

BPC REVIEW

Bethel Presbyterian Church Newsletter

December 2020

Reflections On Mary

What did she endure, this handmaiden of the Lord? Surely it must have been difficult. Just think of the ridicule she must have endured at the hands of her own folk. After all, the explanation for her conception is less than believable on the surface. It even took a visit from an angel of the Lord to convince her betrothed.

This trip to Bethlehem, away from the gawking eyes of suspicion, the whispers of the town folk, must have been welcome, though difficult, journey. In Bethlehem, she was just the pregnant wife of a carpenter from Nazareth. She did not have to worry about those who felt her conception was less than pure.

Here, she would be allowed to bask in the joy of not only the birth of her first born, but in the glory of her chosen position. Here, she would get to totally enjoy the blessings of God, even if it was in an old stable on a chilly night. Here, the oppressiveness of her everyday life gave way to the joy of her calling.

Take a moment and reflect upon the gifts and abilities that God has bestowed upon you. Think about what His call is to you. Has the oppressiveness or just the sheer busyness of life kept you from enjoying His gifts and His calling?

Maybe its time you went on a journey. It may be a physical one, or simply a spiritual one. It may be as simple as a walk in the evening ,gazing at the awesomeness of the heavens, or a quiet moment spent in prayer or bible study.

This type of reflection can bring peace, especially in the midst of difficult times. As simple as these destinations may sound, we often find them difficult to reach because the "Noise" of the world around us can clutter our souls; however, taking the time to take such "Journeys" can often be the answer to relieving the stress and strain of everyday living. Enjoy your journey through advent. Peace.



Pastor Todd

Christmas Eve Services

6:00 pm and 8:00 pm

We look forward to gathering to celebrate this holy night. In order to ensure everyone's safety, we ask that you let the church office know if you are planning to attend the in-person service.

Please call the office at 410-692-5282 or email lissa@bethel-md.org



In This Issue:

- December Birthdays
- Prayer Concerns
- News and Announcements
- Member Highlight:
- Bethel Family Life



Sarah Scott ~ 12/01

John Cairnes ~ 12/03

Kristin Kirkwood ~ 12/03

Lisa Calary ~ 12/04

Sherry Kirchner ~ 12/05

William Scott ~ 12/05

George Denbow ~ 12/06

Richard Walker ~ 12/07

John Shaul ~ 12/08

Carolina Galliher ~ 12/09

Steve Saneman ~ 12/09

Tom O'Neill ~ 12/12

Heather Saneman ~ 12/14

Ann Edie ~ 12/15

Mo Howard ~ 12/15

Theresa Sachs ~ 12/15

Kristin Comer ~ 12/18

Joan Murrell ~ 12/18

Rita Taylor ~ 12/19

Abigail Lowe ~ 12/21

John Adair ~ 12/24

Susan Horn ~ 12/24

Lynda McRee ~ 12/30

Michael Alexander ~ 12/31



2020 Per Capita Reminder

Please be sure to turn in your portion of this year's Per Capita fee of **\$35.73** before the end of the year ... thank you !

Christmas Joy Offering

Please consider giving to the Christmas Joy Offering, a denominational offering that is much like the One Great Hour of Sharing – just with a different purpose.

The Christmas Joy Offering is presented to the congregation during the Advent season and has been around for decades. It is a combined offering that came into existence at the time the PCUSA was created in 1983. It now has two components:

1. Support of racial/ethnic schools related to the Presbyterian Church.
2. Support of the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions of the PCUSA which assists retired church workers, including clergy.

Thank you!



DEACON'S UPDATE

We uphold the following members, relatives and friends in our prayers and pray God's healing upon them:

Ongoing Prayers:

Janet Henderson, Blair Mattheis, Billy Gross, Dorothy Goldstein, George Reeves, Jerry Wiley, Carolyn Mattheiss, Allen Henderson, Beverly Schmidt, Joe Bradford, George Cowman, Betty Rogers.

Sam Fielder, Jr., Father of Sam Fielder III

Dan Kelleher, brother-in-law of Jack and Betty Rogers.

