

January, 2023

*Happy
New Year*

Bethesda Banner

Bethesda Presbyterian Church

4858 McConnells Hwy.

York, SC 29745

(803)328-1360

Sunday School 9:45 am

Worship 11 am

Visit

www.bethesdapres.org
for updates.



*This is a publication of
the people of
Bethesda Presbyterian Church*

One of my Christmas practices that I enjoy is reading John Milton's poem, *On the Morning of Christ's Nativity*. In my faith walk I make time to read and consider the poem every Christmas season.

John Milton is a tough author to read; his language is challenging and his word usage is complex. But for those who persist through they will find Milton offering powerful, descriptive words and phrases for us that consistently teach and encourage us.

As the New Year is beginning I offer you a section from John Milton and invite you to reflect in 2024 on what he is saying. (And yes, some of the words seem misspelled. Trust me, they are not. This was written in 1629).

*“That glorious form, that light unsufferable,
And that far-beaming blaze of majesty
Wherewith he wont, at Heav'n's high council-table
To sit, the midst of Trinal Unity,
He laid aside, and here with us to be
Forsook the courts of everlasting day,
And choose with us a darksome house of mortal clay.”*

As I said John Milton's language is hard to read at times. . . but John also understands something theologically that we should not just remember during Advent. The lesson and example of Emmanuel should stay with us.

Consider the sacrifice of Jesus.

Yes, he will suffer a horrific, isolating death. Yes, on the cross Jesus will be separated, for the first and only time, from His Heavenly Father. We know that on the cross Jesus reaches back out to God in heaven and, because of our sin, Jesus is unable to dwell with His Father any longer.

But consider the sacrifice Jesus willingly made for us in Advent. Consider that Jesus spent all of time and space in total communion with God, and in the incarnation he left that place, as Milton suggests, and chose to be with us. Jesus chose to adopt a *'darksome house of mortal clay.'*

Never needing a physical body in heaven, Jesus sacrifices total communion with God to be with us. To sit with us. To hold us. To heal and save us. He willingly laid aside the glory of heaven to walk among humanity.

We know that Jesus took on our humanity fully. After being with us, Jesus shares our practical, human, experiences. Hunger. Thirst. fatigue. Sore joints and muscles, I believe, he knew something about what these feel like.

Yet, he chose this. Willingly and fully. This is a lesson that should not remain in our hearts in Advent only. Perhaps as the new year begins you and the Lord can take some time to talk about how much Jesus sacrifices to be with us.

Blessings
Rev. Derek

Helping our neighbors:

Please help replenish our "Blessing Box" and Food Pantry.

Plentiful Harvest Kitchen: 138 folks were served a warm meal on New Year's Eve by our team from Bethesda. Our next two dates to serve are March 10 and May 26.

Plastic Recycling- We have collected enough plastics for our third bench! It will be delivered and assembled soon. We will continue to collect plastics for our fourth bench.

Missions, Outreach, and Service Report— December, 2023

Presbyterian Women's Circle:

Card Ministry
Donation to Thornwell

Donations to:

Thornwell
Presbyterian Communities of South Carolina
Tito Palacios and La Mission in Guatemala
The Matias Family in Brazil
Christmas Joy Offering
Christmas Eve Offering for Local Missions
From Adult Sunday School Classes:
Cash Donation for Food Distribution/Bethesda Food Bank
Gift Card for Isaiah House

Prayer Shawl Ministry

Four Prayer Shawls/Lap Afghans Presented
One Baby Blanket Presented

Online Ministry

Worship Services
Pastor's Bible Study
Sounds of Grace

Ministry of Care and Support

Provided Transportation to Medical Appointments and Other Support for Church Members and Community Member

Community Support/Outreach

Food Items *Collected Food*
Items for Food Pantry and Blessing Box /Maintained the Blessing Box by Keeping it Fully Stocked
Food Distribution—Distributed 29 Bags of Grocery Items
Christmas Turkey Dinners—Provided Complete Christmas Dinners for:
56 Households
196 People
55 Turkeys
109 Bags of Grocery Items
Deer Meat
Operation Christmas Child—Group from Bethesda Volunteered at the Operation Christmas Child Distribution Center in Charlotte and delivered 49 Packed Shoeboxes
Isaiah House—Angel Tree gifts given to support this ministry

Benevolence Fund

Child Development Center

Pastor Conducted Two Weekly Chapel Services for Three Year Olds through Pre-K Children and for the After School Children

This week at Bethesda:

Choir will meet at 5:30 on Wednesday, December 6

Wednesday Night Dinner at 6:30 on December 6.

