

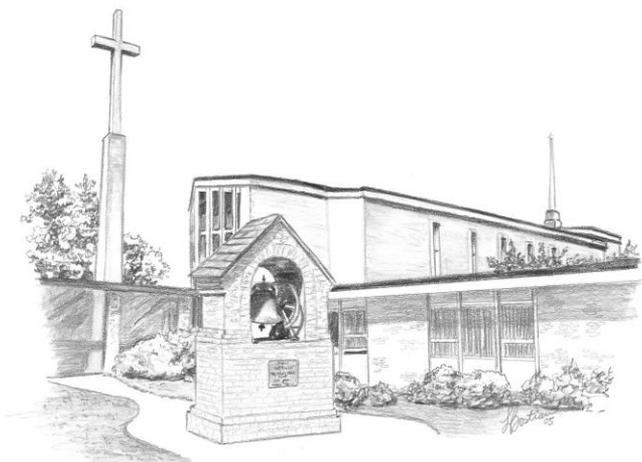
The Beacon



“I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

✝ WHOEVER FOLLOWS ME WILL ✝
NEVER WALK IN DARKNESS

BUT WILL HAVE THE LIGHT OF LIFE” (NRSV)



BETHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH • HICKORY, NC

FEBRUARY + 2018

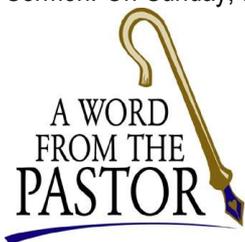
Dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

First, I must begin with an apology for some factual errors that I made in an Advent Sermon. On Sunday, December 17 while preaching on the *Magnificat* of Luke 1:47-

55, I relayed a sequence of events as I thought they had taken place in Atlanta in the 1990's. The events that I was recounting in the sermon concerned First Baptist Church in Atlanta. I became aware of the errors in what I had said in the sermon in the couple of weeks that followed, when a member mentioned the errors to me. This person shared it with me during a visit at the Church building following a meeting. I want to make clear that the person who raised questions about what I had said in the sermon, concerned an offering to correct the sequence of events as it related to the Atlanta congregation. I must also make clear that what this member did was in no way offered antagonistically or maliciously, nor did I take it that way. I appreciated the concern this person was raising. I also want to be clear that the person was not taking issue with the overall point I was making in the sermon. Instead, this person had researched some things, and suggested to me that I may have missed some key points in the sequence of events that had led to significant changes in the ministry at First Baptist in Atlanta in the last decades. I certainly apologize for not getting the facts completely straight. Even though I try to make sure I have a story straight before using it in a sermon, I have been known occasionally to get some facts wrong in an illustrative story. Here the problem on my part may have been, as much as anything, a matter of failure to appreciate the complications in the sequence of events and the nuances of the story.

The sequence of events that I relayed in the Sermon in Advent were based on recollections I had from the brief time I had lived in Atlanta (1990-1992). It was during a period when I was on leave from Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary for a couple of years. Although I was taking some courses at Candler School of Theology and Columbia Seminary in Decatur, I had also working for part of that time for a security firm that had a contract with a couple of Equifax offices in North Atlanta. Some of the employees of Equifax at the time, with whom I interacted on a regular basis were members of First Baptist in Atlanta. Since I remained a seminarian I also did some regular supply work for the Southeastern Synod.

First Baptist, Atlanta is the congregation in which Charles Stanley has served since the 1970's as Senior Pastor. In my Advent Sermon at Bethany, my misstatements began when I said that Charles Stanley had left First Baptist Church in Atlanta to start a new congregation beyond the Parameter in Metro Atlanta, outside the inner-city with its many social problems. Homelessness, panhandling, and vagrancy were



becoming more common in the downtown area surrounding the location of First Baptist Peachtree and 5th Streets at the time. In fact, Charles Stanley is still Senior Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Atlanta. According to the Website for First Baptist Church Atlanta:

Under Dr. Stanley's leadership the church outgrew its building and purchased 55 acres and a building from the Avon Corporation in Dunwoody [section of north Atlanta on the north of the I-285 Perimeter] In 1997, the congregation moved to its current location in the renovated building at 4400 North Peachtree Road. The church continues to restore and build as God leads in order to meet the growing needs of its many ministries. In addition to providing Sunday school classes for all ages and discipleship classes throughout the week, FBA supports 100 Faith Promise missionaries internationally and sends out more than 100 members on short-term mission trips each year. (<https://www.fba.org/main/our-vision>, Accessed: January 17, 2018)

In addition to serving as the Senior Pastor of First Baptist, Atlanta, The Rev. Charles Frazier Stanley is also the founder and president of "In Touch Ministries." He became well known during his two, one-year term tenure serving as president of the Southern Baptist Convention from 1984 to 1986. As the member of Bethany pointed out to me, it is Charles Stanley's son, Charles Andrew "Andy" Stanley who is the Senior Pastor and founder of the North Point Community Church, Buckhead Church, Browns Bridge Church, Gwinnett Church, Woodstock City Church, and Decatur City Church, all of which, like the current First Baptist are located in the area of Atlanta to the north of the I-285 Perimeter. In the sermon I had said that the son (Andy Stanley, whose name I did not mention in the sermon) was now pastor of what had previously been his father's congregation. That is not correct. Instead, it is the various campuses of the North Point Community Church, self-described as a Non-Denominational congregation, which Andy Stanley leads as Senior Pastor. Thus, across the multiple sites of Andy Stanley's Non-Denominational Congregation Andy Stanley's sermons are electronically transmitted every week. Andy Stanley's multi-campus North Point Community Church and First Baptist, Atlanta are all now in the more affluent, areas of Atlanta outside the downtown area. While I was factually correct that First Baptist, Atlanta had eventually relocated from downtown Atlanta, I failed to research the story enough to see that Charles Stanley remain Senior Pastor of First Baptist. It turns out that the relocation of First Baptist took place several months after the 1996 Atlanta Summer Olympic Games.

