May 2024

245 S. Church St.
Spartanburg, SC 29306
864-585-4801
bethelmethodist.org
Child Enrichment Program 864-585-8356

As I write to you, I am listening to the livestream of the United Methodist Church's General Conference that is taking place in Charlotte, NC. Depending on when you read this, the conference may be ongoing, or it may have already ended. We still do not know the full outcome of the proceedings occurring in Charlotte. Some of what is decided will then have to go and be shared at our Annual Conference here in South Carolina. I have shared some of my thoughts on social media about General Conference so I thought I would offer a few here as well.

No matter what happens at General Conference, everyone will be disappointed. Either it will be too much or too little change. Either it will come too slowly or too quickly. No one will be completely satisfied. And that's kind of the point. Because here's the thing, they are never going to get everything right at this General Conference. That's why we have another scheduled for 2026. And in all likelihood, there will be another General Conference after that one. We talk about 'working toward perfection' not being perfect. That sanctifying grace that continues to work on us as individuals and collectively as a denomination, as a conference, and as a local church, is one of the many reasons why I love the United Methodist way of being a follower of Christ.

I was at a gathering with Bishop Ken Carter and he offered us this thought about General Conference and two competing ideas. First, he said, General Conference matters tremendously. What will transpire over the next few weeks will have a significant impact for the future of the United Methodist church. Secondly, at the very same time, most folks in the world will be unaffected by what happens at General Conference. That's a sobering thought and helpful for perspective.

Yes it matters, but only inasmuch as we allow it to positively impact the way in which we serve Jesus Christ in the world around us. No matter what happens at General Conference, we are still in the Easter season, "Christ is risen, He is risen indeed!", and we live on this side of the Resurrection. That is a great place to be. May God work as only God can at General Conference, at Bethel UMC, and most importantly in each of our hearts as we seek to be faithful disciples of Jesus.

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Brad

Last year Epworth Children's Home served over 1,400 children and families through their statewide programs. Each of these children had this opportunity because of churches in South Carolina who embrace and provide for this ministry. On Sunday, May 12th, 2024, we will participate in the annual Mother's Day Offering to benefit the children who call Epworth home, as well as each child and family touched by Epworth's ministries. Please be in prayerful consideration of what God is calling you to give to this valuable and life changing ministry. For more information about Epworth Children's Home, visit them online at www.epworthchildrenshome.org.

Graduation Sunday is May 19th. We will recognize our graduates during both Contemporary and Traditional worship. If your child is graduating from high school this year and you have not received correspondence from the youth department, please contact Chad Deetz ASAP at cdeetz.bethel@gmail.com so that we can make sure your student is involved in our celebration.

In Christian Sympathy

...from the ministers and congregation to the family and friends who recently passed:

Aaron Reynolds, son of Maxine Reynolds

Prayer Requests

Beth Brewer
Gary Brewer
Peggy Carlisle
Arthur Cumming
Mary Cummings
Lisa Durham
HJ Fleming
Cathy Hanks
David Holder
Toni Holder
Andrew Reitzel
Jerry Reitzel
Maxine Reynolds
Fred Robinson
Jake Sawyer
Layne Stone

Memorials and Honorariums

In Memory of Bob Strother
Operating Fund: Jim & Glenda Bivens

In Memory of Gail Allen
Trustee Fund: Pamela King

United Women in Faith

Our calendar year is winding down for United Women in Faith. We have had a busy spring with our Easter Sides Sale and Book Brunch. Our Easter Sides sale was a big success, bringing in more mission monies than we expected. Thank you to the bakers and casserole makers, and all of those who bought and donated monies to the sale.

The Book Brunch was an informative get-together hosted by Circle 4. Thank you, participants, for great book reviews in all 5 categories. It was a chance to find out more about the program and its impact on our member's faith journey, broadening our history, and some of the social and economic issues women, children, and youth are facing locally and globally.

As I close this newsletter on April 22, Earth Day, a reminder that United Women in Faith has been actively working and showing concern for God's creation for many years through our Climate Justice priorities. We have trained and equipped leaders for our Just Energy for All campaigns in the hopes of reducing gas emissions that harm us all, especially children.

At our Planning Meeting in May, we will decide who we will be distributing our mission monies to from our fall and spring fundraisers. Let us keep up our mission work and continue praying for our sisterhood of strong women at Bethel who love and support one another with their world-changing action.

Grateful,
Jan Fleming

Upcoming:
5/6: Planning Mtg. @ noon
5/9: Circle 8 meets @ 11:30 AM
5/21: Circle 2 meets @ 6 PM

	Sunday Date	In-Person	Gifts to Budget	Other Gifts
13	March 31	Worship: 527 Children: 28	$14,590	$539
14	April 7	Worship: 174 Children: 14	$17,513	$723
15	April 14	Worship: 202 Children: 20	$7,051	$169
16	April 21	Worship: 177 Children:	$10,545	$830

2024 Annual Budget:	***$1,047,704***
Goal per week:	*$19,768*
Year-to-date Budget Goal:	*$316,288*
Year-to-date Gifts Received:	***$239,501***
Remaining 2024 Goal:	***$808,203***

Be a VBS Volunteer!

We are excited about the upcoming Vacation Bible School this summer and aim to involve the entire church in this event! You are invited to serve in various roles throughout the week. Please scan the QR code to register and learn more about the roles we need filled. **All volunteers must complete Safe Sanctuary Certification by June 16th.**

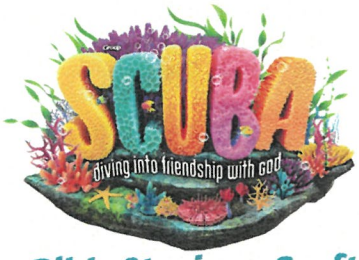
Vacation Bible School 2024

Sunday, June 23 - Thursday, June 27

6:00 pm - 8:30 pm

Dinner at 5:30 pm Monday - Thursday only

K4 thru rising 6th Grade



Scan to register

Bible Stories * Crafts * Music * Fun!

