

BETHANY BEACON

On the Road to Recovery

By Rev. Colleen Samson

At the time of writing this article, I am two weeks out of surgery. My mind is a little clearer than it was last week. I am moving better than last week and feel like I just might make a full recovery. Many of you have been through surgeries, and you understand the persistence it takes to stay on the road and be motivated to face another day of physical therapy. Even though the physical therapist tries to make things "pleasant," exercise has almost always felt like a chore to me.

Physical therapy aside, there have been some "learning moments" for me during this experience. After all, we owe it to ourselves to look inside our experiences in life and gain insight for the future. So goes my journey to look inside my first total hip replacement. Two weeks ago I was wheeled into pre-surgery because the pain from walking was too great. At that point I was ready to concede that the time had come to get a new hip. I had faced the physical pain for far too long, but truthfully, I had not faced the emotional pain of surgery. In the back of my head there was a voice that said I was too young for hip replacement, and I wondered what might happen if this surgery did not have a good outcome. I thought about those issues occasionally and the consequences, but never took the time to talk about them.

So, as I left my husband sitting in the waiting room while they prepared me for surgery----to my surprise those emotional issues came flooding to the surface. Gail, wheeled me back to the curtained cubicle. "How are you this morning, Mrs. Samson?" Then, suddenly the tears came. "I'm not doing very good. Please hand me the tissues." "What's wrong, Mrs. Samson?" said Gail. "I'm afraid," I responded. First time those words came out of my mouth, and I surprised myself with this admission. I was afraid. The pastor, the one filled with faith, the one with a close relationship with God, the one who sat with others telling them everything would be alright,----was afraid. "Oh, Mrs. Samson," Gail said, "you don't have to be afraid, God is here for you, watching over you. You don't have anything to worry about." Then, the confes-

sion----"I'm a pastor and I know God's here. I guess I just needed someone to remind me." Nurses came in and went out of my cubicle each reassuring me of a good outcome while they put in IV's, took my vitals, and prepared me for surgery. Then Gail, who had disappeared briefly, brought someone in my cubicle. It was Joe, a Baptist deacon, who was visiting someone a couple cubicles down. After briefly introducing ourselves Joe said, "Can I pray with you?" "I'd like that," was my response. We shared a quiet, simple, reassuring, prayer; two strangers sharing a love of and faith in God. For me, Joe was an unlikely person to reach out to me. Each of us had to cross several social, economic, and gender barriers, but when God is in the situation, barriers just do not exist.

My husband is finally called to the curtained cubicle. "How are you doing?" Tears were almost gone by then---"Are you ok?" he asked. "I wasn't, but I'm doing better." I hesitated to tell him that in the short period of time that we were separated that God had reached out to me and told me not to be afraid because He was with me. Something I knew, but needed to hear. Then, I heard the sweet prayer of my husband asking for God's presence in each part of my surgery, and for God to give me peace during my recovery.

Things were different after that. I was able to smile and "cut up" with the anesthesiologist. He asked me to tell him my favorite Bible verse. I said, "You probably don't want to hear, *I am the Resurrection and the Life*." The nurse and the anesthesiologist rolled their eyes at each other and agreed that verse was not the one they were looking for. I said, "Is this better, -----*Do Not Be Afraid, For I Am With You Always*." They agreed that verse would be the one I needed.

Since coming home, I have found it hard to pray during times of pain. I think I need to handle the pain with medication and a bag of ice. Those are two good methods, but God is there, helping me with the pain, too, if I allow that to happen. It is by the grace and love of God that you and I face everything in our lives -----even the pain from an ugly incision.

