

# Star of Bethlehem

*"Abiding in Christ, Loving as Christ, Inviting to Christ"*



February 2012



## Read it Through

We are one month into our Bible reading plan for 2012! Are you

still reading every day? Maybe you've found a good routine and set aside a time each day to read from your Bible. Some of you are taking advantage of the family plan and digging into scripture over dinner. Or maybe you're still trying to decide what time of day works best for you to read. And others have not had a chance to look at their reading plan at all. Let's remember we're not going at this alone! Find ways to encourage one another as we move into the second month of reading through the Bible

We have over 50 people who have signed up to read through the Bible this year! Won't you join us? It will be good for your soul, and for our Church! Please pray for those listed below, keep them and their endeavor in your prayers, and encourage them when you see them!

Ann Price  
Mary Ann Cuthbertson  
Robin Castorina  
Lynda Aldridge  
Ruby Hall  
Polly Knight  
Phyllis Thomas  
Pat Sloan  
Mike Wilhelm  
Bill Moss  
Charlene Abel  
Lazette Thomas  
Ken Thomas  
Kerry Price  
Ann Cuthbertson  
Bob Currie  
Judy Johnson  
N.B. Hinson  
Johnny Gordon  
Gayle Philemon  
Charles Robinson  
Tana Mcconnaughey  
Alisa Wilhelm  
Ernestine Helms

Don Price  
Magda Thomas  
Jim Aldridge  
Nancy Brantley  
Henry Hall  
Carol Hucks  
George Sloan  
Jan Haigler  
Patsy Cuthbertson  
Virginia Moss  
Eric Thomas  
Andy Blackwelder  
Chad Price  
Faye Vicars  
Janice Lowder  
Brenda Huntley  
Jane Hatch  
Barbara Hinson  
Carolyn Gordon  
Sharon Robinson  
Jessie Price  
Kara Kindley  
Mallory Wilhelm  
Sharon Smith

## Teacher Training Opportunity

There are amazing things happening at Bethlehem in our Sunday School Classes. God is using Sunday School to help us all deepen our faith and understand the Word. All Sunday School Teachers are invited to join us for a conference of inspiration and training on February 17 from 6:30-9pm and February 18 from 9am-12noon at First Baptist Church Indian Trail. Come hear authors Steve Pharr, Allan Taylor and Josh Hunt give practical tips on taking our Sunday School to the next level. **To sign up email or call Andy by February 12.**



## Website Re-launch

Take a few minutes to look around our newly redesigned

website: [www.bethlehemchurch.net](http://www.bethlehemchurch.net). Andrew Brame has been working with Andy to keep our site up to date and informative about everything going on at the church. If you have suggestions or find anything that needs Andrew's attention, email him at [andrew.brame@gmail.com](mailto:andrew.brame@gmail.com).

## Children's Sunday School: An Anointed Runt

In the month of February, the children will learn that God sees people differently than we see people. Of course God sees 2 eyes, a nose and a mouth when he looks at your face, but God sees more than that. God sees what is in our heart. We'll be learning the story of how God chose David, the youngest and smallest of 8 brothers, to be the king of God's people, all because his heart was beautiful in God's sight.



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 7:00pm - Presbyterian Women Praise Team Practice	2 7:00pm Celebrate Recovery	3	4
5 SOUPer Bowl of Caring 5:00pm- Super Bowl part @ Price's house	6 7:00pm Evangelism MT	7 10:00am Bible Study	8 11:00am - Senior Lunch  7:00pm Praise Team practice	9 7:00pm Celebrate Recovery	10 Scouts— Pinewood Derby →	11
12 3:00pm Congregational Forum with EPC representatives  6:00pm - Youth	13	14 10:00am Bible Study  7:00 pm - Session	15 7:00pm Mission & Service MT, Praise Team practice	16 10:00am - Widow- Widowers Support Group  7:00pm Celebrate Recovery	17 9	18
19 3:00pm- 3rd Congregational Meeting  6:00pm Youth	20	21 10:00am Bible Study	22 10:00am Congregational Care MT  7:00pm Praise Team practice	23 7:00pm Celebrate Recovery	24	25
26 Youth –Food Pantry	27	28 10:00am Bible Study	29			