Howard Eisner, brother-in-law of Carol Morrow.

Gail Kimble, niece of Tom & MaryLee Swift.

Hazel Liff, friend of Andi & Ron Holmes.

Jean Mattheiss, sister of Bruce Mattheiss.

Leah Ridenour, friend of Gail Thomas.

John Dorn, friend of John & Rita Cairnes.

Mary Borrell, aunt of Gail Lowe.

Frank Clement, friend of Sam and Marsha Brooks.

Becky Hoffman, niece of Sam & Marsha Brooks.

Dorothy Ornadoff, friend of Sandy Hughes.

Ruth Anne Poole, sister of Gail Thomas.

The Rode Family, family of Melissa Dick.

Gail Lowe will be updating the Prayer Concerns. If you would like to add someone or you feel someone can be removed from the list, please call Gail at 443-567-0150 or email her at ggalowe@aol.com



The holidays may look a little different this year...many of the events and traditions we look forward to may not be happening. So what are some alternative ways we can add a little joy to the season?

If you love Christmas concerts, try streaming a concert live in your living room! You can be cozy, safe and warm at home while enjoying a bit of seasonal cheer!

There are plenty of gardens and Christmas Markets offering virtual tours this year, too. What's better than traveling for free in your pj's?

Or bundle up, put some hot cocoa in a thermos, and head out to view the Christmas lights! Take a drive around your neighborhood or venture a little further to enjoy the twinkling lights.

If your cookie exchange was cancelled, maybe you can bake a batch of cookies (or buy some special treats!) and send them to someone who needs a little TLC this year.

Just know that we're all in this together. We may be missing our loved ones this year, but we will appreciate our time together even more when it's safe to gather again. Until then, we can try to find a little joy in every day.

“And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy.”

Matthew 2:9-10



Announcements

A note from Mary Circle

Bethel's Women's Association (Mary Circle) has not been meeting during this COVID19 pandemic, however, we continue to pray for our church family and the community and wanted you all to know WE CARE!

In remembering those less fortunate; this fall we mailed \$100.00 to Heifer Program International to provide 5 flocks of chicks to a village family.

We also purchased \$100.00 worth of canned meats, milk, peanut butter and jelly and spaghetti for Bethel's Harvest Home Donations.

As we move out of this year into a new year, we hopefully will find a way to meet safely as a group and in the meantime will continue our daily devotions and prayers for God's spiritual and physical healing.

May God's healing be with us all,

—Ruth Walker for Mary Circle

Wednesday Night Bible Study Announcement

Are you interested in learning about the End Times?

What does the Bible have to say about our current events?

Come and join us for a Bible Study on the Book of Revelation

Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m. at Bethel Church in the Fellowship Hall

— Led by John and Rita Cairnes



Mask, Masks, Masks!!

Back in March, our daughter, Ronda suggested I sew face masks for health care workers. My sewing machine was put to work, using supplies on hand, turning out colorful and whimsical masks to help keep folks protected. As my resources dwindled, our Jane mentioned the masks to her coworkers at Johns Hopkins to promote the cause. They helped restock my supplies and before you knew it, I had sewn 800 masks.



The face masks are free. Bethel's Care and Reach Out Team has helped to distribute them and when Bethel was able to open our doors again abiding by the COVID regulations, a basket of masks was made available for any who may need them. A basket of masks remains in the sanctuary. Please take a mask and/or take a mask to share with another.

THANKS TO ALL OF YOU who donated thread, elastic, material or pipe cleaners and for those who donated money, I used that \$85 to purchase canned goods for Mason Dixon Community Center (through Bethel's Harvest Home food collection).

Thank you for "masking up", distancing and washing your hands frequently. Together, we can all help prevent the spread of illness.

Peace and good

health to all,



Harvest Home Sunday

Food collected on Harvest Home Sunday was delivered to Mason Dixon by the Mission Committee. Mason Dixon was very pleased with our collection efforts. Thank you to everyone at Bethel for your generous canned good donations!



