

BETHANY UMC

107 S. Front St.
Milton, PA 17847
(570) 742-9796

bethany18coffice@gmail.com

Website:

bethanyumc-miltonpa.org

Sunday Worship:

Gathering of the Family of God: 9:00 am

REV. BRIAN LUCAS

1035 Sunset Dr
Milton, PA 17847
570-351-1619 (Cell Number)
570-742-2000 (St Andrew's UMC-Office)
blucas@susumc.org

Upper Room – Now Available

January / February


Announcements:

Dates to Remember:

- Jan 4 - 9:00 am – Gathering of the Family of God / Communion
- Jan 5 – 9:00 am – Monday Morning Mocha “Faith Question” @ Bethany/Office
- Jan 11 – 9:00 am – Gathering of the Family of God
10:15 am – Christmas Take Down Decorations / Lunch
- Jan 18– 9:00 am – Gathering of the Family of God [Special Offering/Human Relations]
- Jan 20 – 6:00 pm – Leadership Team Meeting (Office)
- Jan 30 – 9:00 am – Gathering of the Family of God
10:15 am – January Birthday Celebrations
- Feb 1 – 9:00 am – Gathering of the Family of God/Communion
- Feb 8 – 9:00 am – Gathering of the Family of God
- Feb 14 – Happy Valentines’ Day!
- Feb 15 – 9:00 am – Gathering of the Family of God
- Feb 18 -7:00 pm– Combined Ash Wednesday Service at Bethany UMC
- Feb 22 – 9:00 am – Gathering of the Family of God
10:15 am – February Birthday Celebrations

Every Sunday Worship (Gathering of the Family of God) at 9:00 am.

Every Monday Morning – Monday Morning Mocha “Faith Questions” at 9:00 am (Bethany)

 BETHANY UMC OFFICE
18 CENTER ST
MILTON, PA 17847

Jan / Feb
2026

Bethany United Methodist Church

“A Church with the Heart of Christ in the Heart of Milton”

Volume 13, Issue 1 & 2

January & February 2026



Milton's Good News

November and December “At a Glance”

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Looking back in November and December for Bethany, November we started with our Annual Charge Conference @ St Andrew's. Candles on the altar for our 2025 Saints for All Saints Day. Had our “Hanging of the Greens”, which we decorated the church and had lunch together. Bethany & St Andrew's joined together to make popcorn balls for our December movie nights. December we had two movie nights; one held at Bethany and the other at St. Andrew's. Christmas Eve with candlelight at Bethany & St. Andrew's. Bethany End of the months by celebration the November's & December's birthdays after church with cake and coffee. Thanks to those who donated cupcakes! Ended December with a joint service and breakfast with St. Andrew's.

“Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.”

Hebrews 11:1 (NIV)

-Cheri Buss



Happy New Year 2026!

Bethany UMC wishes you a happy New Year!

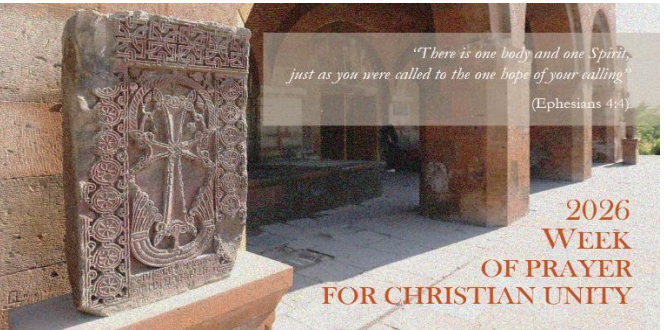
May the faith of God be with you this year. May the peace of God surround you this year, and may you be blessed each day!



Special points of interest:

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Week of Prayer for Christian Unity



2026 Theme:

“There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling” (Ephesians 4:4).

Join the many faithful from Christian denominations around the world for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, Jan. 18-25, 2026.



