

 *Faithful,
forgiven,
& free*

**IN GOD
WE TRUST**



The Echo

July 2024

A publication of Bethany United Methodist Church, Weyers Cave, VA


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If you would like ...
and currently don't
receive the church
newsletter
and other important
updates by email, please
send your email address
to Cindy Kite at
office.bethany@gmail.com.

Blessed is the nation whose
God is the Lord, the people he
chose for his inheritance.

Psalm 33:12



From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Bethany UMC Family,

One of the things I have learned in my young life is that tomorrow is never promised, and the future is never clear. Now who holds the future, and the present is a completely different story. This July will be four years since I survived being shot in Durham, NC. In one instance, I learned how quickly life can change in a dime. I also learned that there are things we love and hold valuable to us one day, but those things might change another day. One day your family, friends, and faith are the most important things; and then the next day it is walking, breathing without a ventilator, and sitting up in a bed that brings joy and value to your day. Nowadays each day I wake up, I know that there is purpose. I know that I am living on borrowed time. But the thing is, we all are living on borrowed time. Each day we breathe and walk this Earth, we have the potential to be Kingdom builders. And one of those things I have learned is to celebrate the wins. Celebrate the joy when someone surrenders their life to Christ. Celebrate the joy when someone overcomes addiction. Celebrate the joy when a child reads a bible passage in front of the congregation. Celebrate the joy when God's people come together to do something special and powerful!

The biggest joy we get to celebrate is this church family being a faithful witness to Jesus for 70 years! We are reminded that we are to celebrate the joys of God, and this my friends is a big joy. 70 years' worth of leading

folks to Jesus, 70 years of baptisms and confirmation, 70 years of loving on the people of Weyers Cave, and don't forget the 70 years' worth of potlucks (praise God for good cooks and good food)! On September 8th we will be commemorating our 70th Anniversary with a special Homecoming Worship Service. We will be inviting former pastors, members, and all to come and worship in celebration together! The DS of the Shenandoah River District will be preaching, we will have a special video from the [Bishop](#), and we will join to do what is Methodists do so well... eat together!

For this special day to occur, we need YOU! We are putting together a committee who will be tasked with sending out invitations, decorating, planning the service, and putting the after-service meal together. I would encourage everyone, whether you've been a member for 70 years, or you've just started attending, to find a way to participate. If you are creative, help with decorations. If you have time to send out invitations, help with invitations. If you would like to prepare part of the meal, help with the food. We need the whole church family to make this special and joy-filled day happen! We will have a sign-up sheet for each of these categories out here in the next few weeks, so keep your eyes peeled.

Friends until then, continue to be moved by the Spirit, find the joys around you, and take care of one another.

In Christ's Love,

Pastor Blaine

Pastor Blaine will be on vacation July 1 - 10.

There will be no one in the office that week. If you need to contact Pastor Blaine or Cindy, please text or call Cindy at 540 - 820 - 5604 or email the office at office.bethany@gmail.com. Jim Harris will be our guest speaker on July 7.

70TH ANNIVERSARY

Remembering Our Past, As We Anticipate The Future



My Years at Bethany UMC by Pastor Jim Harris

In April 1975, Eugene Woolridge, the Harrisonburg District Superintendent, said he was going to appoint me to serve a part-time charge of two churches in Burketown, Bethany and Pleasant Grove UMCs. Here I was, a young, inexperienced man – a Navy vet, college sophomore and K-mart employee - and I was going to be a pastor.

I had to wait until I completed License to Preach School, so I began my ministry Monday, July 21st, and preached my first sermon as a pastor on Sunday, July 27th. Because Annual Conference had already taken place, I served that first year as a “Supply

Pastor,” which meant it didn’t count as a year under appointment.

The five years I spent at the Burketown Charge yielded many blessings. I went from a part-time supply pastor to what we then called a full-time Deacon, now known as a Provisional Elder. We went from living in a small apartment to living in a brand-new parsonage. We had forged lasting friendships, buried dear church members, welcomed new lives, baptized children, youth and adults and ministered to the hurt and suffering.

