BETHANY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Monthly Newsletter 2023 Vol 1



Happy New Year!!!

Do you ever thank God that the old has passed and the new has come? Whether it's the first day of a new year or the opening of a new flower – the new can get exciting. Have you ever walked on the beach, turned around and looked where you had walked and looked at where the waves have erased your footprints and imperfections of the sand, leaving it smooth and clean?

A fundamental difference between man and nature is renewal. Wherever man goes, he pollutes the environment, but God applies the natural principle of restoration and in time, renewal begins.

Renewal is a spiritual matter. Yet spiritual renewal is possible only as we allow God's grace to work in our lives. Some of us continue to live in a world of broken pieces; renewal means change, and many of us are afraid of change.

In a Peanuts cartoon, Charlie Brown says to Lucy, "You're going to be proud of me, Lucy. I've decided that this next year is going to be my year of decision! I'm going to be a better person!"

Lucy responds, "Not me. I'm going to spend this whole year regretting the past. It's the only way, Charlie Brown. I'm going to cry over spilt milk and sigh over lost loves. It's a lot easier. It's too hard to improve. I tried it once. It drove me crazy. Forget the future is my motto. Regret the past! Why did I do this? Why did I do that? I regret it all! Oh, what remorse! What anguish!"

Could you be like Lucy who would rather live in a shattered world than allow God's Spirit to affect renewal in your life? Paul wrote, "Forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on;" Thank God for the renewal of God's Spirit and presence and press on!

On a Personal Note

The Ritter Family would like to express a sincere thank you to all of you for your kind gifts and well wishes over the Christmas season. Your kindness and generosity are deeply appreciated. We truly love Bethany!

Michael, Laurie, Dow, and Emma

Transition Time

Over the last six months, the Ritters have made our transition to Bethany. True there are still things for us to learn, but as someone has made a point to share with me just the other day, "Michael, you are our pastor." Over these few months, we have gotten together in small group settings and discussed different aspects of the church. The following pages are a recap of these meetings and how we can move forward.

Transition Team / Cottage Meeting Recap

Where do we begin? What fun we have had as we have only begun ministry together. Over the last four months, there have been 23 cottage meetings that have taken place. These meetings were to get to know the minister in a more intimate setting and vice-versa. To say the least, we have a wonderful church at Bethany, and it has been a blessing getting to meet so many during these gatherings.

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One thing that Laurie and I quickly found out was that each cottage meeting had its own theme. There were those that wanted to focus on a certain age group; those that wanted to focus on discipleship; others that wanted to discuss missions; worship, both traditional and contemporary was a theme of some, and others wanted to discuss our different ministries. All of the cottage meetings wanted to discuss our wonderful past, our beautiful present and our unclear future.

Each cottage meeting began with a "get to know each other" time. It was interesting to me that there were those groups that knew everyone, but then there were other groups that participants didn't know each other. (Even those that had both had been members at Bethany for many years.) It just goes to show the grand size of our wonderful congregation.

We then moved into a time of asking questions of the minister. They could have been personal questions to questions related to the happenings of the church. The questions ranged from: What is the story behind the Irish Blessing?" How often will you preach at the different worship settings? What are you doing to grow the church? Especially 50's, 30's, College/Young Adults? What is my golf handicap? Is your favorite meal?" (And no! I do not like mushrooms!) "And tell us the story of your snake." Each question spoke to either the needs of the congregation and/or the desire to know your minister more.

There were a couple of common questions that were addressed at each cottage meeting. One was about state of the denomination of the United Methodist Church as a whole. With the upcoming conversation/vote being had in 2024 at General Conference, there are those that are concerned about what this means for Bethany – and rightfully so. The short answer to this is we are following the direction of our Bishop. Facts are, we are a very diverse congregation with different opinions and each opinion matters. As we navigate the waters that are before us, my prayer is that we continue to see the guidance from our guide, our God and proceed on faith. We may not have all the answers, but we know the One that does, and I would encourage us to follow.

Another common question at each meeting was what is perceived as a "missing" group of people at the church. I was asked about how we can reach those young adults that have left the church for whatever reason. Some ideas have been discussed on how to address this – maybe a new opportunity for young adults, a coffee hour, fellowship times addressing their needs, etc. These are the beginning ideas that we have to address an important group.

After this time of "asking the minister", I had questions for the attendees about Bethany. Each group was not asked all these questions based on the time, but for the most part, these questions were addressed in some way through the night.

