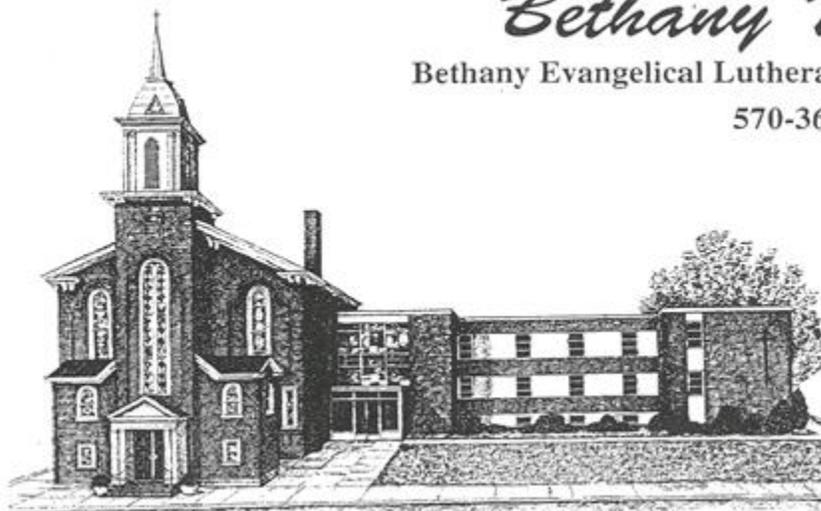


Bethany Messenger

Bethany Evangelical Lutheran Church, Montoursville, PA

570-368-8933



**Campus Location: 369 Broad Street,
Montoursville, PA**

Rev. Steve Shipman – Interim Pastor
(570-916-7780) prsteveshipman@gmail.com

Vicar Megan Shaffer – Intern
(570-764-1214) MeganAnnShaffer@gmail.com

Mrs. Mary Paulhamus – Director of Church
Music

Mr. Michael Twigg – Church Secretary

Mrs. Deborah A. Harman - Sexton

VOLUME 74

September 2022

NUMBER 9

At A GLANCE, THIS IS WHAT'S GOING ON:

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Message from Vicar Megan Shaffer

Hello Beloved Bethany and Greetings to the Flock Beyond these Walls,

September is upon us. The children are heading back to school and I am among their ranks for what is, God willing, my final semester of seminary. Part of my final studies has been to read the entire bible. I am required to write brief summaries on each book, to write a few sermons on various topics (including translations of Hebrew and Greek) and to demonstrate my proficiency to my mentor group at Luther House of Studies. By the time my letter reaches you, I will have less than 20 books left to read. For this my beloved Bethany, I ask you to keep me in your prayers. Finishing this project by December will be a large undertaking for me. I will be finishing it while I also participate in two semester long classes. I'm trying my best to be hopeful and to not allow it to daunt me.

Many individuals throughout the bible were called by God to face tasks that were daunting and otherwise impossible without God. Moses for example argued with God, pointing out his own flaws in order to excuse himself from his call. Many others tried to walk away or tried to hide like Jonah. It took a few days in the belly of a whale to get Johan to become obedient. No matter how these men tried to run or excuse themselves from their call, God patiently stayed the course and equipped them to follow through with what He needed them to do. Both Moses and Jonah were formed into "God walkers," learning to seek out God's will for what they were called to do. Were they perfect at it? Certainly not. King David, was a man who walked with God and his story is full of flaws. Yet, because he trusted God, he went on to do amazing things, seeking out God's will and yes, admitting his wrongs when they happened and turning away from them. Ezra and Nehemiah also were "God Walkers."

Both Ezra and Nehemiah received calls from God to rebuild Jerusalem after it was leveled to the ground. When the initial group reached Jerusalem after a 300 mile journey, they found it burnt to the ground; a heap of rubble. After two years of work to set up towns around the city, the first remnant began the arduous task of going about to do what God called them to do, rebuild the temple. This group faced an arduous task and while they began laying the foundation, their work was already being thwarted as they encountered resistance. The evil one worked hard at causing frustration in order to stop the work. Two lawyers from a boarding area went to task against the Israelites by writing letters to the king concerning the "rebuilding (of) that rebellious and wicked city" and the dishonor it will bring to the king. King Artaxerxes was a wise man, rather than make a hasty decision he requests the work cease.

