

The Ladder



A Publication of

New Bethel UMC

December 2017

Glen Carbon's United Methodist Congregation

Advent 2017 Sermons

December 3rd

Waiting with Unanswered Prayer

December 10th

A Season of Silence

December 17th

In the Refiner's Fire

Also the Christmas Cantata:

Silent Was The Night

December 24th Morning Services

(8:15 & 10:45)

God's Perfect Timing

December 24th Evening Services

(4:30 & 11)

Lessons from Bethlehem

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

"Just a Little Christmas"

Everyone is invited to come hear the Christmas story, then enjoy our celebration of the holiday season after, in the Fellowship Hall.



CHRISTMAS CANTATA

"Silent Was the Night"

Experience the calm, quiet celebration of Christmas.

The Cantata will be shared
Sunday, December 17,
8:15a and 10:45a services

Pastor's Pen:

There's a chorus running through my head this morning that goes something like this:

*There'll be joy,
There'll be joy,
There'll be joy, joy, joy, joy, joy;
There'll be joy,
There'll be joy,
There'll be joy in the morning!
There'll be joy....*

Christmas is a wonderful season of joy and I, for one, am feeling it! I hope you are. Our church is beautifully decorated, our choir and our children are practicing for their Christmas specials, and the youth are getting ready to shop for a family they are sponsoring. Our younger kids did a great job on Sunday lighting the Advent Candle, reading the liturgy, and placing some figures in the manger. Our musicians led us in beautiful music, and the Bible story reminded us that God is with us, even when we don't feel like God is listening...Jesus is still our Immanuel.

Last night, my husband and I sat together in our family room and watched the Carol Burnett 50th anniversary show. Howard had taped it from Sunday night. As we sat there laughing heartily at the humor and antics of Carol, Tim Conway, and Harvey Korman, I found myself feeling so blessed, so warm and secure and happy... And then I heard a loud peal of thunder – yes, thunder – as a beautiful evening rain-storm swept through. We had the patio screen door open and the sounds and the smell of the rain and the beautiful lightning, only added to the serenity. Ah, to hear heaven and nature sing... Joy is in this world, indeed.

Whatever the challenges of the season are for you this year, I hope you'll find moments of joy. Whether walking through the malls and stores, and even the hospitals, try to keep a lookout for joy. Spend good time with family and friends. Attend church regularly. Have fun wrapping gifts and baking cookies. Try to stop and listen when heaven and nature sing. And remember whose birthday we're celebrating!

This is a beautiful season, and a day that the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it! Seize the joy, the wonderful joy of Christmas! It is part of God's gift to our world. I hope your December is full of it!

See you at the Joy-Full Place,

Pastor Penny



HISTORICAL NOTE:

The population of Palestine in Jesus' time was approximately 500,000 to 600,000. That's about the size of the cities of Boston or Jerusalem today! Around 18,000 of those residents were clergy, priests, and Levites. Jerusalem itself was a city of around 55,000 people, but during major feasts, the population swelled to perhaps 180,000! What did the children of Jesus' time do for fun? Among other things, the children played games similar to hopscotch and jacks. Whistles, rattles, and toy animals on wheels were popular, and hoops and spinning tops, too! How do we know this? Archaeologists have found these toys. Older children and adults found time for games, too. It seems a form of checkers was quite popular in Jesus' time....

THANK YOU to:

John and Donna Kutz, Larry Metter, and Beyer Auto Body for the beautiful re-do and upgrade of the Ladies' Restroom downstairs!

All who donated and helped pack the Thanksgiving Meal Boxes. The families who received them were very appreciative. **Special thanks** to **Dan Black, Jim and Kathy Jeffries, and Linda Lawhead** for helping to pass out our ten Thanksgiving baskets on Monday, November 20, to grateful families in our community. Thank you, **New Bethel UMC**, for sharing your blessings with others in our community!

All who donated and helped in any way with the Soup and Bread dinner (it seems so long ago!)

