

Bethel Baptist Church

1100 Huguenot Springs Road
Midlothian, VA 23113

Change Service Requested

NON PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT 2133
MIDLOTHIAN, VA 23112



WORSHIP TIMES

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

.HAPPY.
Valentine's
Day

A stylized graphic for Valentine's Day. The word "Valentine's" is written in a large, black, cursive script. The word "Day" is written below it in a similar cursive script. Above "Valentine's" is the word ".HAPPY." in a red, sans-serif font. There are three red hearts: one above the "e" in "Valentine's", and two below the "V" and "a" in "Valentine's".

February 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2 ● Communion Sunday ● Sunday School, 9:30 am ● Worship, 10:30 am, POHC ● Girl Scouts, 5 pm, Downstairs	3 ● ESL, 8:30 am, Downstairs ● Sharing and Caring, 9 am, POHC ● WMU, 10 am, POHC	4 ● Garden Club, 10 am, POHC ● Boy Scouts, 7 pm, POHC	5 ● Sacred Circle, 6 pm, Endeavors Room ● Youth Group, 6:30 pm, Downstairs ● Choir Rehearsal, 7 pm	6 ● Men's Fellowship Lunch, Noon at Italian Delight Restaurant ● AA Meeting, 5:30 pm, Providers Room	7	8
9 ● Sunday School, 9:30 am ● Scout Sunday —Worship, 10:30 am, POHC ● Girl Scouts, 5 pm, Downstairs	10 ● ESL, 8:30 am, Downstairs ● Sharing and Caring, 9 am, POHC ● Church Council Meeting, 7 pm, Zoom ● DEADLINE for Articles for the March Outreach Newsletter	11 ● Boy Scouts, 7 pm, POHC	12 ● Preschool Valentine's Parties ● Charlotte's Party, 5 to 6:30 pm ● Valentine's Dinner, 6 pm, POHC  ● DEADLINE for Quarterly Ministry and Mission Business Meeting Reports	13 ● Preschool Valentine's Parties ● AA Meeting, 5:30 pm, Providers Room ● Circle of Truth Rehearsal, 5:30 pm	14 	15
16 Sunday School, 9:30 am ● WMU Sunday —Worship, 10:30 am, POHC ● Memorial Association Meeting , Right after Worship, Providers Room ● Girl Scouts, 5 pm, Downstairs ● Quarterly Ministry and Mission Book of Reports Distributed during Workshop Service	17 <i>Preschool Closed</i> ● ESL, 8:30 am, Downstairs ● Sharing and Caring, 9 am, POHC	18 <i>Preschool Closed for Parent/Teacher Conferences</i> ● Boy Scouts, 7 pm, POHC	19 ● Sacred Circle, 6 pm, Endeavors Room ● Youth Group, 6:30 pm, Downstairs ● Choir Rehearsal, 7 pm	20 ● Middle District Pastor's Lunch & Learn, 12 - 1:30 pm, POHC ● AA Meeting, 5:30 pm, Providers Room	21 ● Bethel Preschool Fun Friday, 9 am to Noon, POHC	22
23 ● Sunday School, 9:30 am ● Worship, 10:30 am, POHC ● Girl Scouts, 5 pm, Downstairs	24 ● ESL, 8:30 am, Downstairs ● Sharing and Caring, 9 am, POHC	25 ● Boy Scouts, 7 pm, POHC	26 ● Sacred Circle, 6 pm, Endeavors Room ● Choir Rehearsal, 7 pm	27 ● Ladies Fellowship Lunch, Noon at Four Seasons Restaurant ● AA Meeting, 5:30 pm, Providers Room	28 ● Charlotte's Party, 9 to 11 am	

The Boxcast App

The AV Team has a way to view Bethel's complete church services on your Apple TV, Roku, or Smart TV, using the Boxcast app. The app will provide a simple, high quality way to view services on your TV so the entire family can watch together.



Simply 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 the channel the church's logo will appear. Select this channel.
4. You are DONE.

