



Bethel Presbyterian Church

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The Open Door

Volume 10, No. 12

December 2013

Dear
Friends,

It doesn't seem possible that it is already Advent! My goodness, didn't we just celebrate Christmas 2012? Ready or not, Advent is here and in four weeks, Christmas will be upon us too. But right now, as I write this, it is the week of Thanksgiving and so I want to begin this letter with a thanks to you all. This year we received 74 angels – that is more than twice the number we have had in previous years. And guess what – only 6 angels were left on the tree and for those several people donated money so the church elves could shop. So Thank You! Thank you for your generosity to those in need in our community all the time but especially this time of year. Thank you for taking extra angels, for donating money to buy food for Christmas baskets, thank you for going the extra mile to make Christmas joyful for our neighbors.

Lots of folks have been making plans for Hanging of the Greens activities, for Christmas basket distributions, and for the pageant and Christmas Eve. It is a busy season – this one of pondering and waiting! So thanks to the legions of Christmas elves it takes to pull all of this off, and thanks to all of you who will come and participate and enjoy this season as a church family. Check out the rest of the Open Door to find out the details of all these wonderful Advent and Christmas plans and mark your calendar.

This time of year is full of wonder and awe and it should be. It still makes me pause to think that God chose a baby – small, vulnerable, powerless – to show us how much God loves us. God came to us in that fragile little being to show us the face of

love. And that is what this season is all about – LOVE. Not sentimental, sappy love. But real love, the kind that requires devotion, attention, care, sleepless nights, saying no, letting go, being vulnerable.

We will read through Isaiah this Advent season with his images of the peaceable kingdom, the lion and the lamb, the little child who leads us. Those images are filled with love, they are the result of love. As we move through the activities, the parties, the preparations of this season may we remember that it is about LOVE – real love. And may we imagine how real love is a part of our lives – with ourselves, in our families, in our school or work relationships, in our view of the community and the world. God loves us – God loves you!

*Grace and peace,
Wendy*

Fellowship Team

Thank you to the Generosity Team and to Nancy King for coordination of Bethel Teams to provide assistance with the chili/petros meal that was served following the congregational meeting on November 10, to Viviana Vanegas for the chuchitos, to Roger Richmond for the desserts, and to all those who assisted with set-up, clean-up, and kitchen duties. As I heard Roger's reminder to us: many hands make quick work!

Hanging of the Greens is scheduled for December 8. A soup/sandwich meal will be served. Cupcakes will be iced as a favorite activity during the afternoon festivities and enjoyed as a dessert for our evening meal as we celebrate the upcoming birthday of Christ.

The Fellowship Team requests Bethel members and friends to bring cookies and other "finger desserts" to share following the Fellowship Supper and annual Christmas pageant on Wednesday, December 18.

Appreciation for John Carter and his service to Bethel will be celebrated to honor his retirement as custodian at the end of the year. Plans include a punch/cookie reception to be hosted on December 29 following worship service.

Thank you to Mary B. Hines who has volunteered to assume responsibility for routine scheduling of the monthly host(s) for Fellowship Suppers. We appreciate Marianne Shadden's faithfulness to this past duty.

Hanging of the Greens

The Hanging of the Greens will be held on Sunday, December 8th, beginning at 3 p.m.

This is the time when we decorate the church with wreaths, garlands, a Christmas tree, and evergreens for Advent and Christmas. It readies the sanctuary, and all of us as well, for the season. The Hanging of the Greens Celebration is also the day that the Christmas Baskets and gifts are distributed.

Here's a brief schedule of times and activities:

3 p.m. -- Activities begin. There are craft activities for children and adults in the fellowship hall, and distribution of baskets and gifts takes place in the gathering area upstairs. The outdoor Nativity will be set up outside, and various other decorating activities will take place all over the church.

5:45 p.m. – Join us in the fellowship hall for a simple meal of soup and sandwiches with cupcakes for dessert.

6:30 – The day concludes with worship in the sanctuary, as we reflect on the message of the Advent season.



Special Advent and Christmas Worship Services

Sunday, December 8

Hanging of the Greens begins at 3:00

Wednesday, December 18

Fellowship Supper and Pageant 6:30

Sunday, December 22 :

Special Choir Music at the 11 a.m. worship service

Tuesday, December 24

Candlelight Christmas Eve Communion Service 7 p.m.

