

MAY 2021

# CHURCH NEWSLETTER

*Monthly Updates from Bethany Presbyterian Church*

## *Pastor Update*

BY: PASTOR BRIAN JANSSEN

I John 4:18 tells us "there is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear." We tend to think that love is easy. In our culture it is depicted in such a way that we can easily believe that we need only love the familiar. There is nothing inherently wrong with this. We certainly know what it is to love our children, our spouses, our parents and our siblings. However, the church is always called to move beyond this, and move toward a more difficult kind of love.

We like to speak about the agape love that Jesus has for us, that kind of unconditional love as it is usually understood. This agape love is not simply good news for you and for me but rather the unveiling of a new world situation, that is a new world order.

Yes, Jesus brings forgiveness of sins; but for those who experience this a new and overflowing love is released from us to our neighbors. Those different from ourselves are no longer to be feared but there to be loved. So perfect love in Jesus Christ has the possibility of casting out the fear we once held onto. It is through this love that God takes charge of the world in a whole new way.

It is this kind of love that makes it possible for us to say that peacemakers are blessed, and that we are strong when others find us weak, it is what makes it possible for us to stand over graves and say, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. It is quite literally Easter love. It is a love that it held onto lightly because it is a love that needs to be shared. It is this kind of love that not only makes forgiveness possible but necessary, not just between God and us; but especially between neighbors.

This is finally the thing that distinguishes our God from all other gods. Our God loves. Yes, God can be demanding. You cannot take lightly the command to carry your cross every day and follow. But now, in light of the resurrection, the cross is not an emblem of defeat, but a sign of what love looks like. To carry a cross is not to be burdened. To carry a cross is to carry love with you at all times and in all ways. I hope this Spring, you not only find time to enjoy the new signs of life springing into the world, but also find new ways to love yourself, your neighbor, and Jesus.

HERE'S WHAT'S UP!

**2 - MUSIC NOTES, BYG**

**3 - GOD IS SOVERIGN**

**4 - MISSION TEAM UPDATE**

**5-8 - NEWS, UPCOMING  
EVENTS, BIRTHDAYS**

# Music Notes

BY: JOHN HENNINGER

## SUMMER MUSCIANS NEEDED

We will continue to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ as we enter into May. With those warmer days getting closer, we are beginning to plan for our summer season. If you are interested in sharing your voice with us or offering your musical talent, please let me know. Finding song leaders can be challenging in the summer as schedules begin to fill up and we would love to have you join us!

## MODERN WORSHIP MUSICIANS NEEDED

The Modern Worship team is looking to add a few new musicians to their roster. If you play an instrument and would like to join the band, please contact Connie Segeleon.

# Bethany Youth Group

Spring has sprung at BYG! We started with an Easter Escape Room activity which saw the Senior High Youth taking the title away from the Leaders who had a faster time with the Nativity Escape Room. These activities are fun and challenging ways to dig deeper into the people and places surrounding the important events in the life of Christ.

Now that nicer weather is here, our mid-week check ins are no longer happening via Zoom. We are heading outside to local parks. The first walk happened on April 7th at Fairview Park. It was a beautiful evening and a small but fun group enjoyed a hike through the park, watching the sunset.

During April BYG meetings, we are busy planning for Youth Sunday on May 2nd. Hope to see you all then! Any questions on how you can be a part of BYG, please reach out to the church office or Joan at [joankundra68@gmail.com](mailto:joankundra68@gmail.com).



# God is Sovereign – Part 1

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BY: DOUG BOVARD

There is not one square inch in the whole domain of our human existence over which Christ, who is Sovereign over all, does not cry: "Mine!" – Abraham Kuyper

Scripture Readings: Psalm 33:1-22; Psalm 93:1-5; Psalm 68:7-10; Ephesians 1:3-12; Prov. 21:1; Daniel 4: 1-37; Job 42:2; Luke 1:37; Hebrews 1:3; Romans 11:36; and Hebrews 1:1-4.

The sovereignty of God is a foundational cornerstone of Christian churches, especially the Presbyterian Church. Resounding throughout the pages of Scripture is the proclamation that God is King of Kings and Lord of Lords! When we say God is sovereign, we are ascribing to Him a rule and authority that transcends space and time, with nothing outside its scope. There are no "maverick molecules" to quote RC Sproul. God's sovereignty ought to provide comfort to believers facing adversity and instill awe in the face of His limitless power.

God guides and directs both the macro-story – the movement of human history – and our micro-stories – each of our individual lives; everything happens in accordance with His plan. God is unfolding His-story which involves salvation of his people for his glory by focusing on his son, Jesus. How God works in both the macro and micro stories has been expressed through the idea of providence. Describing providence, The Westminster Confession of Faith 5.1 states:

God the creator of all things doth uphold, direct, dispose, and govern all creatures, actions, and things, from the greatest even to the least, by his most wise and holy providence, according to his infallible foreknowledge and the free and immutable counsel of his own will, to the praise of the glory of his wisdom, power, justice, goodness, and mercy.

