

WELCOME, VISITORS! We are happy to have you join us in worship today.

*Please sign the Welcome Card found in the pew pocket  
and place in the offering plate or hand to an usher. Thank you!*

NURSERY is available for infants to 3-year-olds during the Sunday School hour and 11:00 service.

THIS WEEK AT BETHANY		
TODAY	8:30 am	Informal Worship Service - Communion
	9:30 am	Celebration & Fellowship
	9:45 am	Sunday School
	11:00 am	Traditional Worship Service- Communion
Monday, January 5	6:00 pm	Praise Team
	6:00 pm	SPPRC
Tuesday, January 6	5:30 pm	York River Villas
	7:00 pm	JOY Circle
Wednesday, January 7	7:00 pm	Choir Rehearsal
Thursday, January 8	10:00 am	Bazaar 2026 Organizational Meeting
	10:00 am	York River Garden Club
Friday, January 9	9:00 am	HMAG
Saturday, January 10	10:00 am	Christmas Decorations Removal
Sunday, January 11	10:00 am	Staff Appreciation Sunday Worship
	Following Worship	Covered Dish Luncheon

Birthdays

- 1/4 Diana Simmons, Joe Bayly
- 1/8 Christina Mahoney
- 1/9 Wes Stilley



BETHANY NEWS – January 4, 2026

*Altar Flowers are given today by Rob and Cathy Raines in honor of our wedding anniversary, with a heartfelt prayer for a year of abundant blessings and peace for everyone in our church family.*

**Christian Sympathy** is extended to the family of Tiina Shackelford, whose mother-in-law, Sharon Shackelford passed away on Christmas evening. And to Ellie Fountain on the passing of her grandfather, Billy Howell.

**Prayer Requests** — Please keep Cheryl Roane in your prayers as she recovers from back surgery.

Please, also, pray for Donna Andersen as she prepares for major surgery involving her kidney.

**Church Offering Envelopes** for 2026 are now available in the main hallway. If you do not see your name or are interested in receiving envelopes for 2026, please contact the Church Office.

**Pastor’s Sunday School** (16 weeks) welcomes all who are not currently in a Sunday School class. The first meeting will be January 18<sup>th</sup> in the Fellowship Hall, from 9:45-10:35 am.

Please join us for our **Staff Appreciation Sunday**, next Sunday, January 11<sup>th</sup>. We will have one service that day at 10:00 am followed by a covered dish luncheon. Please join us in celebrating our awesome staff – Rudy, Sandy, Ellie, Becca and Jimmy and give them the recognition they deserve.

Please come help and remove Christmas decorations on Saturday, January 10<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 am. If you like we can have lunch at Eggheads afterwards. Hope to see you there! - Betty Durette

The **JOY Circle** will meet January 6<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm in the Friendship Class. Doe Breen will give the program. All ladies are invited to join us for Bible Study and fellowship.

The **Bazaar 2026 Organizational Meeting** is Thursday, January 8<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 am. Come help plan for the 2026 Bethany Bazaar. All are welcome!



## BETHANY HAPPENINGS



**Pastor's Sunday School  
(16 weeks) welcomes  
all who are currently  
not in a Sunday School  
class.**

**The first meeting will be January 18<sup>th</sup> in the Fellowship  
Hall, from 9:45-10:35 am.**



**Sunday, January 11<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 am  
One Worship Service!**

**Covered Dish Luncheon Following  
the Service!**

### Bethany UMC Prayer List

#### BETHANY FAMILY

**CANCER/CHEMO:** Krista Chase, Carol Johnson, Sue Leed, Fred Niethamer, Linwood Rowe, Larry Whitfield  
**GRIEVING:** Families of Lorraine Brown, David Chapin, Kathleen Green, Jean Heywood, Richard Parkes  
**HEALTH ISSUES:** David Cecil, Dawn Cluts, Billy Davis, Sandy Fox, Estelle Harris, Nerine Hickman, Milton Hudgins, Kathy Jacobs, Paul Kendall, Dennis Mitchell, Patsy Morales, Peggy Peterman  
**HOMEBOUND:** Linda Booth, Ruth Wallace, Lavalle Wilson  
**PARKINSON'S:** Mike Andersen, Yvonne White  
**RECOVERING FROM SURGERY:** Patsy Bell, Robert Blackwell, Martin Breen, Betty Butler, Ken Freeman, Jackie Hampton, Cathy Raines, Cheryl Roane, Bernard Robins, Dawne Sawyer

#### BETHANY FRIENDS

**CANCER/CHEMO:** Sharon Acree, Peyton Arthur, David Blackburn Kendall Walthall Caton, Wanda Dowell, Bill Edwards, John Gordon, Traci Greene, Larry Jones, Sissi Mise Smith, Mason Staley, David Trottier, Gerri Wilson  
**GRIEVING:** Family of Richard Staples  
**HEALTH ISSUES:** Opal Brown, Michelle Burton, Joshua Childers, Charlene Diggs, Mary Elizabeth Hogge, Shirley Lewis, Gary Poland, Phillip Presson, Wendy Roundy, Sue Young  
**RECOVERING FROM SURGERY:** Terry Oliver

#### ACTIVE MILITARY AND THEIR FAMILIES

Kevin Jacobs, Will Neikirk, Jim Minor, Jennifer Arnold Blackburn, All members of the military.

#### OTHER PRAYERS

United States of America; Ukraine; Israel and the Middle East; United Methodist Church

#### ASSISTED LIVING

Gloucester House, 7657 Meredith Dr., Gloucester 23061	Sarah Hillard, Rm 113
Gloucester House, 7657 Meredith Dr., Gloucester 23061	Sharon Cheek, Rm 107
Heron Cove, 7409 Heron Cove Way, Gloucester 23061	Bonnie Lewis, Rm 13
Riverside Mathews, 603 Main St., Mathews, VA 23109	David Cecil, Rm 33B
Sanders Assisted Living, 7407 Walker Ave., Gloucester 23061	Carolyn Scott, Rm 208
Sunrise Senior Living, 2015 Cranbeck Rd., Richmond 23235	Pauline Harris, Apt. 130
Riverside Rehab, 682 Gloucester Rd, Saluda, VA 23149	Jennie Lipscomb

**NOTE ON MUSIC FOR EPIPHANY** – Epiphany, the festival commemorating Christ's manifestation to the gentiles in the person of the Magi – or three wise men – is celebrated annually on January 6<sup>th</sup>.

One of the finest chorales (or hymns) for Epiphany was penned by Philipp Nicolai, a Lutheran theologian, poet and composer.) *O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright* (UMH 247) first appeared in 1599 as part of a volume of meditations on death and eternal life, Nicolai's response to the Black Plague which had devastated his home in Westphalia (NW Germany). This chorale is somewhat of a departure from the bold, confident, objective hymns of Martin Luther and introduces the sentiment of the soul's love for the Heavenly Bridegroom. Nicolai's text is alive with references to the light which Christ brings into the world, such as "*Morning Star*," "*Light Divine*," and "*Heavenly Brightness*."

These visual metaphors are translated into musical motifs by the God-given genius of Dietrich Buxtehude. In Protestant church music history, he ranks as the most important predecessor of Johann Sebastian Bach, who at age twenty walked over 200 miles to study with him. Buxtehude's sublime *Chorale Fantasy* on "*O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright*" dances into the light with the rhythm of the jig, borrowed from popular music of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. – Rudy Shackelford