One of the highlights of my time there was the beginning of the prison ministry that grew to become Kingsway Prison and Family Outreach. This began from a desire of the Bethany United Methodist Women to send Christmas cards to the inmates at Harrisonburg Camp 8. From that humble desire I became a Bible study leader at Camp 8 with church members accompanying me. Two of those members were Shelton and Louise Jennings. They had a passion for that ministry like no others, and when I decided to move, I asked them to take over the Bible study... and look what happened!

In June of 1980, just short of five years spent as the pastor of Bethany and Pleasant Grove, my family and I packed a rented U-Haul and our VW van and headed for Tulsa, Oklahoma, and three

years of seminary at the ORU School of Theology. It was not easy to leave. Tears were shed. Doubts about the decision to do this lingered. But there was also excitement and anticipation.

It is rare that a pastor gets to serve the same congregation twice, but I was blessed to be able to do just that. I was asked to fill in at Bethany for six months after their pastor was unable to continue. I started on January 11, 2009, and it was like going home after being away at college or in the service. It was the same address, the same building, and many of the same people, but there were also many changes, which is not surprising after 30 years.

By the time I returned, Bethany and Pleasant Grove had merged into one congregation and the church had added an addition with a half-gym/fellowship hall, and classrooms. When I was there in the 1970’s the pastor’s office was in the parsonage, now it was in the church, and there was an administrative assistant. And of course there were many new faces, and lots of children and youth.

I am grateful to God that I could return briefly to my first church. Bethany UMC is much like a parent to me. They got me off to a good start; their love, patience, teaching and encouragement have helped to guide my entire ministry.

(We welcome Pastor Jim Harris as our guest speaker Sunday, July 7.)

70TH ANNIVERSARY

Remembering Our Past, As We Anticipate The Future

Honoring Louise Jennings

On Sunday, July 21, we will continue to celebrate Bethany's 70th Anniversary as we recognize Louise Jennings, a former member of Bethany who recently retired from her position as executive director of Kingsway Ministries. Shel and Louise Jennings responded to God's call to begin a ministry to those in prison and their families 40 years ago! Kingsway began from their home in Weyers Cave and has expanded to include many ministries and programs from their office in Harrisonburg. We praise God for what he has accomplished through Louise over these 40 years. Please plan on staying after the service as we have a celebration reception in Louise's honor.

In addition, to honor Louise in a tangible way, we will be collecting 40 each of the following items: men's & women's deodorants, shampoos, conditioners,

shaving cream and body wash. These items will be donated to Kingsway Ministries in honor of Louise. There will be a basket in the foyer for your donations.



BUM BITES

The youth spent a wonderful week serving Dickenson County, VA in the Appalachia Mountains. We worked with the organization Appalachia Service Project and were with 7 other church groups. We stayed at Clintwood Elementary in a partitioned off gym-one side women and one side men. Our day started at 7:15 AM with wake up and devotions. After breakfast, we headed to our family's worksite. It was about 20 minutes away and literally on the side of the mountain. Our family had 4 boys, all under the age of 11. Our work week consisted of building stairs, railing, and pickets on the back of the trailer home and then a 7 foot high staircase, railing, and pickets for the front porch. Since we were unable to rebuild the front porch, we replaced reinforcing posts, pickets, and deck boards. The evenings were filled with much needed showers in the shower trailers, dinner, evening programs, and recreational games outside. A couple of days we got to explore Breaks

Interstate Park and Bear Pen public pool. Since the school was not air conditioned, fans proved to bring some comfort. We may have been a small group of six people, but we served the community well. Mission trip members consisted of Maecy Ann and Jay Frizzelle, Happy and Kevin Huffer, Lucy Huffer, and Bridgett Crawford.

Thank you to everyone who supported youth summer mission trip his past year with prayers, time, or finances. This trip would not have been possible without you.



Missions Update

by Lori Mooney

Happy 4th of July. Enjoy the picnics and fireworks. Enjoy your summer.

A huge THANK YOU to those of you who put together kits for Conference we had 32 complete kits and some money sent in from your donations.