Four Ways to Give at Bethel

1. **In Person:** Drop your check in the offering plate as it is passed in the People of Hope Center Sunday mornings.
2. **Send a check to our secure mailbox.** The address is: Bethel Baptist Church, 1100 Huguenot Springs Road, Midlothian VA, 23113.
3. **Online Giving:** On Bethel's website there is a link to give. Click on the link and you'll be prompted to give through either your bank account or a credit card. You may also use this 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 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.



But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self control. **Galatians 5:22-23**

Sunday School Classes

The following classes meet weekly:

- The Providers Class meets in the Providers Classroom in the People of Hope Center
- The Endeavors Class meets in the Endeavors Classroom in the People of Hope Center
- The Salt and Light Class meets in the last room on the right in the Education Building (it is marked Salt and Light)
- Students in grades K-5 meet in the Jigsaw Room, downstairs
- Students in grades 6-12 meet in the Youth Room, downstairs

The nursery is open during Sunday School for our younger children.

The Zoom class broadcasts from the Providers class.

The Zoom link is:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87461349993?pwd=UW0rZ2ZF00Ep4RUJNVHhIk1pGRmIDQT09>

Meeting ID: 874 6134 9993

Passcode: 139739

Opportunities!

Mission/Ministry

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

Fellowship/Discipleship

- Men's Fellowship Lunch meets the first Thursday of each month at noon (See Bruce Lewis)
- Ladies Fellowship Lunch meets the last Thursday of each month at noon (See Shirley Lewis)
- Sacred Circle, meets every Wednesday evening at 6:00 pm
- Youth Group meets every other Wednesday night at 6:30 pm
- Sunday School Classes meet every Sunday at 9:30 am
- Brotherhood Breakfast is held every 5th Sunday (See Bob Moseley)
- JIGSAW children's ministry meets every Sunday (See Tina McNeel)
- Sharing and Caring Group meets every Monday at 9 am in the People of Hope Center (See Bruce Bartlam)

Fun Valentine Activities

Whether you are celebrating Valentine's with your significant other, a friend or as a family, there are plenty of fun ideas to make the day special!

1. Do a puzzle together. Bonus points if it's where you honeymooned or took a favorite vacation with family or friends.
2. Exchange love letters. If you are spending time with someone they are probably pretty special. Take a few minutes to write down what you admire about them, love about them, appreciate about them.
3. Fondue together! The naturally slow process of enjoying fondue leaves lots of time for conversation! See two great recipes below!
4. Share the love with acts of kindness. Take some donuts to a fire house. Help your children or grandchildren make Valentine's to distribute at a local senior living community. Buy some flowers and randomly hand them out to people.
5. Plant seeds of love. Start your spring seedlings inside to give all of you something to look forward to in a few months.



Cheese Fondue

Ingredients:

- 2 cups lightly packed shredded Gruyere cheese
- 1 ½ cups lightly packed shredded Swiss cheese
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 1 cup low-sodium good-quality chicken broth
- ½ teaspoon lemon juice (Important! Don't leave it out)
- 1 tablespoon finely minced or pressed garlic
- ¼ teaspoon ground black or white pepper
- ¼ teaspoon nutmeg
- Dash of paprika



Directions:

1. Place both the shredded Gruyere and Swiss cheeses in a gallon-size resealable bag with the cornstarch and shake until evenly coated.
2. In a stovetop-safe fondue pot (or in a regular saucepan or electric fondue pot), add the chicken broth, lemon juice, and garlic and bring to a simmer. Reduce the heat to medium-low. Add the cheese, a small handful at a time, stirring constantly, but not briskly. It works best to use a wooden spoon and stir in an S-shaped motion, making sure to scrape the bottom of the pot so it doesn't burn.
3. Once the cheese is melted and begins to just barely simmer, add the remaining spices and move it immediately to the table on the fondue stand with the sterno flame below. It should be the consistency of warm honey. Add more or less cheese for perfect consistency and additional salt and pepper to taste if needed.
4. Serve with your favorite fondue dippers: steamed broccoli and/or cauliflower, carrots, apples, chicken sausages, bread, lightly sauteed mushrooms, tender potatoes – the options are endless! Don't forget if you drop your food into the fondue pot, lean over and give your neighbor a kiss!

