



# Bethany Beacon

*A Community of Peace & Justice*

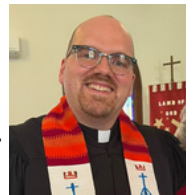
## From the Pastor's Desk – Becoming a Little More Like Dolly

*"Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God." – 1 John 4:7*

Since hearing of the passing of Dolly Parton, I have been reflecting on what made her life so inspiring and magnetic to generation after generation. She was idolized by my guitar-playing grandmother and I too came to admire her deeply as I saw her glorious wit and heart for compassion. I have seen so many varied people of different backgrounds, different beliefs and different ideologies, mourning her passing. What makes a person so impactful? Then I saw a church sign that gave me the answer:

*"I will always love you" – God & Dolly*

She made so many feel loved. She made so many feel seen and cherished. She made so many feel like family. She was the neighbor who gave generously when wildfires and flooding impacted her hometown. She was the beloved one who brought a new book every month to millions of children. She was the one who could make you laugh and cry through her music and her bubbly personality. She not only gave generously from what she had, but she did so with a great deal of kindness. There is not enough room on this page to list all the love she shared. So today, as we remember such an impactful life, may we all be a bit more like Dolly.



*Rev. Josh Fitterling, Pastor*

### Connect with Us!



Bethany UCC Claremont NC



@BethanyUCCClaremontNC

Call: (828) 464-5194 Email: [bethanyuccclaremont@gmail.com](mailto: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/text (610) 750-2688 or email [josh.fitterling@gmail.com](mailto:josh.fitterling@gmail.com).

## **Bless You, Teachers! – Tissues, Band-Aids, and Ice Cream Shared with the Staff of Catawba Elementary**

On Sunday, August 16, we assembled 45 blessings bags after worship. The next Tuesday, we delivered them with a sweet treat as school was about to begin! They were so very grateful!



Many thanks to all who donated tissues and time to make this outreach effort a wonderful success!

## **Catawba Valley Pride Saturday, September 19 10am to 3pm**

Join us at Catawba Farms in Newton for this year's Catawba Valley Pride event!



Bethany will have a booth at the event where we will meet folks, share some fun giveaways, host a "make-your-own" bracelet station, and extend the extravagant embrace of God's love to all people! Many thanks to those who have signed-up to help out that day and represent the church!

If you would like to stop by and support the festivities, the event will take place at:  
Catawba Farms  
1670 Southwest Blvd  
Newton, NC 28658

CCHUNGERWALK.COM

SPONSOR START A TEAM  
RAISE SUPPORT WALK  
SPREAD THE WORD



**REGISTER NOW**

**BENEFITING**



**SUNDAY | 3PM**

**OCTOBER 4, 2026**

**DOWNTOWN NEWTON**

(Frank & Sue Jones Amphitheatre)

**WHY WE WALK**

To provide meals to the  
homes facing food insecurity  
in Catawba County!

### INFORMATION

**2:00PM - Registration**

**2:45PM - Awards**

(Top Team Fundraiser, Largest Team, Top Individual Fundraiser and more)

### QUESTIONS

**Ashure Ministry**  
(828-465-1702 | ashureministry.org)

**The Corner Table**  
(828-464-0355 | thecornertable.org)

**Hickory Soup Kitchen**  
(828-327-4828 | hickorysoupkitchen.org)



## Bethany to participate in this year's Hunger Walk!

Want to join Pastor Josh on a walk for a good cause? You can sign up here and register for the "Bethany UCC" team! Through our Outreach funds, the team will begin with a \$500 donation!

Want to add your own donation? Donations can be made online by visiting:

<https://runsignup.com/bethanyunitedchurchofchrist>

Cash donations or checks made out to "Hunger Walk" can be given directly to Pastor Josh or another walker! Have questions? Reach out to Pastor Josh!

## Pastor Josh Away the End of September

Pastor Josh will be visiting his parents in Pennsylvania from Monday, September 21 to Friday, October 2. He will officially be on vacation from September 23 to September 29 and available by phone/email the other days.