For years the Israelites waited patiently for permission to resume their work. Artaxerxes dies and now Darius, King of Persia is in command. Zerubbabel and Jeshua take up the task of rebuilding the house of God in Jerusalem having the prophets of God to help them (paraphrase). As the Israelites patiently wait God has Darius search the archives and the Israelites are given permission to resume the rebuilding of the temple and their advisories are given a warning to "keep away." They can finally go forward.

After many decades, toils and trials the temple is rebuilt, dedicated, offerings were made and the Passover is celebrated. Ezra the priest is instructed by the king to take the people back home to Jerusalem and to begin setting up their government. Not only do the Israelites return to Jerusalem, they also return to God by admitting their wrong doings of their ancestors and turning away from sinful behaviors. Yet the city is still in ruins and the wall is just a pile of stones. Without a wall to protect them, the people are exposed to great danger. (Continued pg3)

Hearing of the conditions of Jerusalem breaks the heart of Nehemiah, a cupbearer to the king. He prays to God for the sins of the past generations, begging God for his mercy. God hears his pleas and sends him to rebuild the city walls. Just like Ezra, Nehemiah is met with a task that seems impossible, yet God equips him with eager families who each sign on to take a portion of rebuilding the wall. He finds himself in the position of governor and is immediately met with opposition. As the work begins, once again, the evil one sets out to thwart the work. Yet, Nehemiah stands strong and firm in his mission. He knows it is God who will give the Israelites success in their project.

Through a series of trials, the Israelites work together, protecting one another and helping one another to rebuild. When enemies threat to attack, men stand with weapons to protect the workers. When people charge unfair interest on loans, Nehemiah sternly sets things right and deals with the criminals. Each time the enemy starts, God protected them, making them stronger and stronger. After an astounding 52 days the wall was completed and this terrified the enemies of Israel. When one reads of the rebuilding of Jerusalem, despite many trials, hope abounds.

I pray beloved Bethany, that we too can take hope from such a testimony as this. The world is attacking us right now for the evil one is always plotting against us. If we stand firm in the Lord, pray to Him, and seek his will, He will give us the strength we need to rebuild in ways He wants us to. Yes, covid knocked us down. Members scattered while your precious flock was without a pastor. Yet, don't lose hope. If God can call back the remnant of Israel to rebuild and to gather back up the scattered, He can do the same for us. With this, I encourage you to pray to Our Lord that He should reveal to us what future He has for us.

“For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.” (Jeremiah 29.11)

**May Our Lord Bless You and Keep You,
Vicar Megan**

Message From Rev. Dennis Smith

Well, here it is my first contribution to Bethany's newsletter as the chair of the Worship and Music Committee. When I began worshipping here nearly a year ago, I figured that I would join the congregation, but I didn't anticipate becoming as involved as it turns out that I have mainly because of the distance of where I live with respect to Montoursville. I have only missed 4 Sundays since I began attending worship here. Not only have I been attending Sunday morning worship, I have helped in leading and preaching in the Divine Service, sung with the choir as well as a few solos, even played the organ on the First Sunday of Christmas, and leading taking turn in leading the adult Sunday School class. I have also been the delegate of the congregation to the Western Mission District's convocation back in June and the NALC's convocation (via Zoom) on August 5th. Then back in May I was nominated and voted in as chair of the Worship & Music Committee, which for me is important to be involved in the worship live of the Church.

It began back in my high school days when the pianist at my home church would not be attendance of worship. I had to start playing for worship services when she was not there and sometimes even for Sunday School if she was still a no-show. And then in my college years a deeper understanding of worship began to develop, especially as I began taking courses to prepare me for the ordained ministry. And then I was introduced and drawn to the liturgical worship within the Lutheran tradition.

I came to see "worship" as we human beings giving God, our Creator, His worth-ship - giving God praise and gratitude for what He has done for us in Christ Jesus, our Lord. I then understood worship as reception of the means of grace, not just Baptism and Holy Communion, but also confession & forgiveness, and the Word (in reading and preaching). But worship is not limited to Divine Service (Holy Communion or Eucharist) but also anytime the Christian is in prayer, praise, thanksgiving, and witness of his/her faith in Jesus. Worship is very central to the life of the Christian.

It is in the Divine Service where we as a community gather around the Word proclaimed and the sharing of the Sacrament of the Altar. The writer of the New Testament book of Hebrews writes, "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us now consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near."(Hebrews 10.23-25 ESV). The writer makes it clear the importance of corporate worship in the life of the Christian. Yes we can worship God on our own BUT we still need our community of faith.