Sunday, December 29

Lessons and Carols at the 11 a.m. worship service

Roane County High School Band fruit arrives the night of December 4. Get ready to enjoy those sweet oranges.

A New Year Faith Formation

Opportunity:

We are excited to offer a cross generational faith formation opportunity during the first quarter of 2014.

The title of the study is "The Heart of Christianity" based on the book of the same name by Marcus Borg. Mark your calendar now for the following dates:

Sunday Jan 19, 26; Feb 23 and March 9 from 5-6:30 with dinner provided.

Sat/Sun Feb 15-16 Church Family Retreat at John Knox Center

Wed, March 26 during Church Supper

This faith formation series will cover topics such as who is God, what is faith, how do we understand salvation, and the practice of being Christian. On the Sunday night sessions, we will worship, have table conversations together and break up into age groups for discussion. There is more information on the retreat in another article in this newsletter – so be sure to read it too. This cross generational faith formation series is a wonderful opportunity to learn as a church family, to grow together in faith and to experience a community that is rooted in worship, spiritual growth and fellowship.

We want everyone to be able to participate so if you need a ride, please let the office know and we will arrange one for you. If you need childcare for a child under 3, let the office know so that we have adequate childcare available. And watch the bulletin announcements for RSVPs for dinner on the Sunday nights.

Faith Formation

Bethel Family Winter Retreat

You might have heard about our new intergenerational study based on the book by Marcus Borg called the Heart of Christianity that we will start in January. We want to encourage you to join us on February 15-16 for a time to escape to Camp John Knox for relaxation and renewal. The retreat will consist of three sessions of study and discussion based on the book, free time, fellowship and worship. Childcare will be provided. In regards to housing, there will be a variety of choices. We will have handicap and singles lodging available in the dorm facility. Families can choose to stay in a cabin by themselves or join another family. The dorm rooms house four people and the cabins house eight people. Watch for more information regarding registration and pricing information in January's newsletter. Scholarships are available for anyone needing assistance. You can contact Wendy or Will in the church office for more information.

Adult Sunday Study

To complement Bethel's ongoing commitment to becoming an "Earth Care Congregation," the Adult Sunday School Class that meets in the Library has chosen Mallory McDuff's *Natural Saints: How People of Faith are Working to Save God's Earth* as our "next book." We will begin with a discussion of the book's Introduction on Sunday January 12 at 9:30 and anticipate devoting at least 6-8 Sundays to reviewing the rest of its lively content. All members and friends of Bethel who are interested in this timely topic are welcome to join our free wheeling discussions. We are particularly delighted that Dr. McDuff, who teaches at Warren Wilson College in Asheville, North Carolina, will join us for one of those sessions. Copies of *Natural Saints* ... can be purchased at ABEBooks.com, Amazon.com or other on-line book services. If you have questions or would like to know more about our class and/or this book, contact: Mark Banker at 376-2118 or at Mark.Banker@Webbschool.org

caring for
GOD'S
earth

December is here! This is a busy season of family, exams, Christmas, Advent and life in general. Take time to enjoy this season at Youth. Watch for opportunities to ring the Salvation Army bells at Food City. Be sure to pick up an Advent devotional pamphlet written by students at this year's Triennium.

Please note that all activities and times are subject to change. Check out these sites for pictures and information regarding up to the minute details for the ministry:

Bethel home page: www.bethelpcusa.org/youth

Bethel Facebook page

Email Blast

Text Tree

The Calendar:

December 1 @ Location TBA

5:00 PM-We will go shopping for our Angel Tree children and eat dinner together. Watch for details.

December 2- Breakfast Club for Midway students. I can provide transportation to school. Meet at 6:45 at the old Waves Café parking lot.

December 3- Breakfast Club for RCHS & Cherokee students. I can provide transportation to school. Meet at 7:15 AM at McDonald's.

December 7- Can you help us? We need help setting up the Nativity scene in front of the Bethel sanctuary and the tree in the Gathering Area. We will start at 9:30 AM and be finished by noon.

December 8

1:00 PM- 2:00 PM- We need help hanging ornaments at the top of the tree. (Free Pizza for your help!))

