

February 2026 Newsletter

Monthly Updates from Bethany Presbyterian Church

From our Senior Pastor

Rev. Dr. Brian Janssen



We try to live as long as we can in the afterglow of Christmas, especially when it is snowing out, as it is doing while I write this. We know, of course, that God is the God of that great holiday, but too soon forget that God is the God who created every month. February is the month when we begin to look tentatively for those signs that the world will get warmer, and maybe, if Phil doesn't see his shadow, that we will be in the bloom of spring soon enough. Yet, we often find ourselves waiting and plunging back into the dailyness of ordinary lives.

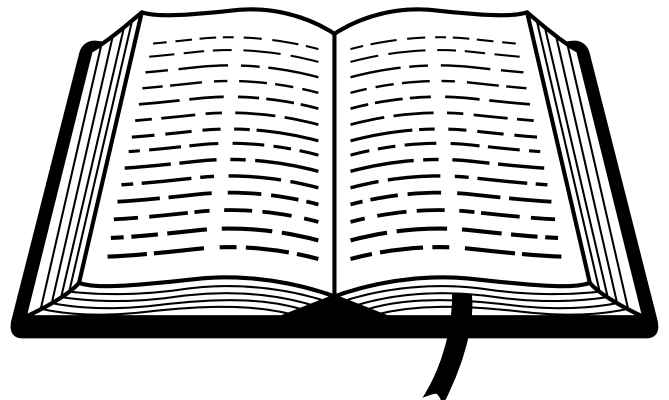
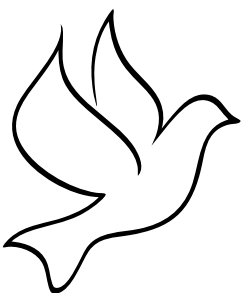
You may have recently seen the ads for PNC Bank that celebrate the institution's ability to be "brilliantly boring", the notion being that it's okay to stay the course, not change much, and be a steady presence. I'd like to think the church hit on that reality first. Routine is good. G. K. Chesterton once quipped that "God loves routine. Every day he tells the sun to get up, and like a small child asks it to do so again and again and again." I love the line Gandalf speaks in *The Hobbit* that continues to ring true to this day: "Some believe it is only GREAT POWER that can hold evil in check. But that is not what I have found. I have found that it is the small, every-day deeds of ordinary folk that keep the darkness at bay. Small acts of kindness and love."

What will love look like for you in this month, I wonder. Maybe it will look like stopping by Upward basketball on a Saturday morning and saying hello to the referees, parents, and coaches—not to mention Mike Suchoza and Beckie Price, who make the whole thing go. Maybe it will look like coming to BYG and learning from Abbie, or getting to check in with friends whom you haven't seen all week without having to worry about popularity contests. Maybe it will look like taking communion to someone or visiting a friend in the hospital. To the world, these things can seem small, but these are the very things at the core of the life of the church—the church, that very institution that has and continues to change the world into something that approaches more and more the likeness of God's kingdom.

I hope your month will also include being in church, greeting each other with the peace of Christ, singing praises to God, and being surrounded by the warmth of the Holy Spirit.

Blessings,

Pastor Brian



From our Interim Associate Pastor

Rev. Dr. Larry Ruby



Love, Peace and Forgiveness



Dear Friends in Christ,

February is the month of love. If you don't believe me, then just ignore Valentine's Day for the special people in your life and let me know the consequences! Truth is this love thing isn't as easy as it seems. Jesus knew it. His 'Great Commandment' is all about love for God, others and ourselves. Love is hard, and it cannot flourish without forgiveness of others and for ourselves.

Scott Hunter, In his "Coaches Corner" writes: *"The more I study and understand the nature of life, the more I become convinced that the "formula" for having an amazing life is really quite simple: Totally release the past, ... forgive everyone for everything, including yourself, be grateful for everything, and focus only on being at peace with yourself and others."* Sounds simple, but it isn't!

Forgive everyone for everything, including yourself!



This is a tough one for most people. Consider the following: There is a forgiveness project at Stanford University. The results are disturbing but not surprising. **Most people don't want to forgive!** They actually cherish their negativity! Kindness and being a nice human being don't sell as well as anger and bitterness. People feel entitled to create enemies and somehow justify their right to do that. And people use the wounds they have received to justify wounding others. And the cycle goes on and on!

