



John's Journal

As you may have noticed, Lent comes very early this year. Ash Wednesday (the beginning of Lent) is on February 14th. And that makes Easter occur on April 1st. There's a whole lot that we could do and say about

Easter being on April Fools' Day, but that would probably be very inappropriate, so we'll just leave it at that!

The Lenten season has always been very meaningful to me. From the ashes on Ash Wednesday, to the penitence of the season, to the palms and passion of Holy Week, to the profound reflection of Maundy Thursday, to the horror of Good Friday, and finally to the immense joy of Easter Sunday, this season represents pretty much what it means to be a Christian.

Trying to absorb it all and make it make some sense is sometimes difficult. And so I turn to those who can put these feelings into words so much better than I can.

One of my favorite writers, and one I have quoted on numerous occasions is Ann Weems. She is the daughter and wife of Presbyterian ministers, so she knows a little bit about this church life. And I find in her writings that she is a well-grounded theologian.

As we prepare for Lent, I wanted to use this space to share some of my favorites from her book, *Kneeling in Jerusalem*. I hope these brief readings can mean as much to you as they to me.

Put Away the Tinsel

When Lent comes,
 you have to put away the tinsel;
you have to take down your Christmas tree,
 and stand out in the open . . . vulnerable.
You either are or you aren't.
You either believe or you don't.
You either will or you won't.
And, O Lord, how we love the stable and the star!
When Lent comes the angels' voices
 begin their lamenting,
and we find ourselves in a courtyard
 where we must answer
whether we know him or not.

Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday
 and we are on our way
 to Your Way.
O Lamb of God,
 have mercy on us and
 keep us from all the smallness of our lives
 that would take precedence over
 kneeling in Jerusalem.

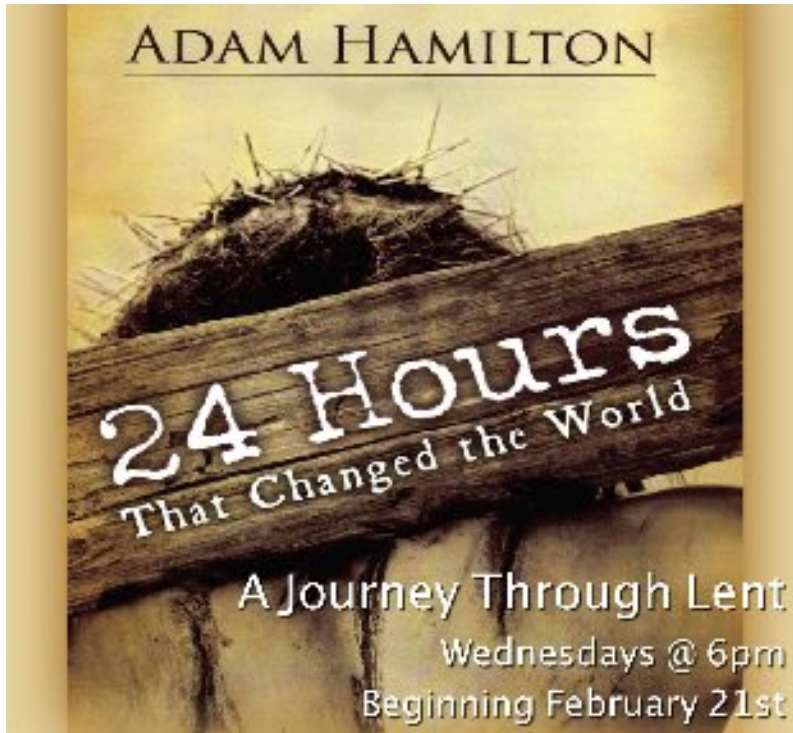
The Walk

Those of us who walk along this road
 do so reluctantly.
Lent is not our favorite time of year.
We'd rather be more active --
 planning and scurrying around.
All this is too contemplative to suit us.
Besides, we don't know what to do
 with piousness and prayer.
Perhaps we're afraid to have time to think,
 for thoughts come unbidden.
Perhaps we're afraid to face our future
 knowing our past.
Give us the courage, O God,
 to hear your word
 and to read our living into it.
Give us the trust to know we're forgiven,
 and give us the faith
 to take up our lives and walk.

So, just a few tidbits to get your juices flowing during this Lenten season. I hope you will take advantage of a fabulous Lenten study we are offering, beginning on Wednesday, the 21st at 6:00, and each Wednesday through Holy Week. You can read about the details on page 2 of this newsletter.