As chair of our Worship & Music Committee, I hope for us to examine the worship life of Bethany: What do we do well? What can we do better? What are we missing? We are already beginning to look at the prayer life of our congregation by examining our prayer list and how to not just pray for these people but looking at how to address their need in a better way.

I recently helped to oversee an updating of our sound system, including a second wireless microphone. Finally, I would like to say how much I am enjoying being a part of this congregation.

In Christ's Service *Dennis A. Smith*



CHURCH COUNCIL ACTIONS: THE CHURCH COUNCIL HELD IT'S LAST MEETING ON MONDAY AUGUST 15,2022

July Reports are posted outside the church office

*Christian Education
Mission Committee
Worship and Music
Staff Support*

Treasurers Report

2022 Congregation Officers:

Dave Grube – President Mike Stover – Vice President Nicole Carey – Secretary

*Council Members:, Jamie Brouse, Michael Brouse, Richard Hillegas, Glenn Kaufman, Weston Miller, David Neidig, Philip Oechler, Kathie Snauffer, Gail Stover, Michael Stover
Council will hold its next meeting Monday August 15th at 7:15pm*

Income & Expenses through July 2022

<i>2022 Income</i>	<i>\$78,028.54</i>
<i>2022 Expenses</i>	<i><u>99,154.80</u></i>
<i>Expenses Over Income</i>	<i>-\$21,126.26</i>

CONTACTING THE CHURCH OFFICE: 9:00 am. to 2:00 pm., Monday through Thursday
(570)368-8933 & email: secyBethanyNALC@gmail.com **this email can reach ALL STAFF*

IN AN EMERGENCY: Vicar Megan Shaffer (570)764-1214 (Call twice in a row – if no answer)
Gail Stover - Prayer Chain (570)971-5710 / stover1104@gmail.com

BETHANY'S WEB SITE: www.BethanyNALC.org

BETHANY'S FACEBOOK PAGE: www.facebook.com/BethanyNALC.org

**Worship Opportunities for Penn State Students -
Spread the word! Greetings from Emmanuel
Lutheran Church of State College,**

In just a few short weeks from now Penn State will be kicking off a new school year. We're writing to ask you to let your Penn State University-bound students and families know that there is an NALC congregation located just 2 blocks from campus! Emmanuel would be delighted to welcome them to Happy Valley and to support your students over the course of their studies here.

If your students happen to have move-in or transportation needs, or would simply like to meet a few more friendly faces as they move to a new town, we'd like to help. We know how important local connections are, and we hope we can play a role in making your students' college experience positive and faith affirming.

We'd also like to start building relationships with students' families now, so they can rest assured there's a place of worship available to them when visiting for Parents' Weekends, football games, stops at Berkey Creamery, or anything else that may bring them our way.

To that end, please share our contact information with any incoming students and families you may have in your congregation. They can reach us at our website, www.emmanuelnalc.org, by email at info@emmanuelnalc.org, or by phone at **814-826-1352**. We hope to welcome them soon!

In Christ, Pr. Logan Wilmoth

Emmanuel Lutheran Church State College, PA *God With Us!*

www.emmanuelNALC.org

MINISTRY UPDATES

RALLY DAY & the 9-11 Bell Ringing is set for September 11th. Help us kick off our new Sunday School year by bringing in school supplies for Operation Christmas Child and for the NALC Disaster Relief!

Divine Worship will begin at 9am with a blessing of the Backpacks. All students are welcome to bring in their backpacks to receive a blessing from Vicar Megan. Don't forget to return to the church in the afternoon for the annual 9-11 ringing of the bells during the Memorial Motorcycle Ride. Time: TBA.

The following Items are needed for both projects: -BIBLES! -Devotionals -Greeting Cards with messages of hope and love from us to go inside of the bibles.

-Bookbags -Pencils -Mechanical Pencils -Erasers -Pencil sharpeners -Boxes of Crayons - Note books -Pocket Folders -Water Color Sets -Children's Safety Scissors -Rulers -Pens - Glue Sticks (No liquids please!) -Playdough -Markers -Pencil cases -Coloring Books

Items for NALC Disaster Relief will be accepted until October 16th.

Items for Operation Christmas Child will be collected throughout the fall.

