



John's Journal

Each year as new elders are elected, part of my responsibilities (as mandated in the *Book of Order*) is to guide our elders through a series of training sessions. Not

only are our newly elected elders a part of this training, but current elders are asked to be a part of them as well, to help remind them of their responsibilities as elders, to keep them up-to-date on Presbyterian stuff, and to instill a sense of camaraderie as we head into a new year in just a few weeks.

This year's training will involve two sessions - on Sunday evenings December 2nd and December 9th. The first session will focus on personal faith stories, and the Presbyterian system of government, and how the Session works as an organization. The second evening will focus on what it means to be an elder at Bethany, and will include hearing the Faith Statements of our elders-elect, as they are examined by the Session in preparation for their installation and ordination on the first Sunday of January.

This is always an exciting time as we begin a new year as a Session, and welcome new faces to the group. This year we welcome **Tracey Troxler, Ben Russell, and Randy Cousins** to the Session.

It is also a sad time as we say farewell to those who have faithfully served and are rotating off. This year we offer a HUGE thank you to **Brandon Troxler, Glenn Patterson, and Sandy Cook** as they rotate off at the end of 2018.

Please continue to keep your elders in your prayers as they tend to the business of Bethany, and still embrace their role as spiritual leaders. Part of their ongoing training for 2019 will be a book study throughout the year. Each month's meeting will include a time for study and reflection on Tod Bolsinger's book, *Canoeing the Mountains: Christian Leadership in Uncharted Territory*. The basic premise behind this book is reflecting on the story of Lewis and Clark, and how they set out to find a waterway

to the Pacific Ocean. They trained and prepared and planned for traveling on rivers all the way. When they got to the Rocky Mountains, they were prepared for their new reality.

From Chapter one in the book, we read: *"The culture is changing, the world is changing rapidly, and churches are facing change on an unprecedented scale. Churches and church leaders are becoming increasingly irrelevant, even marginalized. Shared corporate faith is viewed with cynicism at best, downright hostility at worst. The cultural advantage we experience during the seventeen centuries of Christendom has almost completely dissipated. Seminary training for the Christendom world is inadequate to this immensely challenging - transformation-demanding - moment in history. We have to learn to lead all over again."*

I look forward to working through this book with the Session, and to helping lead Bethany into the future with open eyes and full hearts - striving to do ministry in new and relevant ways.

But first, let's begin our journey through the Advent season to the manger! What an exciting time it always is this time of year as the expectations of the season fill our hearts and lives.

Although we are bombarded each year - and earlier each year - with the secular intrusion on our celebration, let us covenant to remember why we are celebrating. The Lord will be born, and there's nothing we or the world can do to stop that.

I'm excited about all of our Advent and Christmas activities and programs that we have coming up over the next few weeks. I hope you are as well. And so, let us celebrate! And let us remember as well. We hear the admonition to "put Christ back in Christmas." Well, Christ never left Christmas! He's always been there and he always will be there. It's just that sometimes the world forgets that. The business of Christmas sometimes gets in the way.

So, celebrate the hope, joy, peace, and love of this season! As always, I am so grateful to be your pastor!

sabbatical

rest | refresh | refocus

When a Presbyterian pastor is called to a particular congregation, the congregation approves the "Terms of Call," or the compensation package that all the parties agree to - the congregation, the pastor, and the presbytery. There are guidelines from the presbytery as to minimum compensation figures, as well as participation in the Board of Pensions (insurance and pension), vacation and study leave time, and continuing education funds. One item that has been included in Terms of Call for the past several years is a sabbatical - a time of study, rest, and renewal - usually for three months - for the pastor after seven years at a particular church.

I am grateful that the sabbatical was included in my Terms of Call when I came to Bethany in January of 2013. That would mean that I would be eligible for a sabbatical in 2020. That seems like a long way away, but in essence it is just over a year, so now is the time for me to begin planning.