To all you non-sports fans, I say, "Please pardon me." But this IS the month for the Super Bowl. I have three football points of faith, none of which have to do with a team in that championship game. In fact, they all have to do with Tim Tebow, the outspoken Christian quarterback of the Denver Broncos:

1. A CBS Denver sports writer commented after the Denver Broncos overtime playoff defeat of the Pittsburgh Steelers that "Only Tim Tebow could turn his passing yards into a Biblical passage." How? When you add it all up, Tebow, the Denver Broncos quarterback threw for 316 yards, setting a postseason record of averaging 31.6 yards per completion. In case you didn't know it, [John 3:16](#) is one of Tebow's favorite verses. It reads, "*For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.*"



2. In a world of so many wicked people using their religion as an excuse to hate people, I just love the picture here:

No other comment necessary on that!

3. And third, straight from Tebow's internet site, [TebowsEyeBlack.com](#):

This whole thing makes no football sense, of course. Most NFL players hardly talk to **teammates** before a game, much less visit with the sick and dying in area hospitals.

Isn't that a huge distraction?

"Just the opposite," [Tebow says](#). "It's by far the best thing I do to get myself ready. Here you are, about to play a game that the world says is the most important thing in the world. Win and they praise you. Lose and they crush you. And here I have a chance to talk to the coolest, most courageous people. It puts it all into perspective. The game doesn't really matter. I mean, I'll give 100 percent of my heart to win it, but in the end, the thing I most want to do is not win championships or make a lot of money, it's to invest in people's lives, to make a difference."

Tebow is just one of a vast number of professional athletes that give back to their communities. He just said it really, really well! And it is a good reminder that one's personal priorities can be kept straight even in the midst of a lot of distractions. Which challenges me to do the same. And maybe so for you, too!

In Jesus,

**Dr. T**

Pastor, Bethlehem Presbyterian Church



As we are beginning a New Year our thoughts turn to the past, 2011, and our future, 2012.

What are we grateful for...let's give THANKS and PRAISE to our Heavenly Father. What are we anticipating, hoping for and working towards for 2012?

2011 was a growing year at Bethlehem. We added 9 new members, who in turn, brought smiles; a warm friendly spirit and willingness to roll up their sleeves to become an active participant. Bless you! Names of new members are Lea Walker, Tom Croxton, Louise Ross, Jerry and Sharon Smith, Charles and Sharon Robinson. Gene and Juanita Cain have reunited themselves with Bethlehem. We thank God for you all and look forward to serving Him with you in the days ahead.

A heartfelt THANK YOU to all who have served on the Evangelism Team this year! Your energy, time and talents have brought results and been appreciated. They will lead us into 2012.

2012 promises us days to look forward to more growth, new smiles, new faces, and people to share the love of Christ. Our working together and reaching out to those in need....some lonely, some happy; others in a valley and still others on a mountain top. All of us, however, facing tomorrow with the need of the Savior and His Love.

Jeremiah 29: 11-13."For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart."

May 2012 find each of you seeking Him and finding Him with all of your heart. Bless you people of Bethlehem.

**Transfer from the PC(USA) to the EPC Update. The third meeting of this process is scheduled for Sunday, February 19 at 3:00pm**



Our Christmas play, "Hay - A Stable Experience", was a huge success with the children acting, singing and talking their way through the nativity story. As we enter this new year I will try to remember what the angel Gabriel (played by Gabriel) shouted to us; "Do not be afraid", for God is always with us in all that we face each day!

I would like to thank all who generously donated to the preschool this past year. Your contributions allow us to continue this ministry to the community and provide high-scope enrichment program for the children.

The preschool brought in the new year with a celebration and noise makers and countdowns. We have begun a unit on the fruits of the spirit and are trying to memorize the bible verse for the month.

The preschool used the serving room for snack and lunchtime. IF you are using the tables and chairs please return them to the serving room when finished so they will be ready for the children on Monday morning.

