



BETHANY CHURCH
OF BERWICK
116 Summerhill Avenue
Berwick, Pennsylvania 18603

BETHANY BEACON

Mission Statement: We are a Beacon for God—
Helping people to see, to accept and to grow in the light of Jesus Christ

VOLUME SIXTY

FEBRUARY 2024

ISSUE—ONE



DURING THIS LENTEN SEASON,
*we praise God for
his righteous Son,*
who perfectly kept all of God's commandments
for us and paid the full price
for our disobedience.

Lenten Services will be on Wednesday evenings at 7:00 pm.
February 14, Ash Wednesday service will be at Bethany Church of Berwick.

The host church will be announced at a later time for the following dates:

February 21, February 28, March 6, March 13, March 20

Holy Thursday March 28 at Bethany Church of Berwick

BETHANY STAFF

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“Like” us on Facebook!

New Address!

[https://www.facebook.com/
bethanychurchofberwick/](https://www.facebook.com/bethanychurchofberwick/)

Worship Schedule

**In Celebration of Bethany Church and to
Welcome Pastor John Leek and Family**

February 11, 2024

Sunday School @ 10:00 am

Combined Worship @ 11:00 am

for a Service of Consecration

Luncheon to Follow



We will be having a soup/stew/chili luncheon after the Combined Worship service on February 11 at 11:00 am. We ask you to sign up so we can plan on how many will be in attendance. You are asked to provide a favorite soup, stew, chili or dessert. We encourage you to invite your family members and neighbors to join in worship and celebration.



Short Term Prayer Concerns

Dee, Kenzie, John Zeart, Deb Springman, Becky, Harold Ackerman, Family in Turmoil, Matt Glasgow, Paul Miller, Deb Leffler, Jack and Mary Carver, Olga, JoAnne Heacock, Barb Fenstermacher, Pat, Jack Peters, Barry, Karen Dobernack, Joshua, Charlene Dailey, Kellie Eyer, Pastor John's Family, Pat Leach, Lisa, Dean Bowman

Please note: If you would like someone to be moved to the long-term list, please contact the church office.

Long-Term Prayer Concerns

Wendy McClintock, Donna Stubbs, Sam Miller, Shirley Hornberger, Kim Varner, Marlene Eckrote, Jim & Carol Zeart, Kim Kishbaugh, Warren Wolfe, Edna Mae Belles, Kent Williams, Rosemary Martz, Joe Phillips, Sr., Betty Morgan, Karen Hunsinger, Bill Mausteller, Billy Robbins, Samantha Scoblink, Nick Pritchuk, Renee Ptashinski, Mike Mattern, Esther Bower, John Ptashinski, Joan Harmon, Dick and Bethann Savage, Carmella Picarello, Judy Harvey, Edna McClintock, Gloria Varner, Eric Black, Tod Locher, Lisa Hubley, Gary Fisher, Pastor Ed Cope, Jackie Fisher, Tammy Smith, Frances Houseknecht, Pam Price



A prayer for Lent

Dear Christ, hasten to me. Release me from my sins. Free my arms from the chains of evil, that I may embrace you. Lift the scales of ignorance from my eyes that I may see you. Why do you delay? What are you waiting for? You are my God and my Lord, you are my refuge and strength, you are my glory and my hope. In you I put my trust. Dear Christ, hasten to me.

—Aelred of Rievaulx (12th century)



**Bethany Church of Berwick
Peacemakers Prayer Support Ministry**

Matthew 5:9

**Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called sons of God.**

General Prayer for Departments:

- Borough of Berwick Police Department**
- Briar Creek Township Police Department**
- Salem Township Police Department**
- Nescopeck Borough Police Department**
- Columbia County Sheriff's Office**
- South Centre Township Police Department**
- PA State Police Shickshinny Station**

Specific Daily Prayer for Officers: February 2024

1. Deputy Michael Tkach
2. Officer Kyle Trenholm
3. Deputy James Dalton
4. Officer Joseph Gainley
5. Deputy Kevin Bradley
6. Officer Michael Klinetob
7. Vincent Figureido, Patrolman
8. Officer Raymond Thonkinson, III
9. Detective Gregory Martin
10. Sgt. Thomas Hegland
11. Officer Joshua Switzer
12. Chief Deputy Michael Beyer
13. Officer Joshua Lowery
14. Tyler Soboleski, Patrolman
15. Officer Brandon Shultz
16. Deputy James Arter
17. Officer Steven Torres
18. Officer Scott Sienkiewicz
19. William Lefevre, Patrolman
20. Officer Victor Guevara
21. Detective Reagan Rafferty
22. Deputy Kevin Katch
23. Officer Phil Mainiero
24. Officer Michael Quaranta
25. Officer Riley Robinette
26. Cole Schaffer, Patrolman
27. Lee Pitonyak, Patrolman
28. Deputy Anthony Kopitski
29. Officer Randy Gaugler

