

THE TOWER

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Bethel Presbyterian Church

DECEMBER 2011



For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9:6

Around the turn of the 20th century, feuding became a curse in parts of the upper South. In one instance, two families had killed a number of each other's kin in a feud that had started over a stray cow. During World War I, one of the feud leaders went to church with his family during Christmas. Normally, he stood outside, but, for some reason this time, he went in and listened to the service. He heard about the Prince of Peace, and it struck his heart.

He thought about the losses and pain that the feud had caused. Realizing that the family of his enemy was having a hard time that winter because their breadwinner had been drafted into the army, this changed man decided to secretly help the struggling family that his own family had feuded with for so long. Every day, he secretly had a basket of food delivered to that family.

When the war ended, and soldiers came home, the returned soldier of that family decided to track down where the food that had sustained his family while he was away came from. Finding that it was his old enemy who had kept his family in food and health, he went to find out what had happened to the old feud leader. He told the astonished soldier that the Prince of Peace had changed his heart. The feud was over.

The Prince of Peace still changes hearts today.

Joy Gift Program -

December 11th, 2011

The Joy Gift program will be held Sunday, December 11th following the morning worship service. We will have a covered dish meal so bring your favorite dish to share! Following the meal our young people will present a program under the direction of Donna Bush and Denise Thornton. If you would like to participate in the program please come to Sunday School for practices. Come and join us for a great meal and the program that will follow!

- Christian Education Committee



What Is the Christmas Joy Gift Offering?

A Presbyterian tradition for almost seventy years, the Christmas Joy Gift Offering is one of the four special offerings designated by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to provide congregations direct ways of supporting specific causes that help those in need. The receipts for the Joy Gift Offering are distributed equally to the Board of Pensions for assistance programs and to National Ministries of the General Assembly Council to help support Presbyterian racial ethnic education.

Bethel Emergency Relief Fund (BERF)

Watch for the BERF tree which will be in the hallway between the Fellowship Hall and Memorial Hall soon. We need to make sure that all of those gift tags are taken so that the families we are helping can receive the Christmas that they have dreamed of and prayed about. Remember that the gifts will need to be returned to the church by December 11th and will need to be wrapped with the tag attached. Also, don't forget that you can "team up" to buy gifts (especially expensive ones) if you want to. Thank you so much for your great generosity! Bethel's people can always be counted on to be a blessing!

The Session and Board of Deacons will have their annual joint meeting on Sunday, December 11th, at 6:30 pm. All Session and Diaconal members need to plan on attending this meeting. All newly elected officers (returning, ordained, or not yet ordained) will need to make plans to attend for examination by the Session following the joint meeting. If you will not be able to attend, please let Joel know.

Our annual Christmas Eve candle lighting service will be held at 9 pm. The service is always a moving and beautiful experience as we hear the Good News both read and sung. Many talented local folks come to share their joyful seasonal music with us. Come and take part as we sing, as we pray, and as we praise God for the birth of our dear Savior!

Joel will be on vacation from December 25th until January 2nd. If you have an emergency please contact the Church Office (during normal office hours) or leave a message on the church answering machine. The answering machine will be checked each day for messages. Thank you!

The church office will be closed for the Christmas holiday season from Friday, December 23rd through Tuesday, December 27th and on Friday, December 30th through Monday, January 2nd for New Year's.



Presbyterian Women December 2011

The Afternoon Circle will meet at the church on Tuesday, December 13th, at 2:30 pm.

The Evening Circle will meet at the church on Thursday, December 8th, at 6 pm in the Fellowship Hall. Please bring a dish to share and a present for a gift exchange. We will also play a few games for fun!



Offerings 2011: It is requested that offerings for 2011 be made no later than Sunday, December 25th, 2011. Thank you for your continued support.

Pledges 2012: 27 pledges for a total of \$79,260 have been received. Thanks to those who pledged. If you have not already pledged, please prayerfully consider pledging now for 2012 - it is not too late. A pledge card is included below and are also available at the church. Send completed cards to the church (Attn: Receiving Treasurer), or put in the Receiving Treasurer mailbox in Memorial Hall or in the offering plate any Sunday.

Offering Envelopes 2012: Beginning Sunday, December 11th, numbered offering envelopes will be available in the vestibule. If you received numbered envelopes in 2011 you will have the same number reserved for 2012. If you do not currently use envelopes but would like to, please contact the Church Office with your request.