The idea of a sabbatical is to give a pastor time completely away from their job. This time should be used for study, travel, rest and relaxation, and time with family and friends. There is also benefit to the congregation because the pastor will return renewed and refreshed, and also ready to share the experiences and study of the sabbatical with the congregation.

I have begun my planning. One of my goals is to keep you, the congregation, fully informed of my plans as they progress. I want you to be as excited about this as I am! I have asked a few people to help me in my planning and to be a support for me, and also to help in interpreting what I am doing with the congregation. This support group is Ron Kimrey, Tracey Troxler, Helen Brown, and Sandy Russell. We have met once and got a good start on planning.

I will be applying for a sabbatical grant through the Lily Foundation Clergy Renewal Program. This grant not only provides funds for my sabbatical, but also funds for the congregation for use in providing pastoral leadership while I am gone.

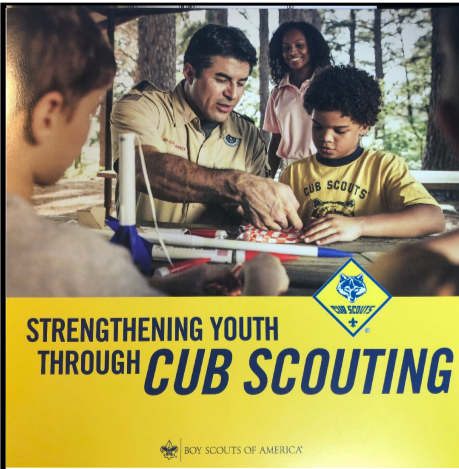
It is still very early in the planning stage. I am exploring several options as to what my study focus will be. As to the timing, I am looking at May, June, and July of 2020. Please know that I will continue to keep you informed over the next year or so, as I plan for this important step in my ministry - and for the mission and ministry of Bethany. Stay tuned. JWJ



do. love. walk.
micah 6:8

It's not too late! Anyone who has not yet had the opportunity to complete and return a **Pledge Card** to the church, please know that it's not too late! If you do not have a card, one may be obtained in the church office, or call Pam Hurt, our Financial Secretary (she is at the church on Tuesday afternoons) and she can help you with your pledge.

It takes all of us working together to carry out the ministry and mission of Bethany Presbyterian. All gifts are welcome and appreciated!



At its November meeting, the Session enthusiastically and unanimously approved the proposal to sponsor a **Cub Scout Pack** here at Bethany! This pack will be open to both boys and girls from our community, and will meet at the Rec Building. The local leaders are thrilled that there is another opportunity for scouting in this part of Alamance County.

We were fortunate a while back to have the District Representative, Jim Allegretto speak to us for a Moment for Mission in worship, to share a little bit about the program and what the needs were. In addition to providing space for meeting and being the Chartered Organization, we need to identify two persons within the congregation who would be willing to help out. One would be the **Chartered Organization Representative**, and the other would be the **Scouting Committee Chair**. Maybe you were a scout as a young person and were molded in positive ways from scouting. Maybe you have some time to give back to scouting. In moving forward with planning,

we need to identify these two folks. If you are interested, and need further information, please contact the church office, or call Jim Allegretto directly at 336.675.1300.

The benefit to Bethany from having a scouting program based here at the church can be tremendous. Let's get this moving and find these two people to help lead this effort.



DIRECTORY UPDATE:

We're getting close!! All the pictures have been taken and edited and are ready to upload to our online database. This will happen throughout the next few weeks. The hope is that the directory will be printed and put in your mailboxes by the first of January.

Thanks again for your participation in this effort. We think the new directory will be very helpful, especially as we have had several new members over the past year. And thanks again to Salina Russell for her work in getting the photos taken and edited.



Make your plans now be present for a very special Christmas presentation, as our choir leads us in the traditional **Service of Lessons and Carols on Sunday, December 23rd** as part of our regular morning worship.

2018 marks the 100th anniversary of the first Service of Lessons and Carols at King's College, Cambridge. The service is comprised of nine scripture readings telling the story of our faith leading up to the birth of Christ. These readings are interspersed with choir anthems and congregational carols.