- 2/02 Lonnie Brady
- 2/03 Deanna Schuckers
- 2/04 Gina Talanca
- 2/05 Savannah Terry, Carter Townsend
- 2/07 Kimberly Morris
- 2/08 Carole Unseth
- 2/09 Donald Davis, Whitney Holloway,
Benjamin Stroup
- 2/10 Nolan Eyer, Shane Scandle,
Ruby Sherman
- 2/12 Julia Rauch
- 2/13 Jarrett Samsel
- 2/14 Paityn Brown
- 2/15 Cassidy Boston, Cindy Sweppenheiser
- 2/17 Douglas Stroup
- 2/18 Kenton Karns
- 2/19 Jane Ruhmel, Hope Samsel
- 2/21 Mary Remley
- 2/23 Christy Kehl-Hess
- 2/24 Susan Forsythe, Norman Peters
- 2/25 Dena Klingerman
- 2/26 Melanie Grasley-Mordan,
Adam Molick
- 2/27 Harvey Eckart
- 2/28 Harold Ackerman, Chris Nowakoski

Winter has arrived!

We are all ok. Brenda surprised us with a weeks visit from California, the week before Christmas. We had a great time.

Love & God Bless,

June A. Sitler

P.S. Thanks for the Christmas card.

BEACON ARTICLE – FEBRUARY 2024

Reflecting and Looking Ahead

Bethany Church begins 2024 full of hope and optimism! Stepping out in faith, the congregation in 2022 made the difficult decision to leave the United Methodist denomination and then join the fledgling Global Methodist Church. That links us with fellow believers from around the world who are committed to “make disciples of Jesus Christ who worship passionately, love extravagantly, and witness boldly.”

This month we welcome Pastor John Wesley Leek, who also transitioned from the UMC to GMC. We're excited to work with him to discern God's plan for Bethany's next chapter in ministry. Our name may have changed, but our commitment to serve as a beacon of God helping others to see, accept and grow in the light of Jesus Christ burns as bright as ever!

2023 Highlights

A lot took place at Bethany Church last year:

- The UMC approved Bethany's disaffiliation.

- The congregation officially incorporated as Bethany Church of Berwick.

- Bethany Church of Berwick took ownership of church property.

- Bethany joined the Global Methodist denomination.

- Signage, logo and other communications were updated to reflect our new status.

- John Leek was invited to serve as pastor.

- PB&J care pack and pantry box give-aways took place each month.

- Bethany hosted two clothing give-aways.

- We collected food for Harvest Home.

- Giving Tree Ministry provided warm clothing to Berwick residents downtown.

- Ladies fellowship met regularly throughout the year.

- The Peacemakers offered encouragement and prayer for local law enforcement officers.

- Post Overdose Response Team connected with community members in recovery from substance abuse.

- We welcomed eight new members into the church family!

In the last seven months, we were blessed to hear from numerous guest speakers. Special thanks to those from our own congregation who led services and shared messages: Gary Bowman, Jeff Girton, Rev. Ralph Hartenbach, Sarah Hazlett, Angel Kishbaugh, and Ron Sult.

Attendance remained consistent throughout the year, a testament to the congregation's commitment and the relevant lessons and sermons shared.

Financial Update

Bethany Church enters 2024 financially stable but in need of support. The costly disaffiliation process drained reserves, and some major capital expenses loom large on the horizon.

We ask that you prayerfully consider your weekly stewardship. Offerings continue to lag behind expenses. While income from the T-Mobile contract, savings on pastor expenses, and other revenue have helped offset the shortfall, this is not sustainable.

BEACON ARTICLE – FEBRUARY 2024

Financial Update—Continued

Our 2023 year-end balance totaled \$173,257, which includes all funds. That may sound like a hefty sum, but it costs about \$236,000 annually to operate the church.

Council is currently planning a campaign to replenish funds and prepare for anticipated facility repairs. Look for announcements and your invitation to participate in the coming months.

That said, God continues to provide! Despite 2023's tremendous expenses, Bethany's generous heart shone through in continued support for numerous ministries. The congregation contributed about \$20,000 to missions, including Extra Mile Giving.

