

The Newsette



Bethany Christian Church

(Disciples of Christ)

5400 Forest Hill Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23225

"A Family of Faith, Growing in Christ, Growing through Service."

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Reverend Ben Moore
Senior Minister

Anne Crumley
Church Secretary

Duane Toole
Director of Music

Jane Reeves
Organist

William Lynch
Custodian

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THE PASTOR'S DESK —

I have a confession to make, I'm one of those people. I'm one of those people that wants to put up the Christmas decorations the day after Halloween, to start drinking eggnog and listening to Christmas music on the first of November. There are probably two big reasons for this: I love the Christmas Season and everything that goes with it, and I am too caught up on instant gratification. I don't think there is anything wrong with the first reason; all of the excitement, joy, love and hope of the Christmas season are wonderful parts of a life of faith as well.

On the other hand, the instant gratification is a significant problem, especially when it comes to Christmas and Advent. I'm not talking about the stores holding their Black Friday Sales on Thanksgiving Night, or the ones that have had Christmas Trees up since before Halloween. They aren't concerned about the Christmas I am, and probably know very little about Advent. I am talking about those of us who know of the true meaning of Christmas. Christmas and Advent are not about getting instant gratification, they are about a journey longer than our imaginations can fathom, the dawning and eventual consummation of the Kingdom of God.

For thousands of years people have tried to make Christmas come early, whether it be the Israelites trying to select their own Messiah, the Early Church conspiring with the Roman Empire to bring about the reign of God, Medieval Kings going on Crusades to the Holy Land to clear the way for the return of the Messiah, or modern Christians seeking to blow up the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem to make way for the new temple through which Christ will come again. This list makes me feel a lot better about being a little early on the Christmas Music and the eggnog, but in some ways it comes down to the same thing, wanting to get something before its time.

When we try to skip the journey we lose out on some of the essential parts of the reward. Just like a marathon runner who hops on a bus for a few miles instead of running would not actually be a marathon runner because of what they missed out on. Without realizing it we tend to cheat ourselves out of the fullness of God's love, hope, peace and joy because we don't have the patience for the journey.

This year I waited, no decorations, eggnog or Christmas music until after Thanksgiving. Well, almost. The Christmas music started on the radio the day before and I just couldn't help myself. But, I feel more enriched by Thanksgiving this year, and I am hopeful that Advent and Christmas will be deeper and more meaningful as well. Advent is a great time to remember that when we skip over something in our excitement to get to something else, we might miss out on the most important thing. After all, not many people showed up at the stable after Jesus' birth.

Journeying with you,
Pastor Ben

SERMON TITLES AND SCRIPTURES FOR DECEMBER

December 4 - *"Peace is Coming"* Isaiah 40:1-11; Psalm 85:1-2,8-13

December 11 - *"Freedom is Coming"* Isaiah 51:1-4, 8-11; Psalm 136

December 18 - *"The Kingdom is Coming"* Isaiah 9:2-7; Psalm 96

December 25 - *"Babe is Born"* Luke 2:1-14; John 1:1-5

Dates to Remember

December 4th
Membership Meeting
Following Worship

December 10th
CWF Luncheon
"Christmas Memories"
12:00 Noon

December 11th
Children's Christmas Pageant
9:45 A.M.

December 15th
"Young At Heart" Seniors
10:30 A.M.

December 18th
Christmas Cantata
11:00 A.M.

Youth, Chi Rho and CCODA
Christmas Party
following Worship

December 24th
Christmas Eve Communion
8:00 P.M. and 11:30 P.M.

December Servants

ELDERS

4 - Dee Evans-Mary P. Hawthorne
11 - John Grubb-Dolores McCann
18 - Ross Dorneman-Jerry Pugh
24 - Don Stargardt-Tom Fore
25 - Linwood Hasty-Ross Dorneman

Communion to Home Bound

December 5th
Kevin Scholl -DeLois Evans
Brian Gradwell-Ross Dorneman

DEACONS

Rod Grundy, Captain
Mary Kline, Becky Murrell,
Connie Stroupe
Subs : Jackie Fore-Peyton Grubb

USHERS

John Massie, Jim Evans,
Christopher Gangloff

COMMUNION PREPARATION

4 - Marie & Ollie Peebles, Sara
11 - Marie & Ollie Peebles, Sara
18 - Barbara Ozlin & Jim Davis
24 - Ann & Linwood Hasty
25 - Dolores & Ed McCann

WORSHIP HOUR NURSERY

4 - Chris Hawthorne
11 - Cari Alton
18 - Holly & Kevin Scholl
25 - Christie Rolston

If you are unable to serve on the date assigned, please arrange for a replacement.