We all know how special our music program is, thanks to our dedicated choir and our music director, Chris Bagley. It is truly a gift to our community that we can offer a service such as this. Tell your friends and neighbors and let's fill the sanctuary on the 23rd as we



The church office will be closed on **Monday, December 24th, Tuesday, December 25th, Monday, December 31st, and Tuesday, January 1st** for the holidays.

Disciple Fast Track

—Into the Word, Into the World

Each Tuesday evening (with the exception of the second Tuesday of the month when the Session meets) a group of dedicated learners meets to dive into scripture with engaging discussion and interaction.

The first 12-week has focused on the Old Testament books of Genesis and Exodus. This unit will be completed in early December. After the first of the year, the group will begin another 12-week unit, looking at the New Testament books of Luke and Acts.

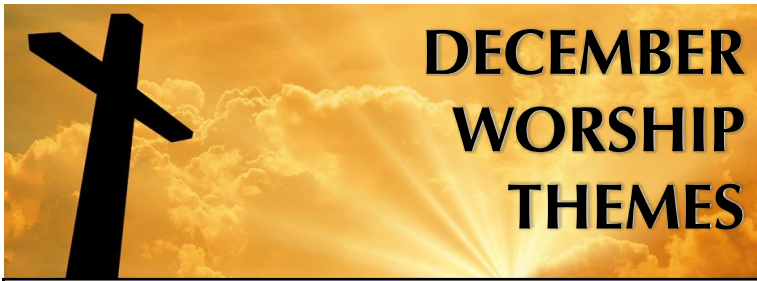
Anyone wishing to join the group after the first of the year for the New Testament unit is certainly welcome and encouraged to do so. See John for further information.



As is our custom, we will gather as a church family on **December 24th** for our **Christmas Eve Communion and Candlelight Service**. The service begins at **5:00 pm**.

This moving and joyous service includes traditional Christmas carols, scripture readings, prayers, the lighting of the Christ candle, announcement of the birth of Christ, the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and the candle lighting.

Christmas Eve is always a special time as we gather with family to celebrate this special time. Take an hour out of your evening to gather for worship as we tell the whole world, "*Joy to the world, the Lord is born!*"



December 2nd - First Sunday of Advent:
 Jeremiah 33:14-16
God's Emoji

December 9th - Second Sunday of Advent:
 Philippians 1:3-11
The God Who Completes

December 16th - Third Sunday of Advent:
 Zephaniah 3:14-20
When Fear Give Way to Joy

December 23rd - Fourth Sunday of Advent:
 Various
Service of Lessons and Carols

December 24th - Christmas Eve - 5:00 pm:
 Luke 2:1-20
Just One Candle



Missed a Sunday? Check out our sermons online!
 There are three ways to listen to audio of our Sunday sermons:

- On our website: www.bethanypreschurch.org
- On our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/bethanypresbyterian
- Or by going to: www.buzzsprout.com/9198



Advent is here! With joy and anticipation we begin our annual journey to the manger through the season of Advent. With familiar carols, the warm glow of candlelight, lighting our Advent candles each week, and many other traditions, we will go to the manger and be blessed! Here's a calendar for the season:

- Sunday, December 2nd - First Sunday of Advent / Sacrament of the Lord's Supper
- Sunday, December 9th - Second Sunday of Advent
- Sunday, December 16th - Third Sunday of Advent
- Sunday, December 23rd - Fourth Sunday of Advent / Service of Lessons and Carols
- Monday, December 24th - 5:00 pm - Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Service

In December Darkness
Ann Weems

*The whole world waits in December darkness
 for a glimpse of the Light of God.
 Even those who snarl "Humbug!"
 and chase away the carolers
 have been seen looking toward the skies.
 The one who declared he never would forgive
 has forgiven
 and those who left home
 have returned,
 and even wars are halted,
 if briefly,
 as the whole world looks starboard.
 In the December darkness
 we peer from our windows
 watching for an angel with rainbow wings
 to announced the Hope of the World.*



