



Bethesda Presbyterian Church | Aberdeen, NC | February 2025

# A MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR

Dear friends and members of Bethesda Presbyterian,

During this season, at Bethesda, we are looking more deeply at the Lord's Prayer with the hope that it will enrich our prayer life and deepen our fellowship with God. As we look around at the world today, it is evident that people are hungry for connection. They want more meaningful and genuine relationship.

In the Lord's Prayer, Christ does not merely invite us to repeated His words. He is inviting us to pray "in this way" or "in this manner" (Matthew 6:9). He wants His prayer to be a model for prayer.

Ultimately what we find is that Lord's Prayer teaches us is not simply to repeat special words or merely talk to God. Instead, the Lord's Prayer is an invitation to step into a relation, to step into Jesus Christ's relationship with his Father. Christ wants us to pray in Him, taking on his childlike status and position with the Father. This ought to change how we think about prayer! But, more importantly, putting this into action will draw us into deeper connection and fellowship with God the Father and His children.

Blessings and peace,

Rev David Priddy

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# Celebrations & Concerns

# February Birthdays

## 2024 Charlie Berger Award Recipients

Kay and Jim Mack

In 1994, the Charlie Berger Award was initiated at Bethesda Presbyterian Church in memory of the spirit of Charlie Berger. This award is given to an individual/individuals in our church each year. The Fellowship and Evangelism Committees select a deserving individual(s) they feel most represents the spirit of Charlie Berger. Though many work behind the scenes in our church, this recipient should be specifically involved in outreach and fellowship within the church and the community. We are grateful for all the gifts that Kay and Jim bring to Bethesda!



Congratulations to the Wynn Family on the birth of Marian Piper January 15. Proud parents are Jeff and Christi; big sisters are Taylor and Birdie!

Congratulations to the Hand Family on the birth of Cameron Alexander January 20. Proud parents are Christian and Hannah, big sister is Hazel, and proud Grandmother is Amy Hand.

Welcome to the world little ones!

- 2 Halle Cunningham
- 5 Carolyn Moore
- 6 Mark Moon  
Sue Wiener
- 8 Jackson McClain  
Brielle White  
Linda McMillan
- 10 Jim Thomas  
Julia Thomas  
Al McDonald
- 14 Catherine Clark  
Mikaela Priddy
- 17 Carolyn Burns
- 18 Nick Cunningham
- 20 Nate Patton
- 21 Bruce Thomas
- 23 Charlie Hill  
Rebecca Hill
- 24 Hannah Clarke  
Ann Frank
- 25 Bev Cunningham
- 26 Victor Andersen  
Marilyn Sherwin
- 28 Kim Blue  
Jessica Wilson

# Music Notes

As we enter this time between Christmas and Lent, the choir is working on different types or genres of music. My hope is that we will reach you through your preferred style on some Sunday. We are starting the process of ordering our new robes. Thank you for your support in this endeavor.

Also, over Bethesda's history you have nurtured many fine musicians. Having been a part of this church for four years, I now see one of the big reasons so many from Bethesda have become accomplished musicians. You celebrate, support, and encourage young people as they study. Your appreciation of our Children's Choir and the young people who have played their pieces during gathering music has been greatly appreciated both by me and the children. You are giving them the opportunity to play or sing but also the courage and confidence to participate in a safe environment. Thank you.

We can always use more choir members and would love for you to come to rehearsal and give it a try. We work hard but we do have fun.

Blessings,

Earlene

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## Christian Care

The Christian Care committee would like to thank everyone who contributed to the No Child Left Behind fund. We were able to give \$1700 to both Crains Creek and Southern Middle schools. We will be collecting for this worthy cause again this year. If you are a committee chair, circle leader, Bible study leader or Sunday school leader please consider having your group collect for this fund throughout the year. There are lots of needs come December and collecting all year is a great way to contribute. If you have any questions please contact Terri Combs.

