

FEBRUARY 2021

# CHURCH NEWSLETTER

*Monthly Updates from Bethany Presbyterian Church*

## Pastor Update

BY: PASTOR BRIAN JANSSEN

### A CALL FOR HOPE

Greetings! It is so wonderful to be checking off my list of "firsts" here at Bethany Church. This includes my first newsletter article! I want to thank each and everyone of you for praying for me and Lisa as I worked with the PNC and as we prayed to God and sought his guidance in discerning this call to Bethany Church. Needless to say, our prayers were answered and we are so excited to be here with you. God is up to something wonderful here and we cannot wait to be a part of it.

As we move into this new year together, we continue to be hopeful that we will be back together in some way that feels "normal" soon. The lifeblood of the church has always been and will always be the people. We know now, more than ever, that the church is not just a building but the people whom God has called to a particular mission in a particular time and place. The great theologian Leslie Newbigin wrote that the church is called to be, "The sign, the foretaste, and the means" of God's coming kingdom. By this he meant that the church is called to show people what God's kingdom looks like, offer people a tangible understanding of the kingdom in its healing, and outreach ministries, and will be the means by which God's reign will finally and fully be realized on the day of Christ's return.

Each ministry area of the church is vital in shaping and carrying out the mission that God is placing before us. That we have been able to do this through 2020 in creative, imaginative, and hopeful ways is a testament to the ways God has been at work in all of us. New years bring new hope and we have a lot to be hopeful for. I hope that I will be able to celebrate more fully being your new pastor with you in the near future. I am sure all of you have hopes for your families and for the ministries in which you are engaged. I am hopeful that God will shower us all with magnificent grace as we begin ministry together.

I have loved worshipping with you the past few weeks, I can't wait for that to turn into months and even years.

Blessings,  
PBJ

HERE'S WHAT'S UP!

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# Music Notes

BY: JOHN HENNINGER

## LOOK AHEAD...LENT

As January comes to a close, we look ahead to the Lenten season, which begins on February 17 with Ash Wednesday. Throughout Lent, there are many different signs to remind us of the sacrifice Christ made on our behalf, his ministry, his teaching, his betrayal, his trial, and his death.

This year, let us focus on our faith and examine how the example of Christ might inspire us to make our own sacrifice. The words from one Lenten hymn always help me focus at the beginning of the season, to understand why we embark on this journey every year.

1. *Lord, who throughout these forty  
days  
for us did fast and pray,  
teach us with you to mourn our sins  
and close by you to stay.*

2. *As you with Satan did contend,  
and did the victory win,  
O give us strength in you to fight,  
in you to conquer sin.*

3. *As you did hunger and did thirst,  
so teach us, gracious Lord,  
to die to self, and so to live  
by your most holy Word.*

4. *And thro' these days of penitence,  
and thro' your Passiontide,  
forevermore, in life and death,  
O Lord, with us abide.*

5. *Abide with us, that through this life  
of doubts and hope and pain,  
an Easter of unending joy  
we may at last attain!*

# The Characteristics of God

BY: DOUG BOVARD

*What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us.* – A.W. Tozer

I love quotes from A.W. Tozer! Tozer was from a small village in Clearfield County, PA; he was a self-educated pastor and author; and he epitomized what I call a strong Christian. With great clarity, Tozer taught about the almighty God he loved. I pray that my upcoming series of articles will increase your love of God and your understanding of His characteristics and attributes. Personally, I never tire of gaining a deeper knowledge of God. It deepens my love for Him. I hope you feel the same way when reading these future articles!

If what comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us, then we better have a high view of God. A high view of God should shape how we live, worship, evangelize and serve. A low view of God leads to low and base ways of interacting with God, self, and others. My articles will seek to promote a high view of God. We are better equipped to understand ourselves and the world around us when we have an accurate and high view of God. Although we cannot understand the full depth of God's character, we should know some of the main characteristics of God that are explained in His Word.

God reveals Himself through His Word. When you read my articles, please have your Bibles ready. The Bible, and not our feelings or imaginations, will be our ultimate source. That said, there have been many theologians and great scholars who have addressed this topic. J. I. Packer comes to mind with his famous book *Knowing God*. To a large extent, I will follow the teaching series titled the *Attributes of God* by Ligonier Ministries teaching fellow Dr. Steven J. Lawson. Also, the great church confessions, creeds and quotes of others will be considered and presented along the way. Here are the characteristics we will study:

God is self-existent	God is gracious	God is truthful
God is omniscient	God is sovereign	God is foreknowing
God is good	God is immutable	God is omnipresent
God is spiritual	God is loving	God is wise
God is omnipotent	God is holy	God is righteous in wrath

Please read and ponder these scriptures as we start this new series of articles: Ex. 15:11-13; Ps. 89:3-11; Job 42:2; Isaiah 43:10-13; Rom. 11:33-36; and Ps. 89:5-11. I'll conclude this introductory article with a quote from the father of the Presbyterian Church.