And if you would like to read more from Ann Weems, I can loan you several of her books, or you can order from Amazon.

Blessings to all my Bethany family during this journey to the cross . . . and beyond!



Make your plans now to join as we journey through the Lenten season with a six-week study of Adam Hamilton's **"24 Hours that Changed The World."**

Adam Hamilton guides us, step by step, through the last 24 hours of Jesus' life in his popular, heartbreaking, and inspiring study.

No single event in human history has received more attention than the suffering and crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth. In this study, Hamilton will help us experience and understand the significance of Jesus' suffering and death like never before. He retraces the day that changed human history in his usual straightforward yet easy, conversational style that speaks to both long-time Christians and those who are simply curious about the story of Christ's crucifixion.

The study will begin on Wednesday, February 21st and will run through the six weeks of Lent. We will meet at 6:00, so as to not exclude choir

members who may want to join the study. There is a study book, as well as a video resource to help guide us through the study. The only cost is for the book, which is \$10.00.

Here is the schedule:

- Wednesday, February 21st: Introduction / The Last Supper
- Wednesday, February 28th: The Garden of Gethsemane
- Wednesday, March 7th: Condemned by the Righteous
- Wednesday, March 14th: Jesus, Barabbas, and Pilate
- Wednesday, March 21st: The Torture and Humiliation of the King
- Wednesday, March 28th: The Crucifixion / Christ the Victor

Lent is a time of preparation and contemplation. This will be a meaningful way to make your way through the season. Take a moment to fill out the form below and bring it by the church office, call the office to register, or fill out the form on our website. Please indicate whether you will be purchasing your own book, or if you would like the church to order. The cost is the same. Sign up today!

"24 Hours That Changed the World" Registration Form

Wednesdays @ 6 pm beginning February 21st

Name _____

Email Address _____

Phone Number _____

Please Order my book _____

I'll order my own book _____



**Our Lenten Journey begins on
Wednesday, February 14, 2018
Ash Wednesday Service
7:00 pm
A Service of Prayer, Contemplation,
Music, Scripture, and the
Imposition of Ashes**

Welcome

to our brothers and sisters from **Shiloh Presbyterian Church**, who will be joining us for our Pancake Supper and Ash Wednesday Service. Shiloh's pastor, **Rev. Scott Orr**, will join John in leading the service. We look forward to hosting our fellow Presbyterians, and hope to make this an annual event - alternating locations each year!



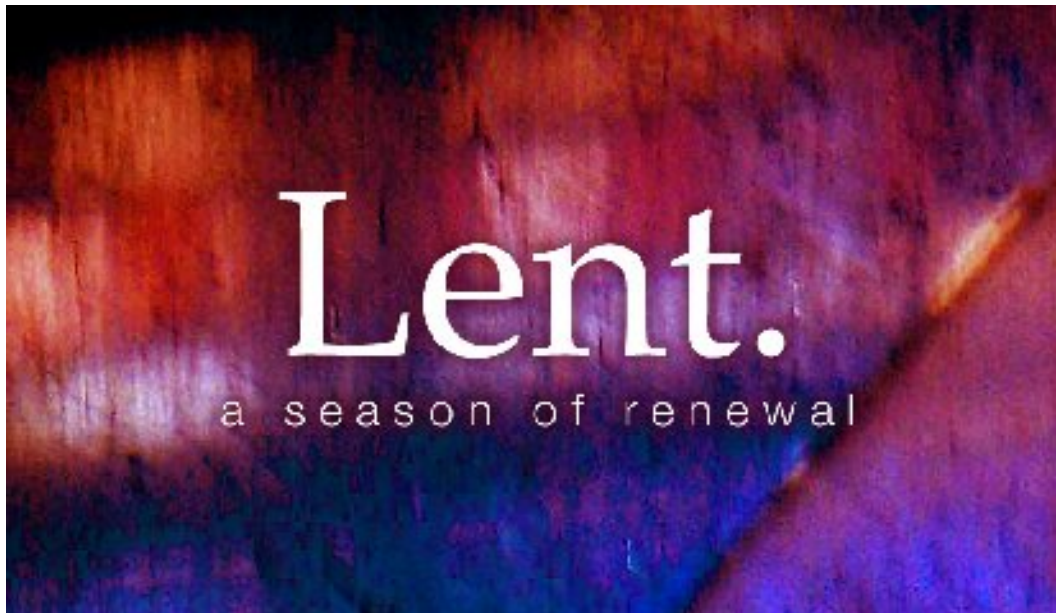
Wednesday, February 14th - 5:30-6:45 pm

Fellowship Hall

Sponsored by our Youth

Donations accepted to help send our youth to Montreat Youth Conference this summer.





