

December 2018  
Volume MMXVIII Issue 9

Bethesda Presbyterian Church



# Bethesda Banner

Bethesda  
Presbyterian  
Church

4858 McConnell's Hwy.  
York, SC 29745  
803-328-1360

Sunday School  
9:45  
Worship Service  
11:00

*One Spirit ~*

*One Body ~*

*Many Gifts*



This is a publication of the  
people of Bethesda  
Presbyterian Church  
York, South Carolina

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## Rejoice This Christmas Day

Unto us a Son was given,  
rejoice this Christmas day,  
a gift from God to you and I,  
the Truth, the Light, the Way.

To the world a Savior's born,  
rejoice this Christmas day,  
He fills the soul's hunger pain,  
the Bread, the Life, the Way.

To every heart bound in sin,  
rejoice this Christmas day,  
the gift of grace will set you free,  
the Christ, the Lord, the Way.

To thirsty souls everywhere,  
rejoice this Christmas day,  
and drink from the Fountain of Life,  
the Grace, the Mercy, the Way.

To all those who are heavy-laden,  
rejoice this Christmas day,  
for He is the Prince of our Peace,  
the Door, the Lamb, the Way.

Rejoice on this Christmas day,  
your Lord and Saviour is here,  
rejoice, I say again, rejoice  
let His birth bring your heart cheer.

—Deborah Ann Belka

**“The fruit of SILENCE is prayer. The fruit of PRAYER is faith. The fruit of FAITH is love. The fruit of LOVE is service. The fruit of SERVICE is peace. -Mother Teresa**

## *Session Highlights*

The Bethesda Session met on Sunday, November 18, 2018. Items covered at the meeting included the following:

- Received a new member
- Received monthly committee reports
- Received the financial report
- Received the Pastor’s Report
- Considered a request to use the Family Life Center for Basketball Practice
- Reviewed a list of members who have not been attending and planned out-reach to these members
- Received a brief update on the Pastor Nominating Committee. The PNC will meet with representatives from Providence Presbytery on November 27.
- Planned Elder Training
- Set December 30, 2018, as the date for Elder Ordination and Installation
- Elected Johnny Walker and Karen Percival to serve on the 2019 Congregational Nominating Committee

### *Congregation Elects New Elders*

A meeting of the congregation was held on Sunday, November 11, 2018, immediately following the 11:00 AM worship service. The following people were elected to serve as Elders for the class of 2021: Trudy Amick, Bobby Fulmer, Jim Percival, and Debbie Simpson.

### *Pastor Nominating Committee Has First Meeting*

The newly formed PNC (Pastor Nominating Committee) held its first meeting on November 27, 2018, to begin Bethesda’s search for a called pastor. Committee members are Valerie Bull, Cindy Davis, Stacy Russell, Donna Hagler, Jim Percival, John Nettles, and Irvin Jones. The committee will meet again on December 11, 2018. The commissioning of this committee will take place on Sunday, January 6, 2019. After morning worship, lunch will be provided by the committee for our congregation in the Fellowship Hall.

#### *November Attendance*

	Worship	Sun. School
Nov 4	53	44
Nov 11	81	47
Nov 18	78	46
Nov 25	57	40



#### *December Elders on Duty*

*John Nettles  
Stacy Russell  
Johnny Walker*

*Liturgist - Johnny Walker*



“He Is Our Hope” will be presented by Bethesda’s Choir and Hand Chimers at the morning worship service on

**Sunday, December 16 at 11:00**

Please plan to join us for this very special celebration of our Savior’s birth. To God alone be the glory as we worship Him through His gift of music!

### *Congregation Celebrates Baptism and Welcomes New Member*

On Sunday, November 11 **Hill McClain Sutton**, son of Justin and Anna Muse Sutton, was baptized at Bethesda Presbyterian Church. Hill is the grandson of Hill and Robin Muse.