This Fall we have another student with a peanut allergy. **Please note: If any group is using the preschool rooms remember to wash the tables and chairs when food is served and take out the trash.**

In Christ's love,  
Robin Graham



## February Mission Project

**Mission & Service Ministry Team** Our mission project for this month is Loaves & Fishes. As always, we will continue to collect canned goods throughout the year for this organization. (large plastic container in both the entrance of sanctuary & at the front of the multipurpose room). In addition, a monetary collection will be taken the last Sunday in February.

The Mission and Service Team want to thank all of you who contributed various items for the benefit of Turning Point during January.



## Celebrate Recovery is Underway!

As of January 12, we are committed to help people on the Road to Recovery! It is for people open to a better way of living in the area of Anger, Co-dependency, Rejection, Forgiveness Issues, Eating Disorders, the Need to Control, and Addictive Behaviors of all sorts! Come see what it is all about. We begin with a time of worship every Thursday, 7pm (come early for refreshments).



### Reminder to congregation:

Please be sure to check doors as you are leaving the premises from Church

activities; they need to be locked when nobody's here! Also: please do not wonder around the Multi-Purpose Room during week-day morning hours; the safety of our Pre-schoolers is an utmost concern for us. Only our Preschool employees and parents dropping off or picking up children need to be in that area Monday-Thursday before 1:00pm. Please remind others. Thank you!

### Refocus for Lent

- Give up complaining — focus on gratitude.
- Give up harsh judgments — think kind thoughts.
- Give up worry — trust God to provide.
- Give up discouragement — be full of hope.
- Give up bitterness — turn to forgiveness.
- Give up hatred — return good for evil.
- Give up anger — be more patient.
- Give up pettiness — become mature.
- Give up jealousy — pray for trust.
- Give up gossiping — control your tongue.
- Give up sin — turn to virtue.
- Give up giving up — persevere.

—Author unknown



## Congregational Giving At A Glance

	<u>January 2012</u>	<u>2012 YTD</u>
<b>Regular Offerings</b>	<b>\$12,916.20</b>	<b>\$12,916.20</b>
<b>Mission Offerings</b>	<b>\$15,239.00</b>	<b>\$15,239.00</b>

### Pack well



During Lent, as we focus on Christ's journey to the cross, let's also examine the journey of our lives. The first task when leaving on any adventure is packing. What have you placed in your bag? Are you weighed down with temptations, self-doubt, money worries, relationship troubles? Have you overlooked any important items? Maybe your bag feels too empty for the challenges ahead. Remember to pack mercy, grace and forgiveness.

Thanks to Easter, we know that our journey in Christ continues, even when the road becomes difficult. So as you prepare for Lent, carry with you the hope made possible by Jesus' sacrifice on our behalf. —Based on the "Journey to Hope" sermon series, [www.rethinkchurch.org/lent](http://www.rethinkchurch.org/lent)



"When I said we should put the magic back in our marriage, Steve ..."



**\*THIS MONTH'S\***  
**birthdays**

- 6th Jan Haigler, Ken Thomas
- 7th Banks Huntley
- 8th Vivian Belk, Ann Price
- 9th Kim Hinson
- 10th Riley Watwood, Mallory Wilhelm
- 15th Everette Hall, Louise Mullis
- 18th Hayden Clontz
- 24th Brenda Gaddy
- 28th Kerry Price

If your birthday is not listed or if you are not sure we have your birthday, please call the church office so we can make sure we have it for the future!



**\*THIS MONTH'S\***  
**anniversaries**

- February 14 Bill & Cathy Deason**
- February 17 Bill & Virginia Moss**

If your anniversary is not listed or if you are not sure we have your anniversary, please call the church office so we can make sure we have it for the future!

I want to thank the church for my Christmas gift. I appreciate all the support you have given me over the past 10 years. That's right, 10 years. In March I will be celebrating 10 years with Bethlehem. Time sure flies when you're having fun!!

