

# THE OUTREACH

**A People of Hope. A Culture of Grace.**

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**BETHEL**  
BAPTIST CHURCH

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When we think of the Christmas story, I suspect that the first image that comes to mind is the manger and rightly so. As we approach this Christmas season, I'd like to offer you another image, that of Magi, or wise men. Matthew 2:1 says, "Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem." There's a lot we don't know about these wise men. We don't know how many "wise men" there were; scholars speculate between two and twelve. We don't know exactly where they came from; scholars speculate Northern Arabia, Syria or Mesopotamia. What we do know is that God gave these wise men a vision and they followed. We've been talking a lot about vision lately and it's a term you'll hear a lot next year. We've set aside the weekend of January 20-22, 2023 as our "Vision Weekend." This will be the start of us "Discovering God's Vision Together." Blessedly, we've got our own "Wise Man" that will lead us on this journey. His name is Ken Kessler. Ken is a consultant with the Baptist General Association of Virginia. I'd like to introduce you to Ken so that you can get to know him before our "Vision Weekend." Ken is married to Teresa; his wife of 39 years and they have three grown sons. Eighteen months ago Ken and Teresa were blessed with a grandson, Finley. Ken is one proud grandfather! I've asked Ken to tell us a little about his story.



Teresa and Ken Kessler

"Being the first born of five boys in the backroads of south and central Louisiana, I learned pretty quick the importance of helping and responsibility. My father worked in various jobs through our early years, and my Mom worked outside the home as a pastor's secretary. So we learned early on to help in whatever ways we could with each other.

There was not a day that we did not hear and know about God's love for each of us. We were at church whenever the doors

Continued next column

were opened, and in South Louisiana, our family of seven made up 5 to 10% of any church we attended. Baptist churches were small in Louisiana because a primary part of the population was Roman Catholic. My Mom and Dad though, made sure we understood the differences, and especially understood, the primary role of the Scriptures and the church in our experience of God. In this environment, I naturally came to the conviction that God loves me and gave "my heart" to Jesus for what he had done on my behalf. One of the most significant events in my early life was the bankruptcy of my Dad's pulpwood business. I was in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade and felt the pain of what my friends were thinking about me. The biggest challenge, though, was coming home from school and finding everything in our house taken away. My Dad's creditors had taken everything that was in our home away through an auction that had been held that day. Mom and Dad had prepared us, but we were in a state of shock. The interesting thing to me was that by the end of the week, our house was full again. Our little Baptist church of friends had helped us by collecting furniture and other items for us by the end of the week. That display of love made an impression on me as a twelve-year-old. Since those days, I have championed the power and love of the local church. Mom and Dad told us that God would provide for us, and He did in a big way."

It was events like this that gave Ken a love for God's people and helped to shape his call to ministry. Ken attended Gardner-Webb University where he majored in Religion and minored in History. He attended both New Orleans Baptist Seminary and Southeastern Baptist Seminary. During seminary three important things happened to Ken. First, he began serving at a local church on weekends in the Charlotte area. Ken says, "This relationship with this group of people allowed me to make much of my learning very practical."

The second thing that happened came through an encouraging word from one of Ken's professors, Robert Dale. Ken says, "He introduced the idea of a church life cycle to me and the implications for helping a congregation keep vision at the forefront of its life.

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After taking every course he offered me, he shared with me one day, 'Ken, you are one of the few students who can get the intellectual ideas around a church's ministry well and also help serve the practical aspects of how to make these things happen in a local church.' That affirmation served as an inspiration for me."

The third thing that happened came three weeks before Ken's graduation where he learned that his mother's cancer had spread to her brain, her bones, and her liver. Ken said, "We would only have three more months with her before she died. This whole process was catastrophic for me. It was the first time I had experienced the process of watching someone die from a horrible disease. I knew I was not mentally or spiritually ready to serve as a pastor of a local church, but it was through these experiences that I felt God reminding me that one of the primary ways he had gifted me was to serve as a "helper" throughout my life."

Ken has certainly lived out that call to help churches and we're looking forward to him helping Bethel. We will learn more about Ken's story in next month's newsletter where I'll share a "Success" story of how he helped one church to capture God's vision for their future. Until then, please plan on attending our Vision Weekend on January 20-22 and please be in prayer for that weekend. Finally, I want to wish you and your family a very Merry and Blessed Christmas. May God bless Ken and his family, May God bless you and our Bethel Church family. Grace and Peace.