3:00 PM-8:00 PM- We need your help to:

- Decorate the church and trees.
- Assist with mission outreach Christmas baskets.
- Activities with children
- Food Setup
- And more

December 14- We need your help to ring bells for the Salvation Army. We need volunteers

at each entrance/exit to ring the bells anytime between the hours of 3 PM and 6 PM.

December 15 @ 6:00 PM-8:00

PM Christmas Party!! Join for great food and games.

December 22 @

11:00 AM—Worship
No Youth

December 24 @ Bethel

7:00 PM- Christmas Eve Service

December 25- MERRY CHRISTMAS!!!

December 29- It's back!!! Join us for a great time for an awesome Lockout/Lockin. We will have games, food, fun and an awesome bocce ball tournament! We will also be working on planning the Epiphany service scheduled for January 5th. The cost is TBA.

Watch for more information about Bethel caroling.

What are you doing over Spring Break?

The Bethel Youth Ministry is planning a Spring Break mission trip to Asheville, NC. We will be working with the Asheville Youth Mission. What will we do?

- Physical labor
- Visitation to playing games with kids.
- Sharing a meal with the homeless.

Simply, we will all be experiencing what it means to be Christ's hands and feet in the world.

The cost would be \$295 per person, and there is a strong possibility that cost will be lower due to donations in a mission trip fund.



Save the Date!!!

The Bethel Presbyterian Youth is looking at taking a trip to Montreat this summer! What is Montreat? I am glad you asked. *Montreat is a Presbyterian Church (PCUSA) retreat center located in Western North Carolina. The event is a life changing and spiritual experience for youth. It is a gathering of youth from around the country where we will worship, study and participate in recreation activities. Wendy Neff, Brian Shelby and I will be the chaperones for the trip. The week that has been chosen is June 1-7. We will need to know if you have interest by December 29th and commitments by January 15th. The cost is \$265! You can see the payment breakdown below:*

January \$100
February \$100
March \$65

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Transitions Fellowship

Advent is here! It is a time of expecting and hope. Be sure to pick up an Advent devotional pamphlet written by students at this year's Triennium.

Check out these sites for pictures and information regarding up to the minute details for the ministry:

Facebook / Text messages / Email Blasts

December 3 @ 7 PM-Chapter 5 & 6 of the Heart of Christianity.

December 7- Can you help us? We need help setting up the Nativity scene in front of the Bethel sanctuary and the tree in the Gathering Area. We will start at 9:30 AM and finished around noon.

December 8

3:00 PM-8:00 PM- Join us for:

- Hanging ornaments and decorating the church.
- Assisting with mission outreach Christmas baskets.
- Activities with children
- Food Setup
- And more

December 14- We need your help to ring bells for the Salvation Army. We need 1 or 2 young adults at each entrance/exit to ring the bells for one hour from 3 PM- 4 PM.

December 17- Christmas Party & Transitions Birthday! Let's celebrate the holiday and Transitions' Birthday at the same time! We will meet at 6 PM for the party and then move to the Sanctuary for Take Time Worship: Christmas Edition at 7 PM.

December 22

11:00 AM-Worship

December 24

7:00 PM- Christmas Eve Service

December 25- Merry Christmas!!!

Watch for more information about Bethel caroling, and ringing bells for the Salvation Army at Food City.

Generosity Team

Thanks from the Generosity Team to all who made Commitment Sunday a resounding success. Over 50 "Commitment to Myself" cards were returned along with 40 "Opportunity Knocks" forms from adults, youth and children. Thanks to all who returned those. If you haven't completed the card and/or the form, please feel free to do so and place in the offering plate or turn in to the office. It is never too late for those. Thanks also to all the cooks, to those who made sure all the trimmings were there for the petros, the dessert chef(s) and the set-up and clean-up crews. It is always a fun opportunity to work together.

Save the date! Generosity Team will be presenting another Generosity Presents program on February 8, 2014. Robert Hay from the Presbyterian Foundation will be joining us that Saturday morning for breakfast, a program and perhaps another book exchange. Details haven't been completed yet. More information will be in future Open Door newsletters.