A Fresh Start

We're grateful to the many church members who have helped prepare the parsonage for the arrival of Pastor John, wife Abby and their three sons. Pastor John begins his official duties Sunday, Feb. 4, though he has been planning for the Lenten season since January.

We will join in a combined service of consecration at 11 a.m. Sunday, Feb. 11, to reaffirm our collective commitment to joyfully sharing the light of Christ. With Lent beginning Wednesday, Feb. 14, this is an excellent time to reflect, reconnect, and rekindle our faith.

We look forward to celebrating and serving with you!

In His service,

Bethany Church Council



The Bell Choir is being formed here at Bethany. If you are interested, please contact Sally (Sara) Miller by phone call or text at (570) 759-8892. Everyone is welcome to join. We would like to start practicing soon so please let Sally know you want to be a part of the Bell Choir.



Welcome Pastor John Leek and his family to Bethany Church of Berwick. We are so happy to welcome Pastor John and his wife, Abby, and their 3 sons to our Church Family.

Have You Named Bethany in Your Will?

A reminder to anyone who has included a bequest to Bethany in your will: Please update your documents with the name **Bethany Church of Berwick** to ensure that your gift is distributed according to your wishes. Thank you!

Missions & Evangelism

Extra Mile Giving for February will be in support Krista Hartenbach's Mission Work

Our Extra Mile Giving for February will be in support of Krista Hartenbach's mission work with RESOURCING CHRISTIAN EDUCATION INTERNATIONAL. R.C.E. serves international Christian schools and education ministries in their mission of providing exceptional educational opportunities with a biblical foundation and Christian worldview. You may use the envelopes that are available at the Information Desk in the Main Entrance hallway and on the Angel Card Table.

Your Loving Choices, Inc.
904 Market Street
Bloomsburg, PA 17815
(570) 784-6124

Donation Statement

\$200.00 for 2023

Bethany Church Berwick
116 Summerhill Avenue
Berwick, PA 18603

"His eye is on the Sparrow; I know He watches me". Matthew 10:29-31

With such confidence we wish you and your loved ones a blessed new year in the Lord. His faithfulness will endure in your life throughout the new year. We thank God for you. May His name be praised!

At YLC, we continue to have confidence and believe in his promises. We are blessed to close the year with you alongside of us to continue serving this community that we love and cherish. Thank you for your prayers and for your financial contributions to this kingdom-ministry. May God bless you!

Again, we wish you a great new year and remember, "He watches you".

Bonne Année 2024!

In HIS Infinite Love,

Marthe Poteau-Beauvais



Bethany Church of Berwick hosted a Ladies Fun Afternoon event on December 3. The ladies enjoyed making a snowman craft and a hot cocoa bar.

Ladies from the community were also invited to the fellowship.

Seated: Karen Stroup, Susan Forsythe, Linda Hughes, Shirley Welliver, Judy Harvey

Middle Row: Margie Monroe, Paige Brown, Paityn Brown, Diane Shymansky, Elizabeth Stout, Allison Heintz

Back Row: Angel Kishbaugh, Michelle Seigfried, Sarah Schenkel, Sheilia Williams, Samantha Scoblinsk, Sarah Hazlett

The next Ladies Fun Event is scheduled for February 24.

Fun with color!

The inaugural 2024 Ladies' gathering will be a watercolor painting tutorial led by Barbara Erb & Sarah Hazlett.

Join us Saturday, February 24, 1-3 pm as we learn about how watercolors work! You'll leave with your own one-of-a-kind artwork, and enjoy an afternoon of fun & fellowship at the same time.

No fee, though donations are welcomed! Open to the ladies of Bethany Church and of the community, membership not required.

Be sure to register soon so we can have plenty of supplies on hand!

Puzzle!

After solving the equations, write the words on the correct numbered lines below. Complete Ephesians 1:3 (NIV) to discover how God shows his great love for us.

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 14 - 7 = ___ Father | 10 + 15 = ___ in |
| 10 + 9 = ___ heavenly | 10 - 5 = ___ God |
| 9 + 9 = ___ the | 6 - 3 = ___ to |
| 12 + 12 = ___ blessing | 12 - 6 = ___ and |
| 2 - 1 = ___ Praise | 6 + 6 = ___ Christ |
| 7 + 7 = ___ has | 18 - 9 = ___ our |
| 11 + 11 = ___ every | 22 - 11 = ___ Jesus |
| 13 + 13 = ___ Christ | 1 + 1 = ___ be |
| 8 + 8 = ___ us | 7 + 6 = ___ who |
| 10 + 10 = ___ realms | 2 + 2 = ___ the |
| 8 + 9 = ___ in | 10 + 5 = ___ blessed |
| 5 + 5 = ___ Lord | 4 + 4 = ___ of |
| 10 + 11 = ___ with | 10 + 13 = ___ spiritual |

1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22		
23	24	25	26		

Ephesians 1:3, NIV

Answer: Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. Ephesians 1:3, NIV



CONNECTED BY LOVE

God's Word is filled with messages about love, which connects us to God and to one another.