NAME(S) _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP COMMITMENT FOR 2012

Grateful for God's love in Jesus Christ, I (we) make the following commitment to support the mission of the church through our congregation, presbytery, synod, and General Assembly.

\$ _____ per week month other

(This commitment may be increased due to changing circumstances)

I (we) wish to receive information about giving through Estate Planning

Keep this portion as a record of your financial stewardship commitment for 2012

My (our) financial stewardship commitment:

\$ _____ per week month other

(This commitment may be increased due to changing circumstances)

Bethel is trying a new idea this year with our **Christmas Poinsettias**. You may purchase poinsettias as in the past or instead of purchasing a poinsettia you may make a donation to BERF (Bethel Emergency Relief Fund). You can still make a donation to BERF in honor or in memory of someone just as you would if you ordered a poinsettia. The form to order poinsettias or make a donation follows this announcement.

**Note: Please fill out the form completely. Sometimes forms come back not completely filled out and it can make things difficult when compiling them for the bulletins. Also, if you would like to order a poinsettia and make a donation please use two forms (one for the poinsettia and one for the donation). Thank you!*

Christmas Poinsettias and BERF Donations Form

You may order poinsettias at a cost of \$10.00 (tax included) each or you may make a monetary donation to BERF (Bethel Emergency Relief Fund). The poinsettias purchased and the donations made to BERF will be acknowledged in the bulletins on December 18th, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. Please fill out the form below, attach the check or cash and place in the offering plate or mail to the Church Office: Attn: Church Secretary; 563 Bethel Green Road; Staunton, VA 24401. **If you are purchasing a poinsettia please make checks payable to Bethel Presbyterian Church. If you are making a donation to BERF please make the check payable to Bethel Emergency Relief Fund. The deadline is Tuesday, December 13th at 3 pm.**

Number of Poinsettias _____ Check or Cash Total _____

or

Donation to BERF _____ Check or Cash Total _____

In Honor Of : _____

Given By: _____

In Memory Of: _____

Given By: _____

Poinsettias will be on display in the church on December 18th, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

***Remember to pick-up Poinsettia(s) following the Christmas Eve Service or on Sunday, December 25th,*

Nursery schedule

December 4 - Tobe and Pam Hewitt

December 11 - Keedie Leonard; Cole/Isabelle Leonard

December 18 - Keith and Kayla Folsom

December 25 - James and Cynthia Williams

Deacon's Offering Schedule: December 2011

Dean Caldwell

Susan McCutchen-Smith

Chris Schooley

Mac Williams

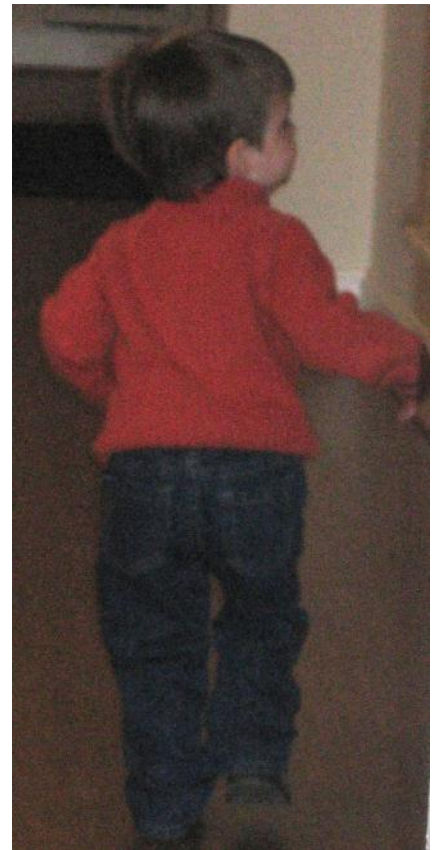
Flower Schedule

December 2011

December 4th - Bettie Swisher

December 11th - Bettie Swisher

December 18th - December 25th - Christmas Poinsettias



SESSION NEWS

Officer training will be on December 8th, 2011, at 8:00 pm.

A request was received to transfer Kristen Bosserman's membership to Old Providence Church.

The Witness Committee finished their fundraising schedule and mission trip guidelines for 2012.

A committee of three elders and three deacons was approved to obtain estimates for repair of the church tower.

