

Bethel United Methodist Church (01/25)
355 Hampton Street
Walterboro, SC 29488

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The Spirit of Bethel

For The People of Bethel

Making disciples of Jesus Christ
for the transformation of the world.

January 2025

355 Hampton Street
Walterboro, SC 29488
(843) 549-7691, office
(843) 782-4845, Preschool

Pastor

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Accompanist

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Church Secretary

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Church Sexton

Willie James Lawery

Website

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Webmaster

Sharon Courtney
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Rev. Burton Ott
Happy New Year!!



At the beginning of the year, many of us are in the habit of making resolutions. Do you know the number one most common resolution made? You probably guessed it, or like me have attempted it... to lose weight or get in better physical shape. Most people have the desire to do something to improve their physical health. Some of us will join a gym or sign up for a group class to help us begin an exercise program of some sort.

Other folks might make resolutions to improve their mental health. They might resolve to join a book club or try to read a book per week or month. Some may take up chess or join a bridge club or take courses at a local college, trying to increase their mental capabilities.

But what about us Christians? What type of meaningful resolutions should we be making? Shouldn't we at least be asking, "What would Jesus want us to resolve this year?" Before we make commitments to improve our physical and mental health, shouldn't we begin with our spiritual health? Our faith lives? Our spiritual walk with Jesus?

When I was in seminary, I discovered a book by Richard Foster titled, Celebration of Discipline. The subtitle is, "The Path to Spiritual Growth." We tend to think of the word, discipline, as a chore or a bad thing. But in his book, Foster explains that to practice the Spiritual Disciplines is a

celebration of becoming more Christ-like and drawing closer and closer to Jesus.

In our recently completed Experiencing God study, God kept impressing upon me that He wants me to be more intentional about spending time with Him. I resolve to intentionally spend time practicing the Spiritual Disciplines: meditation, prayer, fasting, studying Scripture, serving God, and worshipping Him.

Foster says the primary requirement is a longing for God. "As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, my God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God? (Psalm 42:1-2)

Happy New Year!!

O Lord, let my
New Year's resolution
be to
follow you
more closely
and to
trust in your
loving guidance.



Sunday School: 9:00 AM
Worship: 10:00 AM
Second Sunday is worship with the Agape Praise Band.

Glory Group



Glory Group

When: Tuesday, January 7th

Time: 12:00 PM

Come enjoy lunch and fellowship. Bring a friend.

Bethel Men's Group News

The Bethel United Methodist Men will be meeting c
Tuesday, January 7th
at 6:00 PM





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Bethel Men's Group News

The Bethel United Methodist Men will be meeting on **Tuesday, January 7th at 6:00 PM**

Praise the Lord, we made it through another year.

The Bethel United Methodist Men wish all of you a HAPPY AND BLESSED New Year. A few good men will start off with their first monthly meet of the new year on Tuesday 7 Jan at 6:00 in the fellowship hall. All men of the church are invited to join us for dinner, devotion, a short business meeting and some great Christian fellowship.

Items to be discussed include FCA dinner for Salk on 13 Feb., possible church dinner on 16 Feb, and planning for our annual oyster roast. Come on out and join us, bring your ideas on what more we can do to serve God, our church and the community.



ACCOUNT BALANCES: (As of November 30, 2024)

Budget Income:	\$493,290.71
Actual Income:	\$357,587.90
Budget Expenses:	\$493,290.82
Actual Expenses:	\$403,479.32
Net Actual:	(-\$45,891.42)

Our income as of November 30th is \$135,702.81 less than budgeted.

Youth Groups

Both youth groups will meet at **4:00 PM on**

Junior UMYF (6th - 9th grades)
Senior UMYF (10th - 12th grades)

On January 5th during the regular meeting time the decorations in the church will be taken down. Youth parents are asked to help if possible.



AED on Site at Bethel

Bethel now has an AED (Automated External Defibrillator). Several people have been trained to use the device. Another class will be held soon for any others interested in being familiar with the use of the device. The AED and a first aid kit are located in the hallway behind the sanctuary near the fellowship hall.



Report from the Mission Team

As 2024 ends we wish you a joyous 2025. We have had a wonderful year being able to help many of Colleton County residents. We gave out 900 bags of food and provided money for 4 In His Name Free Laundry Days. We gave to disaster relief. We were able to do this because of the congregation's generosity.

