave and lodged in it. And behold, the word of the Lord came to him, and he said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" ¹⁰ He said, "I have been very jealous for the Lord, the God of hosts. For the people of Israel have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword, and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away." ¹¹ And he said, "Go out and stand on the mount before the Lord." And behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind tore the mountains and broke in pieces the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. And after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. ¹² And after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire the sound of a low whisper. ¹³ And when Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his cloak and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. And behold, there came a voice to him and said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" ¹⁴ He said, "I have been very jealous for the Lord, the God of hosts. For the people of Israel have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword, and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away."

Psalm 62 To the choirmaster: according to Jeduthun. A Psalm of David. ESV

¹ For God alone my soul waits in silence;
from him comes my salvation.

² He alone is my rock and my salvation,
my fortress; I shall not be greatly shaken.

³ How long will all of you attack a man
to batter him,
like a leaning wall, a tottering fence?

⁴ They only plan to thrust him down from his high position.
They take pleasure in falsehood.

They bless with their mouths,
but inwardly they curse. *Selah*

⁵ For God alone, O my soul, wait in silence,
for my hope is from him.

⁶ He only is my rock and my salvation,
my fortress; I shall not be shaken.

⁷ On God rests my salvation and my glory;
my mighty rock, my refuge is God.

⁸ Trust in him at all times, O people;
pour out your heart before him;
God is a refuge for us. *Selah*

⁹ Those of low estate are but a breath;
those of high estate are a delusion;



"For God alone, O my soul,
wait in silence,
for my hope is from him.
He only is my rock and my
salvation,
my fortress; I shall not be
shaken."

Psalm 62:5-6



in the balances they go up;
they are together lighter than a breath.
¹⁰ Put no trust in extortion;
set no vain hopes on robbery;
if riches increase, set not your heart on them.

¹¹ Once God has spoken;
twice have I heard this:
that power belongs to God,
¹² and that to you, O Lord, belongs steadfast love.

For you will render to a man
according to his work.

Our teens (and we ourselves) can learn a lot from these examples. Maybe the next time our teens have some down-time, we can encourage them to lean into boredom, to take a break from the distractions of digital media, and to seek God; and maybe the next time we have some down-time, we can try the same thing.

Continue the conversation:

- Do you feel bored a lot? What does it feel like?
- How do you normally deal with your boredom?
- When was the last time you were alone and without your phone or any other device?



ennui

/än'wē/

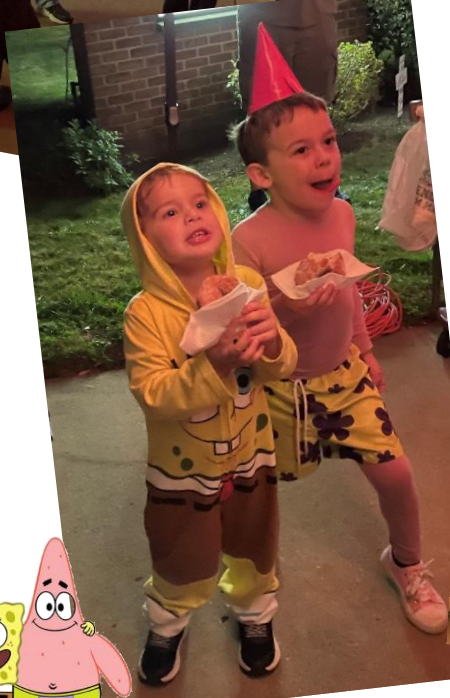
Originally a French word, we adopted “ennui” in English as the name for a particular feeling of boredom, characterized by weariness and dissatisfaction.

Event Recap...



TRICK or TREAT

October 31st, 2024



NALC
North American Lutheran Church





BYLD is a week-long event for high school students that focuses on leadership skills, theological education and discernment all from the perspective of the NALC Four Core Values.

BYLD will take place July 7–12, 2025 at Geneva College, only 14 miles from the North American Lutheran Seminary (NALS). The cost for students is \$100 and their transportation to PA (a travel subsidy is available for those coming from further away).

Bethany Lutheran will provide transportation and cover the cost of the week for any who attends. **Spaces are limited**, so make sure to register quickly! If any of our youth are interested in this opportunity, please be in contact with Pastor James as soon as possible.

MINISTRY HIGHLIGHTS



The **Helping Hands Ministry** is a group of many talented individuals who volunteer their time and talents to serve others who are in need. We recognize that some members of the congregation may need help with household tasks, simple repairs, and transportation. Some volunteers are also able to relieve caregivers for short periods of time to allow the caregiver to leave to run errands and have some time to relax.

These are small tasks or quick fixes, not major projects or renovations. Please consider joining this ministry. The areas of need we would like to assist with are:

- General Maintenance (changing filters, lightbulbs, batteries, moving air conditioners)
- Plumbing
- Electrical
- Door & Lock
- Minor Carpentry
- HVAC
- Relieving Caregivers/Sitting with Members
- Cleaning
- Yard Maintenance
 - Transportation

Women of Bethany

The Women of Bethany will be meeting on **December 2nd at 1:00pm**. We are packing boxes for the shut-ins with cookies and treats. Kathie Snauffer will have devotions and refreshments.