December 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9:45 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Worship 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:00 PM Disciple Bible Study: Into the Word, Into the World 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3:00 PM Decorating Sanctuary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9:00 AM First Sunday of Advent 9:45 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Worship 7:00 PM Officer Training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10:00 AM Circle #1 7:00 PM Circle #4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:00 PM Disciple Bible Study: Into the Word, Into the World 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6:00 PM Fellowship Class Christmas Party
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9:00 AM Second Sunday of Advent 9:45 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Worship 7:00 PM Officer Training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:00 PM Circle #3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:00 PM Session Meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Angel Tree Gift Deadline 9:00 AM Third Sunday of Advent 9:45 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Worship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6:30 PM Angel Tree Wrapping Party! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:00 PM Disciple Bible Study: Into the Word, Into the World 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9:00 AM Fourth Sunday of Advent 9:45 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Worship / Service of Lessons and Carols 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Church Office Closed 5:00 PM Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Church Office Closed 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9:00 AM 5th Sunday Break-Fast 9:45 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Worship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Church Office Closed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Church Office Closed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal 			

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)



A Special Thank You

A very special thank you goes to our Elders who are rotating off the Session at the end of 2018. Please express your gratitude to **Brandon Troxler, Sandy Cook, and Glenn Patterson** who have served faithfully, with good humor, and with unyielding dedication to their calling as an elder. Thanks Brandon and Glenn for a job well done!



The **Service of Ordination and Installation** of our newly elected elders will be held during morning worship on **Sunday, January 6, 2019**. Please be in prayer for these new officers, as well as the entire Session as a new year begins!



The Session met for its regular monthly stated meeting on November 13th. Here are some highlights:

- Heard a devotion from Jean Payne
- Shared in joys and concerns of the congregation
- Approved minutes from October stated meeting
- Heard an update from Glenn regarding selling of the property / some movement and hopefully more action can be taken soon.
- Rick and John gave report on meeting of Salem Presbytery that had occurred that same day in Blowing Rock / several pertinent issues were shared with the Session
- Enthusiastically approved the proposal to sponsor a Cub Scout Pack
- Heard a treasurer's report from Treasurer Ron Osborne
- Heard an follow-up on the recently completed Stewardship campaign
- Were reminded of Officer Training for all current and newly-elected elders on December 2nd and 9th
- Were reminded about upcoming Advent celebrations
- John shared information regarding his upcoming sabbatical in 2020. Names for a Sabbatical Support Group were presented. Application process for a grant will commence soon, with the support group providing guidance and assistance.
- Chris updated the Session on his work / choir retreat canceled due to his health issues / brass choir will be playing in worship on November 18th

NEXT MEETING: SUNDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2018
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2018
ELDERS OF THE MONTH FOR DECEMBER
NANCY PURCELL AND GLENN PATTERSON



BETHANY ANGEL TREE 2018

Again this year the Presbyterian Women's Council has decided to adopt KidsPath and Eldercare families for the Christmas Season. The Angel Tree will be loaded and ready for your choosing on Sunday, November 18th. Several have asked to have Angels in hand prior to Black Friday shopping.

KidsPath

KidsPath is a division of Hospice of Alamance/Caswell. KidsPath provides services to families with children who are experiencing a life threatening illness. They also provide grief counseling to children who have lost a loved one. KidsPath assists these families in many ways. In participating with our Angel Tree, we help out with Christmas gifts for the sick children and their siblings. This helps the parents who are struggling monetarily from the effects that a life threatening illness can bring to a family. Often one parent has to quit their job to help care for the ailing child. Traveling to hospitals, overnight stays, paying for food when the child is in the hospital, surgeries, chemo, and overall medical costs are devastating to these families at times. Our generosity helps make Christmas merrier and less stressful for these families facing a crisis with a child.

Alamance Eldercare

Alamance Eldercare provides assistance to Elderly citizens in our area who have very little to no family to assist them. These citizens usually still live in their homes, many of them alone, and have no one to make their Christmas special. In participating in our Angel Tree effort, we help provide these beautiful people who are often overlooked, with some simple Christmas cheer!!!