*Todd*

## Ministry & Missions Celebration December 7, 7 p.m.



The Quarterly Ministry & Missions Celebration will be held on December 7, at 7 p.m. We will have the meeting in person in the People of Hope Center and you can also participate via Zoom. We will begin the meeting with communion. If you're attending over Zoom please have your communion elements prepared. In terms of the meeting itself, the major item on the agenda is to approve the budget for 2023. The Zoom link will be sent out by email the week before the meeting. All reports are due by Monday, December 5.



By Heather Kerns  
Preschool Director

The excitement is in the air with Christmas quickly approaching! The children and staff are working hard to complete their holiday units before our Christmas break begins. There are so many fun projects and lessons to complete! This is such a magical time of year for children and adults alike, and we will be focusing on the true meaning of the season in our preschool, Jesus.

I would like to say thank you to all the preschool families who helped with our outreach program this year. The idea of doing unto others is a sometimes-difficult concept for small children to grasp. To help them to understand that it is just as important to give as it is to receive, the preschool participated in the Powhatan Christmas Mother program to help assist local low-income families provide Christmas. We were able to contribute many items that will certainly bring smiles to children's faces on Christmas morning. Our preschool collected children's toothbrushes, Play Doh, crayons, books, stickers, bubbles. We are so thankful for the support of our families.

Our preschool is thrilled to host our second-annual Parents Christmas Shopping Day on Friday, December 9<sup>th</sup>. Parents can drop off their Bethel Preschool students on Friday morning, December 3<sup>rd</sup> at 9:00 and go Christmas shopping, wrap gifts, or just enjoy a moment of solitude before the mayhem of the holiday season. While here, the children will make Christmas crafts, make and eat Christmas treats, and play together. Parents will pick up students at 12:00 pm. This was a huge success last year, and we are hopeful it's even better the second time!

We will hold "Cookies, Cocoa, and Christmas Carols", our preschool Christmas production, on Thursday, December 15<sup>th</sup>. We will sing Christmas carols, enjoy hot cocoa and cookies, and I've heard that there may even be a special visitor from the North Pole! We are so excited to spread the magic of the Christmas season with our students and families before they leave for break.

Our preschool will be closed December 19 through December 30 for Christmas Break. We look forward to welcoming back our students and staff on Monday, January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023. The Bethel Preschool teachers and staff and I would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



## Missions News by Frances Morris

**Women's Missionary Union Meeting**—The monthly meeting of the WMU will be held on Monday, December 5, at 10 a.m. in the People of Hope Center. All women are invited.

**Bethel Preschooler Cards:** If you have signed up to send a card to a preschooler, please be sure to remember his/her birthday and any upcoming holidays.

**Kroger:** To register your Kroger card for missions, go to [www.Kroger.com](http://www.Kroger.com) and sign in. Then click on "Community" on the tab bar and click on "community Rewards." The church member number is **QW701**. You will still get your points toward gas.

## Men's Fellowship Lunch December 1, at noon

The Men's Fellowship will meet for lunch on December 1, at noon at the Italian Delight Restaurant in Powhatan. If you have any questions, please call Bruce Lewis at 804-467-2886.



## Shoe Drive a Huge Success

Pat Reynolds and the GFWC Worthington Women's Club, would like to thank everyone who participated in the recent Shoe Drive. Thanks to your generosity we were able to collect 1,025 pairs of shoes.

Praise the Lord, that's a lot of shoes. We couldn't have done it without your help. Thank you for helping to spread God's love through donating shoes.



## Vision Weekend January 20-22



## Note from Our Parish Nurse

Flu season is here! The Vaccine finder link below is for flu and COVID boosters. It provides availability for boosters in your zip code:

[Vaccines.gov](http://Vaccines.gov)

Shingles vaccines are \$0 in 2023 thanks to the Inflation Reduction Act! Check with your Medicare provider!

Just a tidbit from Christianity.com about a popular Christmas carol:

O Come All Ye Faithful

This popular Christmas Hymn harkens to the biblical story of the birth of Christ. It is considered a reference to the shepherds, after hearing the angels singing, coming to Bethlehem to adore their new-born savior. Today this hymn signifies and celebrates our coming together in worship to adore the loving blessing of Jesus, as he sacrificed himself for our salvation. Wishing everyone a wonderful Christmas.