Question One...Out of all the churches in this community, you are here. "Why Bethany UMC?" "What is it about this church that you choose to live out your discipleship through Bethany?"

- Programing Something for everyone all ages
- Friends are here
- Is my family church, 7th generation here
- Personal touch by minister
- Home visits
- Support of the church
- Preaching
- Programs: youth, children, Sunday schools, music, missions.

- Activities to be involved in with your friends
- Outreach and reputation of BUMC in our community
- Friends going through the same cycle of life
- It feels like "home", a place they grew up in
- Went one time and we came home to a mug and we never left
- Good Sunday School class
- Welcoming to visitors (could do packets for visitors)
- Music, large church

Question Two...The mission of the church is to "make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world." How has Bethany lived this out?" If we could only make one change to live fully into this mission, what would it be? Examples?"

- Small groups
- Living Water Oasis
- Missions active teams (local, US, world) ex: Habitat
- When AME church burned, we gave them Spell to use.
- Involved in community
- Being kind to people everywhere

- Inviting others to church we have a lot to offer
- LCS, Market
- Whole worship experience
- Children's programs, Recreation, Youth, Salkehatchie, CDC, KidsCare
- Stephen Ministry

Question Three..."Remembering your entire experience at Bethany, when did you feel the most alive, most motivated, and most excited about your involvement? What made it exciting?"

- Talking with people at the Blessing Box
- Saturday night Word & Table
- Playing volleyball with Sunday School
- As a kid youth group, friends & activities
- As an adult Friendships through Sunday School
- Watching kids experience their stuff and grow up in church
- Mission trips both international and national
- Angel tree that includes older children
- Service projects
- BNOW

Question Four..."What do you value most about our church?" "What activities or ingredients or ways of life are most important?" "What are the best features of Bethany?"

- The people
- Friendship
- Feeling of home
- Place to raise kids
- Youth group

- Community The People
- Sunday School classes
- Children/Youth programs
- BUMC Staff
- Rev. Ritter's sermons!!!

Question Five..."What is one wish you'd like to make for the future of Bethany?"

- Ice Cream Machine
- Better communication about what we are doing
- Always being able to pay debt and mortgage
- "Gods got this"
- 35-45 year old members back attending
- New sound system

- Repaired/new air conditioning systems
- To instill the Holy Spirit to re-engage and re-energize the congregation
- Accomplish vision and goals
- · Keep increasing and growing
- See old active members come back to the church who have not returned post Covid

Question Six..."Do you have any concerns or suggestions?"

- The direction the church is going in the future
- Schism and potential split in the church
- Do not know what tomorrow will bring
- Communication is difficult

Lastly, I would like to say thank you to the transition team for working hard to make a successful transition for the church and the Ritters. It truly shows how you value your church and its ministries with how you have dedicated your time. Special thanks goes out to Gillis McAllister, Dave Braddon and Joan Naugle who have led this team and also to Joan who has taken care of setting up all the cottage meetings. Your leadership has been greatly appreciated.



The Living Christmas Story

Thank you to all who participated in the Living Christmas Story! From those who constructed the sets, to donating food, to being a part of the cast – and everything in between – it was a success because of YOU. This year we had around 312 cast members, 70 crew, and 2,367 visitors! What a blessing to our community!

Look for next year's dates to come out soon!

The committee devoted countless hours to making this years Living Christmas Story a huge success. Thank you to the following committee members:

Co-chairs: Travis Wheeler & Seth Woolwine

• Sets: Ben Brabham

Props: Rebecca Dunlap

• Costumes: Minde Wheeler

• Casting: Jennifer Beebe

Security: Matt Bates

• Traffic: Stuart Courtney & Chuck Lewis

• Food: Karen Eubanks

• Animals: Jennifer Horres

• *Trams:* Gus Holladay

• Plants: Cori Woolwine

• At -Large: Greg Horres & Melanie McClure

• **Staff Liaison:** Emily Vick











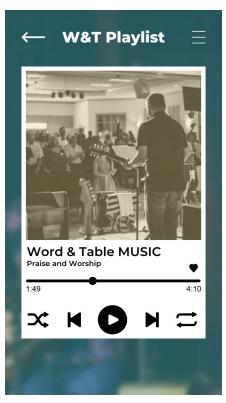




Word & Table

If you would like to listen to songs from worship all week you can find a special Word & Table Playlist on Spotify! This month you can also find 10 songs chosen by Pastor Narcie Jeter. Use the QR code to find Bethany UMC on Spotify.