How does the Angel Tree work?

The social workers who are familiar and are assisting these families interview the families and come up with "wish lists". These lists are turned over to us at Bethany, and we place the items requested on Angels (for KidsPath) or Snowflakes (For Eldercare). Each KidsPath child or Eldercare patron will have several Angels/Snowflakes represented on the tree. (One Angel is not "all they will get" for Christmas)

How to participate?

- Choose Angels or Snowflakes from the tree
- Purchase the item written on the Angel or Snowflake
- Wrap the gift, and **attach the Angel/Snowflake you chose to the gift** so that we know which item the gift contains. *Please tie the angel/snowflake to the gift so that it is easily removed without damaging the packaging*
- Return the gift to the Fellowship Hall (Look for signs) **NO LATER THAN Sunday, December 16th.**
- **OR DONATE \$** - If you can't, or don't like to shop and would rather give a monetary donation, we welcome and need donations. Please give the money (Cash / or Check to Presbyterian Women) to Tina Patterson, or Brenda Sykes by **Wednesday, December 12th.** Monetary donations are welcomed, and every dollar will be used to purchase items for Angels left on the tree, or gift cards for Christmas Meals, and/or Groceries.

The "Wrap Up"

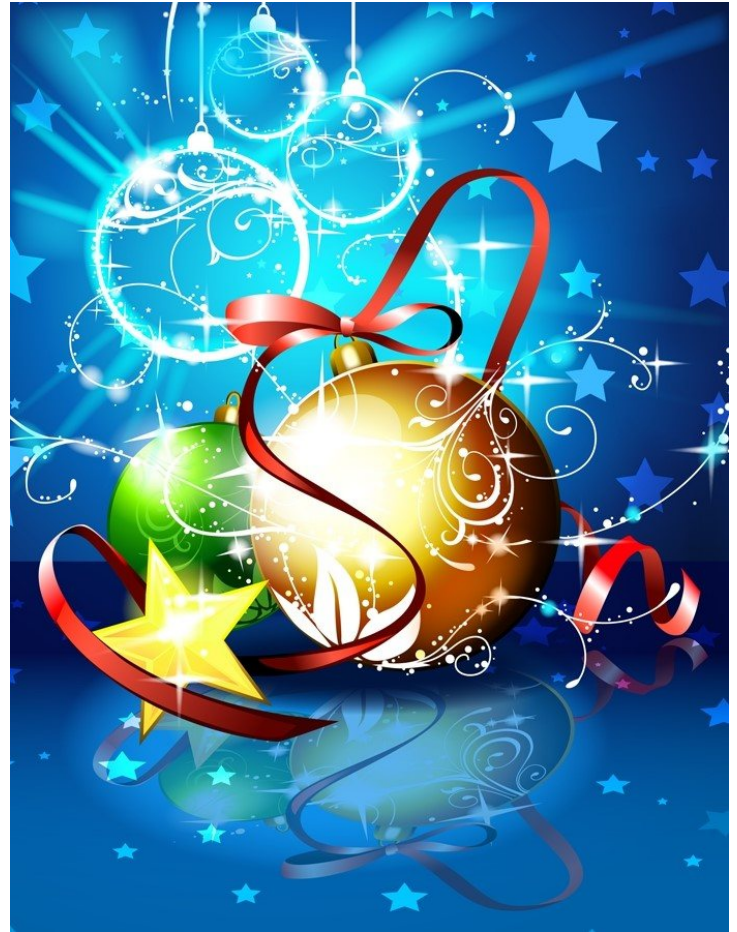
Monday, December 17th - at 6:30 pm - Please join us in the Fellowship Hall to SORT the gifts, and Wrap any gifts that were shopped for with monetary donations. Please bring scissors and tape.

Bethany's Memory Tree

The Bethany Memory Tree is a beloved tradition that allows us to remember our lost loved ones during the Christmas season. All ornaments placed on the tree are registered in the Bethany Memory Tree book that is placed yearly beside of the tree.