We have received generous donations of food from Black Street School, Tabo, Ebenezer, Williams, and Adnah churches. Each month Becky Kinard knits two beautiful Afghans for the Food Pantry to give away.

In January we will be collecting socks for distribution to the community. Look for the "Sock Basket". February we will be taking Valentines to shut-ins.

We want to give a tremendous thank you for helping so much. She is an honorary Food Pantry member.



Proof of Light

On January 6 Christians celebrate Epiphany, when the Magi came to worship baby Jesus. Epiphany, which means an appearance or manifestation, symbolizes the first recognition of the Savior by non-Jews. Because Epiphany also is a reminder that Jesus came as the light of the whole world, its symbols include light, candles and a star.

How did the wise men know — and how do we know — that Jesus is the light of the world? As preacher George Buttrick said, "It would little avail to ask how we know. That would be like asking how we know that Beethoven's 'Hymn to Joy' is joyous. If a man were to say, 'It is not joyous to me,' he would not condemn the music; he would tell only his morbidity. There is no logic to establish an axiom, for an axiom is the basis of all logic; and the soul of Jesus has axiomatic truth. Jesus is light, and there is no proof for light except light itself."

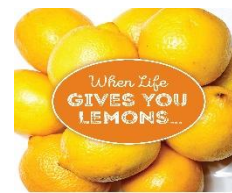


MLK on What Really Matters

Exactly two months before his assassination, Martin Luther King Jr. preached his final sermon at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta. On February 4, 1968, the civil-rights icon spoke about how he wanted to be remembered at his funeral. He preferred that people recall not his education or achievements but that he "tried to give his life serving others" and "tried to love somebody."

Adapting a 1952 homily by J. Wallace Hamilton, King decried the "drum major instinct — a desire to be out front, a desire to lead the parade." Humans often want to be great and first, as evidenced by the disciples James and John requesting prime seats in paradise. But King urged listeners to focus on the "reordered priorities" of Jesus, who wants us to "be first in love."

As Jesus showed, "everybody can serve," King said. Your background or status doesn't matter, as long as you have "a heart full of grace" and "a soul generated by love."



All about attitude

"The way you say 'representative' to an automated system reflects the real you," a friend told me. After we laughed at that truth, I realized *everything* I say matters. Someone is always listening, whether the words and tone are positive or negative.

Ephesians 4:29 (NLT) says our language shouldn't be "foul or abusive" but good, helpful and encouraging. Whether I'm peaceful, hurried, joyful, empathetic, frustrated, celebrating or hurting, I can carefully choose my words (and the attitude behind them). When I'm not ready to speak wholesomely, may God shut my mouth. When a friend needs encouragement, may I listen to God's prompting. When I need to confront, may I do so lovingly.

Changing how we think — that is, how we speak to ourselves — can be tough. But God wants to transform our reactions and motives, dispelling pride, a lack of confidence and anxiety. In this new year:
I'm alone can become *God is with me*.

I can't do this can become *Anything is possible with God*.
I'm failing can become *Just because I'm struggling, it doesn't mean I'm failing*.

I'm not enough can become *I'm God's beloved child*.
I'm tired can become *God will give me rest*.

Don't stop there. Consider the concerns in your heart and let God give you new words and attitudes.

Bible Quiz

When 12-year-old Jesus stayed at the Jerusalem temple as Joseph and Mary started traveling home, after how many days did his parents find him?

