

Bethany United Church of Christ

Embracing the Community

2952 Bethany Church Rd, Claremont NC 28610

www.BethanyUccClaremont.org and follow us on [facebook](#)

bethanyuccclaremont@gmail.com 828-464-5194



Winter News 2016 / 2017



Turn, Turn, Turn

by Rev. Colleen Samson

During this season of the year, it can feel like every time you turn around, there is something to do. In addition to regular activities, there is food to cook, presents to buy and wrap, cards to get in the mail, and children's programs to attend. There is not much extra space in which to turn among the holidays of Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Years! We all try our best. But, by the time the holidays are over, some of us are relieved. It is a time to be busy.

In some ways turn, turn, turn, reminds me of the Ecclesiastes 3 scripture and the 1960's song by the Byrds. There are some particular parts of the scripture and the song I want to emphasize for 2017. Those phrases are "a time to plant, a time to build up, a time to laugh, a time to dance, a time to love, and a time for peace. And, a time to every purpose, under heaven." As your pastor, these are the things I want for Bethany as we move into a new year. It is our TURN! This is our SEASON!

We talked about HOPE during Advent. HOPE is the destination of our faith. HOPE is what keeps us alive and living life with a purpose. Let's be HOPEFUL together this year. Let's make HOPE our word. Let's live into God's future for Bethany.

Journeying with God is exciting. We have a guide, so we do not have to figure everything out. We just have to listen and be faithful. Jesus' birth changed everything. It turned, turned, turned the world upside down. Get ready to be dizzy watching God do things we never imagined! Happy, HOPEFUL 2017!

Bethany is a community of justice and peace serving the needs of people on their spiritual journey.

NO MATTER WHO YOU ARE OR WHERE YOU ARE ON LIFE'S JOURNEY, YOU ARE WELCOME HERE.

Every Sunday Morning
Adult Faith Formation 9:30
Worship Service 10:30

PROJECT WARMTH

During December, we participated in The Salvation Army's Project Warmth by donating new or gently used coats for children in kindergarten through twelfth grade. We donated 19 coats to be taken to the Salvation Army for distribution. Thank you to all who supported this first-time mission at Bethany to spread warmth and love to our community's children.



BETHANY UCC ENDOWMENT FUND

At the Annual Congregational Meeting on the second Sunday in December, 2014, our congregation approved the proposed By-Laws for the Bethany UCC Endowment Fund (a copy is available upon request). An endowment fund is a special fund that's invested for long-term growth and exists to support our mission now and in the future. Its purpose is to receive gifts and address a variety of future needs beyond what our annual budget is designed to provide.



"Even if I knew that tomorrow the world would go to pieces, I would still plant my apple tree". (Martin Luther)

Planting seeds for future fruit is both an act of hope and an expression of faith. We plant in hope that the small seeds will one day produce a tree whose fruit will bless future generations. We plant in faith by entrusting those who follow us to nurture our tree, harvest the fruit properly, and use it for the best purposes. Making a gift to the Bethany Endowment Fund is a similar undertaking. Such a gift is a seed whose promised fruit will support the church well beyond your lifetime.

Congregational Meeting

Our annual Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, December 11, following the 10:30 Worship Service.

Our **Christmas Eve Community Candlelight Service** will be Saturday, December 24, 6:00 pm. Special music by John David Welch. Come and enjoy this beautiful service.



**CONSIDERING BECOMING
A MEMBER OF BETHANY?
PLAN TO ATTEND THE
"INQUIRER'S" CLASS.
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 5 AFTER
WORSHIP FOR LUNCH AND
INFORMATION.**

The Redemption of Scrooge

December 4
"The Remembrance of Christmas Past:
Hope from Heartbreak"

December 11
"The Life of Christmas Present:
Look Upon Me"

December 18
"The Hope of Christmas Future:
Death Defying Acts"

December 24
"The Redemption of Scrooge:
Keeping Christmas Well"

December 25
"God Bless Us Everyone"
Lessons and Carols

Scriptures

December 4 Isaiah 9: 2,6

December 11
Deuteronomy 15: 7-11

December 18
Revelation 8: 4b-17,
Luke 4: 18-19

December 24
Luke 1:26-2:20

Dec. 25
Lessons and Carols

January 1
Psalm 8

January 8
Isaiah 42:1-9

January 15
John 1: 29-42

January 22
Psalm 27: 1, 4-9

January 29
Psalm 15

February 5
Psalm 112: 1-9

February 12
Deuteronomy 30: 15-20

February 19
Psalm 119: 33-40

February 26
Exodus 24: 12-18

After School All Stars

The Bethany All Stars have been enjoying the fall weather, which has been nice for them, allowing for homework, reading, and snacks outside. They had great progress reports earlier and very good report cards recently with lots of A's and B's! We think they definitely are settled in now and just enjoyed their Thanksgiving break. The children shared with us what they would miss if they weren't here with us in the All Stars program, and some of these busy parents were nice enough to respond with why they are thankful for this program, too. Now their focus will be on Christmas, sharing gifts, fun with family, and, of course, the Reason for the Season. We have a great group of children and have added a couple more to the Before School. We are thankful for them all and their family's support of our program.

We wish everyone a very peaceful and Merry Christmas!
Ms. Lee and Ms. Jeannine

Birthdays

December

15 Hunter Ervin
23 Katie Krump
27 Becky Cline
30 Louise Harris

January

4 Tommy Little
13 Adam Smith
24 Colleen Samson
26 Joey Mosteller

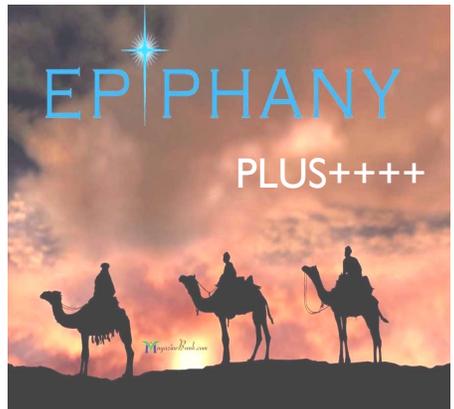
February

3 Larry Sink
14 Sarah Bostian
17 Vivian Cline



& Happy New Year

Don't Forget!
Meet and Eat on Friday,
February 3, 2017.



Epiphany is celebrated on the 6th of January. This year, the liturgical season of Epiphany lasts for nine weeks until Ash Wednesday, March 1, and the beginning of the season of Lent.

For Bethany folks our sermon focus will be on living into your best most passionate self; and, living into the best most passionate church we can be. It will be a time of connecting with ourselves. A time to slow down and bathe in the glow and revelation of God's presence.

We will wonder at the MYSTERY, we call God.
We will explore our FINGERPRINT.
We will love the MYSTICAL experiences offered through the life of Jesus.