5

Charlotte's Pantry

February Pantry Schedule



- Wednesday, February 12, 2025, 5 to 6:30 pm
- Friday, February 28, 2025, 9 to 11 am

March Pantry Schedule

- Wednesday, March 12, 2025, 5 to 6:30 pm
- Friday, March 28, 2025, 9 to 11 am

Charlotte's Pantry Helping Others

31 Full Thanksgiving Meals were Distributed in 2024

28 Full Christmas Meals were Distributed in 2024

How to Help

Charlotte's Pantry is currently accepting donations of the following items:

- Non-Perishable Food Items
- Toiletries such as Hand Lotion, Shampoo and Tooth Paste

Please see Brenda Peck with Questions

Lost and Found

Bethel is collecting quite the pile of lost and found items. There is a green bin in the People of Hope Center where all the items are being stored. Starting at the end of March, items not claimed will be donated monthly. Stop by and take a look in the green bin marked "Lost and Found" and see if one of your treasures is waiting to be reclaimed!

Family Fun Chocolate Fondue

Ingredients:

- 10 ounces chopped semisweet or bittersweet chocolate
- ⅓ cup milk (preferably not skim milk)
- ⅓ cup heavy cream
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- Dipping options: strawberries, bananas, small rice krispie squares, vanilla cookies, marshmallows, etc.

Directions:

1. In a saucepan or stovetop-proof fondue pot, combine the chocolate, milk and cream, and heat on low, stirring often, until the chocolate is completely melted and the mixture is glossy and smooth. Don't let it come to a boil.
2. Once melted, stir in the vanilla extract. The fondue will likely be fairly thick. If a thinner consistency is desired, whisk in heavy cream or milk a little bit at a time until you reach the ideal consistency.
3. Pour the mixture into a fondue pot or small slow cooker to keep warm while serving.

Leftover fondue keeps well in the refrigerator. Warm over low heat, stirring often, to reheat. Leftovers are great as an ice cream topping, too!

Pilgrimage to Greece



Reach out to Todd or Karen to learn more about the *Pilgrimage to Greece* trip (**October 7 - 18, 2025**). This journey will take us through the footsteps of the Apostle Paul, visiting historic sites like **Athens, Corinth, Thessalonica and Philippi**.

We truly believe this pilgrimage will deepen your understanding of Scripture and the early church. It's been said visiting the lands where the Apostle Paul traveled is like experiencing a "5th Gospel," offering fresh insights into the Word of God and its application to our lives. We'd love for you to experience this with us!

Ministry & Missions Meeting Wednesday, March 5 at 7 pm



The quarterly Ministry & Missions Meeting will be held on **Wednesday, March 5 at 7 pm** in the People of Hope Center. The meeting will be in person and also available via Zoom and will begin with communion. If you are attending over Zoom, please have your communion elements available. The Book of Reports and the Zoom link will be sent electronically prior to the meeting and hard copies of the Book of Reports will be available at Worship Service on February 16 and the night of the meeting.

Those submitting reports for the Book may do so by emailing the report to Kim Arnold at karnold@bbc1817.org by February 12.

Wednesday Night Programs in February

Wednesday, February 5 - Sacred Circle - 6 pm, People of Hope Center
Wednesday, February 12 - No Sacred Circle. Enjoy Valentine's Dinner!
Wednesday, February 19 - Sacred Circle - 6 pm, People of Hope Center
Wednesday, February 26 - Sacred Circle - 6 pm, People of Hope Center

Sharing and Caring

The "Sharing and Caring" group meets each **Monday morning at 9 am**. in the People of Hope Center. For more information contact Bruce Bartlam at 804-739-2936.

WMU Sunday

WMU Sunday will be during worship on **February 16**. There will be a guest speaker and all ladies will be invited to sing a song of praise in honor of missionaries and their work to present the word of God to the world.

Memorial Association Meeting

The congregation is invited to attend the next Memorial Association meeting **right after worship service on Sunday, February 16** in the Providers classroom. The discussion will include an update on the columbarium project.

Scout Sunday

Join us on **February 9** for Scout Sunday. Troop 800 will join us that day and will participate in different parts of the worship service. Please give them a warm Bethel welcome when you see them.

