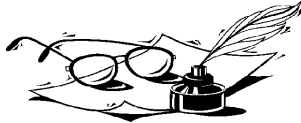




Corner of Beaver & Burrowes



From Pastor Paul's Desk.....

A-B NEWSLETTER

• ALBRIGHT-BETHUNE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH •

Rev. Paul R. McReynolds, Pastor

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Blannie Bowen, Editor; Volume 28, Number 12, December 2021

Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, the Healer of the Soul, and our Everlasting Redeemer. I am so excited about what the Lord has in store for us at Albright-Bethune. We have an amazing opportunity to be a bridge in the community by mending their souls with the word. Engaging their hearts in stewardship and prayer. All of this is done by a Beloved Community engaging in planting the seeds of Jesus Christ, our Hope. Building Bridges of connections throughout the community. (Matthew 25:34-36, Luke 4:18-19).).

Hello Family. I pray all is well with you and yours. As we have entered the Advent season, we have many opportunities to serve in our community and give back. We have an incredible opportunity on December 11. We are partnering with the Penn State Black Graduate Student Association for a food drive for our local community. Students, members of the community, and others are welcome to drop off canned or boxed food items at the Office of Graduate Education and Equity on December 1-10 from 10-5 p.m. Donations can also be dropped off at the BGSA General Body Meeting on December 3 or at the Church on December 11(tentatively). More details will be forthcoming in the next few days.

Also, I am excited about the opportunities to do ministry in the life of the church and the community. We will host a Wishing Well at the Meyer Dairy Store on December 9 from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. This is a partnership with the Interfaith Human Services. If you would like to volunteer or have questions, please contact Mrs. Carla Roser-Jones (carla.roserrjones@gmail.com).

In addition, you're invited to enhance your Advent season by participating in a small group study using Adam Hamilton's book, "*Faithful: Christmas Through the Eyes of Joseph.*" From beginnings as a humble carpenter to his all-important role as the earthly father of Jesus Christ, Joseph's place in the nativity story is sometimes overlooked, but contains valuable lessons. Like Joseph, we encounter challenging circumstances that we could never anticipate. Joseph provides us a great example of humbly obeying God even when we don't understand. The four-week study will be led by Pastor McReynolds. The first session was held on November 29. The next three sessions will be held on December 6, 13, and 20 at 7 p.m. both in person at Albright-Bethune and on Zoom. You can download the free book at <https://www.christianbook.com/apps/account/ebooks>; The username is: Albrightbethuneumc206@gmail.com; and the Password is ABUMC1234.

Finally, I am excited to announce that Youth Sunday School will begin on Sunday, December 5. If you have any questions, please reach out to Mrs. Carla Roser-Jones. Also, we are back in production! The Children's play will happen this year on December 19. We need you to bring your neighbors, your nephews, nieces, sons, daughters, and grandchildren for a 10 a.m. rehearsal when the children will be costumed and go over the music for the play. Come out and have an amazing time. If you have any questions, reach out to Mrs. Carla or Mrs. JoDee Dyreson. Blessings upon each of you!! Sincerely, [Paul McReynolds](#)