Donation Drop Off Box is located in the hall outside of the church office.

Thank you for your support of these great missions!

Project Linus Update:

We have two **Make A Blanket Days** coming up. The first will be [September 24](#) at St. Luke's Lutheran Church in Williamsport, with Dawn Nau in charge {nauhill2@comcast.} Contact her to help or for further information. Our Make A Blanket Day at Faith Lutheran Church will be Oct. 8 from 9:30 till 2Pm. In reparation we need help fringing blankets for blanketeers to knot. Email me or call me - [570-966-3675](tel:570-966-3675) if you can help. More details later. Thanks so much for your help and support.at Warren, Project Linus Coordinator of the Central Susquehanna Valley.

TUREEN DINNER SPONSORED BY THE WOMEN OF THE CHURCH

EVERYONE IS WELCOME

Reservations due by Tuesday Sept 6th, 2022

To be held Monday September 12th, 2022 at 6pm

Come and enjoy beautiful, friendly, dogs!

Bring the "Kids of any age"

*We are looking forward to a special program, **The Alliance of Therapy Dogs**. Celebrating 30 years of sharing smiles and joy!*

Come see Lucy, a Goldendoodle, handled by Victoria Stetts,

Also, a Leonberger and two Newfoundland's.

The handlers and dogs visit James V. Brown to read with the

Kids, also make visits to hospitals, nursing homes, schools,

And Colleges. They can be found at the Williamsport Growers

Market to read with kids until October.

Bring a dish to share.

Provided: Broasted Chicken, rolls, drinks

Asking for donations for the chicken

Name_____

Attending_____

Office ph. 570-368-8933

Email secybethanyNALC@gmail.com

HOSS'S FUNRAISER EVENT

The next date for Hoss's fundraiser event is **Tuesday September 6th** . Coupons will be mailed with August's Newsletter. Additional coupons will be available in the office as needed.

You can use a coupon any time throughout the day or multiple times if you like.

You would need a different coupon for each visit.

Simply Giving

What is it? Simply Giving is an auto enrollment that replaces your weekly offering envelopes. Just fill out the form once and never have to worry about bringing the offering envelopes to Sunday service. You can mail or fax in the completed form on the following page and Vanco will take care of the rest!

Attitude of Gratitude

A big thank You to Gail Stover for the delivery of altar flowers and the nice visit, they made my day a little more cheerful, thank you to Vicar Megan and Pastor Shipman for the visit and communion.

Peggy Shultz

Want to thank someone who showed you kindness? This is a great way to show our appreciation for our brothers and sisters in Christ who take time to up lift others! Feel free to submit your 'gratitude' for our next issue.

Email Vicar Megan: MeganAnnShaffer@gmail.com with Attitude of Gratitude in the Subject Line.

Looking for resources to Enrich Your Walk with the Lord? Here are Free Resources

<https://thenalc.org/> - See the Devotions Tab

<https://www.bible.com/> - Has a large variety of studies and devotionals by topic, book or author. Its Free!

https://www.moravian.org/daily_texts/ - Daily Texts and Reflections for Study.

Mail completed form to:
 Vanco Services, LLC
 12600 Whitewater Dr. Suite 200
 Minnetonka, MN 55343



Fax completed form to:
 952-983-8665

Member Enrollment and Authorization Form

Complete This Section for ALL Enrollments (Please Print)			
Last Name	First Name	Middle Initial	
Mailing Address	City	State	ZIP Code
Home Telephone Number	Work Telephone Number		
Check the appropriate box: <input type="checkbox"/> New enrollment/authorization <input type="checkbox"/> Change in authorized amount <input type="checkbox"/> Change in account			
Gifts/payments should be taken from: <input type="checkbox"/> Checking (attach a voided check) <input type="checkbox"/> Savings (attach a savings deposit slip) Routing Number _____ Valid routing # must start with 0, 1, 2, or 3 Account Number _____	REQUIRED: I authorize Thrivent Financial for Lutherans and Vanco Services, LLC to automatically withdraw contributions/tuition payments/donations from my account. I have attached a voided check or savings deposit slip. This authority will remain in effect until I give reasonable notification to terminate the authorization. Account Holder Signature _____		
*** ATTACH EITHER A VOIDED CHECK OR A SAVINGS DEPOSIT SLIP ***			

