

The Newsette

Bethany Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
5400 Forest Hill Avenue, Richmond, VA 23225-2513
(804) 233-1066 and (804) 233-9515

bethanychristiandoc@gmail.com / www.bethanyccdoc.org / www.facebook.com/bethanyccdoc

December 2025

Volume 64, Issue 12

Our Vision: Bethany Christian Church is committed to worshipping God, deepening our faith, spreading the gospel, and serving where Christ leads.

Rev. Jaclyn Twedell Woods

Senior Pastor

Naomi Moon

Financial Secretary

Duane Toole

Director of Music

Carol Molinares

Pianist

To submit information for the Newsette, call (804) 233-1066 or send an email to bethanychristiandoc@gmail.com

We are still broadcasting our Sunday service online on Facebook for those members and friends who choose to worship at home.

DECEMBER TEAMS

If you are unable to serve on the date(s) assigned, please arrange for a replacement.

PROPERTY OPENER and CLOSER

Ollie Peebles

COMMUNION PREPARATION

7 – Brian & Penny Gradwell
 14 – Kathy Rende
 21 – Barbara Ozlin, Shelia Thayer
 24 Eve 2:00 pm – Stephanie Lewis
 24 Eve 11:30 pm – Brian & Penny Gradwell
 28 – Sue Marion

USHERS - all month

Scot Hawthorne
 Ollie Peebles

WORSHIP LEADERS

7 – Barbara Ozlin
 14 – Stephanie Lewis
 21 – Sue Marion
 28 – Barb Koch

DEACONS

Sue Marion
 Kristin Wolfe

ELDERS

7 – Barbara Ozlin
 14 – Brian Gradwell
 21 – Ray Crawford
 24 Eve 2:00 pm – Donna Wicker
 24 Eve 11:30 pm – Penny Gradwell
 28 – Barb Koch

ELDER SERVICE TO HOMEBOUND

Ross Dorneman & Becky Murrell

OFFERING COMMITTEE

Jo Anne Dorneman & Karen McClain

NOTE 1: The Into Action AA group will be meeting in our Youth Center: •Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m. •Thursdays at 7:00 p.m.

NOTE 2: Crown and Joy Presbyterian Church meets in our main building: •Sundays at 1:30 p.m. •Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m.

•Third Saturdays at 8:30 a.m. and other times as coordinated with us



THOUGHTS FOR THE MONTH

"The word advent means "expectation". What advent can do for us is create a sense of hope." ~Louie Giglio

And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. ~ Luke 2:10-11

STEWARSHIP INFORMATION

Stewardship report as of October 31, 2025 (83.33% of the year)

Income received year-to-date \$140,164.84 (90.45% of annual budget)

pledged donations; "give-as-I-can" donations;
transient, Sunday School, budgeted special offerings and
receipts; budgeted facility donations; budgeted
interest/dividend income

* also YTD, we have received and disbursed through Misc Special Offerings: \$860 to CrossOver Ministries, \$630 to
ACTS, \$600 to WHOA Foundation

Total operating expenses year-to-date \$156,357.57 (73.07% of annual budget)

For 2025, we:

- accounted for \$1,350.00 in facility donations
- accounted for \$8,854.18 miscellaneous donation to the church
- accounted for \$35,971.47 gain in the value of our Perpetual Endowment Fund

Information on our accounts as of October 31, 2025

Truist Checking Acct	\$ 62,584.32
Truist Business MM Acct.....	\$ 640.89
Truist CD (matures 10-5-2025 – original principal \$25,000).....	\$ 26,284.03
Truist CD (matures 3-27-2026).....	\$ 50,000.00
Christian Church Extension Fund CD for Loving & Caring Endowment (principal cannot be used - matures 11-14-2025).....	\$ 10,000.00
Perpetual Endowment*	\$ 427,867.39
*principal.....	\$ 237,855.59
*dollars available as directed by designated gifts from members/friends.....	75,853.51
*income available for general church needs as directed by the General Board.....	111,518.88



FRIENDS AND FAMILY EVENT

Dear Bethany CC, as most of you know BJ suffered an injury at work and is in need of some extra help. He has always been someone who put everyone before himself and has never asked for anything in return. Friends and Family with support from **Sportspage**, 8319 Bell Creek Road, Mechanicsville, 23116, will be having a fundraising night. All you have to do is come out on **Dec 3rd** and enjoy some great food. A percentage of the bill will be given to BJ at end of the event that night. We will also be holding a 50/50 raffle. So come out, bring your friends and family, to give a little help to someone who really deserves it! We look forward to seeing everyone there! Please share the invite and feel free to contact Brian or Penny if you have any questions. Thank you!

