

THE CHALLENGE

Bethlehem Methodist Church

Volume 12

Issue 3

March 2024

From the Pastor's Desk

March: **Green**, leprechauns, rainbows, pots of gold, parades, St. Patrick's Day, pinching, ACC and NCAA Tournaments, winter is almost over, and (this year) Easter; these are the things that come to mind the fastest when thinking of March. How about you?

Of all these things, the first thing, oddly enough, that came to mind for me was '**green.**' **Green** is not my favorite color, even though it can be a beautiful color, and can be associated with many things, but it led me to think of *Psalm 23:2*: "He makes me lie down in **green** pastures, he leads me beside quiet (still) waters." The imagery of lying down, in peace, in the soft thick plentiful grass of God's pasture in which He has provided - this lush **green** grass provides such endless nourishment for health and strength. The Lord only knows the Peace we need and thankfully, He alone can offer that the world cannot. And then, God's nourishment for strength, wisdom, loving, caring, discipling... from the **green** grass to feed upon. Yet still, there are the quiet/still waters that we may drink our fill for nourishment, hydration, health...God is so God!

We are in a world that wants to be so self-efficient/self-reliant we lose sight and the opportunity for a deeper relationship with the Almighty, the All-Knowing, and All-present God our Father and our Creator who sustains through the Good Shepherd, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, that continuously draws us closer to Him. And as God offers, we must receive, we must accept the Peace, the Nourishment, and Love of God so we are able to experience life in God more fully and help others who desperately need it as we do.

I may not be able to understand fully why my mind went to leprechauns, but I am thankful I was led by the Holy Spirit to that beautiful '**Green.**' **I hope you will be too.**

We are not  lucky.

We are  Blessed.

God's Grace and Peace,

Pastor Joseph, III



**Bethlehem
Methodist Church**

Our Mission at Bethlehem Church 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

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Pianist

Laura Cranfill

Childcare Director

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Custodian

Ovido Sorbito

Webmaster

Kylie Russell



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Visit our Website at
bethlehemumc.org

STEWARDSHIP REPORT-January 2024

Budget – Revenues & Expenses

\$533,275.77 Total Budget's Fund Balance as of January 1, 2024,
+ 26,635.35 Money Received in January
- 43,429.62 Money Spent in January
\$516,481.50 Budget's Fund Balance as of January 31, 2024

For the month of January, 2024, the Church Budget spent \$16,794.27 more than it received.
For the year, the Church Budget spent \$16,794.27 more than it received.

Designated Gifts

Disaffiliation Loan Repayment—The church council voted unanimously on October 22, 2023, to borrow the money needed to pay our disaffiliation expenses from the Designated Gifts Collective Fund Balance. The conference notified us on November 15, 2023, the disaffiliation amount was \$78,485.33.

<\$28,749.95> Disaffiliation Loan Balance January 1, 2024
+ 4,460.00 Money Received from Individuals in January
+ Money Received from Fund Raisers in January
+ 1,000.00 Money Received from Other Sources in January (Arlene Stokes UWF)
<\$23,289.95> Disaffiliation Loan Balance January 31, 2024

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.

\$78,849.71 MM&RF Money Available January 31, 2024

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	Arbor Fund	\$ 882.70
Food Pantry	\$ 1,274.82	Handbells	\$ 160.52
Discretionary Fund	\$ 1,101.49	Scholarship-Religion Ed	\$ 1,983.22
Records & History	\$ 581.56	Missions-Undesignated	\$ 18,448.49
MYF	\$24,732.82	Christmas Shoeboxes	\$ 290.06
Family Ministries	\$ 4,893.47	Cemetery Fund-Maint.	\$ 30,946.33
Helen Grady Endow.	\$ 815.00	Choir Fund	\$ 266.26
(\$800 History)		Flowers	\$ 416.50
Brunswick Stew(Care/Nurture)\$	189.92	Fundraiser	\$ 2,076.39
		Misc In/Out (childcare)	\$ <406.90>

Total Other Designated Gifts \$89,434.53

Total Designated Gifts Collective Fund Balance as of January 31, 2024 \$144,994.29

Trust Funds

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

\$60,054.76 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

Join Us!