God is bound to and involved with his creation. He loves his creation. He upholds the universe by the power of his Word (Heb. 1:3). In him all things hold together and the world would cease to exist if he ever stopped doing so. He directs history so that in the fullness of time he sent forth his son (Gal. 4:4). God disposed events to turn out a certain way according to his perfect and secret plan. He chose Isaac, not Ishmael; Jacob, not Esau; Moses, not Aaron. God disposed that Pharaoh would react in certain ways to demonstrate who was the true God. God governs both living creatures and inanimate objects.

Our future does not rest in the hands of human beings. Our destiny does not depend upon blind chance or luck. Rather, God is actively involved in our lives, directing them according to his holy purposes. Yes, we know that evil exists and Satan has great power, but it is nothing compared to the might of our almighty Lord. As Christians we realize that our lives and human history have both a purpose and direction. It is the big story God is working out. He is guiding human history to a specific goal: the full and final salvation and liberation of his people and his creation (Romans 8:18-30).

How does a high view of God as King of Kings keep us from relying on our own works? Considering God's sovereignty, how do you or others speak about him, understand him, and live your lives?

# Mission Team Update

## FIDGET BLANKET NEEDS

The Bethany Mission Team is on a mission. We are working to create fidget blankets through this mission of love to keep the hands and minds of patients going through Dementia and Alzheimer's busy.

If you search on the internet you can see thousands of ideas. Some of the items needed for Fidget Blankets are as follows: fleece and flannel materials, large buttons, appliques, ribbon and rickrack (different widths), plastic beads, keychain rings, zippers, belts, colorful shoelaces, ties etc. Just about anything can be used in some manner so look through those closets and see what you can find. As long as it can go into the washer and dryer, it can be used!

These blankets are an approximate finished size of 16" x 20" and are for the residents in the memory unit at Country Meadows.

"This mission is very near and dear to our hearts for many reasons. A dear friend of mine has Dementia and I have had other friends who have had loved ones diagnosed with Dementia or Alzheimer's," said Connie Segeleon, Mission Team member. "My daddy passed away from Alzheimer's and I only wished I had known about the fidget blankets back then as he would have loved one, so my first blanket was dedicated to him, with his favorite colors."

We can all be a part of this mission and you do not have to know how to sew using a machine. Beads can be strung, and buttons sewed on ribbons as well as the blankets themselves. The Mission Team is also accepting donations of Joanne Fabrics gift cards to purchase supplies. For those who knit or crochet, blankets can be made from yarn or hand muffs and others can sew items on them as well. Anyone is welcome to join us and be a part of something truly awesome.





# 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 MAY

- Deacons – May 3, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.
- Session Teams – May 10, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.
- Session Meeting – May 24, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.

## Youth Sunday – May 2

Join us for this special program that is completely designed and produced by our church's youth. The Youth Sunday program will be featured at both the 8:15 and 10:45 a.m. services.

## PW: Hanging Basket Sale – May 2

The Presbyterian Women will be selling hanging flower baskets this year that would make the perfect Mother's Day or hostess gift. Baskets will be available for purchase starting on May 2. Stop by the Welcome Center to view the selection and make your choice – \$25 per basket or \$40 for two.

## Washington City Mission Trip – May 3

The Bethany Mission Team will be volunteering at the Washington City Mission on Monday, May 10 from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. The warehouse address is: 1000 Sheffield Street, Washington, PA 15301. Please dress comfortably in close-toed shoes. Also, dress in layers with clothing you do not mind getting dirty. The warehouse can get cold. Please meet at the church at 8:30 a.m. to car pool or at the Mission Warehouse at 9:00 a.m.

## Join Bethany for a Roller-Skating Night – May 7

The Discipleship Team invites you and your friends for some good old-fashioned fun. Skate the night away with some great music and good company at the Neville Roller Dome. Register Today: [www.bethanypresby.org/event/roller-night](http://www.bethanypresby.org/event/roller-night)

## Communion – May 9

We will be sharing in the sacrament of communion on May 9. If you are unable to join us in person, please celebrate with us from home by using your own loaf of bread and cup of juice.

## Bethany Golden Oldies – May 20

Once again Bethany Golden Oldies will gather on the third Thursday May 20 at noon in Fellowship Hall. Our Program is Starlette, who will entertain us again with some beautiful music. As our world opens up, and folks are going places again, it's time to think about the possibility of going on another trip. If you haven't attended a meeting yet, PLEASE JOIN US FOR SOME FUN, TASTY FOOD, CONVERSATIONS WITH LONG TIME AND NEW FRIENDS. No reservations needed.

**Annual Men's Retreat - May 21 and 22**

You're invited to join your fellow brothers for the 2021 Annual Men's Retreat. This year, the group will be gathering at Oglebay Resort on May 21 and 22. Attendees are welcome to join for one or both days and don't have to golf to participate. For more information and rates, visit: [www.bethanypresby.org/event/mens-retreat](http://www.bethanypresby.org/event/mens-retreat)

**Pentecost - May 23**

On May 23, we will celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit and the 'birthday' of the Church. To mark this special occasion, we invite you to wear red to church!

