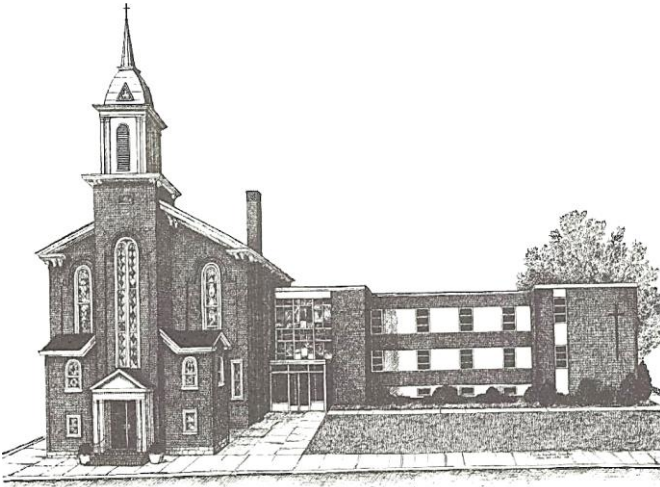


BETHANY MESSENGER



Bethany Evangelical Lutheran Church

369 Broad Street

Montoursville, PA 17754 570-368-8933

www.BethanyNALC.org

www.facebook.com/bethlutmtrsvlle

Email secyBethanyNALC@gmail.com

Sunday Services

9:00 am Holy Communion

10:15 am Coffee / Fellowship

10:30 am Sunday School

Emergency Pastor contact Gail Stover 570-368-2282

Office Hours: Monday – Thursday 9 am – 2:00 pm

VOLUME 75

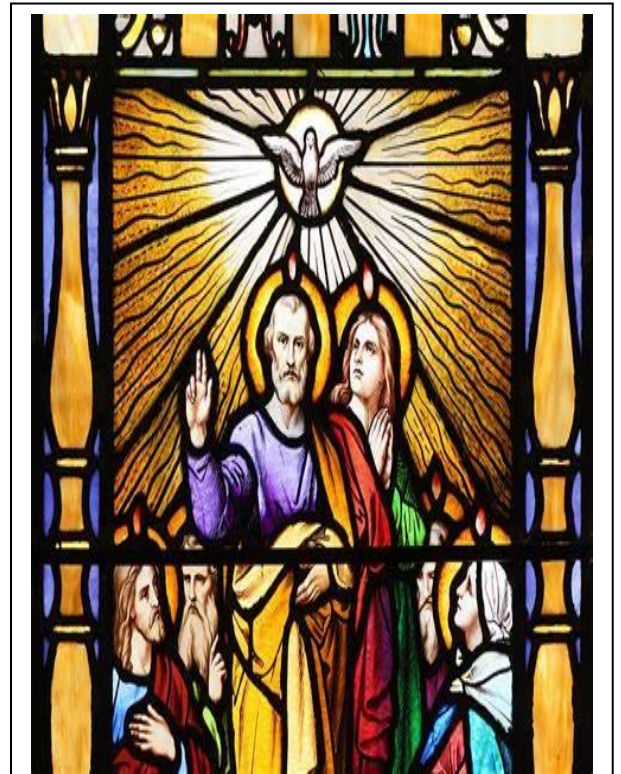
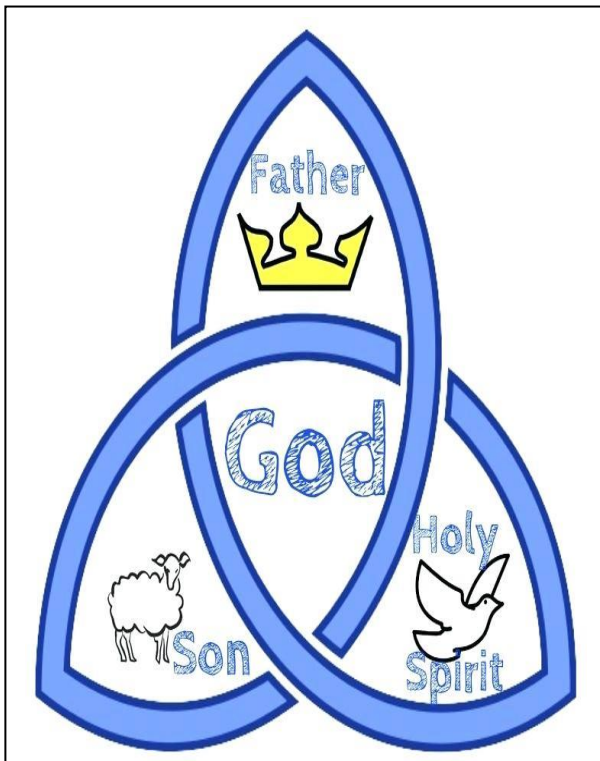
June 2023