Membership Directory

We are pleased to announce the new Bethel Membership Directory is available in print and electronically! Copies will be distributed the next few Sundays and will also be available in the church office for pick-up. Be sure to sign up to view it electronically on your phone and computer so you will always have the latest additions and updates!

Reserve Event Space for 2025

Reserve your 2025 Meeting/Event Space Today! Are you planning on using meeting/event space at Bethel in 2025? Whether for a group project, a meeting for two, or a new mission idea, please let the church office know when and where you will be using space so it can be noted on the calendar. Contact Kim at karnold@bbc1817.org to be added to our working calendar.

Photos Needed



Calling all photographers, photography hobbyists, and event photo enthusiasts! Bethel wants to capture all we do through photographs both to use in the future and to document our activities.

We need people to take photos at church and on church sponsored outings to build our collection. Attending the Valentine's Dinner? Helping with Brunswick Stew? Packing Shoe Boxes? Setting up Christmas trees? Hiding Easter eggs? Decorating for Trunk or Treat? Practicing for the Cantata? Meeting a guest speaker? All of these and so many more are exactly what we are looking for.

Take a picture with your phone and send it Kim at karnold@bbc1817.org and it will be added to our picture archive! Be a part of documenting who we are and what we do!

February Birthdays

Best Wishes to all Celebrating a Birthday in February

1 - Bruce Lewis	16 - Nicole Mayberry
1 - Katie Toler	16 - Sarah Moseley
2 - Kaelyn Keaton	16 - Stephen Theriot
5 - Cyris Jenkins	17 - Madeline Talley
6 - Shannon Turban	17 - Kaitlyn Patteson
7 - Lauren Birt	17 - Kasey Bradbury
7 - Jeff Huband	18 - Jeff Ratliff
7 - Charlie Jamerson	18 - Tweedle Richardson
8 - Suzanne Kiffner	21 - Elizabeth Bradbury
9 - Jason Moore	21 - Jane Ruehrwein
9 - Robert Yeager	21 - Coen Moore
11 - Sharon Laslie	22 - Carter Brandon
13 - Pamela Cody	23 - Kilby Proffitt
13 - Emily Montaigne	25 - Hayden DeShetler
14 - Brian Moseley	25 - Mark McNeel
14 - Barbara Phillips	25 - Peggy Keatts
14 - Bob Gillis	25 - Shannon Cramer
14 - Natalie Realubit	27 - Nancy Treanor
14 - Josephine Realubit	27 - Dee Garland
15 - Sara Currie	27 - Joseph Thomas
16 - Elzora Bye	29 - Doug Jamison

A Note from Our Parish Nurse

February is American Heart Month!



Feb. 7th is Go Red Day for women's heart health. Wear red to raise awareness. Knowledge is power; know your numbers—blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood sugar, just to name a few.

The link below has information from apparel to education for go red day: <https://www.goredforwomen.org/en/know-your-risk>

Ideas for a heart healthy lifestyle:

1. Start a diet and exercise program after checking with your PCP.
2. Try a weight lifting program, hiking or maybe a dance class.
3. Quit smoking.
4. Laugh, enjoy life!
5. Get enough sleep.
6. Start a new self care skin routine. Be sure to include your feet.

"You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself any direction you choose." - Dr. Seuss, *Oh, the Places You'll Go*

<https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/education/american-heart-month>

"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." Psalm 51:10 ESV

Happy Valentine's Day!

Blessings,
Cindy Luck RN FCN

Valentine's Dinner

Sign up today for the Valentine's Dinner being held on **Wednesday, February 12 at 6:00 pm** in the People of Hope Center. Dinner will be catered by Lee's Chicken with a suggested donation of \$10/per person. Sign up is available on the sign up sheet on the round table outside of the People of Hope Center or by calling Kim in the church office at 804-794-8590. **The deadline to RSVP is Sunday, February 9.**



March Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for the March Outreach Newsletter is **February 10**. All articles, thank you notes, ministry information and other items should be dropped off in the church office or emailed to karnold@bbc1817.org before **February 10**. Thank you for your help!