Thank you to the youth and adults who went on the Youth Mission trip in June. We know that they made a big difference in many lives with all the work they did to help the community they were in. We know they learned new things about themselves and each one in the group. Great job! Thanks for being the hands and feet and doing some awesome work.

We are putting together some fund-raising nights with local restaurants to raise some money for Gary and Blaine to go with Friends of Barnabas to Honduras in September. Watch out for announcements about where we will be heading and when.

We have had to get a new AC unit in the sanctuary of the church, and it cost around \$9000. If anyone would like to make an extra donation, to help covering the cost of this added expense, please note on the check or cash donation that you want it to go to help with this. Thank you.

On July 21, we will be honoring Louise Jennings for her many years of service with Kingsway Ministries (now, Kingsway Outreach). We will be having an after-church event on that day and in her honor, we would like to collect items that Kingsway Outreach need. So, if you can help us out and donate and of these items, they will be presented to her on that day. We need donations of the following: (men's and women's) deodorant, shampoo, conditioner, shaving cream, and body wash. We will have a container in the set up in the foyer for your donations. Thank you. Please plan on staying after church on July 21st for some good food and fellowship.

Mission spotlight of the month: Habitat for Humanity. We believe in the power of homeownership to build strength, stability, independence, and opportunity for families and communities. Habitat for Humanity does not build homes for people, but with them as equal partners. Habitat homeowners build alongside volunteers and pay an affordable mortgage. Habitat for Humanity is committed not just to building homes, but to building community. We prioritize our construction efforts within focus neighborhoods to maximize our impact. If you would like to make an extra donation to Habitat for Humanity, please be sure to note that you want it to go to this mission.

If you know of someone who needs help, please let us know.

Lori Mooney, co-chair, 540-820-7394,
Brownsugarcookie@yahoo.com

Sarah Simmons, co-chair,
540-292-0956,
sarahsimmons4@aol.com



BASEBALL IN HEAVEN

Two brothers who loved baseball wondered whether they could play the sport when they went to heaven. So, they swore that whoever went to heaven first would find some way to let the living brother know.

The oldest brother passed away a week later. And, on the night he was buried, he reappeared at the foot of his brother's bed.

"Is there baseball in heaven?" asked the younger brother.

"Well, I've got good and bad news," the older brother said. "The good news is that there is baseball in heaven."

That's great!" said the brother. "What's the bad news?"

"The bad news is you're pitching Sunday."



REMEMBERING PHIL AND RUTH ANN MIKESELL

“He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” -Micah 6:8

As we mourn the passing of two beloved and long time members of our Bethany family, Ruth Ann and Phil Mikesell, we praise God for the sure promise that they are with him and are grateful for their example of committed discipleship. Ruth Ann and Phil are best described as “faithful servants.” They led our Mission Team for many years laying a foundation which remains a strength of our Bethany ministry today. You could count on them to volunteer to be a part of every project or fundraiser whether it was a community outreach like Vacation Bible School, assisting the youth with apple dumplings or leading a mission

team to the poorest areas of Kentucky. Most recently, they served many years as our church sextons. Ruth Ann, fun and feisty, and Phil, so humble and kind were encouragers. You could count on them to be at every church event assisting or participating. Even in the last few months Phil lamented that he was no longer able to be an active part of church activities, and 2 days before his passing, after just losing his beloved Ruth Ann of 61 years, Phil was at the worship service on Sunday.

They loved their church family and we loved them. Most of all they loved their Lord and they obediently followed his call to love their neighbor through faithful service. We will miss them, but just as many other faithful Bethany family members we have loved and lost, they will certainly live on in our hearts and memories.

May the lives and example set by Phil and Ruth Ann be a challenge to each



of us. Are we following the call of faithful service and obedience to God? Are we giving the best of ourselves and our resources or only offering what is left after pursuing the other priorities in our lives? Do we truly have the heart that Jesus has for our community, our church family and for those who are hurting, struggling and don't even know that He is their answer? Over our 70 years of ministry at Bethany, faithful members have answered the call in a myriad of ways. Let us individually and as a church family continue to listen, hear and respond.