Scheduled Meetings and Services

Sunday

Sunday School - 9:45 A.M.
Sunday Worship - 11:00 A.M.

Children's Choir

9:45 A.M.
3rd Sunday of each month

Youth, Chi Rho, C.C.O.D.A.

1st and 3rd Sunday
following Worship
Light lunch served

Wednesday Rehearsal

Chancel Choir - 7:30 P.M.

C.W.F. #1

Tuesday, December 13th
10:30 A.M. at church

C.W.F. #4

Thursday, December 15th
7:00 P.M. at church

FROM THE WORSHIP DEPARTMENT

The Worship Department continues to use short articles like this in the Newsette and notes in the weekly bulletin to highlight the seasons of the church, and the liturgical colors we use to adorn the Communion Table and Pulpit in the Sanctuary, and the Minister's stole.

The Season of Advent began on November 27th. It is the season of spiritual preparation for the celebration of the Birth of Christ and looks forward to the future reign of Christ. The liturgical color for Advent will be violet, symbolizing the sovereignty of Christ and repentance from sin. Advent concludes on Christmas Day, December 25th.

We will be pleased once again to be able to enjoy the Poinsettia Tree in the Sanctuary this year. The Allie Marshall Memorial Fund made possible the purchase of artificial poinsettias for the tree. We appreciate the efforts of the volunteers who will be setting up the Poinsettia Tree, and other decorations throughout the church. Live poinsettias given in memory and in honor of loved ones will be placed in the Sanctuary by December 11th.

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTERS

Each week during the Advent Season we will have members of the congregation come forward, present a reading, and light one of the Advent Candles. The four candles stand for Hope, Peace, Joy and Love, with the candle in the center representing the Christ. The readings will help center our worship for the day and present the theme of the Worship Service. We are thankful for those who have agreed to read:

November 27th - Ben Moore and Tammy Tripp

December 4th - The Scot Hawthorne Family

December 11th - Jerry and Nan Pugh and Tommy

December 18th - The Grubb Family

December 24th - 8 P.M. Charles & Shirley Stevens; 11:30 P.M. Kelly & Sara from Taiwan

MEMBERSHIP MEETING - December 4th

The Annual Membership Meeting of Bethany Christian Church will be held immediately following our 11 A.M. Worship Service on December 4th. The agenda for the meeting is to approve and elect Church Officers and Leaders for 2012, to review and approve the Operating Budget for 2012, and to adopt the Vision Statement. All members are urged to attend this very important meeting.

VISION STATEMENT

The Vision for Bethany Christian Church presented by the Vision Task Force is summed up in the Vision Statement.

"To share the Good News of God's activity in our lives through witness and service to Westover Hills, Stratford Hills, and beyond, in order to encourage people to find their unique place in God's family."

If adopted by the Membership, this will guide all of our ministries as a church. We have found our unique place in God's family here at Bethany and our ministries will work to help others find their place.

CWF "CHRISTMAS MEMORIES" LUNCHEON - December 10th

All Bethany women are invited to the "Christmas Memories" Luncheon on Saturday, December 10th at 12:00 Noon. Please bring a covered-dish, drinks will be provided. The Service Project will be a Book Sale with proceeds to go to CrossOver Ministries. Bring any hardcover or paperback books that you would like to donate. We will also include the basket of books that has been in the Parlor. Also, bring a special Christmas ornament or memento that has special meaning for you and share it's story if you would like. The CWF Slate of Officers for 2012 will be voted on at the luncheon.