From Pastor's Study

"Questions in the Dark"

Dear St. Andrew's & Bethany UMCs Family,

The night sky in winter holds a special kind of mystery. The other night, while walking the dog, I was admiring the fairly clear sky and all the stars, and found myself full of questions. Like the Magi who followed celestial guidance, we often journey with more questions than answers. That's the beauty of faith, isn't it? Not that we have everything figured out, but that we're willing to follow the light we're given, even when we can't see the whole path ahead.

As we begin this new year, I'm learning that questions can be as sacred as answers. The Magi didn't have GPS coordinates or a detailed itinerary – they had a star and a holy curiosity. Their journey began with questions: "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him" (Matthew 2:2).

Sometimes I think we're afraid of questions in our faith journey. We worry they signal doubt or weakness. But what if our questions are actually invitations – doorways into deeper relationship with God? After all, some of the most amazing stories in scripture began with questions:

- "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh?" (Moses)
- "How can this be?" (Mary)
- "Will you really sweep away the innocent with the guilty?" (Abraham)

As we approach Lent beginning February 18th, we're entering a season specifically designed for holy questioning. Lent invites us to examine our hearts, challenge our assumptions, and wonder anew about God's presence in our lives. Like a winter night sky, it offers both darkness and light, mystery and revelation.

What questions are you carrying into this season?

- Where do you see God's star leading you?
- What mysteries are you being invited to explore?
- Which comfortable certainties might need gentle challenging?

Remember, questions don't diminish faith – they deepen it. Like the Magi, we're all wanderers and wonderers, following divine light through holy darkness. Sometimes the greatest act of faith isn't having all the answers, but being willing to live the questions.

As we journey together through these winter months, let's create space for holy curiosity. In our prayer times, our Bible studies, our conversations – let's welcome questions as friends rather than threats. After all, every great journey begins with a question, and every star followed leads to unexpected grace.

In the spirit of wonder,
Pastor Brian

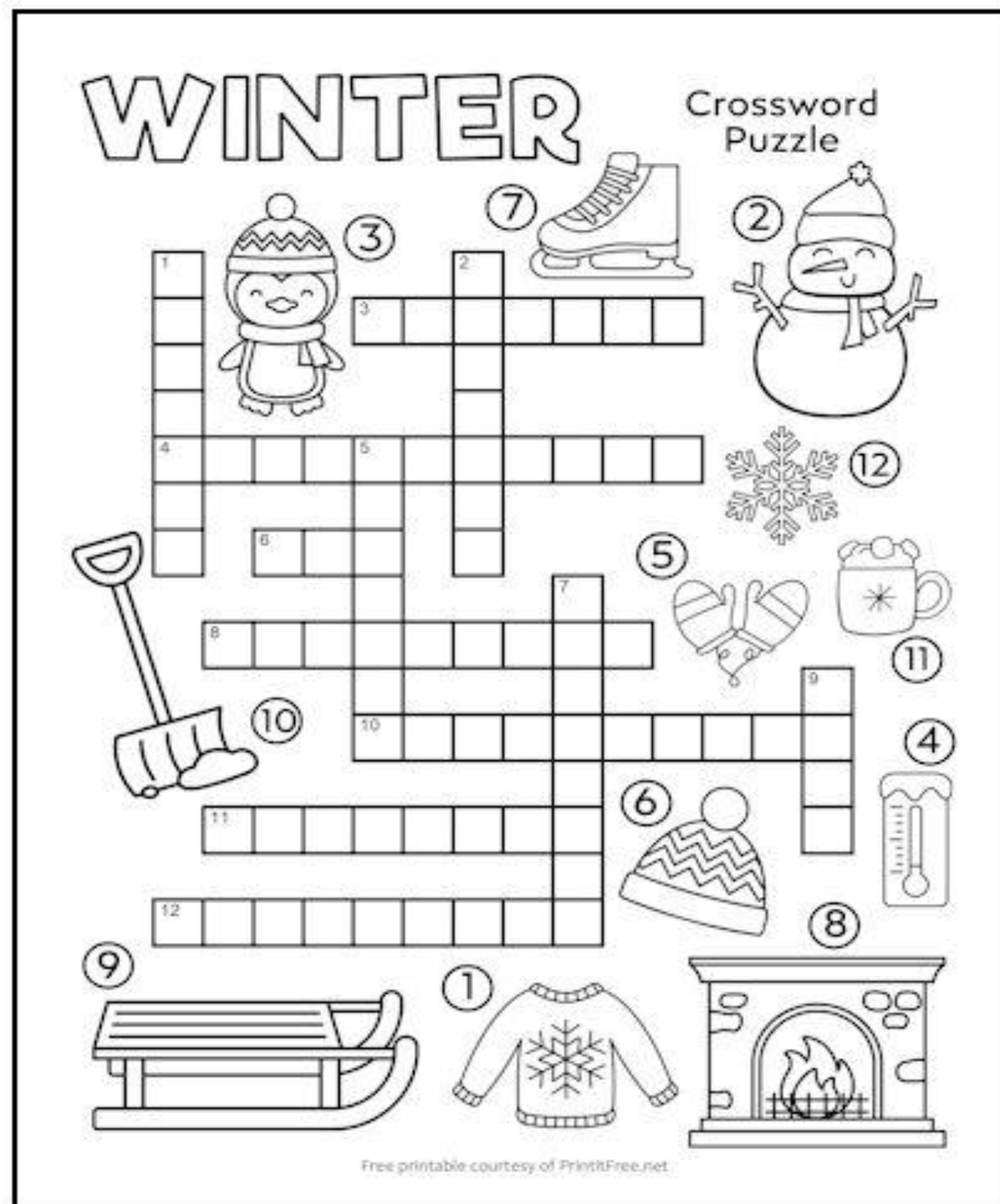
P.S. Join us beginning **Monday, January 5th at 9 am.** for Monday Morning Mocha. We will meet in the conference room of the Bethany UMC offices. Bring your "Faith Questions," and we'll explore our deepest wonderings together in a safe and supportive community.



