

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

All: Father God, You have set forth the way of life through Your Son Jesus Christ, whom You love dearly. We shamefully confess that we have been slow to learn of Him and have been reluctant to follow Him. You have spoken and called to us, but we have not listened. You have revealed Your beauty to us, but we have been blind. You have stretched out Your hands to us through our friends, but we have passed by them. We have accepted Your gifts and offered little thanks. We are unworthy of Your unchanging love.

Pastor: We now confess to you our sins. Please forgive us for the poverty of our worship ... for the selfishness of our prayers ... for our inconsistency and unbelief ... for the ways we neglect fellowship and Your grace ... for our hesitation to tell others about Christ ... for the ways we deceive others ...

All: Forgive us when we waste time and when we misuse the gifts you have given us. Forgive us for when we have made excuses for the wrong things we have done and when we have purposefully avoided responsibility.

Pastor: Forgive us that we have been unwilling to overcome evil with good and that we have not been ready to carry our cross. Forgive us that we have not allowed Your love to work through us to help others and that we have not made their pain our own. Forgive us for those times when instead of working for unity we made it hard for others to live with us because of our lack of forgiveness, inconsiderate judgment and quick criticism.

All: Forgive us for when we have not tried to reconcile to others and when we have been slow to seek redemption.

Pastor: Seek out our hearts, O God, see what sins lie hidden there within, lead us to repentance, forgive us, change us and make us new, we pray. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

* SONG OF PRAISE

Hymn #132: *“Good Christian Friends, Rejoice”*

THE INVITATION

COVENANT PRAYER

Pastor: God of the Covenant, we offer You this prayer:

All: My righteous God, for the sake of Your Son Jesus Christ, see me now as I come before You. You promise mercy if I turn to You with my whole heart. Forgive my unfaithfulness when I have not done Your will.

Pastor: God requires that you rid yourself of every idol in your life.

All: By turning against Your will I have turned my love toward the world. From the bottom of my heart, I here and now renounce every idol in my life. In Your power I will watch for any temptation that will lead me away from You.

Pastor: Through Jesus Christ, God offers to be your God, if you allow Him to be.

All: Before all heaven and earth, I here and now acknowledge You, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, as my Lord and God. I vow to give all of myself, body and soul, to be Your servant and to serve You in holiness and righteousness all the days of my life.

Pastor: Jesus Christ is the only way and means to God. God has given us Jesus as the way and means to salvation.

All: Jesus, You are the only new and living Way. I come to You hungry, sinful, miserable, blind, naked and unworthy. With all my power, I submit to You as my Lord and Head. I renounce my own

unworthiness and vow that You are the Lord, my righteousness. I renounce my own wisdom and take You for my only guide. I renounce my own will and take Your will as my law.

Pastor: God has given holy laws as the rule of your life.

All: All Your laws are holy, just and good. I willingly accept them as the rule for my words, thoughts and actions, promising I will strive to order my whole life around your direction. I will not allow myself to neglect anything I know to be my duty.

Pastor: Christ has told you that you must suffer with him.

All: Jesus, I here and now make this covenant with You and accept whatever comes in life. Through Your grace I promise that neither life nor death will separate me from You.

Pastor: The Almighty God searches and knows you, even the thoughts of your heart.

All: O God, You know that we have made this covenant today in sincerity, without deceit or reluctance. If You find anything false in us, guide us and help us to set it right.

O mighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, You have now become my Covenant Friend. And I, through Your infinite grace, have become Your covenant servant. I am not my own. I am Yours alone. Make me into what You will. Rank me with those You will. Put me to use for You. Put me to suffering for You. Let me be employed for You. Let me be laid aside for You. Let me be lifted high for You. Let me be brought low for You. Let me be full or let me be empty. Let me have all things or let me have nothing. Let me be Your servant. Let me follow your commands. I will no longer follow my own desires. With a willing heart, I give myself completely to Your will. May this covenant that I have made here on earth be ratified in heaven. Amen.

* SONG OF RESPONSE

Hymn #123: *“It Came Upon the Midnight Clear”*

OUR LIFE TOGETHER

Please sign the friendship pad (the blue folder) and pass along to others in your row, greeting others by name after worship.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD’S PRAYER

All: Our Father who art in heaven; hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

PRESENTING OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS TO THE LORD

OFFERTORY

“God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen”

Frank Jackson

* DOXOLOGY

* PRAYER OF DEDICATION

All: O Mighty One, You have done great things for us and holy is Your name. Bless all we offer You - ourselves, our time and our possessions - that through us Your grace and favor may be made known to all the world for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Righteousness, our Redeemer. Amen.

