



Bethany Beacon

A Community of Peace & Justice

From the Pastor's Desk - What Does the New Year Hold?

"For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope." – Jeremiah 29:11

When one year ends and a new one begins, there is often a sense of hopeful excitement and optimistic anticipation at what the new year will bring. It is a time when many will set intentions for themselves in 2026 (we call them New Year's Resolutions as we open ourselves to what changes might come our way). At this turning of the calendar page, we enter the unknown of 2026 with a spirit that may just be a little more open to and enlivened by the possibilities of what comes next.

I feel all of this, not only in my personal life but in the life we share at Bethany! What holy work will we do together in 2026? How will we reach out in new ways to engage and care for our community? What divine possibilities await us as we lean into the guidance of God's Spirit? As we live into these questions and as we find the answers together, I trust, above all, that the answers which await will be good! I trust that God is in the mix as we journey forward together. Like Jeremiah, I trust that God is moving us toward a future of hope. So may we lean into that future with hopeful excitement and optimistic anticipation!

Rev. Josh Fitterling, Pastor



Connect with Us!

Call: (828) 464-5194

Email: bethanyuccclaremont@gmail.com

Visit: 2952 Bethany Church Road
Claremont, NC 28610

If you have a pastoral emergency or need to reach out to Pastor Josh directly, you can call (610) 750-2688 or email josh.fitterling@gmail.com.

Past Sermons now on YouTube!

Did you miss a Sunday sermon or would you like to share a favorite message with your family and friends? Well, now our sermons are recorded! Each week, Pastor Josh is making a special recording of his sermon and uploading it on our newly created Church YouTube Channel. Sermons are uploaded Sunday evening or Monday. You can find the channel at <https://www.youtube.com/@BethanyUCCClaremontNC>.

**YouTube****Epiphany Sunday and Blessing of our Reverse Advent Boxes – Sunday, January 4 at 10:30am**

Join us as we remember the visit of the Magi to worship Jesus! This Sunday, we will also bless our Advent offerings of non-perishable food items for the food pantry at Ashure Ministry. Additional items are still welcome!

2026 Altar Flower Sign-Up Now Available!

Would you like to sponsor our Altar Flowers for a month in 2026? The flowers cost \$100.00 and are used throughout the month to bless our worship space! Afterwards, the flowers can be taken home by the sponsor, or they will be shared with residents at Abernethy Laurels. Feel free to talk to Norma with any questions!

**Pastor Josh Away – Wednesday, January 28 through Tuesday, February 3**

Pastor Josh will be on vacation from January 28 through February 3. If pastoral care needs arise, please reach out to one of our Church Elders (Judy Kirby, Donna Ervin, and Nancy Rockett).

Western North Carolina Association (WNCA) Women are Relaunching

Our Association of the Southern Conference is arranging a Re-Launch Zoom meeting for the Church Women of WNCA on Saturday, January 10, 2026, at 10:30am. The Zoom link and agenda will be shared closer to the meeting. If you would like to know more or are interested in attending, please let Pastor Josh know!

The women of Western NC, Eastern NC, and Eastern Virginia Associations will gather at the SOC Women's Summer Conference, which is tentatively scheduled for either May 29–30 or June 5–6, 2026.



Thank you for your Financial Support!

To all who contributed in 2025 to the financial needs of Bethany, thank you! Your ongoing support in this past year of transition kept our ministries going and has helped set us up for a great 2026!

In 2026, our offering goal is \$52,000 which is an average of \$1,000 per week. We will strive to keep the congregation informed on how we are meeting that goal. Meeting or exceeding this goal will help keep Bethany on a good financial foundation as we look toward the future with hope!

A Note of Gratitude to our Bethany Church Family!

Thank you for the kind and generous love offering shared with us this Christmas season! You bless us in all the ways you support our shared work together, and we are grateful to get to serve among such a kind and thoughtful congregation!

In Gratitude,
Jane Campbell and Rev. Josh Fitterling



January Calendar

Sunday, Jan 4	9:30Am - Faith Formation 10:30Am - Epiphany Sunday Worship with Holy Communion & Blessing of Reverse Advent Boxes
Monday, Jan 5	10:00Am - Worship Committee Meeting
Thursday, Jan 8	11:45am - Volunteer at Ashure (Chicken packing)
Sunday, Jan 11	9:30Am - Faith Formation 10:30Am - Worship
Monday, Jan 12	10:00Am - Outreach Committee Meeting
Tuesday, Jan 13	10:00Am to 12:00pm - Volunteer at Ashure Ministry
Sunday, Jan 18	9:30Am - Faith Formation 10:30Am - Worship
Monday, Jan 19	10:00Am - Council Meeting
Sunday, Jan 25	9:30Am - Faith Formation 10:30Am - Worship with Installation of Lay Leaders
Tuesday, Jan 27	1:00pm to 3:00pm - Volunteer at Ashure Ministry

****Pastor Josh will be on vacation from Wednesday, January 28 through Tuesday, February 3.****

January Birthdays

Jan 6 - Gennie Lou Byerly

Jan 16 - Maria Spada