



+Corner of Beaver & Burrowes



A-B NEWSLETTER

• ALBRIGHT-BETHUNE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH •

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Blannie Bowen, Editor; Volume 28, Number 7, July 2021

From Pastor Paul's Desk.....

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)

Family, I pray all is well with each of you!! We have begun our summertime extravaganza and much awaited vacation trips out of town. I want to say thank you to each one of you for allowing me to be your Pastor. I am excited for this next chapter we are embarking on together with EVC (Equipping Vital Congregations). Pastor, what does that look like? You can see in information sent out via email about the in's and out's of the program. We will be working with EVC for the next two years. It will be up to the stakeholders, the church family, and leadership working together in tandem to accomplish our goal which is to cause transformation in the lives of our beloved community. I am looking forward to us climbing to new heights and helping each of you connect people to Christ. We want to be bridge builders in turning Downtown State College into the Beloved Community. I am most especially excited that this Sunday (July 4) will be our first time back in the sanctuary. Keep striving and climbing because the Lord is with you. Share with friends and family to come out to worship with us and to also worship with us on Facebook Live every Sunday.

O God Our Creator: Dear Heavenly Father, please be with me, I pray, as we move on from the old to the new. The joy, memories, and hardships of the last year, in spite of what we faced, you were. Lord help us to leave them there, Lord, and not carry them with us into this new season. Guided by your Holy Spirit, we will be united in love and joyfully accomplish this mission. As we enter into this new era with excitement and even some anxiety, we recall the talents and skills with which you have blessed this beloved community. Be with us as we move forward, rejoicing with you and supporting one another. We say this in your Holy Name. Amen. **Pastor Paul McReynolds**

• **DEATH OF MR. STEVENSON** - Albright-Bethune lost one of its most faithful servants on June 23 when Mr. Albert Stevenson died in Clarion, PA, at age 97, just a month shy of his 98th birthday. He was the chair of our trustee board for many years in addition to fulfilling various other roles in our congregation. He prided himself for raising the most money for our annual Men Who Cook fundraiser in the spring and for buying the most pecan pies for our Thanksgiving fundraiser. Albert and his beloved wife (Azalea) moved to State College after Hurricane Katrina destroyed their home of almost 60 years and most of their possessions in 2005. Even with this major hardship and disappointment, they remained positive and upbeat. They became very active members of Albright-Bethune and the State College community. A memorial service for Mr. Stevenson will be held later in the year.

Mr. Stevenson was a faithful Albright-Bethune worshipper and servant until his health began to decline. As the chair of the Trustee Board, he was very involved in maintaining both our church building and the parsonage as they required lots of maintenance and upkeep. He loved to cook one of his New Orleans favorites (red beans and rice) for our Men Who Cook fundraiser. Mr. Stevenson loved photography and making and sharing his photos. He was especially kind to children and loved giving them candy and other goodies. Mr. Stevenson loved people and he quickly engaged strangers in conversations about various topics. While a student at Dillard University in New Orleans, he joined the Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity and remained a proud member. Even though he is no longer with us, Mr. Stevenson will live forever in the memories of all who encountered him.

• **EQUIPPING VITAL CONGREGATIONS (EVC)** - Effective July 1, Pastor McReynolds becomes the fulltime pastor of Albright-Bethune. This change means that our church will no longer be yoked with Park Forest UMC as part of a 2-point charge. Through the Equipping Vital Congregations (EVC) program, our Susquehanna Conference and State College District are providing resources and support that should enable our congregation to experience a growth mode. On March 30, District Superintendent Brenda Leigey held a special charge conference where our congregation voted to support this new arrangement. The key objectives of the EVC program include the following:

- Help the church move toward greater vitality in its outreach, mission and ministry in the community.
- Intentional focus on reaching new, younger and more diverse people to grow the Beloved Community.
- Pastor and laity working together.
- Two-year commitment between the church and EVC.
- Accountability through monthly coaching contacts, quarterly stakeholder meetings and monthly updates to the EVC Office.
- Funding from EVC will continue, for two years, as long as progress toward agreed upon goals is being made.
- Funding from EVC may be extended if progress is made AND funds are available.

See Pastor McReynolds or Jackie Peagler, our Administrative Council Chair, if you have questions about the EVC program and the objectives for our congregation.

• **ANNUAL CONFERENCE** - The Susquehanna Conference 2021 Annual Conference was held virtually June 18-19. Bishop Jeremiah Park said that they worshipped and conducted only essential business out of an abundance of caution for what is best for clergy and lay members. See Pastor McReynolds or Jackie Peagler if you have questions about Annual Conference.

