

Bethany
Presbyterian
Church

Sharing, Caring,
Believing, Doing

The Church Mouse



Bethany Presbyterian Church

**January
2024**

Volume 27,
Issue 1

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Stewardship Update

STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN UPDATE:

As of December 15, 2023, we have 100 pledges with \$250,633 pledged. We need your support! If you have not yet filled out your estimate of giving card please do so. If you did not receive an estimate of giving card, please call the church office at 663-3000.

2024 PER CAPITA

2024 Per Capita is 36.85 per Active Member (\$22.95 to Presbytery of GV, \$4.10 to Synod of the Northeast, and \$9.80 to General Assembly). You may mail your per capita to Bethany noting on your envelope what it is for. Please consider sending an additional \$36.85 that will cover the costs for a Member (in Nursing Homes, away at school, etc.) that may not be able to! Per Capita provides the means to strengthen the connections of our work, and build lasting relationships to help all Presbyterians share God's love through mission and ministry!

What is Per Capita?



PER CAPITA APPORTIONMENT

Every church is apportioned a share of the expenses of the presbytery, the synod, and the General Assembly for ecclesiastical purposes. The apportionment is based on church membership. The amount varies with the needs of the presbytery, synod, and General Assembly, and is a regular expense payable by this church at the spring meeting of presbytery. The amount to be paid this year per communicant member is \$36.85.

Bethany Mission Statement

We are a welcoming Christian family who worships God and nurtures spiritual growth through friendship, learning, music and serving others.

Special points of interest:

- Stephen Ministry
- Shipmates
- Church Calendar
- Presbyterian Women and insert
- Jennifer's Closet
- Advent Celebration

**Deadline for the
February
Newsletter is on
January 15, 2024**

Pastor's Page:

Dear Friends,

People become more aware of their past and more hopeful about their future at the beginning of a new year. We have a tendency to reflect on our past, regret our mistakes, contemplate the future and make resolutions.

Louisa Fletcher Tarkington wrote a poem entitled, "The Land of Beginning Again."

I wish there were some wonderful place
Called the land of beginning again
Where all our mistakes,
And all our heartaches,
And all of our poor selfish grief,
Could be dropped like a shabby
Old coat at the door,
And never be put on again.

There is something about the past that troubles us, even if it's nothing more than the nagging belief that we could have done better.

There's a country song that has a very sad line in it about the past: "It looks like looking back is all I have to look forward to."

As Christians we have hope for the future. The Bible is filled with the idea of beginning life over again. It runs like a thread throughout the entire Bible.

God has set before us an open door. No one can close it. However, it is up to us, individually, to make the decision and effort to walk through it. Whatever loose ends may be lying out there in the past, God can help us gather them into new beginnings.

Let us begin this new year as new creations in Christ, delivered from our past and filled with hope for the future.

Wishing you a blessed New Year,

Dr. Bob Spratt

With Our People

With sympathy

Christian love and sympathy is extended to Joan Vogt at the passing of her sister-in-law, Rosemary Vogt.



LIFE GROUP: Would you like to be part of a new Life Group?! A Life Group is a small group of people who meet regularly to share food, fellowship, Bible or book study, and prayer. It is a wonderful way to connect with a smaller group and feel "at home." If you are interested in leading or joining a new Life Group at Bethany, please contact Carrie Buri at theburis@yahoo.com or (716)-390-8941.

I would like to thank everyone that sent cards to my sister-in-law Rosemary Vogt over the past 6 months. She fought very hard but lost her battle. She greatly appreciated all the prayers. Also thank for the many sympathy cards I have received. Bethany is a very caring church.
~ Joan Vogt

Fiscal Focus

| 2023 | November | Year to Date | % Budget |
|-----------------------|--------------|--------------|----------|
| Income | \$23,317.49 | \$326,886.67 | 68.94% |
| Expense | \$50,536.20 | \$418,796.02 | 88.33% |
| Surplus/ (Deficit) | -\$27,218.71 | -\$91,909.35 | |



Jennifer's Closet—Now Open—located in the basement at Bethany. By appointment only: Jennifersclosetny@gmail.com

