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

July/August 2025

I've had this thought percolating in my head for the last few weeks revolving around joy. Coming off a whirlwind of activity in my life and the life of the church in the first half of the year, I have been asking myself questions like, "did I enjoy that?", "is that a source of joy?", and "where is my joy in all this?" These questions might seem trite to you, but I believe that one of the things that we often get wrong when it comes to how we live together as a church family is that we forget to enjoy what we get to do. We become so focused on being obedient and doing all the right things for the right reasons, that joy is often forgotten or was never a part of the discussion to begin with.

Some years ago, pop culture became infatuated with an author and tv personality named Marie Kondo. You may remember the question that she posed when it came to de-cluttering one's life: "Does this spark joy?" If you answered yes, then you kept whatever you were talking about. If you answered no, the item or thing was discarded. Again, this may seem a boring and simplistic line of thinking, but I think she stumbled upon an ancient thought practice for people of faith. Joy is truly important. And what I have come to realize over the years and been reminded about lately is how contagious joy can be. I have seen it at baseball games down the road with the Spartanburgers. I have seen it at Vacation Bible School with all who participated, children, youth, and adults. I have even seen it recently while the United Methodist Church of South Carolina did business at Annual Conference, of all places. And if you can find joy, dare I say enjoy, Annual Conference, then you know God is up to something.

Friends, if our goal is to build the kingdom of God, to help people in their lives, and to make disciples of Jesus Christ, I wonder what role joy may play? I believe that as contagious as joy can be, others might want to come and be a part of a group of people who enjoy living together as the Body of Christ. May you find moments of joy to celebrate in your lives and may our joy increase at Bethel as we grow into what God is calling us to do and to be this season. I hope to see you soon!

Blessings and Peace,
Pastor Brad

	Sunday Date	In-Person	Gifts to Budget	Other Gifts
21	May 25	Worship: 42 Children:11	$5,564	$190
22	June 1	Worship: 149 Children: 10	$12,113	$1,062
23	June 8	Worship: 133 Children: 9	$7,455	$379
24	June 15	Worship: 148 Children:	$10,018	$692
25	June 22	Worship:128 Children:	$13,065	$109
26	June 29	Worship: 140 Children:n/a	$4,043	$662

2025 Annual Budget:	***$825,935***
Goal per week:	*$15,883*
Year-to-date Budget Goal:	*$412,968*
Year-to-date Gifts Received:	***$241,556***
Remaining 2024 Goal:	***$584,379***

In Christian Sympathy

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

Rusty Towery, son of Ann Towery

Memorial and Honorariums

In Memory of Bill Hill
Missions Fund: Judy Martin

In Memory of Rusty Towery
Operating Fund: Hattie Haulbrook

In Memory of Scott Trisler
Operating Fund: Hattie Haulbrook

United Women in Faith

Summer has officially arrived with a hot dome, and it covers Spartanburg! Our Circles are not letting the heat slow down their mission work in the community.

Lydia Circle has been busy with VBS, assisting in various roles. In the weeks ahead, they will visit Rosewood Assisted Living to hold another game of BINGO. Mary Circle will not meet this summer, and Susanna Circle will not meet in July; they will both resume in the fall.

All three Circles will participate in A Way Home at the end of the month by assisting Libbi Smith with providing meals, offering monetary support, and staying overnight.

The 2025 Mission U theme, "Practicing Hope Together", is once again very timely. The studies on adults, children, and youth remind us that we can get through the dim times and day-to-day challenges when we have hope together. At Bethel, when our Circles meet, we have hope, faith, and love together.

See you in September,
Jan

Upcoming:
7/17-7/19: Mission U at SMC.
8/13: Lydia Circle meets at 10 AM.

PRAYER list

Beth Brewer
Gary Brewer
Aaron Cohen
Judy Eaker
Matt Gilley
Blaine Gray
Cathy Hanks
David Holder
Toni Holder
Casey Miller
Patti Moran
Tracie Powell-Wilkin
Beverly Rakestraw
Jerry Reitzel
Maxine Reynolds
Linda Seifert
Scott Smith
Ann Towery
Shelley Winkler

Blessing of the Backpacks & Back to School Brunch

AUGUST 10th

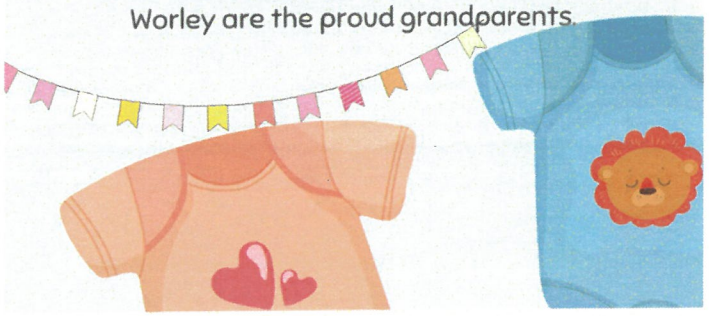
Join us for a back to school brunch at 10 am in the Fellowship Hall. Please bring a brunch dish to share.

Anyone and everyone returning to school this year, can bring their backpack to be blessed during both worship services.

Welcome to the World!

Alex and Erica Whitt welcomed a baby girl, Hannah Elizabeth, on June 11.

Bryan and Ashley Worley welcomed a son, Clark Brendan, on June 20. Don and Sheila Worley are the proud grandparents.