NUMBER 6

Bethany's Mission Statement: Matthew 28:19-20 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the

name of the
Father and of
the Son and
of the Holy
Spirit, and
teaching them
to observe all
that I have commanded you.

Sunday June 11, 2023 –
Sunday November 26, 2023
Season After Pentecost



The eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. And when they saw him, they worshiped him, but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me." Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.

Sunday June 4, 2023 Holy Trinity Sunday



The Gift of The Holy Spirit

May 2, 2008 / [The Magazine](#) / [By The LCMS](#) / [2 Comments](#)
by *Dr. Gerhard Bode*

The miracle of Pentecost is not merely a past historical event. The Spirit's wondrous activity goes on in the Church today.

What is a Christian to do with Pentecost?

Traditionally, the Church has observed this day as one of the most important festivals of the year. But unlike Christmas or Easter, Pentecost doesn't have the cultural attachments that remind us of its significance. There are no ornamented trees, strings of lights, or wrapped presents to announce the season, no egg-filled baskets or Easter lilies to proclaim the day. Without cultural traditions behind it, we may wonder how to celebrate Pentecost. Is it really as important as the other days? Why do we observe Pentecost at all?

The Church celebrates the Festival of Pentecost as the fulfillment and conclusion of the Easter season. The name *Pentecost*, meaning “the fiftieth day,” originally referred to the Jewish Festival of Weeks, the time of thanksgiving for first-fruits and the ingathering of the harvest (cf. Ex. 34:22). The Christian Church retained the name to mark the completion of the 50-day period after Easter—and the first in-gathering of believers into the Church.

On Pentecost, Christians commemorate the special outpouring of the Holy Spirit. We recall how a humble fisherman, filled with the Spirit, boldly proclaimed Jesus Christ crucified and risen from the dead. We give thanks that a multitude of hearers repented and believed. Three thousand people, from all over the world, were baptized and received the gift of the Spirit. Sent by God the Father, and by His Son, Jesus Christ, the Spirit came to continue the Father’s work on earth.

The Spirit’s activity continues today. That’s why the Christian celebration of Pentecost is such a joyful one—and so vital for the Church to remember. Through the preaching of the Gospel and Baptism, the Holy Spirit calls and gathers believers to Christ and His Church. This gracious work is ongoing; it is not yet completed in our lives. The Spirit works among people of every nation and language—among all to whom the Church is sent to proclaim the Gospel. For this reason, Christians pray for the continued outpouring of the Spirit and for the fulfillment of His sanctifying work.

The Promised Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit’s activity is creative and powerful. His working in this way has a history. In the Old Testament, the Spirit was present at the creation of the world, hovering over the face of the waters (Gen. 1:2). The Spirit came in power upon Israel’s judges and kings, equipping and strengthening them to accomplish great feats and victories for God and His people (Judges 6:34; 14:6; 1 Sam. 16:13, 14). By the Spirit, the prophets became mouthpieces for the Lord, proclaiming both judgment and deliverance (Ezek. 2:2–3; Micah 3:8).

In the New Testament, the Holy Spirit came upon Christ Himself, descending upon Him in the form of a dove at His Baptism (Matt. 3:16). On the evening before His crucifixion, Jesus promised His disciples that they would receive the *Paraclete*, the Spirit of Truth. This Comforter and Helper would live with them and be in them forever (John 14:16ff.). He would direct them in proclaiming Christ and His work of salvation for the world. After His resurrection, Jesus commissioned His disciples, sending them out to “make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you” (Matt. 28:19–20 NIV).

Before His ascension into heaven, Jesus explained to the apostles that they, too, would be baptized with the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:5). When the Spirit came upon them, He said, they would receive power, and they would be His “witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8). Jesus’ promise of sending the Holy Spirit upon His followers was soon fulfilled in a marvelous and unprecedented way.