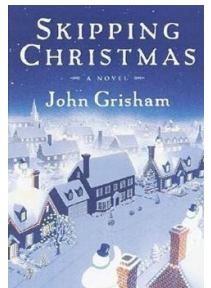
Blessings, Cindy Luck, FCN

Please Note: The Parish Nurse location has moved. It is now located in the nursery area in the back of the People of Hope building. If you need the use of a wheelchair or a walker, we have some available. Please contact Cindy Luck or the church office.



## Library Christmas Pick

Attention Adults: Do you usually read a Christmas book during the holiday season? I try to read one each year. The Bethel Library has a book for you. It's very light reading – not a book that you have to think about. The title is "Skipping Christmas" by John Grisham. Could you ever really skip Christmas? Have you ever really thought about it? Check out this book and find out about a couple that tried.



Barbara Bell, Media Director



The deadline for the January Outreach is December 10th. All information should be emailed to the church or dropped off at the church before December 10th. Thank you for your help on this.

# Bethel Care Team



It is just amazing how the year has flown, and here we are arriving at the most precious time of the year, when we celebrate our Savior's birth. All the glitter and decorations have been out now for a good while to remind us to shop and gather gifts for our families and friends. How precious the time must have been for Joseph and Mary to not deal with all things of that nature and instead be filled with the spirit and love handed down from God the father. Let us not forget during these coming days what is important at the end of the day. Our gift of eternal life with our Savior in heaven if we take him into our hearts and live our lives in a manner he would have us do.

We are reminded that many are called by the Lord, few might be chosen, many hear the word with their physical ears, but have no functioning spiritual ear to hear, and many read the scriptures in the Bible, but are blind to the spiritual truth. My we open our hearts and minds more in this coming year, set aside time for reflection and prayer and embrace our truth, be kind, be inclusive, smile and reflect God's love in your heart.

May you all have a wonderful Christmas holiday and don't forget our homebound and their Christmas cards please, let them know you are thinking of them with love. Please have them in the box by no later than Dec. 18, as I have to deliver them that week. Here is a list of those we would like cards for: Dolly Smith, Barbara Burchett, Conner Smith, Ramon Bookman, Marie Justis, Lee Elam, Peggy Heath, Myrna Perkins, Curtis Salyer, Barbara Phillips, Shirley Roberts and Frances Morris.

Thank you all for your support and prayers  
Shirley Lewis/Team lead

## Many Thanks

Karen and I would like to thank you for the card and gift card that you blessed us with for Pastor Appreciation Month. We really appreciate your love, support and care that you have given us. Bethel is a special place filled with wonderful people and we are truly blessed to be able to minister along side each one of you. May God bless you and may God continue to bless Bethel Baptist Church.

With love and appreciation,  
Todd

Dear Bethel Church,  
Rodney would like to thank everyone at Bethel for all the cards, calls and prayers after his eye surgery. Things are moving along on schedule and he hopes to be able to clearly see out of his eye shortly. Thank you again. It made us both feel special!

Rodney and Mary Lynn Smith

Many thanks continued next column

## Many Thanks Continued

Dear Bethel Family,  
Thanks so very much for all the prayers, cards, and the goodie basket that was sent to us at the passing of Bill's sister. Your prayers meant so much at this time.

God Bless All,  
Bill and Joyce Bullock

Dear Bethel Family,  
You are such a blessing to me. Thank you for your thoughts, prayers, cards, calls and messages, and for the beautiful fall arrangement and food. God is so good, He provided you for me. I'm on the mend, gaining my strength and mobility back everyday.

Yours in Christ,  
Judy Barker

Dear Bethel Family,  
Thank you so much for celebrating with me on the occasion of my 25 years of service at Bethel. The reception was lovely and I enjoyed talking with many of you as we enjoyed fellowship and cake. These 25 years have been so wonderful and I am grateful that you've put up with me for such a long time! It brings me great joy to serve with our staff, adult choir, Circle of Truth, Men's Quartet and other music endeavors at Bethel. Several of you have requested another 25 years! That would indeed be wonderful but we will have to wait and see what God has in mind. His plan is always perfect and I promise to give you as much time as He allows!