We welcome **Sullivan Foy** to Bethesda Presbyterian Church. He is transferring by Letter of Membership from First Baptist Church in Rock Hill. We are happy to have him join us in worship, fellowship, Bible study, and other activities at Bethesda.

### *A Note of Thanks*

Dear Prayer Shawl Ladies,

Thank you so much for the beautiful blanket for my granddaughter Reba-Rose. It means so much to know it was crocheted with prayers. I will treasure it and save it for her child one day. You were so kind to think of us. It is just gorgeous and so soft. Reba-Rose loves it. Thanks again.

-LaVonne Stewart

## *December*

### **A Thought to Ponder**

### **A Message for All to Carry**

The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it....The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

The Gospel of John

## *Carols at Your Door December 9*

It’s that time of year! This year Bethesda voices will bring “Carols at Your Door” to those in our congregation and community that might need a little Christmas cheer. **We will meet in the Fellowship Hall on Sunday, December 9th from 3:45 - 6:00.** If you have names of people we may sing to, please contact Steve Childers (803-417-3571) or the church office by December 5th. Everyone is invited to join us for caroling and then return to the Fellowship Hall for fun and refreshments. There will be a sign-up sheet in the Narthex. Come help us spread the Christmas cheer as we celebrate the season of Jesus’s birth.



If you would like to **order a Christmas poinsettia** to decorate the sanctuary, please order by December 16. It may be in honor of or in memory of a loved one. A sign-up sheet is in the vestibule or you may call the church office to place your order. Make checks payable to Bethesda Presbyterian Church and write poinsettia on the memo line of the check. The cost is \$12 each. Only 30 poinsettias have been ordered, so get your order in soon. You may give your check to Stacy Russell, John Nettles, or place it in the offering plate. You may also turn it in to the church office.



## Don't Forget!!

**It's not too late to help with Operation Christmas Child!** We are still collecting items to fill shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child. You may bring these items on Sunday morning and give them to Karen Percival or Lindy Blanks or plan on joining us at the Packing Party Sunday afternoon, December 2, from 2:00 - 4:00. Everyone is invited.

Other ways that everyone from the congregation can be involved with this project include:

- You can pack your own boxes and bring them to the church for us to deliver to the Operations Center.
- You can send a monetary donation to help cover the \$9 shipping fee for each shoebox.
- Pray for Samaritan's Purse, the workers who make this project happen, and the children who will receive the shoe boxes.

## *Welcome Aboard!*

We want to welcome **Lindy Blanks** to Bethesda. She has accepted a position as our interim Director of Christian Education. Lindy is from Chester and worked previously as an English teacher. She comes to us full of ideas and excitement as she begins her new journey with us. She even joined us for our Adventure Air trip and had a blast getting to know some of our children and youth while jumping with them. Anyone who talks to her can't help but feel excited because of her bubbly personality and energy. Lindy's email address is: [bethesdaycm@comporium.net](mailto:bethesdaycm@comporium.net).

## *Guatemala Mission Trip*

Bethesda's Guatemala Mission Trip will be July 13-20, 2019. We will travel to Guatemala to work with Dr. Tito and La Mision. If you missed the informational meeting on November 25 but are interested in going, please contact Steve or Sarah Childers to get your mission trip packet. It contains the application and should answer many of your questions. Still not sure? Steve or Sarah will be happy to discuss this important decision with you.

**Bethesda CDC would like to wish all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!** The Center will be closed December 24 - 26 and January 1 for the holidays. We will be hosting our annual Christmas musical program on Thursday, December 13 at 7:00 PM in the Family Life Center. All are welcome to attend.



## **Child Development Center**

**A Ministry of Bethesda  
Presbyterian Church**

The Center is also serving Gardner's BBQ on Thursday, December 13 in the Fellowship Hall from 3:30-6:00 PM. Tickets are \$10 each and include: BBQ, bun, beans, chips and slaw. All proceeds benefit the playgrounds. Baked goods will also be sold. If you would like to donate baked good items or purchase tickets please contact someone at 803-328-0149 or stop by the Center.