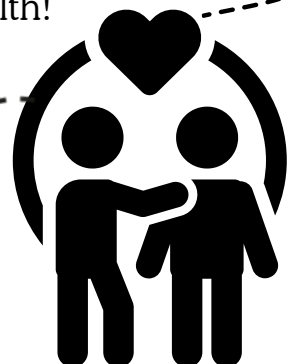
People just don't see the consequences of unforgiveness. Here's the reality: our grievances mean nothing. Do you think anyone cares about them except you? Bottom line: do you want to be right or happy? People all too often think they get to be happy by being right. It doesn't work that way. Those two choices are mutually exclusive. So, forgiveness means you give up your need to be right in favor of happiness and peace.

Not forgiving someone is like taking poison and waiting for the other person to die. So, give yourself a gift: forgive everyone for everything, including yourself! By the way, that is Jesus' idea, not mine! (Matt. 18:21-35)

So. Happy Valentine's Day! Don't waste another minute holding the self-destructive bitterness and unforgiveness that steals your joy, your peace and your health!

Be blessed! (and read Romans 12:9-21)

Pastor Larry Ruby



A Message From MomCo.

MomCo Morning Group: Dreaming, Growing, and Doing Life Together

The MomCo Morning Group has been buzzing with excitement lately as we've taken time to dream big, set meaningful goals, and imagine a shared vision for 2026. Between cups of coffee and plenty of laughter, our conversations have been filled with hope, creativity, and prayerful reflection about how God might continue to shape our group in the year ahead. It's been both energizing and encouraging to look forward together, trusting that even small steps taken in faith can lead to beautiful growth.

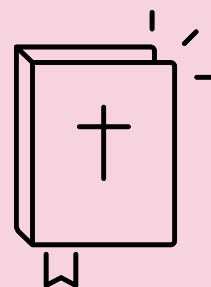
At the heart of MomCo, though, is something even more special than planning: the camaraderie and fellowship we share as women walking through motherhood together.

This group has become a place where friendships are formed, stories are shared honestly, and encouragement is freely given.

Whether we're celebrating victories, navigating challenges, or simply enjoying a moment of adult conversation, there's a deep appreciation for the support of other women of faith who truly understand this season of life.



We are grateful for the friendships God has woven within MomCo and for the joy that comes from doing life together. As we continue to grow, dream, and support one another, we look ahead to 2026 with full hearts, thankful for where we've been and excited for where God is leading us next.





from Abbie Gardner, Youth Director



BETHANY YOUTH GROUP:

We started off this year by talking about Holy Habits! We'll be continuing this conversation for the month of January. What are the Holy Habits you ask? Praying, Reading Scripture, and Community! All very daunting and intimidating for youth, so we are encouraging them to do this as a group! We purchased devotionals for students to take home and read every day, and our Group Nights will be based on the devotion of that day!

We also started making prayer boards. Students were encouraged to choose from hundreds of pictures and make a board that inspired them and brought them peace. We worked on them all throughout January and they took them home at the end of the month! In February, we will continue working in our devotional, while also spending a lot of focus on prayer! Stay tuned for March's schedule! It will be posted in the Welcome Center! The YOUTH voted on the outing and theme!

If you have any students in grades 6th-12th, please fill out these BYG surveys! Even if you are not a regular attendee, your input will help us plan for the next year! You can scan these QR Codes, go to these links, or fill out the paper copies available in the Welcome Center!

---Parent Portion: <https://forms.gle/xxe8rY7onc6zcVHg9>

---Youth Portion: <https://forms.gle/TYWzjFtedFB3XVCi9>



YOUTH PARENTS

CONFIRMATION CLASS:

We have had a great start to Confirmation Class 2026! We have 4 confirmands this year; Amelia, Charlotte, Clark, and Elise. We have been meeting during Sunday School hour and have been enjoying getting to know each other, and ourselves better in this process.

We kicked off our first class by doing a Photo Scavenger Hunt. They had to get pictures with objects, in certain rooms, or with specific people. They completed them all WITH time to spare!



This is my first time running this program and I have been having so much fun with it, and I am learning so much as well! I look forward to even more discussions, activities, and projects with these fantastic confirmands, and can't wait to share more fun moments with all of you!



