

# Bethany United Church of Christ

Embracing the Community

2952 Bethany Church Rd, Claremont NC 28610

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## Winter News 2017 - 2018

### What Will the New Year Bring? Rev. Colleen Samson

It seems like not too long ago we were concerned about Y2K. Remember that? It was the turn of the century, and everybody was worried about what would happen to computers when we turned the calendar to the year 2000. As it turns out, there was little cause for worry. It reminds me of the way most of us operate; we worry when there is very little to worry about! And, there is very little we can control, so we should just get on with life and what comes will come. If only it were that easy.

Most of the time I think there is enough to be concerned about daily, so I try not to live in the future. Living in the moment is hard, because it means we have to shut our minds off to what might happen. But, we don't know the future. We only know the present moment, so let's do our best to live there. That is what God asks of us. "Therefore, do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own." Matthew 6: 34 When we don't worry, we are more likely to enjoy each day. We accept the challenges and joys placed in front of us and do the best we can. What Will the New Year Bring? Less worrying.

With less worrying, the New Year will bring new opportunities to connect with God and others. "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind"; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself." Luke 10: 27 Now, that is the way to LIVE. If your New Year includes living this verse from Luke, you will be doing God's will in your life. What if you chose a [Bible verse for your New Year's resolution?](#)

2018 will come on January 1. What you do with your new year is your responsibility. Living a life dedicated to God and in the example of Christ is what it means to be a Christian. I encourage you to begin attending Adult Discussion on Sunday mornings at 9:30 a.m. Our study during Advent will complement the worship service as we study *The Journey* by Adam Hamilton. After the beginning of the year, we will use a book by John Pavlovitz called *A Bigger Table*. Spread your spiritual wings and fly!

I believe God wants good for each of us. No matter what the New Year brings, God will be close to us. The question is, "Will our New Year bring us closer to God?"

*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



### Scriptures

- Dec 3 Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19
- Dec 10 Isaiah 40: 1-11
- Dec 17 Psalm 126
- Dec 24 To Be Determined
- Dec 31 Psalm 148
  
- Jan 7 Psalm 29
- Jan 14 John 1: 43-51
- Jan 21 Jonah 3: 1-5, 10
- Jan 28 Deut 18: 15-20
  
- Feb 4 Psalm 147:1-11, 20c
- Feb 11 2 Kings 2: 1-12
- Feb 18 Mark 1: 9-15
- Feb 25 Psalm 22: 23-31

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY**

### December 2017

- 15 Hunter Ervin
- 23 Katie Barrett
- 27 Becky Cline
- 30 Louise Harris

### January 2018

- 4 Tommy Little
- 13 Adam Smith
- 24 Colleen Samson

### February 2018

- 3 Larry Sink
- 14 Sarah Bostian
- 17 Vivian Cline



### MEET AND EAT

Join us Friday, December 15  
6:00 p.m. at Nagano's  
Hwy 70 Conover NC  
Everyone is welcome!  
Bring your family and friends  
to this time of fun and fellowship!

## ADVENT SERIES

**BEGINNING DECEMBER 3, 2017**

**Mary of Nazareth: Willingness**

**Joseph of Bethlehem: Mercy**

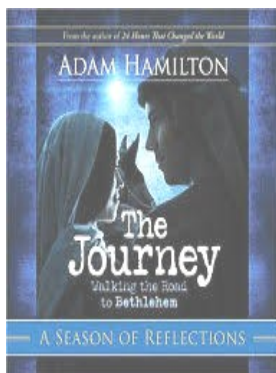
**Elizabeth of Judea: Encouragement**

**CHRISTMAS EVE**

**Lessons and Carols at 10:30 a.m.**

**The Manger: Presence**

**Featuring the children 4:00 p.m.**

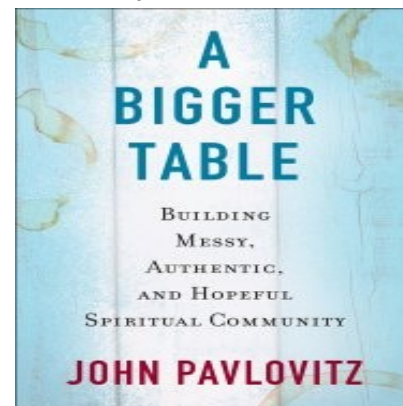


## ADULT DISCUSSION

**JANUARY 7, 2018 9:30 a.m.**

*Sunday morning*

*If you would like to participate  
in this study,  
please see Pastor Colleen for  
your book.*



### Top 10 Needs For Kinship/Foster Care Families

1. Continued prayer for our children, families, DSS staff, and Child Welfare Court Officials.
2. Help to recruit new foster homes.
3. New blankets for all ages.
4. New underwear of all sizes.
5. Financial contributions to our Foster Care Fund (to pay for fun extras such as band camp, athletic gear, field trips, etc.)
6. New/gently used plastic storage containers.
7. New/gently used coats.
8. Be added to our volunteer/donor list to help meet child specific needs.
9. Feminine hygiene products for teenage girls.
10. Diapers of all sizes and wipes.



## Ash Wednesday

ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

BETHANY UCC

FEBRUARY 14, 2018

7:00 P.M.

### WHY ASHES?

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the season of Lent. Lent is a time when many Christians prepare for Easter by observing a period of fasting, repentance, moderation and spiritual discipline.

Ash Wednesday emphasizes two themes: our sinfulness before God and our human mortality. The service focuses on both themes, helping us to realize that both have been triumphed through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

During some Ash Wednesday services, the minister will lightly rub the sign of the cross with ashes onto the foreheads of worshipers. The use of ashes as a sign of mortality and repentance has a long history in Jewish and Christian worship. Historically, ashes signified purification and sorrow for sins.

It is traditional to save the palm branches from the previous Palm Sunday service to burn to produce ashes for this service. Sometimes a small card or piece of paper is distributed on which each person writes a sin or hurtful or unjust characteristic. The cards are then brought to the altar to be burned with the palm branches. The ash cross on the forehead is an outward sign of our sorrow and repentance for sins.