



Bethany Beacon

A Community of Peace & Justice

From the Pastor's Desk – Mountain Strong

"Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ." – Galatians 6:2



Pictures from Left to Right: kitchen demolition, kitchen renovation progress, finding Sasquatch outside a restaurant (got to have some fun!), bathroom demolition, bathroom renovation progress.

Last month, I had the opportunity, with the council's blessing, to join my home church on their mission work in the Black Mountain region as they came to help with the ongoing rebuilding effort after Hurricane Helene. The pictures above are from that trip as we worked on restoring a home for a family in need. Trips like these are always meaningful for me and they helped to form me and my faith when I was a teen. They taught me the power of love and the strength of caring community.

As we celebrate the resurrection this Easter, may we remember what love can do – rebuild homes, nurture hope, overcome the grave, and so much more!



Rev. Josh Fitterling, Pastor

Connect with Us!



Bethany UCC Claremont NC



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

Ashure Ministry March Madness Mini-Challenge at Bethany is...



DUKE!!! Thank you to all who voted with your non-perishable food donations! Together, we will be donating 132 food items plus \$500 from our outreach endowment funds to Ashure! Thank you for showing your team spirit and helping to feed our neighbors!



Maundy Thursday

Maundy Thursday Service – Thursday, April 2 at 3:30pm in Spirit Place at Abernethy Laurels

As the cross approaches, we gather to remember the Last Supper and the growing darkness. All are invited to join us as we share this service with our neighbors at Abernethy Laurels. The service will be in Spirit Place. Please enter through the main entrance and sign-in at the desk. The service will be co-led by Rev. Maria Yocum and Rev. Josh Fitterling. Music will be provided by Jane Campbell. Communion will be shared.

Easter Sunday Celebrations!

7:30am – Outdoor Sunrise Service

Join us for a brief, outdoor worship moment as we welcome the sunrise and the wonders of Easter! In the event of rain, the service will be indoors.

8:00am – Breakfast in Fellowship Hall

Following the sunrise service, all are invited to join us in Fellowship Hall for breakfast! Pancakes and bacon will be provided along with goodies donated by the congregation.

9:00am – Easter Worship in the Sanctuary

Christ is risen! Join us in the sanctuary as we sing of and celebrate the power of God's love!



Fostering Hope Diaper Derby – Let’s Giddy-Up and Give!

With the Kentucky Derby just around the corner, the Outreach Committee thought we could have our own derby – a diaper derby! That’s right, we will be off to the races, collecting coins at every turn, to help nurture the lives of children cared for by Fostering Hope. Loose change can be placed in the offering plate each Sunday morning starting on April 12. We will collect throughout the season of Easter with the final Sunday to contribute being Pentecost Sunday!



Fostering Hope “strives to support the physical, emotional, and social needs of children in foster care and the village that surrounds them through connecting the Catawba Valley community.”

March Offering Report

Thank you to all who contribute to our weekly offerings! After the first quarter of the year, we are on track to achieve or exceed our offering goal! In 2026, our goal is to average \$1,000 per week to meet our offering goal of \$52,000.



March Total Offerings/13	\$5,423.00
March Weekly Average*	\$1,084.60
Year-To-Date Total Offerings	\$14,276.00
Year-To-Date Weekly Average	\$1,098.15

**March included 5 Sundays. Exceeding our goal helps cover unexpected costs, like the recent tree trimming and removal.*

Defibrillator Training – Sunday, April 19 following worship

Would you like to learn how to use our defibrillator or get a refresher course on how it works? Join us after worship on Sunday, April 19 in Fellowship Hall for a brief demonstration by our own Larry Sink. This should take no more than 15 to 20 minutes.



Our defibrillator currently resides in the church office. Following the training, the defibrillator will be displayed in a more public location within the church. While we hope we will never have to utilize it, having church members familiar with the device is vital for providing care if the need ever arises.

Outdoor Worship & Picnic

Sunday, April 26
10:30AM



Earth Day Outdoor Worship Service & Picnic

Sunday, April 26 at 10:30am

In celebration of Earth Day and the gift of God's creation, join us for this special, outdoor worship service and celebration! Chairs and tables will be provided. Following worship, we will cook up hamburgers and hotdogs (veggie burgers will also be available). A sign-up for sides will be out in the coming weeks.

Installation Gratitude!

Beloved People of Bethany,
Thank you to everyone who made my Installation Service and celebration possible! Whether assisting in leadership, attending in joy, or providing hospitality at the reception, I felt your love! It was a hope-filled day for what is a hope-filled future we are creating together! Thank you!!!

In Gratitude,
Pastor Josh



Updates from Around the Church Grounds

In the past month, in addition to some tree trimming around the property, the large oak tree by the side entrance of the church has been taken down as the tree was dying and was a hazard to our building and our people. As you can see from the stump, the rot was deep and growing. The Property Committee will explore what's next for this garden space in the future.

You may have also noticed a new green utility pedestal by the parking lot. This is from our recent switch to Spectrum for internet service. This switch was made to reduce our costs and increase internet reliability throughout the church. The new network and password information is available in the office or from Pastor Josh.



"In These Times: What Does Jesus Expect?" – WNCA Spring Education Event – Saturday, April 25 from 9am to 2pm – HERE at Bethany UCC!



How are we to live in this moment? What does faithfulness look like when social and political chaos seems to reign? What does Jesus expect of his followers for such a time as this? There will be a keynote speaker, the Rev. Dr. Avery Jerome Danage, Sr., workshops, lunch, and a brief Service of Anointing. The cost is \$25 (which includes a lunch). If you are interested in attending alongside other church representatives, please reach out to Pastor Josh for the registration link! In addition, if you would like to help us host, please let Pastor Josh know!

\$396 Raised for One Great Hour of Sharing!

Thank you to all who contributed to this annual appeal of the UCC! This special offering supports ministries that fund health, education, agricultural development, emergency relief, refugee ministries, and disaster response.



April Calendar

Thursday, April 2	11:45am – Volunteer at Ashure (Chicken packing) 3:30pm – Maundy Thursday Service at Abernethy Laurels (Spirit Place)
Sunday, April 5	7:30am – Outdoor Easter Sunrise Service 8:00am – Easter Breakfast in Fellowship Hall 9:00am – Easter Worship in the Sanctuary
Sunday, April 12	9:30am – Faith Formation 10:30am – Worship w/ Holy Communion
Monday, April 13	10:00am – Worship Committee Meeting
Tuesday, April 14	10:00am to 12:00pm – Volunteer at Ashure Ministry
Sunday, April 19	9:30am – Faith Formation 10:30am – Worship 11:30am – Defibrillator Training following Worship
Monday, April 20	10:30am – Council Meeting
Saturday, April 25	9:00am to 2pm – WNCA Educational Event
Sunday, April 26	9:30am – Faith Formation 10:30am – Outdoor Earth Day Worship with picnic to follow
Tuesday, April 28	1:00pm to 3:00pm – Volunteer at Ashure Ministry



April Birthdays



April 27 – Jane Campbell