I also stated in my Advent Sermon that sermons of Charles Stanley are prerecorded sermons from years ago. This is not correct. I compared the senior Stanley and his son who followed him into the ministry to another father and son clergy team, The

Rev. Robert H. Schuller and his son the Rev. Robert Anthony Schuller. In this latter pair, the father was famous for many years for his "Hour of Power" broadcasts from the Chrystal Cathedral in Orange County California. The son succeeded him at the Chrystal Cathedral and in 2008 the younger Schuller resigned after having major differences over the ministry's direction took place with his father and the congregation's leadership. In that case the Chrystal Cathedral was sold to The Orange Diocese of the Roman Catholic Church to be used as the diocesan cathedral in Garden Grove California. Though I did not state it in the Advent Sermon, the "Hour of Power" program is currently hosted by Bobby Schuller, who is Robert H. Schuller's grandson and the son of Robert A. Schuller.

So, when I stated that the sermons of Charles Stanley were prerecorded from years ago, this was in error. What I had failed to check was that since he is still Senior Pastor of First Baptist, Atlanta and the president of "In Touch Ministries," his weekly broadcasts from the current site of First Baptist, Atlanta are in fact very recent prerecorded broadcasts. These still include Charles Stanley's sermons from First Baptist that are recorded weekly for rebroadcast by "In Touch Ministries." Further, what I failed to recognize was that just as the senior Schuller and his son had a "falling out" so it seems did the senior Stanley and his son. This was a matter of nuance in the story which I failed to get clear before I preached my sermon on December 17.

In 2012, CNN reported that tensions that developed over a period between Charles Stanley and Andy Stanley had led to a division in their respective ministries. The tension was exacerbated by the fact that Andy Stanley preferred to appear before his congregation on Sundays in jeans and exhibited a much more casual style compared to his father's coat and tie and a more rigid Southern Baptist Biblical conservatism. The much-publicized divorce of Charles Stanley from his wife, Anna in 2000, after several years of separation, caused a huge rift between father and son. Andy was unable to persuade his father to resign as Pastor of First Baptist in order for the congregation to decide whether the senior Stanley should have remained Pastor. This was a position favored by many in leadership at First Baptist. Charles Stanley met with his son at his office at First Baptist. Following the meeting, plans for the younger Stanley to remain with his father at First Baptist ceased. Charles Stanley was reported to have said at the end of their meeting, "Andy you have joined my enemies, and I'm your father." Through counseling, CNN's has reported that the two have made strides toward reconciliation, but First Baptist and North Point Congregation are very separate ministries, which in my sermon preparations, I had failed to recognize. Even when I had lived in Atlanta, the contentious marital separation between Anna and Charles Stanley was widely reported in the Atlanta press.

(<http://www.cnn.com/2012/11/17/us/andy-stanley/index.html>, Accessed: January 17, 2018)

In my sermon for the Third Sunday in Advent, I had been attempting to draw a contrast between those congregations of all traditions that are led to depart the locations in which they were founded. Many of these congregations move to areas where the members are less inclined to encounter the problems of the world. Bethany was established in 1910 in what was then, the more rural area of West Hickory. West Hickory and Longview, along with Hildebran were at the time, and in the years followed, strong centers of the mill community. The rural life which was also a part of the community, has long since given way to our population now being fully surrounded by the city limits of the western part of the City of Hickory. The mills have in so many cases because shuttered large urban spaces, prone to vagrancy and weeds. The blue collar, working, middle-class community has largely given way to a more ethnically diverse community where many in the population struggle for long term employment. Those who are caught up in the rampant abuse of opioids and illicit drugs are a common site in our community. One member of our congregation, Hattie Capers was wounded in a domestic incident at her apartment in the neighborhood. The city of Hickory continues to strive to keep up with the demands of a decaying infrastructure and with the needs of the community for basic services. Many are the weeks in our office, when we need to refer visitors to the doors of our church building to Cooperative Christian Ministries to be vetted for their eligibility for assistance. These are the folks who repeatedly fall through the cracks of public assistance. In addition to those who are affected by addiction to illicit and controlled substances, we often see the effects of alcoholism. Homelessness is not uncommon in many areas of the larger city of community. In short, at Bethany Lutheran Church in West Hickory in 2018 we cannot abandon the community in which we have been called to do ministry since 1910.

In my sermon on December 17, we reflected upon the words of Mary in Luke 1. She proclaims in the text that already in the news of the Annunciation that God is already at work through the conception of the one who would be brought forth as Mary's first-born son, by the Holy Spirit's power. God was already at work through this conception nine months before the nativity, having been the one who has "filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty." (Luke 1:53, NRSV) Mary sings of God's mighty acts, making note of many of the same things that Jesus will identify later in his "Sermon on the Plain" in Luke 6. In my sermons over the course of the twelve days of Christmas, I suggested that first from Luke's perspective, Jesus was born under the law, in poverty, and in a homelessness at a time and in a region, that was one of the most challenging in human history. If God were going to come into the world in human flesh, he could have chosen no greater difficult an age, no more difficult a land, and in no greater challenging circumstances than those which God had chosen. What's more, Jesus as the Son of the living God was born into a human family, to a woman who could easily have been accused of adultery, since

Joseph was not the biological father of Jesus.

Matthew would remind us that in addition to all of these hardships, the family into which Christ our Lord was born, was left as a refugee family. Yet all of these conditions revealed to us by the Gospel writers was by God's election and choosing. Most importantly, it was all done for our sake. We as the Baptized people of God, as I have continued to remind us all, have been joined to the one who was born in harsh political and economic conditions, under the law, in homelessness, in poverty, to a woman who might have been accused of adultery and in a family of those who became refugees. Jesus identifies with the lowly of whom Mary sings in the *Magnificat* and about whom Jesus preaches in the Beatitudes of Matthew and Luke. In my sermon of the Third Sunday of Advent, my failure to have done my research better, I hope will not take away from my real point. I was attempting to draw contrast between those congregations who seek to avoid the world on their own doorstep while worshipping one who identifies with such a world as this. I sought to contrast Bethany and those congregations who move to another, more affluent, more comfortable part of town, while seeking to remember that we have been joined to the one who for our sake became like ones who live in the more challenged neighborhoods of our city. I sought in the sermon to remind us that we have been called to be the Church by the one who might more easily found in West Hickory, Westmont, Longview and Hildebran.

