

December, 2023



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*

Right about now, I might be tempted to talk about Christmas and the joy of Advent. As the song says, ‘it is the most wonderful time of the year.’ At Bethesda, plans are in place for the Christmas program on December 17th. We have plans for 3 distinct services for Christmas Eve in the works—and there is so much more going on as well!

All of these plans give us a sense of joy and anticipation.

We might also be tempted to bemoan the drivers on the roads and to complain about full, aggressive, lines at the Christmas checkouts. As Christmas gets closer, people seem to get more and more rude and short-tempered.

If I have to go to the store, I try to avoid doing so after supper. I know the lines will swell with people and patience will be in short supply. . . But let’s not focus or dwell on either idea. Let’s save that for another time.

Instead, let’s consider what helps us to flourish as the Body of Christ and how we can use that knowledge to spread God’s Word and care for God’s people as the Incarnation of Jesus is celebrated.

Howard Thurman once wrote, “*Don’t ask what the world needs. Ask what makes you come alive, and [then] go do it. Because what the world needs is people who have come alive.*”

Too often we find people who believe it is their calling to fix everything and everyone that they come into contact with. They feel that God placed them in our midst to show us what is wrong with everything. These people have solutions to every problem, just ask.

We are encouraged to lean on their wisdom, or follow their teachings, to get us out of the jam that we are in either as individuals, as a church, or as a nation. But that does not feel like what God asks any of us to do; only God can do the transformational work that is sorely needed in this world.

Instead, I wonder if God asks us to determine what gives us passion, what “makes us come alive” to use Thurman’s words, and then repeatedly practice that act or choice before a world and community that could use that act of Christian witness?

Maybe that is a more biblical way to grow ourselves as Christians and practice our faith.

So as Christmas comes and you find yourself being pressed and pushed around by life, notice what creates passion in you and then practice that act over and over again.

Blessings,
Rev. Derek

Helping our neighbors:

Please help replenish our "Blessing Box" and Food Pantry. Suggested items are non-perishable food items - peanut butter, jelly, canned meat or pasta items, spaghetti sauce, pasta, small cereal boxes, etc. A basket is available weekly in the vestibule for donations. There is also a basket in the Fellowship Hall for those who wish to make contributions at the Wednesday Night Dinners. These items are used to fill the "Blessing Box", distributed to people who request help through the Bethesda Benevolence Fund, and delivered regularly to local food distribution organizations. Thank you for your contributions to this ministry.

Plentiful Harvest Kitchen: Our next date to serve is December 31. Please consider helping our neighbors.

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.

Second Harvest Food Pantry Dates

December 8 – Faith Presbyterian, 7520 Charlotte Hwy, Indian Land, SC 29707

Food Distribution: On December 14 , we will give out Turkeys and fixings to our neighbors

Missions, Outreach, and Service Report— November 2023

Presbyterian Women's Circle:

Card Ministry

Donations to:

Thornwell

Presbyterian Communities of South Carolina

Tito Palacios and La Mission in Guatemala

The Matias Family in Brazil

Dimes for Hunger: Collected at Total of **\$1,457.56 in October**

Prayer Shawl Ministry

One Lap Afghan 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 Community Member

Community Support/Outreach

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

Thanksgiving Turkey Dinners—Provided Complete Thanksgiving Dinners for:

67 Households

242 People

63 Turkeys

114 Bags of Grocery Items

Operation Christmas Child—Packed 49 Shoeboxes (25 for Boys and 24 for Girls)

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

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

Opportunities this Christmas

The CDC will be having a Spaghetti Supper/Bake Sale from 5:00 to 6:45 p.m. December 7th , 2023, with CDC Christmas Program at 7:00 p.m. If you can provide baked goods contact Linda Messer at 803-327-6836 or 803-367-1702. Volunteer workers are also needed for the Spaghetti Supper. Come out and support the CDC by helping and/or purchasing a spaghetti plate and baked goods.

