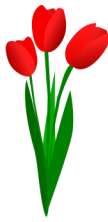


March 2025



Bethesda Banner

During my junior year in college, I met a professor who would help to shape my theology profoundly. As a religion major I needed to take quite a few electives to complete my degree. One of the courses that I chose was taught by a monk named Father Michael and the class entitled: Orthodox Spirituality. It looked good in the school catalogue and my friends, and I eagerly signed up for it.

During the class Father Michael challenged many of our preconceived notions of how we came to believe what we believed about God. I found his gentleness around God's word to be helpful. He did not chastise us for what we believed but instead pushed us to articulate how we came to our beliefs—something that was lacking in many of my classmates.

I still use many of his practices in my daily life when a challenging situation comes before me and causes me to wonder where God is at work and how God calls me to respond to a difficult situation. This is a practice that comes to bear missionally when I am with my local community here in York.

The note that Father Michael wrote to me at the end of our class still sits in the book that we read in the class. It is both a challenge, and a word of encouragement, to me. The note, and the process of that class reminds me, that while my belief on a subject might seem right and proper in the moment, it is only when I hold my beliefs up to God that I gain confirmation of right and wrong with the Lord. Only as you and I study God's Word, prayerfully, do we find the right perspective in Christ.

For theology, and what we think in the moment, has been used to justify a great number of positions and choices. In the book that I am reading now I found this quotation that helps to support this concept. *"Theology reminds me that, however diabolical the act [that I witness], it did not turn the perpetrator into a demon."*

Some in the Church are quick to assume that their theological worldview is THE only theological worldview for everyone. But as we spend time with God, and in God's word, we discover how God is present and at work.

This is also the work that comes in Lent, the work of reflection and the work of mature theological reflection. I hope that you will spend time this season thinking and reflecting on where God is active and how God is shaping you as a church and as the Body of Christ.

Blessings,
Rev. Derek

1. Desmond Tutu.

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*

Helping our neighbors:

Plentiful Harvest Kitchen: Our next date is March 30. Future 6/15, 8/31 and 11/16.

Please help replenish our "Blessing Box" and Food Pantry. Suggested items are non-perishable food items, inexpensive can openers, and small hygiene items. (powdered milk, evaporated milk, saltine crackers, coffee, sugar, canned fruit, 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.

Plastic Recycling- Our fourth bench has been ordered! Please continue collecting soft plastics for our fifth bench.

Missions, Outreach, and Service Report— February, 2025

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

Christmas Joy Offering

Three Prayer Shawls/Lap Afghans Presented

Two Baby Blankets Presented

Online Ministry

Worship Services

Sounds of Grace

Ministry of Care and Support

Provided Transportation for Church Member and Community Member to Appointments

Community Support/Outreach

Blessing Box--Maintained the Blessing Box by Keeping It Fully Stocked

Lunch Distribution—Prepared and distributed 463 bag lunches to area children during York County Schools

Break, including York Housing Authority and Motel residents in York as well as neighborhood children

Childrens and Youth Ministry

Bible Buddies/Youth Group

Youth Superbowl Pizza Party

Child Development Center

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

Hosted a Spaghetti Dinner Honoring Esther Bailey and Janice Meeks for their many years of Service to the CDC

BENEFIT

YARD SALE



Bake Sale

Hamburger/Hotdog Plates

Live Music

Saturday, March 22

8 am - 2 pm

Bethesda Presbyterian Church

4858 McConnells Hwy.

York, SC 29745

All proceeds go toward medical costs
for our pastor's wife.

Monetary donations and items for the yard sale
are appreciated.

Music by:
Pacia Smith



JC Riley

Wayfaring Strangers

Take a look around your house and gather up things you would like to donate to the yard sale. Donations may be dropped off at the church Monday through Friday from 9 am until 1 pm. If these times are not convenient for you, contact the church office and we will set up a time to meet you at the church. If you have big items, we can also arrange for someone to pick those up.

We also need donations of diet and regular can soft drinks and individual bags of chips for the hotdog/hamburger plates.

Upcoming in March:

Choir will meet at 5:30 on Wednesdays.

Wednesday Night Dinner will be on Wednesdays at 6:30 pm.

Ash Wednesday Service this Wednesday, March 5, in the sanctuary following dinner.

