

# Bethany United Church of Christ

*Embracing the Community*

2952 Bethany Church Rd, Claremont NC 28610

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*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 Discussion 9:30am  
Worship in Person 10:30am**

Email: [bethanyuccclaremont@gmail.com](mailto:bethanyuccclaremont@gmail.com)  
for information

## Bethany News

## Spring 2023

### PENTECOST PREVIEW

The Book of Acts records that on that fiftieth day after Passover, Pentecost, the first disciples had gathered for what was already a Jewish harvest celebration. Acts 2 tells the story of the Holy Spirit coming into the lives of those disciples. With rushing wind and living flames, the Church was born. In Christian tradition, Pentecost is now recognized as the “birthday” of the Church and offers a creative opportunity to celebrate the mystery of God and the powerful gifts and movements of the Holy Spirit. This year, Pentecost is celebrated on May 28. In diverse ways we celebrate that which strengthens us in our faith.

At Bethany UCC, we will prepare for Pentecost with a focus on Strengthening the Church. We'll do that two ways. The first is **a one day event on Sunday May 7, immediately following worship**. During worship, we will celebrate Holy Communion, remembering Jesus and his ministry. After worship, we will gather for a light **lunch in the Fellowship Hall** and then celebrate that we are the body of Christ in this day and time. By visiting the early church in the book of Acts, we'll discover how we have the same gifts and talents, the same needs and ministries. This event will close with a **“Gifts of the Spirit Profile”** that allows you to discover the ways the Holy Spirit has gifted you. It's a way to welcome and prepare for your personal Pentecost!

Pentecost is also the time of the annual UCC Strengthen the Church offering. This Five-for-Five offering provides a way for local congregations to fund leadership development, plant new churches, invest in youth ministry, and encourage innovation in existing congregations. **By your generosity to this offering, you build up the greater Body of Christ and celebrate the unifying message of Pentecost again. The in-gathering for this offering will be Pentecost, May 28.**

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY**



**May**  
19 Jose DeJesus

3  
25

**June**  
Steve Kirby  
Cindy Smith-Canipe

**July**  
4 Eddie Ervin

## Planning for Your Own Care



On May 15-17, Bethany UCC and St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Claremont are partnering up with Carolina Caring to host a three evening event that's open to the entire community. The three seminars will be held in the Fellowship Hall at Bethany UCC Claremont (2952 Bethany Church Road, Claremont, NC 28610) and are free of charge to all who attend.

Rev. Sandi Hood, who is both a Hospice Chaplain and the Pastor of Peace UCC in Hickory, will lead off on Monday, May 15 at 6:00 p.m. to discuss how to make your healthcare wishes known. Everyone who attends will receive a free toolkit, including the legal forms necessary to complete Advance Directives.

Then, on May 16, an estate attorney from Patrick, Harper and Dixon in Hickory will be with us to explain NC law as it pertains to probate court, a Durable Power of Attorney, a Last Will and Testament, and what it means to "get your affairs in order." Again, we'll meet at 6:00 p.m. Because we're including time for questions and answers, we're also including a light supper on this night.

The third night, May 17, also begins at 6:00 p.m. and includes a form for funeral planning so that both your family and your church know your specific final wishes. Even if you aren't a member of Bethany or St. Mark's, you can use the form for keeping in your own records. Also on this night, there will be a notary present to notarize the Advance Directives for anyone who would like this service. There will be no charge for notarization on this night.

While the seminars deal with some heavy topics, let them leave you feeling light. Stop avoiding weighty decisions and use the time to spur important conversations in your home. Make it a family project by bringing your loved ones. You'll be glad you did!



## That's a Fair Trade

How do you like your coffee? At Bethany UCC, we take ours with justice for farmers. The **UCC Fair Trade Project** allows congregations to partner with the United Church of Christ and Equal Exchange to build fair trade practices for small farming communities. Just by serving fairly traded coffee on Sundays, we take action for justice in the market place. The UCC Fair Trade Project is a way for local congregations to join hands with communities in the developing world. Through the project, small farmers and their families gain more control over their lives, earn a fairer share of income, have access to credit and technical support, and gain a trading partner they can trust, a fair trade organization called Equal Exchange. The project encourages careful stewardship of God's creation and allows your cup of coffee to be served with love!

## CALLING ALL CANS!



With the close of the food pantry in Hickory, the Charlie Bunn Food Pantry at Eastern Catawba Cooperative Christian Ministry (ECCCM) in Newton is now seeking to serve all of Catawba County. The need has increased exponentially. Volunteers from Bethany UCC who meet monthly to stock food pantry shelves and assemble care bags, say it's easy to see what's missing from the shelves and how we can help more effectively.

Bethany volunteers recently noticed a need for more canned fruit. So, if you're able to help restock on the shelves, bring any type of canned fruit to Bethany UCC and put it in the basket outside the sanctuary doors. Pop-top cans are especially appreciated. Other needs at the food pantry are canned and dried beans, plastic grocery bags, clean egg cartons, and gallon sized Zip Lock bags. And, if you have paper grocery bags or packing materials, bring those, too. They are greatly appreciated at Thrifty Threads and Treasures, ECCCM's clothing and household store.