Sunday, March 24th

Palm Sunday

9:15AM Sunday School

10AM Morning Worship

Thursday, March 28th at 7PM

Maundy Thursday



Holy Communion Service

Friday, March 29th at 7PM



Good Friday Service

Sunday, March 31st

Easter



7AM Sunrise Service

10AM Sunday School

11AM Morning Worship



Schedule Updates for Exercise Class Held at Bethlehem Methodist Church

Exercise classes will continue to be held on Mondays and Wednesdays from 6:30 – 7:30 PM in the church fellowship hall. \$5 per class or \$20 per 5 classes. Questions – Contact Lauren (336) 686-4192 or laurenmstarr22@gmail.com.

Mondays: Line dancing and yoga classes. Bring a mat or towel and bottled water.

Wednesdays: Modified / low impact dance sculpt. Light weights are optional. Bring a bottled water.

NOTE: Class on Wednesday, March 20th will start at 7:00 PM after the fund raiser meal.



CHICKEN STEW PICKUP THIS MONTH!



The Arlene Stokes Circle is having a Chicken Stew and Bake Sale on **Saturday, March 9th** in the Fellowship Hall. The stew was pre-order only.



CHURCH RAFFLE!

Saturday, March 9th, 2024

At the chicken stew bake sale on March 9th, there will be a raffle for a quilt (pictured right) made and donated by Sharon Norman.

See Sharon for tickets.



**\$5 PER TICKET
OR
3 FOR \$10**

Proceeds go to Arlene Stokes
Mission Projects

Thanks for your continued support of the Arlene Stokes projects!



BLOOD DRIVE

Oneblood blood drive at Bethlehem Methodist Church on **March 19th** is from **1PM – 7PM**. Call Susan Coward at 336-404-6803 to sign up or sign up online at oneblood.org/donate-now and use sponsor code 56568.

Donors will receive a \$20 e-gift card and insulated tote bag. **Please bring photo ID.**

Come join us to help save lives!

Share your power.



A Special Note:

Bethlehem received a thank-you note from Carla McBee, Northeastern Randolph Middle School's Student Advocate, thanking our congregation for the Noisy Offerings given for the Backpack Pals Fund. Our previous collections have been:

- o January 2024: **\$190.00**
- o February 2024: **\$142.00**

Thanks so much for your donations to this very important project!



March and April **UPPER ROOMS** are available at the church for pickup.



Bibles & Biscuits (A Men's Bible Study)



Meets the 1st Saturday of the month at
8AM, Climax Fire Station #35



Easter Lilies

Easter Lilies to decorate the sanctuary Easter Sunday can be ordered via e-mail at bethumcclimax@gmail.com or completing an order form with payment at the church. Orders are due by **SUNDAY, MARCH 10TH, 2024**. Lillies **cost \$16.50** and can be taken home after the Easter 11AM Service.



**60 +
SUPPER**
SAVE THE DATE

**APRIL
28TH
@ 5PM**

FOOD, FELLOWSHIP
AND FUN!





Those in Need of Prayer

Active Duty Military

Cory Fields

Kelsey Garrett

Rodney Golden

Donald Jacobs

MSGT Ryan Osbourne

Francis Snow

Frank Willis

Our Homebound & Shut-ins

Our printed prayer list includes church members and close family and friends of church members.

