



## HAPPENINGS IN OCTOBER



**John Roberts, Marian Williams, and Kim Wiles teamed up with Lisa and Michael Reynolds to paint the trailer to be used for the garden/farm manager to live in at the Spring Forest Community in Hillsborough. They have a large community garden and host community meals once a week.**



**Dan Portaro, John Roberts, and Gary Crispell made it a special day by visiting Henry Garrart. They even carried him some famous Bethany stew. That always puts a smile on Henry's face.**





**The crew served 248 plates at Urban Ministries of Durham in October. They served until the food was gone. Thanks to all of you that make this ministry possible.**





## Forward Together Reconciling Sunday School Class

Sunday, October 26, 2025, was a historic day for Bethany UMC. Forward Together Reconciling Sunday School Class sponsored a congregational straw poll vote to gauge the interest of the Bethany UMC family toward moving forward to be a more affirming, accepting and inclusive church by becoming a reconciling congregation/church. This journey started in 2018 when a group got together, under the direction of Rev Julia Webb-Bowden, to discuss and reflect on the United Methodist Church's 2016 Study of the Council of Bishops Commission on the Way Forward. 23 Bethany family members participated.

After the completion of the eight-week study, a smaller spin-off group decided to continue working toward Bethany being a more inclusive church. After several meetings the group went through the 5 step process and unanimously voted to affiliate with The Reconciling Ministries Network, and Forward Together Reconciling Group was born.

After COVID and Bethany opened up for regular churches services again, a handful of the original Forward Together Reconciling Group decided to become more active within Bethany to be a more affirming, accepting and inclusive church, and with permission from the Bethany Church Council, on June 2023, the Forward Together Reconciling Sunday Class was born.

Since then, they have completed book studies, video series, and became involved in outside mission opportunities, demonstrating the dignity, love, acceptance and affirmation afforded to any beloved child of God.

After hosting a joint video series with the Lizzie Grey Sunday School Class "Faithful and Inclusive – The Bible, Sexuality and the United Methodist Church" by Rev Rob Fuquay, Forward Together Reconciling Sunday School Class discussed their desire to petition the Bethany UMC Church Council to provide a Bethany church wide vote to affiliate with The Reconciling Ministries Network and become a Reconciling Church and expand the simple sense of welcome and belonging of ALL people into the Bethany United Methodist family.

85% of the Bethany UM Church family voted to continue with the journey to be a more affirming, accepting and inclusive church by affiliating with the Reconciling Ministries Network and becoming a Reconciling congregation/church.

Forward Together Reconciling Sunday School class wishes to thank all that voted to move forward to becoming a reconciling congregation/church and offers the opportunity to answer any questions or address any concerns to those who voted no.

Michael Corsi-OConnor ( He, Him, His )

Facilitator

Forward Together Reconciling Sunday School Class

Bethany UMC

*"Be the Change You Want To See In The World"*

*"Living and Leading Change on Purpose"*



## MONEY MATTERS—OCTOBER

**Received for the General Fund                      \$19,668.00**

### **Designated gifts to other funds**

|                         |                  |
|-------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Apportionments</b>   | <b>\$ 507.65</b> |
| <b>Building Fund</b>    | <b>4,212.14</b>  |
| <b>Building usage</b>   | <b>1,900.00</b>  |
| <b>Free Breakfast</b>   | <b>50.00</b>     |
| <b>Urban Ministries</b> | <b>50.00</b>     |
| <b>World Communion</b>  | <b>113.00</b>    |

**Friends,**

**Many thanks for your generosity in October! Your tithes and offerings to the General Fund exceeded past months and is most appreciated. In addition, monies donated and matched at the October fellowship dinner plus other monthly contributions will almost pay the Fellowship Center loan for a month! (Need \$313.00)**

**You should have received your quarterly giving statement. If you did not receive one or if you have questions, please let the office know.**

**Your faithfulness in giving is most appreciated!**







Dear Bethany Church Family,

The author of Hebrews writes that, “faith is the assurance [or *reality*] of things hoped for, the conviction [or *evidence*] of things not seen” (Heb. 11:1, NRSVUE). Faith is central to our walk with Christ as disciples. It is faith, given by God in grace, that allows us to build a relationship with God, to embody God’s will with humility, to transform into Christ-likeness, to know God and to encounter God’s Spirit. Faith is the avenue, the byway, for a fallen humanity to encounter and work in relationship with a righteous God. But how can we be sure of this faith? What assurance do we have that this faith is true and how can we be confident in it? Truthfully, that is a difficult question to answer. How *can* we be sure of something that is unseen?