**Mark Your Calendar: Annual Golf Outing - June 26**

Join Bethany for our Annual Golf Outing on June 26 at the Fort Cherry golf course. All members and friends of Bethany are welcome to attend. Stay tuned for more information!

**Mark Your Calendar: West Virginia Mission Trip - June 27**

Bring God's love and blessings to the poor, elderly and victims of natural disaster. Engage in fun and fellowship with our Christian brothers and sisters the week of June 27 in West Virginia. Participants can join for the full week or for half a week. Learn more and sign-up: [www.bethanypresby.org//blog/wv-mission-trip](http://www.bethanypresby.org//blog/wv-mission-trip)

## News and Announcements

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**CONFIRM YOUR PROFILE INFORMATION - DIRECTORY UPDATE**

Please take a minute to confirm your information is up-to-date and correct for the new edition of the Church Directory. In addition to any new information, please let us know if your interests have changed or would like to be kept informed on certain church projects or missions. Please call or email Jill in the office, [kolenda@bethanypresby.org](mailto:kolenda@bethanypresby.org) or 412-221-5132 to update your information.

**NOTES FROM THE FINANCE OFFICE**

Kim McCann will be on vacation from May 7-May 18. The deadline for any checks needed through May 20 is Wednesday, May 5 at noon. If you have an accounting need / emergency during that time, contact Clerk of Session, Beckie Price.

**STEWARDSHIP TEAM**

We are asking that you write the contribution amount on your envelopes. It makes it easier for our counters on Sunday. Thank you.

**FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK**

Tune in to hear Pastor Brian reflect on recent happenings at the church and provide an outlook of what's to come. Watch past videos: [www.bethanypresby.org/blog](http://www.bethanypresby.org/blog)



## *Bridgetown Community Food Bank*

The Bridgetown Community Foodbank continues to be a pillar within the community. At the April 19 distribution we helped 121 families, including 43 children, 95 adults and 78 elderly. Thanks to your generous donations we were also able to provide the Food Bank clients with a gift card so they were able to buy perishable food. The Foodbank is always looking for volunteers, if interested, please call the church office.

To learn more about the Foodbank, please visit:  
[www.bethanypresby.org/food-bank](http://www.bethanypresby.org/food-bank)



## *May Birthdays*

5/01 Alice Eiszler  
 5/01 Joseph Mizia  
 5/02 Helena Brickner  
 5/02 Jackson Gullo  
 5/04 Phyllis Matthews  
 5/04 Bethany Orosz  
 5/06 Ann Doty  
 5/06 Brenda Wolesslagle  
 5/07 Russell North  
 5/08 Jenna Foltz  
 5/08 Timothy Gastgeb  
 5/08 Tom Harold  
 5/08 Kara Julius  
 5/08 Valeria Lorenzi  
 5/08 Jody Romanelli  
 5/09 Alex Harbison  
 5/10 Brandon Orosz  
 5/11 Larry Gastgeb  
 5/11 Roberta Gerstacker  
 5/11 Kaycee Nelson  
 5/11 Jacquelyn Nixon  
 5/12 Jim Davidson

5/13 Brittany Edney  
 5/13 Alyssa Padula  
 5/13 Karen Talerico  
 5/14 Sandra Gastgeb  
 5/15 Amy Gastgeb  
 5/16 Liam Edney  
 5/16 Colleen Heasley  
 5/16 Susan Nagy  
 5/17 Kathryn Evans  
 5/17 Denise Leigh  
 5/17 Maximilian Nagy  
 5/17 Dylan Nock  
 5/18 Angela Holzworth Tournay  
 5/18 Elaine London  
 5/18 Carolyn Morelock  
 5/18 Judy Vietmeier  
 5/18 Susan Witwicki  
 5/19 Patricia Frye  
 5/20 Macario Gonzalez-Perez  
 5/20 Joseph Szallar  
 5/20 David Verduci  
 5/21 Linda Manzini

5/21 Connor Schultz  
 5/22 Lara Bizzack  
 5/22 Faith Ruehle  
 5/22 Logan Smith  
 5/23 Katelyn Morelock  
 5/24 Samantha Hartnett  
 5/25 J. D. Cellone  
 5/25 Wendi Duffill  
 5/25 Ian Suppo  
 5/26 Margaret Bolam  
 5/26 Peggy Walsh  
 5/27 Rebecca Findley  
 5/28 Robert Montagna  
 5/29 Terri Berton  
 5/29 Emily Lambert  
 5/29 Cindy Lamberti  
 5/29 Sara Sunderlin



# Vacation Bible School

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## SAVE THE DATE!

VBS will take place on July 19 - July 23.  
The volunteers are still working on the  
finalized plan. Please look in future  
bulletins or the Bethany website for more  
information.



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