Complete This Section for Lutheran Congregation Donations			
Congregation Name	Street Address		
City	State	ZIP Code	
Frequency of Funds Transfer (Please check only one): <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly on Monday <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly on Friday <input type="checkbox"/> Semi-monthly (transferred on 1st and 15th of each month) <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly on the 1st <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly on the 15th START DATE: _____ Church Envelope Number: _____	Church Fund Designations: General/Operating \$ _____ Building \$ _____ Evangelism/Outreach \$ _____ _____ \$ _____ _____ \$ _____ TOTAL \$ _____	Amount \$ _____ \$ _____ \$ _____ \$ _____ \$ _____	

Complete This Section for Lutheran School Tuition Payments			
School Name	Street Address		
City	State	ZIP Code	
Total annual tuition for all family members \$ _____ Divided by number of monthly payments (see below) _____ Amount of each monthly payment \$ _____ Please contact your school for information on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payment duration options (e.g., 10 months or 12 months) • Date the first and last payments are due • Date during each month that the transaction will occur • Student's school tuition number 	Date of first payment: _____ Date of last payment: _____ Student's Tuition Number: _____		

Complete This Section for Lutheran Institution Donations			
Institution Name	Street Address		
City	State	ZIP Code	
Date of Monthly Gift Transfer (Please check only one): <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly on the 1st <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly on the 15th Amount of each monthly gift (minimum \$5) \$ _____	Date of first payment: _____ Date of last payment*: _____ * Note: If you want your gift to be given continuously until you notify us to change the amount or stop the gift, please write "CONT." as the date of the last payment.		

FOR CONGREGATION/INSTITUTION OFFICE USE ONLY	
Congregation/Institution Code: <u>0021235254</u> Envelope/Participant Number: _____	Date: _____ Verifier Initials: _____

Red Cross Bloodmobile

Upcoming Dates:

Wednesday Sept 14th - *(12:30 pm to 5:30 pm)*

Friday November 11th, 2022 - *(1:00 pm to 6:00 pm)*

Did you know that 90% of the Red Cross Blood Mobile Staff are Volunteers?

Our Nation is experiencing a national blood shortage, please consider donating if you are able, lives depend upon it!

For more information, please visit:

Redcrossblood.org

Bethany Lutheran Church Contact: Denise Bergenstock 570-323-2984

If you are able to assist with this event please call Denise.

Annual Blessing of the quilts

Join us the first Sunday in October and come see 13 different quilts all made by Bethany's

Own quilting ministry. Our fellowship always welcomes guests. Please stay tuned for a full ministry update in the October Newsletter.

Vicar Megan Shaffer

Harvest of Hope – Volunteer Opportunities & Fresh Free Veggies and Fruit

We are currently following the COVID-19 requirements. The Fresh Express program continues the second Thursday of every month; however, we distribute the food as cars drive by. We are currently supplying the schools with backpack food items to supplement weekend food.

Fresh Express is open every 2nd Thursday of the month from 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM.

Volunteers assist with this program every 2nd Thursday of the month from 1:00 PM - 5:30 PM utilizing 2 hour shifts for set up, sorting, distribution and clean up. The **Backpack program** packs food every 3rd Thursday of the month from 6:30 PM - 8:00 PM during the school year. The backpack supply team meets the 1st and 3rd Mondays of the month from 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM. The backpack set up team meets every 3rd Tuesday of the month from 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM.

Harvest of Hope is now celebrating our fourth year! Although the dream and seed of this project began about 5 years ago, we could not have imagined the rate of its growth. The community involvement from the schools, organizations, businesses and churches has been a blessing. The stories that we have been privileged to hear warm our hearts! With that being said, we have a long way to go to meet the needs of the community. We are currently serving 120 students in the Montoursville School District with weekend supplemental food. We have approximately 550 students that qualify for this food. We are working on a financial plan to increase the number of students to meet this need. We serve approximately 75 families with our Fresh Express program. If you are interested in being part of helping financially please see "How to Help".

Our Backpack program is organized so that a child in need will receive one bag of food every Friday during the school year. In that bag they receive 2 entrees, 2 breakfast items, 1 vegetable, 1 fruit and 2 snacks along with a special item on holidays.

We have 12 churches committed to help us with food donations for the backpack program as it functions purely from donations. We are so blessed to have this community group effort. We have received food donations from school events and personal food donations. If you would like to donate please see "How to Help".