From the Bethel Library

What could be better on a cold day in February than curling up with a good book? And with Valentine's Day around the corner, a romance novel might just fit the bill! The Leeward Island series, by Lorri Dudley, explores romance, action and adventure in a tropical setting. The Redemption series, by Karen Kingsbury and Gary Smalley, follows the Baxter family through love, loss and redemption. You can find these books in the Barbara Bell Memorial Library, across from the Church Office.



"I believe readers should be led on a heart journey. Romance should allow for an escape from everyday life. It should also lead us to a better understanding of the human condition and how God views us. I believe readers, like the heroines and heroes of stories, are not static creatures and can discover different aspects of themselves through empathizing with characters' comical mishaps and dramatic misunderstandings. I believe romance novels can depict a fallible human heart that can be made whole again by a merciful creator and remind us of the hope for the same." **Lorri Dudley**

Preschool News

February is here and it is always an enjoyable month for our preschoolers. Between winter weather and Valentine's Day celebrations, there is lots of fun and anticipation!



We began enrollment for our current students and church families in January, and public enrollment for the 2025-2026 school year begins on February 1. Families who register their students before March 1 will receive a \$10.00 discount on their fees and sibling discounts will be offered to families who enroll multiple children.

We are excited to, again, be able to offer two PreK classes, a 4-day class offering for 3-year-olds, and STEAM After School Enrichment every Thursday! If you know of anyone looking for a wonderful little preschool, please keep Bethel in mind. We are confident that our school will have a full roster for the next academic year, which is so thrilling.

Valentine's Day celebrations will take place on Wednesday, February 12 and Thursday, February 13 for all our preschool classes. Our teachers will be planning a special day of treats and Valentine exchanges. The children always LOVE to share their cards and creations with their friends, and it makes for such sweet memories. Teachers will be reaching out to parents soon about how they can contribute to their class parties.

Our Preschool will be hosting the second annual Bethel Museum of Fine Art on **Thursday, March 26** in the People of Hope Center. Our teachers have saved special student artwork throughout the school year, and we will be showcasing all their incredible designs on the evening of March 26. We hope to see many church members, as well as preschool families at 5:30 pm to view the gallery of artwork made by our students. We will have light refreshments and are excited to have our students proudly show off their work. Mark your calendars now and we hope to see you there!

I would also like to remind everyone that the preschool will be closed on Monday, February 17 in observance of Presidents' Day.

Thank you again to all who help support the preschool; you are the reason we are the program we are today!

Heather Kerns, Bethel Baptist Preschool Director

Men's Fellowship Lunch is February 6

The Men's Fellowship Lunch for February is **Thursday, February 6, at noon at the Italian Delight Restaurant in Powhatan**. If you have any questions please contact Bruce Lewis at 804-467-2886. All men are welcome.

Ladies Fellowship Lunch is February 27

The Ladies February Fellowship Lunch will be on **Thursday, February 27 at noon at the Four Seasons Restaurant in Midlothian**. All women are invited. If you plan to attend, please call Shirley Lewis at 804-467-2885 to RSVP.

2

Many Thanks!

Dear Bethel Family,

Thank you so much for your support of our music ministry as we prepared for our Christmas music presentation. Many of you shared encouraging words before and after our musical and I appreciated that so much.

I want to thank our church family and Personnel Committee for the generous Christmas gift and lovely ornament presented to me recently during worship. I am very blessed to be part of the Bethel family!

Blessings for a wonderful year in 2025!

Cathy Marshall

I want to thank the Bethel Church congregation for sending me the nice fruit and nick-nack basket that I received New Years Eve, following my recent hospital stay. I really appreciated it. I also want to thank those that texted, sent cards, food, phone calls and other acts of kindness!

Thanks again,
Dennis Glazener

May God bless you as you have blessed me. Thanks for the flowers, candy and cookies and all the wonderful cards and visits. Everyone has been wonderful to me. God Bless, Merry Christmas and a wonderful New Year.

Love,
Peggy Heath

Dear Bethel Family,

I wanted to take a moment to express my heartfelt gratitude for your support during my recent surgery and praying this is the last for a long time. Your kindness and encouragement meant so much to me during this challenging time. I appreciate the beautiful cactus and the delicious fruit basket!

