



Bethesda Presbyterian Church | Aberdeen, NC | January 2025

A MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR

Dear friends and members of Bethesda,

We go into the New Year thinking about the Christmas story in Luke 2:8-20—remember, Christmas isn't over yet! There the lowly shepherds encounter the angelic host who proclaim the birth of the Messiah. Then the Scripture says that when the angels departed the shepherds “went with haste” (v. 16) to find the child. One of the most tantalizing questions raised by this story is whether the shepherds left their sheep? It seems likely that they would have. After being visited by angels who herald the message of the coming of the Messiah, the shepherds would likely have felt like everything had changed. For something radically new had arrived, and that word “haste” seems to imply that they quickly dispersed without much thought. If that is correct, then it suggests to us that the shepherds had to leave behind something, they had to risk something to meet the Christ child.

There is a word of wisdom and challenge here for us. Jesus Christ is always holding out the promise of newness for us. He is the author of the New covenant. He is the one who is making all things new. He forgives sins and delivers from evil. He frees us from the gridlock of our past and opens up new doors for life. Believing in that promise, however, likely means that we must give something up or let something go. It means making haste toward Christ and leaving behind something.

This New Year make haste toward Jesus. You will likely have to leave something behind. Prepare yourself for that reality. But, don't forget, in Christ, God is doing something new.

Blessing,

Your brother and pastor,

Rev David Priddy

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Celebrations & Concerns

December Birthdays

The busy month of December did not disappoint! We started the month off with our Hanging of the Greens service on the first of December, followed by Merry Hearts Preschool Sunday on the eighth as well as our Love Feast that evening. Our choir provided the Christmas story in scripture and song during the Lessons and Carols service on the fifteenth. Moore Brass joined us for worship on the 22nd and helped us celebrate two Baptisms along with the Motes family joining the church. Our Community Christmas Eve service was very well attended and we had a few people come back the next morning for our Christmas Day worship service. We hope everyone had a blessed Christmastide.



Prayers and sympathy to the family and friends of JC Smith and Marie Sykes who passed away in December. Continued prayers for Pastor Priddy and his family upon the death of his grandmother, December 26.

1	Nathan Clarke
	Jordan Huffman
2	Marie Hardister
	Sara Swartout
5	Sarah O'Brien
	Adelaide Ough
8	Mary Ann Ward
16	Jamie Boles
17	Brittany Hardison
19	Franke McNeill
20	Leigh Baggs
	Will Jacobs
22	Mary Shaffer
26	Travis Driggers
27	Connie Atwell
	Alan White
28	Ellen Heckman
29	Wil Byers
31	Pat McLaughlin
	Maddie Gorb

Music Notes

Happy New Year! May 2025 continue to bless Bethesda, her people and her mission.

Once again Christmas Eve was meaningful service. What a delight to join with Page Methodist to worship on this special night. A big thank you to Mason Roth for her beautiful solo. O Holy Night is a favorite of many people, and she always does an excellent job.

Next, I want to thank the children's choir, their parents and grandparents for their dedication and hard work. Nine AM rehearsals are hard to manage on Sunday mornings! The children did an excellent job and certainly lifted my spirits each time they sang. We are excited that Adelaide and Isabelle Ough have joined us.

As always, the Chancel Choir did a great job with a variety of different genres. Many thanks to them and to the soloist, quartet, trios, and duets. They work very hard and are fun to direct.

As a choir we are sad that the Ferguson family must leave. They have contributed a great deal to the music program at Bethesda and will be missed. But on a happier note, we are happy to welcome Ron Long, Frankie Holt, and Katherine Stuber. They all have nice voices and are already contributing to our group. We do still have some spots open so, please consider joining us in this new year.

Blessings,

Earlene



Youth and Family Ministry Programs

Bethesda offers programs for the spiritual growth of the whole family.

Family Fun Night The first Sunday of the month from 4:30-6:30 pm. This family Bible Study is perfect for families with children pre-K through 5th grade. It includes dinner, music, games, and crafts.

Faith Weaving Friends This program brings together 2nd-5th graders every third Friday of the month from 5:30-7 pm. It includes fellowship over dinner, Bible study, and fun!

Bethesda Youth Group (BYG) Geared toward 6th-12th grade students, BYG meets some Sundays from 5-7 pm (check the calendar for exact dates). Each meeting includes dinner, recreation, and a Bible Study. **NOTE:** The Youth Group is looking for adult leaders to help plan & lead activities. The church's leadership is currently working to figure out the best way to proceed with our youth program. If you would like to help in any way, please contact the church office

Adult Bible Studies Various Bible studies are offered throughout the year. Check our website for more info or contact the church office to receive notifications.

Presbyterian Women's Circles Our women's Bible Study groups meet monthly from September to May. Bethesda offers four women's circles that meet on various days and times. Please see page 9 for all the details and contact information.

Men of the Church Gathering quarterly on the first Thursday of the month, Men of the Church enjoy fellowship over dinner, a devotion, and discuss mission, outreach, and congregational support opportunities. Check the church calendar for meeting dates and times.