July Youth Schedule

Sunday Night Youth will meet July 6 & 27 from 5 pm – 6 pm
Wednesday Night Youth will meet July 23 from 5:30 – 7:30

July 2 & 30 Chad Chat, 12 pm – 3 pm We will eat lunch, learn more about the bible and play some games. Bring your ow n lunch. **July 2 & 9** Mission Training, 5:30 – 7:30 pm If you are going on the mission trip, you must attend. Come in clothes you don't mind getting dirty.	**July 8** Bucket Golf Championship 10 am – 2 pm Come and play in our Bucket Golf Tournament on a course built around our church. Bring money for lunch.	**July 9** Hang Day, 12 pm – 5:30 pm Bring your lunch and join us for games, sports, and hanging out.
July 13 - 19 Youth Mission Trip **July 20** Youth Mission Report in both services	**July 22** Movie Matinee, 11 am – 4 pm We will grab lunch and catch a movie with Children's Ministry. Cost is $10 plus money for lunch.	**July 25** Youth Lock-In, 8 pm – 8 am Hang out and play games all night! There will be food and fun! Cost is $10.
July 31 F is for Fun Dinner Date 5:30 pm – 9:30 pm We will grab dinner at Fuji and then catch the new Fantastic Four movie. Bring $10 for the movie and money for dinner.		

The Next Step: A Service of Confession, Lament, and Hope

Bethel UMC has been through a lot over the last few years. On Sunday, August 10th, at 5 pm we will have a special worship service that we have designed to help us focus on what God has brought us through, where God meets us today, and what God is calling us to do and be in the future. This worship experience is designed for those who desire a space and time to process their grief in relation to the church-wide vote to remain United Methodist that was held on August 11th of last year. Gathering a full year later, we will have a time of confession, public lamentation, and a reminder of God's hope amid loss and despair. If you still struggle with any grief in your life, this will be a safe space to be with others during a sacred time of worship.

August 31st (Labor Day Weekend) will be a combined worship service at 10 am in the Sanctuary.
Be sure to mark your calendar!

The church office will be closed September 1st .

Executive Pastor
Rev. Brad Gray
Director of Youth
Chad Deetz
Coordinator of Children's Ministry
Jennifer Bartless
Director of Music
Dale Fischer
Organist
Dr. Kristine Lee
Church Secretary
Shannon Evans
Financial Secretary
Donna Hopkins
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: 9:00 am – 4 pm
Fri: 9:00 am – 12 pm

Spartanburg United Methodist Churches Night

The Hub City Spartanburgers are hosting another UM churches night. This game will take place on August 20 at 6:35 pm. To purchase your tickets, go to gofevo.com/event/Bethelunited3. Purchase deadline is August 18.

During the month of July, we will continue our focus on Jesus' invitation to welcome and care for strangers based on Matthew 25. Our work with a Way Home as well as the youth mission trip to eastern North Carolina will be the concrete ways in which we provide care. If you are interested in financially supporting these mission opportunities, please designate your giving as such. The month of August, our focus will be on those who Thirst. Stay tuned for more information on our August mission focus.

Sundays

Worship Services

Contemporary Worship
9:00 am, Fellowship Hall

Sunday School
10:00 am

Traditional Worship
11:00 am, Sanctuary

Sunday Night Youth
5 pm – 6 pm

Please check bethelmethodist.org for more information.

Wednesdays

God Squad – 5:30 – 7:30 pm
Youth Group – 5:30 – 7:30 pm

Bethel Connects, Children and Youth Sunday School, and Special Ed. will not meet during the month of July.

Dates to Remember

July 4
Church office closed

July 13 - 19
Youth Mission Trip

July 20
Youth Mission Report
Both worship services

August 10
Blessing of the Backpacks
Both worship services

Back to School Brunch
10 am, Fellowship Hall

August 18
Trustees Meeting
6:30 pm, Conference Room

August 25
Finance Meeting
6 pm, Conference Room

August 31
Combined Worship
10 am, Sanctuary

1	Dori Helms
1	Mia Miles
2	Holly Hartell
3	Cory Rodgers
5	Mark Mahaffey
7	Shelley Winkler
7	Sheila Worley
7	Mark McMahan
8	Katherine Horner
9	Susan Hendrix
9	Kay Melba
9	Abigail Duclos
10	Marilyn Culverhouse
13	Libbi Smith
13	Missy Powell
14	Nate Helms
16	Robert Glenn
16	John Melba
16	Morgan Burns
16	Darby Dill
18	Judy Martin
20	Al Williams
20	Dan Bargar
20	Connie Culver Long
20	John Allison
21	Mary Grace Reitzel
21	Robbie Cooper
23	Bryan Hoffmann
23	Ella Nichols
23	Judy Collins
23	Brad Gray
26	Anna Mahaffey
26	Keith Kulas
27	Ann Blumer
27	Tracy Mahaffey
28	Marie O'Dell
29	Olivia Summer

1	Rick Scruggs
1	Clay Terrell
2	Joseph Cox
3	Nancy Lambert
4	Isaac Gray
4	Chad Huckabee
5	Ayaz Surka
5	Marci Bowen
5	Jerry Ellsworth
5	Cannon Brady
9	Nicholas McIntyre
9	Anna Troutt
9	Cam Smith
10	Melissa Al-Khalil
10	Jack Lewis
11	Mattthew Painter
11	Sarah Hartell
11	Erica Whitt
11	Jon Brady
12	Irma Graham
12	Nicholas Gazda
14	Joyce Strawhorn
15	Kim Jolley
15	Peyton Ivey
18	Ginger Boyle
19	Jerry Reitzel
21	Carol Charles
21	Mary Kellam
21	Kaitlyn Brady
22	Anna Kellam
23	Jim Merrill
23	Sally Moore
23	Ann Towery
23	Hayley Moore
23	Lance Johnson
25	Caroline Horner
26	Coleman Nichols
27	Becky Gibson
28	Heidi Gazda
30	Darrell McNeill
31	Toni Holder