Is not this the fast that
I choose: to loose the
bonds of injustice,
to undo the thongs
of the yoke, to let the
oppressed go free,
and to break every
yoke?
ISAIAH 58:6

Ash **Wednesday**





FEBRUARY WORSHIP THEMES

February 4th:

Isaiah 40:21-31

The Isaiah Olympic Biathlon

February 11th:

Mark 9:2-9

Jesus, the Transformer

February 14th - Ash Wednesday:

Psalm 51:1-17

Soul Repair

February 18th:

Mark 1:9-15

A Brief History of Jesus

February 25th:

Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16

El Shaddai



There are three ways to listen to audio of our Sunday sermons:

On our website: www.bethanypreschur.ch.org

On our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/bethanypresbyterian

Or by going to: www.buzzsprout.com/9198



**Lenten Communion
1st Sunday of Lent
February 18, 2018
11:00 am worship**



February 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>9:45 AM Sunday School</p> <p>11:00 AM Worship</p>	<p>Johnaway-General Assembly/Special CEComm. Meeting - Louisville</p>	<p>John away - Association of Presbyterian Church Educators - Louisville</p>	<p>7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal</p>			
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
<p>9:45 AM Sunday School</p> <p>11:00 AM Worship</p>	<p>7:00 PM Circle #4</p>		<p>7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal</p>			
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<p>9:45 AM Sunday School</p> <p>11:00 AM Worship</p>	<p>10:00 AM Circle #1</p> <p>7:00 PM Circle #3</p>	<p>7:00 PM Session Meeting</p>	<p>Valentine's Day</p> <p>5:30 PM Pancake Supper</p> <p>7:00 PM Ash Wednesday Service</p>	<p>Brunswick Stew Prep</p>	<p>Brunswick Stew Day</p>	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
<p>First Sunday in Lent</p> <p>9:45 AM Sunday School</p> <p>11:00 AM Worship</p>	<p>Presidents' Day</p>		<p>6:00 PM Lenten Study Series</p> <p>7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal</p>			
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
<p>Second Sunday in Lent</p> <p>9:45 AM Sunday School</p> <p>11:00 AM Worship</p>			<p>6:00 PM Lenten Study Series</p> <p>7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal</p>			
25	26	27	28	1	2	3

Your Church Staff:

Pastor: Rev. John W. Johnson
Director of Music: Christopher Bagley
Office Administrator: Joy Saleeby
Bookkeeper: Pam Hurt

Elders:

Chip Allen
A. J. Campbell
Sandy Cook
Karen Maxwell
Ron Osborne (Treasurer)
Glenn Patterson
Jean Payne
Nancy Purcell
Brandon Troxler

Rick Purcell (Clerk of Session)



**Souper Bowl of Caring Offering
Super Bowl Sunday - February 4th
Coinciding with
Pennies for Hunger Offering**



The Session met for its regular monthly stated meeting on January 9th. Here are some highlights:

- Heard a devotion from Nancy Purcell
- Heard a financial report from Treasurer, Ron Osborne
- Engaged in lengthy discussion regarding shortfall in pledges for 2018 / discussed ideas of addressing this in the new year
- Were reminded of schedule for Lent including the Ash Wednesday Service on February 14th / communion on First Sunday of Lent, February 18th
- Heard of plans for upcoming Lenten Study Series - "24 Hours That Changed the World" being held on Wednesday evenings at 6:00 beginning on February 21st
- Heard suggestion from Clerk, Rick Purcell, regarding removing one long pew on north side and replacing with short pew to accommodate wheelchairs
- John reported on homebound communions that he and Jean Payne had delivered / and also his continuing education plans coming up

**NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2018
ELDERS OF THE MONTH FOR FEBRUARY
JEAN PAYNE AND CHIP ALLEN**





Have you noticed our beautiful **Prayer Board** in the entrance hall coming from the parking lot, or have you just walked on by it? We hope you have noticed it, because its presence reminds us of the importance and the power of prayer.