In Memory of **Earl Fields**

By Denny & Julie Spencer

By Maysa Downing

In Memory of **Francis Snow**

By Frank & Julia Willis

By Jerry & Karon Monnett

By Larry & Lynne Causey

In Memory of **Guy & Ruth Reynolds**

By David & Laura Cranfill

In Memory of **Jodi Weatherly**

By Bob Weatherly

In Memory of **Margaret Hackett**

By Bob Hackett

In Memory of **Mark Allen**

By Jimmy & Janice McCormick

By Phyllis Wicker

By Ron & Sandi Otwell

In Memory of **Robbie Monnett**

By Jerry & Karon Monnett

In Memory of **Ruby Hockett**

By Lynne & Larry Causey

In Memory of **Wanda McClintock**

By Dale & Becky Windsor

By Evonne Parks

By Margaret Royal

HONORARIUMS

In Honor of **Dale & Becky Windsor**

By Wayne & Shelia Moser

In Honor of **Jane Reddick**

By David & Laura Cranfill

In Honor of **Margaret Royal**

By Wayne & Shelia Moser

In Honor of **Nancy Golden**

By Darlene Coble

In Honor of **Phala Garrett's Family**

By Phala Garrett

In Honor of **Phyllis & Wayne Alley**

By Wayne & Shelia Moser

Memorials & Honorariums

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

MEMORIALS

In Memory of **Ann Holder**

By Jerry & Karon Monnett

In Memory of **Bill & Doris Hockett**

By David & Laura Cranfill

In Memory of **Clarence & Hattie Bell Hackett**

By Bob Hackett

In Memory of **Clem Royal**

By Margaret Royal

In Memory of **Dalton Bowman & Boys**

By Louise Bowman

In Memory of **Dicky & Keith Parks**

By Evonne Parks

In Memory of **Doris Kirkman**

By Byron & Phyllis Dahl

By Denny & Julie Spencer

By Faye Fields

By Phyllis Wicker



March







3/5 Amanda Cook
Alan Kirkman
Brooke Townsend
Erika Braddock
3/7 Pam Jones
3/8 Buddy Fields
3/9 Lois Bazhaw
Darlene Coble
David Robb II
3/10 Beverly Fields
Bob Norris
Lucy McClintock
Carlie Suggs
3/11 Suzie Branch
Kimberly Duncan
Teresa Stevens
3/12 Jay Bowman
Dale Young
3/13 Heather Robb Adams
3/20 Barry Lineberry
3/24 Tony Bowman
Leo Kirkman
Johnny Riddle
3/25 Jonathan Franklin
Henry Wilkinson
3/26 Caleb Hinshaw
Lindsey Wray
3/27 Wanda Woodford
3/28 Joey Bowman
Lorene Wells
3/29 Susan Coward
3/31 Carlton Johnson
John David (J.D.) Peele

April

4/1 Phyllis Alley
Jeff Neelley
4/2 Madigan Downing
4/3 Beth Walsh
Casey Welborn
4/4 Craig Massarelli
4/5 Ashley Neelley
4/7 Eddie Wilkinson
4/8 Doyle Ingold
4/9 Phyllis Garrett
Jane Willimas
4/10 Wayne Dunham
Jim Jones (Alice's son)
4/11 Louise Bowman
4/12 Frances Jean Fields
4/13 Christopher Bass
Danny Dunham
Glenna Staley
4/17 April Wreath
4/18 Anna Parrish
4/19 Shirley Hackett
Matthew Young
4/20 Daniel Moser
Craig Smith
4/24 Erica Reed Sypole
4/25 Haley Parrish
Lexie Terry
Jane Reddick
4/27 Julie Spencer
4/29 Rachel Grace Hill
Sandra Southard
4/30 Ruby Kirkman
Parker Robb