# 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.

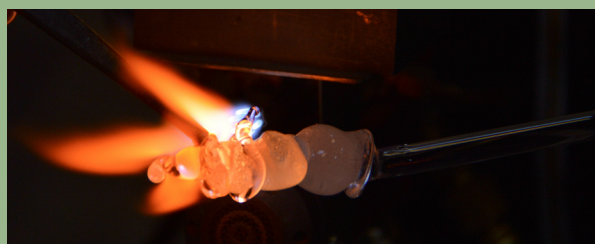
# Youth Update

This January the Youth Sunday School class started to read the book of Acts, written by Luke. We learned more about Peter and his preaching style (he did not hold back). He preached on repentance and the resurrection, two of the main things about Jesus, and Stephen the first martyr with Saul there watching on. One of the “first” deacons, Phillip, spread the word through his interaction with the Ethiopian. Maybe we should be more like Phillip and how he approached the Ethiopian. God gave him the opportunity and Phillip took it by helping the Ethiopian to understand what he was reading, the book of Isaiah. Phillip was not pushy, but was ready when the opportunity arose to tell someone about Jesus. Saul’s conversion and how the apostles reacted to him and other believers is another interesting lesson in the book of Acts. Then there was Ananias and Sapphira, the married couple who lied to Peter and what happened to them. We learned about the replacement of Judas, the Holy Spirit coming to the apostles, talking in tongues, the role women played, why we need to understand the Old Testament and so much more. If you have not read Acts, now is the time to start.

Some of the youth and older youth, went on an Henster Adventure to Starworks in Star. It was a perfect time to go since we had some snow. Frozen with Fire & Ice, we got to make two glass snowmen by using a blow torch and glass. You put the ice in the fire and created three snow balls and combined them. Then the details were added, the hat, scarf, and face. Smiles, laughter, and fellowship was had by all the bundled up. No one was hurt and nothing caught on fire. Each snowman was unique.

What will be the next Henster Adventure?

Keep Your Light Shining!!!



# Evangelism

Evangelism is about Love; Epiphany is the season of Love; and February is the month of LOVE. Although the Greeks defined nine types of love, we most closely associate Agape (ἀγάπη love with the church). But we should also consider Philia, Pragma and Storage loves – particularly in the season of Epiphany.

Agape love is defined/described as “an unconditional love that is not dependent on any external factors.” It seems fair to argue that a society without Agape would be unable to function, as we are dependent on one another as a species. However, Philia (φιλία) love implies “spiritual connection, trust, and sharing of the same values;” and Pragma (πράγμα) love is an “essential component of making relationships work in the long term being based on duty, reason, and shared goals.”

That brings us to Storge (στοργή) love, which “relates to love within a family.” An example of storage love is when a parent cares for a child, makes them feel secure, comfortable, and safe, and doesn't expect anything in return. During Epiphany we hear the voice of God the Father saying these words. “This is my son, my beloved, with Him I am well pleased.” The account of the Transfiguration contains the additional charge, “Listen to Him” (Luke 9:35 NRSV). In “Soul Physicians” Robert Kellemen says this about the nature of the Trinity, “They were experiencing constant, uninterrupted, intimate, relationship. They were together, in harmony, giving, sharing, relating – loving” (Soul Physicians pp 62).

Epiphany is designed to orient us to this divine love that is constantly being given and received - a love that has its root in the Trinity, is meant to encompass humanity, and all of the world by extension.

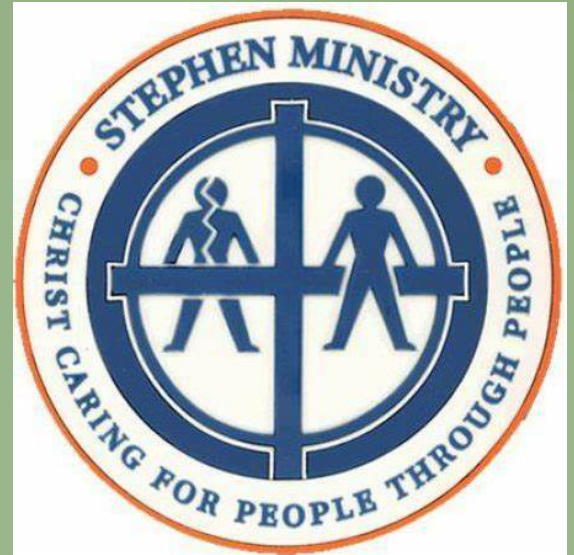
Finally, do not forget Valentines Day and our Valentines Day luncheon where the Men of the Church are hosting this event to show our love for the women of our lives.



\$25 for men  
no cost for women and children  
Everyone is invited

# Stephen Ministry

## Stephen Ministry is about Love and Caring



As we approach our training sessions, many are trying to discover God's vision for your life and your spiritual gifts. As part of Stephen Minister training, we help prospective ministers answer six simple exploration questions. (Questions are easy – Answers are hard)

The first three are internal to the Stephen Ministry process and relate to recruitment. Stephen Ministers are commissioned by their Congregations. As such they must be able to help Congregations answer:

- How can we help people at our church discover and develop their own unique spiritual gifts?
- How can we help people fulfill their passion to use their gifts in meaningful ministry?
- How can we move away from endlessly searching for people just to fill slots—and move toward an approach that focuses on the gifts God has given people?