Between Fall of 2008 – Spring of 2010, our family lived in Brampton, Ontario while I attended the classes for the Course Phase of my PhD Program at the Toronto School of Theology (TST) in the University of Toronto (U of T). While working on that PhD, I also completed the requirements for a Licentiate in Theology (STL) issued by Regis College, also in in TST in the U of T. The STL is a certificate issued by select Roman Catholic schools, certifying that one is qualified to teach Roman Catholic Theology in a Roman Catholic College, University, or seminary. I studied at several of the TST schools in the larger U of T. That is one of the great advantages of the program in Toronto. As such I was able to study with great scholars and in great historical institutions. My home school during the entire PhD program was the University of St. Michael's College (USMC). USMC is administered by the Congregation of St. Basil or the CSB order of the Roman Catholic Church. Regis College on the other hand, is administered by the Society of Jesus or the Jesuit Order in Canada. The Jesuits were founded in the sixteenth century by St. Ignatius of Loyola. The order has produced a long line of great scholars and theologians. Yet only now, in the twenty-first century has a Pope, Pope Francis, the current Pope arisen from among the Society of Jesus to serve as Pontiff. The current home of Regis College in Toronto is on the U of T campus, just up from the Ontario Provincial Parliament Building in the center of the City. Regis occupies rented space in what was once the home of the Christie family of Toronto. In this country the name



Photo source:

https://www.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://www.news1130.com/wp-content/blogs.dir/sites/9/2017/03/16/homeless-jesus.jpg&imgrefurl=http://www.news1130.com/2017/03/16/controversial-homeless-jesus-statue-coming-vancouver/&h=900&w=1200&tbnid=uM61ph2eNpInZM:&tbnh=150&tbnw=200&usq=__MMZCBDiJ8DbXrgIPEK0eNOgIw0I%3D&vet=1&docid=1qAmUABivgdPIM&itg=1&client=firefox-b-1&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiZiYC8-OHYAhUD7awKHWqjBTEQ_B0IfzAK (Picture Accessed: January 18, 2018)

Inspired by: "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me."

(Matthew 25:40, NRSV)

Homeless Jesus, also known as *Jesus the Homeless* was installed. It is a bronze sculpture by Canadian sculptor Timothy Schmalz that depicts *Jesus* as a homeless person, sleeping on a park bench. While the original sculpture is in front to the street entrance of Regis College, other copies of the Sculpture have been installed in front of St. Albans Episcopal Church in Davidson, NC along with other locations such as the entrance of the Roman Catholic Cathedral in Vancouver, BC, Canada, the entrance of a church building in Chicago, and St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City. There are now literally numerous copies around the world. In the Sermon for Advent 3, I mentioned the sculpture and its significance. Recently, I purchased for myself, a miniature copy of the sculpture from the studio of Timothy Schmalz in Kitchener, ON. Canada. Schmalz is a native of St. Jacobs, Ontario and has religious works all over the world, including the United States. In coming weeks, I plan to display the miniature of the sculpture in the Narthex in the hopes that as we are

William Mellis Christie is likely not well known. Yet in Canada, the name Christie is as well-known as famous entrepreneurs such as Ford, Bell, or Firestone. Christie became famous in Toronto in the 19th Century for his cookies. Today in grocery stores across Canada, go to the cookie aisle, and there you will find cookies and crackers with familiar names on the packaging known to those of us in the US, with the name Christie in a familiar looking red triangle on the upper left corner of the box. Christie is the sister company to Nabisco, (an acronym for the National Biscuit Company, founded in the US in 1898). The Christie Mansion, now home to Regis College was once home to one of Toronto's most affluent families. Yet today, all of the inner-city problems including homelessness are common, just outside the doors of Regis and the other schools in the U of T.

After we left Toronto, *in the year 2013 a new piece of sculpture,*

called to be the Church in the world, that we might be ever mindful that having been joined to Christ in our Baptism, we are called to see Christ in the often most neglected and marginalized persons whom we encounter. We are all created in the image of God, and therefore are living icons of the one who was before all time and will remain throughout all ages, but who for our sake, became one of us, that is he who is Christ our Lord.

Again, I apologize that in the sermon in Advent, I did not research the facts or nuance the story of Charles and Andy Stanley as carefully as I should have. The person who spoke to me about accuracy of my story did not take issue with the direction of the sermon. This person only sought to offer help and to share some correction to some of the facts as I presented them in the sermon, and to learn more for themselves about the north Atlanta congregations. When this person believed that the facts as I had stated them might be incorrect, this person merely wanted to bring it to my attention. I am glad they did so that I could correct the story. I would also want to be clear, that it was not my intent to condemn or cast ridicule Charles Stanley or his son, Andy Stanley. Nor was it my intent to put down *the late Robert Schuller or his son*, Robert A. Schuller, or the grandson, Bobby Schuller. Certainly, there is much in the theology of the Schullers and the Stanleys with which I would disagree. Both families in their own way have had a history of promoting, to different degrees what I would consider a shallower theology. In the case of the Schullers they have also offered a "Prosperity Gospel." I wish them no ill will nor would I seek to besmirch impugn the character of any one of them. I only sought to use them as a way of offering a contrast to illustrate how the people of God are called to be involved in the communities in which their buildings and ministries are situated, so that Christians together may be the Church in the world as we live out our Baptism. If you would be interested in learning more about the work of Timothy Schmalz at his Kitchener, Ontario studio you can go to: www.sculpturebytps.com

Important Meetings and Developments

The term Sacristan is a term which may be new to many, even for lifelong Lutherans. When I was growing up my mother was a member of the Lutheran Church Women (LCW) at Our Redeemer Lutheran Church in Greenville, NC. The LCW was responsible for, among other things, the Altar Guild. I helped my mother and learned the names of different linens and paraments, from the altar frontal, to the white fair linen that covered the altar. Since the early Church, those who cared for the vestments and paraments were women, but in some communities, they might have been men, especially in the monastic communities where there were no women. The traditional term for those who cared for the paraments and all of the appointments around the Nave and Chancel was a Sacristan

Sacristan (sac-ris-tan / sakrəstən) *noun* / plural noun: **sacristans**

1. a person in charge of a sacristy and its contents.
2. *Archaic* the sexton of a parish church.