We are also compiling a list of people who are willing to help with serving and/or preparing food for funeral luncheons. Many families have stopped gathering, but it is important to be together at those times. If you can help with this ministry, please **call (570-368-2282)** or email Gail Stover at stover1104@gmail.com.

MESSAGES AND GRATITUDE

Annual Reports are due January 15. Just a reminder to all ministry chair, persons that annual reports (the yearly activity reports) are due in the church office by January 15. Thank you to everyone for your hard work and dedication to our ministry!

Thank you! Thank you to everyone who helped to set up the crèche in anticipation for the Advent and Christmas seasons. Your hard work and preparation give our community a visual representation and reminder of the real reason for the season!

Tureen luncheon: Our next tureen luncheon will be on Sunday, December 15. After the luncheon, we will watch the movie The Polar Express. This would be a great time for children, adults, and families to gather, enjoying food and fellowship in the spirit of the season.

Thank you! Thank you to the Bethany Quilting Ministry, Barb Winchester, Jean Wentz, Denise Bergenstock, Carol Miller, Gloria Goodspeed, & Lorene Guillaume for the gift of the beautiful quilt on the 1st anniversary of my installation at Bethany!

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

Mark your calendar, these events are open for all to participate

Special Advent Luncheon: Everyone is invited to a special Advent Luncheon we are holding on **December 8th at 12:00pm**. Everything will be provided. Please sign up on the sheet outside of the church office by **December 4th** so we are able to get a headcount for attendance.

Tureen Luncheon Schedule

All Lunches will take place at 12:00pm

❖ Sunday, December 15, 2024

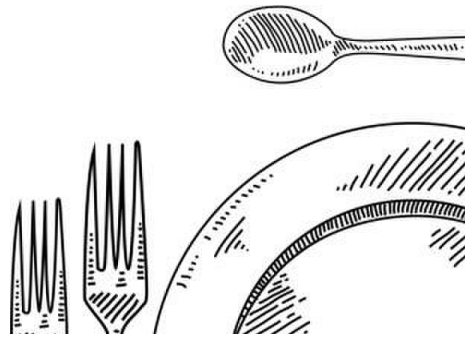
❖ Sunday, January 19, 2025

❖ Sunday, February 16, 2025

❖ Sunday, March 16, 2025

❖ Sunday, April 27, 2025

❖ Sunday, May 18, 2025



Please remember to bring your own table setting

Cookie Crawl: We will be participating in the Cookie Crawl on **December 13th & 14th**. Cookie donations will be accepted and should be dropped off prior to that date.



Christmas Caroling will take place on **December 22nd, 2024, at 2:00pm**. More details to follow. All are welcome!

Bible Study: Will take place every 2nd and 4th week of each month on **Wednesday at 12:00pm** and on **Thursday at 6:00pm** in the fellowship hall.

Harvest Home: It's Harvest Home time again. Time to give thanks for the many blessings God has provided. You may bring cash or nonperishable items (*regular sized cans only, please*) to service on **November 24th**. Cash and canned goods will be given to the Food Pantry.

Donations Needed: Once again, we are asking for donations for some needed work on our property. We are looking for \$3,000 toward temporary leak repairs to the roof of the education building as well as leaks above the entrance at the glass doors by the elevator. We also have a rough estimate of \$5,000 to fill in the abandoned cesspools under the parking lot. The depth of the cesspools is unknown, so the estimate is assuming they are 8 ft deep. If they are deeper, the price would be higher. If you are willing to contribute to this work, please mark your contribution either "Roof Repairs" or "Cesspools Filling". Thank you!

Quilting (Donations Needed): Now that all the past year's quilts have been sent on their way it's time to talk turkey (*some Thanksgiving humor*). We will soon be broke. When we get our 2 machines cleaned and serviced, we will be out of money in our quilt fund. Please consider helping to rebuild our funds. Even \$1, \$5 or \$10 every now and then by many adds up quickly. Donations to the office need marked "QUILT FUND" or given to Barb Winchester. Thanks for helping us help others.



Disaster Relief: Donations for disaster relief will be accepted in the church office at any time. Donations and funds received will be sent to NALC Disaster Response. Please make checks out to Bethany Lutheran Church with "Disaster Fund" on the memo.



SIGHT & SOUND™

Trip – Show – Dinner

Tuesday May 6th, 2025

Departure time: TBD (early morning)

Ticket Price: \$185.00 ea.

Includes Bus, Dinner, and cost of ticket



Reservation forms available outside of the church office

Can a small change in your daily habits impact your entire 2025?

Absolutely! One of easiest resolutions you can commit to is K-LOVE's 30-Day Challenge. Simply listen to K-LOVE for 30 days and see what impact it can have on your life. Whether you're new to K-LOVE or taking the challenge for the tenth time, all are welcome to join. Even if you're already listening to K-LOVE each day, you can sign up. AND it's never too late to make the commitment. Surround yourself with the talk and music on K-LOVE that will help you focus on God...music like HITS DEEP artist TobyMac. Listen now to K-LOVE by downloading the mobile app or on the online player.