Debbie



**Volunteer**  
**Schedule**

*February 2012*

- February 5 -**  
**8:45 Greeters: Patricia Kindley**  
**8:45 Nursery: Pat Sloan & Jessie Price**  
**11:00 Ushers: Bob & Amy Currie**  
**11:00 Nursery: Jan Haigler**  
**Open Church: Patricia Kindley**  
**Close Church: Gerald Gaddy**

- February 12 -**  
**8:45 Greeters: Bill & Kara Lemon**  
**8:45 Nursery: Alisa & Mallory Wilhelm**  
**11:00 Ushers: Scott & Mary Ann Cuthbertson**  
**11:00 Nursery: Brenda Huntley**  
**Open Church: Danny Philemon**  
**Close Church: B.B. Haigler**

- February 19 -**  
**8:45 Greeters: McConnaughey Family**  
**8:45 Nursery: Elaine & Aspen Holeman**  
**11:00 Ushers: Gerald Gaddy**  
**11:00 Nursery: Lazette Thomas**  
**Open Church: Don Price**  
**Close Church: George Sloan**

- February 26 -**  
**8:45 Greeters: Danny & Gayle Philemon**  
**8:45 Nursery: Polly Knight & Hannah Ferreira**  
**11:00 Ushers: Johnny & Carolyn Gordon**  
**11:00 Nursery: Faye Vicars**  
**Open Church: Tom Aldridge**  
**Close Church: Tilden Belk**

**\*\*Please Note: Please exchange dates with someone if you can not be at church on your assigned Sunday. Thanks you for your help and cooperation.**



*Love Never Ends*

## The Undecided

The moment I stepped outside tonight after the second congregational meeting for the change from the PCUSA, I felt both enlightened and frustrated. These were two emotions that I didn't expect. I thought that once I had more information, I would feel better about making my decision. However, I was still just as undecided and just as frustrated as I had been before the meeting.

I was extremely excited by the exchange of ideas, concerns, and feelings from all of the committee members. The questions were well thought out, and the replies were equally expressed. I was both surprised and glad to hear from one of the Presbytery members that they were willing to listen to ways that the Presbytery could change in order to keep Bethlehem from leaving. That generated some of the most interesting comments of the evening.

I also was surprised to hear what Gary McCrimmon had to say regarding how his home church handled the current issues facing all Presbyterians today. I had no idea that there might be a third option. I have to openly wonder if this option of not leaving the PCUSA and compromising on one of the main issues could be a possibility for us.

However, after hearing the majority of the comments during the question and answer session, I would have to conclude that that is probably not an option that most people would be willing to consider. I respect the fact that most people have studied the issues, prayed, and have already made their decision. But my husband and I have not.

One person tonight suggested that these meetings were a complete waste of time, and that we should just go ahead and vote now. I beg to differ. Maybe it's because we're from a younger generation. Maybe it's because we haven't been members for very long. Maybe it's because we're not as strong in our faith. We don't really know. All we know is that we need more information. We need more prayer. We need more time.

Then another person from the congregation called for all the people who supported the session to stand. I'm sure the people surrounding me were surprised to see that I didn't stand. I couldn't. I felt that if I stood that would mean that I was decided. That I was casting my vote, and I just couldn't do that. I completely support our session and believe that they are doing an excellent job, but I felt it was inappropriate to ask everyone to express their opinion by standing right then and right there. It divided us.

I'm so very tired of being made to feel like there is either a right vote or a wrong vote. If I'm with the change from PCUSA, I'm right. If I'm against the change, I'm wrong. Scott and I don't want to make a *right* decision, or a *wrong* decision. We want to make an *informed* decision. So, for those of you who are so sure of your vote, I envy you, but please SLOW YOUR ROLL! There are those of us who still need more time. Please, please, please be patient with us.

I know that in the end there will be votes for both sides. I also know that each member of the congregation will prayerfully consider what they think is best. I just hope that all of us will be secure in our decision, secure in our God, and secure in Bethlehem.



## St. Valentine's sacrifice

Every February 14, we celebrate the loved ones in our lives with cards, flowers and chocolate. But Valentine's Day has another meaning that's been lost.

First declared a holiday by King Henry VIII of England in 1537, it commemorates the beheading of St. Valentine on February 14, 270 A.D. His crime? Performing wedding ceremonies after Roman Emperor Claudius II had outlawed marriage.

Valentine was martyred for faithfully doing the work God had given him. Although it's good to celebrate love and marriage, let's also remember the courage of a man who gave his life following his convictions.