Jennifer's Closet served 17 families in the first month of operation, this includes 3 families who just moved here from Haiti. With the help of 25 volunteers, we sorted donations, set up our storage and the sorting room, and established a website. <https://www.jennifersclosetny.com> (website). We would like to thank the following volunteers: Pam Auld Jan Banschach, Lisa Clement, Rick Clement, Pat and Ken Connor, Jim Cruppe, Karen Dobbins, Sandy Ericson, Ron Fisher, Cindy Hetzler, Jim Hetzler, Craig Johnson, Sue & Teresa Kredovic, Gail Kuhner, Heather Kruspe, Carolyn Ladieu, Cheri Livoti, Mary Leader, Jeff, Sue and Sarah Malak, Karen Mciver, Sally Phillips, Judy Price, Jennifer and Kurt Smith, Journey Spratt (website), Dr. Bob (rack assembler), Marie Watt, and Wendy Watt. Special thanks to Rick Clement for painting the clothing closet rooms and removing closet doors, and Jim Hetzler for removing the stage and ordering our banner.

Hours: Mondays and Thursdays from 9:30-noon. December 2nd Donations accepted and sorting party 10am-noon Stop by before going to the delicious Women's Luncheon!! We are currently accepting only children and teen clothing at this time (no shoes, boots, purses please). If you have holiday wear to donate, please include those in your donation. WE NEED PANTS HANGERS! Please donate to the shopping cart in the Clark Park Entrance. Contact: Brenda Spratt: (585)643-4170 and email: jennifersclosetny@gmail.com. You can now make monetary donations to Jennifer's Closet through the Community and Global Missions Committee. Make checks payable to Bethany Presbyterian Church and in the memo section write: Jennifer's Closet.



Stephen Ministry

The holidays have just passed and we still have that warm feeling of family and friends making our holiday complete. It's a wonderful time of the year. New goals and new memories. But there is also something we renew over and over at Christmas.

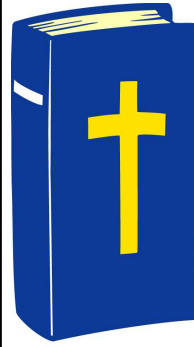
The most significant reason of our Christmas season is the birth of our Lord, Jesus. As most parents do, I am sure Joseph and Mary wondered how their tiny son would live out his life and which roads he would take. They knew he was special, but there is no way they would understand or expect him to have the impact that he did on people all over the world. They had the gift to the world in their hands. They could not have comprehended what he would show us, and teach us with his kindness and love to all. He asked us to do the same so his story would continue.

A small statement puts it simply: "Always show more kindness than is necessary, because the person receiving it needs more than you will ever know". Jesus taught us that compassion is for every season. He expects us to demonstrate it to others. That is our agreement we made with him when he came into our hearts.

Bethany offers a group of Stephen Ministers to help you understand the kindness and love from our Lord when it does not feel as if it is present in our lives. Things can get overwhelming and maybe a couple of conversations with a Stephen Minister can guide you back to the comfort you need to deal with events that are troubling you. We are the trouble shooters! If you would like to speak with a Stephen Minister, please contact Dr. Bob or Wendy Watt.

Peace to you from the Stephen Ministers

Written by Cindi Sywulski



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



NEWS FROM THE CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE: We are thrilled to kick-off the New Year with a change in Christian Education at Bethany Presbyterian Church! Children are a gift from the Lord (Ps 127:3), and it is our privilege as a body to lead them to Christ. Here is some important information regarding this upcoming changes.

Beginning Sunday January 7, 2024 Christian Education will be meeting during worship service. As we launch this ministry, we plan to have one united class. As the Lord grows this ministry, we will adjust accordingly and add more classes for specific age groups.

After prolonged discussion and prayer it was decided to do Sunday School during our Sunday Worship Service. After worshipping together with the congregation, at around 10:15 AM (immediately after the Christian's Message) all kids attending Sunday school will be dismissed to go to their classes for an hour-long program, including a Bible lesson, craft, and music.

Schedule: 10:15 – 10:45 kids worship and Bible lesson
(this may include snacks and/or crafts)
10:45-11:15 music worship & rehearsal time
– parents can meet children

Bible lessons and crafts will be conducted by a scheduled rotation of volunteers and Karen McIver will oversee music with support from Kim Rudd.

We are so grateful for the music and teaching volunteers that will lead this ministry!

BARNARD FIRE DEPARTMENT: offers some free '10 Year Smoke Alarms', and can install them for those who aren't able to do it themselves. Call 663-1113 for an appointment for them to come to your house.

BETHANY WOMEN



BPWC believes that an environment grounded in Christian beliefs promotes the full growth and expression of the individual. Such an environment renews, strengthens, and empowers the individual to participate in the life and work of the church, the servant community of Jesus Christ in the world.