March 2024

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1 World Day of Prayer 	2 8AM Bibles & Biscuits @ Climax Fire #35
3 3rd Sunday in Lent Communion Peanut Butter & Oatmeal Sunday 9:15AM SS 10AM Worship 5PM Jr. Youth (Jr. Youth Room) 5PM Sen. Youth (Sr. Youth Room)	4 Walking Group (Time Varies) 6:30PM Exercise (FH)	5 10AM StoryTime (Lib.)	6 Walking Group (Time Varies) 6:30PM Childcare Brd (Sunshn Rm) 6:30PM Exercise (FH) 7PM Choir Practice (Choir Room)	7 10AM Child. Chapel (Sanct.) 4PM Child. Chapel (Sanct.) 7PM Trustees (FH)	8	9 Chicken Stew, Bake Sale, & Raffle (FH)
10 4th Sunday in Lent Daylight Savings Begins 9:15AM SS 10AM Worship 5PM Sen. Youth (Sr. Youth Rm.) Easter Lily Order Deadline	11 Walking Group (Time Varies) 6:30PM Exercise (FH)	12 9-1PM FH & Kit in use (Friendly Club Prep) 10AM StoryTime (Lib) 11AM Friendly CI (FH)	13 9:30-10:30AM Bookmobile (Childcare) Walking Group (Time Varies) 6:30PM Exercise (FH) 7PM Choir Practice (Choir Room)	14 7PM Admin. Church Council (FH)	15	16
17  5th Sunday in Lent Noisy Offering St. Patrick's Day 9:15AM SS 10AM Worship 5PM Jr. Youth (Jr. Youth Room) 5PM Sen. Youth (Sr. Youth Room)	18 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE Walking Group (Time Varies) 6:30PM Exercise	19 10AM StoryTime (Lib.) 1PM – 7PM Blood Drive (FH)	20 First Day of Spring  Walking Group (Time Varies) 5PM Fundraiser Meal (FH) 7PM Exercise (FH) 7PM Choir Practice (Choir Room)	21 10AM Child. Chapel (Sanct.) 4PM Child. Chapel (Sanct.)	22	23
24 Palm Sunday  9:15AM SS 10AM Worship 3PM Easter Egg Hunt 5PM Sen. Youth (Sr. Youth Room)	25 10AM (Paid) Staff Planning Meeting (Parlor) 10:30AM Arlene Stokes (Young-at-Heart) Walking Group (Time Varies) 6:30PM Exercise (FH)	26 10AM StoryTime (Lib.)	27 Wonderful Wednesday (Bus leaves at 9:40AM)  Bus in Use Walking Group (Time Varies) 6:30PM Exercise (FH) 7PM Choir Practice (Choir Room)	28 Maunday Thursday 7PM Service	29 Good Friday Childcare Closed 7PM Service	30
31 Easter Sunday  7:00AM Sunrise Service 10AM SS 11AM Worship	1 April Walking Group (Time Varies) 6:30PM Exercise (FH)	2 10AM StoryTime (Lib.)	3 Walking Group (Time Varies) 6:30PM Childcare Brd (Sunshn Rm) 6:30PM Exercise (FH) 7PM Choir Practice (Choir Room)	4	5	6 8AM Bibles & Biscuits @ Climax Fire #35

GREETERS:

3/3 Open
3/10 Open
3/17 Bud & Judy Fields
3/24 Open
3/31 Open

ALTAR FLOWERS:

3/3 Open
3/10 Lisa Taylor
3/17 Open
3/24 Open
3/31 Easter Lillies

ACOLYTES:

3/3 Ashton Allen
3/10 Maysa Downing
3/17 Braxton Wall
3/24 Quart Fulk
3/31 Bradon Allen

USHERS:

David Allen
Byron Dahl
Doug Garrett
Desi Williams

March OPENER:

David Cranfill

March CLOSER:

Barry Norris

The Easter Story

M	C	S	S	I	U	D	V	U	A	O	L	O	J
F	R	S	S	U	P	A	G	B	N	I	A	S	R
H	T	J	S	U	S	E	J	O	V	E	S	O	N
A	O	O	U	E	L	R	A	C	R	G	T	R	A
L	G	J	L	D	N	B	O	R	R	E	S	A	N
L	O	E	N	I	A	E	O	U	E	A	U	N	E
E	D	R	L	T	P	S	V	C	M	P	I	S	
L	C	U	T	O	R	S	A	I	U	S	P	S	I
U	R	S	S	M	O	H	U	F	G	T	E	T	R
J	O	A	I	B	B	D	T	I	M	R	R	S	Y
A	S	L	R	E	B	I	N	X	T	E	O	H	S
H	S	E	H	S	E	D	N	I	R	N	L	F	L
R	G	M	C	Y	R	C	C	O	E	G	O	R	S
S	A	V	I	O	R	S	B	N	H	N	B	P	A

PONTIUS PILOT
CRUCIFIXION
TOMB
LAST SUPPER
ROBBER
BREAD
EMPTY
RISEN
SAVIOR
JERUSALEM
HALLELUJAH
CROSS
FORGIVENESS
GOD
CHRIST
JUDAS
JESUS
SIN

Play this puzzle online at : <https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/6713641/>



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