Our Fresh Express program receives a delivery of fresh and nutritious items in the morning from the Central PA Food Bank. We open our doors later that day for families to shop for their groceries. A hospitality team welcomes the families and provides them with snacks. The initial paperwork is completed as required by the State for statistics.

Thank you for your interest in the Harvest of Hope and we look forward to meeting you in some way in the future.

Sharon Atherholt Jane Zimmerer

Co-Chair's of Harvest of Hope

Located within Faith Church: 700 Fairview Drive, Montoursville, PA

BACKPACK BREAKFAST NEWS:

The Backpack Program is continuing into this new school year. Families are grateful for the items that we are able to contribute!

They continue to appreciate our donations of:

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Oatmeal (1-2 oz. packets) | Cream of Wheat (1-2 oz. packets) |
| Boxed Cereal (Individual, 1.5-2 oz) | Cereal Bars (individually packaged) |
| Multigrain Bars; Breakfast Bars; Pop Tarts; Belvita Breakfast Biscuits (1.76 oz.) | |

***Prayer List Changes ***

We Are Updating And Refining How We Monitor The Prayer List.
Some Changes You Need To Be Aware Of:

- *New* 90 Day Cycle - Every 90 days the list will be updated to remove/add/keep persons on it.

- When requesting someone be added to the list we kindly ask for the following to be provided:

- Individual’s First & Last Name
- How Name is to Appear in the Bulletin (Full or First)
- If Name is Only to be Mentioned During Service (Not in Written Communications).
- Connection to Congregation (If a Non-Member)
- If the Person Would like Pastoral contact (Include Phone Number)
- Any Specific Intentions (If Possible).
- Long Term or Short Term

Thank you in advance for your understanding. It is an honor to pray for our brothers and sisters in Christ and it is something we take very seriously.

EQUIPMENT AVAILABLE

Equipment is always available to borrow during recovering from surgery and for those who may be experiencing difficulties. We have walkers, canes, equipment for the bathtub and commodes are all available. Please let us know if you have any needs, and we will assist you.



HOME COMMUNION AVAILABLE

Home Communion is again available to our shut-ins! If you wish to have a pastor come and visit and administer the Sacrament, please contact Flip Oechler or the church office to schedule a visit.



NEED A COAT, TAKE ONE; HAVE A COAT, LEAVE ONE

Winter is coming, and we *know* that cold days are ahead! If you are considering some closet cleaning, we certainly can use more coats, especially as we know that there are some local families who are going through difficult times. We accept children's and adult's sizes, and have a bin for hats, mittens, scarves, and gloves.

Also, if you know **anyone** in need of a coat or jacket, please remind them of our supply.

When someone receives a gift of warmth, it helps show others that people who Love Our Lord also care about them!



PROJECT LINUS & SHEPHERD OF THE STREETS

We are still sharing our knitting, crocheting, and quilting gifts with others by making blankets of all sizes (baby, children, adult) for those with cancer or going through traumatic experiences at hospitals. You may bring these items to the Church Office. We are also collecting winter hats, gloves, and scarves to share with the Shepherd of the streets.

UNITED CHURCHES FOOD PANTRY

The Food Pantry currently is blessed with an abundance of food, but that will probably change as we go into the fall. They are beginning to prepare for the upcoming holidays, and are also beginning to distribute gift cards (\$5-\$10) to each client so that they are also able to purchase if they need something that is not available at the pantry (so monetary donations are also very appreciated).

The following is a list of pantry items for which they are currently requesting:

- Coffee
- Rice
- Condiments
- Pop Tarts
- Hamburger Helper
- Potatoes
- Jello & Pudding mixes
- Pie Filling

You may drop off items at our church and they will be delivered to the pantry.



SHEPHERD OF THE STREETS

Rev. Mark Brumbach, [(570)322-6538] the leader of this ministry, shared these thoughts.

“We are constantly helping people with monthly hygiene kits and we rely on your donations of specific items for the kits.