The Day of Pentecost

The apostles had gathered themselves in Jerusalem to wait and pray. They were a bedraggled group—an odd assortment of unimpressive, unemployed out-of-towners. Suddenly, a sound like the rushing of a great wind filled the whole house where they were staying. Tongues of fire appeared on them. The Holy Spirit came upon them in power and strength, filling each of them, and they all began to speak in other languages.

What an amazing scene! With the wind, audible but unseen, came the Spirit's creative breath of life (cf. John 3:8). With the many tongues of fire was the one fire of the Spirit's presence—the presence that warms cold hearts and burns away the deadness of doubt and unbelief. The miraculous ability to speak in different tongues equipped the apostles for communicating with the visitors staying in Jerusalem for the Pentecost festival.

The strange events drew a crowd. The Spirit sent the apostles out preaching and witnessing—proclaiming the wonders of God. The audience was bewildered by the message and the messengers. How could simple Galileans speak such things? Some in the crowd scorned and ridiculed the apostles. Were they deluded? Drunk? But others were amazed at what they heard, wondering what all this meant.

On Pentecost, the apostles were human instruments of the Holy Spirit. Ordinary people, filled with no ordinary Spirit, they became extraordinary witnesses—courageous proclaimers of the Gospel. Under the Spirit's guidance, Galilean fishermen, a former tax collector, and the others—flawed instruments all—now announced the great saving work of God in Jesus Christ. And impetuous Peter—the one who had denied Jesus, who had forsaken Him and hid in fear—stepped forward as the bold spokesman of the Holy Spirit.

What did the Spirit accomplish on Pentecost? Through the apostles' preaching and Baptism, He called and gathered believers into the Church of Christ. He gave them the Christ-earned forgiveness of sins and salvation. He established Christ's kingdom, made manifest through the Gospel for all the world. As Luther proclaimed in his 1534 Pentecost sermon: "Thus Christianity begins with the poor fisherman, and with the despised work of God, which is called Christ, hanging on the cross"
(WA 37.402).

The Present Work of the Spirit

The miracle of Pentecost is not merely a past, historical event. The Spirit's wondrous activity goes on in the Church today. To be sure, the special manifestation and dynamic outpouring of the Spirit on the apostles at the first Pentecost was a unique event in the history of the Church. However, there are some important things for Christians to remember about our own Pentecost celebrations.

The confidence of Christians in our world today easily can be shaken. We are bombarded with invitations to doubt the truthfulness of God and His Word. False teachers may tempt us to cast aside our faith in favor of the claims of other “truths.” We have become accustomed to new assaults on the person of Jesus Christ, His message, and His work. It may not surprise us that our beliefs are rejected and despised, but our confidence may soon weaken if we find ourselves rejected and despised because of our faith.

In his recent bestselling book, *The GOD Delusion*, biologist Richard Dawkins attacks belief in God, asserting that religious faith—especially the Christian faith—is not only utter foolishness but a threat to a stable and healthy society. He maintains that atheism and a rejection of all religions could be a force for peace in the world. Keeping faith and hope becomes ever more difficult as Christianity and Christians become the object of ridicule, mockery, and even suspicion.

When we struggle with fear and doubt, the Holy Spirit invites us to pray for comfort and hope. The Spirit—our Helper—does not give us over to discouragement, but strengthens us in our faith. He reminds us that Christ, our Savior from sin and death, holds us firmly in His undying grip, and helps us hold firmly to Him. The Spirit does not give us over to uncertainty, but consoles us, confirming in us the belief that God’s Word is true and His promises sure. The Spirit gives us joy in the midst of grief, peace in the face of fear.

The Holy Spirit active in the apostles on Pentecost is the same Spirit who works in believers today. The dynamic Word proclaimed on Pentecost—the Gospel of Jesus Christ, crucified and risen from the dead—is the same Word proclaimed among us today. The Spirit unites believers through the bond of peace. As the apostle Paul testifies, the Spirit calls us to one hope, the hope of the glorious salvation life of Christ. Together with the apostles and the early Christians we have “one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all” (Eph. 4:5). The Spirit works surely and certainly in the Church, and in the hearts and lives of individual believers. Like the apostles on Pentecost, our courage and confidence in witnessing and telling others about Christ lie in the power of the Spirit and the Word.

