



First Bethel Church  
King's Light Newsletter

FEBRUARY  
2026

2026



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER  
THOUGHTS FROM  
PASTOR DAVID

If the parking lots could talk! Church parking lots that is! It is in these spaces that many evaluation sessions take place and are commonly referred to as “parking lot conversations.”

*Church went too long! I couldn't hear the young person reading scripture! I didn't like the hymn selections! The pastor was dressed too casually! ...* are a few examples of the critique every church parking lot has heard. And it is okay...to an extent. We all are critics...we all critique and evaluate what we see and hear. Though a certain level of conversational critique is harmless, great caution must be exercised to keep it healthy, constructive, and redemptive.

In the church, a healthy level of critique is that where judgement & evaluation can be shared & discussed with helpful improvement for all as its goal. This is called “constructive criticism.” Paired with forthright and honest communication, God is able to use this for the greater good and redeems it for benefit of the church and the Kingdom of God.

Critique, rooted in self and in one's emotional brokenness, is very harmful. I have seen great damage caused by individuals offering critique in an effort to elevate oneself, or in an effort to tear down the other. In an organization, this type of criticism is akin to damage caused by termites that eat away at the structural elements which left unchecked, lead to structural collapse. May we always check our motivation and always strive to honor God and not self.

**I am glad to say I have not experienced the later here at First Bethel – only the former. I am thankful!**

I have experienced a few situations at First Bethel where a few acted upon erroneous information obtained from others who were not properly informed. Though it did take some work to correct the situation and move everyone onto the same page, it would have been much easier for all involved to have spoken to me directly with the questions and concerns. Though First Bethel is not large enough to employ multiple pastors, it is large enough and in ministry enough to keep this pastor very, very busy. But please know this: I am never too busy to meet with you and discuss any matter at hand; whether it is about the church or about your journey of faith through a difficult, broken world.

As we leave our next church service or leadership meeting and the parking lot conversations pop up, check yourself with the Apostle Paul's words he wrote to the believers in Ephesus: *Do not let any unwholesome [or corrupting] talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.* (Ephesians. 4:29 NIV/ESV)

May all we say and do flow out of the desire to make glad the heart of God and to further God's Kingdom on Earth! Amen!

Journeying together,

**Pastor David**



Dear First Bethel

*Christina and I am very grateful for the Christmas Gift given to us by the church! We so much appreciate your generous hearts! We are truly blessed by you!*

*Pastor David*



Feb 1 Jim Howells  
Feb 1 Charlene Phillips  
Feb 9 Pam Bright  
Feb 12 Charlene Pauline  
Feb 12 Isabelle Rinehart  
Feb 17 Patty Vitale  
Feb 20 Sherry Kendall

Feb 25 Bruce Cook  
Feb 25 Jane Cooper  
Feb 25 Donna Leonhart  
Feb 26 Jordan Cummins  
Feb 26 Kadin Gray  
Feb 28 Sandy Mason

---

## RED LETTER LIVING BIBLE STUDY



The Red Letter Living Bible Study, led by Rev. Joel Garrett, will return on Tuesday, February 3<sup>rd</sup> at 6:30PM in the Oxford Room and will continue weekly through March 31<sup>st</sup>.

# WINTER WORSHIP SCHEDULE



## SUNDAYS

**9:30AM WORSHIP**

*With CHILDREN'S MESSAGE &*

*WORSHIP ENRICHMENT*

*COMMUNION IS HELD THE FIRST SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH*

**10:30AM SUNDAY SCHOOL**

**10:45AM WIRED WORD ADULT DISCUSSION**

*Children are welcome to stay in the sanctuary with their families. We have "Busy Bags" filled with engaging items available at the back of the church. Additionally, children ages three through third grade can join Miss Charlene for Worship Enrichment after the Children's Message. For those who prefer, there is a furnished Nursery area upstairs.*

*If you need more information, feel free to ask an Usher or a Greeter or anyone with an "Ask Me" nametag before or during the service.*

# FISH TALES



## **FISH is Fun In the South Hills at Parkford Community**

What a festive and fun finish we had in December after our very first semester of FISH!! We decorated cookies, worked on crafts, played in the snow (!!!), went Christmas caroling through the Parkford community, and enjoyed conversation and delicious pizza.