The church budget for 2012 was approved as submitted.

After discussion regarding the P.A. system in the sanctuary, it was agreed to have professional assistance to determine what is needed for better sound and volume.

Deacons Notes – December 2011

Financial – Year to date income and expense budgets are in a balanced range, although both are lagging budgeted amounts.

Congregational Service – Recent activities included Bible Study, Men’s Supper, Music Lessons, contacts with shut-in members and others.

Community Service – Recent activities included a Mission Dinner and Auction, Harvest Party, Beth-el Emergency Relief Fund, and Preschool.

Building and Grounds – We repaired outside lights at the Scout Hut and Handicapped Parking Lot. We will remove office carpeting and use the wood floor because of mold problems. Tim Turner is investigating options for refurbishing the sign out front. A contractor is scheduled to waterproof and repair the south exterior wall of the hallway to the Fellowship Hall in November.

Scouting – The Boy Scouts collected 650 pounds of food in a Food Drive for Kingsway.

Property – The first phase of tree replacement was completed. Memorial gifts of \$300 or more will be recognized with a memorial plaque.

Deacon’s Prayer List:

Evan Annese
Powhatan Bouldin
Covie Brandt
Family of Marjorie Brooks
Bill Brubeck
Dr. David Burgess Med Mission
Lorine Caldwell
Larry Curry
Jarod Davis

Family of Aggie Dodson
Jessie Earhart
Denny Grimm
Joel and Nellie Hamilton
Danielle Hanger
Anne Jones
Hayley Kudro
Flora Law
Margaret Liptrap
Lucy Miller
Judy Olson
Les Prickett

Jean Reeves
Carol Schooley
Tom Small
Richard Smith
Frankie Sours
Beatty Speck
Charlotte Swortzel
David Turner
Richard Turner (Greater Augusta)
James Williams (Fishersville)

Our sympathies and condolences to the family and friends of Aggie Dodson who passed away on November 10th, 2011.



A special thank you to all the ladies who have helped me fold the Tower during 2011: Claudia Hall, Jackie Law, Evelyn LaPorte, Joyce Miller, and Denise Thornton. You ladies are absolutely wonderful and make my job so much easier! I could never get the Tower mailed without you! Also a special thank you to Ken Wilkinson who faithfully proofreads the Tower every month before publication. Thank you all!

- Adrienne Barker, Church Secretary

A special thank you to Ken and Joyce Miller for emailing and formatting the Tower for the website every month. Also, thanks to Ken for emailing important Congregational News and Prayer Requests. You make my job a million times easier!

- Adrienne Barker, Church Secretary

Thank you to everyone who attended our mission meal on November 6th, you helped to make it a big success. You are helping to support our local and international missions. We would also like to thank everyone who made desserts and helped serve food. Thanks also to Joyce Miller for donating the quilt to be auctioned and Brian Ritter for the handmade porch swing. We raised \$3,000 to help with our future mission work.

- Wayne and Kathy Swisher



Kingsway continues to need all types of non-perishable food: cereal, peanut butter, canned goods, dried beans, etc. Please place your donations in the designated basket in Memorial Hall. Thank you for your generosity!

If you would like information about events going on within the Shenandoah Presbytery log on to the Presbytery's website at: <http://www.shenpres.org>. To keep up with current news and projects within the denomination log on to the PCUSA website at <http://www.pcusa.org>

The Witness Committee would like to thank Wayne and Kathy Swisher for providing the meal on Sunday. Thank you to all their helpers and to all of you who helped with the fundraiser. A total of \$1,550 was donated for the meal. We also thank Eddie Shinaberry for auctioning the items. We would like to thank Brian Ritter for donating the swing which sold for \$200 to Derek and Cindy Almarode. We would like to thank Ken and Joyce Miller for donating the Civil War Love Letter Quilt which sold for \$1,250 to Jill Webb. The Committee would like to thank the congregation for all their support for all the fundraisers and mission projects that were sponsored by the Committee for 2011. We would not be able to do what we do without each and everyone of you. We are truly blessed with a generous and supportive congregation. **THANK YOU!!**

Don't Forget!!

December 22nd - First Day of Winter

December 24th - Christmas Eve

December 25th - Christmas Day

December 31st - New Year's Eve

TAKE A MOMENT TO PRAY FOR ALL WHO STAND IN NEED OF PRAYER.