Morning Circle will meet on Thursday, March 6, in the Sunday School Room

NEW 2025 FLOWER CHART is in the Narthex- sign up to place flowers in 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 by the previous Tuesday. There will be a plate upfront for people to donate for the Flower Fund

Who is Your Elder Shepherd?

New church directories including assigned Elder Shepherd are available on the front pew in the sanctuary or by contacting the church office.

Thank you

Thank each of ya'll for the lunches and food this week. It was very much appreciated. God bless each of ya'll. Thank ya'll so much for the wonderful folks ya'll are.

To the Prayer Shawl Ministry. Thank you so much for the beautiful afghan you made for my granddaughter, Margaret Ruth Masaitis. But most of all thank you for your prayers for my daughter Emily and her husband Eric during this very long adoption process.

God bless you all,
Donna Adams

Ministry Support Online!



Contributions may be made from the QR code.

Ark Encounter/Creation Museum
October 16th - 19th, 2025
Ark Encounter - Ark Encounter Dr., Williamson KY 41097
Creation Museum - 2800 Bullittsburg Church Rd., Petersurg KY 41080

Group rates are below - Prices are per person and include hotel room for 3 nights, tickets to both museums and transportation.

(These are an ESTIMATE and NOT FINAL!)

<u># of People</u>	<u>Total Price (per person)</u>
30 People	Adult - \$714 Senior - \$704 Youth - \$669 Child - \$614
40 People	Adult - \$635 Senior - \$625 Youth - \$590 Child - \$535
50 People	Adult - \$571 Senior - \$561 Youth - \$526 Child - \$471

The prices will fluctuate based on the number of people attending the trip. We will be able to finalize prices once we have those who are willing to commit. **We are asking that you commit by March 7th so we can begin to lock in final prices and book the charter bus.**

If you commit, we are **requiring a \$100 non refundable deposit** per person be made. The deposit will be refunded if the entire trip is cancelled but other than the cancellation of the entire trip the deposit will **NOT** be refunded. **Please make checks payable to Bethesda Presbyterian Church and put "Ark Encounter Trip".**

The charter bus will only hold up to 55 people. We will max out at 55 people and will not be able to accept anymore at this point (would LOVE to have the bus maxed out)! Those who want to go on the trip do not have to be church members. Invite your family and friends.

If you have questions, contact Jesse or Laura Merrit



Dear Church Family,

The Property Committee wanted to make you aware of some changes to burial and cemetery fees that will become effective March 1, 2025. These fee changes are still favorable when compared to other churches and cemeteries.

Below is the schedule of pricing and definition of each category.

Status MEMBER - \$600 - Members of Bethesda Presbyterian Church.

AFFILIATED - \$900 - immediate family members of someone buried in the cemetery. An immediate family member includes : Father, Mother, Son, Daughter, Brother, Sister, step-father, step-mother, grandparent, grandchild or spouse.

COMMUNITY - \$1200 - Anyone other than the status identified above, with no immediate family ties to the cemetery per the affiliated member definition, ie., community citizens, friends or associates of the church.

Additionally, the Property Committee is exploring the purchase of a columbarium, a permanent structure within the cemetery with inbuilt spaces (niches) that house inurned cremated remains. The Cemetery policy still allows for cremains to be buried in plots. A Columbarium allows for an alternative. Two sets of cremains may occupy one niche. The question for the congregation is how much interest is there in that option. The cost of each niche would be \$600 for church members. Please at your earliest convenience let Pat know if you have an interest in a niche. A decision will be forthcoming. Lastly, you may ask for a copy of the newly written Cemetery Policy by contacting Pat in the office. Please contact a member of the Property Committee if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,
Steve Childers, Chair



Ash Wednesday is the first day of the 40 days of **Lent**, a six-week period (not including Sundays) dedicated to reflection, repentance, prayer, fasting and spiritual discipline. It is observed in preparation for Easter and ends on Holy Thursday before Easter Sunday. Holy Thursday marks the Last Supper. The Lenten season was established in the 4th century. It is observed by Catholics and several Protestant denominations.

Ash Wednesday emphasizes two themes: our sinfulness before God and our human mortality. The service focuses on both themes, helping us to realize that both have been triumphed through

the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The ashes, applied in the shape of a cross on the forehead during and Ash Wednesday service, are a symbol of penance, mourning and mortality. Centuries ago, participants used to sprinkle themselves with ashes and repent much more publicly, but the practice fell away sometime between the 8th-10th centuries before evolving into what it is today.