Please know that each prayer request left on the board is taken and each request is prayed over. But here's the thing: the more people are praying for something, the better!

So, here's how you can become more involved with the Prayer Board:

- **Add prayer requests to the board. They can be left facing forwards or backwards.**
- **Read the requests that are left on the board and include them in your daily prayers.**
- **Remind others about the Prayer Board and that it is available for all to use.**

Although it is a beautiful piece of workmanship (thanks Bobby Peele!), it's there to be used and not just admired. So let's fill it up with prayer requests and embrace the power of prayer in our lives and in our world!

Maybe you're been looking for a way that you can be more involved in some sort of service opportunity. Have you ever thought about **Meals on Wheels!**? Bethany has a long history of providing this much-needed ministry to members of our community. As Kim Snyder reminded us in church on the 21st, there is a need for volunteers.

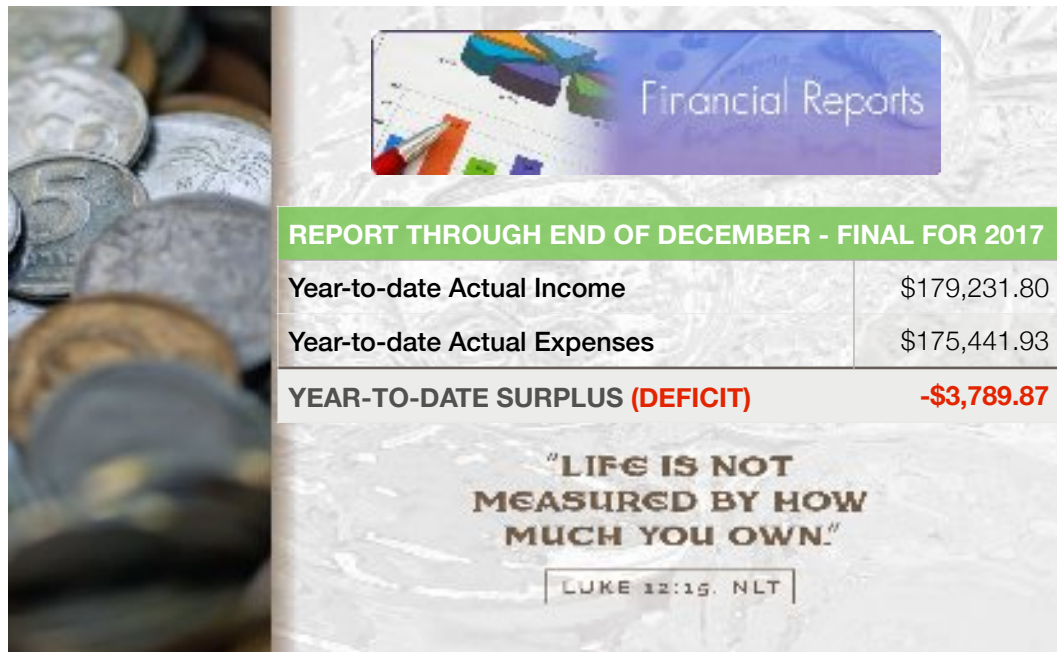
Bethany is responsible for one week per month, and the route takes about an hour or so to complete. So there's not a tremendous amount of time commitment. It is better to have a partner in making the deliveries, so there's someone to help with directions and to keep you company.

Talk to some of our folks who continue to provide this ministry to our community, and they will tell you how meaningful it is to them, but more importantly how meaningful it is to the recipients. It's such a simple thing that we take for granted - a hot meal and a friendly face. And yet for many, this is a vital part of their day, to receive the meal, and the contact.

If you have questions, or would like to volunteer, just see Kim Snyder or give her a call. If you need her number just call the church.

Get involved! You won't regret it!





Financial Reports

REPORT THROUGH END OF DECEMBER - FINAL FOR 2017

Year-to-date Actual Income	\$179,231.80
Year-to-date Actual Expenses	\$175,441.93
YEAR-TO-DATE SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	-\$3,789.87

"LIFE IS NOT MEASURED BY HOW MUCH YOU OWN."

LUKE 12:15. NLT



As the Session gathered for its January meeting on the 9th, one of the continuing topics of discussion was our financial situation. Although we do have much to be thankful for, in that we did finish 2017 in the black as indicated above, the outlook for 2018 is challenging, in that the amount pledged for 2018 does not fulfill all our budgetary requests and needs.