Thus a sacristan was in charge of the sacristy (n.) which is a "repository for sacred things," mid-15c., from Anglo-French *sacrestie*, from Medieval Latin *sacrista*, from the Latin *sacer* meaning "sacred"

Using the term Sacristan serves to remind all of us that the work of preparing the worship space includes not just the altar and chancel area, but it includes the banners, the window areas, the crosses to which we affix palms on Passion Sunday or veils at the beginning, during, and at the end of the Lenten cycle. Sacristans arrange for the procurement of palm branches for the congregation on Passion Sunday, prepare ashes for from the previous year's palms for Ash Wednesday, arrange for, placement and care, and the ordering of poinsettias at Christmas, and Easter Lilies for the Feast of the Resurrection. They care for, and set out the funeral pall for funerals, setup the Baptismal space for Baptisms and Corporate affirmations of Baptisms. In general, they care for and prepare of the entire Nave and Chancel area for any special services. I am working with Council to make sure that we have a broader Music and Worship Committee with Becky Buchanan as co-chair along with Cindy Elder. The Committee plans to include a workshop in the late spring or early summer on making Chrismos, which are not only delicate, but convey a special meaning during the twelve days of Christmastide. The Committee will be working with me in the coming year to develop policies for special services including, rites of discipleship such as the Catechumenate for those adults and older persons who have never been Baptized, Baptism of infants and younger children, Affirmation of Baptism (Confirmation) of adolescents, Affirmation of Baptism for those Baptized who are returning to the Church, Christian Marriage, Christian Burial, as well as the use of the worship space by other groups such as musical groups and those teaching Church music. There is a lot that comes under this Committee, and the expanded view of the particular work of those who serve as Sacristans, many of whom are not on the Worship and Music Committee itself, will assist the Council and the committee as a whole accomplish its mission.

Stephen Ministry offers one of the most exciting new opportunities to our congregation. Last year our Congregation Council applied for and received a generous grant of over \$4000.00 to begin a Stephen Ministry at Bethany. This grant enabled us to apply for the one-time fee for a Stephen Ministry Charter and to send a member to be trained in Orlando. This person would undergo a week of intensive training in Stephen Ministry. The grant also permits us to purchase participant materials for those who are called to the ministry of Stephen Ministry. Stephen Ministry is intended to make connections between those would benefit from a person

with whom to be in conversation about a major life transition or loss that is causing grief. Grief is a process and Stephen Ministry recognizes that only through the cross of Christ is a person able to move through the process of grief to healthy way of embracing a new reality in life. Healing is not instantaneous. There are three Greek words used in the New Testament which commonly denote a sense of some type of healing. The first is the word *σῶζω* or *sózó*, used some 123 times, which is the verb form of a word meaning to save. Thus, the one who saves and heals is the savior. All healing is understood in the New Testament as part of God's ongoing mission of salvation. In the New Testament of course, the overall work of salvation has been, and is being accomplished through the sending of the Son, Jesus. The second of the words found in the New Testament associated with healing is the word *ἰάομαι* or *laomai*. It is used in some form sixty times in the New Testament. This word refers primarily to Jesus, who carries out the mission of being the healer. This type of healing almost always involves the dramatic release of power coming forth, and it is almost always from Jesus that this power comes forth. Often this instantaneous healing involves an exorcism in which a demon is cast out immediately. However, whether it is an exorcism or a healing from an ailment such as the woman suffering from a hemorrhage in Mark 5:29 or Luke. 8:47, this type of healing is dramatic and miraculous. There is the instantaneous healing of the slave of the High Priest whose ear Peter had cut off found in Luke 22:51. Jesus is often described in the New Testament as one performing exorcisms or as one fulfilling his overall Messianic Mission by being one who has come to *ἰάομαι*. Yet, by far the word which is most commonly associated with healing as a part of God's work of salvation and wholeness is *θεραπεύω* or *Therapeuso*. It is used in some form eighty-six times in the New Testament. Sometimes it is used in the same sentence as *laomai* to suggest that Jesus casts out demons and brings healing as a process. The cross is understood to have instantly healed us of the division of sin. But often Jesus' work of salvation is a process of healing and this is denoted by the term *θεραπεύω* in the text. Sometimes Jesus encounters those who want *laomai* or instantaneous healing and instead what Jesus offers is a process of healing or *θεραπεύω*. So, healing is often a process, whether it is emotional or physical as it is described in the New Testament. It is not without accident that our term "therapy" comes from the Greek word *θεραπεύω* meaning the process of healing.

Stephen Ministry, named for the first Deacon (a title in the Church meaning "servant") who was martyred by among others, the one who would become known to us as the Apostle Paul. Stephen offered the ministry of service by assisting both those inside and outside the Church. Through the ministry that bears his name, many experience the New Testament model of *θεραπεύω*, or healing as a process. Stephen Ministers accompany those who are Care receivers. Stephen Ministers are trained to make the distinction between what is healthy as Stephen Ministers and

that which is not. Care Giving is a healthy way of one offering to walk with another in a healthy way. On the other hand, Care Taking implies that the one who accompanies has assumed an unhealthy role that only Christ can take for us. He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows as the “Suffering Servant” *par excellence* though his cross. Stephen Ministers are trained as healthy “Care Givers” who are to walk with a “Care recipient” recognizing that *θεραπεύω* or the process of healing is made possible by our “Suffering Servant,” Christ Jesus our Lord.