With love and appreciation for my Bethel family,  
Cathy Marshall

Dear Bethel Family,  
Paige and I would like to thank our church family for the kind thoughts, cards, food, flowers and continued prayers as our family continues to grieve and rejoice that my dad is now with his Lord, Jesus. He knew and loved many in this Body.

Mike, Paige and the rest of our whole family

Dear Bethel Friends:

Thank you so much for the beautiful flowers and all the many ways you showed such thoughtfulness to Bruce and to me during and after my surgery. We are humbled and overwhelmed by the caring and love you showed us. We are most blessed to be a part of such a caring church. May God bless each of you during this special season of the year.

Pat and Bruce Bartlam



## December Birthdays



2 Clay Call	18 Jackie Carr
2 Sherwood Dance	19 Karen Bradbury
2 Stephanie Blanton	19 Debbie Nellis
3 Lynne Doughtie	20 Michael Brandon
4 Clara Justis	20 Shanna Call
4 Aaron Stagg	21 Diane Beasley
5 James Willis	22 Sarah Acree
6 Roe Cole	22 Robin Mead
6 Bill Rogers	23 Mary Florence
6 Kendel Wynne	24 Howard Stephens, Jr.
8 Isaac Gilbert	27 Evie Rivera
8 Drew Ratliff	29 Christy Moseley
10 Laurie Haynes	30 Barbara Burtchett
11 Jamie Ellis	30 Sissy Dance
11 Kayla Rider	30 Brenda Jackson
11 Ben Turner	30 Joyce Hall
13 Matthew Moseley	30 David Simon
14 Slate Baker	
15 Jeanette Napier	

## Charlotte's Pantry Schedule

### Upcoming pantry schedule:

December 14, 5 to 6:30 p.m.

December 17, 11 am to Noon

(Special Christmas Distribution)

If you would like to help with this distribution, please contact Brenda Peck.



## Wednesday Night Programs in December



December 7 — Ministry & Missions Celebration — 7 p.m.

December 14 — Sacred Circle/Dr. Spencer—6:30 p.m. Zoom

December 21 — Sacred Circle/Dr. Spencer—6:30 p.m. Zoom

December 28 — No Sacred Circle



## Opportunities for:

### Mission/Ministry

- Music Ministry/Choir
- WMU  
(Meets the first Monday of each month at 10 a.m.)
- Charlotte's Pantry (See Brenda Peck)
- Backpack Ministry (See Vera Caniglia)
- Sunday Morning Nursery Ministry (during worship)
- Friends of the Homeless (5th Mondays at 8:30 a.m. (See Ardelle Florence))
- AA Meeting every Thursday at 5:30 p.m.
- Puppet Team (See Andrea Hale)
- Media Center (See Barbara Bell)
- Care Team Ministry (See Shirley Lewis)

### Fellowship/Discipleship

- Men's Fellowship Lunch 1st Thursday of each month at noon (See Bruce Lewis)
- Women's Fellowship Lunch last Thursday of each month at noon (See Shirley Lewis)
- Youth Group Meets every Wednesday night at 6:30 p.m.
- Sacred Circle Wednesday evenings at 6:30 p.m.
- Sunday School Classes 9:30 a.m. each Sunday
- Zumba Thursday evenings at 7 p.m. (See Megan Luck)
- Brotherhood Breakfast (every 5th Sunday)
- JIGSAW children's ministry, every Sunday (See Tina McNeel)
- Sharing & Caring Group meets every Monday at 9 a.m. in POH (See Bruce Bartlam)

## Library News



As Christmas comes closer and closer our preschoolers get more and more excited. Of course, the Bethel Library joins in all the excitement with them. Christmas, what a beautiful time of the year. A time for family and friends. A time when the world was saved by one tiny baby. Image that! How blessed we are. Enjoy this holiday with your families and friends. There is no greater joy.

Merry Christmas to All,

Barbara Bell, Media Director

## Sharing and Caring



The "Sharing and Caring" group meets every Monday at 9 a.m. in the People of Hope Center. For more information, please contact Bruce Bartlam at 804-739-2936.