So Very
Thankful

Member Highlight: Norma Kirkwood

Norma Kirkwood began her faith journey as a young teenager by walking about two miles from her home to Ayres Chapel United Methodist Church. She took her young sister with her and eventually her parents also started to attend. It was there that she met her husband Jack and they were married in 1948. She had recently graduated as a registered nurse from Church Home Hospital in Baltimore.

She delayed her nursing career to raise three children, Donna, Dennis, and Debra and assist her husband on the family farm. When a barn fire put them out of full-time farming, she returned to nursing briefly at York Hospital and then spent one year as the school nurse at Bel Air High School. The following year she began a 20-year career with the Harford County Health Department, eventually being the nurse-in-charge at the Aberdeen Clinic.



Norma joined Bethel in 1972 along with her husband and son. Her husband's great-great-great grandparents, Robert and Jane Henderson Kirkwood were part of the founding members of Bethel and the family farm, Newark, where she still resides, has been in the Kirkwood family for seven generations, since 1763.

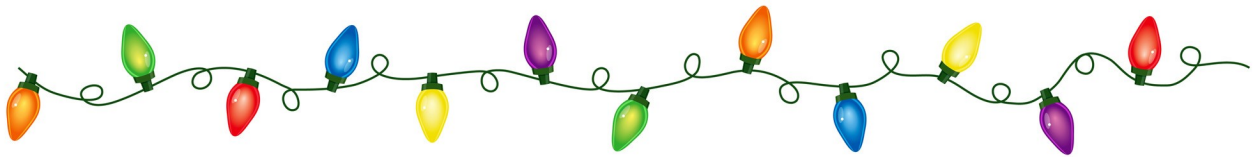
Norma is known as a gentle and caring person who helps her family, friends, and friends-to-be in many small and large ways. When her husband passed in 2004, she made it her mission to reach out to other recent widows to help them adjust to the new reality. She has served Bethel as a Deacon for several terms and was part of the Pastoral Nominating Committee that brought Rev. Bruce Barstow to Bethel. For a time, she coordinated the prayer phone chain for the church.

When last serving as a Deacon, she helped interim pastor Rev. David Harris deliver communion to our shut-ins. He made the comment that she was so effective in greeting and conversing with the homebound, that she should be part of the training program for future ministers. She has always lived a humble life and continues to remark on how fortunate she has been in her life of 93 years. She and her husband enjoyed travel across the United States and Europe. She was an excellent seamstress and cook and enjoyed her gardening. She is grateful to God for her longevity, health, family, and friends who continue to bring joy into her life.

Bethel Family Life...



Gail and Clara Thomas had fun baking this beautiful cake together!



Amber Nichols is learning to adjust to the cold evenings. Marty is finding that she is not ready for cold weather.



Ryan Nichols is remembering the summer of 2018 when, after a great deal of preparation, he married two special friends.

Greetings from the Church Office Administrator

Hello! I wanted to introduce myself as the new office administrator for Bethel Church. I've had the pleasure of meeting quite a few new faces, and I have been welcomed and made to feel right at home, so thank you! I know I have big shoes to fill, but I'm learning my way around the office a little more each day.

You might like to know little about me: I'm a lifelong Harford County resident and live in the town of Bel Air. My husband and I have 2 grown sons: one is currently stationed in Houston, TX with the Coast Guard, and the other works as a survey technician/drafter with an environmental engineering firm. We also have 3 indoor rescue kitties who enjoy watching all the wildlife in our yard.

I find peace by spending time in nature....I love hiking, kayaking, photographing the outdoors, and growing flowers in my garden. Ladew and Longwood Gardens are two of my favorite places! I enjoy cooking and reading, and I also dabble in digital artwork and watercolor painting just for fun.

I am happy to be serving the congregation at Bethel and I look forward to getting to know you all.

Take care and be well,

Lisa Robbins



Merry
Christmas

CELEBRATE THE SEASON

of CHRISTMAS
The Joy



Bethel Presbyterian Church
4135 Norrisville Road
White Hall, Maryland 21161
Office: 410-692-5282