Roger Webb has successfully completed the training as a Stephen Ministry Leader. He will soon begin training Stephen Ministers in a series of training events at Bethany. The Michael Peeler Grant from the NC Synod will enable us to purchase the participant books for Stephen Ministers so that they do not have to incur the costs themselves. Men will be paired with male “Care Receivers” and women with female “Care Receivers.” The whole process is designed to maintain the strictest confidentiality, even as to who is being paired with a “Care Giver.” Roger Webb will only discuss the feedback he receives from our Stephen Ministers with me as the Pastor so that I will be able to assist in knowing if there are things of which I need to be aware, for the sake of the life and ministry of Bethany. Stephen Ministry offers another way for Bethany to “be the Church” in our community and among the members of our Congregation.

Some things to look for in my Letter in the Annual Reports: The results of a meeting with Mayor Hank Guess and City Council Alderman David Zagaroli; A meeting with the members of our Christmas Eve Quartet; A meeting with Dr. Robbie Adell, Superintendent of the Hickory Public Schools and Dr. La'Ronda Whiteside, Assistant Superintendent; Ways of addressing accessibility and lack of familiarity with our facilities which may prove a barrier for visitors and members alike; Some information on an exciting new opportunity called “Planting Hope” funded by the ELCA, and offered to only a few select North Carolina congregations, including Bethany; Update on exterior Narthex Windows; Ways in which we are living out our Mission and Purpose Statement.

My report will be in *Yearbook; 2017 Reports*, which I encourage you to pick up and look through prior to our Congregation Meeting on Sunday, February 11. I believe that we have much to look forward as we proceed through this still new year.

Grace and Peace,





WORSHIP & MUSIC COMMITTEE MEETING

Scheduled as needed. Notices will be included in your weekly bulletin and via your email.



COME SING WITH US! We need you!

Choir practice is held each Wednesday at 7:00 pm.

Now is the time to think about giving God your glory by joining our choir here at Bethany. We pray that you will consider joining us.



GOLDEN AGERS

Come celebrate with us.... **Golden Agers**

Sweetheart Luncheon at Olive Garden. What's a better way to celebrate Valentine's Day than to meet with our friends and

share a meal together on **Thursday, February 8 at 11:30 am.** Invite others to attend with you. A sign up sheet has been placed in the narthex so that we can reserve our space. Thanks!



KNITTING & CROCHETING MINISTRY meets each Monday at

2 pm, no experience necessary. Working on projects for our church as well as for outside our congregation. Bring your needles, hooks and yarn and join us. We will meet in "Fox Den" in the Peeler Bldg. Call Karen Shaw with any questions at 828-328-8665.



QUILTERS meets each Wednesday at 4 pm. We need your help in putting together some quilts. Please come and join us in the Quilters Room located in the Peeler Building.



These dates are open for placing flowers on the altar during 2018, please feel free to contact church office at 322-5002.

February 4, February 11, March 18, April 1, April 8, April 22,

June 10, July 8, August 12, August 26, September 2,

September 30, October 7, October 14, November 11,

November 25, December 2, December 9, December 16, December 30

WEDNESDAYS TOGETHER MINISTRY

Many thanks to our cooks, serving & clean up teams and our dessert makers each week for their faithful service here at Bethany on Wednesday evenings. We need everyone's help in order for Wednesdays Together to continue.

We need a few more folks to help clean up after the meal time. Would you please consider helping? Contact Carol in the church office.

We would like to see our Mid-Week Celebration begin with worship, then a meal, followed by a great time to be together in other ministry opportunities.

Please invite others to come out with you and be a part of this great fellowship and ministry here at Bethany each Wednesday evening.

5:15 pm	Mid-Week Service
6:00 pm	Dinner
7:00 pm	Choir

COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD ~ Check it out! Please stop by and see what's going on in your area. This bulletin board is located across from the church office. Lots of important information and events that you can take advantage of.

DEAR MEMBERS....YOU'VE GOT MAIL ~ Do you check your mailbox each Sunday? Hopefully the answer is "yes." Don't want you to miss out if something important has been placed there. Thanks from your friendly mail carrier.



Our food drive for CCM is an ongoing service project. Please keep bringing items for the needy. Food supplies are running low and the need is great. Place in the BLUE collection bin in hallway.



God has asked that we study his word and especially bring the little children unto Him and to bring them up in the word of God.

Sunday School is not just for kids.
Getting into God's Word is awesome!

SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES ~ We encourage everyone to find a class to attend and grow together in God's Word.

SUNDAY SCHOOL Classes

Held each Sunday morning at 9:30 am.

We encourage everyone to find a class to attend and grow together in God's Word.

Ladies & Men's Class ~ meets in the Margaret Pauline Deaton SS Classroom

Children's Class ~ meets in the Peeler Bldg – 2nd room on right



For ages from Birth to 3rd Grade

Children's Church for age's birth to 3rd grade.

Children's Church will follow the Children's Time message which is held in sanctuary until communion.

Our "Little Faith Builders" leaders are very excited to start this ministry and will be available to assist in taking your child over to Children's Church.

Saturday, February 10

4:30 pm – 6:30 pm

Pinto Bean Supper



*Pinto Beans - slaw - onions - cornbread
dessert - beverage*

Bring your family, friends, and neighbors for a delicious and free meal with great entertainment by "Elvis." Ed Smith, Elvis tribute artist will perform.

Sponsor: *Evangelism/Social Ministry Committee*

Meal is Free ~ no take out



OPPORTUNITIES ~ Great opportunities to help others seldom come, but small ones surround us every day.