A Letter From Stewardship

Dear Bethany Family,

Happy New Year! January brings forth the season of our refresh, our reflection on the past year. For some, it was the best year, with new hope, new love, and new adventures. For others, the past year may have brought struggles, disappointments, devastations. Yet all the while our God was there for us, whether we felt him in those moments or not.

Last year we reminded you all to remember your first love, the love of our father. This year we are asking you to “*TRUST*” our father. We are going to encourage you all through this new year to remember that as we focus on the world around us, we take a minute, and we remember that God has not forgotten about you and He never will. He hears our prayers and remembers our hearts desires, and struggles.

In Genesis 18, God made Abraham and Sarah a specific promise - one that did not make sense. Yet 13 years later when they were still waiting and feeling that God forgot his promise. *In Genesis 18:14*, God posed one important question to Abraham: “*Is anything too hard for the Lord?*” Abraham and Sarah lost trust in their faith and in their Lord. How many times have we asked for our prayers to be heard, and did not trust that they were? We didn’t feel like anyone was listening. We lost faith and lost trust in everything and everyone. It’s easy to doubt, but when we replace our doubt with faith, we give God something to work with. You allow God to do His part and release blessings. We are giving our trust to Him.

We apply this to our family here at Bethany Church, in our stewardship with our elders and deacons, session team members, teachers, and coaches. We have faith in those managing our resources (our time, talents, money, environment) to act responsibly as caretakers of our faithfulness. We put our trust in those around us to manage the gifts we have given.

Proverbs 3:5-6 “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your path straight.” So, as we reflect and start this new year, we are asking you to trust. Pray on it, read the Word, act in faith and humility. Take a deep breath and trust in those around you and in our Lord. Spread that trust and faith with others.

Our church needs your continued support so that we can help those around us. There are many ways to give, whether in person, through our online giving portal available through the home page www.bethanypresby.org or by mailing your contributions to the church. Your support of the mission of Bethany Church is appreciated.

Thank you for your commitment to and support of Bethany Presbyterian Church.

In hope and blessings,

Pam Petrow and Becky Quinn/Bethany Stewardship Team

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Worship with Communion at 8:15am & 10:45am 9:30AM – Sunday School 12PM – Church Audit Committee 4PM – BYG Mini Golf	4:30PM – Upward Practice 6:30PM – Body Carpenter Workout 6:30PM – Men's Huddle	4:30PM – Upward Practice 7PM – ALANON	10AM Fellowship of Prayer 11:30AM – Knitters 5:30PM – Upward Practice 6:30PM- Scouts 7PM – Choir	9AM – Quilters 12PM - Rotary 4:30PM – Upward Practice 6:30PM – BLOOM 7PM – Dart Ball 7:30PM – AA		8AM - Upward GAMEDAY
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Worship at 8:15am & 10:45am 9:30AM -Sunday School 12PM – BYG Superbowl Gameday	4:30PM – Upward Practice 6:30PM – Body Carpenter Workout 6:30PM – Men's Huddle	4:30PM – Upward Practice 6:45PM – Session Team Meetings 7PM – ALANON	11:30AM – Knitters 5:30PM – Upward Practice 6:30PM- Scouts 7PM – Choir	9AM – Quilters 9AM – Morning MomCo 4:30PM – Upward Practice 6PM – BLOOM and Café Bethany 7PM – Dart Ball 7PM – Evening MomCo 7:30PM – AA		8AM - Upward GAMEDAY 11AM -Knitters
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Worship at 8:15am & 10:45am 9:30AM -Sunday School 5PM - BYG Group Night	President's Day 4:30PM – Upward Practice 6:30PM – Body Carpenter Workout 6:30PM – Men's Huddle	4:30PM – Upward Practice 7PM – ALANON 7PM – Deacon's Meeting	ASH WEDNESDAY 11:30AM – Knitters 5:30PM - Fish Dinner 6:30PM- Scouts 7PM – Worship	9AM – Quilters 12PM - Rotary 12PM – Golden Oldies 4:30PM – Upward Practice 6:30PM – BLOOM 7PM – Dart Ball 7:30PM – AA		8AM - Upward GAMEDAY FOOD BANK
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT Worship at 8:15AM & 10:45AM 9:30AM -Sunday School 5PM - BYG Group Night	4:30PM – Upward Practice 6:30PM – Body Carpenter Workout 6:30PM – Men's Huddle	4:30PM – Upward Practice 7PM – ALANON 7PM – Session Meeting	11:30AM – Knitters 5:30PM – Upward Practice 6:30PM- Scouts 7PM – Choir	9AM – Quilters 9AM – Morning MomCo 12PM - Rotary 4:30PM – Upward Practice 6:30PM – BLOOM 7PM – Dart Ball 7:30PM – AA		8AM - Upward GAMEDAY DIAPER BANK 11AM Knitters

