

*April 018
Volume 4, Issue 4*

Bethesda Church
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Dear Bethesda,

Many years ago, the pastor and elders of Bethesda disagreed with the theological direction that the denomination was headed and so, as a protest and a matter of conscience, they decided to no longer pay the allocation to any of the three levels.

Time has passed and we have begun to see a different relationship emerge with the local Philadelphia Presbytery over the last several years. It is these changes that have prompted the elders to once again consider the question of paying the allocation. Here are some of the changes we have evidenced and were taken into consideration.

- The property of Bethesda Pres Church is owned by the Presbytery and we are the trustees of it. When the church desired to sell the parsonage, the Presbytery gave its blessing and even allowed the church to take the interest gained from the sale that was invested to help pay the pastor's housing allowance, even though Bethesda wasn't paying any money to the Presbytery like other churches were.

Bethesda Beacon

By and for the members and friends of Bethesda Church

- When Bethesda desired to put in water gardens throughout the property, the Presbytery gave its blessing and allowed us to do so and even held us up as an example for the entire Presbytery and still does to this day....even though we were not paying our allocation to them as other churches were.

- When Bethesda asked to collaborate with the owner of the apartments next door about the possibility of a vegetable garden in the back of the property, the Presbytery gave its blessing....even though we were not paying our allocation to them as other churches were.

- When Bethesda was without a pastor and searching, the Presbytery provided a moderator and supervisor to help aid in the ministry and mission of this church.....even though we were not paying our allocation to them as other churches were.

- Bethesda and Elkins Park applied for a grant from the Presbytery for \$800 for training our elders and deacons. The Presbytery not only gave us the grant, but also loaned us the full offices of the Presbytery to hold the training in, including all the technology we needed.....even though we were not paying our allocation to them as other churches were.

- The Presbytery has not foisted new open boundaries upon

us. While they allow pastors and churches to affirm what they believe around same-sex marriage, the Presbytery is committed to not forcing any of the churches or pastors within its bounds.

- The current leadership at the local Philadelphia Presbytery has changed over the last 3 years. They are for the churches of the Presbytery and desire to support them, foster collaboration and see them grow. The new leadership is FOR us and FOR our FUTURE!

- They have been gracious to us even when we pulled back from the relationship. They did not hold it over our heads or use it as a reason to refuse any request we brought to them. They lived the example of Christ in their relationship with us.

- The Presbytery has a lawyer on retainer, which we will be utilizing to help us handle the paper dumpster which hasn't been emptied or removed. This alone will amount to more money used by Bethesda than we would pay in a year of allocation.

- The Presbytery has trustees which oversee insurance, property, rentals and investments. They are available to us for advice, assistance and advocating. We have already utilized this service by having a trustee come

(article cont'd on next page)

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to our finance committee and assist us in making decisions about our investments.

- The Presbytery has committed hundreds of thousands of dollars to grants that are available to churches. It will be difficult to ask for a sizable sum to assist us in care of the property in the future if we do not pay our allocation.

If you are overwhelmed by the amount of changes in the Presbytery, the elders were too. For these reasons, the session voted to pay the Philadelphia Presbytery allocation only for 2018. The Regional Synod and General Synod portions will not be paid. The allocation is based on our membership of 83 members and it is \$18 a member for a total of \$1,494. We've already received more than that from the Presbytery this year in grants and services. We hope that this article was helpful to you and we would love to hear feedback from you. It is okay to disagree with this decision, but we hope that you will share that with us as we continue to live in community together serving our Lord Jesus Christ.

Blessings and Peace,
Pastor Heidi and the Session

Women's Circle

Women's Circle meets on the 4th Tuesday of each month. All ladies are invited to come and join us on April 24th at 10 a.m. Carol Caputo will bring a short devotional and refreshment will be provided by Carol Bonsted and Jean Feraco.

Mariners

The Mariners are going to the Cairn University's Hymn Sing on April 14 from 1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. in the Chattos Chapel on the Cairn University Campus.

There's a sign-up sheet on the Mariner's bulletin board.

LCA

The Lincoln Cultural Seniors Association will meet on April 17th at 12:15.

As usual come for just \$2 get a delicious donut or Danish and a cup of coffee or tea. This month entertainment is Vintage Harmony.