THE SPIRIT'S HAND will continue to move the patients to the chapel. Need volunteers each third Sunday of each month (**February 18**) to help move residents at Trinity Ridge to and from Sunday Worship. Helpers need to be there by 3:45 pm; chapel begins at 4:30 pm. We have been asked to recruit at least one more helper. Keep up the faith and prayers!

EVANGELISM/SOCIAL MINISTRY COMMITTEE ~ Our monthly meeting will be held this month on **Tuesday, February 12 at 6 pm. (Please note the date change)** Please consider joining this most important Committee, as it reaches out into the community and spreads Bethany's mission to **BE THE CHURCH!!!!** Thank you.
Beth Brittain & Linda Lutz, Co-chairs

The EVANGELISM AND SOCIAL MINISTRY COMMITTEE is embarking on a new partnership with the Hickory Soup Kitchen. Thanks to Cindy Johnson, Tommie Johnson, Cindy Elder and Linda Lutz who volunteered (were BEING the Church) at the Hickory Soup Kitchen on January 16 as Bethany's representatives. **If you are available on Tuesday, February 20 to spend a two hour time period at the Soup Kitchen between 7 AM and 1 PM, please let Linda Lutz know.** This date is so important because as we are celebrating Thanksgiving this same week with a bounteous meal and family fellowship, many of those who live among us in the Catawba Valley area are very hungry, very cold, and very alone. We thank God for the ministry of the Hickory Soup Kitchen.

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTRY provides to our shut-in members with means of visits and communion. Our shut-in members are very important to us and they love the visits. If you wish to go with Roger and Gene to visit our shut-in members please contact Roger at 310-7120 so they can plan with you a date and time. We would love more people being involved in this ministry with our shut-in's. It's very rewarding!

"MINISTRY OF THE MONTH"

Evangelism/Social Ministry Committee has decided that each month they will choose a ministry in our area to sponsor by collecting donations at our Wednesday's Together. The month of February we have chosen to adopt "**Hickory Soup Kitchen.**" *Thanks for helping in this ministry.*



MONTH OF FEBRUARY

Meeting at Bethany this month:

Group Mary – Meeting on **Monday, February 5** at 6 pm.
Patsy Nikbakht, Chair

Group Ruth – Meeting on **Sunday, February 4** at 2:30 pm
Becky Buchanan, Chair

WELCA members will be distributing valentines to every Bethany member on February 11th. The valentines will have a member's name, address and telephone number written on it. We are asking that the person be called or mailed a valentine wishing them a Happy Valentine's Day. We would like for everyone to be reached by either way and know that Bethany is a loving congregation and we want to spread God's love. Please don't leave anyone out and thank you for helping to continue this custom.

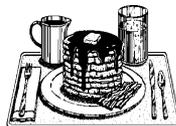
SAVING TABS FROM CANS~ Group Mary is now collecting tabs from drink cans for Ronald McDonald House service project. Every tab means money to help. A collection basket has been placed near the CCM food bin for your convenience in the hallway. Please start saving and bring each Sunday. Thanks, Patsy



We encourage **all men of Bethany** to come out and be a part of Bethany's Men in Mission. This month's breakfast meeting is on **Sunday, February 11 at 7:30 am at Snack Bar**.
Looking forward to seeing you then.

SHROVE TUESDAY PANCAKE SUPPER

February 13 at 5:30 pm
Sponsored by: Bethany's LMIM



Come enjoy this special meal!
Donations will be accepted for the project in the Court Yard of:
"Lighting the Cross"
in memory of Adrian Frye

COUNCIL MEETING

**** Please note date change ****

Council will be held **Tuesday, February 6 at 6:00 pm.**

Our regular meeting date was changed due to Shrove Tuesday event.

SPECIAL NOTE TO COUNCIL MEMBERS: Please check your mailbox weekly to see if you need to sign off on purchase orders and if by chance other important items might have been placed in your mailbox during the week that needs your immediate attention. *Make sure your council reports are turned in to the office one week prior to that month's council meeting so packets can be ready to be picked up and read prior to the meeting.*

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Sunday, February 11

The second Sunday in February is appointed by our Constitution for an annual congregational meeting. This year that falls on February 11. We will convene after the 10:30 am worship service in the sanctuary. Please make plans to stay and attend this meeting.

This annual meeting is to receive and approve reports from our committees. (These are contained in the 2017 Yearbook). The floor is open also for any additional items of business that members would like to bring before the congregation.

The 2017 Yearbook will be distributed beginning on February 4.

One per household, please.

2017 CONTRIBUTION STATEMENTS are ready and have been placed in your mailbox in the church hallway for you to pick up.

CALLED EVANGELISM/SOCIAL MINISTRY COMMITTEE MEETING

will be held on Sunday, February 4 right after the Souper Bowl Luncheon so to discuss the final preparations for the Pinto Bean Supper on February 10. Thanks!

MINISTRY OF THE MONTH OFFERINGS - 2017

During 2017 the Evangelism/Social Ministry Committees placed collection baskets on each table at our Wednesdays Together meals. The purpose was to bless others through this ministry here at Bethany. This would not have been possible without you.

We are excited to share with you the total collected and deposited to each group:

January & February – Jordan Pendry - Eagle Project = \$622.05

February – Hickory Soup Kitchen = \$850.00

March & April - CCM = \$124.34

May through Augustno meals

September – Safe Harbor Rescue = \$186.00

October – Pregnancy Care Center = \$184.00

November & December – Hospice = \$299.00

Total for 2017: \$2,265.39

So with that said, we would like to say from the bottom of our hearts, THANKS!

STEPHEN MINISTRIES CORNER

Recruiting Information

Stephen Ministers bring distinctively Christian care to those in need. They use both words and deeds to express Christ's care for others—listening and comforting, calling on the training they have received and employing the tools of faith. If this description fits your personal goals for ministry, consider becoming a Stephen Minister. A training class is starting soon. An application will need to be completed before one can enroll in the training class. **Application forms will be given out after the 8:30 and 10:30 service on Jan 28 and Feb. 4. Please place the completed form in my mailbox. Application forms will need to be completed by Feb. 11.** For more information, contact Roger Webb, 310-7120 (cell) or 405-1092 (home). Be sure to speak your name and phone number clearly.