Rev. Dr. Thad Austin will lead worship on Sunday, September 27. If pastoral care needs arise, please reach out to one of our Church Elders (Judy Kirby, Donna Ervin, and Nancy Rockett).

Choir Update – Next piece will be offered on Sunday, October 4



Many thanks to all the singers who have made reforming the church choir possible! ***The next rehearsal will take place on Sunday, September 6 after worship.*** If you would like to sing but can’t make it to the next rehearsal, no worries! Simply reach out to Jane or Pastor Josh!

August Offering Report

Thank you to all who contribute to our weekly offerings! In 2026, our goal is to average \$1,000 per week to meet our offering goal of \$52,000.

|                              |             |
|------------------------------|-------------|
| August Total Offerings       | \$6,082.00  |
| August Weekly Average*       | \$1,216.40  |
| Year-To-Date Total Offerings | \$41,069.61 |
| Year-To-Date Weekly Average* | \$1,173.41  |

*\*August was a 5 Sunday month and we continue to exceed our goal! This helps us cover unexpected expenses and allows us to keep shrinking our small, year-to-date deficit.*

Ashure Ministry Monthly Update

For the month of September, the requested pantry items are:

**peanut butter & jelly!**

Donations of food, plastic bags, and egg cartons can be placed in the baskets outside the sanctuary. And thank you!



## Western North Carolina Association Meeting – Saturday, October 3 from 9:00am to 2:00pm at Abernethy Laurels



We are in need of two lay delegates to accompany Pastor Josh to this year's Annual Meeting. The topic is "Prophetic Advocacy in a Fragmented Season". The day will include worship, committee updates, election of new leaders to association roles, engaging in meaningful dialogue about the mission and future of our faith communities, and

fellowship. Registration fee is \$25.00 (the church will pay this for our delegates) and includes lunch. Please reach out to Pastor Josh if you are interested in attending as a lay delegate!

## Church Work Day – Monday, September 14 – Starting at 9:00am



Join the Property Committee for our next church work day to tend to our building and grounds. On this day, we will focus on painting (hallway, Fellowship Hall, and exterior doors). Feel free to bring any tools or supplies you think will be helpful as we work together. Contact Larry Sink if you have any questions!

*\*\*Note that Church Council will still meet at 10:30am!\*\**

## "Messages for the Young and Young at Heart" to Begin

Beginning on Sunday, September 13, we will be adding a brief message each week to worship that is geared toward the children and the child-like spirit within us all! May these moments nurture us all as we grow in life and faith!



## Faith Formation Resumes – Sunday, September 13



Our Faith Formation class resumes on Sunday, Sept 13 at 9:30am in the Parlor. Facilitated by Rev. Maria Spada, we will continue to use the lessons put out by "The Wired Word". If you wish to receive the weekly lessons, please let Maria or Pastor Josh know!

## September Calendar

- Thursday, September 3** 11:45am – Volunteer at Ashure (Chicken packing)
- Sunday, September 6** 10:30am – Worship w/ Holy Communion
- Tuesday, September 8** 10:00am to 12noon – Volunteering at Ashure Ministry
- Sunday, September 13** 9:30am – Faith Formation  
10:30am – Worship  
3:00pm – “Come From Away” Fellowship Outing  
(\*pre-purchased tickets required\*)
- Monday, September 14** 9:00am – Church Work Day  
10:30am – Church Council Meeting
- Saturday, September 19** 10:00am to 3pm – Catawba Valley Pride
- Sunday, September 20** 9:30am – Faith Formation  
10:30am – Worship
- Tuesday, September 22** 1:00pm to 3:00pm – Volunteer at Ashure Ministry
- Sunday, September 27** 9:30am – Faith Formation  
10:30am – Worship w/ Guest Preacher Rev. Dr. Thad Austin
- \*\*Pastor Josh will be out of town visiting family beginning Monday, September 21 and he will return for Saturday, October 3.\*\***



## September Birthdays

- September 12 – Donna Ervin**  
**September 16 – Rick Wilkinson**  
**September 24 – Rev. Josh Fitterling**  
**September 29 – Al Gentle**