CONFIRMATION SUNDAY

Join us for Confirmation Sunday on May 5th and welcome Bethel's newest members!

Jack Cooper
Jamison Kimbrell
Hayley Moore
Lucas Rodgers
Aggie Romansky
Brayden Shealy

VBS Supplies

We would really appreciate your help with providing some items we will need for VBS.
If you have any of the following items around your house, please bring them to the Children's Wing.

Spray paint (used is fine)
Plastic bottle caps – from water bottles, 2 liters or milk
Colored straws
Easter grass
Egg crate mattress topper
Hard plastic bowls – various sizes
Zip ties
Colored wire ribbon

Wednesday Night Supper

May 1
Potato Bar and salad

May 8
Chicken tenders and potluck sides

May 15
Breakfast at Bethel
Pancakes, sausage, and fruit

May 22
Low Country Boil

*Menu may change. We will keep you updated.

SPARTANBURG LOVE WHERE YOU LIVE 5K · 10K · KIDS RUN

Join Bethel for the Love Where You Live 5k/10k on May 11! The event kicks off at 8:30 am with a Kid's Fun Run, followed by the 10k at 9 am and the 5k beginning at 9:20. An awards ceremony will take place at 10:30. To sign up, go to runsignup.com and search Love Where You Live. Click on teams and you will find Bethel Runners (don't worry, you don't need to run). We hope to see you there!

Executive Pastor
Rev. Brad Gray
Pastor of Discipleship & Belonging
Rev. Megan Gray
Director of Youth
Chad Deetz
Coordinator of Children's Ministry
Jennifer Bartless
Director of Music
Dale Fischer
Organist
Dr. Kristine Lee
Business Manager
Colette Duncan
Church Secretary
Shannon Evans
Church Hostess
Lisa Durham
Building Superintendent
Bob Werner
Custodians
Jacob Sawyer
Carlos Cobo (every other Sunday)
Child Enrichment Program
Chella Hamrick, Center Director

Office Hours
Mon – Thurs: 8:30 am – 4 pm
Fri: 8:30 am – 2 pm

May Birthdays

1	Lynda Sizemore	10	Mary-Taylor Gibson	25	Richard Scruggs
2	Anna Horner	11	Mary Jane Surka	25	Staci Wall
2	Carter Pitts	11	Jennifer Rodgers	26	Joan Hughes
2	Grayson Downs	12	Luke McIntyre	27	Colleen Cannon
3	Eric Gray	12	Jennifer Bartless	27	Katie Kulas
3	Matthew Fischer	12	Jacob Whitt	27	Lucas Rodgers
4	Linda Mauzy	14	Mia Lane	27	Cade Spears
5	Mary Thomas	14	Brad Sain	28	Jeffrey Reitzel
6	Mary Gee	15	Henry Cooper	28	Jaeden Cornett
6	Faith Sain	16	Alexander Green	29	Jan Fleming
6	Bowen Sain	17	Matthew Splawn	29	Madilyn Moore
6	Ava Romansky	17	Ethan Smith	30	Max Cauthen
7	Ryan Hanks	20	Reece Snead	30	Stacey Mason
7	Paige Bobo	21	Mike Woodrum	30	James Pogue
7	Isabel Helms	23	Faith Alspaugh	30	Patrice Daniel
8	Kelli Ann Wall	23	Deborah Labanick	31	Ji Hae Adams
9	Jack Burwell	23	Chris Lawrence	31	John Kellam
10	Betty Cannon	23	Katie Fleming	31	Vicki Rising
10	Richard Faulkner	24	David Holder		
10	Anna-Kay Pitts	24	Scott Rollins		
10	James Irwin	24	Mike White		
10	HJ Fleming	25	Dwight Lambert		
10	Coleman Huckabee	25	Charles Thomas		

Sundays

Worship Services

Contemporary Worship
9:00 am, Gym

Sunday School
10:00 am

Traditional Worship
11:00 am, Sanctuary

D Groups:
5th – 12th Grade
5:00 pm – 6:30 pm
for studies & activities
Fellowship Hall

Please check bethelmethodist.org for more information.

Wednesdays

Game Time –4:00 pm, Fellowship Hall
Family Supper – 5:30 pm, Fellowship Hall
Children's Choir – 5:30 pm
Small Groups – 6:00 pm
Youth Choir – 6:15 pm
God Squad – 6:30 – 7:30 pm
Youth Group – 7:00 – 8:00 pm
Sanctuary Choir – 7:00 pm

Our last Wednesday night is May 22nd

Sanctuary Choir will have rehearsals every Wednesday throughout May at 7:00 pm
No rehearsals for Children and Youth Choirs

Other Weekday Studies

Tuesday Morning Bible Study
10:15 am, Builders Classroom
Facilitator: Pastor Megan

Dates to Remember

May 5
Confirmation Sunday
11 am, Sanctuary

May 6
SPRC Meeting
6:30 pm, Conference Room

May 12
UWF Sunday

Epworth Mother's Day Offering

May 19
Graduation Sunday
Contemporary & Traditional Worship

May 20
Church Council
7 pm, Fellowship Hall

May 22
Last Wednesday Night Supper

May 27
Memorial Day
Church office closed