Joanna Nuoffer for organizing another successful Operation Christmas Child Shoebox collection!

All who helped decorate the church for the holiday season!

From Norma Abram: During a time like this we realize how much our friends and relatives really mean to us...Your expression of sympathy will always be remembered. Thank you to my church family for all the cards, food and caring.

OPEN HOUSE AT THE PARSONAGE TO CELEBRATE A GRADUATION:

Dear New Bethel UMC family,
Come join us as we celebrate

David Howard Barber Bell's graduation from SIU – Carbondale!

Sunday, December 17, 2-5pm. 68 Glenwood Drive, Glen Carbon, IL.
Hosted by Penny Barber and Howard Bell

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Finance Committee will meet on Tuesday, December 12, at 6:30pm.

THE CHURCH OFFICE will be closed the week between Christmas and New Year's. If you have an emergency, please contact Pastor Penny at 217-932-3115 and she will either help you or find someone to assist you. We have several members who have volunteered to do hospital calls and such while Pastor is out of town. HAVE A BLESSED CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR'S!



New Year' Eve Service
December 31, 2017
One service at 9:30 a.m.
No Sunday School classes

SANCTUARY TO GET NEW CARPETING IN 2018

New carpeting will be coming in January, 2018. The new color is a dark gray, with flecks of maroon in it which will complement the maroon pew cushions.

HELPING A LOCAL FAMILY WITH CHRISTMAS

Since we are not sponsoring Santa's Workshop this year, New Bethel UMC has decided to sponsor a local family for Christmas. The parent came by the church and visited with the Pastor and we now have a list of clothes and a toy or two for each of the four children. We will write the items on little paper angels and place them on a tree in the church lobby (like we did for the Thanksgiving basket food). Feel free to take an angel or two and purchase the gifts and bring them back to the church by Wednesday, December 20th. You will need to wrap the gifts and place the angel on the package as a label. The parents of the children will then be able to come by the Church before Christmas and pick up some great gifts for their family. What a wonderful way to share the love and joy of Christmas! If you have any questions, please call the church office anytime.



POINSETTIAS - Would you like to purchase a plant or two in honor or memory of a loved one? Contact the Office or return the poinsettia request form that will be in your Sunday bulletin.

DINNER AND A LIGHT SHOW

Pastor Penny would like to invite you to join her on **Tuesday, December 19th**, for dinner at Eckert's Country Restaurant in Belleville, followed by a driving tour of Our Lady of the Snows *Way of Lights!* This is a fun family activity for any and everybody, married or single, young or old, adults and children! We will meet at New Bethel UMC at **3 pm** and carpool to the restaurant in Belleville for a nice meal together. There will be plenty of time to look around the stores afterwards. Then at 5:30 or so, we will load up our vehicles and drive the short distance over to Our Lady of Snows and see their stunning displays of Christmas lights. If we want to stop for camel rides, we can do that, too! We should arrive back at New Bethel UMC by **7 p.m.** Each person pays for their own dinner and you may want to bring a free-will donation for the Shrine. If you'd like to join us for this evening, just sign up in the church office, **by Sunday, December 17th!**

A Blue Christmas Worship Service *For those who are struggling this Christmas Season*

For some, it is difficult to think about "celebrating" Christmas this year. Perhaps due to grief, or situations and circumstances which makes having a "holly, jolly Christmas" difficult to imagine.

On **December 20th at 7 p.m.**, Caseyville United Methodist Church will be holding a "Blue Christmas" Service; a special service for those in the midst of grief, loneliness, sorrow or whatever "darkness" that they might be experiencing.

This service provides a red space, offers hope and healing in Jesus' name, and acknowledges that God is present and we are not alone in feeling out of tune with the season.

The Caseyville United Methodist Church is located at [119 W. Lincoln Ave.](#), in Caseyville, Illinois. All are welcome. If you know of someone who is struggling this year, please let them know about this service; or better yet, bring them.