New Bible Study

Wednesdays at 7pm

We will begin a new Bible Study on Wednesday night, called Meeting Jesus. Begins April 4th

Mother/Daughter Banquet

Mother/Daughter Banquet is on Saturday May 5th at 5:30 p.m. Get your tickets now. See Edna Swenson, Carol Caputo and Elaine Brehm or call the office. Tickets \$7 adults \$3 for children (ages 3-11)

The menu consists of:

Baked Ziti, Salad, Bread and Butter, Ice Cream Sundaes, and a beverage.

The cut-off date to purchase your tickets is April 29th.

Calling all men....we need servers please call Pricilla Schofield if you can help serve.

Flea Market

May 12th 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.



Reserve your spot today. For just one space its \$15, 2 spaces for \$25. Pick up a registration form outside the Fellowship Hall or stop by the office.

If you are able and willing to help make this a huge success, let Linda Alexy know ASAP.

We will be having a church table, so if you would to donate your treasures you may bring to the church storage room in the back any afternoon Tuesday, through Friday. We ask that you please mark your items with appropriate pricing. Please call the office before you come to make sure someone is there. Thanks!

April Birthdays

- 2 – Savannah Bishop
- 9 – Stan Schofield
- 14 – Margaret Atkinson
- 16 – Margie Moore
- 17 – Bonnie Rutter
Janet Miller
- 23 – Barbara Roland Wilson
Robert Fulton
- 29 – Anita Tangert
- 30 – Woody Zimmerman

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April Anniversaries

- 6** – Margie & Bill Johnson
- 22** – Joan & Phil Kalanty
- 25** – Cheryl & John Larkin
- 27** – Bonnie & George Rutter

Liturgists for April

- 1** – Jean Feraco
- 8** – Joan Wilson
- 15** – Joan Stewart
- 22** – Freda Fulton
- 29** – Debbie Thomas

Session

Session met March 12th in the library. The elders dwelled in the Word, Acts 17 and 23 and asked how can we be a *church* for Philadelphia. The session received the pastor's report of the ongoing work, mission and visitation of Rev. Hankel. The session voted to approve a recommendation by the Pastor to allow Deacons and Elders of the church take communion to Bethesda's shut-in members. The elders approved a request for baptism of Nicholas Gabel on May 6th at the 11am service. The session agreed to have the Teen Challenge choir visit on April 29th at both services. The elders received reports from the member care and finance teams. The session approved a recommendation of the finance team to pay the Presbytery part of the yearly apportionment for 2018 for our current membership of 83 members which totals \$1,494. An article explaining this decision will be written in the beacon. The elders approved a recommendation from the finance

team to move the current Electronically Traded Fund (ETF) from 80% stocks to 60% stocks to curb our risk during this season. The session discussed increasing the frequency of communion in worship at the 11am service to be the first week of *every* month. The elders felt strongly in favor of this and chose to speak to the deacons first as well as try communion by intinction on Maundy Thursday service to see how it is received. After sharing joys and concerns, we prayed. We adjourned to the April 10 stated session.

Deacons

Our last meeting was held on March 14, 2018.

The Deacons ordered and received the drip protectors for Christmas candles used for the Christmas Eve Candle Light service as well as the new Advent candles.

Pastor Heidi provided information on two topics reviewed from Session and the Deacons approved them.

(1) Deacons can serve communion to shut-ins (Pastor Heidi will provide a booklet on how to do this. (2) Communion Service will be held on the first Sunday of every month. Pastor Heidi informed us of a needy woman from the community who was seeking financial assistance, and after discussion of this matter the Deacons agreed to give this woman \$200.00 as a one-time contribution. Pastor Heidi suggested that a new way of receiving the Communion

elements would be administered on Maundy Thursday on a trial basis: for example, each member of the congregation wanting to participate in receiving the Communion elements will leave their pew seat and form two lines in front of the Communion table where there will be a plate of small crackers and a chalice of grape juice. Each person will take a small cracker from the plate, dip it into the chalice of grape juice, partake of the elements, and then return to their pew seat. Those who are unable to easily walk up to the Communion table will be personally served.

There will be two worship services on Easter (9:30am & 11:00am).