*It is evident that man never attains to a true self-knowledge until he has previously contemplated the face of God, and come down after such contemplation to look into himself.* – John Calvin



# Mission Team Updates

## HELP NEEDED: ONGOING "FIDGET BLANKET" PROJECT

The Mission Team is continuing to work on their outreach program with Country Meadows in Bridgeville. One goal is to make fidget lap blankets for the Alzheimer's and dementia patients at the facility. To learn what this is all about and how you can participate, Presbyterian Women will be joining this outreach by having an informative meeting Saturday, February 27, 2021, upstairs in our Welcome Center at 1:00 PM. All safety procedures will be followed for this meeting. Join us to learn more about the initiative and how you can participate. If you can machine sew, hand sew, knit or crochet, or donate items, we want and need you!!



## EASTER AND GREETING CARD COLLECTION STARTS FEBRUARY 1

The Mission Team is collecting Easter or greeting cards to distribute to the residents of the Country Meadows. We are asking the congregation to donate blank cards, completed cards with notes or pictures and/or handmade cards or pictures (they love cards or pictures from children). A collection box will be available by the back entry door of the church starting on February 1. In November, the team prepared and delivered "Appreciation Baskets" for the staff at Country Meadows for their Memory Support, Personal Care and Restorative Services Buildings. While coordinating this effort, we inquired of any other needs for the facility and our contact indicated that the residents loved to get cards, notes, pictures and handmade cards or pictures as they are so isolated from their families. Please consider donating to help put a smile on their faces!



## LACROIX MISSION: PROVIDING RICE AND BEANS TO SCHOOL CHILDREN

Haiti continues to struggle with droughts, violence and COVID-19. The Mission Team continues to send money to the LaCroix Mission to purchase bags of rice and beans to the families of the school and surrounding villages. Food continues to be scarce and the children are always anxious for school to open because they know they are guaranteed one hot meal at lunch. If you are interested in sponsoring a specific child or donating for future food purchases, please visit [www.bethanypresby.org/mission-outreach](http://www.bethanypresby.org/mission-outreach).



## CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING UPDATE

Last December, the special offering was split evenly between the Presbytery Christmas Joy and Washington City Mission. The Presbytery Christmas Joy offering provides assistance to current and retired church workers in their time of need and develops our future leaders at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges. As a church, we sent \$1,096.00. The City Mission has worked tirelessly to find ways to adapt and continue to serve amid this pandemic. The community they serve was in desperate need of their help during these trying times. As a church, we sent \$1,330.43. Thank you for your contributions to these two great causes!

## HELPING LOCAL FAMILIES CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS

The COVID-19 pandemic has taken a toll on many families financially. This past Christmas, the Mission Team coordinated gifts for families that could use a little extra Christmas cheer after struggling to make ends meet. One of our families was identified during the Thanksgiving Dinner distribution and another was identified through Family Promise, both are long standing Bethany missions. The mission team would like to thank generous donors from the Friday Morning Women's Bible study (led by Judi Wolstoncroft and Kara Julius) and other individual donors that helped in sponsoring gifts.



## PROVIDING SUPPLIES TO ANGEL'S PLACE

Angel's Place is one of the Bethany Mission Beneficiaries that receives a monthly donation from our mission budget. It is an organization that provides childcare and early childhood education to qualified single low-income parents. Many of the parents are in the process of completing their education and/or need these resources for their jobs. In addition to the care and early childhood education, Angel's Place also provides the children with nutritionally balanced meals and snacks in the morning and afternoon.



Currently, the mission is struggling to obtain cleaning products they need for their facilities. The Mission Team purchased items such as bleach, Clorox, laundry detergent, dishwasher detergent, hand sanitizer, paper towels, garbage bags and masks and gloves and delivered them to the facility the first week in January. Beth Banas, the executive director of the program, was so appreciative and indicated that these items would be able to help them for a long time. As soon as in-person visitation is allowed again, we have been invited to have lunch with the children and share in their activities, and we can't wait! Additional information on this program is available on their website at: [www.angelsplace.org](http://www.angelsplace.org).



### HELPING SOJOURNER HOUSE FAMILIES GET A FRESH START

The Sojourner House is a Pittsburgh mission that provides compassionate, faith-based residential recovery services to mothers and children. This organization helps addicted mothers learn to break the cycle of poverty and chemical abuse while rebuilding damaged relationships with their children. Recovery is a family affair at Sojourner House. Sojourner House helps mothers and children rebuild relationships damaged by addiction, while providing children the counseling, emotional support and enrichment they need to overcome their traumatic past and break the cycle of poverty and chemical abuse.

The Mission Team has been sponsoring Sojourner House for many years. The team liaison, Deanna Lambert, has helped grow a strong partnership with the mission and is continuously looking for ways we can bless these families as they work through their journey in rebuilding the life God has promised.

Deanna along with her daughter Emily, Nina Morse, and Kara Julius set out in December to organize five "welcome home" baskets for the women and families graduating the program and moving into their own apartments. The baskets include all of the housewares, linens and cleaning supplies a family would need to get a head start to making a new home. The baskets included sheets, bath towels, kitchen towels, hygiene products, cleaning products, kitchen utensils, dinnerware, Tupperware, and of course a Bible. Many of these families entered the program with nothing more than the clothes on their back, we pray that this token from Bethany Church is a reminder that all of God's children are loved abundantly and offered grace.

