

Bethany Beacon

A Community of Peace & Justice

From the Pastor's Desk - Making a Joyful Noise!

"Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth." - Psalm 100:1

As you will soon read in this edition, Jane, our beloved Organist, and I are hopeful that now is the time to bring back a church choir! Not every Sunday, mind you, but on occasion. Our goal is to offer simple, yet meaningful pieces, to enrich our worship life together at various points throughout the year. I am thrilled and if you like to sing, I hope you will consider joining us!

Personally, I am excited not just because I love what music can do in the life of the church and in the heart of every believer. I am excited because I love to sing with choirs! When I was about 27 years old, I sang with my first church choir and I was hooked! I love the ways in which music speaks unspoken words. I love the feelings it evokes. I love the fellowship among singers. I love how singers helped one another. I even love the moments when imperfection comes through and yet we stand together and create something beautiful, even in the broken moments. I feel so alive and hopeful when singing, even when I get the notes wrong! In so many ways, I have experienced choir as a model for life. It is a reminder to hear unspoken words, to cherish community, to help one another, and to even see the beauty of imperfection as together we create something wonderful So whether we are in a choir or not, may we still make a joyful noise!



Rev. Josh Fitterling, Pastor

Connect with Us! Bethany UCC Claremont NC @BethanyUCCClaremontNC

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If you have a pastoral emergency or need to reach out to Pastor Josh directly, you can call/text **(610) 750-2688** or email **josh.fitterling@gmail.com**.

Loaves & Fishes Sunday, August 2 - Worship at 10:30am - Lunch and Presentation to follow.



As we hear once again of the feeding of the five thousand, we gather to worship our God and to remember all that we bring to do amazing things in the name of Jesus!

Following worship, the Stewardship Committee invites you to a luncheon and presentation to reflect on the first half of 2026 and the ministry we have done together!

We will share updates on the financial life of the church, highlight the impact we are having, and look with hope toward the rest of the year!

Bless You, Teachers! Tissue Collection Drive Continues through Sunday, August 16



Help us bless the teachers and classrooms at Catawba Elementary with the gift of this classroom essential! Tissues can be stacked on the front pews in the sanctuary. We will be supporting 45 teachers.

In addition to the tissues we collect, funds from our Endowment for Outreach will be used to purchase additional tissues and band aids, another commonly requested item for teachers. Following worship on Sunday, August 16, we will create 45 blessing bags which will be delivered on Wednesday, August 19 from 1 to 2 pm along with a “make-your-own” Ice Cream Sundae bar! Thank you for your support!

Save the Date - Catawba Valley Pride
Saturday, September 19
10am to 3pm

Join us at Catawba Farms in Newton, NC for this year's Catawba Valley Pride event!

Bethany will have a booth at the event where we will meet folks, share some fun giveaways, host a "make-your-own" bracelet station, and extend the extravagant embrace of God's love to all people! If you would like to help staff the booth with Pastor Josh, please let him know. Whether you can stay for an hour, half the day, or for the entire event, your help would be greatly appreciated!

Songs & Stories Sunday - August 30 at 10:30am

Join us for this special service as we sing some favorite hymns, recall the stories of their writing, as well as hear why they are meaningful to those within our congregation!



Thank you to everyone who shared some favorite hymns with us! While we may not be able to sing them all on this particular day, we will certainly keep any unused requests for future worship services.



Pastor Wall Updates Coming Soon!

In the coming months, you will see updates underway on the pastor wall. This will include taking down the photos, adding the two most recent pastors, preparing and painting the hallway, and re-establishing the wall! A date for painting will be set and shared. All volunteers are welcome to help refresh the space!



Calling all Singers! Join our Re-Forming Choir!

Jane, our faithful organist, and Pastor Josh invite you to consider joining our re-forming choir! Rehearsals will be after worship select weeks and generally brief. To begin, the choir will offer pieces in worship every 4 to 6 weeks. Pieces will mostly be unison or 2-parts to start.

Are you interested in learning more? Gather around the piano ***after worship on Sunday, August 9*** or talk to Jane or Pastor Josh. Our first piece will be offered on Sunday, August 30. Come when you can, sing when you can! Make a joyful noise in all the ways you can!

June Offering Report

Thank you to all who contribute to our weekly offerings! In 2026, our goal is to average $1,000 per week to meet our offering goal of $52,000.

June Total Offerings	$5,189.00
June Weekly Average	$1,297.25
Year-To-Date Total Offerings	$34,987.61
Year-To-Date Weekly Average*	$1,166.25

**We continue to meet and exceed our goal! Thank you!*

Ashure Ministry Monthly Update

Recycled plastic grocery bags are in high demand at the food pantry! Save yours and bring them to church.

For the month of August, the requested pantry item is:

canned food with pop-tops!

Donations of food, plastic bags, and egg cartons can be place in the baskets outside the sanctuary. And thank you!





Bethany to participate in this year's Hunger Walk!

Want to join Pastor Josh on a walk for a good cause? You can sign up here and register for the "Bethany UCC" team! Through our Outreach funds, the team will begin with a $500 donation!

Want to add your own donation? Donations can be made online by visiting:

https://runsignup.com/bethanyunitedchurchofchrist

Cash donations or checks made out to "Hunger Walk" can be given directly to Pastor Josh or another walker! Have questions? Reach out to Pastor Josh!



Faith Formation on Summer Break!

Our Sunday morning Faith Formation class will be on summer break until September. Many thanks to all who attend, and a special thank you to Rev. Maria Spada for faithfully leading the group each week!

August Calendar

Sunday, August 2	10:30am - Worship w/ Holy Communion 11:30am - Luncheon and Stewardship Presentation
Monday, August 3	10:00am - Worship Committee Meeting
Thursday, August 6	11:45am - Volunteer at Ashure (Chicken packing)
Sunday, August 9	10:30am - Worship 11:30am - Choir Informational Meeting & Rehearsal**
Tuesday, August 11	10:00am to 12:00pm - Volunteer at Ashure Ministry
Sunday, August 16	10:30am - Worship *(**Following worship, we will create 45 blessing bags for the teachers at Catawba Elementary**)*
Monday, August 17	10:30am - Church Council Meeting
Wednesday, August 19	1:00pm to 2:00pm - Teacher Gift Bag distribution and Ice Cream Sundae Bar at Catawba Elementary
Sunday, August 23	10:30am - Worship
Tuesday, August 25	1:00pm to 3:00pm - Volunteer at Ashure Ministry
Sunday, August 30	10:30am - Songs & Stories Sunday Worship



August Birthdays

August 8 - Karen Gentle
August 10 - Darlene Conklin
August 15 - Judy Kirby