Sunday School Classes meet at 10 am on Sundays after the breakfast hour.

- **Nursery** (Ages 0-2) Our youngest learners enjoy time in the nursery reading books, singing songs, and learning through play and exploration.
- **Lower Elementary** (Ages 3 - Kindergarten) Utilizes curriculum to teach foundational Bible knowledge. Children enjoy activities, crafts, games, and imaginative play to learn and reinforce lessons.
- **Upper Elementary** (1-5 Grade) Utilizes age appropriate Sunday School lessons while keeping children engaged through crafts, games, and fun.
- **Junior and Senior High** (6-12 Grade) Studies different books of the Bible, comparing and contrasting stories and characters.
- **Parlor Class** Studies different books of the Bible as well as theological books to gain a deeper understanding of the Word, how it applies to the world today, and to strengthen faith.
- **Jesse Wimberly** (Adult) Utilizes *The Present Word* curriculum series to facilitate instruction and discussion.
- **The Seekers** (Adult) Currently studying the Gospel of John, this class studies and discusses how they can apply God's Word together.

Youth Update

This past December, oh how much fun we had on the Christmas Henster Adventure. Fortunately, no one showed up on the Naughty List. We ended up in Denton at the Christmas Train. The place was all lit up with lights, had different types of food (homemade gingerbread cookies and cheesecakes to name a few), hot beverages, crafts, and Christmas cheer. You should had seen us all getting ready to go in, all bundled up. I think everyone had hand warmers and some toe warmers on, there was a slight chill in the air.

We rode the train (the great thing about this is you get told the real Christmas story and see it come to life) and while they were telling about the birth of Jesus, a baby on board began to cry right then as the we hear about the baby Jesus being born and then became quiet as the story and train continued on. We petted and fed animals and the horse, I think, was trying to pet us. Then we went off on a horse drawn wagon tour of the park. As we returned back, LoJuanna and Tammy sneaked off to go shopping, checking out the different buildings. That is when we went sliding, well the youth and Kelly (Henster Elf) did. I had my chance to go down but who would have taken their pictures? Next time I will. Smiles, laughter, and fellowship was had by all as well as memories for a life time. Be on the look out for the next Henster Adventure.

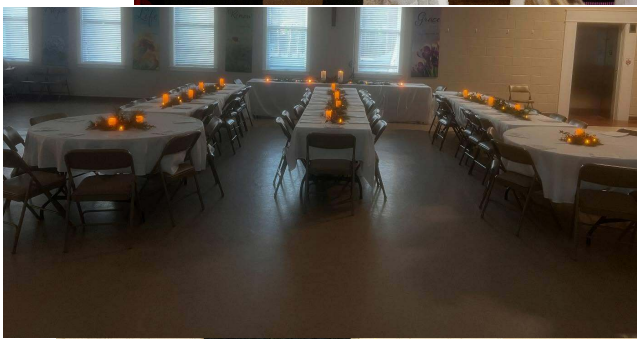
As we start a new year in Sunday School, we will continue to read the writings of Luke and start the book of Acts.

Keep Your Light Shining!!

Henster



December Events at Bethesda



Evangelism

The Heidelberg Catechism Study

Many people have recently asked: "What does the Heidelberg Catechism have to do with Evangelism?"

Evangelism, according to the Christian dictionary, is the sharing of the message and teachings of Jesus Christ. It is delivering the message that Jesus Christ is not only the Son of God but also gave his life as a sacrifice for our sins.

First published in 1563, the Heidelberg Catechism summarizes the major teachings of Holy Scripture, and provides one of the clearest guides into all the spiritual treasures of the holy gospel. It was intended as "a tool for teaching young people and a guide for preaching in the provincial churches." (Evangelism)

The Heidelberg Catechism, for early protestants, was evangelism - sharing of the message and teachings of Jesus Christ. It helped the people discover just how powerful the gospel really is, and "how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ" (Eph 3:18).

In today world, this understanding helps to better share the message and teachings of Jesus Christ, and "the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes" (Rom 1:16).

Faith Presbyterian Church



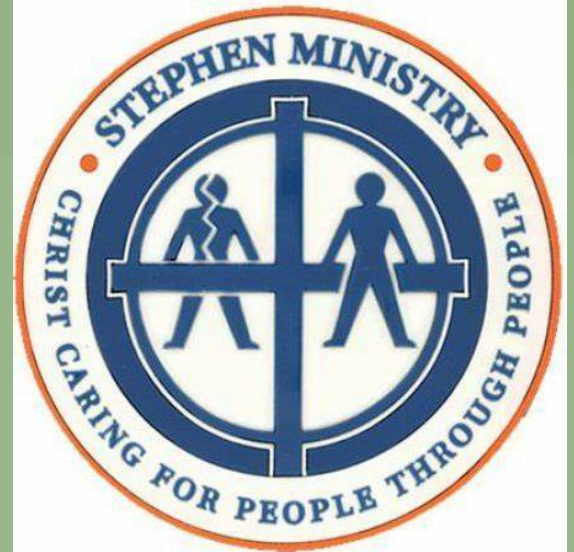
The following was submitted by Rev. H. D. Wood in the September 1880 report to the Mission for Freedmen:

I have visited all my places of appointment, spending two Sabbaths in Carthage, one at Cool Springs, and one at Blues Crossing. I spent a few days at each of these places, that I might visit the people and become acquainted with them. I cannot secure this end by meeting them once or twice a month. If find the people generally industrious, and, at present, absorbed in tending their crops (those who are so fortunate as to have any). The men find employment mostly in "working turpentine," but their pay is small.