Leadership Reports...

All Committee/Leadership Reports need to be handed into the church office or pastor, by the second Sunday of each month. **For Jan and Feb they are due: Sunday, Jan 11 & Feb 8, 2026.** You can bring them into the church or email them to Pastor Brian at blucas@susumc.org. Thank You!

Fun Page.....



Bethany UMC Current Expense Income Oct. & Nov. 2025 Reports:

Financial Secretary's Report: October 2025

Date	Offering Envelopes	Plate Offering	Advent Offering	Butler Trust	World Communion Sunday	Free Will Offering	Contract Over payment	Totals
10/05/25	\$1,780.00	\$10.00	\$0	\$0	\$5.00	\$0	\$0	\$1,795.00
10/12/25	\$1,165.00	\$5.00	\$0	\$3,660.19	\$50.00	\$50.00	\$0	\$4,930.19
10/19/25	\$2,143.00	\$10.00	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$100.38	\$2,253.38
10/20/25	\$15.00	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$15.00
10/26/25	\$387.00	\$10.00	\$50.00	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$447.00
Totals	\$5,490.00	\$35.00	\$50.00	\$3,660.19	\$55.00	\$50.00	\$100.38	\$9,440.57

Financial Secretary's Report: November 2025

Date	Offering Envelopes	Plate Offering	Advent Offering	Fuel & Cool Fund	Poinsettias	Memorial Fund	Price Hardship Fund	Totals
11/02/25	\$5,380.00	\$20.00	\$180.00	\$200.00	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$5,780.00
11/09/25	\$308.00	\$0	\$5.00	\$210.00	\$32.00	\$0	\$0	\$555.00
11/16/25	\$290.00	\$10	\$0	\$0	\$114.00	\$0	\$0	\$414.00
11/23/25	\$423.00	\$0	\$100.00	\$0	\$10.00	\$0	\$100.00	\$633.00
11/30/25	\$250.00	\$117.00	\$0	\$0	\$10.00	\$125.00	\$0	\$567.00
Totals	\$6,651.00	\$147.00	\$285.00	\$410.00	\$166.00	\$125.00	\$100.00	\$7,949.00

Finance Report (Oct. & Nov. Current Expenses In & Out):

October 2025

Total Income Received: \$9,440.57 + (Bank Interest \$1.31) = \$9,441.88

Total Expenses Paid Out: \$11,538.58

Average Attendance: 22

November 2025

Total Income Received: \$7,949.00 + (Bank Interest \$1.97) = \$7,950.97

Total Expenses Paid Out: \$11,225.23

Average Attendance: 14



Lenten Offering....