Friday Morning Ladies Bible Study

The Friday Morning Ladies Bible Study will begin on January 6, 2023. Our first study this year is Horizontal Jesus by Tony Evans. It is a 6 week study about how our relationships with others affect our experience with God. The Bible Study Book can be purchased online at the cost of about \$21.00. Make sure you order the Study Book because there are other books with the same title. Our class will be held here at Bethany in Room #215 every Friday morning from 9-11.

Our future plans include 2 more studies which are; The Daniel Prayer by Anne Graham Lotz and Psalm 23 by Jennifer Rothchild.

Hope you will join us!

Questions? Call Karen Halley- 843-345-0644 or Marcia McElheny-843-345-5885

Memorials

These are memorials from November 10th to December 15th, 2022

In Memory of Beth Way English

By Betsy Moore (Memorials)

In Memory of Dr. Joe James

By Joan Owens (Memorials)

In Memory of Fred Weathers

By Joan Owens (Memorials)

In Memory of Dot Free

By Joan Owens (Memorials)

In Memory of Inis Salisbury (Spell Endowment)

By Maxine & Marion Winningham

By Carroll & Rachelle Edwards

By Cliff & Janice Gibson & Family

By Thomas & Robin Socha

By Betsy Moore

By James Harrell, Jr.

By Tony & Brenda Frye

By Jane & George Tupper

By Dorchester Soil & Water Conservation District

By Barbara Hauschild

By Gene & Kathy Smith

By Danny & Dianne Wright

By Joe & Annette Meachum

By Kevin & Debra Weathers

In Memory of Kenneth Bonnette

By Sandy & Gil Hager (Memorials)

By Kent & Donna Brasher (Memorials)

By Kevin & Debra Weathers (Memorials)

In Memory of Jim Emery

By Margie & Ed Muckenfuss (Memorials)

By Kent & Donna Brasher (Memorials)

In Memory of Evelyn Smith (Spell Memorial)

By Margie & Ed Muckenfuss

By Joe & Annette Meachum

In Memory of Fred Weathers

By Margie & Ed Muckenfuss (Memorials)

In Memory of Tom Veneziano

By Kent & Donna Brasher (Local Missions)

In Memory of Bob Lesch

By Ollie Lesch (Handbells)

In Memory of Ray Goins

By Annette Goins & Family (Music)

In Memory of Betty Brandhorst

By Bethany Quilters (VBS)

Offering Envelopes are in and available for pick up in the upstairs Welcome Center Hallway.

Please double check your number as it may have changed.

Thank you



Finance

If you would rather, you can also set up recurring payments online through push-pay. If you should have any questions contact Melanie Russo for help at mrusso@bethany-umc.com.

LOCAL MISSIONS

Angel Tree

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

We were able to provide Christmas gifts to 197 kids. This is the most Bethany has provided! Thank you for your faithful giving and support of our children.























Plarning

We thank these Plarners for Plarning these mats for the homeless. No longer do people only get mats. They get pillows made from two dish towels, warm socks and other toiletries, and they're all prayed over by a

pastor and the planners present! Please bless those that receive these mats and, let them feel both our love and God's love.







GLOBAL MISSIONS

Interested in getting involved with Global Missions but don't want to go out of the country? Well, now is your chance. The Global Missions Team is planning a trip to the area surrounding Camp Nathaniel near Hazard Kentucky.

This trip will be to help the communities that were devastated by the historic flooding that occurred in July 2022. We will be working in conjunction with Josh Felder and Camp Nathaniel near Emmalena in eastern Kentucky April 10 through April 14, 2023. Robert Stasiukaitis has graciously offered to serve as construction team leader for this week. JC and Peggy Ridgeway will serve as co-team leaders with Roanna Payne.

If you are feeling led to participated in this project, please sign up on the list posted on the GMC bulletin board near the kitchen or contact Roanna Payne at roanna1958@bellsouth.net or 843-343-9217.

