



CONNIE MCVICAR, JOHN HULL, KERRY SHAULIS, DEB HULL AND REV. ERIN JAMES BROWN-WILKINSBURG

# The Little Harbinger

## Bethany Memorial Church

First Quarter 2023

## The Pastor's Pen

by Rev. Erin James-Brown

I (Erin) am expecting a baby very soon! I will start my parental leave on January 27 and return to Sunday service and regular work March 26.

Bethany Memorial leaders and volunteers, old and new, have been busy helping me prepare for my upcoming time away. The Board Members passed a generous 8-week leave policy and wrote a comprehensive Parental Leave Policy making it all official. With these policies in place, the church applied for a grant from the Pension Fund of the Christian Church. And now it's time to celebrate! We were awarded \$2,500 to use for guest preacher honorariums and emergency on call care from a local pastor and hosting preachers who visit Bethany, WV. We've got an incredible lineup of guest preachers during my parental leave, including Rev. Dr. Katie Hays, Revs. Rebecca

Anderson and Yvonne Gilmore, who will preach from a pre-recorded video. Our partners from Christian Church of Wilkinsburg (DOC), Pastor Janet Hellner-Burris and Minister Cecilia Sims, are coming from Pittsburgh to share their gifts with us in person. We've got our in-house talent, Dr. Holly Hillgardner and Marci Mazza-Fredley, leading us in worship and spiritual development some Sundays. And we are especially excited to hear a special pre-recorded sermon from our former pastor, Rev. Dr. Sharon Watkins! Over the next two months our learning and worship to our God will continue and faithfully grow with the help of financial resources and excellent homiletical skill.

*For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.*

*Jeremiah 29:11*

NRSVUE

# The 2023 BMC Budget

by Rev. Erin James-Brown

After spending 10+ hours poring over spreadsheets and holding conversations, the Finance Team, made up of Gerard NeCastro, Helen Moren, Connie McVicar and John Cole, finalized a budget for Bethany Memorial Church in 2023. That doesn't include the hours spent lying awake thinking about numbers, consulting spreadsheets, and praying for God's guidance.

With the help of 13 households pledging to support the congregation in 2023 and other funding from generous donors, the church passed a balanced budget on January 22. We can report that the budget includes **\$9,800** for outreach and giving away to support local and national causes that align with where we believe Jesus calls us. We added a new budget line of **\$3,100** for evangelism, a very church-y word that means telling our neighbors that God loves them and Jesus is pretty cool and the Bible is a complex, fascinating book. That doesn't include hours spent connecting with people over email, meeting in coffee shops and local restaurants, designing fliers and posting them anywhere we can find a bulletin board,

door, or willing local business. Plus, posting our things online - the place where everyone is all the time.

The 2023 budget also helps us grow our ministry to students at Bethany College where we'll host an Ash Wednesday Service, Bible studies, and other events like open mic nights, yarn circles, breathing meditation, and support for affinity groups (like the Gay/Straight Alliance and the Black Student Union). May we all raise a chalice to healthy finances that are just, loving, and guided by the Holy Spirit.

