

## Bethel Presbyterian Church

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# The Open Door

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December 2016

## Dear Friends,

Advent just may be my favorite time of year. I love the shorter days that beckon us inside to rest and renew. I love lighting candles in worship and at home, watching those small flickering lights grow throughout the season until they could dispel a room full of darkness. I love the scriptures readings, the promises in Isaiah, the hopefulness and uncertainty in Luke. And I love the music, "O Come, O Come Emmanuel," "The Canticle of the Turning." The minor keys of meditation and thoughtfulness that transition to major keys with robust joy and action move us through the season.

In the midst of watching and waiting, we here at Bethel are not passive but active. Hanging of the Greens readies not only our building to welcome Christ but also our hearts through crafts and gifts that we use throughout the season. Our distribution of Christmas baskets and gifts generates a swarm of people sharing their energy, their talent, their time and their money to purchase food and gifts, to set up the food for our guests to shop, to offer hospitality to our guests as they come into the building. This is how we watch and wait at Bethel – and what a great witness to the community.

So as we head inside a little sooner these days, as we sit near fires and drink cocoa listening to the music of the season, as we ready our houses and our hearts for the Christ Child who is coming again, remember to watch and to wait for the sounds of angel wings, for the alleluias that echo on the breeze, for the glimpse of hands reaching out in love and comfort.

*Grace and peace,*

*Wendy*

## December Events

### Handbells

As a result of the opportunity fair in November, there is a renewed interest in restarting the bell choir. Jackie Rylander will be honored to organize the choir if there is enough interest. Email address for Jackie is [jackierylander@gmail.com](mailto:jackierylander@gmail.com).

### Sunday, Dec. 4: Hanging of the Greens

3:30 PM — 5:00 PM:

- Christmas Baskets & Gifts pick-up
- Activity Centers in Fellowship Hall

5:00 PM – 5:30 PM

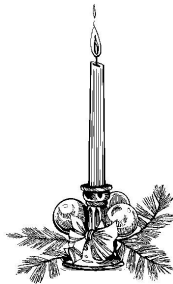
- Clean up and setup for dinner

5:30 PM – 6:15 PM:

- Dinner

6:15 PM – 7:00 PM

- Worship



There will be no **Women's Bible study** on Dec 8 or 22; on Dec 15 they will have an Advent Brunch from 10:30 to noon.

### Fellowship Supper and Christmas Pageant

will take place on Wednesday, December 21st. Supper will be at 6:30, followed by the pageant in the church Sanctuary, with desserts served after the pageant.

Please bring a dish to share, and cookies or brownies for dessert. Please allow the cast members to eat first so that they will have time to change into their costumes.

### Caroling

It's time again to gather and share joy with our homebound members and friends. Everyone is welcome to join the caroling brigade on Sunday, Dec 18. We will meet at the church at 4pm to go carol and then share food and fellowship together. Watch bulletin announcements to learn where the post caroling festivities will be.

### Christmas Joy Offering

Each year during the Advent and Christmas season, we turn our eyes to Bethlehem and celebrate the wondrous gift of Jesus Christ, our Savior. By giving to the Christmas Joy Offering, we honor this gift by providing assistance to current and retired church workers in their time of need and developing our future leaders at Presbyterian-related racial ethnic schools and colleges. We will receive the Christmas Joy offering in worship on Dec 18, 2016. Please give generously.

### Christmas Eve Offering

Once again this year we will receive baby items for the Christmas Eve offering. Diapers, formula, baby soap, baby wipes, baby food and cereal are all needed. Our offering will be delivered to Hands of Mercy where it will serve many families in our county. As we prepare to welcome the Christ Child again this year, may our preparations include caring for the babies in our community. Christmas Day – worship only; no Sunday School

**Christmas Eve service will be at 8pm**

## Coming Up...



### Presbytery of East Tennessee Disaster Assistance Mission Trip to Hammond, Louisiana Jan. 22-28

Working with Presbyterian Disaster Assistance in recovery work from devastating flooding. Cost: \$200 all-inclusive. Limited to 25 people. **Registration Deadline: Dec. 1** [office@presbyteryeasttn.org](mailto:office@presbyteryeasttn.org)

### Bridges Out of Poverty Sunday School Class

At the September Sunday School Kick-off Breakfast, Wendy requested suggestions for topics we would like to study in Sunday School. A suggestion was made that we learning more about local poverty and how we can be of service in that community. With that in mind John Leitnaker, Executive Director of Roane County Cooperative Ministries has offered to lead a 6 week "Bridges Out of Poverty" class during our Sunday School time period. This course will help us understand the issues of poverty in our county and how we can assist those in poverty. The class will start January 8<sup>th</sup>. Please contact the church office to sign up.

# December 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Each Week: Bethel Arts Ministry: Art Club—Adults: Mon. 10-Noon & Mon 6:30-8:30 PM Taoist Tai Chi: Tues. 6-7:30 PM, Fri. 10-11:30 AM, Sat. 9-10:30 AM Rug Hooking group on Mondays at 1:00. Bell Choir Practice: Wednesdays 6:00 PM Choir Practice: Wednesdays 7:00 PM				<b>1</b> Ten 10 Book Club Christmas Brunch	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4</b> Faith Team 12:15 Hanging of the Greens and Christmas	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> NO Women's Bible Study	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> Finance Team 6 PM	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> Women's Bible Study Brunch 10:30	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>18</b> Christmas Joy Offering Session 12:15 Caroling 4 PM	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> Fellowship Team 5:30 Property Team 5:30 Fellowship Sup- per 6:30; Christ- mas Pageant follows	<b>22</b> NO Women's Bible Study	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> Christmas Eve Service 8 PM
<b>25</b> Christmas Day NO Sunday School	<b>26</b> Generosity Team 7 PM	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>

## December Birthdays

- 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 Jessica Choate  
Jim Schall



## Prayer Reminders

Wellington Place  
 1098 Bradford Way, Kingston  
 37761  
 Chris Badger, Rm. 107  
 TN Veterans' Home  
 1 Veterans Way, Knoxville 37931  
 Jan Parker  
 Cornerstone Village-North  
 2-1 Oak St., Johnson City 37601  
 Tauno Maki  
 Prayer Requests:  
 Jim & Mary B Hines, Jill McMaster  
 Jeff & Sherry Paris