Ash Wednesday starts the first day of Lent, which then ends on Holy Saturday. This 40-day journey called Lent is a wonderful opportunity to grow in your faith. As you are observing Lent and journeying on your spiritual path, we hope that you use the enclosed Lenten envelope to bring your special giving to your church on or before Easter Sunday or mail to:

Bethany United Methodist Church
Attn: Financial Secretary, Bob Fitch
18 Center Street, Milton, PA 17847



Trustees Report



Trustee items in process or completed:

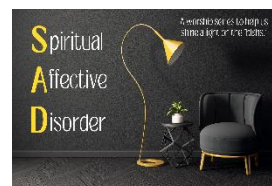
- We recently signed a three-year contract with PenTeleData to continue our internet service at the current speed. With the new contract we will save approximately \$27 per month.
- A new door is on order to replace the door between the Social Hall and the kitchen. The new door will have a window, which should eliminate the potential safety hazard of someone getting hit because they can't be seen on the other side.
- Susquehanna Fire Protection recently performed the yearly inspection on the fire extinguishers and the fire suppression system in the range hood.
- Entoguard recently completed their quarterly pest control visit with no problems noted.
- We received our annual notice of the required back flow testing of the water supply line. The plumber has been contacted to perform the test.
- There is a problem with the exterior lighting by the Center Street entrance. An electrician has been contacted and should be able to get us on their schedule soon.
- The PA Department of Agriculture recently inspected our kitchen and had no concerns.

Parsonage Update:

- We closed on the sale of the parsonage on November 7.
- The house sold for our asking price of \$365,000. Less the realty transfer tax and the attorney's fee we netted \$360,681.
- We've opened a new checking account at Milton Savings Bank and deposited the check into the new account.
- We paid ourselves back from the proceeds the money we spent preparing the house for sale and our share of the parsonage expenses paid to date to St. Andrew's, which was approximately \$8,400 total.
- The property insurance company has been notified and had taken the parsonage off our property insurance coverage.

Submitted by Jamie Aurand

SAD: Spiritual Affective Disorder (Shining a light on the Blahs (Worship Series)



Seasonal Affective Disorder happens when a lack of sunlight affects our moods and ability to cope effectively. Spiritual Affective Disorder can also be a condition when we've had prolonged stress and life is disturbingly uncertain. What is our faithful response to our strained mental health? What if everyday life activities could become spiritual practices — deepening our experience of a meaningful life and helping us shine a light on the "blahs"? Join us for our new series beginning on January 4th.

January and February Worship Schedule 2026

SUNDAY MORNING
WORSHIP
 SCHEDULE

Sunday, Jan 4 – 9:00 am – Gathering of the Family of God / **Communion**

Sunday, Jan 11 – 9:00 am Gathering of the Family of God

Sunday, Jan 18– 9:00 am - Gathering of the Family of God
 [Human Relations Day – Special Offering]

Sunday, Jan 25 – 9:00 am – Gathering of the Family of God
10:15 am – January Birthday Celebrations

Sunday, Feb 1– 9:00 am – Gathering of the Family of God / **Communion**

Sunday, Feb 8 - 9:00 am – Gathering of the Family of God

Sunday, Feb 15 - 9:00 am Gathering of the Family of God

Wednesday, Feb 18 – 7:00 pm- Ash Wednesday Service @ Bethany UMC

Sunday, Feb 22 – 9:00 am – Gathering of the Family of God

10:15 am – February Birthday Celebrations



N.O.W. Hear This!.....