Call [\(618\)334-3388](tel:6183343388) for information or directions or visit our page on Facebook.

UMW Holiday Luncheon

Ladies of New Bethel! You are invited to the UMW Holiday Luncheon on December 16th, at 11:30am. A catered meal will be served, so please RSVP to Bev Jones by Sunday, December 10th.

It's a New Bethel Christmas Card!

You want to send a greeting to everyone, but with the cost of cards and postage, it really adds up! This year, you can sign the large Christmas card located in the Narthex, and leave a note for your NBUMC friends. If you like, you can then share your savings with our March to the Manger or another project in which you have interest. The card will be available December 10th through December 24th. Contact Sharyl Humerickhouse with questions.

VISITOR FOLLOW UP AND COOKIES!

Pastor Penny is looking for a few good bakers! Would you be willing to bake some cookies and do a quick, front-porch visit to some of our worship visitors? Presently, we give first time visitors a New Bethel UMC mug with a \$5 gift card in it; and if they've provided their address, Pastor Penny sends them a welcome letter. The second time they visit, it would be great if a member or two from the congregation would take by a plate of cookies and tell them how wonderful it has been to have them worship with us. If this sounds like a ministry you might be able to help with, please contact Pastor Penny at 217-932-3115, or at the church office 618-288-5700. This is just one of the ways we are hoping to continue our good outreach to those in our community!

January 2018 Sermon Series:

Grace Anatomy

How well do we understand the grace of God?

As Albert C. Outler says, "the grace of God is always amazing!" That's true.
But what are the differences between *prevenient*, *justifying* and *sanctifying* grace?

What does it mean to be saved by grace, through faith?

How can God really forgive us for all our sins and mistakes?

Does God keep a record?

And do we really understand that grace isn't cheap?

Join us as we begin a fresh New Year
with an examination of the different parts of Grace...

FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

Due to several generous donations in November, our mortgage balance is down to **\$49,116**, as of December 1st.

Our annual **March to the Manger** will be on Sunday, December 24th. This love offering will help further New Bethel's ministry in the Glen Carbon community.

COMING IN FEBRUARY:

Sunday evening Worship and Planning sessions with Pastor Penny
We will sing some good hymns, have a short devotion and time of prayer,
then discuss the vision, ministry, and goals of our church!

CHILDREN and YOUTH SUNDAY SCHOOL

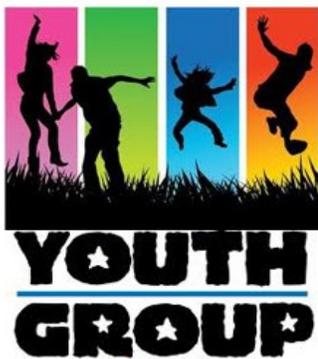
Pre-school/Elementary Sunday School class will be exploring the Advent season with special lessons.

Children's Worship activity bags are available during each service for your little ones. They are welcome to grab one out of the tub and take back to their pews after the Children's sermon.

Middle School SS Class is discovering the Case for Christ. This class is led by Pastor Penny Barber and Andrew Adams.

High School SS Class continues to do the NOOMA videos. This class is led by Cody Azotea and Dennis Wilson.

MIDDLE SCHOOL & SENIOR HIGH YOUTH



Wednesday, December 6: We will head to EHS to enjoy the Christmas Concert and support our NBY musicians. Meet in the EHS Commons between 6:30 and 6:40. Tickets are \$5.00 (let Judy know if you need help with that.) **Let Judy know if you plan to attend so the group can get enough seats.**

Sunday, December 10: We will be shopping for Christmas gifts for the family we are "adopting" this year. Meet at church after the late service for lunch and shopping. **Adults are welcome too!** Everyone is invited to bring a cash donation, and we will

spend as much as we have donated. (If you can't join us on Sunday, but would like to donate, please see Judy before noon on 12/10.)