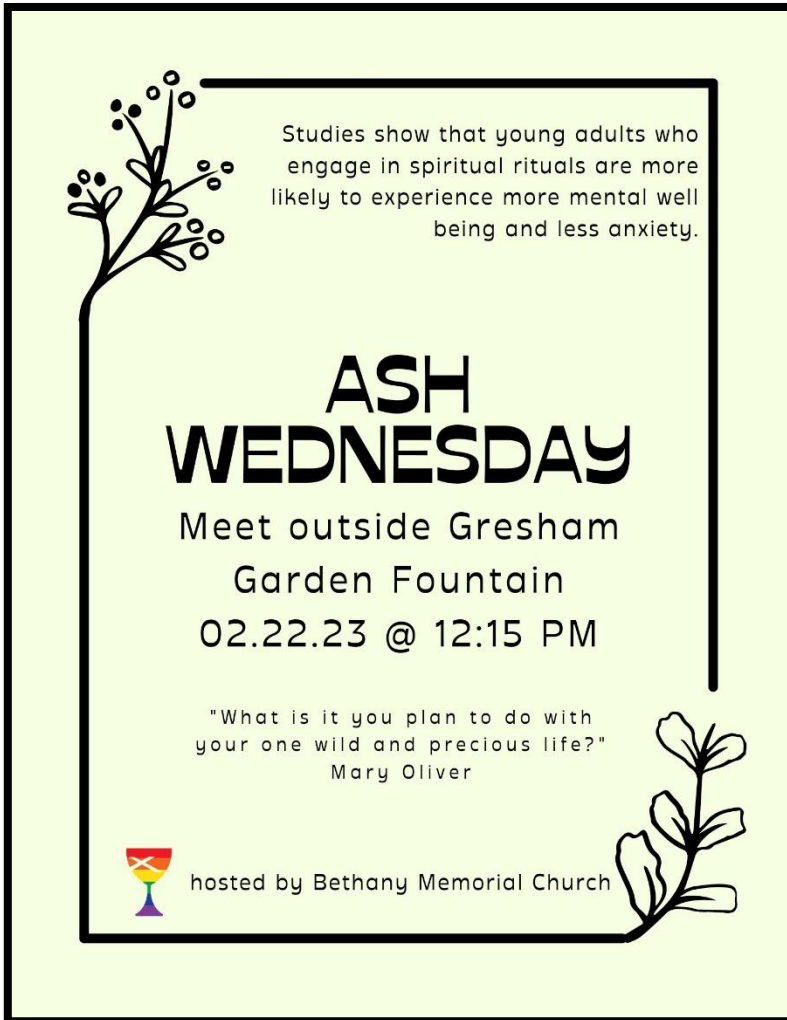
If you would like to join us in this transformative work in the West Virginia panhandle, where we are one of the only LGBTQ+ affirming churches and growing in intergenerational learning, you can schedule a regular monthly or one time gift on our PayPal account ([bit.ly/BMCPayPal](https://bit.ly/BMCPayPal)). Your donation will increase our presence in this area and help share the love of God with our corner of the world. Or scan the QR code below to find our PayPal account easily.

New to QR Codes? QR stands for Quick Response and works in the same way as a barcode. The QR code is a square shaped black-and-white grid containing certain information—like web addresses or contact details—that you can access with your compatible device. When you scan this code, your phone displays the information contained in the code.

To scan a QR code with your iPhone or Android:

1. Open the **Camera** app.
2. Point your camera to the QR code you want to scan.
3. Your phone will recognize the code and display the relevant information.





Studies show that young adults who engage in spiritual rituals are more likely to experience more mental well being and less anxiety.

# ASH WEDNESDAY

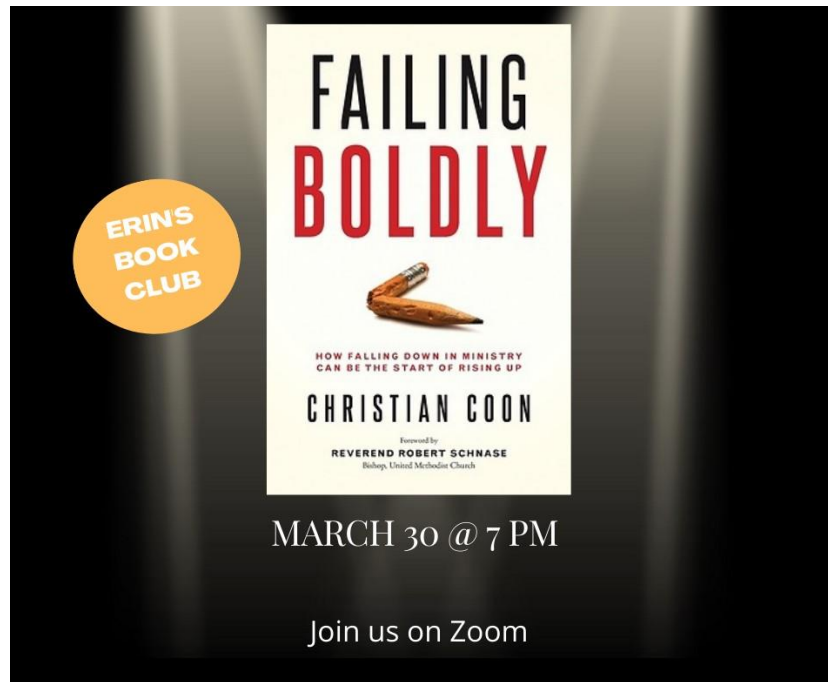
Meet outside Gresham Garden Fountain  
02.22.23 @ 12:15 PM

