



The Bethany Gazette

Bethany Presbyterian Church Newsletter

February/March/April 2023



Dear Bethany Family and Friends,

As we look out our windows and see gray skies and snow and ice and dreary weather let's remember this quote from Martin Luther. "Our Lord has written the promise of resurrection, not in books alone, but in every leaf in springtime." Yes- our Lord gives us the promise of resurrection - He gives us Hope for now and for our future in our lives with Him. The time between our celebration of the Birth of Jesus and His Death and Resurrection seem to be such a short time in calendar days—those days filled with so many opportunities to worship and celebrate our Christianity together - opportunities to share and show our Christianity with others. We use the play on the title of the event "The Super Bowl" Football Game as "The Souper Bowl of Caring" where we share a meal together of soup and take donations to help feed those in need in our area. We share Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday Services with our Christian Brothers and Sisters from Grace Lutheran. For several years we have planned a special service to include a meal for Palm Sunday that had been postponed due to COVID - this year we plan to hold that special service with details to come! Then we will join together for the celebration of Resurrection - Easter Sunday with light refreshments before service, communion, fellowship and joining in hope for our future in Christ!

Many have not been able to attend church because of physical limitations; please know that you are held in love and prayer. If you are able to attend and have not been in church please know that you are missed and God calls you to share in love and worship and fellowship.

As we prepare our lives for Good Friday and Easter, let us join together in this prayer from Rachel Olsen - Journey Into the Presence of God.

Dear Lord, may I realize afresh today what Your death and resurrection mean for me. Forgiveness, freedom, and the ability to walk with You through this fallen world into eternity. May I always find my satisfaction in You and Your willingness to offer Yourself to me. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Remember - there is always hope because God is always with us.

Blessings in His Grace and Peace,

Pastor Denise

Bethany Presbyterian Church
Blaine Street & Chandler Avenue
Johnstown, PA 15906
www.bethanyjohnstown.com
814-539-9194

Pastor: Denise A. Todero, CP
Morning Worship: Sundays @ 10:30 AM
All Are Welcome!

February 2023

- 5: Morning Worship 10:30 a.m.
- 12: Morning Worship 10:30 a.m.**
Souper Bowl of Caring Sunday
- 19: Morning Worship 10:30 a.m.**
Session Meeting After Worship
- 22: Ash Wednesday Service at Bethany 7 p.m.**
- 26: Morning Worship 10:30 a.m.

March 2023

- 5: Morning Worship 10:30 a.m.
- 12: Morning Worship 10:30 a.m.
- 19: Morning Worship 10:30 a.m.
- 26: Morning Worship 10:30 a.m.

March 2023

- 2: Palm Sunday Service 10:30 a.m.**
- 6: Maundy Thursday at Grace Lutheran 7 p.m.
- 9: Easter Sunday Service 10:30 a.m.**
Light Refreshments Before The Service
- 16: Morning Worship 10:30 a.m.
- 23: Morning Worship 10:30 a.m.
- 30: Morning Worship 10:30 a.m.

"May God empower your inner strength through the power of the Holy Spirit." —
Lailah Gifty Akita

2023 Per Capita

Suggested Per Capita for 2023 is \$40 per member. Feel free to contribute more if you'd like.

Please use the special Per Capita envelope to make this contribution, which can be placed in the offering plate or mailed to the church.

"Per Capita is crucial to the overall health of the PC(USA), because it binds presbyteries, synods, and congregations together in one church."

– J. Herbert Nelson, II,
Stated Clerk of the
General Assembly of
the PC(USA)

Be Sure To Visit Our Website (www.bethanyjohnstown.com) and Like Us On Facebook (Bethany Presbyterian Church— Johnstown, PA)

Souper Bowl of Caring Sunday

In 1990, Souper Bowl of Caring began with a simple prayer from a single youth group: “Lord, even as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us be mindful of those without a bowl of soup to eat.”

Since then, more than \$170 million has been generated for local charities across the country through Souper Bowl of Caring. It has become a powerful movement that transforms the time around the Big Game into the nation’s largest celebration of giving and caring for those in need.

Through this mission, people learn they can make a positive difference in the world as they collect food, raise money and serve at hunger-relief charities and show caring and compassion in local communities across the country.

Share in God’s love for our neighbors in need and give generously on Souper Bowl Sunday. All of the donations collected will go directly to our Tackle Hunger Charity of Choice, the West End Food Pantry.



Easter Flowers

We are planning to have Easter flowers available to order once again this year. Look for more information on both coming soon in the bulletin, on the church website, and on our Facebook page.



Support The West End Food Pantry

The West End Food Pantry continues to need non-perishable food items to keep their shelves stocked. Donations can be placed in the bins by the Blaine St. Entrance as you enter the church. Monetary donations can be placed in the offering plate or mailed to the church. Thank you for your contributions to this important community resource.

Bulletins and Newsletters Available Online

Bulletins from Morning Worship are available on the church website (www.bethanyjohnstown.com). We keep each bulletin up for a few weeks following the service so you have plenty of time to check out any you may have missed. Church Newsletters are also posted on the church website.

Furnace Repair Update

If you've joined us for Worship over the last few weeks, you probably noticed it was warmer than usual in the building. In early December, the furnace malfunctioned and due to its age, the parts were impossible to find. Our friends at Hinkle Plumbing and Heating recently completed repairs and got the temperature back to a comfortable level. Now all we have to worry about is paying the gas bill...

A big thank you to Ray Sheets, Mike Whorl, and Jimmy Stormant for their assistance throughout the process



Sign Up for the Email List

If you aren't already on our official email list, be sure to sign up today. Click the link on our website or email bethanyjtown@hotmail.com to be added to the list.