Thank you again for all the support, prayers and love that Bethel has shown to me and Russell. It is so great to have such a wonderful church family.

We love you all very much,
Susan Wright

The Board of Directors, Staff, Volunteers, and Patients of the Free Clinic of Powhatan thank you for your thoughtful gift of dinner with sandwiches, Brunswick Stew, bread and pumpkin cookies. It was very much enjoyed.

Free Clinic of Powhattan

THE OUTREACH

A People of Hope. A Culture of Grace.
1100 Huguenot Springs Road, Midlothian, VA 23113
bbc1817@verizon.net | www.bbc1817.org
804-794-8590



BETHEL
BAPTIST CHURCH

Vol. 57 No. 2 February 2025

Inside This Issue

Article from Pastor Todd	pg. 1	Fun Valentine Activities	pg. 5	Ministry & Missions Meeting	pg. 4	Reserve Your Event Space	pg. 4
Bethel Library	pg. 3	Ladies Fellowship Lunch	pg. 2	Parish Nurse	pg. 3	Valentine's Dinner	pg. 3
The Boxcast App	pg. 6	Lost and Found	pg. 5	Photos Needed	pg. 4	Ways to Give	pg. 6
Charlotte's Pantry	pg. 5	Many Thanks	pg. 2	Pilgrimage to Greece	pg. 4	Wednesday Night Programs	pg. 4
Cheese Fondue Recipe	pg. 5	March Newsletter Deadline	pg. 3	Preschool News	pg. 2	WMU Sunday	pg. 4
Chocolate Fondue Recipe	pg. 5	Membership Directory	pg. 4	Scout Sunday	pg. 4		
February Birthdays	pg. 3	Memorial Association Meeting	pg. 4	Sharing & Caring	pg. 4		
		Men's Fellowship Lunch	pg. 2	Sunday School Classes	pg. 6		

Last month, I introduced our theme for the year: "Practice Makes Perfect." This idea comes from Jesus' words in Matthew 5:48, where He says, "Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect." In this context, "perfect" doesn't mean flawless or without error, as the world often defines it. Instead, it speaks to being whole, complete, or mature in Christ. This kind of perfection is a journey, one that we pursue through the spiritual disciplines that Jesus Himself practiced. These disciplines include **Sabbath, Prayer, Fasting, Solitude, Scripture, Community, Simplicity, Generosity, and Hospitality.** As we practice these Spiritual Disciplines, we become more like Him, which enables us to live into our vision of "Knowing, Growing and Going in the Love Christ."

In keeping with our theme, we are going to practice Community and Hospitality together on **Wednesday, February 12.** Join us for a fun evening of fellowship, food, and laughter, as we celebrate Valentine's Day with a dinner and The Newlywed Game! We held this event last year, and I believe everyone had a wonderful time. We are excited to bring it back this year, and we'd love for you to be a part of it!

Valentine's Dinner Event Details:

- Dinner: 6:00 PM
- Game: 7:00 PM
- Cost: \$10 per person (Includes dinner and fun!)
- Catering by Lee's Chicken

The discipline of hospitality is about being a community that truly welcomes others with open arms, just as Christ has welcomed us. Romans 12:13 says, "Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality."

Through this event, we get to open our doors, share a meal, and practice being present with one another. It's not just about the food or the game; it's about building relationships and growing together in the love of Christ. In a world that often feels disconnected, these moments of fellowship are vital to nurturing the community Christ calls us to be. This is a chance to connect, build new friendships, or strengthen existing ones—all while celebrating the love and grace of God.

In Acts 2:46-47, we see the early church living out this kind of community: "Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people." When we come together for dinner and fun, we're following in their footsteps—growing in unity, joy, and the love of Christ. As we laugh, share stories, and get to know each other better, we deepen our relationships in the Body of Christ. John 13:34-35 reminds us of the foundation of our relationships: "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." We hope this evening will be an expression of that love—growing together in Christ as we share in the joy of His community.

To help us prepare, **please RSVP by February 9th.** You can sign up at the round table in the People of Hope Center or contact the church office. We look forward to an evening full of laughter, love, and the joy of community.

Until then, may God bless you and may God bless Bethel Baptist Church.

-Todd