***Tickets must be pre-purchased by Thursday, December 6.***

We would like to thank Ms Jamie (17 years) and Ms Stacy (15 years) for their dedicated years of service to Bethesda's CDC. Happy Birthday to: Demetrius G, Press S, Sawyer S, Baron W and JESUS!

## *Playground Fundraiser*

On Thursday, December 13, 2018, the CDC will have their Annual Christmas Program at 7:00 PM in the Family Life Center. Everyone is welcome to attend. In conjunction with the program, **the CDC Advisory Board will sell Gardner's BBQ plates** in the Fellowship Hall from 3:30 – 6:00 for \$10 per plate (BBQ will not be sold by the pound). The plate will include a BBQ sandwich, baked beans, slaw and chips. Our goal is to sell at least 300 plates. In addition, various baked good items will be for sale. Tickets will be pre-sold, with a cut-off date of December 6 in order to have an accurate plate count. **All proceeds will go toward the restoration of the church's playgrounds.**

If you would be willing to donate baked goods, please contact the daycare at 328-0149. Tickets may be purchased at the daycare, the church office M-F 9:00 to 1:00 PM, or from Donna Hagler, Cheryl Forlines, Todd Russell or Gayle Dickson. If you would like to buy a plate and not attend the program, you may prefer to pick it up before 6:00 to avoid the parking lot congestion.

If you have any questions, or need tickets outside of these time slots, please feel free to contact me at 803-627 - 8410. If you are homebound and would still like a plate, I will do my best to arrange that for you. Thanks in advance for your participation.

-Todd Russell, Chair, CDC Advisory Board



**Congratulations** to Elizabeth and Carolann Bull, Raegan Hall, and Grayson Darby for their Perfect Attendance in Sunday School for the month of November. That's awesome!

*Maybe Christmas doesn't come from a store—maybe Christmas perhaps means a little bit more. - Dr. Suess*

## *Children and Youth*

**Saturday, December 1** 9:00 AM Hanging of the Green - help decorate the sanctuary. All ages are invited.

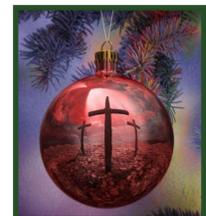
**Sunday, December 2** 2:00 - 4:00 PM Shoebox Packing Party. We will be packing shoeboxes in the Fellowship Hall to send to Operation Christmas Child. Afterwards, we will enjoy a treat together. Everyone is invited. Children under the age of 7 need to be accompanied by an adult.

**Monday, December 3** 3:00 - 7:00 PM Operation Christmas Child. We need a group of volunteers to work at the operations center. Volunteers must be over the age of 13. They will take our shoeboxes and have the opportunity to work alongside other volunteers to prepare the shoeboxes for final shipment. A volunteer sheet is in the Narthex.

**Sunday, December 9** 4:00 - 6:00 PM Carols at Your Door We will go Christmas caroling to people in our area and then return to the Fellowship Hall for refreshments.

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On October 12 - 14 three of our youth and two adults traveled to Asheville for an **Asheville Youth Mission Immersion Weekend**. We joined with the youth and leaders from First Presbyterian Church in York. On Friday evening we played games, had Bible study, and learned more about Saturday's activities. Saturday morning we went to the Asheville Manna Food Bank where we bagged up hundreds of breakfast cookies to be distributed to various agencies throughout the Asheville area. After lunch, we did a walk around Asheville called "A Walk in Their Shoes." Each group was given a script of a real person and the struggles they met in the streets of Asheville and the help they received to get them back on their feet. Our weekend ended on Sunday morning with a prayer walk at a Prayer Labyrinth near the river. This was a very moving activity. The weekend's theme was: "Share what you have and let God do the rest," which is a very good thing for all of us to remember.





