

BETHANY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Bethlehem, Pennsylvania 18018

Hours: Mon, Tues and Thurs. 9:30-1:30

Church Office: 610-868-4441

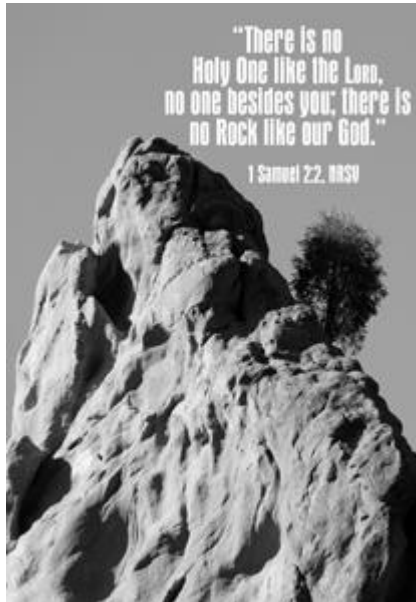
E-Mail: bethanyunitedchurch@rcn.com

Web address: www.uccbethany.org

Pastor Todd Fennell

Matt Miller, Consistory President

Susan Wright, Director of Music



August 27, 2023 Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

“Moving Forward United in Faith”

“Committed to Christ, United by Love. We are about God, Christ, the Word, and the Future. No matter who you are or where you are on Life’s journey, you are welcome here. We are Bethany United Church of Christ.”

BETHANY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

August 27, 2023

10:00 AM

We encourage our visitors to include their name, address, and phone number in the Guest Book at the top of the steps and come again. If you are looking for a church home, we invite you to become part of the community of faith and mission here at Bethany.

(* PLEASE STAND AS YOU ARE ABLE
(Bold Text is said or sung by everyone)

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

JOYFUL NOISE: To benefit those affected by the fires on Maui.

PRELUDE: "The Church's One Foundation" ...arr. K. mc Chesney
Handbell Choir

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Give thanks and praise to the Holy One!

Many: We bow down in reverence as we, the temple of the Living God, gather for worship.

One: Sing praises with your whole heart!

Many: We exalt our God who is faithful and steadfast in love.

One: Hear the word of our great and glorious God!

Many: We listen in anticipation for the Sovereign One remembers God's people.

*HYMN: #546 Built On the Rock

*PRAYER OF INVOCATION (unison)

O God, in so many ways You reveal Yourself to us, though we do not always recognize You. We yearn to

learn more about You through the life, death, and resurrection of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Thank You for the witness and testimony of others. Open our hearts and minds to know more about Your actions in our lives each day. Enable us to see You more clearly in order that we might follow Your Son more nearly. Amen.

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

Pastor: The peace of Christ be with you.

People: **And also, with you.**

***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE (unison): #50 Great is the Lord vs.1**

Great is the Lord, he is holy and just; by his power we trust in his love. Great is the Lord, he is faithful and true; by his mercy he proves he is love. Great is the Lord and worthy of glory! Great is the Lord and worthy of praise. Great is the Lord; now lift up your voice, now lift up your voice; Great is the Lord! Great is the Lord!

READING OF SCRIPTURE

Romans 12: 1-8

*Matthew 16: 13-20

Leader: This is the Good News

People: **Thanks be to God!**

SERMON: "You can call me Peter"

FUTURING PROJECT UPDATE: Matt Miller

OFFERING INVITATION

OFFERING OF OUR TITHES and GIFTS

OFFERTORY: "Upon the Rock of Faith" ... R. Reed
Chancel Choir

***OFFERTORY RESPONSE: #34 Doxology**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below; praise him above, ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION:**

Holy One, we thank you for revealing yourself to us and through us with abundance and flourishing. Give us generous hearts. May our offerings offer a testimony honoring your provision and giving glory to your name. Receive these gifts and magnify them for the needs of your creation. Amen.

SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

CALL TO PRAYER – PASTORAL PRAYER - THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

***HYMN: #544 The Church's One Foundation**

***BENEDICTION**

***CHORAL BENEDICTION: #405 My Hope is Built (refrain only)**

On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand; all other ground is sinking sand; all other ground is sinking sand.

POSTLUDE

Our worship ends, our service begins!