The Holy Spirit has a history—a record—of working in the world through His means of grace and the forgiveness of sins. This history is also a personal one for each of us, because the Spirit works intimately in our lives. In his explanation to the Third Article of the Creed, Luther details the Spirit’s work, giving us a very personal confession of faith for Pentecost:

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith.

In the same way He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith.

*In this Christian Church He daily and richly forgives
all my sins and the sins of all believers.*

*On the Last Day He will raise me and all the dead,
and give eternal life to me and all believers in Christ.*

This is most certainly true.

Through the Gospel and the Sacraments, the Spirit nourishes, preserves, and increases the Church and its members. As believers in Jesus, we too have received the gift of the Holy Spirit, and our Baptisms are wonderful reminders of the Spirit's gracious activity of regeneration.

The Church belongs to the Holy Spirit, and His work in it goes on unceasingly until the Last Day. He continues to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ, to create faith, and to administer the forgiveness of sins to believers across the globe. At the same time, He gathers new people into His Church, using modern-day apostles as His instruments, sending them to all nations, baptizing and teaching.

Through the Holy Spirit, the Gospel is amazingly translatable, crossing languages, cultures, and ethnic borders. The Spirit speaks Arabic and Zulu, Spanish and Mandarin, American Sign Language and Braille, and He proclaims the divine Good News in all of these human languages. National divisions and prejudices are not barriers to the Spirit. He is no respecter of human boundaries. He is the Caller, Gatherer, and Unifier of God's people in the Church.

Luther wrote a Pentecost hymn that may serve as a prayer to the Holy Spirit. In this beautiful hymn we pray for the Spirit to be active among us, to strengthen our faith, and to comfort us as we walk in His service:

Come, Holy Ghost, God and Lord,
with all Your graces now outpoured
On each believer's mind and heart;
Your fervent love to them impart.
Lord, by the brightness of Your light
In holy faith Your Church unite;
From every land and every tongue
This to Your praise, O Lord, our God, be sung:
Alleluia, alleluia!

Come, holy Light, guide divine,
Now cause the Word of life to shine.
Teach us to know our God aright
And call Him Father with delight.
From every error keep us free;
Let non but Christ our master be

That we in living faith abide,
In Him, our Lord, with all our might confide.
Alleluia, alleluia!

Come, holy Fire, comfort true,
Grant us the will Your work to do
And in Your service to abide;
Let trials turn us not aside.
Lord, by Your power prepare each heart,
And to our weakness strength impart
That bravely here we may contend,
Through life and death to You, our Lord, ascend.
Alleluia, alleluia!

–“Come, Holy Gost, God and Lord” *LSB 497*

On Pentecost Christians rejoice in the gift of the Spirit to God’s people from all times and all places. We celebrate and, as on Christmas and Easter, our Pentecost praises resound with joyful Alleluias to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

**CHURCH COUNCIL ACTIONS: THE CHURCH COUNCIL HELD IT'S LAST MEETING ON
MONDAY MAY15 ,2023**

2023 CHURCH COUNCIL OFFICERS:

PRESIDENT- DAVE GRUBE
VICE PRESIDENT – MIKE STOVER
SECRETARY – NICOLE CAREY
TREASURER – WES MILLER

April Reports are posted outside the church office

Council Members: Jamie Brouse, Michael Brouse, Glenn Kaufman, Kathie Snauffer, Gail Stover, Michael Stover, Sally Lomison, Tracy Rhian, Dennis Smith

Council will hold its next meeting Monday June 19th at 7:15pm

Income & Expenses through April, 2023

<i>2023 Income</i>	<i>\$ 42,494.88</i>
<i>2023 Expenses</i>	<i><u>72,787.53</u></i>
<i>Expenses Over Income</i>	<i>\$-30,292.65</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*

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

MESSAGES and GRATITUDE

Thank You - for the beautiful flowers for my birthday, I appreciate your thoughtfulness. Made my day extra special.

Jean Beard

Thank You – for your donations for Red Geraniums thus far! Further donations are needed. The geraniums are placed in the church on the Day of Pentecost, then planted at the front of the church.

Thank You for your support of Bethany, your contributions enable Bethany to provide for our mission which is to spread the word of Jesus Christ, to allow us to learn the word of God in our Sunday Services, in our Sunday School Classes and at our Bible Studies, which prepares us all to become disciples in our daily lives.

Thank You to everyone for your support during my collegiate Journey.