*We are in the process of putting together a planning team
for our 70th Anniversary Celebration!*

We'll need lots of folks with lots of good ideas

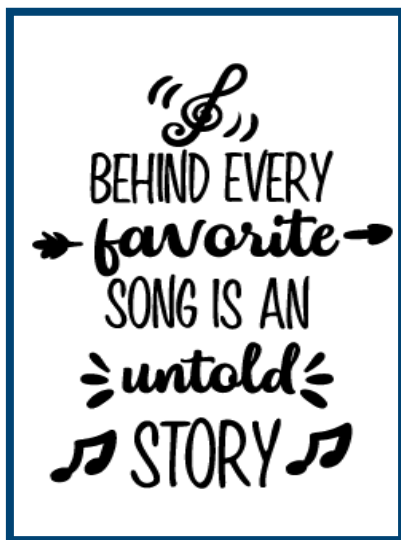
to help us plan events for this special time in our church.

If you would like to help plan events, create invites, decorate, etc.,

please contact Cindy Kite or Pastor Blaine.

SONGS FOR SUMMER!

Do you have a favorite hymn or P&W song? One you haven't heard for a while or one you can't hear enough? If so, please stop by the Welcome Center to pick up a form, fill it out, and place it in the box at the Welcome Center. This summer we want to sing some of your favorite hymns and P&W songs!



VACATION TIME

Pastor Blaine will be on vacation July 1-10. There will be no one in the office that week. If you need to contact Pastor Blaine or Cindy, please text their mobile phones! Jim Harris will be our guest speaker on July 7.

SHINE THE SANCTUARY!

Come out to help SHINE THE SANCTUARY on Tuesday, July 2 at 10 am. Our wooden pews and altar furniture need to be conditioned and polished to preserve the wood. This is an easy project for all ages. You can even sit to help with this project! We can accomplish this task quickly with lots of helping hands!



YOUNG AT HEARTS

The Young at Hearts will meet for their monthly luncheon at the church on Tuesday, July 2 at 12 pm. If you are 55+ or minus, you are invited to join this group of folks for a picnic style lunch which will be provided by our Young Adult Group. Questions? Contact Leslie Wagoner.



CALLING ALL YOUNG ADULTS!

If you are 18-30ish, we would love to have you join us for an activity or two. Most of the time the cost of the activity is covered. This is a very busy time in our lives; however, know that we are here for each other. Friends and ALWAYS welcome! Our next event is serving our Young at Hearts group at noon on Tuesday, July 2. If you are able to come and help or would like to provide a dish, please let Jac Bridges know. Proceeds from the lunch will go to cover the cost of more activities. Jac's contact info is 540-416-6122. Please text him if you would like to receive notice when an activity for the young adults is planned.

CARING CARDS

Caring Cards will NOT meet in July! If you have some spare time, join this group to write thank you notes and notes of encouragement to folks who need it. No commitment. Come when you can. We meet the second Tuesday of each month. The August meeting date has yet to be determined. Keep watching for updates in "The Happenings!"

Coffee with the Pastor

Pastor Blaine will be holding "Coffee Hours" on Thursday, July 11 from 3:30 - 5 pm at Valley Pike Rumor Mill. Come have a cup of coffee or tea and enjoy some sometimes deep conversations and at other times not so much. Everyone's invited and welcome to come!



DONUTS & DEVOTIONS

All men are invited to join us at "Donuts & Devotions" on Saturday, July 20 at 8 am. There will be donut eating. Coffee drinking. Fellowshiping. Devotion sharing and discussion on lots of different topics. There is no commitment. Just come when you can.



ICE CREAM SOCIAL

Mark your calendars now and plan to attend our Annual Ice Cream Social on Sunday, August 18 at 5:30 pm. Hotdogs, buns, and drinks will be provided. You are asked to bring a picnic type dish to share with all. And we know there's some good cooks out there! And for those of you who make that awesome homemade ice cream, start practicing those recipes so you can be crowned King or Queen Top Ice Cream Maker this year! A sign up sheet for homemade ice cream will be placed at the Welcome Center at the beginning of August.