- **BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES** - Congratulations to these individuals who celebrate special days this month: July 3 – **Percephany Devier-Poindexter's** Birthday; July 4 – **Paul Amara, Jr.'s**, Birthday; July 5 – **Paris vonLockette's** Birthday; July 7 – **Azalea Stevenson's** Birthday; July 23 – **Tonya Black's** Birthday; July 24 – **Albert Stevenson's** Birthday; July 26 – **Kadie Amara's** Birthday; July 29 – **Niki Dickerson vonLockette's** Birthday; July 30 – **India Warren's** Birthday; and July 31 – **Jacob Amara'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.
- **VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL** – Park Forest Village UMC is holding a FREE outdoor Bible School from July 19-22. All children are welcome to register in advance by emailing office@pfvumc.org or just show up. Dinner is offered at 5:30 pm and the program runs from 6-8 pm! Park Forest is looking for two additional helpers to help support the school and all volunteers must have the required child abuse clearances. If you have questions about the school, contact Carla Roser-Jones. This is an excellent opportunity to support the children and youth of our church.
- **SPIKES GAME** – Now that many of the COVID restrictions have been relaxed and crowd limits removed, our church plans to again attend a State College Spikes baseball game. **Wally Richardson** has agreed to again lead this effort and will reserve tickets. Wally will provide more details about the date and ticket price once they have been confirmed. This promises to be pleasant, safe, and enjoyable outing for our members and worshippers. Please plan to attend and bring a friend.
- **SOCIAL MEDIA & DISCIPLE MAKING** - After the COVID-19 pandemic closed Forest Chapel UMC's doors, the world found a new window on its ministry. Through worship services and prayers posted [on Facebook](#), people began visiting the Cincinnati church from multiple time zones away. In the past year, Forest Chapel has seen new members join from Bhutan, Nepal, and Indonesia - all Asian countries with few Christians. By far the biggest growth came on May 30 this year, when church leaders welcomed 750 new members — mainly worshippers in Ludhiana, India. Forest Chapel's experience is more far-reaching than most but hardly unique. After scrambling to go virtual in the early days of the pandemic, many UM churches now report [drawing more attendance online](#) than they typically do in person. The strain of the pandemic is real, but so is the innovation. Where once preachers traveled the sawdust trail, many United Methodist pastors now log onto Facebook, Zoom, YouTube, Instagram or WhatsApp to reach new people. The result is that even as churches have worked to stop the spread of a deadly virus, they also have found new ways to spread the living Gospel. And that's unlikely to stop, even [as in-person worship in the U.S. resumes](#) (By Heather Hahn and the Rev. Gustavo Vasquez, UM News).
- **EACH ONE, BRING ONE!** - Many individuals will soon move to the area when classes start at Penn State and in the schools. Some individuals will seek a church home to have a fulfilling religious experience. Take the time to share your worship experiences and then bring one of these individuals to church with you. Next, nurture and keep that person involved in our church. Don't underestimate the impact that you can have if each one of us brings only one new person into our congregation. If each Albright-Bethune member and worshipper brings only one new person into our church family, we can begin a serious growth mode. See Pastor McReynolds for ideas that you can share with an un-churched person.

- **HISTORICALLY BLACK UMC COLLEGES** – There are 11 Historically Black Colleges that are affiliated with the United Methodist Church. Do you know a graduate of these institutions? Several are regular worshippers in our church. The list of institutions includes Bethune-Cookman College in Daytona Beach, FL; Bennett College in Greensboro, NC; Claflin College in Orangeburg, SC; Clark-Atlanta University in Atlanta; Dillard University in New Orleans; Huston-Tillotson College in Austin, TX; Meharry Medical College in Nashville, TN; Paine College in Augusta, GA; Philander-Smith College in Little Rock, AR; Rust College in Holly Springs, MS; and Wiley College in Marshall, TX.

- **FINANCE CORNER** - Each month the amount our church collects via offerings is posted in this section of the newsletter. Our June collections totaled **\$4,594**. See Cathy Bowen if you have questions about our church’s finances. Here is an item that might be of interest.

AmazonSmile

Albright-Bethune is a recognized charity with the AmazonSmile Foundation. If you make purchases using Amazon, you can also benefit Albright-Bethune by designating it as your charity of choice through Amazon Smile. All you need to do is use the AmazonSmile link when making a purchase. (The products and prices are the same. All AmazonSmile does is give you a voice in how Amazon distributes its charitable donations). Each time a customer makes a purchase using AmazonSmile, a portion of eligible items purchased will generate a 0.5% donation for the charity selected. Here is the designated link for Albright-Bethune: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/25-1711251>. I suggest you bookmark the church’s link on your computer or device. You can also Google AmazonSmile and select Albright-Bethune from the list of charities.

- **YOUR ITEMS** - Send, email to blanniebowlen@gmail.com or give your items to **Blannie** by the **20th** of the month. Send your birthday, awards, church presentations, writings, etc.

Calendar	
July 4	Independence Day (Observed on July 5)
July 13	Albright-Bethune Administrative Council Meets, 7 p.m.
August 10	Albright-Bethune Administrative Council Meets
August 14	Penn State Summer Commencement
August 23	Penn State Classes Begin
September 6	Labor Day
September 14	Albright-Bethune Administrative Council Meets, 7 p.m.
October 3	World Communion Sunday
October 12	Albright-Bethune Administrative Council Meets, 7 p.m.
October 17	Laity Sunday
November 7	Daylight Savings Time Ends
November 9	Albright-Bethune Administrative Council Meets, 7 p.m.
November 14	Organ and Tissue Donor Sunday (Give Life)
November 21-27	Penn State Thanksgiving Holiday Break
November 25	Thanksgiving Day
November 28	United Methodist Student Sunday
Nov 28-Dec 24	The Season of Advent