* SONG FOR SENDING

Hymn #136: *“Go, Tell It on the Mountain”*

* BLESSING

* POSTLUDE

“Silent Night”

WORSHIP NOTES

LARGE PRINT BULLETINS AND HYMNALS, as well as audio listening devices, are available from the Worship Welcome Team.

MONTHLY CONGREGATIONAL LETTERS: On communion Sundays, five letters will be placed in the Narthex and then taken to Fellowship in Galbraith Hall. ***Please add a quick note to each letter ... these letters provide an important link to those members unable to join us during worship each week.***

SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION: Will be observed on Sunday, January 5th, Team 2, Heather Hunter.

MEMBERS IN SERVICE

LITURGISTS: Maria Jay; Jan. 5th Courtney Kiesling

FELLOWSHIP HOSTS: No Fellowship Hour this week; Jan. 5th Families C & D

WORSHIP WELCOME TEAM: Team 9: Phyllis Criss, Judy & Fred Shoemaker, Tom Hultz*, Joanne Wells*; Jan. 5th - Team 10: Monica, Chris, Miranda & Leah Day, Jerry Wade*, Mike Schultz* (*Chairlift)

SANCTUARY COORDINATORS: Gary May; Jan. 5th Greg Smith

GRAPHICS TEAM: Larry Jay; Jan. 5th Ben Smith

SOUND BOARD: Steve Kloc; Jan. 5th Gail Anderson

CHANCEL FLOWERS:

Christmas Poinsettias

CHURCH CONTACT INFORMATION

2999 Bethel Church Rd., Bethel Park, PA 15102
412/835-0405 Church Office 412/835-1037 Fax
Website: www.bethelpresby.org
Email: bethelpres@verizon.net

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Cathie Smith, 412/965-4253 or pastorcathie.bethelpc@gmail.com
Parish Associate: Rev. Dr. James Smith, Sr., 412/551-4765 or dr.jamesksmithsr@yahoo.com

Director of Youth Ministries: Kasey Wilfong, 412/835-0405

Director of Music and Worship: Jason Wilcox, 412/651-4638

Organist: Cody Soska, 412/877-9139

Administrative Assistant: Kathy Young, 412/835-0405

Administrative Assistant: Nancy Carr, 412/835-0405

Custodian (Day): Bob Murphy, 412/835-0405

Custodian (Evening): Rob Roche, 412/835-0405

Congregation Life
Weekly Newsletter
December 29, 2019



2019 ANNUAL REPORT: Please be sure all Annual Report information is forwarded to Kathy Young by December 31st. Thank you for your cooperation!

SOUTH HILLS INTERFAITH MOVEMENT FOOD PANTRIES: Since the holiday season is here, SHIM would like to stock a shelf at the Food Pantry dedicated to baking items. They are requesting donations of flour, sugar, vanilla, spices or any other baking product you would use to make your favorite holiday treat. SHIM will greatly appreciate any nonperishable food item you choose to donate.

FINANCIAL PEACE UNIVERSITY: Never worry about money again with Financial Peace University (FPU)! It's the proven plan to help you master budgeting, beat debt and live the life of your dreams. Through nine lessons rooted in biblical wisdom, your FPU Group will learn from Dave Ramsey and his team of financial experts. Class starts January 26th, from 2:30 to 4:00 p.m. Contact Kristen Kiesling or the church office for more info or visit fpu.com/1108235 to sign up!

2020 Chancel Flowers

With the new year comes the need to update the Chancel Flower Calendar. I will be sending Chancel Flower sponsor letters; however, there are several Sundays open in January and February:

- January 12
- January 26
- February 2
- February 16
- February 23
- One Vase \$25.00
- Two Vases \$50.00



If you would like to sponsor chancel flower openings in January or February, please contact:

Bethel Presbyterian Church
 2999 Bethel Church Road
 Bethel Park, PA 15102
 412/835-0405

Thank you to all those who continue to sponsor our chancel flower vases.

Carol MacDonald

TAX RELIEF FOR YOUR GIVING TO OUR CHURCH!

At the age of 70½, the IRS requires you to withdraw a certain amount from your IRA or 401K accounts and pay ordinary income tax on it. This is called a required minimum distribution or "RMD". A portion of this required withdrawal can be transferred directly from these accounts by your financial advisor to our church and be part of your pledged giving or a special additional gift. This credit will avoid taxes on these monies and perhaps lower one's overall tax rate. Check with your financial advisor for details.

UPCOMING EVENTS!