The Liturgical seasons change faster than our weather seasons, so it may be hard to believe that Lent begins this month when it feels like we just finished cleaning up Christmas?! But these season changes give us an invitation to reflect and contemplate differently.

Last year, during Lent, we dove a little deeper as a community in practices of reflection and contemplation within the theme of art. During that time, we started a new program: Bloom With a Twist! Painters were invited to create art, reflect on Christian readings, and listen and sing along with Bloom on Thursdays evenings. We've all admired the beautiful art that was created and is hanging in our Welcome Center now! By member request, we will bring it back during Lent this year. Join us for a community favorite way to create meditative, Christian art while Bloom's modern music helps to keep our focus on the gifts of God's love and redemption. We look forward to offering Bloom With a Twist again this year! Please join us, starting Feb 19 at 6:30 pm in the Welcome Center. Be on the lookout for updates about this program, as well as how Bethany Cafe is hoping to be involved with Bloom With a Twist!

Bloom and Bethany Cafe are blessed to continue our Modern Worship and Dinner combo this month, too! Please join us on February 12th for a lovely time of fellowship, delicious food, and for an experience of Modern Worship with Bloom. See bulletins and fliers for more info.

New sound in the Sanctuary!

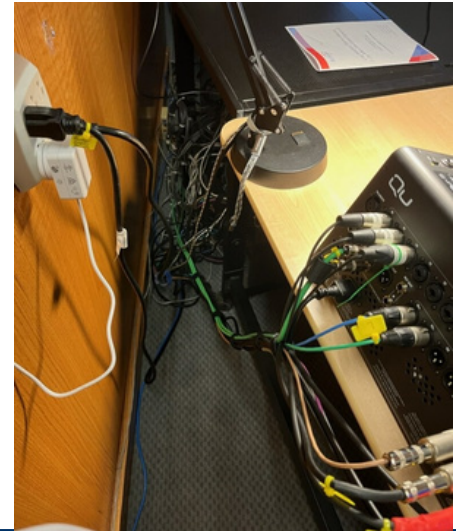
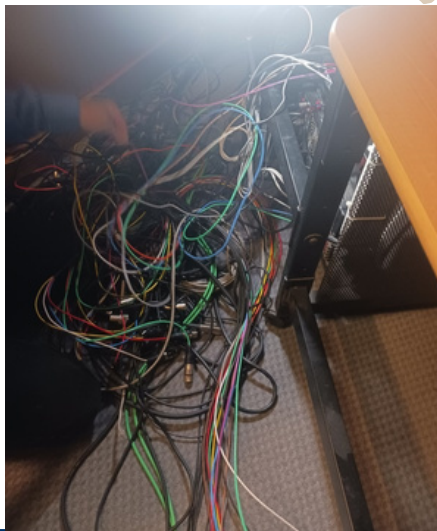
We all applaud and express our gratitude to our Music Associate, Caleb Auldrige, and to Mike Segeleon for their incredible team work on the sound upgrade in the Sanctuary. All of our music ministries will benefit from the new equipment, and our experience of worship (both in person and through the live stream) will have an improved sound to elevate our praise.

This was not a small undertaking, as you can see in the before and after photos, the wiring alone was a major project! I got to see them behind the scenes - which looked like a giant dish of spaghetti of audio and visual wiring that somehow was transformed into a smooth sound system that will enhance our in house and online sound. Bravo! We look forward to the upcoming worship services together! New wiring, hardware, software, monitors- read more about it in Caleb's update! Thank you, both, for your combined efforts in the installation of the equipment, and thank you, Caleb, for training us in this new technology. And, Bethany community, thank you for supporting this decision and the commitment to an upgrade. Bravo! We look forward to the upcoming worship services together!