Financial Update by Cindy Kite

Summer is here and if know me, you know that makes me really HAPPY!!! I love everything about summer ... yes even the heat! However, I don't have to work out in it as my husband always reminds me.

The summer, with all it's warm temperatures makes people think about vacations. Plan vacations. Go on

vacations!! With so many folks traveling during the summer months, church attendance is usually down. And if attendance is down, that means giving is also down. And it is!!

I know you don't want to hear about "giving money" from the church! And I don't like writing about it when there's not good news to tell!! But we want to be transparent and you need to know. We are currently \$15,939.15 or 15.3% behind in giving compared to where had hoped to be. So, before you go on vacation or a quick weekend getaway, make sure to send your giving into the church or give it a Sunday ahead of time. Most folks don't make up a missed Sunday of giving. It's important to the life of Bethany and of our ministries.

Enjoy your summer. The 4th of July. Your quick trips and family vacations. Your time outdoors with family and friends. But don't forget about your church family!

June 23, 2023 - Week 24		
Budget	226,345.00	
Where We Should Be		103,889.04
Where We Are		87,949.89
Deficit of		(15,939.15)
Net Percentage		-15.3%

July

2nd Kathy Frizzelle
Whitley Kile

3rd Thalia Casey

4th Tom Gorden

5th Daisy Castle

8th Avery Cox

12th Ramona Garrison

14th Jerry Sheets

16th Karen Ott

Ralph Reese

17th Sandy Gibson

18th Dollie Wilfong

19th Nancy Colvin

24th Tina Morris

25th Charlene Michael

27th Kathy Kile

Drew Hittie

30th Adam Casey

August

1st Eddie Lynn

3rd Joe Meek

5th Bill Kile

10th Julie Ritchie

11th Scott Williams

Christian Michael

13th Don Truslow

14th Judy Faby

18th Kevin Huffer

19th Dale Roller

20th Lindy Sheets

Robert Hill

24th Hazel Truslow

30th Carolyn Swartz

Kevin Stroop

If your birthday is listed incorrectly or not listed at all, please contact the office with the correct info. Thank you!



Prayer List

Members: Laura Lucas, Carolyn Swartz, Tom & Jan Gorden, Don & Hazel Truslow, the family of Phil & Ruth Ann Mikesell

Extended Family: Bowen - nephew of Kelli Huffer





Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>1</p> <p>God bless America</p>	<p>2</p> <p>12 pm - Young at Hearts (Church)</p>	<p>3</p> <p>6:30 pm - Women's Bible Study</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Happy Fourth of July!</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6</p>	
Pastor Blaine on Vacation!						
<p>7</p> <p>Jim Harris - Guest Speaker</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p> <p>6:30 pm - Women's Bible Study</p>	<p>11</p> <p>3:30 - 5 pm - Coffee Hours (Valley Pike)</p> 	<p>12</p>	<p>13</p> 
Pastor Blaine on Vacation!						
<p>14</p>	<p>15</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17</p> <p>6:30 pm - Women's Bible Study</p> <p>NATIONAL HOT DOG DAY!</p> 	<p>18</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>20</p> <p>8 am - Donuts & Devotions</p> 
<p>21</p> 	<p>22</p> <p>August Newsletter Articles Due!</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p> <p>6:30 pm - Women's Bible Study</p> 	<p>25</p>	<p>26</p> 	<p>27</p>
Pastor Blaine on Vacation!						
<p>28</p> <p>HAPPY Parents DAY</p> 	<p>29</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p> <p>6:30 pm - Women's Bible Study</p>			

Bethany United Methodist Church

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The Echo

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Dale Roller, Praise Band Leader
Cindy Kite, Secretary/Treasurer
Bridgett Crawford, Youth Director
Danny Perry, Sexton

August Newsletter Deadline: July 20, 2024

Please submit articles to Cindy Kite at
office.bethany@gmail.com.

Webmaster: bethanyumc.website@gmail.com



connect. grow. serve.

At Bethany we ...

Connect with God in community
Grow in our likeness to Jesus Christ
Serve our neighbors