I appreciate all the cards, candy, and prayers. I was able to graduate May 6th with my Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice and a minor in Journalism. Continued Blessings, Jennie Brouse

Thank You - *I would like to thank you all for sending the beautiful flowers to me, thank you so much, you are all wonderful!*

Joan

Bethany Lutheran Church is participating in these many programs including:

Shepherd of the Streets, School backpack Program, Shut- In Visit Ministry, Bloodmobile, AA Group” We Chose to live” program, Bell Choir & Chancel Choir, Soloist Volunteers, Bible School Week Program, Quilters, Women of Bethany, Confirmation Classes, Give a Coat, Take a Coat, Sunday Worship Assistants, Bethany’s Summer Picnic and Vesper Service. Soup Sales and Chicken and Biscuit Dinner, Wednesdays in Lent program, Easter egg coloring, crafts and egg hunt, Samaritans Purse Christmas gift boxes, United Churches of Lycoming County, and more.

PLEASE PRAY FOR

Eugene Harris – Marjorie Gower - Kevin Taylor- Julie Griffiths -Marjorie Fantaskey – Joan Hiller - Betty Rosencrans – Joan Swartz - Margaret Ryan – David Erdley- Biddie & Michael - Louise and Jim – Vonnie - Fay and Harold Sausser – Colleen Davidson - Jim Sechler – Lou and Emily Bassler- Ann & Tom Long- Matthew - Evelyn Seaman – Charlie – Piper - Sadie – Iva Kressler – Peggy Shultz – Lenny and Kathy Hinton – Eileen Lauchle - Darrell

The women's meeting is Monday June 5th at 1:00PM – Gail will be doing devotions and providing refreshments.

Please bring donations of candy and cookies to be packaged for Shut-ins by Sunday June 4th or bring on Monday by 1:00pm to be packaged.

Thank You, Gail Stover

MINI GOLF - We would like to cordially invite you and any interested church members to join Bethany Evangelical Lutheran Church at our Annual Mini Golf Outing. It will be at Hoopla's Mini Golf course on Sunday, June 25th 4:00 pm. Not all, but most will stay for dinner afterwards. Each individual is responsible for their own game and meal.

We ask any and all that are interested to please contact our church office at 570 – 368-8933 by June 19th. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns. We look forward to meeting any members that wish to join us for this event. Jamie Brouse

Vacation Bible School is planned for July 17th – July 21st

6:00pm – 8:00pm each evening

AED (AUTOMATED EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATOR)

Thank You for your donations for the purchase of the AED for the church. Our goal of \$1,800.00 has been met! Thank You for your generosity.

DONATIONS FOR RED GERANIUMS are still needed for the planting for Pentecost and continues to be requested. You may indicate how much you would like to donate on the memo of your regular donation check or you may place a note with your cash donation. By mail, please send check marked “geraniums” to Bethany Lutheran Church, 369 Broad Street Montoursville. Thank You

BETHANY ALTAR FLOWERS are needed for the annual dates of **May 21st, June 11th, August 20th, and September 24th**. Please call the office if you would like to provide flowers on any of these dates. Thank You.

SAVE THE DATES-BLOODMOBILE

Our first Blood Drive will be held **Friday June 16, 2023 from 12:30 -5:30 PM**. If you are able to help with time or providing brownies, please **contact Beverly Brown (570-368-1866)**. You are encouraged to register online or by phone: **RedCrossBlood.org (800)733-2767**, and if possible, do a pre-donation screening and health history online at **RedCrossBlood.org/Rapid Pass**. We have future Blood Drives scheduled for **September 8, & November 10, 2023 also**.

PICNIC & VESPER SERVICE – August 20th at 4:00 pm at Montoursville Indian Park on Loyalsock Avenue pavilion #5.

Please bring a dish do share, table ware and drink.

Thank You to our Handbell participants, We hope to see you in September!

Rise Up Village Bakery



The Rise Up Village Bakery is celebrating its one-year anniversary. We began by baking 5 or 10 loaves of white and wheat bread each week, selling them to friends and neighbors. One year later we are astounded by the support from the community for our vision. The total income from our first three months of operation in 2022 is equal to the amount we received for one baking day on April 3rd,nearly \$700!!! Our production has expanded from bread to include rolls, cookies and muffins. Currently we have 150 individuals on our weekly order email list, and the number of volunteers has grown proportionately as well.