All Things Bright and Beautiful

Did you notice that the choir loft looks a little brighter? In addition to the sound upgrade, we have some new lighting fixtures to help the choir see better and also to brighten up the space where the banners hang. A special thanks to Mike Suchoza for helping to brighten up our time in worship!

Before and After!



A Note about Sound from Music Associate, Caleb Auldridge

Mike Segeleon and I worked together to upgrade the Bethany audio system in the Sanctuary. The wireless microphone units have been moved down to the stage in order to get a stronger radio signal connection which will help with unwanted interference noises. We also put in a new digital stage box that will allow us to plug in microphones from the stage while still being connected to the new console in the loft, as well as have monitor wedge mixes for our Bloom musicians. Additionally, new piano microphones have been added to assist the Bethany choir as well as adding piano to the livestream broadcast. We are very excited for these changes and will have more to come soon!

We are all very excited, too!
Thanks, Caleb and Mike!



Bloom **AND CAFE BETHANY**

**JOIN US FOR A DINNER
AT 6:00PM FOLLOWED
BY A MODERN WORSHIP
SERVICE FOR FAMILIES!**

**THURSDAY,
FEBRUARY 12TH!**

**RSVP by 4:00pm
February 9th on the
sign up sheet in the
Welcome Center!**



PRESCHOOL REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN!



**BETHANY
PRESCHOOL
REGISTRATION
2026-2027**



- NOW ACCEPTING AGES 3-5
- HIGHLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS
- PLAY BASED CURRICULUM
- M,W,F FROM 9:30-12:00
- TOURS AVAILABLE

 **412-206-0166**
Gioia.Preschool@gmail.com

REGISTER HERE!

Preschool registration for the **2026/2027** school year is now open on our website!

Contact Danielle Gioia at [**Gioia.preschool@gmail.com**](mailto:Gioia.preschool@gmail.com) with any questions! We are so excited for the coming year!

Easter Flowers

Be sure to order your Easter Flowers for Easter Sunday! Tulips and lilies are available to order. Be sure to fill out a flower insert in the bulletin. The cost is \$11 per pot. The last day to order flowers is Sunday, March 1st! Please make checks payable to Bethany Presbyterian Church.

Ash Wednesday

Join us for Ash Wednesday as we start the Season of Lent. On February 18th, we will have a fish dinner at 5:30pm followed by a service at 7:00pm. Our service will be a time of reflection, repentance, and prayer as we prepare our hearts for the coming Lenten season.

 During the January 17th Food Bank distribution, 95 families were assisted which included 27 children, 50 adults and 73 elderly. 

CONDOLENCES

The sympathy of the congregation is extended to Kim Duda and family on the passing of Loraine Cellone, who passed January 14, 2026.

February Birthdays



02/01	Emily Smith	02/15	Jackson Trimmer	02/21	Thomas Aspinall
02/02	Chase Lambert	02/15	Jessica Young	02/21	David Werner
02/04	Luke Dunlap	02/15	Clark Julius	02/22	Gary McMillen Sr
02/04	Talia Pyrdek	02/15	Jessica Franchi	02/22	Azjia Gardner
02/04	Marcia Demnyan	02/16	Ruth Doyle	02/22	Rachel Vighetti
02/04	Michelle Zombek	02/16	Lora Shildt	02/23	John Brown
02/06	Julia Stewart	02/17	Caden Harbison	02/24	Michael Gullo
02/07	Sadie Sunderlin	02/17	Erin Colvin	02/24	Amelia Sunderlin
02/07	Peggy Unghajer	02/17	Julie Jackson	02/25	Robert McAuley
02/08	Lorna Werner	02/17	Steve Orosz	02/26	Thomas Morse
02/08	Patricia Pulice	02/17	Roberta Tumulty	02/26	Sandra North
02/09	Sharon DePaoli	02/18	Bonnie Kopach	02/27	Delores Kantorzyk
02/09	Kelsie Sabin	02/18	Kimberly Duda		
02/10	Mia DeRoss	02/19	Sage Sienerth		
02/11	Zachary North	02/19	Todd Mendenhall		
02/12	Cynthia Gastgeb	02/19	Megan Shildt		
02/12	Beverly Bowman	02/20	Lori Haviland		
02/12	Emalyn Harding	02/20	Jim Miller		



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