- **C**HRISTMAS EVE SERVICE - Our Albright-Bethune Christmas Eve service will be held at 6 p.m. on Friday, December 24. Join us for a beautiful and joyful tradition of a candlelight Christmas Eve of lessons and carols to hear the wondrous good news of great joy in word and song. Experience the warm fellowship either in-person or on Facebook Live. Come as you are! All are welcome! Also, we will have our regular worship service on Sunday, December 26. Please plan to participate in both services to celebrate the birth of Jesus.
- **B**IRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES - Congratulations to these individuals who celebrate special days this month: December 7 – **Harriet Nembhard's** Birthday; December 13 – **Rev. Dr. Pamela Ford's** Birthday; December 18 – **Shannon Holliday's** Birthday; December 19 – **Carl Ector's** Birthday; December 23 - **Carla Roser Jones'** Birthday; December 24 – **Ebun Adewumi's** Birthday; and December 29 – **Ajane' Holliday's** Birthday. Give Blannie your special dates (call/text 814-777-6550 or email blanniebowen@gmail.com) so we can honor you on your special dates.
- **C**ONDOLENCES - Two Albright-Bethune families experienced the loss of a family member last month. Maurice Peagler's father died at age 101. Please extend condolences to Maurice and the Peagler family. Also, one of Blannie Bowen's sisters died at age 78. Please extend condolences to the Bowen family.
- **L**EAVES - Thanks to the Scouts of Troop 328 and their families and friends for raking the leaves around our church building last month. Their efforts to keep our grounds neat are much appreciated so the leaves are not covering the parking lot, flower beds, and grass.
- **P**ECAN PIES – Thanks to everyone who bought the genuine Southern pecan pies last month for this annual fund raiser. This year B. Evans Kitchen (aka Blannie) baked 40 pies in time for Thanksgiving. The pies and contributions generated almost \$1,400 for our church.
- **C**HURCH CONFERENCE - The Albright-Bethune Church Conference was held on November 23. Brenda Leigey, our State College district superintendent, conducted the conference via Zoom with the leaders of our congregation. See Pastor McReynolds or Jackie Peagler if you have any questions about the conference or the business affairs of the church.
- **P**OWERLIFTER - Congratulations to **Douglas Bowen** who was named the Best Male Lifter for the USA Powerlifting 2021 Veterans Day Championships held November 13 in Philadelphia. Douglas competed in the 205-pound category. He was able to lift 584 pounds in the squat and he achieved a personal best of 418 pounds in the bench press. In the deadlift, his 683 pounds was close to his personal best of 699 pounds. Congratulations Douglas.
- **S**CHOOL SHOOTING - Oxford UMC in Michigan opened its doors on December 1 for prayer and meditation. The community was rocked 24 hours earlier when a 15-year old shooter killed four persons and wounded eight others. Bishop David Bard said in a statement, "Our hearts break, and we need to let them. We must never allow ourselves to grow numb to the tragic consequences of gun violence in our society" (From UM News).]

- **EAGLE SCOUT CELEBRATION** – On November 14, **Zan Dyreson** received the rank of Eagle Scout during her Court of Honor held at Albright-Bethune. Her Troop 328 of Boalsburg conducted the impressive ceremony that was attended by various individuals and groups. Several individuals presented Zan with a host of honors, awards, and commendations. After the ceremony, individuals had the opportunity to view Zan’s Eagle Scout Service Project which is located outside of our church at the corner of Beaver and Burrowes. Her project included the repainting and repair of the old church sign, planting foliage with a Pan-African color scheme, and engraving garden stones with symbols from the struggle for African-American civil rights. A plaque about her project is mounted on the wall of the church behind her garden. Congratulations of this impressive accomplishment.
- **STRENGTHENING BLACK CHURCHES** - The UMC’s Strengthening the Black Church for the 21st Century (SBC21) will kick-off commemorating 25 years of empowering and equipping Black Clergy and Lay leadership during its national conference, ***Shift Happens: Doing Ministry from the Right Side***, December 1-2 in Houston, TX. The hybrid event is expected to attract 200 in-person attendees. You can find conference details at www.sbc21.org/shifthappens and the press release about the conference at [25YearPressReleaseFINAL.pdf \(sbc21.org\)](http://www.sbc21.org/25YearPressReleaseFINAL.pdf). The conference, in partnership with the UMC Black Staff Association, Black Methodists for Church Renewal (BMCR), Convocation of Black Pastors, Gammon Theological Seminary, and Black Clergy Women will also include the SBC21 National Network of Young Adults Leading in Transformation experience.
- **UMC SCHOLARSHIPS & LOANS** - United Methodist Church high school seniors and those enrolled in college who are also active in their church and/or in the conference may apply for a Fall 2022 scholarship offered through the United Methodist General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. Students must apply online between **December 15–March 24** at <https://www.gbhem.org/loans-and-scholarships/scholarships>. Student loans are also available at low interest rates (with a credit worthy co-signer). Funds for these scholarships come from offerings taken on United Methodist Student Day, World Communion Sunday, and Native American Sunday. Please share this information with students who qualify for this support.
- **CHRISTMAS SYMBOLS** - How much do you know about Christmas symbols? Bells were used in ancient Asian cultures to announce happy and sad occasions. The winter plant mistletoe dates to Scandinavia and a myth wherein an evil spirit was forbidden from killing his enemy. Candles were used by Martin Luther who decorated the first Christmas tree. Candy canes are used in the US to symbolize God’s solid rock promises. Christmas cards date to ancient Egypt and Rome when they were carved in wood. Poinsettias are native to Mexico and symbolize the Star of Bethlehem. The plant is named for Joel Poinsett, the first US Ambassador to Mexico. Holly and ivy are used to represent the crown Jesus wore when he was crucified. Please remember the history of these symbols as we celebrate the birth of Jesus (From *UM Interpreter Magazine*, November-December 2000, p. 14-15).
- **STRESS REDUCERS** - With the Christmas holidays approaching, now is a good time to reflect on an issue of A Christian Perspective newsletter that offered 7 ways to reduce stress and make your life more enjoyable. **(1)** Allow time everyday for privacy, quiet, and introspection. **(2)** When you face an unpleasant task, do it early in the day. **(3)** Delegate responsibility to capable individuals. **(4)** Take a lunch break to get away from your problems. **(5)** Count to 1,000 (not 10) before doing or saying something to make matters worse. **(6)** Have a forgiving view of events and people because we live in an imperfect world. **(7)** Have an optimistic outlook because most people do the best they can.