A Sharing Calendar for Lent 2023

Each day at or after a meal time, gather around this map activity. Consider the reflection and questions, place a coin or a bill (a "gift") in your fish coin bank or a jar.

Feb 26-March 4

Sunday: God, open our eyes to the many blessings you have given us. Remind us that we are all connected by your Creation. May we seek your peace, love and justice with everyone we meet. **Amen.**

Monday: After a natural disaster, it can be hard to find places to cook or to even find food. Say a prayer for those struggling with food insecurity and give a gift for each meal you ate today.

Tuesday: Using the online map, find a PDA partnership near where you live. Say a prayer for those recovering from natural and human-caused disasters. Organize a group to make Gift of the Heart kits (pcusa.info/heart).

Wednesday: Communication can be very difficult after a disaster. Give a gift for every call, text or email you received from a loved one today.

Thursday: In some countries, people have to travel for miles to find clean water, especially after a disaster. Share a gift to help clean water reach people who need it.

Friday: Who are the helpers in your life? Whom do you call upon when you face difficult situations? Thank someone in your life for the specific ways they support you.

March 5-11

Sunday: For those with friends and family but no food, Lord, hear our prayer. For those with food but no friends and family, Lord, hear our prayer. For your gifts of friends, family and food, we give you thanks. **O God, Amen.**

Monday: When families move, building a new community of friends and neighbors can be difficult. Make a card or gift for someone new in your church, school or neighborhood to make them feel welcome.

Tuesday: Using the online map, find an SDOP partnership near where you live. Read about the ministry and say a prayer for the people involved. Give a gift in support of our siblings facing injustice and oppression.

Wednesday: Blankets keep us warm and are used internationally to comfort those affected by disasters. Give a gift for each blanket in your house and pray for those who need their warmth.

Thursday: God gives many gifts and talents to each of us. What are you thankful for within yourself? Make a list and give a gift in thanks for what you feel is your strongest talent/gift.

Friday: SDOP Sunday is in two days! Go to pcusa.org/sdop to learn more about how SDOP partners are alleviating poverty and oppression and download the SDOP-Sunday Resource for more partner stories.

March 12-18

Sunday: Encourage us, O God, when things are difficult. May we draw creativity and hope from your Spirit and from our partners along the way. **Amen.**

Monday: Without the right nutrition in the first two years of life, a child's mental and physical development are compromised. Make a gift to help ensure healthy food for children in our communities and around the world.

Tuesday: Using the online map, find the PHP partner SouthWest Organizing project in New Mexico that is working to eradicate poverty by assisting low-income families with growing healthy food. Give a gift for each vegetable you had today.

Wednesday: The right supplies make all the difference, whether you are growing crops, raising livestock or learning at school. What are the most important tools you use every day? Make a gift to remember how that tool helped you.

Thursday: God's love is shown in many ways, both large and small. Find three things you can do today or tomorrow to share God's love.

Friday: Make up a short, mealtime prayer. Use it during meals this weekend. Invite others to write mealtime prayers and share them with each other.

March 19-25

Sunday: God, you have promised to protect us and take care of us, even when things get really bad. Help us to trust you so that we may know your peace. **Amen.**

Monday: Hunger kills tens of thousands of adults and children every day. Give a gift of gratitude for the meals you have eaten today.

Tuesday: Using the online map, find a partnership near where you live. Read about the need and how it is being addressed. Say a prayer for the people involved in the ministry there.

Wednesday: As people are trained in farming techniques, more and better foods are grown. Nearly 3,000 people received this training last year. Make a gift of thanks for farmers and their crops.

Thursday: Social support and connection are important parts of being healthy. Give a gift of gratitude for one person or place that has welcomed you when you were alone.

Friday: Healthy food choices and food safety can change the health of an entire community. Eat a healthy snack and make a gift to honor those who teach us to eat in healthy ways.

March 26-April 1

Sunday: Loving God, in a world that sometimes doesn't make sense to us, open our hearts to receive your care and your joy. **Amen.**

Monday: Where rain is scarce, special collection systems are built to catch the water so that it can be used for growing plants all year. Give a gift for each plant in your house.

Tuesday: Using the online map, locate a ministry in a country far away from you. What need is being addressed there? Say a prayer for the people involved in that ministry.

Wednesday: Learn about the indigenous people who inhabited the land where you live. Learn the name they used for the land and what that name means. Give a gift to honor them.

Thursday: In Papaya, Haiti, hope is seen in the leaves of the moringa tree, a superfood that helps hungry people in many different ways. Give a gift for every tree around your home.

Friday: The vulnerable are often the most impacted in emergency situations. Discuss who in your community are considered the most vulnerable and say a prayer for them.

April 2-8

Sunday: God, you call us to grow, go out and serve. Open our eyes, ears and hearts so that we can be "repairers of the breach," serving our siblings in need. **Amen.**

Monday: In India, Dalit women have found hope as they work together to provide shelter, food and livelihoods for their communities. Give a gift to honor the strong and courageous women in your life.

Tuesday: Using the online map, locate Daisy CHALN(DC) in California, an SDOP project that supports Black, Indigenous and People of Color, addressing issues of poverty and racism. Give a gift in honor of your friends of color.

Wednesday: Education is a vital tool to help people address their needs. Give a gift for every year you have been in school.

Thursday: Sometimes people need help advocating for their rights — like those who work with the immokalee farmworkers. Say a prayer for those who advocate for basic human rights for all.

Friday: People without housing have nowhere to keep food. Give a gift for each time you have opened the refrigerator today and pray for people experiencing homelessness.

April 9

Sunday - Resurrection/Easter: Present the gifts in your coin box to your congregation. Say a prayer for all those who will receive help from your generosity.



ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING
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For more locations and ministries, go to pcusa.org/oghsmap or scan this code.

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