"What is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?"  
Mary Oliver

hosted by Bethany Memorial Church

Bethany Memorial Church will host an Ash Wednesday service (02.22.23) outside the Gresham Garden Fountain on the Bethany College campus and do the imposition of ashes for community members. Rev. Dan Harry will preside. At the event we will also pass out fliers inviting students to our upcoming events like the Holy Week and our College Bible Study. Then, throughout Lent, we will read, pray and reflect on poems written by Wendell Berry using a study guide created by The Salt Project. Berry's poems find the holiness in everyday life and the world all around us.

**Books. Books. And more books.** We keep reading great books and discussing how to be church with and for each other. In January we read *When God Gets Everything God Wants* by Rev. Dr. Katie Hays, a Disciples pastor and church planter. The book explores God's hope for the world and why we should have hope, too. In March, we will read *Failing Boldly: How Falling Down in Ministry Can be the Start of Rising Up* by Rev. Christian Coon. Coon wants us to know that failure is not something of which to be ashamed. Failure teaches us and stretches us to rely on God in our work as a church. YOU can join us from anywhere because the conversation happens on Zoom on Thursday, March 30 at 7:30 PM. Let us know if you'd like the Zoom link by contacting our Office Administrator, Connie, at [CMcVicar@bethanywv.edu](mailto:CMcVicar@bethanywv.edu).



ERIN'S BOOK CLUB

# FAILING BOLDLY

HOW FALLING DOWN IN MINISTRY CAN BE THE START OF RISING UP

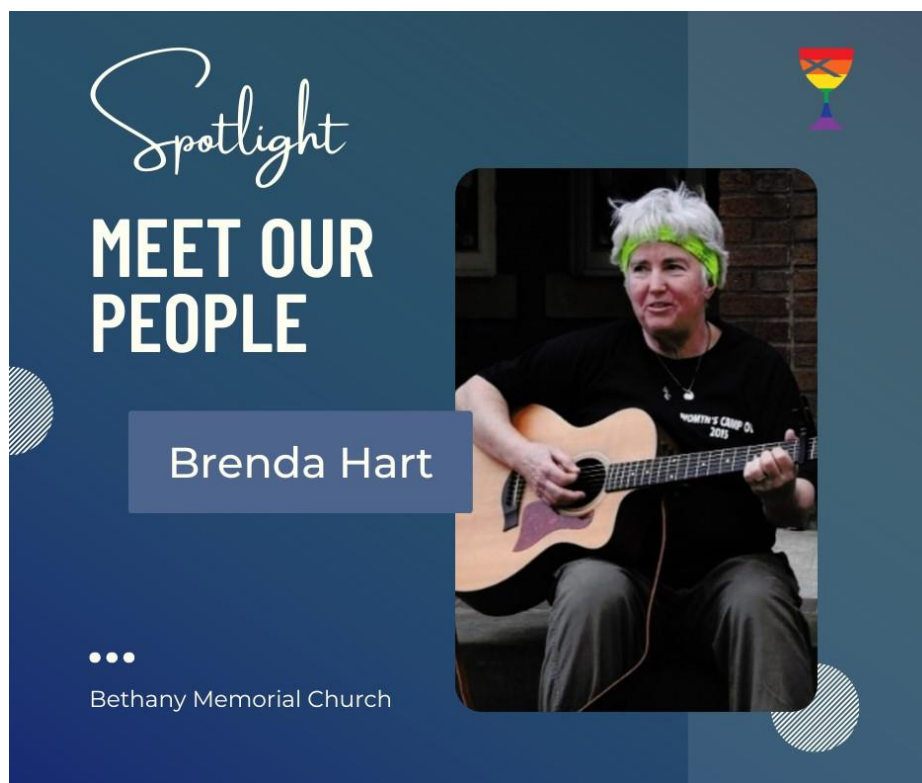
CHRISTIAN COON

Foreword by  
REVEREND ROBERT SCHNASE  
Bishop, United Methodist Church

MARCH 30 @ 7 PM

Join us on Zoom

## BMC SPOTLIGHT



Every other week our Facebook timeline features a member of the BMC community. This online introduction to who we are lets people check us out before they attend worship in-person. They see faces and learn stories and feel less intimidated to enter our big, beautiful building because they know who we are. Check out one of our most recent BMC Spotlights featuring our Special Music Expert - THE **BRENDA HART**.