Hands of Mercy

Our focus for December will be baby items. Diapers and baby wipes are particularly needed; also lotion, shampoo, diaper rash cream, baby bath., etc. Non-perishable food items can be brought in throughout the month and placed in the HOME collection basket in the gathering area. Thanks for supporting our local food pantry and helping families in our community.



Hear the good news!

We have new ringers and consistent subs for when we have scheduling conflicts. We have even peeked into the fourth octave suitcase of additional bells!!! We are hoping to add You to the group so we can play the additional bells. Our goal of playing each month is getting easier. Think about it...we just started playing together in November! Once again, we all thank Chris Badger for her generosity in giving us the opportunity to hear bells ringing to the glory of God.

How delightful the seed has been planted for children ringing bells.

PARENTS: Contact me if your child would like to ring the hour at the beginning of the service on any Sunday. Anyone who can count to 11 can start the tradition! Contact Jackie @ 423-371-3489 or call the church office. We can start a sign-up sheet and put your child on the schedule.

Thanks so much,
Jackie Rylander

Birthdays for December

- 1 Mac Robbins
- 12 John Walker
- 13 Orlando Vanegas, Jr.
- 14 Bob Jones
Donna Walker
- 16 Ted Dailey
- 22 Tom Pickel, III
- 28 David Standridge
Maria Vanegas
- 29 Jim Schall

**Presbyterian Disaster Assistance -
Super Typhoon in the Philippines**

Several people have asked if the church was doing anything in support of victims of the super typhoon in the Philippines last month. Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) is receiving donations that will be used in support of efforts already underway to help those storm victims. PDA is onsite for nearly every disaster in the USA and around the world, providing aid, comfort and necessary supplies for victims and disaster workers. If you would like to learn more about PDA go to www.pcusa.org. If you would like to contribute to PDA for their work in their Philippines or other disaster sites, you may write a check to

Prayer Reminders

Assisted Living and Nursing Homes
 Jamestowne — 851 Lawnville Road, Kingston 37763
 Dick Hettrick Room 102
 Louise Pickel Room 209
 Mac Robbins Room 305
 Sophie Simon Room 302
 George Warlick Room 313
 Wellington Place — 1098 Bradford Way, Kingston 37763
 Jack & Sue Muecke Room 206
 Brakebill Nursing Home — 5837 Lyons View Pike Knoxville 37919
 Anne Smith Room 416-B
 Atchley TN State Veterans' Home — 1 Veterans Way, Knoxville 37931
 Jan Parker Room 230
 NHC Farragut — 120 Cavett Hill Lane, Knoxville 37934
 Marianna Oonk Room 355

In Need of Prayer:
 James Woodard,
 Marianna Oonk,
 Rev. Bill Shenk,
 Rev. Todd Chancey,
 Dianne Russell,
 Bill & Marianne
 Shadden,
 Jimmy Walker
 (serving in Afghanistan)
 Molly Cooper (Chris
 Badger's daughter),
 Jean & Don Dice,
 Harold and Martha
 Underwood (Anita
 Richmond's parents),
 Becky Grant (Larry Strickling's niece),
 Dianne Swinler (Brenda Strickling's sister)

Remember



1 Youth 5:00	2	3 Transitions: Study 7 p.m.	4	5	6	7 Nativity/Tree setup 9:30 a.m.
8 Congrega- tional Mtg. after worship Hanging of the Greens & Basket Distribution 3:00	9	10	11	12	13	14 Salvation Army Bellringing
15 Session 12:15 Youth Christ- mas Party 6:00	16	17 Transitions Party 6:00	18 Property Team 5:30 No Fellowship Team Fellowship Supper & Pag- eant 6:30	19	20	21
22 Special Choir Presentation 11 a.m.	23	24 Candlelight Service 7 p.m.	25 Christmas Day	26	27	28
29 Reception for John Carter after worship Youth Lockin	30	31	Weekly Events: Bell Choir Practice: Wednesdays 6:00 PM Choir Practice: Wednesdays 7:00 PM Taoist Tai Chi: Tues. 6-7:30 PM, Sat. 9-10:30 AM Bethel Youth Ministry: Sundays and Wednesdays; check page 4 for times Several classes and teams will not be having regular meetings in December. Check the bulletins for more info.			