FLOWERS: and Bulletins: are dedicated to the honor and Glory of God by Len and Rebecca Kesselring

GREETERS: Judy & George Morgan

USHERS: Tom Hoffert, Jack Brunner

LAY READER: Phil Haines

Scriptures

Romans 12: 1 – 8 NRSV

12 Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. ² Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. ³ For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. ⁴ For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, ⁵ so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. ⁶ We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; ⁷ if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; ⁸ if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

Matthew 16: 13 - 20 NRSV

¹³ When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say the Son of Man is?”
¹⁴ They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”
¹⁵ “But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?”
¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.”
¹⁷ Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven.”
¹⁸ And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock, I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.
¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”
²⁰ Then he ordered his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

Task Force

Bethany now has a Task Force to work on the Futuring Project. Serving are Eric Derr, Matt Miller, Lisa Nguyen, Dick Roberts and John Talijan. Please keep the Task Force in your prayers.

Bethany Dart team will be defending its Championship title for the 2023-24 season. If you are interested in some fun and fellowship, and a little bit of friendly competition against other local churches, contact Steve Tarasuk team captain. stephen.tarasuk@gmail.com
Talk or text (610)554-0125

Rummage Sale

Rummage Sale donations can now be brought to Bethany for the Oct. 6th and Oct. 7th sale. Please bring them to the Sunday school room to the right of the stage. Thank you!

Joyful Noise

Today will be a Joyful Noise Collection to benefit the people of the Maui fires which have devastated the west end of the island, including some of our churches.



Mark Your Calendars!

On Sunday September 17th we will have our final worship of the summer in Fellowship Hall as we celebrate with an Indoor Church Picnic. We will worship @ 10:45 then follow with our world-famous potluck and hot dogs. Please plan to attend and if you'd like to volunteer to help with any part of this event, please contact the office. Maybe you'd like to run some games or some other post lunch activities. Think about it, you know you want to.

Task force update

Greetings to all,

As a preface to the update, I wanted to answer three questions that some of our task force members have been confronted with since the inception of the team One, what was the process in determining the current makeup of the task force? I was looking for a mix of age, gender, longevity of membership and if possible, and previous actual experience in effort like we are now pursuing, IN the end we met those objectives (almost).

- Dick Roberts and Lisa Nguyen long-time members (in Lisa's case 4 generations of her family).
- Eric Derr- newest member who also had prior experience in the area of mergers with his previous church.
- John Talijan- a new member who has jumped in feet first since attending.
- Me- as president of the consistory I could be the communication bridge between the task force, the governing body (i.e., consistory) and the congregation at large.

NOTE; John Talijan is not currently able to serve on the task force due to his illness Two, why only five members?

My experience on these types of transitional task forces played a role in determining the size.

My experience has shown that the more extensive a strategic task force team is, the less effective they're likely to be. The sweet spot is around five team members. Big enough to have a range of skills, experiences and abilities. Small enough to be nimble and quick.

Three, what is the objective of the futuring project effort?

This is a reminder that the primary objective for this task force is to take the critical steps in exploring other congregations for Bethany to join and/or form a new congregation through the merger of two or more congregations.

The first steps in supporting the project objective are underway. We first identified churches that met the following

initial criteria. One, within close proximity of current active membership (in this case this was a 15–20-minute drive time) and two, be a UCC or Union congregation. With those criteria in mind, we have identified three churches for which we will be attending their services, and then meeting key stakeholders post-service. Each church supplied us with their annual report.

They are

St. Thomas UCC in Bethlehem (Macada Rd.) on Sunday September 17th

St. John's UCC in Bethlehem Township (Farmersville) on Sunday, September 24th

St. John's UCC in Fullerton (Grape St.- Whitehall)- on Sunday, October 1 (tentative)

Besides getting the feel of the congregation's response to new people (welcoming, nurturing) and the relevance and power of the sermon and its message, we have a set of questions that we will ask at the post-service meeting with those key stakeholders to further establish the viability of moving forward with that church.


NOTE; We welcome any who wish to attend the services for that church on those dates, please feel free to do so. Also, with John's uncertain role at this point, I would like to extend an invitation to one or two more people who would like to be part of this task force.

I will be part of this Sunday's service to answer any additional questions that you may have.