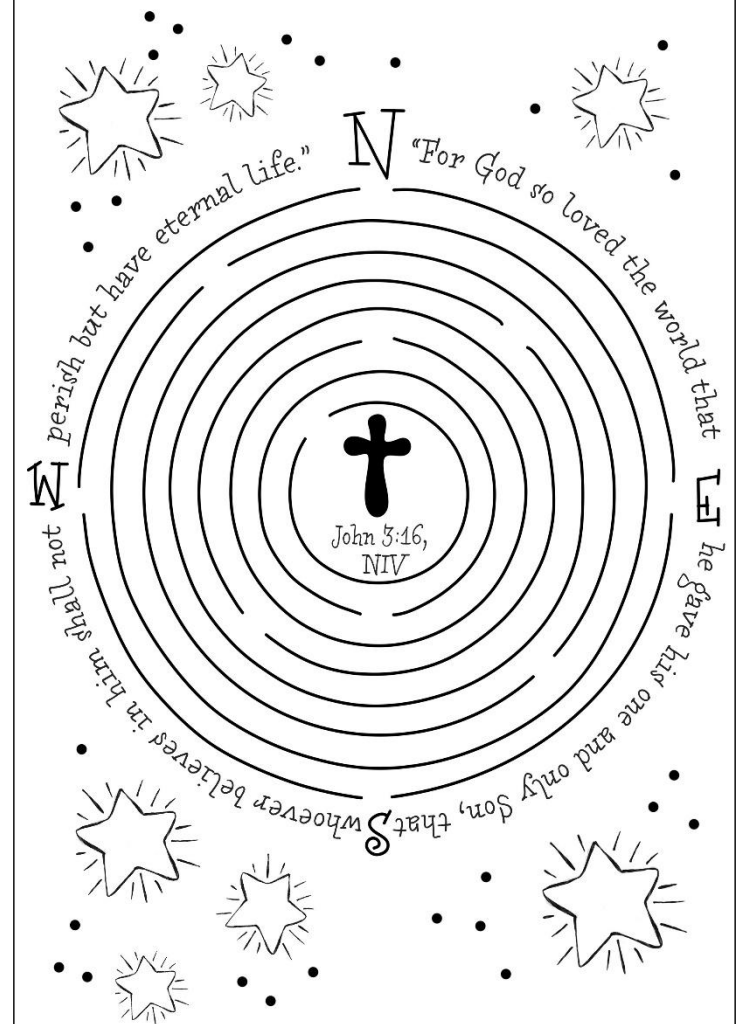
- A. 1 day
- B. 2 days
- C. 3 days
- D. 7 days

Answer: C (See Luke 2:46.)



Puzzle!

Complete the maze to help people from all directions hear the good news. Then, starting at the N (north) and going clockwise, read John 3:16, NIV.





JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Gordon McLeod	1	James Broderick	19
Bobbie McLaine	2	Christopher Corbett	21
Abby Corbett	3	Deborah Ackerman	22
Joey Ritter		Theda Coker	
Terri Crosby	5	Drew Coker	
Donald Rizer		Chapin Jacobs	
Miriam Westbury	7	Lacey Sims	23
Amy Spears		Reaves McLeod	24
Kim Beeson	8	Jewel Brown	
Linda Corbett		Joyce Breland	25
Terry Pournelle	10	Buck Howell	26
Eric Hipp	11	Stephanie Drawdy	
Max Mitchell	13	Tammy Crosby	27
Howell McRae	16	Lesli Pryor	
Tyler Johnson		Leslie Freke	28
Alex Pournelle	17	Grace Ann Brown	29
Laura Barnett	18	Elton Culpepper	
Jill Burtram		Bill Little	30
Harriet Bonds	19	Mary Holland	31



JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

Janet and Perry Buckner	2
Gail and Robert Eppinette	4

Giving Your Best

Like the Magi, we can respond with our best gifts — our industry, our devotion, our very lives. We disciples are Christ's tangible presence in the world. That same Child whose light brought such joy to the Magi now, through us, offers his mercy to every person.



Through us, every day, Christ feeds multitudes; he heals, teaches and guides countless people. Through individual volunteers and major institutions, through simple acts of kindness or worldwide coordinated efforts, the world can encounter, through the Christian community, the enduring, tangible presence of Christ. —Michael Simone



PRAYER LIST

Bethel Members, their families, and others in the Bethel extended church family who need your prayers:

OUR PRAYERS: Scott Bell, R. Lee Benton, Stacy Carter, R.L. Carter, Jr., Marilyn Creech, Troyce Crosby, Dorothy Cummings, Joseph Givens, Kristy and Hayes Harris, Joyce Hennen, Bo Hetrick, Michael Hickman, Bill Howell, Lad Howell, Tony Hubbard, Linda Hudson, Bobbie McLaine, Ann Nettles, Lynn Nettles, Ed Newington, Christopher Plummer, Dan Pope, Joe Ritter, Joey Ritter, Debra Smith, Cindy Thompson, Eddie Thompson, Marion Thompson, Taylor Twigg, Chris Varnadoe, Michael Walker, Shirley Wilmot, Cliff Wisely.