This being the busy season, the temporal affairs of the church are at a stand-still; but they all promise that as soon as they have gathered the crops, they will go to work at erecting suitable places for the worship of God. I urged this matter because the buildings at Cool Springs and Blues Crossing are, to say the least, unfit for the purpose. Being rude log structures without windows or doors, they must be very uncomfortable in winter.

Stephen Ministry

Becoming a Stephen Minister is a Life Altering Experience



Stephen Minister training is an engaging, energizing experience that features a mixture of presentation, video, group discussion, skill practice, and spiritual growth activities. Since 1975, more than 600,000 Stephen Ministers have been equipped by this training to provide care to millions of people.

Stephen Minister training . . .

- teaches principles and skills that equip you to provide high-quality, Christ-centered emotional and spiritual care to others.
- gives you new insight into the thoughts, feelings, and actions of people who are hurting.
- equips you with relational and caring skills you can apply to all aspects of your life.
- helps deepen your faith as the Holy Spirit fashions you into a Christ-centered caregiver.
- builds a special bond of Christian community and camaraderie among all those in your class.
- is highly interactive, engaging, and a lot of fun!

Is God Calling You? If you sense that God might be calling you to serve as a Stephen Minister, the first step is to find out more from a Stephen Leader or Stephen Minister, and fill out an application. Applications are available in the Church office.

Opportunities, Initiatives, & Administrative Notes

Bethesda Presbyterian Women

The Women of the Church coordinating committee has big plans for 2025. Two of our goals are to involve more members in our church community and to inform and learn about our church's history and heritage.

We will begin a series of quarterly meetings, to which all women are invited. These will be on the second Sunday afternoon in January, April, July and September. Each meeting will include a devotional, informative program, and light refreshments.

Please plan to join us on January 12th at 2:00 PM in the fellowship hall to hear the recollections recorded on video by 2 of our sainted elders, Martha McLeod and Bobby Page.

Bethesda Christian Crafters

Sent 40 pillowcases for Samaritans purse Christmas boxes.

They also sold pillowcase pairs to interested church members to raise money for their fabric fund.

They will be having another sewing event late January. Stay tuned for the day and time.



COMMUNITY BLOOD DRIVE **Bethesda Presbyterian Church**

In the Fellowship Hall
1002 N. Sandhills Blvd.
Aberdeen, NC 28315

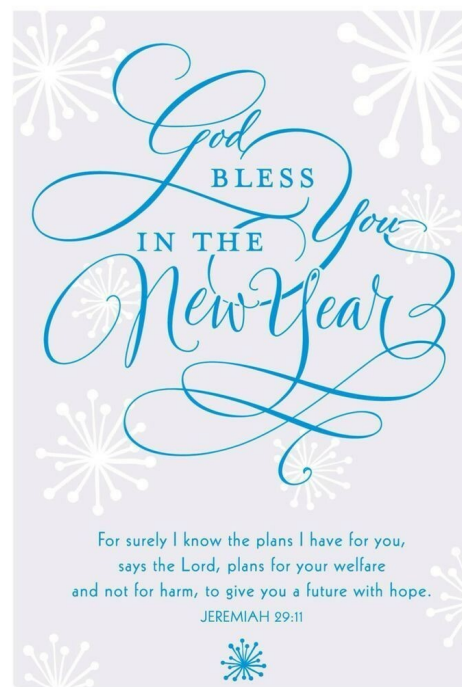
Monday, January 27, 2025
10:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

To schedule your lifesaving appointment, visit redcrossblood.org and enter sponsor code: BPC

Maximize your blood donation. Help more patients.
If you are an eligible type O, B - or A - donor, consider making a Power Red donation.
Red blood cells are the most commonly transfused blood component.

Create a flurry of hope! Come give blood Jan. 27 to Feb. 28 for a \$15 e gift card redcrossblood.org/flurry

USA: 1-800-RED-CROSS | 1-800-733-2767 | 1/17/2024 | 2024-10-20 10:00 AM EST



Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening

By Robert Frost

Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.
My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.
He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.
The woods are lovely, dark and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.



1002 N. Sandhills Blvd.

Aberdeen, NC 28315

<https://bethesdapres.church>

[Facebook.com/bethesdapres](https://www.facebook.com/bethesdapres)

910-944-1319

bethesdapres@ncrrbiz.com

Sunday Schedule

9:15 Breakfast

10:00 Sunday School for all ages

11:00 Worship Service

See our calendar on our website
for days and times of youth
events.