BETHANY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

February &
March 2014

**2952 Bethany Church Road
Claremont, NC 28610**

Phone: 828-464-5194

Email
bethanyuccoffice@aol.com

Website
www.BethanyUccClaremont.org

Pastor
Rev. Colleen Samson

Pastor Emeritus
Rev. Nevin Feather

Minister of Faith Formation
Pastor David Samson

Director After School All Stars
Brenda Josey

Youth/Teens Minister
Pastor John Barnette

Interim Organist
Jane Cadwallader

**Bethany Beacon
Co-Editors**
Vivian Cline
Donna Ervin

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

This article has said a lot about me. I hope you can see that there are times when pastors need to be reminded of God's love. Now, two weeks later, I enjoy seeing God in the get-well cards you send and the phone calls you make. We both appreciate being remembered with desserts, soup, bread, all made with the love of your hands. As you care for me and others in our congregation, know that your "works" are appreciated and that we see God present in each of you.

Blanket Sunday



This winter, BLANKET the world with love!

Church World Service runs a wonderful program called Blankets+. It is a special mission opportunity that 8,000 congregations and groups hold across the U.S. These events provide funds to help people in need around the world, including the U.S.

Bethany UCC will be holding our "Blanket Sunday" on February 23. Look for special donation envelopes, or send your donation to Bethany UCC with Blanket Sunday indicated in the memo. Your donation of just \$5 will provide a blanket for someone in need. And you can donate the blanket in honor or memory of someone you love.

For more information, contact the church office, and you can also visit www.churchworldservice.org or search Church World Service Blankets on www.Youtube.com to see a good video describing the program.

Submitted by Pastor David Samson

Sunday Morning Discussion Group

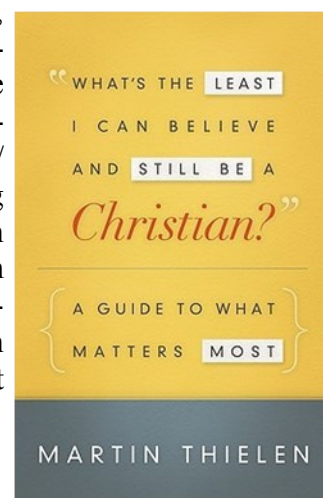
"What's the least I can believe and still be a Christian?" What a great question! Our Sunday Morning Adult Discussion Group is discussing Pastor and author Martin Thielen's book with that title. Part one of the book presents 10 things Christians don't need to believe. In short, Christians don't need to believe in closed-minded faith.

On the other hand, there are things Christians do need to believe, which is the focus of part two of the book. They need to believe in Jesus -- his life, teachings, example, death, and resurrection. A great benefit of these beliefs is that they provide promising answers to life's most profound questions.

Many people in the 21st century hunger for an open-minded expression of Christian faith. That's especially true for young people. For example, in a recent episode of the popular television show *Glee*, several high school students explained why they are turned off by religion. From their perspective, the church is down

on gays, women, and science. When you add to that the arrogant and judgmental attitudes found in many religious-right churches, it's easy to see why people are repelled by religion. If the only faith options are fundamentalism or no religion, many people will opt for no religion. Thankfully, a better alternative exists -- vibrant, open-minded, grace-filled, gender-equal, life-giving, centrist, moderate/mainline faith. Promoting that kind of faith is Martin Thielen's greatest passion in ministry. Everyone is invited to join the discussion every Sunday morning at 9:30.

Submitted by Pastor David Samson





CAREGIVERS SUPPORT GROUP

Caring for the Caregiver

Page 3

There are challenges when you provide care for someone. Whether you provide care in your home, their home, or a facility, care giving can be lonely, difficult, and stressful. Sometimes the result is the caregiver ignoring their own physical and emotional health.

Recognizing the needs of caregivers, Pastor Colleen is offering to gather together a Caregivers Support Group. We need at least five people to start the group. It will be a fluid group, meaning people can join at any point and end when they feel comfortable. The group will begin in March--- date and time to be determined by those who commit to being part of the group for at least six weeks.

The leadership at Bethany is committed to reaching out to the surrounding community to provide spiritual and emotional support helping people cope with difficult areas of their lives. Please talk with your friends and neighbors about this new group.

If you or someone you know is interested in being part of the Caregivers Support Group, please call the church office and leave a message or sign up on the sheet outside the pastor's office.

