

The Open Door

Bethel Presbyterian Church, PCUSA
Kingston, TN

Volume 18, Issue 7

December 2021

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Baby Supplies (Diapers, Wipes, Lotion, Shampoo, Diaper Rash Cream, Baby Bath, etc.) placed in boxes in gathering area.



Session Highlights

The average Sanctuary in-person Worship attendance for October was 55 and for Facebook the average was 175.

Rev. Paul Young was appointed as Session Moderator by the Presbytery's Committee on Ministry (COM).

All five new elder-elects (Kathy Banker, Amy Coen, Ken Dungan, Cyndi Fowler, and Celia Simon) attended the November Session Meeting and are invited to the December Session meeting. The elder-elects will be Ordained and/or Installed during the January 16, 2022 Worship Service.

The Session voted to focus on getting PCUSA ministers to conduct our Worship Services on a guest basis until we have an Interim or Installed pastor.

Five elders volunteered for the Interim Search Committee: Jake Horton (Leader), Bonnie Phillips, Dan Hyder, Ellen Dailey, and Chuck Bunch

Linda Brown, Bethel Treasurer, presented Bethel's estimated budget for 2022. The estimated budget may have to be adjusted, depending on when we get a pastor.

The Session updated COVID worship protocols effective Sunday November 21, 2021:

The noodle pew spacers were removed; offering will be collected with the ushers coming to each side of the pew to collect (the plate will not be passed); masks are still required in the building; no communal serving of food in the building.

The Session approved the Harp Recital to be held in Bethel's Sanctuary Friday, November 26, 2021.

The Session approved Boy Scout Troop 101 and the Cub Scouts to meet at Bethel at the same time on Monday night, with the Boy Scouts meeting in the Scout Room and the Cub Scouts meeting in the Fellowship Hall.

Cathy McDowell
Clerk of Session

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

The office is looking for couples, families or single individuals to sign-up to light the Advent candles during worship.

For each Sunday lighting there is a reading and a prayer + the lighting of the candle/candles. Please contact the office by return email if you are interested in being an Advent Lighter for Bethel's observance of Advent.

Family Promise of Roane County

On November 11 Bethel started sheltering our first family since the pandemic began. We are providing a temporary home to a mother and her 13-year-old daughter. Harriman United Methodist provided meals the first week. Kingston Church of Christ is scheduled to provide meals the following week. Bethel is scheduled to provide meals the week of December 19 – 25. More details will be available closer to that date.

The family has their own transportation, so volunteer van drivers are not needed at this time. Family Promise is working to have needed auto repairs done.

□ Director Greg Chadwick reported on a successful placement of a family through the Prevention and Diversion component of Family Promise of Roane County. A mother with three children, ages 6, 4 and

new born are now in safe, permanent housing after several months of intensive case management.

□ All volunteers with Family Promise are provided updated training annually. This training is now available online. If you are a new or former volunteer with Family Promise, please take time to do this training before Bethel's hosting rotation in December.

Go to: <https://family-promise.co-assemble.com/unlock/7WNHptj> If you prefer to do this in a small group setting or on a one-to-one basis, let Jan Rybka (865-310-8836) know. A time to meet at Bethel can be arranged.

□ Family Promise of Roane County will receive the Learning Through Giving Grant class of 2021 at the University of Tennessee. This is a joint grant between Family Promise of Blount County and Family Promise of Roane County. The total is \$5,756.00. We want to thank our

Director, Greg Chadwick, for his hard work in successful fundraising through grants and gifts.

□ We are still receiving money from the craft sale at Kingston's Halloween Farmers Market. At this moment we have raised over \$800.00 from that event.

The following are Family Promise host churches: Bethel Presbyterian, Kingston Church of Christ, Morrison Hill Christian, Oak Ridge Christian, Rockwood Christian, Harriman Church of God, Redeemer Lutheran,

Harriman United Methodist, and Oak Ridge United Methodist. Support churches are Rockwood Presbyterian, Williams Chapel AME, St. Andrews Episcopal and Kingston United Methodist. Informal support has also been offered by members of Kingston First Baptist and Roane County High Interact Club.