Flood Relief Kentucky April 10-14, 2023

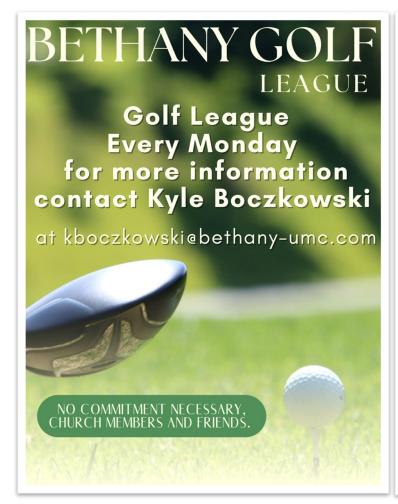




BRIDGE GROUP

Come join our Bridge Group that meets
Wednesday's 9-12pm in the
Friendship Circle room.

We will be meeting every Wednesday at the same time and place. All skill levels are welcome

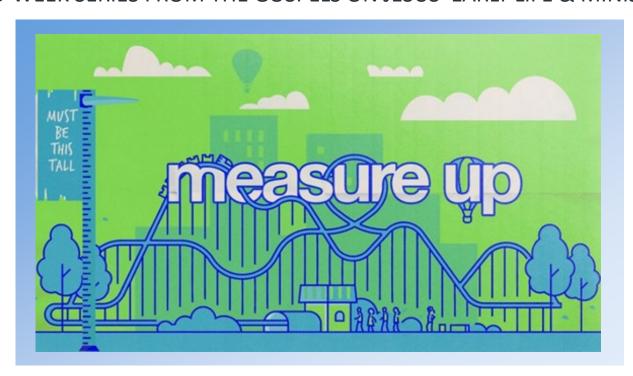


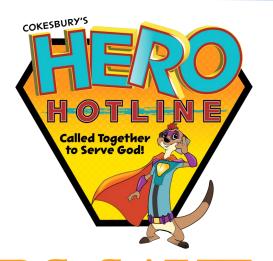


Children's Ministry

January Sunday School unit will be

A 5-WEEK SERIES FROM THE GOSPELS ON JESUS' EARLY LIFE & MINISTRY







VBS SAVE THE DATE
June 12-16
9:00 am - 12:30 pm

Call for Acolytes and Crucifers

Calling all kids 3rd grade and up! We invite you to serve as an acolyte or crucifer in our 8:45 and 11:15 Traditional services. Whether you are new to acolyting or are a returning acolyte, please sign up if you are interested in serving in this important ministry.

We begin worship with the Cross of Christ held high, followed by His light leading the processional of our ministers and choir to the altar. We end each service by extinguishing the altar candles and carrying Jesus' light out into our community with us as we leave. This tradition represents the very basis of our Christianity. This is an excellent opportunity for a young Christian to serve his/her church.

We especially need children to serve at the 11:15 service. The 8:45 service spots quickly fill up, but 11:15 is a constant struggle to fill. Please consider serving at this service, even if just once. You can sign up using this link:

https://bethanyumc.ccbchurch.com/goto/scheduling/25/public

We also need adults to meet the kids before service and make sure they are ready to go and have all the information they need about what to do in the service.

If you would like for your child to be trained, or have a refresher, please contact Children's Ministries at smitchum@bethany-umc.com or evick@bethany-umc.com.

Happy Hearts

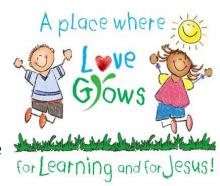
The January 2023 Happy Hearts meeting will be held on January 27 in the Robert J. Howell Fellowship Hall at 12:00 noon.

Our speaker will be Kathy James from Epworth Children's Home. The menu will be chicken dumplings, oriental coleslaw, buttermilk biscuits, drinks, and pina colada parfait for dessert, all for only \$8. Please contact Dot at 843-343-5450 or email her at dmprevatte@yahoo.com by Sunday, January 23rd, to make your meal reservation.

Looking forward to seeing everyone as we begin a the new year at Happy Hearts!

Bethany CDC

Do you have children or grandchildren going into preschool/ kindergarten? We would love to tell you more about the programs we offer at Bethany Child Development Center! Our mission is to provide a high-quality early childhood program in a safe and nurturing environment which promotes the physical, social, spiritual, emotional, and intellectual development of young chil-



dren. Bethany CDC's play-based program offers small class sizes in a warm, nurturing Christian environment. Our teachers care about every child and they work hard to create exciting learning activities that are appropriate for the children's age and developmental level. We offer music classes, art classes, chapel time, and more for children ages 2 - kindergarten. And this year we have an exciting change to our program... All classes will be 9:00 am - 1:00 pm.