## Unwrapping the Manger

On December 25th do we celebrate THE gift or OUR gifts? God paid the ultimate price, for sure. In the hustle and bustle of the holiday season we too pay a price. It's not just our pocketbooks that suffer. It is our hearts. We sacrifice the true joy and peace that comes with a close relationship with Jesus Christ. We offer lukewarm love and half-hearted praise to our Redeemer and call it authentic worship. Some of us, in particular myself, will sit in the pew on Christmas Eve, tired from all the preparations for Christmas Day and distracted by thoughts of Santa, gift-giving, and Christmas dinner. It is a sad, yet predictable commentary on my faith. May God forgive me. May He forgive us all.

Christmas morning will be different at our house this year. When it is time to gather around the tree, Father will unwrap a large gift placed in the middle of the room. The tag will read "To all mankind." We will remember the life and death of Jesus from the manger to the cross; from his resurrection to his ascension, to his reign as Lord and King. Each person in the family will choose an item from the gift box and explain its relevance to Jesus. What do these items have to do with Jesus? A small bundle of straw, a scroll, a hammer, a fish, a cross, a flat stone, a dove, sandals, crutches (a picture will suffice), a slice of bread, a silver coin, a heart, a crown, a gavel, a compass? We will pray and give thanks to the Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace that He is and will be for eternity.

Then, and only then, will we celebrate Jesus' birth with our gifts to each other. How ironic! It's **His** birthday., but **We** got the gift - the entire bundle- God's love, his forgiveness and his mercy. He paid the price. His Son paid the price. And by God's grace we are saved.

- Edie Nettles, Editor of the *Bethesda Banner*

## Update from Mission Partners Laura and Felipe Matias

Laura and Felipe continue to serve at Casa Semear (The Sower House) in Sao Paulo Brazil. They have been passing through an eventful season in the past few months. Felipe is currently acting as director at Casa Semear while the ministry leader is on furlough. He is responsible for planning and coordinating all activities as well as supporting the other staff members.

Recent activities at Casa Semear have included hosting mission volunteers from both the United States and Canada. In early November a group of children from Casa Semear participated in a weekend camping excursion. December projects include the annual Christmas party for all the children, teens, and their families. At this party each child receives specially selected gifts, including clothing, shoes, and a toy. These gifts are provided by generous donations to Casa Semear earmarked specifically for this annual event. For some of the participating children these are the only Christmas gifts they receive.

As always, Laura assists Felipe in this work, in addition to caring for their family and home. This fall, she has been asked to do some substitute teaching at Pan American Christian Academy, where the girls attend school. She recently had the opportunity to lead music and worship at a Women's Retreat for over 125 women at her local church. In addition, Laura and Felipe were chosen this year to prepare their church sanctuary for the Christmas season.

Laura and Felipe appreciate your continued prayers and support as they serve God and minister to the children in the slums of Sao Paulo.



Happy  
Birthday!

1	Faye Smith	9	Tommy Adkins	18	Martina Russell
1	Lewis Smith	9	Jerry Dickson	21	Ginger Dewey
3	Tony Plott	9	Robert Walker	21	Melanie Dover
5	Suzanne Griffin	11	Jim Conrad	21	Ina Oates
5	Will Johnston	11	Kristy Melton	24	Buddy Clawson
6	Melissa Wallace	14	Tyler Hamm	27	Tim Goodband
7	James Anthony, Jr	15	Reggie Clawson	28	Eddie Smith
8	Ernice Bookout	16	Micah Hancock	28	Robert Fulmer

## Remember in Prayer

### At Bethesda

Bill Dover  
Michelle Melton  
Steve Rawdon  
Sonny Moore  
Ethan Hose  
Eddie Allan Smith  
Julie Cornwell  
Don Faris  
Walter Jonas  
Ron Hope  
Patsy Walker  
Barbara Thompson

### Homebound

Amelia Simmers  
Robert Jones

### In the Community and Beyond

Dorothy Adkins  
Walt Bratton  
Larry Rockholt  
Chris Brackett  
Christine Roberts  
Dorothy Hazard  
Cathy Cole  
Caleb Dickson