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PRAYER CONCERNS – Please notify the church office when this information changes.

•Acute – examples are: a surgery and release, an accident, a procedure, a hospital stay and release, etc.

B. J. Gradwell

Mary Kline

Carolyn Moore

Jim Evans

•Ongoing – examples are: rehabilitation and recovery, new treatments, waiting on tests results

Mark Kimmel Ed McCann Eliana Oatman Pat Rende Sheila Thayer Dee & Jim Evans

•Members of our church family who may be struggling with chronic health issues, sadness, loneliness, and other burdens or who might just need a "prayer hug" to include

Merrily Baber

Ann Hasty

Jean McNeely

•Extended Church Family – family and friends of church members

Art John Shell's brother-in-law

Rev. Alice Clarke Sarah McLillard's friend

Nicole Craig Barbara Ozlin's niece

Harrison Gradwell Penny & Brian Gradwell's grandson

Jackie Holliday Ellett Christine Rolston's daughter's friend

Odell Ingram John Shell's mother-in-law

Susan Lowe Mary Lowe's sister

Karen Peregoy Dee & Jim Evans' daughter

Michael McNeely & April Gray

Geraldine Russell Penny Gradwell's mother

Mary Elizabeth (Liz) Smith Barbara Ozlin's sister

Michelle Friend of Karen McClain and her son

Penny Walker Pastor Jackie's grandmother

Heather White Diana Case-Foster's cousin



Please pray for those who suffer from natural disasters and war; for all of our men and women in the military and their families; for our country, its leaders, and peace in our world; and for our church.



CONGREGATIONAL LIFE DEPARTMENT

Please join us for a **casserole breakfast** before the "carol sing" on **Sunday December 21st at 9:00am**. We will be soliciting casseroles from the congregation. If you have a favorite breakfast casserole that you would like to share, please contact Ollie Peebles or Becky Murrell.

CHRISTMAS LOVE GIFTS



We want to recognize our staff with a year-end gift. Please give your monetary gifts to Ray Crawford or Jim Davis by **Sunday, December 14**. If you write a check, please make it payable to Ray or Jim, and note "**staff gift**" in the memo line. Your checks will be cashed and the staff will receive your gratuities! If you want to mail a check, please mail it to Ray or Jim's home addresses. Thank you.



2026 FLOWER CHART

The flower chart for 2026 is ready. Please sign up for your special day for flowers for the Sanctuary by writing on the board outside the kitchen if you're here on Sundays OR by calling Naomi in the church office. The cost is currently \$34.50 to be paid to the church.



WORSHIP DEPARTMENT



YOU are invited to sing with the choir for our Christmas music this year in the Sunday service on **December 21, 2025**. We have part-specific learning CDs (or MP3s) so that you can learn the music at home, and will be rehearsing the Christmas music each **Wednesday from 7:30 to 8:15 in the sanctuary**. If you like to sing, join us for the Christmas music: no long term commitment required! Just show up at 7:30 in the Sanctuary.



GRADUATION ANNOUNCEMENT

Diana Case-Foster will graduate Summa Cum Laude with Highest Honors from William Woods University in Fulton, Missouri on Friday December 5, 2025 with an Advanced Bachelor's Degree in ASL/English Interpretation and Education. Diana has carried a 4.0 GPA the entire 3 years she has been enrolled at William Woods and has been inducted into the Alpha Chi National Honor Society, American Sign Language Honor Society and the American Sign Language Teachers Association. She has also earned the highest ASL Awards of the Laurent Clerc Medal and Alice Cogswell Medal as well as an Honor Society Medal and 2 honor cords and 2 pins for her GPA and hard work.



CHRISTMAS CARDS

We are opening our Christmas "mailboxes in the Narthex" for Christmas cards! You can save postage by using these boxes for people who **REGULARLY** come to church. Please do not put cards for people who worship from home or who are not able to come to church on a regular basis – the church will not mail cards for you. Christmas cards to use have been donated by Ed McCann and are located in the donated card box.



EVANGELISM | OUTREACH DEPARTMENT

Bainbridge Community Ministry box in the hallway near the Chapel is always open for your donations of non-perishable food (and there is a box for paper bags with handles). Tim Skeens, from Bon Air Christian Church, is always so kind to deliver our food donations.

