

Happy New Year!



THE BETHEL INFORMER

January 2021

Pastor Tim Starbuck

Forgetting those things which are behind... (Philippians 3:13)

Can we ever really forget? Even the often quoted, “**God throws our sins into the sea of forgetfulness**” is not what it says. What it says is BY FAR better than that!

“Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives transgressions... You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy... You will trample our sins under your feet and hurl them into the depths of the sea.” (Micah 7:18-19).

It may be permissible to speak of God forgetting, but it is a poetic license rather than Scripture. The several other Scriptures which promise God will remember our sins no more, mean God will not give them any place in His heart toward us. It doesn't speak of some divine lobotomy. Better than forgetting, He cleanses, heals, forgives, restores, and treats the past as of no more value than what is trampled underfoot or dumped overboard.

When Paul says that he is forgetting what is behind, the word in Greek is close to the idea of neglect. He gave no great thought to what was behind. He doesn't waste any time or energy on it. The context of Paul's words suggest he is speaking of his past as a Pharisee in which he counts it as dung. Are we also invited to “neglect” a shameful past?

This time of year is naturally given to thinking about what lies ahead and behind. It would be far better if we believers in Jesus culturally understood the Jewish calendar at least enough to grasp the meaning of the Day of Atonement (dealing with the past), and the Feast of Tabernacles (dealing with the future). God created us as creatures of time who need perennial returns – ever the same, yet changing, heading somewhere ultimate.

Instead, we have culturally managed to turn this golden opportunity to contemplate the ultimate into a big drinking party which helps numb past shame and future fear. Yet the Holy Spirit may still be able to speak to folks of unhealed issues of the past and great eternal issues of the future in their New Year celebration.

There is a scene in the movie Forrest Gump that always moves me when I remember it. A prostitute is standing in the New York City crowd as the New Year's ball falls. She says sadly, wistfully, “Don't ya just love New Year's? It's a chance to start over. Everybody gets a second chance.”

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The wonderful news for the prostitute and for all of us who made a mess of our past, is that we are not offered merely a second chance, but Life out from among the dead. I don't want to forget while still in this present battle where I was, what I was, and what Jesus did to save me from myself, the world, and the devil. Why? Because it moves me to worship, gratitude, obedience, and compassion. It stirs in me a careful watchfulness not to condescend to those watching the ball fall and hoping for a second chance.

My story is not my life was a mess and I got saved and now I'm good story. No. I was saved and I was a mess, and Jesus saved me from my mess after I was saved. That means for those of us who thought we got saved and now life seems to be that same mess others claim to have been saved from, there is GREAT HOPE. All we must do is turn to Jesus. YES, AGAIN! I did, again, and again, and again.

There is a great reason to neglect giving any energy to your past in the way of self-hated, self-condemnation, and self-punishing guilt, on and on. It is a worthless misuse of energy. ***"This one thing I do: forgetting (neglecting) the past, I press on toward the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus. My determined purpose is that I might KNOW HIM."***
(see Philippians 3:7-14)

We can spend a lot of our adult life grieving over our early years, our sin, our mistreatment of others, our secret life. Can we, ever so slowly, as we just live on day by day with Jesus, begin to think of the past only in the light of Redemption, only in the light of Christ's pursuit of and salvaging of us? Perhaps living in the light of redemption, our grieving can turn into worship.

Personal note: *I cannot think now of the past without it bringing me to tears. Not tears of shame or grief, but tears of deep gratitude. I don't need to make New Year's resolutions. I don't need them. I made the only resolution needed for the rest of my entire journey: This ONE THING I do. Forgetting what lies behind, today my eyes are on HIM. To "become" in Him. Jesus holds all my yesterdays and tomorrows. It is today that is mine to live, in the NOW. Happy NEW YEAR!*

Blessings, **Pastor Tim**

**Please keep these persons and their
circumstances in your prayers:**

Vicki Benton, Cody Cordell, Martha Doby, Zeb Hanner, Judy Harrington,
Elsie Joiner, Lois Leonard, Gary Phelps, Butch Safrit and Lois Wilson

Nursing Homes/Retirement Centers:

Lonnie Borland, Ellen Cobb, Jerri Edwards, Ruth Pittman,
Martha Surratt, Dora Walton, John Warren and Mary Warren



"Changes may occur as Covid-19 restrictions are lifted."



Calendar of Up-Coming Live Streaming Events

1		Happy New Year!
	10:00 a.m.	Live Stream Devotions
3	10:00 a.m.	On-Line Sunday School Lesson with Donna Smith
	10:00 a.m.	Worship Service (<i>Family Life Center</i>)
	1:00 p.m.	On-Line Worship Service
4	10:00 a.m.	Live Stream Devotions
6	10:00 a.m.	Live Stream Bible Study
8	10:00 a.m.	Live Stream Devotions
10	10:00 a.m.	On-Line Sunday School Lesson with Donna Smith
	1:00 p.m.	On-Line Worship Service
11	10:00 a.m.	Live Stream Devotions
13	10:00 a.m.	Live Stream Bible Study
15	10:00 a.m.	Live Stream Devotions
17	10:00 a.m.	On-Line Sunday School Lesson with Donna Smith
	10:00 a.m.	Worship Service (<i>Family Life Center</i>)
	1:00 p.m.	On-Line Worship Service
18	10:00 a.m.	Live Stream Devotions
20	10:00 a.m.	Live Stream Bible Study
22	10:00 a.m.	Live Stream Devotions
24	10:00 a.m.	On-Line Sunday School Lesson with Donna Smith
	10:00 a.m.	Worship Service (<i>Family Life Center</i>)
	1:00 p.m.	On-Line Worship Service
25	10:00 a.m.	Live Stream Devotions
27	10:00 a.m.	Live Stream Bible Study
29	10:00 a.m.	Live Stream Devotions
31	10:00 a.m.	On-Line Sunday School Lesson with Donna Smith
	10:00 a.m.	Worship Service (<i>Family Life Center</i>)
	1:00 p.m.	On-Line Worship Service