The 21st century ushered in a new age of technology, scientific discoveries and empirical thought. We are a people of progression, advancing to the next level of technological and scientific toys, instruments, tools, innovations and studies. I think this is one of the amazing things about the humanity that God created. We ourselves are creators and innovators. We learn from past leaders, researchers, scholars, everyday people and historians. We build off of the legacy that they left us and make it our own. We test something and when it doesn’t work, we, usually, try to do something different and make it better. We do repeat the mistakes of the past, but we also learn from it. We have come to an enlightenment period where facts, figures, studies, and evidence trump everything else. I think that these studies of logic, science and reason are good things that help us in building a world that causes human flourishing and abundance. And I do place a certain trust in these things and see them as good when used in appropriate ways.

The only problem that I see is that people will often only see value and surety in the physical, seen world. We naturally will disregard the ideas, thoughts and spirit that linger outside of what the physical senses (touch, taste, sight, smell, hearing) can experience. We will naturally trust in the surety of a bologna sandwich on a plate and being able to eat it compared to a spiritual experience walking along the beach during a tumultuous time. The bologna sandwich *seems more real* than the spiritual experience because of the observational fact that it is there and yet the spiritual experience *feels more real* than any other experience we have had in our whole entire life. I think that we as humans are sure of our immediate surroundings and yet we yearn for what is outside of ourselves and our immediate physical senses. We yearn for something that takes us deeper into life’s meaning and that takes us beyond the observation of facts and figures. It is not just observing the world but deciding what to do in it. What do we do with our history, our research, our studies, our possessions, our world and our lives?

This is where the rubber meets the road. Where does our confidence in decision making come from? Is it within ourselves? Is it about making ourselves the most comfortable by obtaining as much as we can? Or is life more than survival? We are the result of our genetics, our upbringing, our personal experiences, our social groups and our interests. But what do we do with this bundle of things that is connected through the tissue of, what we call, a human being? That is the question that God implanted in each of us. God is seeking to work together with us to achieve God’s good will for the world that brings all to be fed, quenched, served, forgiven and saved. Yet God does not necessarily come to us in our observation of a bologna sandwich (yet God could if God wanted to) but in the process, or movement, of what we can do with that bologna sandwich to love God and neighbor. When God’s Spirit meets ours, we gain a view from the heavenly places and no longer is the world filled with mechanical differences, but we find God in everything and everyone. We experience the vastness of God’s grace by allowing the mystery of the divine to flood the world of the concrete and observable. What is white becomes black and our worldview is flipped upside down. Assurance is finding that God is found in every place. Faith is, “the conviction of things not seen.” Assurance is finding God in things seen and unseen. Assurance is found in the divine mystery of the bologna sandwich and the walk on the beach. Assurance is found and deepens our understanding of God through faith. Faith allows us to have assurance in God, but it is we who work with God to build the muscles that allow surety to grow.

“Because of Christ and our faith in him, we can now come boldly and confidently into God’s presence” (Eph. 3:12). May you walk boldly into God’s presence and experience God in everything,

Pastor Cole



## Trunk and Treat 2025

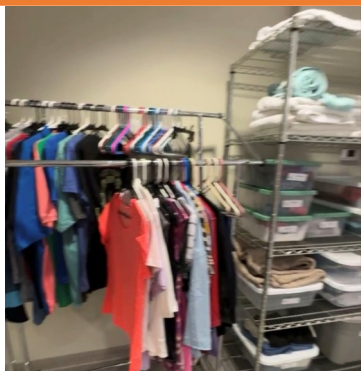








## Looking Ahead



### "Showers of Blessings"

The Bethany UMC "Showers of Blessings" team will be hosting showers and "shopping" for clothes from our Showers of Blessings clothes closet on Saturday, Nov 15 from 9:30am - 11:30am, for our unhoused neighbors. There will NOT be a Free Community Pancake and Sausage Breakfast on Nov 15. Instead, the United Methodist Men will be hosting the Henry Garrett Breakfast on Sunday Nov 23rd.

If you are interested in getting involved in the Showers of Blessings ministry please contact Lisa Kerns, Facilitator at 919 475 3156 or [Krazykearns4@aol.com](mailto:Krazykearns4@aol.com)

Showers of Blessings Team



Kim Wiles will bake cookies for November 23. Call or text 919-475-1851 and leave a message to place your order. Chocolate chip (with or without walnuts), oatmeal (with or without raisins), and peanut butter. All donations will go to pay our apportionments.

**Undie collection for Urban Ministries has been extended to November 9th.**



### Thanksgiving Luncheon

The Hospitality Committee is hosting a Thanksgiving Luncheon on Sunday, Nov 16 following Sunday service. The menu will include roast turkey, mashed potatoes, dressing, vegetables and desserts. Donations will be accepted and given to the Community Free Breakfast fund. Mark your calendars and plan to attend our Bethany family Thanksgiving Luncheon. See you all there and Happy Thanksgiving from your Hospitality Committee.

