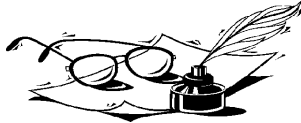




Corner of Beaver & Burrowes



From Pastor Paul's Desk.....

A-B NEWSLETTER

• ALBRIGHT-BETHUNE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH •

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Blannie Bowen, Editor; Volume 30, Number 11; November 2023

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 and 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 and Building Bridges of connections throughout the community (Matthew 25:34-36, Luke 4:18-19).

I pray all is well with each and every one of you. It seems as though time is shifting so fast. It feels like just yesterday, it was the first week of July. Now that we are entering November, it seems as though we are full steam ahead to the New Year. As the election season and possible war in the Middle East have come, we enter a season of anxiety and concern.

The Bible tells us in Philippians 4:6-7 [NRSV]; “6 - *Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. 7 - And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*” At this moment, our hearts and spirits should be prayerful for our country as a whole as we move forward. This is a time that we need the love of Christ abounding in our walk and in our talk fixing our hearts on him who is our healer and sustainer.

On November 12, I am excited that Mr. Blannie and Mrs. Jennifer will lead a conversation about our virtual worship. Please join us after our worship service via Zoom or in person. We want to improve our presence online to reach the people in need close to us and far from us. We want your input! So please join the conversation.

As we are anticipating the Advent season, I am excited for the new series that will begin on December 3 and finish on December 24. In this season of being thankful, allow this to be a time of giving as well as receiving.

A Closing Prayer: O Lord, our example and friend, you understand how much this human life can be frustrating. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, our Sustainer, you give us guidance on what to do in these situations. We pray for all those who are seeking public office and those who work to make our election process possible. May your Spirit provide them wisdom, patience, and understanding. So that, with the steadfast purpose, they may faithfully serve and promote the well-being of all people. We pray in the power and presence of the Holy Spirit. Amen. – **Pastor Paul.**

- **O**NLINE WORSHIP EXPERIENCE CONVERSATION - On November 12 immediately after our worship service, we will have a brief focus group conversation with our online worshippers and others who might be interested. The purpose of this conversation is to secure ideas and input about how we can improve the worship experience for our online worshippers. **Jennifer Saunders** and **Blannie Bowen** will facilitate the conversation that will be conducted by Zoom. Worshippers who are in sanctuary after our service are also welcome to join the conversation. See Jennifer or Blannie if you have any questions.
- **C**HURCH CONFERENCE - The annual Albright-Bethune Church Conference will be held on November 5 at 6 pm at Mount Nittany UMC. Brenda Leigey, our district superintendent, will conduct the conference jointly with the leaders of our congregation and the leaders of Mount Nittany, Fairbrook, Park Forest, and St Paul's UMC. See Pastor McReynolds or Jackie Peagler if you have questions about the conference or the business affairs of the church. All members and worshippers are encouraged to participate in this important meeting where our leaders for next year will be formally appointed and other important business is conducted.
- **P**ECAN PIES - Albright-Bethune is again selling genuine Southern pecan pies that you can enjoy with your Thanksgiving dinner or eat for a special dessert. The price is \$35, but also consider making a contribution to our church. Contact Blannie Bowen by Friday, November 10, if you want to order a pie or have questions. The pies will be baked by B. Evans Kitchen (aka Blannie) and available for pick-up or delivery starting Tuesday, November 14, and continuing until Monday, November 20. You can reach Blannie at (814) 777-6550 or at blanniebowen@gmail.com.
- **F**OOTBALL PARKING - During Penn State's final two home football games on November 11 and 18, our church will again make its parking spaces available to individuals attending the games. Volunteers are needed to help with this activity that will generate funds to support our congregation's programs and activities. If you are interested and available to assist, please contact Pastor Paul.
- **C**ONDOLENCES - Last month, Pastor Paul lost his grandfather. If you have not done so, please extend condolences to Pastor Paul and Ariel on their loss.
- **B**IRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES - Congratulations to these individuals who celebrate a special day this month: November 2 – **Jennifer Saunders'** Birthday; November 4 – **Andrew Jackson's** Birthday; November 4 – **Keisha Johnson's** Birthday; November 5 – **Jillian Kerr's** Birthday; November 11 – **Victoria Jackson's** Birthday; November 14 - **Jadon Isaiah Wilson's** Birthday; November 16 - **Michelle Torregano's** Birthday; and November 16 – **Virginia Geraldine Content's** Birthday. Give Blannie your special dates (call/text 814-777-6550 or email blanniebowen@gmail.com) so we can honor you.
- **W**EEEK OF PRAYER - The National Council of Churches which includes the UMC urged all individuals, communions, congregations, and communities across the globe to join in a focused week of collective prayer beginning October 30 to November 5. The NCC said that considering the recent devastating events taking place in the conflict between Hamas and Israel, an alarming rise in antisemitism and Islamophobia across our nation, as well as the mass shooting in Lewiston, ME., it is crucial that we come together as a global community to acknowledge the suffering and loss experienced by those caught in the crossfire. Please continue to be in prayer for all who have been impacted by these situations and actions.