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM - December 11th

DON'T MISS this year's Christmas Pageant, "The Fumbly, Bumbly Angels," to be presented during the Sunday School hour on December 11th. We will have more children participating this year. Rehearsals are after Worship on December 4th, until 1:30. Note: We are asking the Sunday School classes to provide cookies, breads, etc., for refreshments.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS TO ALL

As the celebration of the Birth of our Lord and Savior approaches, the staff expresses appreciation for being a part of the Ministry of Bethany Christian Church, and wishes you a blessed and joyful Christmas Season.
Ben, Anne, Duane, Jane, William

“YOUNG AT HEART” SENIORS - December 15th

The “Young At Heart” will meet on Thursday, December 15th, at 10:30 A.M. at the church. We will have a Christmas program of carols, games and stories. Please bring a dish to share for the luncheon and come out and join us for a morning of fun.

CHRISTMAS CANTATA - December 18th

Our Christmas Musical Celebration is “Tapestry of Light: a Celtic Christmas Celebration” by Joseph M. Martin. Two of the Advent selections from the music will be performed during Advent, on December 4th and on December 11th. The main celebration will be on December 18th during the Morning Worship. Invite your friends!

YOUTH, CHI RHO AND CCODA CHRISTMAS PARTY - December 18th

The Youth Groups will have a Christmas Party on Sunday, December 18th, immediately following Worship. Come for Games, Fellowship and a Moment of Worship. Lunch will be provided. Please bring a gift (\$1.00 or less) to trade. Also, watch the January Newsette and Bulletins for information on a January Lock-In.

CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICES - December 24th

This year we will have two Christmas Eve Candlelight services. The 8 P.M. Service will be a full “Carols, Candles and Communion” Service that will be about an hour in length. The 11:30 Service will be a casual service that will be about thirty minutes in length. Please come out and take advantage of these opportunities to celebrate the Birth of the Christ Child.

CHRISTMAS OFFERING FOR DISCIPLE MISSION FINANCE

Good News of Great Joy! Out of your love will you give? With your Christmas Offerings to Disciple Mission Finance, you support the ministries offered by the Christian Church in Virginia - serving our churches in a multitude of ways. Much of the support for our Region is based on Christmas Offerings. Help support the development of faith, the creation of community, and the strengthening of the congregations in your Region by giving to the Christmas offering this year. Our offerings will be received December 11th and 18th.

UPCOMING CHRISTMAS EVENT

Fellowship Class - Christmas Dinner - December 6th - 6:00 P.M. - Sergio’s Restaurant

Circle #1 - Christmas Luncheon at church - 10:30 A.M. Tuesday, December 13th - Bring a covered dish of your choice. We will wrap Christmas gifts for the Mountain Mission child we adopted.

Seekers Class Christmas - “Blue Ridge Mountain Christmas” at Hanover Barksdale Theater, 8:00 P.M. Wednesday, December 14th
Also, we are planning to meet for dinner before the show.

Circle #4 - Meeting on December 15th - 7:00 P.M. at church - Chinese Gift Exchange.

CHRISTMAS DAY WORSHIP

At 10:15 on Christmas Day, which is a Sunday this year, we will have an informal Worship Service which will include all of our favorite Carols, Communion, and a very special Children’s Moment. Take a few moments to come out and celebrate the Birth of Christ with your church family.

NEW YEAR’S DAY WORSHIP

At 10:15 on New Year’s Day we will be having an informal Worship Service in place of our normal Sunday Morning activities. This Service will have special elements to help us ring in the New Year and time to pray for the upcoming year.

CHRISTMAS GIFT TO STAFF

Love gifts will be given to the Church Staff before Christmas. You are encouraged to participate in this act of appreciation. Envelopes marked “Staff Gifts” are available in the Narthex for your donations, or see Tom Fore or Barbara Ozlin.

“MEALS ON WHEELS”

December 4th is the last Sunday to bring gifts for Meals on Wheels. A box is in the kitchen for the gifts. All small gifts (toiletries, socks, game books, etc.) are appreciated. Please: NO FOOD or Breakables. Thanks to the many of you who have already brought gifts. Bethany has always been generous in its support of this Outreach Program.