Registration for the 2023/2024 school year is underway now! All the dates are listed below. If you have any questions, please call the CDC office at 843-821-1946. We would be happy to talk with you!

Registration Information

Registration for the 2023/2024 school year begins in January. We are already making plans for a wonderful new school year. If you have any questions about registration, please call the CDC office at 843-821-1946.

Wednesday, January 4-10

In House families' registration forms available

Wednesday, January 11

- In House can mail registration forms
- Registration forms available to Bethany Members

Tuesday, January 17

- Bethany Members may mail registration forms
- In House registration results available

Wednesday, January 18

Wait List may pick up registration forms

Tuesday, January 24

- Wait List may mail registration forms
- General public may pick up registration forms

Monday, January 30

General public may mail registration forms



KidsCare



January always brings us another New Year full of New Resolutions, New Beginnings, and New Experiences! For us at KidsCare it brings new opportunities to reach children for Christ and to teach them about His love, His provision, and His Promises! We are excited to begin a new year with the expectation of having a newness to our hearts that gives our children a glimpse of what it means to be washed clean or made anew! We look forward to the upcoming Spring Break Camps and Summer Camp Days!

We have so many exciting ideas planned! Will you agree with us in prayer that we remain

faithful to God's call to "train them up in the way they should go and when they are old, they shall not depart from it!"? This is our tireless journey as we are called according to His Purpose.

Reach out to us if you are seeking after-school care or would like to be added to our summer camp waitlist!

Makala Boczkowski or Debra Trimeloni at

854-429-1842/kidscare@bethany-umc.com





Student Ministries

www.ascendstudentministries.org



Registration is open for the WINTER RETREAT, 1.27-1.29. All youth are encouraged to participate in this awesome weekend where we will dive into Joshua 6 and explore how the walls in our lives will fall!

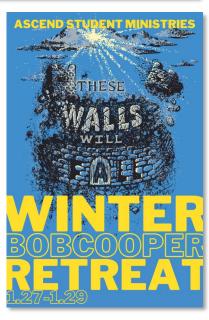


All High Schoolers are invited to Coffee & Croissants on Wednesday, January 11, at 7:30 am. This time we will meet at Coastal Coffee.









breakdown of LIVING CHRISTMAS STORY!

House!

2am Breakfast at Waffle











Thanks to all the youth who came out to help with the LIVING CHRISTMAS STORY!





Spring Bethany NOW 2023 Starts January 11th

Wednesday Nights this Spring

Join us on Wednesday evenings this Spring for Faith, Food & Fellowship. Every week adults, students and kids gather to eat, learn and grow in their faith. Join us for a meal in the Fellowship Hall so you don't have to worry about dinner plans, and stay for a class.

Bethany NOW Schedule

5-6pm Dinner in the Fellowship Hall

6 – 7:30pm Kids Activities

6:15 – 7:30 Youth and Adult Activities

Adults Activities

Living Your Strengths (Spiritual Gifts) Led by Narcie Jeter

Room 239

Do you have the opportunity to do what you do best every day? Chances are, you don't. All too often, our natural talents go untapped. From the cradle to the cubicle, we devote more time to fixing our shortcomings than to developing our strengths. To help people uncover their talents, Gallup introduced the second version of its online assessment, StrengthsFinder 2.0 to help millions discover their top five strengths. Our primary book will be *Living Your Strengths* and *StrengthsFinder 2.0*. We will also be engaging two of Bob Goff's new books: *Dream Big: Know What You Want, Why You Want It, and What You're Going to Do About It* and *Undistracted: Capture Your Purpose. Rediscover Your Joy*.

<u>Jesus in the Gospels</u> Led by Marc Jacques

Room 237

JESUS IN THE GOSPELS focuses on the portraits of Jesus from the four Gospels. We will be focusing on the three synoptic Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, viewing these Gospels in side-by-side comparisons. This study looks at the way each Gospel writer presents events and teachings and at the picture of Jesus that emerges. This is an intensive study that does require preparation time from each participant, approximately 5 hours of reading each week. Participants can expect to gain a fuller understanding and appreciation of the Gospels as richly textured portraits of Jesus.