The Morning Circle will meet this Thursday, December 7, at 10:00 am in the Fellowship Hall.

Thursday Bible Study will meet at 6:00 pm in the Session room on December 8.

New Offering Envelopes for 2024 are available. They have been placed in the mailboxes in the Church office and on the front pew in the Sanctuary. If you do not receive some and would like envelopes, please contact the church office at (803)328-1360 or email bethesda@comporium.net

The **Benevolence Ministry** provides assistance to those in the community in immediate need of emergency financial assistance. A burned-out home, a loss of job, or a pending eviction may all qualify depending upon what the background information may suggest. It caters to legitimate needs which may be ascertained with a good combination of a benevolent heart and sound judgement. The Benevolence Team is made up of persons of good report and wisdom and filled with the Holy Spirit. Funds are not given to those in need but are paid to the billing party. **This Sunday, January 7, 2024 in coordination with Communion is designated as Benevolence Giving Sunday.** Please be generous in replenishing our resources for those in desperate situations.



2024 Flower Chart is in the Narthex - sign up to place flowers in the Sanctuary for Sunday morning worship and, if you wish, info in the bulletin on that Sunday, notify Pat at (803)328-1360 or email bethesda@comporium.net

Thank You

I recently received one of your prayer shawls from the Rev. Jim Platt, and I want to thank you all for remembering me on my knee replacement surgery. It was very touching to be thought of by fellow Christians I have not had the pleasure of meeting yet in such a heart-felt manner.

My wife shares in my delight - she said, "well, the people in churches haven't forgotten about you." Since she is dealing with a broken toe, she is also experiencing the comfort that comes with the prayer shawl.

Blessings to you all as you continue to share

Christ's love in and beyond your community. I hope you all have a wonderful Christmas and a glorious New Year.

Sincerely,
Thomas Robinson

Thank you everyone who gave me cards and gifts. Special thank you to all the musicians who have given of their time and talents throughout the year. I am so blessed to be a part of Bethesda.

LaRayne



January Birthday



| | |
|-----------|--|
| 1 | <i>Ricky Simpson, JoEllen Smith</i> |
| 2 | <i>Stacey Coleman</i> |
| 4 | <i>George Freeman, Jr.</i> |
| 9 | <i>David Johnson</i> |
| 13 | <i>Claire Williamson</i> |
| 16 | <i>Adam Cole</i> |
| 17 | <i>Steve Childers, Linda Messer, Leslie Platt, Janie Stallard</i> |
| 18 | <i>Debbie Fulmer</i> |
| 19 | <i>Zach Costner</i> |
| 21 | <i>Cathy Goodband</i> |
| 22 | <i>Bobbie Kay Hagler</i> |
| 25 | <i>Austin Johnson</i> |
| 26 | <i>Alan Smith, Jr.</i> |
| 27 | <i>Jim Bookout</i> |
| 28 | <i>Jesse Merritt</i> |
| 29 | <i>JonMark Marotta, Kelsey Privette, Kelly Williamson</i> |
| 25 | <i>Johnny Walker</i> |

| | Attendance | | | |
|---------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| | <u>Morning Worship</u> In-person | <u>Sunday School</u> | <u>Online Worship</u> Views | <u>Bible Study</u> |
| - | | | | |
| 12/3/23 | 46 | 19 | 28 | |
| 12/10/23 | 36 | 24 | 45 | |
| 12/17/23 | 80 | 16 | 19 | |
| 12/24/23 | 70 | 28 | 65 (all 12/24 services) | |
| 12/24/23 6pm | 79 | | | |
| 12/24/23 11pm | 20 | | | |
| 12/31/23 | 19 | 16 | 25 | |

Remember in Prayer

At Bethesda

Liz Blackwell, 1/3/24
Peggy Adkins
Cecilia Alexander
Margaret Moore
Jonathan Lauckner
Gene Cornwell
Ricky & Debbie Simpson & Family
Frank Allen
Anita Ferguson Buffolino
Bill Dover
Ruth Rawdon
Eddie Allan Smith (back)
Stacy Meek (CDC)
Janice Meeks (CDC)
Hildegard Bell
Eddie Smith