Nursing Homes/Shut-Ins/Distant Members: Doris Bone, Jane Brown, Nina Crosby, Lucille Culpepper, Sarah Anne Dean, June Dyches, Lynn Harrison, Joy Lawson, Jeanine Price, Gene Rhodes, Rusty Riddle, Kay Speaks, Norma West, Miriam Westbury.

Military Service: Caleb Blankenship, Elijah and Kaeleigh Forni, Cody Keeney, Matthew Mangum, Edward Phillips, Jordan Ray, Tristan Ray, Blake Rhodes.



Please call the church office at 843-549-7691 to have a name added to our prayer list. Also please call the church office if you have a spiritual need or concern and wish to speak with Pastor Ott.



In honor of **Susann Padgett** by the Bethel Handbell Choir

In honor of **Janet Buckner** by her sisters, Joan Paster and Jean Davison.



God in church or nature? Yes.

Church isn't designed to be an alternative to the real world. Worship is a time and space apart from the world in order for us to find our way out into the world. Worship isn't a man-made place distinct from the beauty of the natural world; at its best, church is a place where we realize God's glory in the world we find ourselves in. ... Do I find God in a church? or out in nature? Yes. ... In church I hope to sharpen my senses so I can discover the house of God everywhere. —James C. Howell, *Everywhere Is Jerusalem*



MEMORIAL GIFTS

In Memory of **David Williamson** by:
Leslie, Melissa and Sissy

In Memory of **Chuckie Mangum** by:
Janice King

In Memory of **Rev. Lee Cothran** by:
Martha Woodard

In Memory of **Jimmie Carroll** by:
DeLoris and Tony Hamilton

In Memory of **Michael Padgett** by:
Joanne and Jeffrey Herndon
DeLoris and Tony Hamilton
Charlotte and Elton Culpepper
Mary Wynn Chamblin
Patricia (Sissy) Williamson
Debbie and David Collins
Pam and Tom Whitacre

Joy and Herman Hoffman
Darlene and Charlie Mangum
Stephanie and Billy Drawdy
Gail and Bill Howell
Ann Hooker
Rebecca Wylie & Patrick Wylie
Charlotte Heaton

Cindy, Ellie, & Fisher Walter
Betty Lew and Steve Sanders
Bonnie and Leon Langley
R. Lawrence Smith

Wynona and Donald Rizer
Marie and Ellison Young

In Memory of **Mary Esther Crook** by:
Roger Crook

In Memory of **Jackie Bennett** by:
Thomas Chaplin

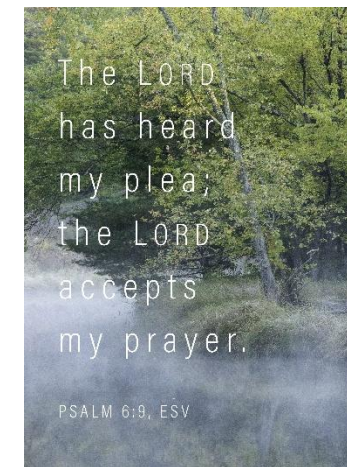


MEMORIAL GIFTS

In Memory of **Lee Dean Cox** by:
Deborah and Riddick Ackermans
Janice King
Faye Greco, Monica Moore, Kathy Elliot
Gail and Bill Howell

In memory of **Rev. David Cox** by:
Deborah and Riddick Ackermans
Charlotte and Elton Culpepper
Janice King
Joy and Herman Hoffman
Faye Greco, Monica Moore, Kathy Elliot
Darlene and Charlie Mangum
Gail and Bill Howell

In memory of **Gerald L. Beach, Jr., and Mary Beach and Gerald L. Beach, Sr.** by:
Jane and Jimmy Crosby



A prayer for spiritual growth

When my spiritual vision is foggy, help me to find my way.

When my understanding is incomplete, open my mind and increase my patience.

When my indifference blocks my senses, touch my heart.

When worry or fear raise their voices, speak to my faith.

Let your Spirit permeate my longings as well as my living and my loving. Amen. —Peggy Ferrell, *Prayers and Poems*

“Life’s most persistent and urgent question is, ‘What are you doing for others?’” —Martin Luther King Jr.