Gary Corsi-OConnor, Chair  
Hospitality Committee

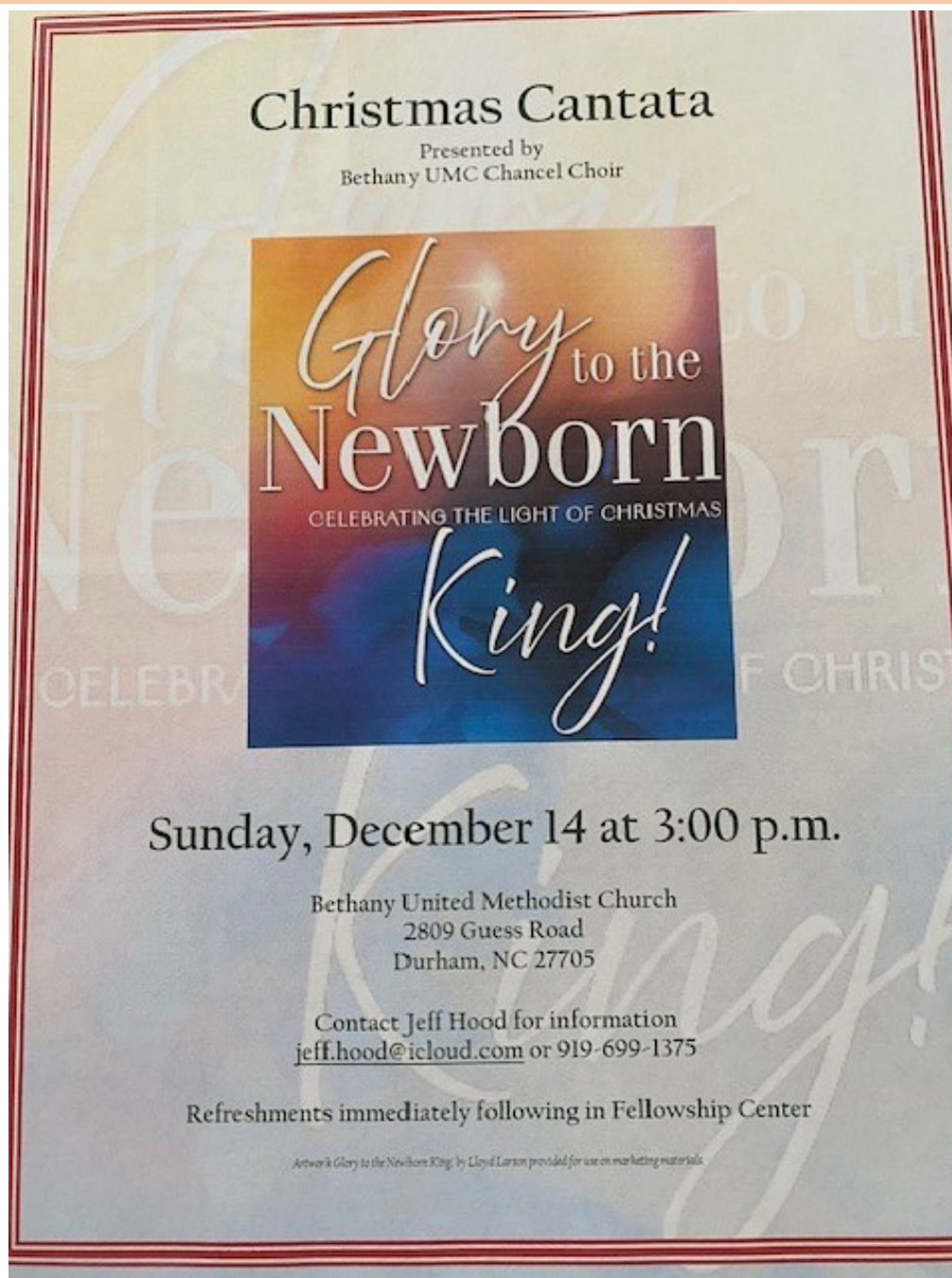
### You are Invited

The Lizzie Grey Chandler Sunday School Class invites our Bethany family to our annual Christmas party at the Fellowship Center on December 6 at 6pm. You may bring an hors d'oeuvre to share and a \$5-\$10 gift if you wish to participate in the Round Robin gift exchange game. A trivia game follows. Festivities end around 8. If you have any questions please call Tommy at 919-475-2842.

### United Methodist Student Day

November 23 is United Methodist Student Day, one of our Special Offering Sundays. It is observed to emphasize the value of education. Contributions received through this special Sunday support scholarships for United Methodist students pursuing undergraduate and graduate degrees.