Where do we go from here? How do we meet our goal of providing job training and support for returning citizens? The income from our product sales provides the funds for us to develop our program, and to focus on our trainees. We are excited to develop an intensive, two-week module which will introduce the participants to the bakery environment. They will learn the procedures for making our products, and will be involved in two full production days. This 50-hour intensive will include mentoring and job skills preparation. Our volunteers will lead the training. We anticipate this program model will allow the trainees to move quickly into the job market.

And we cannot say enough about the blessings each of the volunteers and trainees have brought to the bakery, and to the lives of each other. Skills are diverse and hearts are filled with love and service to others. It may be a tip on how to fold the top of the cookie bag, or how to shape a roll, or designing a brochure. It may be to provide the laugh of the day as the mixer erupts with a "flour shower" to cover the baker. Over lunch we may share the joy of a new grandchild, or encourage someone facing medical issues. We lift each other up with our words and our faith. We are a family united in service and caring.

Information about our program, and a listing of weekly baked goods for sale, can be accessed through riseupvillagebakery@gmail.com . Contact us if you are interested in placing an order, or volunteering in the kitchen. We meet Mondays for production, and Wednesdays for prep work, at New Covenant United Church of Christ, 202 East Third Street, Williamsport. Part of our mission is to provide free or reduced cost baked goods for church and community programs. Call Marty at 570-295-8434 or Wendy at 570-419-9303 for further information. Also, follow us on Facebook.

This article was shared from United Churches of Lycoming County

“HELLO” from Sojourner Truth Ministries!

We are so blessed to serve the community in the capacity that we do. Our March meal count was well over 2000 served - we have been busy! Check us out on FaceBook- “Sojourner Truth Ministries, Inc.”

Thank you for your prayers for this ministry, and for those we serve, and all who come here to work in any capacity.

Blessings to you~ Angelique Director,
Sojourner Truth Ministries, Inc.
501 High St, Williamsport

LUNCH MONDAY – SATURDAY 11:30AM - 12:30PM We serve a hot healthy lunch for dine in and brown bag to go with prayers and daily devotions. **SATURDAYS**, join us at "Dinner Church" upstairs in the Sanctuary at 11:30AM. **BIBLE STUDY TUESDAY 10:00 AM-11:00 AM**



ONE WORD BIBLE STUDY WITH GINA THURSDAY 10:30 AM

Article shared from Churches of Lycoming County and Sojourners Truth Ministries website

JUNE 2023 CALENDAR

BETHANY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Birthdays * Anniversaries **				1	2	3 **Lewis&Heather Pfirman **Ward & Tammy Long **Wayne & Cathy Rockey
4 The Holy Trinity 9:00 AM Holy Communion 10:00 AM coffee / Fellowship – Memorial Hall 10:30 AM SCS/ Confirmation <i>June Grube *</i>	5 Women's meeting at 1:00PM today Cookie / Candy Donations needed by Today at 1PM	6 Quilters 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM	7	8	9	10 **Nathan & Anna Grube
11 Second Sunday after Pentecost 9:00 AM Holy Communion 10:00 AM coffee / Fellowship – Memorial Hall 10:30 AM SCS/ Confirmation	12 **Richard & Nancy Thursby ** John & Carolyn Hunter	13 Quilters 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM	14	15	16 BLOODMOBILE TODAY 12:30 PM – 5:30 PM	17
18 Third Sunday after Pentecost 9:00AM Holy Communion 10:00 AM coffee / Fellowship – Memorial Hall 10:30 AM SCS/ Confirmation **Michael & Gail Stover	19 Church Council 7:15 PM RSVP due for Mini Golf	20 Quilters 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM <i>Newsletter items Due</i>	21	22	23	24
25 Fourth Sunday after Pentecost Confirmation 9:00 AM Holy Communion 10:00 AM coffee / Fellowship - Memorial Hall 10:30 AM SCS / Mini Golf – 4:00PM Thomas & Erin Hillegas Smith	26 Christian Ed 7:00 PM	27 Quilters 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM Stuff newsletters 9:00am **Nathan & Sharon Meckley	28 **Calvin & Lynn Updegraff	29	30 **Mr & Mrs Phillip Spittler	VBS July 17th - 21st 6:00pm – 8:00pm Church picnic August 20th - 4:00pm