- *things to think about when donating to the food bank: cans with pop tops (no can opener required); smaller portions not oversized boxes; items that don't require ingredients not in the box (i.e., some mac & cheese requires milk and butter); cooking oil, sugar, and spices are needed also*

Christmas Offerings will be accepted **Sunday, December 14 and 21**. These offerings support regional ministries. In 31 regions across the United States and Canada, ministers are nurtured and congregations are provided opportunities for work and worship. Often recognized for the ministries of camps and conferences, regions also play a critical role in the preparation and authorization of ministerial ordination. Both are key to church leadership and development. Regions partner with congregations to support the work required to call a new minister.

Please make your checks payable to "Bethany Christian Church" and indicate "*Christmas Offering*" in the memo.

SPIRITUAL GROWTH | COMMUNICATIONS (WSC) DEPARTMENT



You are invited to join us for the **Combined Sunday School classes** for the Advent season with sharing of favorite Christmas carols and songs. Sunday, Dec. 21st is still available if anyone would like to share their favorite carol. Many thanks to Ross, June, Barbara, and Jim for participating. Coffee will be available. If you have any questions or would like to sign up, please contact Sue Marion.

DWF #1 - Our December 16th meeting is a luncheon at Linda Edwards's home at noon. Contact Linda Grubb if you have any questions.

DFW #4 - Our December 18th meeting is a luncheon at Barbara Ozlin's house at 1:00 p.m.

Share the Blessing: Donate Your Gently Used Devotional Books

I'm inviting everyone in our church family to bring in devotional books that you are no longer using. These might be daily devotionals, prayers for special needs, or spiritual reflections - that has helped strengthen your walk with God. Your donated books will be placed on the table in the narthex where others can freely take a copy home. This is a wonderful way to share encouragement, deepen faith, and help one another grow spiritually - one page at a time.

How to Participate:

Bring your devotional book and place it in the designated "Devotional Exchange" box. Feel free to take any books that speaks to your heart! One per family.

Let's share the Word, spread inspiration, and continue to build one another up in faith. Your unused book could be the very message someone else needs today!

~ Sue Marion

Attention Deacons – Please let Sue Marion know if there are months or dates which you DO NOT want to be scheduled to serve in 2026.

**If you are also on the schedule to prepare communion, would you like to prepare communion that month? The whole month or just a Sunday that month?

Thank you so much for serving Bethany Christian Church in this very important way.

~ Sue Marion (grammysue2@comcast.net)



ADVENT WORSHIP SERIES

During Advent and Christmas, Pastor Jackie will be preaching about **Hope in a Fearful Time**. Each week of Advent, we will reflect on questions and read the stories of the beloved characters of the Nativity story – John the Baptist, Mary, Joseph, the Christ Child, the Shepherds, and the Magi – as they choose hope over fear.

- **November 30** – What are you doing to prepare your life and world for hope? – John the Baptist (Matt. 3:1-12)
- **December 7** – What have you said yes to recently that has helped you hold on to hope? - Mary (Luke 1:26-38)
- **December 14** – What hard decisions have you made that allowed you to hope? – Joseph (Matt. 1:18-25)
- **December 21** – Choir Cantata "Joy" – How do you express joy?
- **Christmas Eve** at 2:00 p.m. and 11:30 p.m. – What is newly being born in you that brings hope? – Christ (Luke 2:1-20)
- **December 28** – How has hope made a dwelling place within you? - Shepherds (John 1:1-18)
- **January 4** – How will you carry this hope with you into the New Year? - The Magi (Matt. 2:1-12)

MEMBERSHIP MEETING

A Membership Meeting is set for **Sunday, December 7**, after Worship. The agenda for the meeting is to discuss and approve the church operating budget for 2026 that was presented by the Stewardship Chairperson, Geoff Gangloff, and approved by the General Board at their meeting November 16.

As you review the proposed 2026 Church Budget (and compare with our 2025 budget), you will see the following changes:

- Our pledged offerings are \$2,320.00 less.
- There is a 3% increase for the salaries for our minister and staff
- General Advertising is \$4,600.00 less
- The water budget is increased \$1000.00
- The 2026 total budget is \$10,774.51, \$3,199.60 less than the 2025 budget
- The amount needed to draw from savings is \$57,894.51 to balance our budget, which is \$1,119.60.