Deaths

Sonny Adkins, 11/26/23
Ethel Craven, 11/29/23 (Rev. Marotta officiated graveside service on 12/4/23 at Grandview)
Edna Rhinehart, 12/14/23
Junie Nivens, 12/25/23 (Funeral was at Bethesda on 12/29/23)

At Bethesda Child Development Center

Cynthia Jackson, Dawn Westmoreland, Esther Bailey, Jamie Baker, Catherine Goodband, Stacy Meek, Janice Meeks, Tracy Eddinger, Elizabeth Martin, Aliah Hagy, Natalie Ashe, Emily Hopkins, Shelby Ashe, Madison Hartis.

Global Mission Partners

Matias Family and
Tito Palacios (La Mision)

In the Military:

Chase Davis, Zoe De Anda,
Pierce Dewey, Sully Foy,
Nicholas McAteer, Gage Orr,
Michael Wilkerson

In the Community and Beyond

Jackie Johnson Saboley (hip surgery)
Jane Ellen Barber (Leslie Platt's friend), surgery
Trey Privette (Walker family) glioblastoma
Sue Hopkins
Griffin (Marotta's nephew Axton's 11 year old friend)
Cheryl Hughes
Dorothy Hazard (LaRayne's sister-in-law)
Larry Rockholt (Carolyn's son)
Johnny Rockholt (Faye's son)
Rick Stallard (Josh's father)
Noah Smith, Sr. (Pacia's dad)
Penelope Lowder (Rocky's niece) surgery
Dennis Duncan (Debbie Fulmer's dad) his memory
Hildegard and Jim Bell's granddaughter, lupus
Cherish Clark Walker (Krystal's friend) cancer
Dale Wray & mother, Peggy (Krystal's friend)
Rachel Ann Taylor (Pat's granddaughter) leukemia
Brittany, Wes & Whitley Teter (Linda's granddaughter)
Dolores Lynn (Tara's aunt in Iowa) heart problem
Joanne Cox (Debbie Fulmer's aunt) cancer
Dwight Little (cirrhosis of liver & stroke) Leslie Henson's co-worker)
Abbie So (19 yr. old friend of Emma Marotta) heart failure
Tommy Harper (Sarah's dad)
James David (David Chamber's grandson)
Ron Saboley (Jackie's husband) unable to have surgery
Peggy Neal (JoEllen's mom) disease narrowing blockages
Rose Locklair (Peggy, Faye, Ruth & Mack's sister) hospice
Nikki Thompson (Alberta's daughter) colon cancer

Let us begin the new year with hope and encouragement as we remember the words of the psalmist:

“Yes, my soul, finds rest in God; my hope comes from him.
Truly he is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress,
I will not be shaken. My salvation and my honor depend on God;
He is my mighty rock, my refuge. Trust in him at all times,
you people; pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge.”

Psalm 62:5-8

Bethesda Presbyterian Church

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York, SC 29745

Phone: (803)328-1360

Email: bethesda@comporium.net

Website: www.bethesdapres.org

Our Pastor:

Rev. Derek Marotta

Our Elders:

Alberta Anthony

Mark Boyd

Steve Childers

Cheryl Forlines

Debbie Fulmer

Laura Merritt

Linda Messer

Jim Percival

Stacy Russell

Johnny Walker

*"Certainly the faithful love
of the Lord hasn't ended;
certainly God's compassion
isn't through! They are
renewed every morning.
Great is your faithfulness."
Lamentations 3:22-23*

Our Mission

We celebrate the sharing of the Good News of Jesus Christ who is the head of the Church. Through the leading of the Holy Spirit, we are God's servants dedicated to the nurturing of all people in faith, service and fellowship; providing service to those in need; comforting the bereaved; ministering to the sick; offering solace to the troubled; and always seeking the lost.

We invite all believers in the Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, to share the communion loaf and cup of communion as symbols of our unity and service to the Risen Lord.



Established 1760

Bethesda Presbyterian Church Staff:

Pastor - Derek Marotta

Secretary/Bookkeeper - Pat Jones

Director of Music Ministry - LaRayne Hall

Sexton - Donna Hagler