Hanging of the Greens

The annual Hanging of the Greens service will be offered during the morning worship service on December 5, 2021. As part of the service, the congregation will decorate the tree in the gathering area. You are invited to bring an ornament from home to decorate the tree or use ornaments provided. If you bring an ornament from home, please mark it with your name so that it can be returned to you after Christmas. Cupcakes will be provided for everyone to take home and enjoy.



Birthdays for December

- 11 Krista Kolwyck
- 12 John Walker
- 13 Orlando Vanegas, Jr.
- 14 Bob Jones
Donna Walker
- 16 Ted Dailey
- 19 Linda Adams
- 22 Tom Pickel, III
- 28 David Standridge
Maria Vanegas
- 29 Jessica Choate
Jim Schall

RECAP OF 2021
AND
YEAR-END GIVING



*Hanging of the
Greens for Children
and Youth*

The Study Team is making plans for the annual Hanging of the Greens for children and youth.

This year's activities will be offered by Zoom on December 5th, 12th, and 19th from 9:30-10:30 am.

We will be preparing craft bags for each child and youth to go along with the lessons.

If you have children, grandchildren, or youth that would like to participate, please contact Bonnie Phillips or Jan Rybka by November 28th.

Bonnie Phillips:
bgh472003@yahoo.com

Jan Rybka:
jgrybka@hotmail.com

As we approach the end of the Year 2021 and consider where our church stands financially, we have much for which to be grateful. Even with the pandemic affecting both our ability to gather and our giving, we have been able to meet our obligations, support our missions, and continue ministry on a smaller scale.

At the end of 2019, we had 129 active givers to the church and the total giving to all Funds for the church and all its ministries was \$375,740. The pandemic began in 2020 and we ended the year with 107 active givers contributing a total of \$296,588 for the year, a drop of \$79,152 (21% decrease) from the previous year. Included in that drop was general giving to cover routine budgeted expenses, which suffered a decline of \$33,418 (13% decrease). We were able to cover most of that decline through a Payroll Protection Program (PPP) grant of \$29,700 and by pulling back on gatherings in the building. Our year to date total giving through October 31, 2021 is \$235,668. In addition to this, we received a bequest which was used to reduce the principle of our mortgage loan.

In 2021, we have again seen a reduction in the number of

members who give regularly with only 90 active givers contributing. The number of families or individuals giving to the church has been dropping steadily over the past few years due to death, relocation, or moves in membership. With an aging congregation, this is not surprising, but the pandemic has exacerbated the problem. Our expectation was to make up this shortfall with robust end of year giving, but the departure of our pastor might make this more of a challenge. If the pandemic has placed you in a financially difficult position, know that the church is here to support you in whatever way you may have a need.

God has been faithful to Bethel for over two centuries. Please consider prayerfully your giving to the church for the remainder of 2021.

Note: All gifts must be in the church office no later than 2 P.M. on December 31st or must be postmarked December 31st to count as a 2021 contribution. Giving through Required Minimum Distributions from IRAs or gifts of appreciated stock may be other options that you would like to consider.



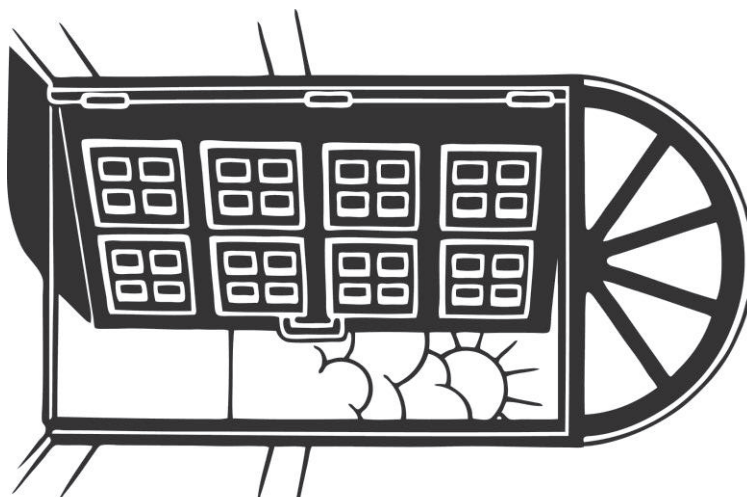
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