- Jan. 10th - 12th Youth Retreat
- Feb. 2nd Souper Bowl Sunday
- Feb. 7th - 8th 30 Hour Famine
- Feb. 9th Skating Party
- Feb. 25th Pancake Dinner

CONGREGATIONAL CALENDAR

Sunday, December 29 (Daily Readings: Psalm 98; 150; 1 Sam. 1:1-2, 7b-28; Col. 1:9-20; Luke 2:22-40)

10:30 a.m. Worship
 Pastor: Rev. Dr. Cathie Smith

Monday, December 30 (Daily Readings: Psalm 93; 145; 1 Kings 17:17-24; 3 John 1-15; John 4:46-54)

Child Care Closed
 Preschool Closed

Tuesday, December 31 (Daily Readings: Psalm 98; 146; 1 Kings 3:5-14; James 4:13-17, 5:7-11; John 5:1-15)

10:00 a.m. Child Care Closed
 Preschool Closed
 Quilters Meeting

Wednesday, January 1 (Daily Readings: Psalm 98; 147:1-11; Isa. 62:1-5, 10-12; Rev. 19:11-16; Matt. 1:18-25)

Church Office Closed
 Child Care Closed
 Preschool Closed

Thursday, January 2 (Daily Readings: Psalm 48; 147:12-20; 1 Kings 19:1-8; Eph. 4:1-16; John 6:1-14)

5:00 p.m. Kinder Karate
 6:30 p.m. Bell Choir Rehearsal
 7:45 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal

Friday, January 3 (Daily Readings: Psalm 111; 148; 1 Kings 19:9-18; Eph. 4:17-32; John 6:15-27)

Saturday, January 4 (Daily Readings: Psalm 20; 149; Josh. 3:14-4:7; Eph. 5:1-20; John 9:1-12, 35-38)

Sunday, January 5 (Daily Readings: Psalm 99; 150; 1 Kings 3:5-14; Col. 3:12-17; John 6:41-47)

9:30 a.m. Sunday School/Small Groups
 10:30 a.m. Worship
 Communion Sunday – Team 2
 Pastor: Rev. Dr. Cathie Smith
 11:30 a.m. Fellowship Hour: Families C & D
 12:00 p.m. Youth Group
 7:00 p.m. Cub Scout Committee Meeting

PRAYER CONCERNS: Rob Backstrom, Hank Barr, Ansley Basso (Virgin), Betty Bauer, Gary Bittner, Carl Bonanni, Marilou Booth, Marina Bowser, Art Brandenburg, Michele Cobb, Phyllis Criss, Bob Dare, Sueann DeFurio, Marilyn DeHuff, Pete Edwards, Ginny Flynn, Bill Franciscus (Marilyn DeHuff's son), Bettyjean Gamble, Steve Kloc, Dick Kraft, Pat Kraft, Whitten Little, Carol MacDonald, Carol McDonald, Emily Parise, Dave Rawlings, Ann Reid, Joan Sherbak, Sally Sinatra, Jean Smith, Lynne Smith (Pastor Jim's wife), Anne Unger (Pastor Cathie's sister), Sheila and Rich Vandevander, Kristi Wade, Edith Wallace, Russell York



Bethel Presbyterian Church
Worship for the Lord's Day
December 29, 2019
10:30 A.M.

"Changed by Christ So We Can Change the World"

** Please stand in body or spirit as you are able.*

PRELUDE *Improvisations on the Day's Hymns*

RINGING OF THE BELL

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: O God, our Covenant Friend, you have been gracious to us through all the years of our lives. We thank you for your loving care which has filled our days and brought us to this time and place.

All: We praise your holy name, O God.

One: You have given us life and reason and set us in a world filled with your glory. You have comforted us with family and friends and ministered to us through the hands of our sisters and brothers.

All: We praise your holy name, O God.

One: You have filled our hearts with a hunger after you and have given us your peace. You have redeemed us and called us to a high calling in Christ Jesus. You have given us a place in the fellowship of your Spirit and the witnesses of your Church.

All: We praise your holy name, O God.

One: You have been our light in darkness and a rock of strength in adversity and temptation. You have been the very Spirit of joy in our joys and the all-sufficient reward in all our labors.

All: We praise your holy name, O God.

One: You remembered us when we forgot you. You followed us even when we tried to flee from you. You met us with forgiveness when we returned to you. For all your patience and overflowing grace.

All: We praise your holy name, O God.

*** SONG OF ADORATION**
 Hymn #116: *"The Snow Lay on the Ground"*

SCRIPTURE **Deuteronomy 30:11-14**

ANTHEM *"Gather Round, Ye Children, Come"* Andrew Peterson
 Frank Jackson

SCRIPTURE **Galatians 5:13-25**

THE COVENANT STORY

PROCLAMATION AND INVITATION TO CONFESSION

Reminder: All 2019 pledges must be received or postmarked by December 31, 2019 to be counted for the 2019 calendar year.