November Meeting: Speaker-Kristen Mathis, founder and CEO of Home Start Hope.

We learned that *Home Start Hope* is a 100% volunteer run organization that relies on donations. Their generosity makes it possible for Home Start Hope to continue this unique service. Generous donors provide household items, money, and talent which help neighbors in need move forward in their lives. These items are so much more than material goods alone. Kristen shared that it's about a new beginning, a sense of ownership and HOPE for a brighter future. When women do better, their kids do better and ultimately our community thrives.

Christmas Luncheon:

On Saturday, December 2nd, 35 women celebrated the beginning of the *Advent Season* at Bella Pasta Restaurant. We enjoyed a buffet of baked chicken, pulled pork, pasta, salt potatoes, salad, rolls, butter, and beverage. Brenda Spratt made a Christmas cake that was absolutely delicious. Gail Kuhner and Beth Thomsen made favors and centerpieces for each table. Gail also dressed as *Elf on a Shelf* which added to the festive atmosphere. Karen McIver led us in singing Christmas songs. We are grateful for the love and support of all the women at Bethany.





November Collection



Thanks for all the items collected
48 mens briefs and 71 women's



Confidential



Children's Christmas Program Potluck Luncheon and Cookie Decorating



January 2024

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|--|---|--|--|--|-----------|------------------------------------|
| | <i>1</i> New Year's Day | <i>2</i> 9:30-Belles & Beaux | <i>3</i> 11-Staff Meeting 7:30-Celebration Ringers | <i>4</i> 7:15-Bethany Choir | <i>5</i> | <i>6</i> 9-Men's Club Breakfast |
| <i>7</i> 10-Worship, Childcare, Roots & Wings 10:15-Youth Studies 11:15-Adult Bible Class | <i>8</i> 2-Pastoral Care Deacons 7-Life Group | <i>9</i> 9:30-Belles & Beaux | <i>10</i> 11-Staff Meeting 6-Christian Ed 6-Spiritual Growth 6:30-Worship&Music 7:30-Celebration Ringers | <i>11</i> 7:15-Bethany Choir | <i>12</i> | <i>13</i> |
| <i>14</i> 10-Worship, Childcare, Roots & Wings 10:15-Youth Studies 11:15-Adult Bible Class 12-Session | <i>15</i> 7-Life Group | <i>16</i> 9:30-Belles & Beaux 10-Presbyterian Women 10-Personnel Comm. | <i>17</i> 11-Staff Meeting 7-Budget & Finance 7:30-Celebration Ringers | <i>18</i> 7:15-Bethany Choir | <i>19</i> | <i>20</i> |
| <i>21</i> 10-Worship, Childcare, Roots & Wings 11:15-Youth Studies 11:15-Adult Bible Class | <i>22</i> 7-Stephen Ministry | <i>23</i> 9:30-Belles & Beaux | <i>24</i> 11-Staff Meeting 7:30-Celebration Ringers | <i>25</i> 12:30-Lunch & Learn 7:15-Bethany Choir | <i>26</i> | <i>27</i> |
| <i>28</i> 10-Worship, Childcare, Roots & Wings 11:15-Youth Studies 11:15-Adult Bible Class 12-Session | <i>29</i> 7-Life Group | <i>30</i> 9:30-Belles & Beaux | <i>31</i> 11-Staff Meeting 7:30-Celebration Ringers | | | |
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Bethany Presbyterian Church

Bethany Presbyterian Church
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Phone: 585-663-3000
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Change Service Requested
Mailed December 22, 2023

**We're on the
Web!**

Ministries Team

Head of Staff / Sr. Pastor

Dr. Bob Spratt

Music Ministry

Jacob Montgomery - Music Director
Jean Coniber - Bell Choir Director

Bookkeeper

Tom Olney

Treasurer

Patric Donaghue

Administrative Assistant & Mouse Editor

Eileen Sengillo

Custodian

Jim Cruppe
Jennifer Smith

Nursery Child Care Worker

Jennifer Watt

Youth & Children's Ministry Leader

Andrew Ferreira

The Session

Wendy Watt, Christian Education
Judy Price, Community & Global Miss.
Bev Murray, Nominating
Jim Hetzler, Personnel
Heather Kruspe, Spiritual Growth
Liz Whittingham, Worship & Music
Dr. Bob Spratt, Moderator
Linda Lamb, Clerk of Session



ISAIAH 60:1, NRSV