BETHANY CHESS CLUB

The Bethany Chess Club will meet on Wednesdays, December 14th and 28th. Come join the fun. If you have questions, please contact Tom Fore.

♪ TOOLE BOX ♪

The Children and Youth are practicing for their Christmas Pageant, “The Fumbly, Bumbly Angels,” to be presented during the Sunday School hour on December 11th. We will present a Christmas cantata on December 18th during the Morning Worship called “Tapestry of Light.” It is based on the Celtic music traditions of Ireland and Scotland. See the articles about each presentation on page 2 and 3 of this Newsette. Don’t miss these two great musical presentations.

PRAYER CONCERNS

Gladys DeBerry; Hazel Heider; Bonnie Williamson; Meesha Joshua

SYMPATHY

We express our Christian love and sympathy to Hazel Heider and her family on the death of her sister-in-law, Evelyn W. Knibb, on November 26, 2011. Evelyn was the wife of Rev. John Knibb, a Disciple Minister.

WEDDING

Congratulations to Kathryn Mary Drake and Ryan Christopher Hedlund, who were married on October 15, 2011, at the Greenwood Plantation in St. Francisville, Louisiana. Kathryn is the daughter of Donna and Chuck Drake.

END OF THE YEAR INVOICES

All invoices and vouchers must be received in the Church Office no later than Wednesday, December 28th to be included in the 2011 Budget. If you have any questions, please call Anne at the office.

STEWARDSHIP REMINDER

2011 is quickly drawing to a close. We encourage all to complete their pledges before December 31st. Also, if you would like to make an additional gift of cash or stock to the Ministry of Christ at Bethany, it will be greatly appreciated.

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSING DATES

The Church Office will be closed December 23rd, 26th, 27th, 30th and January 2nd.

DEPARTMENT CHAIR MEETING

Following the Worship Service on January 8th, 2012, we will have a meeting of our outgoing and incoming Department Chairs to discuss what has been done in the past and what can be done in the future ministries of Bethany. If you are an outgoing or incoming Chair please plan to attend this meeting. Food will be provided.

BAINBRIDGE COMMUNITY MINISTRY

Bainbridge Community Ministry continues to have an increase in the number of people in need of food. There are currently over 400 requests each month, and often the shelves are almost bare. Please continue to keep the box in the hallway filled. Bainbridge is a well-run organization, with each applicant being well checked to determine need, and to avoid applicants receiving similar aid from more than one source. Store bags also are needed, preferably bags with handles.

ADDRESS CHANGES -

Gay Purcell, 14301 Brandermill Woods Trail, A-209, Midlothian, VA 23112 744-0644
Bernice Rawes, A Loving Heart Adult Home, 2467 Genito Blackbird Circle, Powhatan, VA 23139
Gladys DeBerry, 1717 Bellevue Avenue, A509, Richmond, VA 23227

Please notify the church office immediately of any changes in address, telephone number or e-mail address.

NOTE: If anyone has a change from Richmond to North Chesterfield or South Chesterfield, please let the office know ASAP.

BETHANY MESSAGE CENTER

Don't forget to check the Bethany Message Center, located in the hall across from the Chapel. You could use this for your Christmas cards and donate the postage to Bethany. Below each slot there are spaces marked with letter(s) for the person's last name. This is a wonderful way to send your cards and notes to other members.

WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES		
For December		
<u>Date</u>		<u>No.of Yrs</u>
2	Hugh & Mary Penn Hawthorne	61
3	Tim & Mary McDermott	23
4	Earl & Elizabeth Little	12
11	Charles & Linda Wyatt	29
18	Bill & Miriam Blake	62
30	Dick & Barb Koch	39
30	Doug & Anne Marie Gregor	16
30	Ben Moore & Tammy Tripp	6

FINANCIAL STATEMENT	
January-October, 2011	
Total Offerings Received	\$ 141,850.15
Transfers from Stock, Money Market	
And GF Reserve Account	9,276.94
Total Expenses	<u>153,383.61</u>
Short for January-September	\$ 2,256.52
(NOTE: We would be short <u>\$11,533.46</u> without the transfers.)	