12 Steps to The Recovering Pharisee (Like Me) Led by David Powell Room 236

As Christians we cannot be made right before God by being "better" than anyone else. In his book, "12 Steps for the Recovering Pharisee (like me)", author John Fischer points out that Jesus defined the truth in such a way as to leave no one righteous; not one of us. In this study, class participation and discussion will focus on recognizing and laying aside the "Pharisee" in all of us so we can embrace the grace, gratitude and joy of the spirit filled life.

I've Never Been This Old Before Led by Joan Naugle

Room 238

Celebrate midlife and beyond with this joyful collection of wit and wisdom dedicated to both the serious and silly sides of aging. Bestselling author Stan Toler will help you face the Inevitable march of time with a healthy sense of humor and a warm heart. Packed with entertaining anecdotes, good advice from God's Word, and smart suggestions for self-improvement, *I've Never Been This Old Before* will give you a fresh outlook on the second half of life and remind you that no matter your age, God isn't through growing you.

Plarning Mat Ministry

Room 122

Ever wonder what to do with all of those plastic grocery bags? We have an answer! The Plarning Mat Ministry takes common plastic bags and weaves them into sturdy sleeping mats. The bags are cut made into a plastic yarn, known as plarn, and using the same technique as knitting a rug, are then knitted together to make a durable, waterproof sleeping mat. These mats are then given to those who might not have a comfortable, dry place to sleep at night. No experience is necessary – even if you can't knit help is needed to sort and prepare the bags, cut them into the plarn and of course weave them together.

<u>Creative Sewing</u> Blue House

Bring your own project (sewing, knitting, cross stitch, etc.) that you are working on and join us for an evening of fellowship.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 Every scripture is inspired by God and useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the person dedicated to God may be capable and equipped for every good work.

Youth (6th – 12th grades) Activities

Small Groups in the Youth House

Kids (ages 3 by Sept. 1, 2022 – 5th grade) Activities

6:00 – 6:45 3-year old's, 4-year old's, Kindergarteners Cherub Choir Practice Room 233

Choir for children 3 years old (by Sept. 1 of the current year) through Kindergarten. They learn basic bible songs while incorporating movement.

1st – 2nd Graders Melody Choir Practice Sanctuary

Choir for 1st and 2nd graders. This group learns songs to enhance their faith.

3rd – 5th Graders Crafting Faith Art Room 121

A brief bible study with an Arts & Crafts component led by the amazing Mrs. Sharon. They will focus on one theme for the entire session, and complete crafts that reinforce

6:45 – 7:30 3-year-olds, 4-year-olds, Kindergarteners Sprouts Bible Story Time Room 110

Bible story time for children 3 years through pre-K 5-year old's. They hear basic bible stories combined with playtime.

1st – 2nd Graders Crafting Faith Art Rom 121

A brief bible study with an Arts & Crafts component led by the amazing Mrs. Sharon. They will focus on one theme for the entire session, and complete crafts that reinforce

3rd – 5th Graders Wesley Choir Practice Sanctuary

Choir for 3rd – 5th graders. This group learns more advanced songs of the Christian faith.

Dinner Costs

\$8 Adults

\$6 Seniors 65 & Older

\$4 Kids 12 & under

\$20 Family Max (immediate family)

Dinner

January 11 - Taco Bar

January 18 - Build your own Burger Bar

January 25 - Spaghetti & Meatballs



Class Hosting

Sue Knight Class

Sam Wood Class

Connections Class

Bethany United Methodist Church 118 West 3rd South Street Summerville, SC 29483 - 5997 US POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT #25
NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
Summerville
29483



Room Request

If you have a standing room reservation, please submit your request by visiting our website at:

<u>www.bethany-umc.com</u> or contact Ann Gill at agill@bethany-umc.com

Bethany Beacon is published monthly by Bethany United Methodist Church.

Articles, story ideas, questions, comments, news or photos may be sent to the Communications Team at *ddominianni@bethany-umc.com*Please email your address changes or if you would like to be removed from the Bethany Beacon Newsletter mailing list.

Upcoming deadlines: Submissions are due the 15th of each month

www.bethany-umc.com
www.bethanygym.com
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twitter.com/BethanyUMC
Instagram/@umcbethany

Office Hours:

Mon.-Thurs. 8:30 AM. to 5 P.M., Friday 8:30 A.M. to Noon, Church Office: 843.873.1230 Office Fax: 843.873.1937

Gym Office: 843.873.7261 Child Dev. Center: 843.821.1946

Emergency Number: If you have an emergency for which you need pastoral care at

night, on weekends, or holidays, call 843.425.1069.