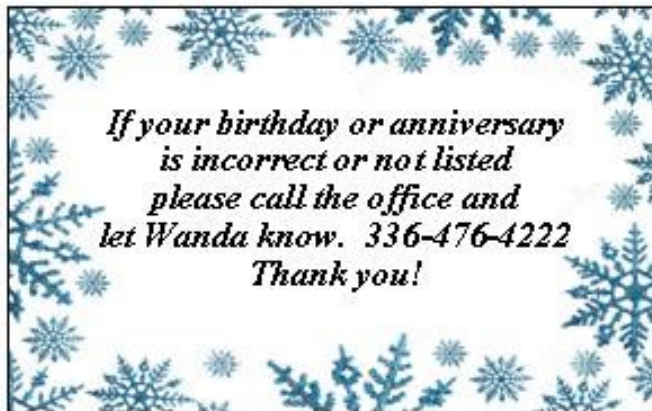


Happy New Year!

Happy Anniversary!

JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

- 15 Alan and Sharon Beck
- 26 Harold and Shelby Walker
- 28 Vince and Sarah Brown



Find us on Facebook at:
Bethel UMC Thomasville

The webpage has a link
to our
YouTube channel.

Happy Birthday!

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 3 Tracy Mayhew
- 3 Samantha Boaz
- 5 Adam Oakley
- 5 Jack Tobin
- 5 Charles Wood
- 8 Jeff Burns
- 8 Robert Safrit
- 8 Dianne Fore
- 10 Sarah Fritts
- 13 Cindy Simpson
- 14 Sierra Brown
- 14 George Fore
- 14 Peggy Safrit
- 17 Loretta Baker
- 17 Patty Bowling Woods
- 18 Tim Starbuck
- 21 Benjamin Smith
- 22 Eric Johnson
- 22 Walker Grayson Surratt
- 23 Chris Lewis
- 30 Zeb Hanner
- 30 Suzanne Finch
- 30 Sarah Beck
- 31 Caleb Starbuck



Check it out! *Bethel's Webpage*
<http://www.bethelthomasville.com>



The Mission of the Bethel United Methodist Church is to:

- B**ring people together for the worship of God by
- E**ncouraging a personal relationship with Jesus Christ through
- T**eaching the Gospel message of salvation. We must
- H**ear the cry of others-both spiritual and physical
- E**stablish supportive ministries for all ages by
- L**oving and affirming all people as they grow spiritually in their faith.



The United Methodist Women are selling flavoring.
Please contact **Dianne Fore at 336-475-3208** and leave a message on her answering machine or please see her at church if you would like to purchase a bottle.

Flavors

Lemon, Orange, Vanilla (Regular) — \$3.50



*Wanda, our church secretary,
will be working from home.
You may contact her during
the following hours.*

*Monday, Tuesday,
Wednesday & Thursday
4:00 — 6:00 p.m.
Phone: 336-689-1701*

**We are needing someone to help with the
flower calendar this year.**

If you are willing to take on this
responsibility, please let
Pastor Tim or Wanda know.

**Thank you to Charles and Priscilla Wood
for your many years of service
in this ministry.**

Priscilla will be glad to let you know the
responsibilities of this ministry.

Thank you!

MISSIONS / OPPORTUNITIES

The UMW is collecting for the
Cooperative Community Ministry.

**The items for January are
canned juices and fruit.**



Local Missions:



**Don't forget to bring hygiene
items for the teenagers for
Communities in School.
The teenagers also need socks.**

Nursing Home and Shut-Ins List

This is an updated list of addresses and birthdays for shut-ins and for those that are in nursing homes. I am sure that they would enjoy getting a card from anyone in their church family.

Abbotts Creek Center
877 Hill Everhart Rd.
Lexington, NC 27292

Room 110 - A
Mary Warren — June 29th

Clapps Nursing Center Inc.
5229 Appomattox Rd
Pleasant Garden, NC 27313

Room 608
Ruth Pittman — October 29th

Mallard Ridge Assisted Living
9420 N. Hwy. 150,
Clemmons, NC 27012

Room Unit C-10
Jerri Edwards — March 22nd

Piedmont Crossing
100 Hedrick Drive
Thomasville, NC 27360

Room 428
Ellen Cobb — August 9th

Pine Ridge Health & Rehab
706 Piney Wood Rd
Thomasville, NC 27360

Room 313
Dora Walton — June 1st

Westchester Harbour
630 Whittier Avenue
High Point, NC 27262

Martha Surratt — March 13th

Westchester Manor at Providence Place
1795 Westchester Dr.
High Point, NC 27262

Room 612
Lonnie Borland—July 22nd



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