The Bethany Memory Tree will be placed in the West Narthex during Advent and Christmas. Ornaments may be placed on this tree in memory of your loved ones who have gone before you. Ornaments may be placed on the Memory tree at any time during the Advent / Christmas season

Please fill out a Reg Tag, and attach the tag to your ornament. Also, fill out the white slip of paper so that your memorial ornament may be recorded in the Memory tree book.



Children & Youth Ministries

- **Sunday school for Youth and Children** / Meets on second floor of Education Building at 9:45 each Sunday
- During **Worship**, children are invited to sit in designated pews (front rows on north side) / there are activities provided
- Our **Nursery** is staffed by a professional, paid worker, as well as volunteers each Sunday.
- Watch your calendar and inbox for special activities for our young people throughout the year.

Find your place!

ADULT MINISTRIES

Christian Education Opportunities

The Fellowship Class - Bible study class using our denomination's *Present Word* curriculum.

Disciple Bible Study - Into the Word, Into the World - meets on Tuesday evenings throughout the school year. New members always welcome.





REPORT THROUGH END OF OCTOBER

Year-to-date Actual Income	\$134,846.98
Year-to-date Actual Expenses	\$137,101.15
YEAR-TO-DATE SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	-\$2,254.17

Ways to Support Bethany Presbyterian Church

1. Place cash or check in the offering place on Sunday.
2. Mail in check to church office.
3. Use your bank's online bill pay to send donation to the church.
4. Set up an Electronic Funds Transfer from your savings or check account on our website or scan the QR code below.
5. Use your debit/credit card on our website or scan the QR code below.
6. Make a gift of stock or other appreciated securities. Contact the church office for more information.
7. Remember the church in your will and your estate plans.



**PRESBYTERIAN
DISASTER ASSISTANCE**

OUT OF CHAOS, HOPE

As you can imagine, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance has been very busy over the past few months, with hurricane relief, and now responding to the fires in California.

In conjunction with the American Red Cross, PDA is working with three presbyteries in the fire areas to provide assistance where it can. Volunteers are being organized, and funds are being requested. In a time when there are always questions about donated funds being used for the purpose for which they were given, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance is consistently ranked as one of the most reliable charities to donate to.

To read more about the work of PDA, and to donate, visit their website at www.pda.pcusa.org. And continue to pray for all those affected by disasters around the world.



December Birthdays and Anniversaries!

Happy Anniversary to:

Carolyn & Glenn Thompson December 14

Happy Birthday to:

Alan Baldwin December 2
 Jimmy Guthrie December 2
 Anna Osborne December 5
 Pat Testerman December 8
 Henry Flythe December 12
 Brent Dampier December 14
 Erick Russell December 23
 Pam Hurt December 31



Presbyterian Women Circles November Schedule!

Circle #1: Monday, December 3rd at 10:00 am

Circle #3: Monday, December 10th at 7:00 pm

Circle #4: Monday, December 3rd at 7:00 pm

Bethany Prays

Bill Faucette
 Faye Campbell
 Shirley Lane
 Ida Whitney
 Rachel Poteat
 Jeremy Harden
 Anne McDaniels
 Mike Sutton
 Stewart Dillard
 Shelvia Russell
 Ruby Martin
 Katherine Turner
 Dianna Yates

Family of Ron Kimrey
 Diane Miller
 Tiffany Tauchren
 Jean Berry
 Christy Lutterloh
 Eleanor Thompson
 Nancy Sutton
 Norma Proctor
 Levi Byrd
 Katherine Bayliff
 Randy Thompson
 Foy Bayliff
 John & Ann Sutton

Peter Slater
 Joey Leake
 Shannon Russell
 Mary Moore
 Barbara Cousins
 Pat Kennedy
 Donna Mitchell-Ayers
 Pete Campbell
 Ben Johnson
 Ruth Younts
 Alex Thomas
 Susie Hunley
 Bill Abplanalp

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