

Bethesda Beacon

A publication of Bethesda United Methodist Church
www.Bethesdaum.com

DECEMBER 2020 & JANUARY 2021



Dear Bethesda Family,

Greetings in the name of Jesus, the author, finisher, and sustainer of our faith. As I sit at my desk writing this, I cannot help but think about how much has changed since this time last year. We were all going into this time of Advent without knowing a couple of months from that moment we would be struck with a worldwide pandemic. What we should do as people of faith is go into this year's time of Advent with a greater expectation that God will shift and turn this troubling time around in our nation. Advent is upon us as we celebrate the time of Jesus the messiah coming to dwell with us, and we ask His presence to be with us during the troubling times we are in. Christ is always within our reach, and we should call upon His name, He is coming, we should prepare for His arrival. Wherever we are in our walk with Him at this moment, I hope we will overcome the thoughts of the negative and celebrate as we enter in this Christmas season reminded of how Jesus brought us and the world into a deeper meaning of hope, peace, joy, and love.

Through this Season, on Sunday mornings we are going to walk a path leading up to the Christmas story. We will witness just how Jesus brought hope, peace, joy and love within our grasp. When some teachers of the law asked Jesus when the "Kingdom Of God" would come, Jesus replied "The coming of the Kingdom of God is not something that can be observed, nor will people say, "Here it is," or "There it is," Because the Kingdom of God is (already) in your midst." In other words, Jesus was explaining to them that all the hope, peace, joy, and love was now, already within their reach.

In our preparation of the coming of Jesus, let's also examine our own hearts and lives. In the midst of trouble, we must be an example of not letting the storm get in us, but those by faith that overcome the storm and stand in the midst of adversity and not be moved by fear. How can we do that when everything around us is changing and life seems to be in a whirlwind? We can be assured that through the Christmas story and know personally that God's presence is within our reach. We may be experiencing change, but He has not changed, He is the same yesterday, today and forever. Come Lord Jesus, Come. O come; O come Emanuel! May His presence and power overwhelm you with Grace and Mercy this season.

Love, In Christ

Pastor Paul

Prayer list:

Our Pastor
All Ministries at
Bethesda UMC
Military
Leaders of America

Billy Boyles
Woody Brewster
Chuck Brown
Earline Burke
Michael Coffey
Irma Davis
Lula Dixon
Kem & Linda Dugger
Harry & Reba
Edwards
Ethan Ferguson
Peggy Haupt
Delanie Hickman
Tony Hickman
LouDean & Betty
Hinely
Diane Hodges
Cindy Howard
Anita Kessler
Ray Kessler, Jr.
Ray Kessler, Sr.
TJ Kessler
Paul Lafferty
Kay Lisicia
Barbara Mast
Kevin McDaniel
Andrew Miles
Carl Mingledorf
Carol Morgan
Clayton Morgan
Scott Morgan
Thressa Morgan
Caroline Morton
Shirley Palmer
Robbie Pierce
Brian Scott
Kelby Shearouse
Laura Sherman
Connie Shuman
Abby Smith
Alice Smith
Janet Smith
Patty Wise Smith
Irene Stanford
Laurie Stregles
Greg Stephens
Virginia Strickland
Joyce Wadsworth
Susan Waller
Alma Zettler
Dwight Zipperer

Thoughts for December 2020 and January 2021

The Christmas Story and New Year's Resolutions from the Letter to the Hebrew Believers

Hebrews 2:14-18 Now since the children have flesh and blood in common, Jesus also shared in these, so that through His death He might destroy the one holding the power of death—that is, the Devil—and free those who were held in slavery all their lives by the fear of death. For it is clear that He does not reach out to help angels, but to help Abraham's offspring. Therefore, He had to be like His brothers in every way, so that He could become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For since He Himself was tested and has suffered, He is able to help those who are tested. (Holman Version)

We usually read the Christmas story from Matthew and Luke for these tell the story of a baby born in Bethlehem. We prefer the story in Luke for it is happier and lacks the tragic story of Herod's tyranny. But the writer of the letter to the Hebrew Christians also tells the Christmas story...he tells us "why" Jesus came into the world as a baby:

"Therefore, He had to be like His brothers in every way, so that He could become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people." In order to be our savior He had to have flesh and blood just as we do. There was no other way, He is the only way!