Pastor Heidi suggested that on the first Sunday of each month such things as Our Daily Bread, the Beacon, etc. would be handed out to each member of the congregation at the end of the worship service in the hallway during the greeting period.

Leaders for each Deacon team were appointed. Because some people will be attending the Bible Study starting in April, 2018, it was agreed that the Deacon's meeting for April and May will be scheduled for 6:00 p.m.

March 2018

Financial Update

March Income: \$14,744.00

February Expenses: \$10,751.00

YTD Income: \$39,038.00

YTD Expenses: \$37,869.00

Rental Income

(Included in reported income)

\$3,475.00 **March**

\$6,150.00 **YTD**

Figures as of 2/28/18

Scripture for April

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16

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Musical Notes

Thanks to all the musical participants in this season of Lent. Sharing your talents from Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday has been a blessing to all.

Come One Come All to hear the Chancel Choir sing
at the Philadelphia Protestant Home on Sunday evening, April 15 at 7 p.m.

Volunteer Choir

will rehearse on Sunday, April 22 immediately following the 11 am worship in the Fellowship Hall to prepare an anthem for the April 29 worship service.

You're Invited

Cairn University's Hymn Sing on April 14 from 1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. in the Chattos Chapel on the Cairn University Campus.

There's a sign- up sheet on the Mariner's bulletin board.

Minute for Mission

Our mission featured for the month of April is Rock of Israel Congregation. Rock of Israel meets in Bethesda's building on Friday evenings and is a Messianic-Jewish congregation. This means that it is a Jewish congregation that believes in Jesus as the Savior and worships him. They have a special ministry in our local area, especially to those who speak Hebrew, Russian, and Ukrainian. Each Friday night, they have a multi-lingual worship service after they share a meal together. They are bringing the Gospel of Christ to Jews, Eastern European immigrants and this community. We have committed to supporting them with \$500 for the 2018 year. On April 22nd we will have our minute for mission during the service. Please pray and consider how God might be calling you to contribute to this wonderful mission reaching out to those who need the Gospel.

Training for Elders and Deacons doing visitation

At the March session meeting, the elders voted to allow Elders and Deacons of Bethesda to bring communion to Bethesda's shut-in members. Pastor Heidi will be holding trainings during the month of April after the 11am service on:

April 8th, 15th and 29th (*you only need to come to one!*)

Who should come: All current serving deacons and elders as well as any ordained elder or deacon at large in the church who would like to do visitation with shut-ins.

Want to get your Beacon Electronically?

Send an email to **info@bethesdapc.com** and let us know you would like your Beacon emailed! Beacons are also posted on bethesdapc.com –just click on mission and then beacon.

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SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 HAPPY EASTER	2	3	4 7 pm Bible Study	5 10:30 am Prayer Mtg 6:30 pm Worship Team 7:30 pm Choir	6 7 pm Youth Group 7pm Kingdom Keepers	7
8 9:30 am Contemporary Worship 9:30 am Adult S.S. 11am Traditional Worship	9 12 pm Finance Team meeting 6 pm Praise Team Rehearsal	10 7 pm Session Mtg.	11 6 pm Deacons Mtg 7 pm Bible Study	12 10:30 am Prayer Mtg 2:00 pm Grief Support Group 7:30 pm Choir	13 7 pm Youth Group 7pm Kingdom Keepers	14 1:30 pm Mariner's Hymn Sing at Cairn University
15 9:30 am Contemporary Worship 9:30 am Adult S.S. 11am Traditional Worship 7:00 pm PPH Hymn Sing	16	17	18 7 pm Bible Study	19 10:30 am Prayer Mtg 7:30 pm Choir	20 7 pm Youth Group 7pm Kingdom Keepers	21
22 9:30 am Contemporary Worship 9:30 am Adult S.S. 11am Traditional Worship	23	24 10 am Women's Circle	25 7pm Property Mtg 7 pm Bible Study	26 10:30 am Prayer Mtg 7:30 pm Choir	27 7 pm Youth Group 7pm Kingdom Keepers	28 10 am Church Work Day!
29 Volunteer Choir Sings 9:30 am Contemporary Worship 9:30 am Adult S.S. 11am Traditional Worship	30					