- **A**DVENT - How much do you know about Advent which celebrates Christ's birth 2,021 years ago? Advent is derived from the Latin word *Adventus* which means coming. It begins on Sunday, November 28, and ends at sunset on Christmas Eve. Advent always includes four Sundays. The 1st Sunday marks the start of the Christian year and the final victory. The 2nd and 3rd Sundays represent John the Baptist while the 4th represents events preceding Jesus' birth. Traditional colors include purple which means royalty and is linked to penitence and Mary, Jesus' mother. Blue represents hope and white and gold represent joy and festivity. Christmas Eve is not part of Advent, but is the beginning of Christmas.
- **A**AUW SCHOLARSHIPS - The AAUW State College Undergraduate Scholarships for Centre County Women application process is now open. AAUW will select four recipients for scholarships that range from \$3,000-\$7,000 depending on the financial need and circumstances of the recipients. Female adult learners enrolled for the 2022-23 academic year are encouraged to apply. Scholarship information and criteria for eligibility can be found at <https://aauwstatecollege.org/scholarships>. The application deadline is March 1.
- **C**HRISTMAS GIVING – You should now start thinking about making Christ a bigger part of your Christmas celebration. The *Christian Financial Concepts* newsletter recommends that we do some soul searching. This newsletter suggests that you decide the amount you plan to spend on gifts and then contribute 10% to Christ-like causes. For example, use the 10% to support food banks, orphans, and missions that spread the gospel in other nations.
- **F**INANCE CORNER - Each month the amount our church collects via offerings is posted in this section of the newsletter. Our November collections totaled \$3,315. See Cathy Bowen if you have questions about our church's finances.

Calendar

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| Nov 28-Dec 24 | The Season of Advent |
| December 6 | Church Book Study, 7 p.m. |
| December 10 | Penn State Classes End |
| December 13 | Church Book Study, 7 p.m. |
| December 14 | Albright-Bethune Administrative Council Meets, 7 p.m. |
| December 18 | Penn State Commencement |
| December 19 | Children's Christmas Play During Worship |
| December 20 | Church Book Study, 7 p.m. |
| December 24 | Christmas Eve Service, 6 p.m. |
| December 25 | Christmas Day – Celebrate the Birth of Jesus |
| January 1 | Welcome 2022 |
| January 10 | Penn State Classes Begin |
| January 11 | Albright-Bethune Administrative Council Meets, 7 p.m. |
| January 15 | Martin Luther King, Jr., Birthday |
| February 8 | Albright-Bethune Administrative Council Meets, 7 p.m. |
| March 2 | Ash Wednesday |
| March 4 | World Day of Prayer |
| March 8 | Albright-Bethune Administrative Council Meets, 7 p.m. |