BETHANY TO SPONSOR BLOOD DRIVES

Community Blood Center of the Carolinas

Saving Local Lives

The Community Blood Center of the Carolinas (CBCC) is a nonprofit community based blood center and the primary blood supplier to 21 regional hospitals, serving patients that live in 16 North Carolina and 3 South Carolina counties. They subscribe to a community-based blood banking philosophy. That means that community donors **know that the blood they give stays in our community first - helping family members, friends, and neighbors.**

Their mission is to be the steward of a community resource: life-saving blood. CBCC collects blood from the community to return it to the community at the lowest possible cost, consistent with the highest standards of quality.

This valuable organization plays a crucial role in our community, providing the blood required to treat cancer, cardiac, transplant, trauma and other patients in our region's hospitals. Collected locally and used lo-

cally - every drop stays in our community saving local lives; that is what makes the Community Blood Center of the Carolinas such an important resource.

Bethany has decided to partner with the CBCC and sponsor 2 blood drives this year. These will be held on **April 2 and October 15 from 3:00 pm - 6:30 pm.** In order to have these drives, it is imperative that we recruit donors who will support our efforts. For the drives to be cost efficient for the CBCC, we must have a minimum of 10 donors. Our goal is to have at least twice that many.

If you can be a donor, please save these dates and plan to give. If you cannot be a donor, please ask family members, friends, and neighbors to give in your place.

We All Have the Power to Heal. It's in Our Blood.
(R)

Submitted by Donna & Eddie Ervin



February Meet & Eat

Our first **Meet & Eat** for the new year will be February 28 at Dos Amigos, Conover at 6:00 p.m. Join in having a great time of Fun & Fellowship. Bring your family and friends with you!

Teen News

For grades 7 - 12

Let no one despise your youth, but set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. 1 Timothy 4:12

By Pastor John 828-292-9410

Happy February! Love is in the air! Or is that the smell of Chocolate? Yep. Valentine's Day is just around the corner! Did you know that St. Valentine is not only the patron saint of love, but he is the patron saint of young people as well? His willingness to help young Christians who were being persecuted for their faith eventually led to his imprisonment by the Roman Emperor Claudius II around 269 AD. While in prison, it is said that he converted 46 members of a guard's family before Claudius II found out and had him executed on February 14. It just goes to show you that it doesn't matter where you are, you can always be a witness for Jesus Christ!



In which Old Testament book do you find the talking donkey?

Which book is the oldest book in the New Testament?

Which verse is the shortest verse in the Bible and what does it say?

* Every now and then, there just might be a prize for correct answers (\$5 Wal-Mart gift card, perhaps?). So, come prepared!

Missions: As I've mentioned earlier, we'll soon be heading over to the Catawba County Humane society to lend a helpful hand. This is a great opportunity to serve the community while also getting to have a little fun with our furry friends!



Please feel free to let me know if there are other mission projects that you are interested in. I'm always open to new ideas!

**February
2014**

Below you will find a schedule for the month of February:

February 2: Youth fellowship - 6:00 pm at Grace UCC

February 16: Youth Bible Study - 6:00 pm at Bethany UCC

February 23: LINC Ministries Youth fellowship - 6:00 pm at Grace UCC

What's up with that?!

Sometimes the Bible can be strange, intriguing, a bit confusing, and even gross. What does he mean by that? Is that Donkey really talking?! You find yourself asking, "what's up with that?!" Is there something in scripture that you are curious about? Let me know! Bible studies are always more fun and interesting if we are studying something you are interested in!



New floors and newly painted walls greeted the children when they returned in January. Thank you so much. Our area looks like a completely new place. We want to thank everyone for moving the furniture in and out and in and out during this transition. It truly was a great display of teamwork. If you moved a file cabinet or a refrigerator or seven computers, you are greatly acknowledged with heart-warming thanks.

We only had to use the fellowship hall for about a week until we were able to return downstairs. I know that we inconvenienced many during this period, and we thank you for your understanding. The children are so proud of their area and are working to keep things in order.