Roger Webb



February Birthdays

- 2/2 Lucy Alexander
2/4 Pam Connelly
2/7 Carmen Reese Watson
2/17 Amy Cole
2/19 Ansleigh Lutz
2/21 Ken Harmon
2/21 Linda Holloway
2/23 Marion Beshears
2/28 Nancy Brittain

*This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.
Psalm 118:24*

February Anniversaries

- 2/27 Ken & Melonie Harmon

*May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and
for everyone else, just as ours does for you.' 1 Thessalonians 3:12*

(Please call the church office with additions or corrections to this list)



Sunday – February 4 – noon

Soup & Sandwich Luncheon sponsored by Bethany's Youth & Family Ministry. Please make plans to have lunch here at Bethany. All money

raised at this luncheon will be given to Hickory Soup Kitchen to help feed those in need in our area.

Tuesday, February 13 – 6:00 pm – Youth & Family Ministry sponsoring "Mardi Gras Cake Walk." We encourage you to wear your Mardi Gras mask and beads.

Can you help? The annual cake walk will be held during the Shrove Tuesday event and baked items such as pound cakes, cookies, brownies and cupcakes are needed. If you can donate any of the above, please let Tammy Locke know as soon as possible. The more baked items the more chances you have to win.



ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP ~ February 14, 7:00 pm

Ash Wednesday is the beginning of the Church's 40 days (not including Sundays) preparation for the great celebration of Easter. We will gather for worship at 7:00 pm to celebrate Holy Communion and receive the imposition of ashes (a cross marked on our forehead using ashes made from palm branches) as a sign of our repentance.

This service marks the beginning of our spiritual pilgrimage through the penitential season of Lent.

Come bring your family and friends to share in this reflective service of repentance.



LENT SERVICES will be held at Mt. Hebron during Lent on Sunday evenings on the following Sundays: February 18, 25, March 4, 18
Schedule will be as follows: Meal at 6 pm – Worship at 7 pm

The Prayers of Intercession

WE PRAY FOR ALL PEOPLE IN THEIR DAILY LIFE AND WORK;
FOR OUR FAMILIES, FRIENDS, AND NEIGHBORS, AND FOR
THOSE WHO ARE ALONE.

WE PRAY FOR THOSE WHO ARE SHUT-IN:

Gene & Lucy Alexander • Dean Compton • Lucy Frye • Mary Ellen Glass •
Ruby McCray • Lucille Marshall • Calvin Mull • Gail Reese •
Frances Reinhardt • Ray Ritchie • Virginia Whisnant • Martha Witherspoon

WE PRAY FOR THOSE IN NEED OF HEALING, ESPECIALLY:
MEMBERS OF BETHANY

Helen Barger • Bill Buchanan • Jackie Childers • Terri Childers •
Pam Connelly • Brenda & Richard Fox • Lucy Frye • Mary Ellen Glass •
Melonie Harmon • Wynda Howerton • Theda Isenhour • Max Johnson •
Kathleen Plemons • Gene Rector • Nancy Seagle • Glenn & Novella
Shoaf • Ray & Sherry Stilwell • Roger Webb • Virginia Whisnant

FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Gennie Katherine Blanton • Willie Blanton • Arthur Brittain •
Pat & Richard Correll • Cathy Gibson • Alice Godbey •
Jessie Harmon • Debbie Hayes • Amy Huffman • Curtis Kiziah •
Rader Kiziah • Dickie Locke • Mike McRee • Mary Norris •
Leon & Rozelle Owen • Ricky Powell • Jean Proffitt • Elizabeth Roberts •
Lisa Robinson • C.P. Shaw Sr. • Erin Sipe • Dot Sisk • Ethel Smith •
George Watson



Family of Russell Pope
Family of Danny Price

Valentine's Day

Find and circle all of the words that are hidden in the grid.
The remaining letters spell a popular Valentine's Day item.

P I H S D N E I R F D I P U C A L
V D H S U R C A C F B A L E N D O
N Y N T I A E A S O L C T O Y M V
S R N E N S N L Y E H O I E R I E
T L E D I D S F A O N T W S A R B
R E Y S L R R E C T C T L E U E I
A W S E R I F O N A I A I C R R R
E E S E E E L L R D S O O M B S D
H J C N S A V T R O N U N T E D S
T G D N T O T O P I P O A S F N A
E N Y E A A R O L L G C F E H I T
E I S D U M R B E L O V E D B I G
W L O D R P O A F F E C T I O N P
S R E M A L F R R E N T R A P A R
E A Y C N A F O R E V E R L I K E
R D R O T I U S D N O I T O V E D

ADMIRER

ADORE

AFFECTION

ATTRACTION

BEAU

BELOVED

BOYFRIEND

CANDLES

CANDY

CHOCOLATES

COUPLE

CRUSH

CUPID

DARLING

DATE

DEAR

DEVOTION

FANCY

FEBRUARY

FLAME

FLOWERS

FONDNESS

FOREVER

FRIENDSHIP

GIFT

GIRLFRIEND

HEARTS

JEWELRY

LIKE

LOVEBIRDS

LOVERS

PARTNER

PROPOSAL

RELATIONSHIP

RESTAURANT

ROMANCE

ROSES

SENTIMENT

SUITOR

SWEETHEART

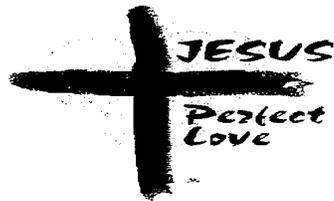
January 2018
 S M T W T F S
 1 2 3 4 5 6
 7 8 9 10 11 12 13
 14 15 16 17 18 19 20
 21 22 23 24 25 26 27
 28 29 30 31