Jessie Mitchell  
Sonny Adkins  
Betty Grigg  
Donnie Greene  
Ed Beam  
Russ Branch  
Julie Pittman  
Ken and Diane Stevens  
J. Claude Bell IV  
Christine King - Jim & Hildgard Bell's granddaughter  
Reed Wagner  
Elsa Carabello

Randy and Virginia Medley  
Reed Wagner  
New Mother's Cottage at Thornwell  
Those impacted by the California wildfires  
Leaders of our country

### Our Global Mission Partners

Matias Family  
Palacios Family  
Driggers Family

# DECEMBER

### Regularly Scheduled Activities

Mondays - Boy Scouts 7:00 FH No meeting on Dec 24 or 31  
Tuesdays - Cub Scouts 7:00 FH No meeting on Dec 24 or 31  
Wednesdays - TGI Wed Dinner 6:30 FH  
No choir practice last 2 weeks of December  
Thursdays - Bible Study 7:00 FH  
Prayer Shawl - December 4 6:30 SR  
Evening Circle - December 1 10:00 AM Trudy Amick's house  
Morning Circle - first Wednesday of the month 10:00 FH  
Men of the Church - will not meet in December

### Regularly Scheduled Committee Meetings *GET*

Admin/Stewardship Committee - Second Sunday 7:00 PM SR  
Child Development Center - Second Tuesday 6:30 PM SR  
Christian Education - Dec 2 after Shoebox Packing Party FH  
Congregational Life - TBA  
Property Committee - Scheduled as Needed  
Worship Committee - TBA  
Personnel Committee - Quarterly, as Scheduled

### Other Activities in December

**Sat. Dec 1** - Hanging of the Green 9:00  
**Sun. Dec 2** - Shoebox Packing Party 2 - 4  
**Sun. Dec 2** - FROG Ministries (basketball) 3:00 - 5:30 FLC  
**Mon. Dec 3** - Hand Chimes 6:30  
**Tues. Dec 4** - Prayer Shawl 6:30 SR  
**Sat. Dec 7** - Saluda Center Open House 3:00 - 5:30 Call Saluda Center for location  
**Sun. Dec 9** - Christmas Caroling 3:45 - 6 FH  
**Mon. Dec 10** - Hand Chimes 6:30  
**Wed. Dec 12** - Choir Full Rehearsal 7:15  
**Tues. Dec 11** - PNC meeting 7:00 SR  
**Thur. Dec 13** - CDC Christmas Program 7:00 FLC  
BBQ Fundraiser 3:30 - 6 FH  
**Fri. Dec 14** - Cub Scouts Lock-in 7 PM until noon on Sat. FLC  
**Sun. Dec 16** - Christmas Choral Program 11:00  
**Tues. Dec 18** - Third Tues. Tog. 10 AM BW  
**Mon. Dec 24** - Remembrances 7:00 PM and Christmas Eve Service and Communion 7:30 PM  
**Tues. - Wed. Dec 24 and 25** Office closed  
**Sun. Dec 30** - Elder Ordination and Installation

*One Spirit ~ One Body ~ Many Gifts*

## Bethesda Presbyterian Church

*4858 McConnells Hwy.  
York, South Carolina 29745*

*Phone: 803.328.1360*

*Email: [bethesda@comporium.net](mailto:bethesda@comporium.net)*

*Website: [www.bethesdapres.org](http://www.bethesdapres.org)*



Light of the World

### Our Pastor:

Rev. Doug Blaikie

### Our Elders:

Ralph Adams

Darius Alexander

Mark Boyd

Trey Amick

Steve Childers

Debbie Darby

Cheryl Forlines

John Nettles

Karen Percival

Stacy Russell

Todd Russell

Johnny Walker

## Have a Blessed Merry Christmas!

### 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:

Secretary/Bookkeeper - Pat Jones    Director of Music Ministry - LaRayne Hall

Director of Children/Youth Ministries - Lindy Blanks

Caretaker - Mike Percival    Sexton - Donna Hagler