Directions: Draw a line from the beginning of each Bible verse (on the left side) through the heart to the rest of the verse (on the right side). Use the Scripture references for help.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| a. We | 1. each other as I have loved you. John 15:12 |
| b. Above all, | 2. has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. John 15:13 |
| c. My command is this: | 3. But perfect love drives out fear. 1 John 4:18 |
| d. And over all these virtues put on | 4. each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. 1 Peter 4:8 |
| e. Greater | 5. the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! 1 John 3:1 |
| f. See what great | 6. because he first loved us. 1 John 4:19 |
| g. There is no fear in | 7. which binds them all together in perfect unity. Colossians 3:14 |



Answers: a, 6; b, 4; c, 1; d, 7; e, 2; f, 5; g, 3

Spring training for Christians

The word Lent comes from Middle English and German words for springtime. In light of the start of baseball season, some people call the pre-Easter season "spring training for Christians." This fresh perspective moves away from the flawed understanding that Lent must be somber, or that giving something up for Lent is punishment for sin or a way to earn God's favor.

As people of faith, we should never take a season off. But every so often — at least once a year! — we do well to examine where we need to get back in shape spiritually. Perhaps we will indeed opt to give something up: that swearing habit, sleeping in on Sundays, or the cost of a weekly treat so we can donate the money instead. Or maybe we'll take on something new for Lent: a Bible study, prayer routine or service project.

God-shaped hole



Have you ever neared the completion of a jigsaw puzzle, only to discover that a piece or two is missing? That's an apt visual for what it's like to live without God. Blaise Pascal, a 17th-century philosopher, observed: "There is a God-shaped vacuum in the heart of each man which cannot be satisfied by any created thing but only by God the Creator, made known through Jesus Christ."

Centuries earlier, St. Augustine proclaimed "Thou hast made us for thyself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in thee." And in the Old Testament, the writer of Ecclesiastes expounded on the meaninglessness of earthly striving and material pursuits. Only God's Spirit can fill our emptiness and satisfy our eternal longings.

"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full," says Jesus in John 10:10 (NIV). He alone provides the solution for emptiness. What comfort to be filled with — and to find our fulfillment in — our Savior!

February 2024						Mar 2024 ▶	
◀ Jan 2024	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 6:30 pm Scouts(Scout)	2 Groundhog Day	3
4 PASTOR JOHN W. LEEK 9:00 am Traditional Worship 10am Sunday School 11am Contemporary Srv	5 6:30 pm Grief Support (RM2)	6 8am TOPS (SGR) 6:30pm Pieces of Prayer (SGR)	7 4:30pm Audit (Rm 2) 6:15pm Praise Team (BR)	8 6:30 pm Scouts(Scout)	9 6:30 pm Scouts(Scout)	10 9am Giving Tree (Front Street) 1pm Schenkel party (FH)	
11 Transfiguration Sunday Consecration Service 10am Sunday School 11am Combined Service 12pm Luncheon	12 6:30 pm Grief Support (RM2)	13 8am TOPS (SGR)	14 Ash Wednesday Valentine's Day 6:15pm Praise Team (BR) 7:00 pm Ash Wednesday Service (Bethany)	15 6:30 pm Scouts(Scout) 6:30 pm Church Council (SGR)	16	17	
18 1st Sunday in Lent 9:00 am Traditional Worship 10am Sunday School 11am Contemporary Srv	19 Presidents' Day Bethany Blessings Closed 6:30 pm Grief Support (RM2) 	20 8am TOPS (SGR)	21 PBJ Distribution 6:15pm Praise Team (BR) 7:00 pm Lenten Service	22 6:30 pm Scouts(Scout)	23	24 Ladies Fun Day 1-3 (FH)	
25 2nd Sunday in Lent 9:00 am Traditional Worship 10am Sunday School 11am Contemporary Srv	26 6:30 pm Grief Support (RM2)	27 8am TOPS (SGR)	28 6:15pm Praise Team (BR) 7:00 pm Lenten Service	29 6:30 pm Scouts(Scout) 			