88.1 FM – Williamsport, reaches Muncy, Hughesville, Warrensville, Cogan Station, and Jersey Shore

95.9 FM – Bloomsburg, reaches Montoursville, Muncy, Hughesville, Unityville, Red Rock, Benton, Nanicoke, Berwick, Mount Carmel, Shamokin, Milton, Mifflinburg, Sunbury, Selinsgrove, and Port Treverton



Altar Flowers for
December 2024



December 1 – Connie Willard

December 8 – Barb Winchester

December 15 – Jean Beard

December 22 – Pastor & Jennifer Bartlett

December 24 – Wentz Family

December 29 – *Poinsettias*

Volunteers will be contacted 2 weeks prior to their scheduled Sunday. If any changes need to be made, please call the church office. Thank you!

Ministry Volunteers for December



Lock-Up Schedule:

12/1/24	Philip Oechler
12/8/24	Denice Palmeter
12/15/24	William Bagwell
12/22/24	Thomas Gower
12/29/24	David Grube

Altar Ministry:

December	<i>Volunteers needed</i>
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Communion Ministry:

December	Tim & Brenda Logan
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Greeting Card Ministry:

December	Ann Long
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Worship Participants:

Sunday	Lay Reader	Communion Assistants	Ushers	Altar Flowers
12/1/24	Phil Riggs	Phil Riggs, Tracy Rhian	Michael Stover, Gail Stover	Connie Willard
12/8/24	Beverly Brown	Barb Pentz, Barb Winchester	Deb Harman, Fred Paulhamus, Beverly Brown, Michael Brouse	Barb Winchester
12/15/24	Arlene Klepper	Arlene Klepper, Tracy Rhian	Philip Oechler, Gary Oechler	Vonnie Hawley
12/22/24	Michael Brouse	Yvonne Sechler, Karen Paulhamus	Michael Brouse, Richard Hillegas, Mark Whitmoyer	Pastor & Jennifer Bartlett
12/24/24	Michael Stover	Michael Stover, Gail Stover	Tracy Rhian, Earla Gower	Wentz Family
12/29/24	Gregory Dwulet	Barb Pentz, Dennis Smith	Michael Stover, Gail Stover	<i>Poinsettias</i>

Thank you for all you do in service to our Lord!

Would you be willing to acolyte, read the lessons, greet people as they come to church, help distribute Holy Communion, set up for communion, change the paraments, or send greeting cards? We are looking for more volunteers to assist with weekly worship. If you feel the Holy Spirit calling you to join in the worship ministry of Bethany, please contact Deb Harman or the church office.

We are also asking that you search your hearts and discover that you would like to take communion to our homebound members. This is something that is easy to do and you will get to visit with people you may not have seen in a while. If the Spirit is nudging you to take this step and share the sacrament with our members at home, please contact Flip Oechler or Pastor James.

Thank you for taking the time to discern where God is calling you to serve in our ministry!



Sunday December 1 Advent 1

9:00am - Holy Communion 10:15am - Coffee/Fellowship 10:30am - Sunday School

Annual Congregation Meeting to follow worship service

Tue. Dec. 3 9:00am – Quilters

Wed. Dec. 4 6:00pm – Dinner at Pudgie’s

7:00pm – Bell Choir

8:00pm – Advent Evening Prayer

8:30pm – Chancel Choir

Sunday December 8 Advent 2

9:00am - Holy Communion 10:15am - Coffee/Fellowship 10:30am - Sunday School

Mon. Dec. 9 7:00pm – Church Council

Tue. Dec. 10 9:00am – Quilters

Wed. Dec. 11 12:00pm – Bible Study

6:00pm – Dinner at Pudgie’s

7:00pm – Bell Choir

8:00pm – Advent Evening Prayer

8:30pm – Chancel Choir

Thur. Dec. 12 6:00pm – Bible Study

Sunday December 15 Advent 3

9:00am - Holy Communion 10:15am - Coffee/Fellowship 10:30am - Sunday School

Newsletter Items Due

Tue. Dec. 17 9:00am – Quilters

Wed. Dec. 18 6:00pm – Dinner at Pudgie’s

7:00pm – Bell Choir

8:00pm – Advent Evening Prayer

8:30pm – Chancel Choir

Sunday December 22 Advent 4

9:00am - Holy Communion 10:15am - Coffee/Fellowship 10:30am - Sunday School

2:00pm - Christmas Caroling

Tue. Dec. 24 6:30 – Special Music

7:00pm - Christmas Eve Service

Wed. Dec. 25 ***Officed Closed Christmas Day***

Thur. Dec. 26 ***Office Closed*** Sunday December 29 Holy Family

9:00am - Holy Communion 10:15am - Coffee/Fellowship 10:30am - Sunday School

Tue. Dec. 31 ***Secretary Out of Office***

Wed. Jan. 1 ***New Years Day Secretary Out of Office***