John and Pamela Pope donated a new sofa for the movie room, and we really are enjoying it. It is a great addition for the children!

Daily schedules are now in place, and we return to regular everyday life.

We have three returning students. Trinity, Eli, and little sister Abigail are back with us. We welcome this family with open arms.

The process for 2015 funding by United Way is already in progress. I have attended two mandatory meetings and submitted our letter of intent for funding. The pre RFP must be submitted by February 5. You can assume that I am busy applying for the grant.

We are offering break out sessions to our students now on a regular basis. When homework is finished, we have small group classes on math and reading comprehension. Thank you to the parents who talk

with us about the difficulties their child is having. Sometimes a little one-on-one will help that child understand a new concept and move forward. The last report cards were great, and we want to keep it that way.

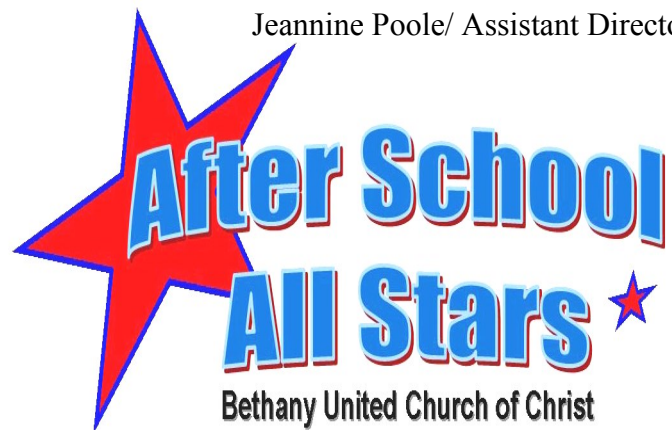
We were closed over Christmas because of the improvements being made. We were open for Martin Luther King Holiday and two teacher workdays in one week. We had good attendance for these extra days.

Thank all of you for your continued support and guidance. Our After School Advisory Board works hard for us. We could not do it without you. Thank you also to Carolyn Kale for depositing our funds, and a very special thank you to Vivian Cline for keeping our books.

As this new calendar year progresses, we are busy doing each day what is best for the children. We truly have the best children a program can have.

Brenda Josey/Program Director

Jeannine Poole/ Assistant Director



CWS School Kits give children in impoverished schools, refugee camps, or other difficult settings some of the basic tools for learning.

Bethany Missions
in cooperation with
the our LINC
partners support
this Church
World Service Project.



Each Kit Should Include:

- One pair of blunt metal scissors (rounded tip)
- Three 70-count spiral notebooks or notebooks totaling 200 -210 pages. **(No loose-leaf or filler paper.)**
- One 30-centimeter ruler (12")
- One hand-held pencil sharpener
- One large eraser
- Six new pencils with erasers
- One box of 24 crayons (only 24)

Please donate to our **Lenten School Kit Project by April 14.** Items needed are listed above. The collection box will be outside Fellowship Hall. *Kits will be assembled at a time and place to be determined. Watch the Sunday bulletin for further information.*

Prayer List



If you want to activate the Prayer Chain, please call **Becky Cline at 828-464-4346**.
Anyone can activate the Prayer Chain with a prayer request or gratitude for a prayer answered.

Gina Beard	Julian Gibbs	James Lowe	Rev. Colleen Samson
Robert Belk	Donnie Harris	Lisa Lundlovsky	Daniel Sanford
Linda Brooks	Louise Harris	Agnes McDaniels	Bob Shadowens
Lena Campbell	Faye Hicks (in Hospice)	Teresa Miller	Judy Sink
Brian Chapman	Samuel Jarrett	Hughleen Murray	Bill Wahl
Aileen Cline's Family	Roger Josey	Nadine Pennell	Cindy Watson
Elizabeth Cline (AL 507)	Donald Laney	Gene Phillips	O. D. Witherspoon
Lyerly Cline (AL Pavilion 210)	Dorothy Lassinger	Claudia & Jerry Pope	Jeannie Willis
Michael Cline	(Rm 106 - CVL at Rock Barn)	Maxine Reinhardt (AL 509)	Clarise Witt
Sheila Earp	Kenneth Lockwood	Richard Rizzo	