Wednesday, December 13: Regular meeting in the Youth Room.

Sunday, December 17: The Children's Christmas program will be held at 6:30 pm. It is always fun to watch and Santa always pays a visit afterwards!

Wednesday, December 20: Finals are over! Let's party! Food, games and gift exchange. Bring a fun gift (\$5.00) - get creative! Pull out and wear your ugly sweaters, Christmas socks, jewelry. Friends are always welcome!

Mission Trip 2018! Week of June 24th!

We will be going to Mountain Mission School in Grundy, VA.
Check it out at www.mmmskids.org.

The trip is open to students currently in 8th grade, as well as senior high and college students. **Adults are needed to drive and work with us.** We will meet soon to discuss details and collect a \$50 deposit to reserve your spot. **Only one group is invited per week, so we want to be sure we have enough people going to do what needs done!** Pray about it, and let me know if you are interested. Please keep this week in mind as you make your summer plans.

Blessings! Judy





BIRTHDAYS ...

- December 3– Mike Chamberlain
- December 10– Karl Larson
- December 15– Pat Voigt
- December 17– Larry Evans
- December 21– Alan Voigt
- December 23– Dolores Baird and Kim Hel-lenga
- December 26– Michael Beyer
- December 27– Wayne Horton
- December 28– Bill Wann
- December 29– Jamie Foster
- December 31– Scott Gilliland

Quote of the month:

*For unto us a child is born, to us a son is given,
and the government will be on his shoulders.
And he will be called Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty God, Everlasting Father,
Prince of Peace.*

– The Prophet Isaiah, c. 740 BC



RECURRING EVENTS AT NEW BETHEL...

SUNDAYS:

Worship. 8:15 & 10:45 AM

Nursery. 8:00 AM-Noon

Sunday School. 9:30 AM

WEEKLY:

Tuesday Daytime

Quilters. Tuesdays 9:15 AM. Fellowship Hall. All are welcome.

Wednesday Evening

Middle & Senior High School. Lively learning and fun with Ms. Judy Lee. 6-7:30 PM, Room 103/104.

Bible Study, Prayer Shawl Ministry. 6:30pm

Chancel Choir. Practice weekly at 7:30pm

Thursday Evening

Bell Choir. 1st and 3rd Thursdays at 6pm (**No Practices in December**)

Praise Band Practice—check with Jake Hout

MONTHLY:

United Methodist Men. 2nd Saturdays, 8 AM breakfast and meeting

United Methodist Women. 2nd Saturdays, 9:30 AM (**December– Luncheon on 12/16, see inside for details**)

December 2017

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

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| | | | | | 1 | 2 Annual Conference |
| 3 Disciple 2- 1:30pm | 4 AA Bible Study - 6pm | 5 Quilters - 9:15am | 6 Youth Group - 6pm Bible Study and Groups- 6:30pm Choir- 7:30pm | 7 Disciple 1- 6pm Praise Band- 7:30 pm | 8 | 9 UMM-8am |
| 10 NBY Shopping for Family Disciple 2- 1:30pm | 11 AA Bible Study - 6pm | 12 Quilters - 9:15am Finance Committee - 6:30pm | 13 Youth Group - 6pm Bible Study and Groups- 6:30pm Choir- 7:30pm | 14 Disciple 1- 6pm Praise Band- 7pm | 15 | 16 UMW Christmas Luncheon (reservations required—see inside for details) |
| 17 Christmas Cantata Disciple 2- 1:30pm Children's Program | 18 AA Bible Study - 6pm | 19 Quilters - 9:15am | 20 NBY Christmas Party- 6pm Bible Study and Groups- 6:30pm | 21 Disciple 1- 6pm Praise Band- 7pm | 22 | 23 |
| 24 Regular AM Services and Christmas Eve Services | 25  | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| 31 One Service 9:30am No Sunday School |  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

Office Closed This Week.