## 4 Ways to Give at Bethel

- 1. In Person:** Drop your check in the offering plate as you enter or leave the People of Hope on Sunday morning.
- 2. Send a check to our secure mailbox:** The address is: Bethel Baptist Church, 1100 Huguenot Springs Rd. Midlothian VA, 23113.
- 3. Online Giving:** On our Website there is a link to give. Once you click on the link you'll be prompted to give through either your bank account or a credit card. Here's the link for online giving: <https://www.bethelchurchmidlothianva.org/giving/>
- 4. Text Giving:** Simply text the dollar amount you'd like to give to (804)361-8590 and follow the prompts. You'll be asked to enter a debit card or credit card number. The minimum amount for text giving is \$10. The platform we're using is safe and secure and you'll be given the option of an email receipt at the end of your transaction. As always, we are grateful for your contributions to the church and we thank you for your gifts.

## Christmas Card Post Office

The Christmas Card Post Office will be open from December 1 to December 31. It will be located in the People of Hope building in the portico entrance next to the restrooms. NO POSTAGE REQUIRED. You can send and receive cards to and from your Bethel family and friends. Please check the post office each week to make sure you don't miss any holiday wishes for you and your family.



**DON'T FORGET** our homebound members. The box for our homebound members will be near the Christmas Card Post Office. Please drop these cards in the special box. These people are: Dolly Smith, Barbara Burtchett, Conner Smith, Ramon Bookman, Marie Justis, Lee Elam, Peggy Heath, Myrna Perkins, Curtis Salyer, Barbara Phillips, Shirley Roberts and Frances Morris.



## Sunday School Classes

**PLEASE NOTE:** We will not have Sunday School Classes on Christmas day. Please join us for Worship at 10:30 am.

## The Boxcast App



The Boxcast App is available to view our complete church services on your Apple TV, Roku, or Smart TV. This will provide a simple high quality means to view our services on your large screen TV so the entire family can watch the service together. Please follow these instructions:

1. Add the Boxcast app to your device.
2. Search for the church's channel by searching for Bethel Baptist Church Midlothian, VA . (NOTE: Spelling and punctuation is important when searching.)
3. Once you find our channel the church's logo will appear. Select this channel.
4. You are DONE.

Please contact the AV team if you have any questions.



## Holiday Hours

Below are the church office closings for the upcoming holidays:

**Christmas**—Office will be closed on Wednesday and Thursday, December 22 (and Friday as usual) and Monday, December 26.

**New Year's Day**—Office will be closed Thursday, December 29 (and Friday as usual).

# December 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Men's Fellowship Lunch—noon at Italian Delight AA Meeting—5:30 pm Girl Scouts—6 pm (downtown)	2	3
4 Sunday School—9:30 am Worship—10:30 am—POH	5 Sharing and Caring—9 am ESL—9 am WML—10 am	6 Garden Club—9 am Boy Scouts—7 pm	7 Ministry & Missions Celebration (Business Meeting) 7 pm Youth Group—6:30 pm	8 AA Meeting—5:30 pm	9 Boy Scout Training/Look In—3 pm till overnight	10 Boy Scout Training/Look In—Leave at 3 pm
11 Sunday School—9:30 am Worship—10:30 am—POH	12 Sharing and Caring—9 am ESL—9 am	13 Boy Scouts—7 pm	14 Charlotte's Pantry—5 to 6:30 pm Sacred Circle—6:30 Zoom Youth Group—6:30 pm Choir Rehearsal—7:30 pm	15 AA Meeting—5:30 pm Girl Scouts—6 pm (downtown)	16	17 Charlotte's Pantry Special Distribution—11 am to Noon
18 Sunday School—9:30 am CANTATA—10:30 am—POH	19 Sharing and Caring—9 am ESL—9 am	20 Boy Scouts—7 pm	21 Sacred Circle—6:30 Zoom Youth Group—6:30 pm Choir Rehearsal—7:30 pm	22 Office Closed AA Meeting—5:30 pm	23 Office Closed	24 Christmas Eve Service—5:30 pm
25 NO SUNDAY SCHOOL Worship—10:30 am—	26 Office Closed	27 Boy Scouts—7 pm	28 Sacred Circle—6:30 Zoom Youth Group—6:30 pm Choir Rehearsal—7:30 pm	29 Office Closed AA Meeting—5:30 pm	30 Office Closed	31



**Bethel Baptist Church**  
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Change Service Requested

**WORSHIP TIMES**

**9:30 am Sunday School | 10:30 am Worship**

Merry  
Christmas