Listed below are a few items that we currently need:

- Kleenex
- Shaving Cream
- Paper towels
- Feminine Hygiene items
- Conditioner
- Women's Deodorant
- Band aids

They also are grateful for any financial support. Donated items can be brought to the church; financial donations can be put in the collection plate – please designate memo “Shepherd” or “Shepherd of the Streets”

Tuesday Night Bible Study Resumes

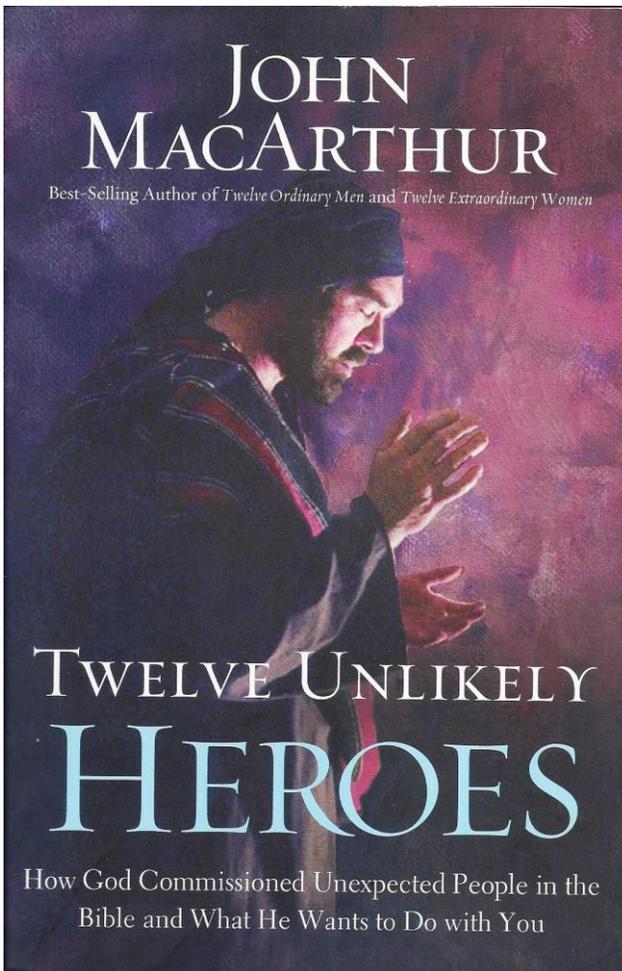
You are invited

Tuesday night Bible Study begins September 13th in the Social Hall.

We gather at 7:00 for a snack and fellowship, study the lesson from 7:30 to 8:30 and close with prayer. We meet the 2nd, 4th and 5th Tuesdays of each month except we do break for the summer.

This year, the text is John MacArthur's Twelve Unlikely Heroes. Each session looks at an individual such as Enoch, Esther, or John Mark. We examine what was special about them, how God used them, and what God's Word about them says to us, today.

If you are interested, and have not already signed up, books may be purchased by calling Sharon Fox Barnard at 570-435-5408.



WHAT KIND OF PEOPLE DOES GOD USE TO ACCOMPLISH HIS WORK?

✠

Far from the children's tales depicted in picture books and nursery rhymes, the men and women highlighted in the Bible were unnervingly real. They faltered. They struggled. And at times, they fell short. Yet God worked through them in surprising and incredible ways to accomplish His purposes. Scripture does not hide their weaknesses, caricature their strengths, or spin their stories as a display of human nobility. Instead, it describes these heroes of faith with unflinching honesty and delivers an unexpected ending: "God is not ashamed to be called their God" (Hebrews 11:16).

In *Twelve Unlikely Heroes*, pastor and best-selling author John MacArthur uses his deep knowledge of the Bible and history to take us back to see these three-dimensional men and women in their own times and cultures. In doing so, it becomes clear how their dramatic stories apply to us today. People who might at first seem foreign quickly become familiar and unforgettable—particularly as they reveal the true Hero behind every witness, the power counterbalancing every weakness, "the Author and Finisher of our faith" (Hebrews 12:1).

JOHN MACARTHUR is a popular author and conference speaker widely known for his thorough, candid approach to teaching God's Word. He has served as pastor-teacher of Grace Community Church in Sun Valley, California, since 1969. His media ministry, Grace to You, produces daily radio programs for nearly 2,000 English and Spanish radio outlets worldwide.

COVER DESIGN BY JEFF MILLER, FACEDOT STUDIO
ORIGINAL PACKAGE DESIGN © 2014 THOMAS NELSON, INC.
FRONT COVER IMAGE © MICHAEL DUDASH

JOHN MACARTHUR
Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time®
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RELIGION / Christian Life / General
USD \$16.99
ISBN 978-1-4002-0611-7
51699

9 781400 206117
Printed in USA

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