*If you would like to know more about Bethany's mission activities feel free to email us at [mission@bethanypresby.org](mailto:mission@bethanypresby.org) or join our Team Meetings on the second Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the Bethany Room, the more the merrier!*

## Pastoral Concerns

### CONDOLENCES

- Mary Beth Hampson went home to our Lord on January 14, 2021
- Kaitlin Fricker, daughter of Barry and Sandra Fricker, went home to our Lord on January 14, 2021



Please keep all of the family and friends of our recently departed members in your prayers. To be added to the prayer list, update your families information, change your address or submit a request, please call the church office 412-221-5132 or email [prayers@bethanypresby.org](mailto:prayers@bethanypresby.org)

# News and Announcements

## FOOD BANK STATISTICS

The Bridgeville Community Foodbank continues to be a pillar within the community. Thanks to your donations, we have helped 115 families, including 34 children, 80 adults and 79 elderly during the month of January. You gave of yourself and shared in all areas and the abundance shows! May God bless you and keep you safe and healthy. To learn more about the Foodbank, please visit: [www.bethanypresby.org/food-bank](http://www.bethanypresby.org/food-bank)

## PRESCHOOL REGISTRATION – NOW OPEN FOR BETHANY MEMBERS

Bethany Preschool is now accepting applications from Bethany Presbyterian members for our 3 and 4-year-old preschool. Registrations from members must be turned into the Preschool by February 5 to guarantee their spot for the 2021-22 school year. Open registration will start online on February 8. [www.bethanypresby.org/pre-school](http://www.bethanypresby.org/pre-school)

## FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Each week, Pastor Brain will be sharing his thoughts and milestones from the week. Videos will be available on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and on our website at: [www.bethanypresby.org/blog](http://www.bethanypresby.org/blog)

## February Birthdays

2/01 Emily Smith	2/09 Sharon DePaoli	2/17 Erin Colvin	2/22 Rachel Vighetti
2/02 Chase Lambert	2/09 Kelsie Sabin	2/17 Caden Harbison	2/23 John Brown
2/03 Tony Poiche	2/10 Mia DeRoss	2/17 Julie Jackson	2/24 Michael Gullo
2/04 Marcia Demnyan	2/10 Tish Liggins	2/17 Steve Orosz	2/24 Amelia Sunderlin
2/04 Luke Dunlap	2/11 David (DJ) Krieger	2/17 Ian Sharp	2/25 Jeremy Hall
2/04 Talia Pyrdek	2/11 Zachary North	2/17 Roberta Tumulty	2/25 Robert McAuley
2/04 Michelle Zombek	2/12 Beverly Bowman	2/18 Kimberly Duda	2/26 Thomas Morse
2/05 Lynn Fulton	2/12 Cynthia Gastgeb	2/18 Caitlin Gibson	2/26 Sandra North
2/05 Catherine Price	2/12 Emalyn Harding	2/18 Bonnie Kopach	2/27 Anthony Cersosimo
2/05 Jay Squires	2/12 Kathryn Nagy	2/19 Todd Mendenhal	2/27 Delores Kantorzyk
2/06 Jackie Farrer	2/12 Gunner Reynolds	2/19 Sharon Sharp	
2/06 Stacey Zwigart	2/14 Emily Brady	2/19 Megan Shildt	
2/07 Hope Bedner	2/14 Lori Wilkerson	2/19 Sage Sienerth	
2/07 Sadie Sunderlin	2/15 Jessica Franchi	2/20 Lori Haviland	
2/07 Peggy Unghajer	2/15 Clark Julius	2/21 Thomas Aspinall	
2/08 Patricia Pulice	2/15 Jackson Trimmer	2/21 David Werner	
2/08 John Smith	2/16 Ruth Doyle	2/22 Azjia Gardner	
2/08 Lorna Werner	2/16 Lora Shildt	2/22 Gary McMillen	



# Upcoming Events

*\*All events subject to change. Please look on the Bethany website for the most up to date calendar of events.*

## **CHURCH LEADERSHIP MEETINGS FOR FEBRUARY:**

- Deacons – February 1, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.
- Session Teams – February 8, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.
- Session Meeting – February 22, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.

## **SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE – FEB. 7**

The annual Service of Remembrance will be on February 7. We will remember the Bethany members who have passed away last year. All family members of those loved ones are invited to reflect and remember.

## **ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE – FEB. 17**

Ash Wednesday is on February 17. It will begin at 7:00 p.m. Due to the current restrictions the annual Ash Wednesday fish dinner is cancelled.

## **GOLDEN OLDIES LUNCHEON – FEB. 18**

Join the Golden Oldies on February 18 for their monthly luncheon in the Great Room at noon.

BETHANY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
740 Washington Avenue  
Bridgeville, PA 15017

Phone: 412-221-5132  
Fax: 412-220-9107  
office@bethanypresby.org  
www.bethanypresby.org

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ORG.  
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BRIDGEVILLE,  
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