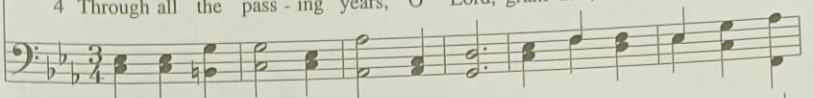
Thanks to all of you for your support in our efforts.

Your brother in Christ,
Matthew Miller

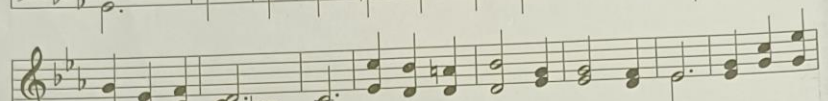
Built on the Rock



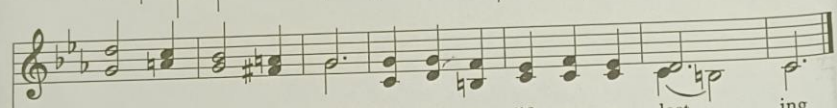
1 Built on the Rock the Church does stand, e - ven when stee - ples are
 2 Not in a tem - ple made with hands God the Al - might - y is
 3 We are God's house of liv - ing stones built for his own hab - i -
 4 Through all the pass - ing years, O Lord, grant that, when church bells are



fall - ing; Christ builds his church in ev - ery land; bells still are
 dwell - ing; high in the heavens his tem - ple stands, all earth - ly
 ta - tion; he fills our hearts, his hum - ble thrones, grant - ing us
 ring - ing, man - y may come to hear God's word where he this



chim - ing and call - ing, call - ing the young and old to rest, call - ing the
 tem - ples ex - cel - ling. Yet he who dwells in heaven a - bove choo - ses to
 life and sal - va - tion. Were two or three to seek God's face, he in their
 prom - ise is bring - ing: "I know my own, my own know me; you, not the



souls of those dis - tressed, long - ing for life ev - er - last - ing.
 live with us in love, mak - ing our bod - ies his tem - ple.
 midst would show his grace, bless - ings up - on them be - stow - ing.
 world, my face shall see; my peace I leave with you. A - men."

WORLD MUSIC BY S. Gaudreix (1783-1872); tr. Carl Doving (1867-1937)

KIRKEN DEN ER E
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544 The Church's One Foundation

1 The Church's one foun - da - tion is Je - sus Christ her Lord;
 2 E - lect from ev - ery na - tion, yet one o'er all the earth,
 3 Though with a scorn - ful won - der we see her sore op - pressed,
 4 'Mid toil and trib - u - la - tion, and tu - mult of her war,
 5 Yet she on earth hath un - ion with God, the Three in One,

she is his new cre - a - tion, by wa - ter and the word:
 her char - ter of sal - va - tion: one Lord, one faith, one birth;
 by schisms rent a - sun - der, by her - e - sies dis - tressed:
 she waits the con - sum - ma - tion of peace for - ev - er - more,
 and mys - tic sweet com - mun - ion with those whose rest is won:

from heaven he came and sought her to be his ho - ly bride;
 one ho - ly name she bless - es, par - takes one ho - ly food;
 yet saints their watch are keep - ing, their cry goes up, "How long?"
 till with the vi - sion glo - rious her long - ing eyes are blest,
 O hap - py ones and ho - ly! Lord, give us grace that we,

with his own blood he bought her, and for her life he died.
 and to one hope she press - es with ev - ery grace en - dued.
 and soon the night of weep - ing shall be the morn of song.
 and the great Church vic - to - rious shall be the Church at rest.
 like them, the meek and low - ly, on high may dwell with thee.

AUREL

THIS WEEK AT BETHANY

SUNDAY, AUGUST 27

10AM Worship in Fellowship Hall

MONDAY, AUGUST 28

9:30AM 1:30PM Office Hours

TUESDAY, AUGUST 29

9:30AM 1:30PM Office Hours

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 30

No Rehearsal

THURSDAY, AUGUST 31

9:30AM 1:30PM Office Hours

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 3

10AM Worship in Fellowship Hall



Please remember to provide the office with any address changes as I would like to issue a new directory. Please email the office or write the information on a paper and leave it in the office. A copy is on the back table please verify information is correct. This is your last chance I plan to run new directories next week. Thanks!