(www.umc.org)



March Birthdays



3	<i>Alan Smith, Sr., Lisa Percival</i>
4	<i>Edie Nettles</i>
6	<i>Lane Russell, Jennifer Maarotta</i>
7	<i>Joni Walker</i>
9	<i>Mills Sharpe</i>
18	<i>Charles Williamson, IV</i>
19	<i>Conor Goodband, Anne Caveny</i>
22	<i>Irvin Jones</i>
25	<i>Katie Burns, Ainsley Darby, III</i>
27	<i>Dorothy Williamson</i>
28	<i>Steven Dickson, Jr.</i>
29	<i>Chad Russell</i>
31	<i>Karen Boyd, Easton Pennington</i>

Attendance February

	<u>Morning Worship</u> In-person	<u>Sunday School</u>	<u>Online Worship</u> Views	<u>Bible Study</u> in-person and online
2/2/25	41	24	14	
2/9/25	49	27	25	
2/16/25	41	20	23	
2/23/25	62	26	28	



to our newest members!

New members are: Tim Hood, Steve Kay, Autumn Lersch and Rocky Rhoad.

Remember in Prayer

At Bethesda

Jennifer Marotta
Margaret Moore
Jonathan Lauckner
Gene Cornwell
Ricky & Debbie Simpson & Family
Frank Allen
Anita Ferguson Buffolino
Bill Dover
Ruth Rawdon
Eddie Allan Smith
Stacy Meek (CDC)
Hildegard Bell
Eddie Smith
Luke Johnson
Steve Dickson, Jr.
Benny Coxton
Edie Nettles - back surgery, 1/8/25
Edward & Dorothy Williamson

Deaths

Family and friends of Roger Russell, 1/27/25 (Chad's uncle)
Family and friends of Weslie Teter, 1/23/25
Family and friends of Janice Meeks, 2/19/25

At Bethesda Child Development Center

Cynthia Jackson, Dawn Westmoreland, Jamie Baker,
Catherine Goodband, Natalie Ashe, Emily Hopkins,
Shelby Ashe, Madison Hartis.

Global Mission Partners

Matias Family and
Tito Palacios (La Mision)

In the Community and Beyond

Cheryl Hughes
Johnny Rockholt (Faye's son)
Rick Stallard (Josh's father)
Penelope Lowder (Rocky's niece) surgery
Dennis Duncan (Debbie Fulmer's dad) his memory
Hildegard and Jim Bell's granddaughter, lupus
Brittany, Wes & Whitley Teter (Linda's granddaughter)
Dolores Lynn (Tara's aunt in Iowa) new heart problem
Dwight Little (cirrhosis of liver & stroke) Leslie Henson's co-worker)
Tommy & Nell Harper (Sarah's parents)
James David (David Chamber's grandson)
Jackie Johnson Saboley
Peggy Neal (JoEllen's mom) disease narrowing blockages
Christina Dixon (Shannon's friend) breast cancer
Janet Osborne (breast cancer)
Debi Dubard - treatment for cancer
Jeff Thompson
Becky Shillington (Jim & Ernice's daughter) surgery
Terry Brown (Darlene Dunlap's cousin)
Kathy Miller (Todd Hagler's mother)
Barry Zachary (friend of Walkers) lung cancer
Bobby Westmoreland and friend, Sherri
Michelle Plott (knee replacement) 3/18/25

In the Military:

Chase Davis, Zoe De Anda,
Pierce Dewey, Nicolas McAteer, Gage Orr,
Michael Wilkerson, Sabrina Dollar

Bethesda Presbyterian Church

4858 McConnells Highway

York, SC 29745

Phone: (803)328-1360

Email: bethesda@comporium.net

Website: www.bethesdapres.org

Our Pastor:

Rev. Derek Marotta

Our Elders:

Steve Childers

Debbie Fulmer

JonMark Marotta

Jesse Merritt

Laura Merritt

Linda Messer

Jim Percival

Lisa Percival

Stacy Russell

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

Director of Christian Education - Laura Merritt

Secretary/Bookkeeper - Pat Jones

Director of Music Ministry - LaRayne Hall

Sexton - Donna Hagler