Hebrews 10:19-25 Therefore, brothers, since we have boldness to enter the sanctuary through the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way He has opened for us through the curtain (that is, His flesh), and since we have a great high priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed in pure water. Let us hold on to the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. And let us be concerned about one another in order to promote love and good works, not staying away from our worship meetings, as some habitually do, but encouraging each other, and all the more as you see the day drawing near. (Holman Version)

Want to make some Biblical resolutions for 2021? Try these:

1. Draw nearer to God assured by faith that you have been washed clean
2. Hold on to hope in Christ because He is faithful
3. Be concerned about one another in a way that promotes love and good works
4. Attend church.... if you cannot attend physically stay connected to the church
5. Encourage one another; pray for each other; pray for the lost
6. Be ready for Jesus's return

As we celebrate Christmas 2020 we have hope in Jesus who came into the world of sin to save the world from sin and provide a way for believers to spend eternity with Him in heaven. Make the "why" of Christmas the center of your Christmas celebration. Rejoice in Him!

Be ready to face 2021 by staying close to God. Stay in His word, stay connected to other Christians. Live every day as though it is the day that Christ will return.

Diane Wilhelm, Prayer Ministry Coordinator

Happy December Birthdays

4th	Harry Edwards
6th	Isabella Smith
7th	Madison Jenkins
8th	Wanda Evans
8th	Stephen Dickerson
8th	Aralyn Zittrouer
8th	Derrick Jenkins
12th	Greg Stephens
12th	Cole Schoonover
16th	Anita Kessler
16th	Judy Davis
17th	Melanie McCall
18th	Isabella Mensing
19th	Levi Zittrouer
20th	Randy Freeman
20th	Ray Kessler, Sr.
20th	Carol Page
23rd	Britni Cress
24th	Hannah Jenkins
29th	Teresa Pierce

Happy January Birthdays

6th	JB Wendelken
7th	Marie Johnson
8th	Lula Dixon
9th	Sarah Grayson
11th	Jim Wilhelm
11th	Tara Shaufelberger
15th	Janice Nease
15th	Geraldine Jenkins
17th	Sean Morgan
19th	Weston Kessler
23rd	Courtney Granat
23rd	Marla Raffield
24th	Ricky Stringer
24th	Wyatt Bush
27th	Tammy Saxon
30th	Gavin Clements
30th	Linda Collins
31st	Thomas Granat

Newsletter

Deadline is Jan. 19th

Please turn in all announcements, articles, or other information by this date for the **February 2021**

Newsletter

Thank you so much!!

Advent, Christmas and Epiphany Study

Advent, Christmas and Epiphany are a most wonderful time of the year. Anticipation is in the air! Joy is in our hearts. You are invited to join me in an online, email Bible study that will begin on Sunday, November 29 and end on Wednesday, January 6 in 2021.

Just send your email address to jdwilhelm@planters.net to receive a devotional thought and prayer each Sunday and Wednesday morning during this time. The emphasis will be on "O Come O Come Emanuel".

I look forward to this time of study as we prepare for the celebration of the birth of Christ.

Diane Wilhelm, Lay Leader and Prayer Ministry Coordinator

Administrative Council Meeting ~ January 25th at 7:00pm in the Sanctuary

	Happy December Anniversaries Wishes to	
3rd	David & Gloria Kasabian	Married 32 Years
6th	Charles & Wanda Evans	Married 51 Years
29th	Lee & Carol Morgan	Married 41 Years



	Happy January Anniversaries Wishes to	
20th	Ralph & Laura Grayson	Married 26 Years



Welcome our newest members to Bethesda!
Barbara & Ed Mast

*Christmas Eve Service
6:45pm*

*Merry Christmas
Remember Jesus is the
Reason for the Season*

*Happy New Year
God Bless Each of You*

If you would like to donate to "People Helping People" there will be a collection container by the social hall doors.

It will be available on Wednesday and Sundays.
Thank You!



Dec. & Jan. - most needed items:

- Laundry detergent,
- Trash bags,
- Shampoo,
- Paper towels

*Administrative
Council
Meeting*

January 25th at 7pm

*Meet in the Sanctuary
Make plans to attend!*

December 2020 Flower List

- 6th Brenda Saxon
- 13th Susan Nease
- 20th Geraldine Jenkins
- 27th Sarah Pierce

*Please sign up online or
call the office to reserve
your Sunday in January
for Altar Flowers*

Online giving is available through easyTithe on our website www.Bethesdaum.com Click the online giving tab & follow prompts

Thank you for your faithfulness!