Thank you,

Ray Crawford

Ray Crawford, Moderator

2026 Budget

(for comparison with our 2025 budget, check your 2025 Directory pages 18-20)

INCOME

41000 Offering Income	
41100 Pledge Income	100,860.00
41300 Transient Offering Income	1,800.00
41400 Sunday School Offering	1,400.00
42100 Special Offerings	7,000.00
43200 Distribution from Reserves	57,894.51
43400 Interest / Dividend Earned	15,000.00
43310 Alcoholics Anonymous Donations	3,900.00
Crown & Joy Presbyterian Church	24,000.00
Total Income	<u>\$ 211,854.51</u>

EXPENSES

61000 Minister's Compensation	
61100 Minister's Salary	40,891.00
61160 Pension	8,174.74
61170 Health Insurance	7,000.00
61200 Cell Phone Allowance	600.00
61300 Mileage Reimbursement	3,500.00
61400 Meetings and Assemblies	400.00
61500 Supplies Reimbursement	100.00
61600 Minister's Housing, Util, Maint	<u>17,500.00</u>
Total 61000 Minister's Compensation	<u>\$ 78,165.74</u>

62000 Staff Compensation	
62200 Secretary	23,566.40
62300 Director of Music	17,899.75
62400 Organist/Pianist	6,073.08
62500 Custodian/Cleaning Service	9,300.00
62600 Social Security Expense	3,636.74
62700 Guest Organist	0.00
62800 Guest Preacher	<u>600.00</u>

Total 62000 Staff Compensation	\$ 61,075.97
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63000 Administration Expense	
63100 Office Operation	2,100.00
63500 General Advertising	2,500.00
Total 63000 Administration Expense	\$ 4,600.00

64000 Education Department	
64150 Sunday School Literature	400.00
64350 Vacation Bible Camp	500.00
64500 Teacher Recognition	50.00
64550 Misc Education Dept Events	50.00
Total 64000 Education Department	\$ 1,000.00

65000 Evangelism Department	
65130 Easter Egg Hunt	150.00
65150 Fall Festival	200.00
65180 Other Evangelism Events	200.00
Total 65000 Evangelism Department	\$ 550.00

66000 Worship Department	
66100 Music Supplies	600.00
66150 Copyright License	550.00
66200 Piano & Organ Maintenance	300.00
66250 Communion Supplies	339.00
66300 Church Bulletins	50.00
66350 Devotional Literature	200.00
66600 Flowers - Worship	104.00
66650 Audio Supplies & Maintenance	300.00
Total 66000 Worship Department	\$ 2,443.00

67000 Congregational Life	
67100 Membership Activities / Cards	150.00
67200 DWF	100.00
67500 Family Night-Type Activities	400.00
67600 Kitchen Supplies	300.00
Total 67000 Congregational Life	\$ 950.00

69000 Property Department	
69100 Insurance	9,000.00
69210 Electricity	7,700.00
69220 Water	7,000.00
69230 Telephone	1,500.00
69240 Gas - Heating	12,100.00
69300 Building Supplies & Maintenance	15,000.00
Total 69000 Property Department	\$ 52,300.00

70000 Stewardship Department	
70100 Offering Envelopes	40.00
70200 Expenses of Financial Secretary	300.00
Total 70000 Stewardship Department	\$ 340.00

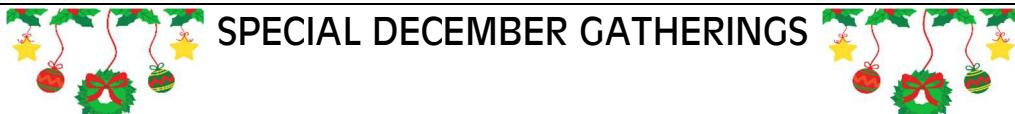
71000 Outreach Department	
71100 Disciple Mission Fund-Operation	75.00
71200 District VII Dues	100.00
71350 Bainbridge Comm Ministry	0.00

71450 Meals on Wheels -> FeedMore	75.00
71700 DWF Service Projects	400.00
71850 ACTS (Area Congr Togethr n Svc)	200.00
71900 Special Offering Distributions	<u>7,000.00</u>
Total 71000 Outreach Department	\$ 7,850.00
72000 Miscellaneous Expenses	
72050 Pastor's Discretionary Fund	500.00
72100 Contingency Fund	<u>1,000.00</u>
Total 72000 Miscellaneous Expenses	\$ 1,500.00
Total Expenses	<u>\$210,774.71</u>



INFORMATION FOR 2026 CHURCH DIRECTORY

IT'S TIME! Please send all of your updates for the 2026 Church Directory – email and address changes are important! Send updates to nmoonbcc@gmail.com.