Loss of our dear Church Members: James Masser & Dorothy Hower

James Masser went with our Lord and Savior on November 18, 2025. James was a member of Bethany United Methodist Church since the closing of St Pete’s in 2016 and served on the Ad Board/Leadership Team.

Dorothy Hower went with our Lord and Savior on November 18, 2025. Dorothy was a lifelong member of Bethany United Methodist Church for 78 years (plus). Dorothy served on Ad Board/Leadership Team, Choir, and many other groups at the church.

They both will be sadly missed!

Loss of our dear Church Constituent Member: Rita Sanford

Rita Sanford went with our Lord and Savior on November 4, 2025. Rita attended here at Bethany United Methodist Church, these past 7 years when she moved from Renovo. Rita was a member of First United Methodist Church, Renovo. We will miss her smiling face here at Bethany UMC.

Monday Mornings Mocha



Join us beginning **Monday, January 5th at 9 am.** for Monday Morning Mocha. We will meet in the conference room of the Bethany UMC offices. Bring your "Faith Questions," and we'll explore our deepest wonderings together in a safe and supportive community.

Pastor Brian Reads the Bible [Facebook]

Pastor Brian reads the Bible will make its long awaited return on **Tuesday, January 6** on **St. Andrew’s Facebook page at 9:00 a.m.** Sessions will usually take place on Tuesdays and Thursdays. In response to a request by a regular participant, we will start with the book of Revelation.

2026 Leadership Team...



- Members of the Leadership Team are as follows:
- | | |
|---|--------------|
| Chair of Leadership Council..... | Cynthia Mohr |
| Recording Secretary..... | Bob Fitch |
| Lay Leader / Lay Member to Annual Conference..... | Bob Fitch |
| Chair of Trustees..... | James Aurand |
| Chair of Pastor/Parish Relations Committee..... | Bob Fitch |
| Finance Chair..... | Cynthia Mohr |
| Treasurer..... | Cheri Buss |
| Financial Secretary..... | Bob Fitch |
| Worship Ministries Coordinator..... | Pastor Brian |

Leadership Team Report.....

No Leadership Team Report in this Newsletter due to the November 18th, 2025 meeting was canceled.

Next Leadership Team Meeting is scheduled for January 20, 2026 at 6:00 pm.

Christmas Decoration Take Down & Luncheon



January 11th, 2026 after church worship we will have a luncheon and “*Christmas Decoration Take Down*”. Please stay to help put the Christmas decorations away and for lunch. Thank You!

Ash Wednesday Service



Lent begins with Ash Wednesday on February 18th. This year’s series will be “Cross Words” in which we take a look at the last statements of Christ delivered while he was hanging on the cross. Ash Wednesday worship will be combined service (Bethany & St. Andrew’s) and take place at **Bethany UMC, Wednesday 18th at 7:00 p.m.**

**Begins, Wednesday,
February 18, 2026.**



Thank You Note:



Bethany Congregation: The Children of Milton YMCA made a Thank You balloon and paraded by the church to wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving and Thank everyone for the Halloween Treat Bag.

Our Prayer List.....

- Concerns:**
- The Family of Rita Sanford – Rita passed away Nov. 4, 2025.
 - The Family of Dorothy Hower – Dorothy passed away Nov 18, 2025
 - The Family of James Masser– James passed away Nov 18, 2025
 - The Family of Connie Aurand (Jamie’s Aunt)Connie passed away. Dec 6th, 2025.
 - Jamie A – Employment
 - Elias Allshouse – Heart Infection
 - Elwood C - Shoulder
 - Earl L (Pastor Brian’s brother) – Heart Ablation / Health
 - Anna P – Continued prayers for cancer treatments / health
 - Nora S. – Cancer / Treatments
 - Florence Y – Cancer return / Hospice care.
- Family/friends with Cancer:** Rita S, Anna P, Florence Y, Dot (Judy’s neighbor); Kenny (Sally’s friend). Alicia (Sally); Dale R (Sally’s friend); Becky B (Lucas’ friend); Nora S.