Order Your Christmas Poinsettias by December 10th Orders for Christmas Poinsettias are now being taken through December 10th . The cost is \$14.00 each. Poinsettias may be ordered in memory or in honor of someone. A sign-up sheet will be available in the narthex. Checks should be made out to Bethesda Presbyterian Church with "Poinsettias" in the comment line. The Poinsettias may be taken home on Christmas Eve.

Date change for Caroling: Join the Congregational Life Committee for Christmas Caroling on **December 10 at 3:00**. We'll meet in the Fellowship Hall and leave from there. If you have anyone that you think will enjoy us visiting them with Carols, please get permission from them and let Sarah Childers or the church office know. We will not go into homes.

Our Christmas Worship Service is on December 17 during the 11:00 worship service.

Christmas Eve Services: 6:00 pm and 11:00 pm

Isaiah 117 House

When children are removed from their homes out of concern for their safety, they are usually brought to a child welfare services office to await placement. This wait can be a few hours to several days. These children often have nothing with them and are scared, lonely, hungry, and in dirty clothing. Isaiah 117 provides a comforting home where these children instead can be brought to wait – a place that is safe with friendly and loving volunteers who provide clean clothes, smiles, toys, and snuggly blankets. This space allows children to receive the comfort and care they need while child welfare staff can do the necessary paperwork and identify a good placement. The mission of Isaiah 117 House is threefold:

- *reduce trauma for children awaiting placement
- *lighten the load for child welfare services
- *ease the transition for foster families

This Christmas Bethesda will collect items needed for foster children who may come through Isaiah House in York County. There is a tree in the back of the church. Please consider taking a gift tag from the tree and purchasing that item. All items should be new with tags on them and they do not need to be wrapped. Please return purchased items by December 24 to the church office or bring to church.



December Birthday



1	<i>Derek Marotta; Lewis Smith, Jr.</i>
5	<i>Suzanne Griffin, Will Johnston</i>
7	<i>James Anthony, Jr.</i>
8	<i>Ernice Bookout</i>
9	<i>Jerry Dickson, Bobby Walker</i>
16	<i>Micah Blue</i>
18	<i>Martina Russell</i>
21	<i>Ginger Dewey</i>
27	<i>Eddie Smith</i>
28	<i>Bobby Fulmer</i>
29	<i>Carson Smith</i>
31	<i>Liz Blackwell, Kim Johnson</i>

" Jerusalem, you have good news to tell. 'Go up a high mountain. Shout out loud the news. Here is your God.'" Isaiah 40:9.

	Attendance			
	<u>Morning Worship</u> In-person	<u>Sunday School</u>	<u>Online Worship</u> Views	<u>Bible Study</u>
11/5/23	46	22	13	19
11/12/23	61	27	29	N/A
11/19/23	40	19	17	N/A
11/26/23	45	26	10	N/A

Remember in Prayer

At Bethesda

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

Memory Jordan, 11/15/23
Peter Perrill, 11/15/23
Sonny Adkins, 11/26/23
Ethel Craven, 11/29/23

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.

Global Mission Partners

Matias Family and
Tito Palacios (La Mision)

In the Community and Beyond

Jane Ellen Barber
Junie Nivens (waiting for liver transplant)
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
Edna Rhinehart (Carolyn Rockholt's sister)
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

In the Military:

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

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Email: bethesda@comporium.net

Website: www.bethesdapres.org

Our Pastor:

Rev. Derek Marotta

Our Elders:

Alberta Anthony

Mark Boyd

Sarah Childers

Jimmy Darby

Cheryl Forlines

Debbie Fulmer

Susan Hibbard

Jim Percival

Stacy Russell

Todd Russell

Johnny Walker

*"For unto us a child is born,
unto us a son is given:
and the government shall be upon
his shoulder: and his name
shall be called wonderful,
Counsellor, The mighty God,
The everlasting Father,
The Prince of Peace."
Isaiah 9:6*

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