February 2018

BETHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH

March 2018
 S M T W T F S
 1 2 3
 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
 11 12 13 14 15 16 17
 18 19 20 21 22 23 24
 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
Bold Like Jesus - Salisbury Conference (Pastor Shaw)						
4 8:30a Early Worship 9:30a Sunday School 10:30a Late Worship 12:00p Souper Bowl Luncheon 12:40p Evang. Called Mtg 2:30p Group Ruth	5 2:00p Knitting/Crocheting 6:00p Group Mary	6 6:00p Council	7 4:00p Quilters 5:15p Mid-Week Service 6:00p Dinner 7:00p Choir	8 11:30a Golden Agers - Olive Garden	9	10 4:30p - 6:30 pm Pinto Bean Supper
11 7:30a LMIM Breakfast Mtg 8:30a Early Worship 9:30a Sunday School 10:30a Late Worship- Cong. Meeting Baptism- Scarlett Pendry	12 2:00p Knitting/Crocheting 6:00p Evang/Social Ministry Mtg	13 5:30p Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper 6:00p Mardi Gras Cake Walk	14 4:00p Quilters 7:00p Ash Wednesday Service	15	16	17
18 8:30a Early Worship 9:30a Sunday School 10:30a Late Worship 3:45p Spirt's Hand-Trinity Ridge 6:00p Lent Service- Mt.Hebron 6 pm-Meal 7 pm Service	19 2:00p Knitting/Crocheting	20 <i>Hickory Soup Kitchen Volunteers</i>	21 4:00p Quilters 5:15p Mid-Week Service 6:00p Dinner 7:00p Choir	22	23	24
25 8:30a Early Worship 9:30a Sunday School 10:30a Late Worship 6:00p Lent Service- Mt.Hebron 6 pm-Meal 7 pm Service	26 2:00p Knitting/Crocheting	27	28 4:00p Quilters 5:15p Mid-Week Service 6:00p Dinner 7:00p Choir			



FEBRUARY 2018 RESPONSIBILITIES

RESPONSIBILITY	February 4	February 11	February 18	February 25
Assisting Minister(8:30)	Tommie Johnson	Tammy Locke	Tammy Locke	Tammy Locke
Assisting Minister(10:30)	Patsy Nikbakht	Cindy Elder	Karen Shaw	Melonie Harmon
Children's Church(10:30)	Denise Powell	Tammy Locke	Denise Powell	Tammy Locke
Communion Assist.(10:30)	Cindy Elder	Jordan Pendry	Wynda Howerton	Denise Powell
Crucifer (10:30)	Gene Rector	Haley Sabey	Gene Rector	Jordan Pendry
Sound Board	David Elder	Ken Harmon	David Elder	Ken Harmon
Greeter (8:30)	Tammy Locke	Tammy Locke	Terri Childers	Mary Emma Smith
Greeter (10:30)	Cindy Johnson	Mary Helton	Beth Brittain	Linda Lutz
Bell Ringer (8:30)	Marcus Johnson	Tammy Locke	Nathan Childers	Tammy Locke
Bell Ringer (10:30)	Larry Powell	Larry Powell	Larry Powell	Larry Powell
Altar Flowers	OPEN	OPEN	Mary Ann Roberts	Mary Emma Smith
Care Givers	Ken & Melonie Harmon Nancy Seagle	Cindy Johnson Mary Emma Smith	Becky Buchanan Theda Isenhour Roger Webb	Novella Shoaf Gene Rector
Teller Duty	Robbie Mozeley	Terri & Jackie Childers	Cindy & David Elder	Melonie & Ken Harmon
Ushers (10:30)	Linda Lutz's Team			
Altar Guild	Melonie & Ken Harmon, Denise & Larry Powell			
Wed. Together Desserts	2/7: Dot Alexander Jackie Childers Karen Shaw Mary Emma Smith	NO MEAL	2/21: Cindy Elder Mary Helton Tammy Locke Mary Moretz	2/28: Nancy Brittain Theda Isenhour Tommie Johnson Denise Powell
Serve & Clean Up Teams	2/7: David & Cindy Elder Tommie Johnson Larry Powell	NO MEAL	2/21: Larry Powell Patsy Nikbakht Donna Bush Gene Rector	2/28: Jackie Childers Beth Brittain Tammy Locke Larry Powell
Ash Wednesday Service Wed., February 14 7 pm	Crucifer - Gene Rector Assisting Minister - Linda Lutz Communion Assistant - Monica Arney Soundboard - Tammy Locke			

NOTE: If you are unable to fill your assignment, please contact another person to serve in your place.

PARISH DIRECTORY

ALL BAPTIZED CHRISTIANS, MINISTERS

The Rev. Dr. Timothy Smith, BISHOP

The Rev. Dr. C. Pierson Shaw, PASTOR

Carol Alley, SECRETARY

Thomas Bumgarner, DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

Linda Lutz, CONGREGATION COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Robbie Mozeley, CONG. COUNCIL VICE-PRESIDENT

Melonie Harmon, CONG. COUNCIL SECRETARY

Terri Childers, CONGREGATION COUNCIL TREASURER

CHURCH PHONE: (828) 322-5002

CHURCH FAX: (828) 322-5005

E-MAIL : secretarybethanylc@gmail.com

Visit us on the Web: www.bethanyhickory.org

PASTOR PIERSON SHAW: (828) 328-8665 (home)

(828) 238-9065 (cell)

EMAIL: pastor@bethanyhickory.org

Personal email: shawpierson@yahoo.com

OFFICE HOURS:

Monday – Friday 8:30 am – 4:00 pm.

BETHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH

Purpose Statement

“Gathered to worship, sent out to serve, and continually enlightened by the Word.”

Mission Statement

As Bethany Evangelical Lutheran Church we are:
“devoting ourselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship,
to the breaking of bread and the prayers.”

Bethany Evangelical Lutheran Church
1644 Main Ave. Dr. NW
Hickory, NC 28601