SPECIAL DECEMBER GATHERINGS

- **Saturday, December 13** – Peabody's Piano Co. recitals in the Sanctuary at 10:00 a.m. and at 1:00 p.m.
... *all are invited*
- **Saturday, December 13** – Focus Class at Candela's on Robious at 6:00 p.m.
- **Sunday, December 21** – Christmas brunch at 9:00 a.m. followed by the combined Sunday School and carol sing ... *let Ollie Peebles or Becky Murrell know if you can bring a breakfast casserole*
- **Tuesday, December 16** – Circle #1 at Linda Edward's house at 12:00 p.m. for our meeting and dinner
- **Thursday, December 18** – Circle #4 at Barbara Ozlin's house at 1:00 p.m.
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FROM PASTOR JACKIE TWEDELL WOODS

"An angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph son of David, do not be afraid...'" (Matthew 1:20)

"But the angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.'" (Luke 1:30)

"An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them and they were terrified. But the angel said to the shepherds, 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy for all the people.'" (Luke 2:9-10)

'Do not be afraid,' scripture tells us again and again. And yet, our world seems to be permeated with fear. But with the coming of Advent, and as we prepare for the birth of Christ, Emmanuel, we turn to the hope that comes with this season.

So join us this Advent/Christmas/Epiphany season, as we focus on the hope we hold tightly to, even as we are confronted with fear. Inspired by the beloved characters of the Nativity story – John the Baptist, Mary, Joseph, the Christ Child, the Shepherds, and the Magi – and how they choose hope over fear, we will put our hope in God. Even when it is hard. If holding on to hope is a challenge in this season, here is a meditation on hope, written by one of my favorite poets, Jan Richardson...

Hope nonetheless.

Hope despite.

Hope regardless.

Hope still.

Hope where we had ceased to hope.

Hope amid what threatens hope.

Hope with those who feed our hope.

Hope beyond what we had hoped.

Hope that draws us past our limits.

Hope that defies expectations.

Hope that questions what we have known.

Hope that makes a way where there is none.

Hope that takes us past our fear.

Hope that calls us into life.

Hope that holds us beyond death.

Hope that blesses those to come.

Blessings,
Pastor Jackie

Advent/Christmas/Epiphany dates

Monday, November 24th at 10:00 am – decorate the church for Advent

Sunday, December 7th after worship – Congregational Meeting

Sunday, December 21st at 9:45 am – casserole breakfast and carol sing

Sunday, December 21st at 11:00 am – Christmas Cantata

Wednesday, December 24th at 2:00 pm – Christmas Eve Service

Wednesday, December 24th at 11:30 pm – Christmas Eve Service

Sunday, January 4th at 11:00 am – Epiphany

Monday, January 5th at 10:00 am – undecorate the church

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DECEMBER 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 AA-YC 7:00 pm	3 C&J Choir 6:30 pm 7:00 pm	4 AA-YC 7:00 pm	5 C&J Teen Night 6:00 pm room upstairs	6 C&J Christmas Party 2:00 pm
7 combined Sunday School 9:45 am Worship 11:00 am •membership mtg-budget Crown & Joy 1:30 pm	8 HOA Meeting 6:00 pm	9 AA-YC 7:00 pm	10 C&J Choir 6:30 pm 7:00 pm	11 AA-YC 7:00 pm	12	13 Peabody's Piano Co Recital 10:00 am Focus Christmas Dinner at Candela's 6:00 pm
14 Christmas Offg combined Sunday School 9:45 am Worship 11:00 am Crown & Joy 1:30 pm	15	16 DWF Circle #1 12:00 pm at Linda Edw ard's house	17 C&J Choir 6:30 pm 7:00 pm	18 DWF Circle #4 1:00 pm at Barbara Ozlin's house	19	20 C&J Meeting 8:30 am
21 Christmas Offg combined Sun. School, bfast, carol sing 9:15 am - Cantata Worship 11:00 am Crown & Joy 1:30 pm • Jan Newsette deadline	22	23 AA-YC 7:00 pm	24 Christmas Eve church office holiday service 2:00 pm Crown and Joy 5:00 pm service 11:30 pm	25 Christmas Day church office holiday	26	27
28 Sunday School 9:45 am Worship 11:00 am Crown & Joy 1:30 pm	29	30 AA-YC 7:00 pm	31			
		Notes: AA: Alcoholics Anonymous C&J: Crown & Joy Presbyterian DWF: Disciples Women's Fellowship				© 2019 Vertex42 LLC Calendar Template by Vertex42.com