1. **What is your preferred name?**  
Brenda
2. **What pronouns should people use when referring to you in conversation?**  
she/her
3. **If you knew it was going to be your last meal, what would you request?**  
Turkey, mashed potatoes, noodles, and green beans.
4. **What is the last book/TV show/podcast you consumed that moved you?:**  
Spoken word artist Gloria Umanah performing "Wonderfully Made" with Ellie Holcomb
5. **What is your favorite restaurant in the area?**  
El Paso at the Highlands
6. **What job/profession did you want to do when you were a child?**  
College Basketball Coach
7. **Do you have a favorite quote or phrase that inspires you?:**  
"We cannot attain the presence of God because we are already totally in the presence of God. What's absent is awareness." - Richard Rohr
8. **Which public figure do you admire?**  
Nadia Bolz-Weber, Lutheran Pastor, author, otherwise known as the cussing preacher

Make sure to like and follow us on Facebook for each bi-monthly Spotlight feature at [facebook.com/bmcwv](https://www.facebook.com/bmcwv)



# Memorial to Saints in Stained-Glass

by Charlotte Chambers and John Cole

The memorial windows of our grand old building have always been a central part of its beautiful structure that require continual care. In the 1986 restoration, numerous windows were re-leaded and repaired, including those in the back of the sanctuary under the balcony. In addition, a beautifully designed set of clear antique glass windows mirroring the design of Thomas and Alexander Campbell windows was installed. These windows allow the stained-glass skylight in Heritage Hall and the Chapel window to be viewed from the sanctuary and were part of a major remodeling/restoration project.

In 2010, the Congregational Board instituted “Window of the Moment” plan whereby the money to repair a window had to be raised before the window was restored by Art Glass of Wheeling. All kitchen windows were then replaced with good quality clear glass for better light, and the former stained-glass windows were saved to repair others in the building, allowing for a better match of glass.

In 2011, the Carle/Scott window in the landing above the narthex and five parlor windows were restored. The Cramblet/Woolery window near the organ was next in 2012. Windows in the office area were restored in 2013, along with four windows in downstairs Sunday School classrooms. No window was removed until funds to restore it were in hand. As the west side of the building receives the strongest wind and weather, it was decided to cover the windows on that side and in the Minister’s office with a high-quality tempered glass. This project was accomplished in 2016.

In the spring of 2022, it became apparent that the restoration of the magnificent sanctuary memorial windows to Thomas and Alexander Campbell and numerous other saints of the Disciples leadership could no longer be delayed. These windows have received only minor and necessary repairs over the past 100 years. Acting in response to the Trustees’ recommendation, the Board sought bids for the restoration of these windows and other windows in various areas of the church. Reviewing bids from four major companies, the Board selected the bid for \$153,000 from Franklin Art Glass (Columbus, Ohio), which was then approved by the congregation.

After receiving a quarter payment of \$38,000, Franklin workers removed all the windows, replacing them with plywood and transporting the numbered sections to the Columbus workshop for restoration. No completion date has been given. Unlike the window restoration in previous years, invested money from the Forrest H. Kirkpatrick Trust will be used. However, to date we have received \$28,000 from various individuals for specific windows.

If you wish to contribute to this project, a list of windows is provided: 1) Carty window in Pastor’s office; 2) Verna Fowler window in the stairwell; 3) Rev. Sharon Watkins window in Communion room; 4) Baptistry windows #1, #2, #3; 5) Board Meeting Room windows #1, #2, #3 6) Sunday school room windows; 7) memorial windows in the sanctuary.

## DID YOU KNOW?



“Let there be light’ and there was light.”

Are stained glass windows simply objects of beauty? Or do they serve a greater purpose?