SERVING IN FEBRUARY & MARCH 2014



Elder of the Month:

February

Larry Sink

March

Donna Ervin

Liturgists:

February

- 2 Pastor John Barnette
Matt. 5:1-12
- 9 Louise Setzer
Ish. 58:1-9
- 16 Brenda Josey
Matt. 5:21-37
- 23 Carolyn Kale
1 Cor 3:10-11, 16-23

March

- 2 Lauren Stewart
Ex. 24:12-18
- 9 Norma Boggs
Gen. 2:15-17, 3:1-7
- 16 Eddie Ervin
Rom 4:1-5, 13-17
- 23 Vivian Cline
Ex. 17:1-7
- 30 Larry Sink
Eph. 5:8-14

Ushers:

February

- Lisa Goins 2
Lou Grandmaison 9
16
23

March

- Josh Stewart
Lauren Stewart 2
9

Counting Offerings:

February

- Eddie Ervin 23
Steve Kale 30

March

- Lou Grandmaison 2
Vivian Cline 9
16
23

Staff -Parish Relations Committee

Rev. Samson's SPRC members are:

Chris Brooks (459-4491)

Becky Cline (464-4346)

Vivian Cline (464-6471)

Larry Sink (612-8042)

Acolytes:

February

- A.J. Ellison
Zach Stewart
A.J. Ellison
Zach Stewart

March

- A.J. Ellison
Zach Stewart
A.J. Ellison
Zach Stewart
A.J. Ellison

Childcare Providers:

February

- Vivian Cline
Gina Beard
Beth Cline
Stacey Mosteller

March

- Lynn Brooks
Louise Setzer
Vivian Cline
Gina Beard
Beth Cline

Happy Birthday!



February

- 3 Larry Sink
5 Steve Kale
17 Vivian Cline



March

- 20 Gina Beard
23 Chris Brooks
27 Jerry Pope



Happy Anniversary!

February

- 7 Rick & Lynda
Wilkinson



March

- 1 Jerry & Claudia
Pope
- 20 Raymond &
Diane Cline
- 21 Joel & Martha
Barringer

Thank You!

TO ALL WHO SERVE THESE
MONTHS.....

WE COULDN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU!!!!



Christmas Eve Confirmands

Steven & A.J. Ellison



*Bethany's Christmas
Cantata.
Sunday, December 22*



"Sing a Song of Christmas" Sunday, December 15



There's Music In The Air!



Special music will be part of our worship services during February and March. We look forward to having these individuals with us.

February 16 Pamela Pope

February 23 Madeline Mehaffey

March 9 Lyle Creek Bluegrass (Donnie Little, Donna Ervin, Phil Bentley)

March 16 John and Pamela Pope

Bethany has been blessed with very talented members and friends. We thank these vocalists and musicians for sharing their musical gifts with us during worship. Be sure not to miss a single Sunday!



Bethany United Church of Christ
2952 Bethany Church Road
Claremont, North Carolina 28610

**Bethany is a
Community of Justice
and Peace serving the
needs of people on
their spiritual journey.**



Rev. Colleen E. Samson
Pastor, Bethany UCC

Phone: 828-464-5194
E-mail:
BethanyUCCOffice@aol.com

**EVERYONE
IS
WELCOME**



We Are on The Web

www.BethanyUccClaremont.org

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

ASAS Advisory Board Meeting
Monday, February 3 - 12:00 pm

Fellowship Committee Meeting
Wednesday, February 5 - 5:30 pm

BCIT Meeting
Tuesday, February 11 - 5:30 pm

Meet & Eat
Friday, February 28 - 6:00 pm
Dos Amigos - Conover

Ash Wednesday Service
March 5, 7:00 pm - Church of the Master

Blood Drive
Community Blood Center of the Carolinas
Wednesday, April 2 - 3:00 pm - 6:30 pm