



Bethany United Church of Christ

Embracing the Community

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Fall 2021



From the Pastor 's Pen...

Rev. Kathy Naish

When I think about words people know in a variety of languages, I think of *please* and *thank you*, of counting to ten when we couldn't carry on a conversation in the same tongue. But knowing some form of *hello* and *goodbye* in multiple languages takes top place. And, "hi" and "bye-bye" are often among a baby's first words. Words of welcome and departure are so important to human culture that we recognize them in multiple languages and practice them with our children. Over the summer we spoke some hellos and goodbyes. We welcomed new members into the life of the church and said farewell to those who moved away. We marked both occasions with fellowship, celebration, and ceremony. It is a momentous occasion to add and subtract from the pews. The people we worship and serve with become integral to our lives because of the shared intimacy of speaking and sharing our faith, of living out our core values, of standing together for justice and kneeling together in prayer. These actions are a visible language, a language of the heart that binds us into a beloved community where each person matters and matters deeply. So, the sadness of *goodbye* is matched only by the joy of *hello*.

We've also said some final goodbyes in our birth families and in our chosen families over these summer months. We've attended funerals and memorials and said goodbye to those whose faces we will miss at family reunions and neighborhood gatherings. Some of us have had that sadness tempered by the joyful hellos of new life in our families; children who will soon learn to wave and speak their greetings right along with the rest of us. Love keeps growing and reshaping and reforming, yet it ends up with the same kinds of smiles and tears, the same welcomes and farewells.

The metaphor of hello and goodbye fits the time of year and the time of life for us, too. We thought for a brief moment that "goodbye" would be the right word for the pandemic, but a resurgence changed our speech and reintroduced us to masks and social distancing. Now, we continue to pray for those who are saying their final goodbyes to loved ones taken by this disease. Another change is on the horizon, too. We are about to say goodbye to this summer and hello to fall. Good bye to tomatoes and hello to apple cider and pumpkins; hello to leaves falling and darkness settling in earlier. Goodbye to the back deck and hello to the fireside. Hello and goodbye; the human heart is fluent in the language of change. May you gather all your hellos and goodbyes close, valuing each with gratitude, with fellowship, celebration and ceremony. May sadness and joy, welcome and farewell, grow love in your life and may that love overflow into the way you greet your days.

Together In Christ, Kathy



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

Worship in Person 10:30

Email: bethanyuccclaremont@gmail.com for information



September

12 Donna Ervin

October

1 Lisa Goins
 12 Eric Ervin
 22 Trish Passman
 25 Vicki Smith-Canipe
 30 Ruth Sanders

Daylight Saving Time Ends Sunday, November 7 at 2:00 A.M.



Season of Creation Care

Many congregations focus on Creation Care in the month of September. Creation Care and Creation Justice are our themes for Worship this month. Explore our foundational calling as believers to care for God's creation.

New In-Person Guidelines from the Church Council

The Church Council met on Monday, August 16 and made new recommendations for our congregation during our indoor, in-person gatherings. In compliance with CDC guidelines, we will now be wearing masks whenever we are gathered for in-person worship and for Adult Discussion. We will also practice social distancing and the pews will be marked to show available seating. Please only sit on taped pews and leave the unmarked pews for space between us. As before, we will have masks available at the doors, or you are welcome to wear your own. Signs at our entrances will alert everyone that masks are to be worn inside and that we are following CDC protocols for social distancing. Please note that the CDC is now suggesting that even vaccinated people should wear masks at indoor gatherings.

The Church Council came to this decision out of an abundance of love and caution. Our concern for each other, for our neighbors, and for stopping the spread of contagion is paramount and we are grateful to you for your participation. If you want to discuss this decision, please contact Larry Sink, Council President, or Jose De Jesus, Council Vice President, or any other member of the church council.

Around and About the Building

Many thanks are due to the dedicated team that trimmed the hedges around the church building, mulched the flower beds, and raked up the debris. To those who gave of their time and effort your work is appreciated!

Also, we have heard good news from Kemp Sigmon regarding the coming work on the basement walls. Because the work we need done is indoors, rainy days will be great for our timeline. We are grateful to Kemp for the coming work and for his gracious spirit. Our building is better for all this effort!

Submitted by Judy Kirby



Outdoor Party!



On Saturday, September 18, at 4:00 p.m., we will gather in Jane and Malcolm Campbell's beautiful backyard for an ice cream party. Yay and Yum! We're having homemade ice cream and plenty of toppings, so contact the Campbells if you want to know what to bring. I'm bringing a spoon!

Did You Know?

We have received Thank You's from the following groups for Bethany's contributions to their organizations:

- The Open and Affirming Coalition of UCC Churches
- ECCCM
- The Corner Table.



Green Team Update

Our congregation's committee on Climate Justice, or the Green Team, met recently with Rev. Brooks Berndt, the UCC national minister for Climate Justice. We are now reading his book, Cathedral on Fire, as we review our options for approaching climate justice in our lives. Also, Carolina Interfaith Power and Light Energy Auditor, Marshall Goers, recently visited our church to look at our heating and cooling units and to see our buildings. He will be sending a report soon, and it will include recommendations on how we might be able to save some energy and some money. The Green Team will meet after we receive the audit and after we all finish reading our book. If you would like to join us, it's not too late. Just let Pastor Kathy or Judy Kirby know.

Submitted by Judy Kirby