- **WEDDING ANNIVERSARY RECEPTION** – On December 3 after our worship service, we will hold a reception in our fellowship hall to celebrate the wedding anniversary of Pastor Paul and Ariel McReynolds. Please put this event on your calendar and plan to attend. See **Jackie Peagler** if you have any questions or want more information about the reception.
- **WORLD HUNGER SUNDAY** - On November 19, congregations in our Susquehanna UMC Conference are asked to support World Hunger Sunday. Congregations are being asked to participate in the Harvest Home for World Hunger Offering. Half of the offering will be designated to assist food distribution programs within our conference. The other half will go to national and international UMCOR food programs. In 2021, the offering from congregations totaled \$30,412 and grants were distributed to 48 hunger programs.
- **T-SHIRTS** – The Bethune Society, our church’s Penn State student affiliate group, is planning to design and sell a t-shirt to help publicize our church. Details and specific information about the shirt have been finalized and you can now place an order. Thanks to **Zan Dyreson** for leading this effort. Please contact her if you have any questions. You can reach Zan at dyresonzoop@gmail.com.
- **VEHICLES FOR BISHOPS** - The recent purchase of sport utility vehicles is good news for bishops and United Methodists of the Congo Central Conference. The SUVs will facilitate mobility and allow bishops to carry out their pastoral responsibilities more effectively, even in the most difficult conditions. Financial support from the UMC Board of Global Ministries enabled the vehicles to be purchased and transported to their destinations. The Congo Central Conference includes four United Methodist episcopal areas covering six countries in central Africa (**From Chadrack Tambwe Londe, UM News**).
- **DISAFFILIATION LEGAL ACTIONS** - The Oklahoma Supreme Court ruled that a judge had unlawfully interfered in the UMC’s disaffiliation policies and ordered that she dismiss two congregations’ lawsuits challenging those policies. [The state high court’s two unanimous decisions, released on Oct. 24](#), represent significant legal wins for the Oklahoma Conference. They also could have implications for other church-disaffiliation cases that have landed in U.S. civil courts. The two decisions detail the Oklahoma Supreme Court’s reasoning for its October 5 order that a trial court “lacks subject matter jurisdiction” to hear cases involving the denomination’s church-exit rules. The Oklahoma decisions came in the same month [a Pennsylvania judge denied a motion](#) filed by 11 UM churches seeking the court’s immediate intervention to help them leave the Eastern Pennsylvania UMC Conference with property (**From Heather Hahn, UM News**).
- **FALL OPTIONS** - Try the following to make your transition to fall more enjoyable. Go outdoors to experience God’s creation and watch the leaves change colors. Have a class outside, take a hike, go on a picnic, or pick-up litter in a park or along a roadside. Try a weekend of camping at nearby sites such as Shaver’s Creek or Black Moshannon. Also, volunteer to take children to recreational areas. These are excellent opportunities to teach children about the creation stories in Genesis or other Biblical texts.
- **THANKSGIVING** – On November 23, we will celebrate Thanksgiving. Please use this time to live the purpose behind the day by helping a few friends, family members, students, and some worshippers. Several of our worshippers are from other states and countries and cannot return home for Thanksgiving. So, please include them in your big meal. One possibility is to deliver or have your guests pick-up the meal. Also, invite your guests to take some of the leftovers so they do not clog your freezer until Thanksgiving 2024.

- **P**LANNING FOR FINANCIAL LIFE EVENTS PROGRAM - Thanks to **Cathy Bowen** who secured a grant from the UMC Foundation to fund a program entitled "*Planning for Probable Financial Life Events*" that our church delivered. Session #1 was held on September 21 and titled *Estate Planning Essentials: Get Your Ducks in A Row Before It's Too Late*. Session #2 was held on October 12 and titled *Financial Missteps to Avoid or Be Aware Of*. Session #3 was held October 26 and titled *Aging and Caregiving Resources in Centre County. Know About Them Before You Need Them*. See Cathy if you have any questions about the sessions.
- **S**TRESS REDUCERS - With the Thanksgiving and 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 2,023 years ago? Advent is derived from the Latin word *Adventus* which means coming. It begins on Sunday, December 3, 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.

Calendar

Nov. 5	Church Conference, Mt Nittany UMC, 6 p.m. Daylight Savings Time Ends
Nov. 12	Zoom Focus Group With Online Worshippers After Worship Organ & Tissue Donor Sunday (Give Life)
Nov. 14	Albright-Bethune Administrative Council Meets, 7 p.m.
Nov. 19	World Hunger Sunday
Nov. 19-25	Penn State Thanksgiving Holiday Break
Nov. 23	Thanksgiving Day
Nov. 26	United Methodist Student Sunday
Dec. 3	Wedding Anniversary Reception for Pastor Paul & Ariel McReynolds
Dec. 3-24	The Season of Advent
Dec. 8	Penn State Classes End
Dec. 12	Albright-Bethune Administrative Council Meets, 7 p.m.
Dec. 16	Penn State Fall Commencement
Dec. 25	Christmas Day – Celebrate the Birth of Jesus