The second three questions are for future, prospective and current Stephen Ministers. Our training helps the individual to discover:

- What are my spiritual gifts?
- Where does God want me to use my spiritual gifts?
- How can I find a useful ministry that is personally rewarding? (Some finish the training only to find their calling to be for a different ministry. There are over 10,000 trained Stephen Ministers who were not commissioned as Stephen Ministers, but used their training to be successful in other ministries.)

# Opportunities, Initiatives, & Administrative Notes

## **Family Fun Night**

February 2 starting at 4:30 for families with children ages preK-5th grade. Dinner will be provided.

## **Men of the Church**

Meet Tuesday February 4 at 6 pm in the Fellowship Hall. Please come to help plan the Valentines Luncheon for February 16.

## **Faith Weaving Friends**

February 21 starting at 5:30 for kids 2nd-5th grade. Dinner provided.

## **Bethesda Christian Crafters**

Will hold a sewing event to make backpacks on Thurs. Feb. 13 from 1 to 4 pm in the Fellowship Hall. Bring a snack to share, scissors, and sewing machine if you can.

## **Family Promise**

We continue to collect cleaning supplies, paper towels, and toilet paper for our local Family Promise shelter for women and children.

On February 9 we will hold a pillow drive. Please bring new unused pillows to worship for the clients at Family Promise. These pillows will be given to the individuals when they arrive and they will be able to take them with them when they leave the shelter.

## **January Red Cross Blood Drive**

Thank you to everyone who donated blood in January! We collected 25 units and met our goals! The next blood drive is scheduled for April 7 from 10-2:30. Go to [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org) and enter sponsor code BPC to register to donate.

## **Vacation Bible School**

Save the dates for our 2025 VBS - July 7-11. We are still collecting Christmas trees. If you are interested in helping with decorations or volunteering speak to Mary Katherine White.



# Opportunities, Initiatives, & Administrative Notes



## 2025 College Scholarship Application Bethesda Presbyterian Church

College Scholarship Applications are now available on the church website. Please adhere to all requirements and deadlines.

 **Ages: 13-17**

**THE SPEEDPARK**

**Go Karting | Mini Golf | Games**



Scan for Info



**\$62R**  
**\$87NR**

**Feb 14th, 2-9 pm**

910-692-7376

**FREE**

**MOONLIGHT HIKE**

**(ALL AGES)**

Fri | Feb 14 | 6-7pm  
Weymouth Woods Sandhills Nature Reserve  
1024 N Fort Bragg Rd  
Meet at the Ranger Station



For more information: (910) 692-7376

# History Corner



## Faith Presbyterian Church

The following was submitted by Rev. H. D. Wood in the November 1882 report to the Mission for Freedmen:

*The work in my field at present is for the most part encouraging. At Blue Crossing (what is now Aberdeen) especially our church is going forward at a surprising rate. They set an example of zeal for the other churches in my field to imitate. They decided to move from the temporary structure in which we worshiped heretofore, and in which we organized in October last. This decision was made on the 1st of last month, while I was there, and they assured me that when I came again (August 1) we should hold our meetings in a nice new church. When I reached there on Saturday, the day before our appointment, I found they had kept their word, and by determined effort put to shame all similar attempts at church erection that I have witnessed since I have been in this part of the country. They had secured a lot of ground in a good location, and built thereon one of the neatest frame churches to be seen in this county. It is larger than any of the churches on my field, being 35 by 25, and in the little time they gave themselves to finish it they had gone so far as to have the windows and doors. I was more surprised at this than at any other feature of the work, because hitherto our churches have been considered complete without these. "Glass" windows never entered into the question of church-building here. As far as they have gone the work is neatly and well done. They have yet to ceil and paint the house which they will do as soon as possible. When finished it will be valued at about five hundred dollars. We held our communion service on the first Sunday in this nice new building, and it was a joyful meeting. The house would not accommodate the large number that assembled, though two hundred people were seated in the church. Three adult persons were added to our membership, and three children by baptism. So the glorious work goes on at this place, where a short time ago the prospect was very gloomy. The opposing and disturbing element is quite subdued, and my highest hopes for this church and people I believe will by the goodness of the Lord, be realized.*



**Aberdeen, NC 28315**

<https://bethesdapres.church>

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### 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.