The Session is considering several options of how to overcome this shortfall in pledges. At this writing, there are

no specifics yet, but please know that you will be kept informed of progress and opportunities that will be coming your way.

In the meantime, if you have the ability, and would like to amend your pledge, this can be done at any time and would be greatly appreciated. You can do this by either putting a note in Pam Hurt's box, or by calling her at the church (she is at the church on Tuesday afternoons).

Bethany has been blessed in the past with very generous donors. The challenge for 2018 is to continue their legacy as we move forward in faith, so that the mission and ministry of Bethany can continue.



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www.bethanypreschurch.org/online-giving





- **Sunday School for Youth and Children** / Meets on the second floor of the Education Building at 9:45 each Sunday
- During **Worship**, children are invited to sit in designated pew (nearest the choir loft) / there are activities provided

- Our **Nursery** is staffed by a professional, paid worker, as well as volunteers each Sunday morning.
- Watch your calendar and inbox for special activities for our young people throughout the year.



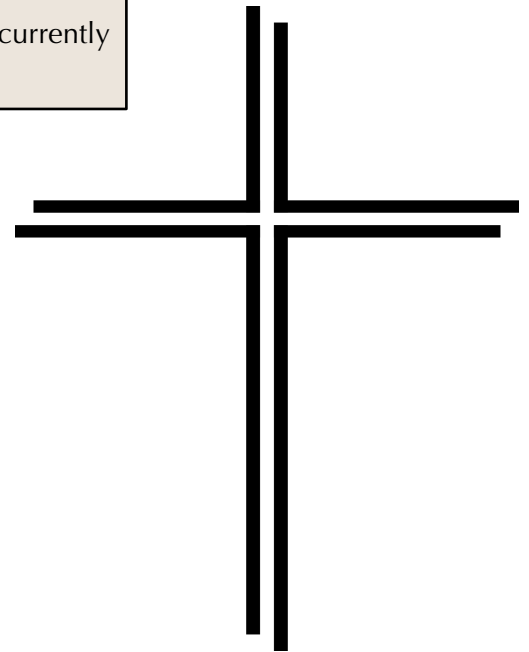
find your place
Adult Ministry

Christian Education Opportunities

The Fellowship Class - Bible study class using our denomination's Present Word Curriculum

The Young @ Heart Class - meets across from the church office / currently using the Uniform Lesson Series

The Seeker's Class - meets in the church office / currently using The Wired Word curriculum



Presbyterian Women Circles January Schedule!

Circle #1: Monday, February 5th at 10:00 am

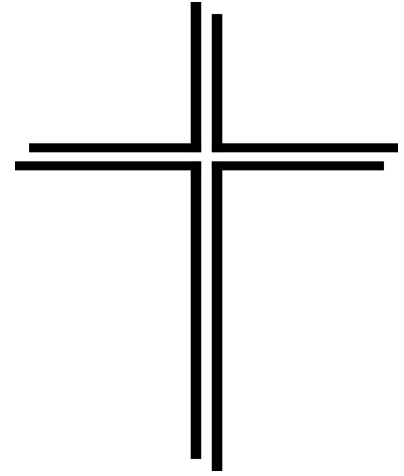
Circle #3: Monday, February 12th at 7:00 pm

Circle #4: Monday, February 12th at 7:00 pm

February Birthdays and Anniversaries!

Happy Birthday to:

Bobby Peele	February 7
Kayla Donley	February 8
Reid Terrell	February 12
Laura Mitchell-Ayers	February 16
Joyce Peele	February 18
Rick Purcell	February 21



Bethany Prays

Bill Faucette	Jack Cook	Shannon Russell
Faye Campbell	Polly and Dick Wilson	Shelvia Russell
Frances Nolan	Teresa Wilborn	Mary Moore
Layla Benoklen	Tiffany Tauchren	Barbara Cousins
Ida Whitney	Jean Berry	Pat Kennedy
Rachel Poteat	Christy Lutterloh	Donna Mitchell-Ayers
Jeremy Harden	Eleanor Thompson	Pete Campbell
Anne McDaniels	Nancy Sutton	Carolyn Thompson
Mike Sutton	Norma Proctor	Ruby Martin
Stewart Dillard	John and Ann Sutton	Levi Byrd
Ben Johnson	Peter Slater	Ruth Younts
Diane Miller	Joey Leake	



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