### **Chancel Choir – We Need Singers!**

We have a tremendous repertoire of music, which includes a broad range of styles and would like to share these musical offerings in worship with the congregation! The Chancel Choir works diligently and patiently every week to “think outside the box” as we search for new ways to uplift the worship experience with a limited number of singers.

We need more singers for every part, and I would like to extend an invitation to those who may be interested in sharing their musical gifts. Though most choir members read music, it is not a requirement as we will teach you! I do ask that you have some prior vocal experience in making a joyful sound in order to complement the structure and skillset of the existing group.

The Chancel Choir rehearses on Wednesday from 6:30-7:45 pm. If you are interested, please contact Jeff Hood ([jeff.hood@icloud.com](mailto:jeff.hood@icloud.com) or 919-699-1375) to setup a time to discuss.



**United  
Women  
in Faith**

**Tuesday Morning Circle**

**The Tuesday Morning Circle will meet on Tuesday morning, November 11 at 10:30 a.m. All women are welcome.**

**Tuesday Evening Circle**

**The Tuesday Evening Circle will meet on November 11 at 7 pm in the Fellowship**

**UWF Evening Circle collects old toothbrushes, empty toothpaste boxes and tubes, empty floss containers, any Burt's Bees containers, Entenmann's Little Bites pouches, and used razors. These items will be recycled and kept out of the landfill. Please give them to Kim Wiles or Sharon Stone.**



**United Methodist Men  
will meet November 11 at 7 pm  
In the Fellowship Center.**





## For November & December

Communion Helpers for November are Donald & Becky House

December are Marian Williams & Maureen Bateman

### Acolyte

|        |                       |
|--------|-----------------------|
| Nov 2  | Michael Corsi-OConnor |
| Nov 9  | Janice Stone-Mills    |
| Nov 16 | Heather Fisher        |
| Nov 23 | April Stone-Mills     |
| Nov 30 | Kate Hankins          |
| Dec 7  | Michael Corsi-OConnor |
| Dec 14 | Sharon Stone          |
| Dec 21 | Kate Hankins          |
| Dec 28 | Janice Stone-Mills    |

If you are unable to do your assignment on your Sunday please let Gary Corsi-OConnor know 919-308-9290, so substitutions may be made.

### Liturgist

|        |                 |
|--------|-----------------|
| Nov 2  | Sharon Stone    |
| Nov 9  | Kate Hankins    |
| Nov 16 | Gerhard Mels    |
| Nov 23 | Lynne Sprague   |
| Nov 30 | Dan Portaro     |
| Dec 7  | Elaine Truckner |
| Dec 14 | Lynne Sprague   |
| Dec 21 | Casey Breit     |
| Dec 28 | Connie Kirby    |

### Open & Close Church

|         |                      |
|---------|----------------------|
| Nov 2   | Sharon Stone         |
| Nov 9   | Kim Wiles            |
| Nov 16  | Donald & Becky House |
| Nov 23  | John Roberts         |
| Nov 30  | Connie & Earl Kirby  |
| Dec 7   | Jimmy Truckner       |
| Dec. 14 | Donald & Becky House |
| Dec. 21 | Kim Wiles            |
| Dec 28  | John Roberts         |

### Ushers

|        |                                   |
|--------|-----------------------------------|
| Nov 2  | Lisa & Gary Kearns                |
| Nov 9  | Donald & Becky House              |
| Nov 16 | Pam Hall & Michael Corsi-OConnor  |
| Nov 23 | Pam Hall & Marcia Painter         |
| Nov 30 | Marian Williams & Maureen Bateman |
| Dec 7  | Gary & Lisa Kearns                |
| Dec 14 | Donald & Becky House              |
| Dec 21 | Pam Hall & Michael Corsi-OConnor  |
| Dec 28 | Marian Williams & Maureen Bateman |

## BETHANY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Sanctuary Address: 2809 Guess Road  
Mailing Address: 2903 Guess Road  
Durham NC 27705  
  
Phone: 919-477-6659  
Email: bethanyumc1@gmail.com  
Calendar (LINK): <https://tinyurl.com/54jvdxv4>  
Website (LINK): <https://bethanyumcdurham.org/>



|                              |                        |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>5 Lisa Kearns</b>         | <b>19 Susan Arnold</b> |
| <b>9 Gloria Foster</b>       | <b>22 Jeff Hood</b>    |
| <b>11 Gary Corsi-OConnor</b> |                        |
| <b>14 Terri Whitfield</b>    |                        |



|                                    |
|------------------------------------|
| <b>4 Brinkley &amp; Diane Hunt</b> |
| <b>17 Conn and Jennifer Apisai</b> |