## **Session Briefs for January 10, 2012**

Rev. Thomas, moderator, opened the meeting with prayer. All elders were present. Patsy Cuthbertson shared the devotion, "Giving of Yourself", with scripture reference from Philippians 2:13.

Three new elders were welcomed – Kara Lemon, Eric Thomas and Mike Wilhelm.

**Treasurer's Report** – Kara Lemon shared a financial summary of the church from January 1 through January 9, 2012.

### **Ministry Team Reports:**

**Building and Grounds** – Bill Moss reported:

- A. Fellowship Hall tile still an on going matter.
- B. Roof on church office needing repair from storm damage

**Christian Education** – Mike Wilhelm's team to meet on January 11, 2012.

**Congregational Care** – Eric Thomas stated that the monthly Senior lunch will be at Mac's in Monroe on January 11 and 11:30 a.m.

**Evangelism** – Patsy Cuthbertson stated that a handout for the congregation will be ready soon.

**Mission and Service** – Charles Greene reported:

- A. Four new members have been added to team.
- B. Food program to schools is going well with "thank you" cards from several recipients.
- C. In January, Turning Point of Monroe will be helped.
- D. On January 12, the first meeting of Celebrate Recovery will begin.

**Personnel and Finance** – Kara Lemon receiving budget requests from team leaders.

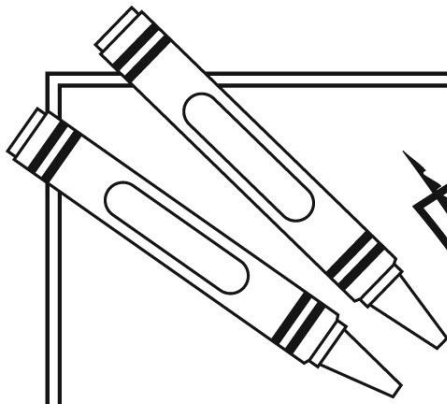
**Pre-school** – Carolyn Gordon stated that a \$2000.00 donation has been made to the pre-school and they have a new member on their committee.

### **Old Business:**

- A. Letter sent from our church requesting Presbytery to appoint alternates for their discernment team members.
- B. Joe Cuthbertson, Johnny Gordon and B.B. Haigler appointed to negotiation team in transfer to EPC.

Next Session meeting will be February 14, 2012 at 7:00 pm in the Jones classroom.

In Christ,  
Don Price



# PUZZLE

## WORD RECOGNITION

In a letter to the church in Colossae, the apostle Paul wrote about the importance of forgiveness.

### •••• DIRECTIONS ••••

To complete Colossians 3:13 (NIV), use the smaller words to fill in the larger words.



gain	as	or	ear	van	an	for	give
gave	her	on	it	one	other	he	an a

ot \_\_\_\_\_ d \_\_\_\_\_ give  
 \_\_\_\_\_ e an \_\_\_\_\_ if \_\_\_\_\_ y  
 of you h\_\_\_\_\_ grie\_\_\_\_\_ ce  
 For \_\_\_\_\_ as t\_\_\_\_\_ L\_\_\_\_\_ d  
 for \_\_\_\_\_ you.”

COLOSSIANS 3:13, NIV

Answers: "Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgive you." Colossians 3:13, NIV

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# Star of Bethlehem

Bethlehem Presbyterian Church

**Mission:**

**To glorify God  
by leaving a legacy of faith  
to succeeding generations through  
the proclamation of the good news of Jesus  
in word and deed,  
by the power of the Holy Spirit.**

**We will accomplish our mission by:**

**Abiding in Christ** - *I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing* - John 15:5

We are a community of believers who seek to dwell in the presence of Jesus and who strive to grow into maturity in our relationship with God in Christ. We will encourage others to do the same.

**Loving Others as Christ** - *This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends.* - John 15:12-13  
We are a community of believers who seek to respond to Jesus' grace in our lives by loving others with his love.

**Inviting others to Christ** - *"Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved." But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him? And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent? - Romans 10:13-15a Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.* Matthew 28:19-20

We are a community of believers who blessed by the presence of Jesus and provision of God the father will invite all those within our sphere of influence into the saving presence of Jesus.