“Let there be light.” The first recorded words spoken by God (Genesis 1:3) in the Bible. As such, light is revered by Christians, and as far back as the 11<sup>th</sup> century, stained glass was used in church windows as a means of dispelling the darkness of shadows and allowing God’s symbolic light to shine through. In addition, with stained glass windows, worshippers were not distracted by outside events.

During medieval times, most common-folk were illiterate, and stained glass windows depicting stories from the Bible provided the means by which these individuals could remember and learn the stories of the Bible. For this reason, stained glass windows were referred to as “the poor man’s Bible.”

BETHANY MEMORIAL CHURCH  
(DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)

# HOLY WEEK



<b>02</b> APR	<b>PALM SUNDAY AND PROCESSIONAL</b> BMC SANCTUARY AND FACEBOOK LIVE GATHER EARLY FOR FELLOWSHIP AND REFRESHMENTS IN HERITAGE HALL BEFORE PALM PROCESSIONAL   10:45 AM
<b>06</b> APR	<b>MAUNDY THURSDAY SERVICE</b> BMC SANCTUARY AND FACEBOOK LIVE   7:00 PM
<b>07</b> APR	<b>GOOD FRIDAY PRAYER VIGIL</b> BMC SANCTUARY AND LABRYNTH 10:00 AM - 6:00 PM   10:00 AM
<b>09</b> APR	<b>EASTER SUNDAY SERVICE</b> BMC SANCTUARY AND FACEBOOK LIVE   10:45 AM



Because of the generosity of friends and family of Bethany Memorial Church, those who are homeless and/or in need in Wheeling and the surrounding area will be warmer this winter. Total contributions during the Christmas season were:

- 17 winter hats
- 33 pairs of gloves
- 31 pairs of socks
- 2 scarves

The gentleman shown to the right, a volunteer at the Wheeling Soup Kitchen, accepts these gifts from Debra Hull, Outreach chair at BMC.

A special thanks to all who donated.

## Prayer List

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*Therefore...pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective. – James 5:16*

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Christian Love and Sympathy for family and friends of Sue DeVaul who passed away December 4, 2022.

- Pastor Janet Hellner-Burris (co-Pastor of Wilkinsburg Christian Church)
- Rev. Erin James-Brown and family
- Jen, Andrew, and Savannah (Brenda's sister-in-law, brother, niece)
- May Tittle
- Rev. Bill Allen
- Jeanne Cobb
- Carole Cook
- George Clark (father of Connie McVicar)
- John Cole
- Paul (brother-in-law of Jan Forsty)
- Elizabeth DeYoung
- Rev. Erin James-Brown
- Kerry Shaulis
- May Tittle (Penny Tittle's mom)
- Becky Ayers and Family
- Helen Moren
- Rick Ehrhart & Sharon Zacherl (cousins of Vicki NeCastro)
- MaryAnn Eisenhauer
- Larissa and Hannah Holland (friends of Vicki NeCastro)
- Debbie Guillony Geisler (sister-in-law of Jim McMillan)
- Madeline Wilson
- David Gnatek (brother-in-law of Holly Hillgardner)
- The Tennant Family (friends of MaryAnn Eisenhauer)
- Cheri Schwertfeger Koscevic
- Butch Brown
- Vonnie Larson
- Lynn, brother of Shirley Kemp
- Tom and Karen (friends of David George)
- Eldon Beery (Debra Hull's father)
- Mary Wilson (former mother-in-law Holly)
- Nancy Pietrangelo (sister of Penny Tittle)
- Perry "Jeff" Jones, Jr.
- Sandy Stevenson (sister of Kim Stevenson)
- Sharley Hillgardner

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*The Christian gospel is a summons to peace, calling for justice beyond anger, mercy beyond justice, forgiveness beyond mercy, love beyond forgiveness.*

*-Wendell Berry*

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Among Bethany College students, the most popular room in the church might very well be the kitchen. Students have used the facility for personal use, baking for on-campus fundraisers, and full-blown dinners for groups small and large. Students are also welcome to use the building for study purposes. For additional information, contact Connie McVicar at 304-829-7138 or [cmcvicar@bethanywv.edu](mailto:cmcvicar@bethanywv.edu).

# The Little Harbinger Bethany Memorial Church

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