After a two-week holiday break, we resumed our Wednesday gatherings on January 7<sup>th</sup>. We have introduced a devotional circle time, weekly opportunities to learn life skills (like baking pizza and blueberry muffins), new games and crafts, and have continued to identify and explore ways to care for and help those children most vulnerable and at-risk. Through our weekly consistent engagement, we are getting to know more about our kids and their families as they learn to trust us.

We have learned a lot since September – such as what works and what doesn't as we are striving to engage with children varying in age from 4 to 14 of different genders and ethnicities, personalities and faiths. And wow, has my respect and admiration for teachers and child-care workers grown!! I always suspected these professions were two of the world's toughest (and potentially most rewarding), but now I know it for sure.

Thanks to all of our amazing volunteers for their time and commitment to this growing outreach ministry, and to all of you for your prayers and support.

See you in church!

Lisa Rulong





**FISH is Fun In the South Hills at Parkford Community  
on Wednesdays 3:30 PM – 5:30 PM**

*Snacks, Games, Crafts & Homework Help  
Come Join Us!!!*

*Contact Lisa Rulong or Mary Courtney for more information.  
FISH volunteer opportunities are now in Ministry Scheduler Pro,  
so signing up is even easier!*

*Contact the Church Office if you have any questions.*



**Appalachia**  
SERVICE PROJECT®

# 2025 ASP SUMMER IMPACT REPORT

by Gloria Stephan

I'm sharing this comprehensive report from ASP that details every hour volunteered and every home repair project completed across all 20 counties this summer by ASP volunteers including those we sent to Kanawha County WV.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION	ASP SERVICE AREA
Basic utilities repaired/replaced (plumbing, electrical, septic, well)	51
Ceilings/walls repaired	183
Doors/windows installed	108
Drainage ditches/retaining walls	14
Fascia/soffit/guttering	29
Floors repaired	276
Foundations repaired	18
Insulation installed	89
Interior/exterior paint	119
Porches/steps/ramps	178
Roofs repaired/installed	92
Room additions completed (bedroom or bathroom)	8
Siding repaired/installed	62
Underpinning installed	27
Total # projects completed	1,314

Our week of service will be **Sunday, June 14<sup>th</sup> to Saturday, June 20<sup>th</sup> 2026**.

You can support this ministry by spending the week with us, donating time, talents or funds, or participating in our fundraising events.

To register for our trip, submit a deposit of \$50/youth or \$100/adult to hold your spot. The trip is open to High School students and Adults with current clearances.

Scholarships and fundraising opportunities are always available. We're looking forward to our 26<sup>th</sup> year of our church family supporting the

ASP ministry with their gifts of time, talent and resources.

See ASP's website. <https://asphome.org/summer/#learn-more> or contact Gloria Stephan for more information..

# TRIVIA NIGHT FUNDRAISER IS BACK!

## TRIVIA NIGHT FUNDRAISER

Saturday February 21, 2026

5PM - 7:30PM

First Bethel United Methodist Church  
5901 Library Road Bethel Park 15102



Join a team, compete, and win fun prizes

\$15 Admission includes snacks and drinks

Our professional host will be Don from TotalQuiz.com

There will be twenty categories of Trivia, Radio Bingo at halftime,

a Silent Auction (new!), and Door Prizes.

**All proceeds benefit our Appalachia Service Project mission trip fund.**



**WATCH FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT  
ASP BISTRO FUNDRAISER DINNERS  
DURING SUNDAYS IN LENT**

# CHURCH LIBRARY NEWS

"Deeply Buried Secret"



We added three-dozen books in 2025. These two bestsellers are among the latest:

## THE TELL (Large Print)

Amy Griffin, the author of this memoir, says psychotherapy and an illegal drug enabled her to recover a haunting memory from her distant past. Griffin, a wealthy New Yorker, tells how she was abused by a male teacher starting when she was 12 years old in Texas. BookBrowse said she brought back "a deeply buried secret" in a "journey from denial and building walls to facing her past, finding her voice, and the realization that sharing her story was the true path to justice and self-acceptance."

## THE LET THEM THEORY: A Life-changing Tool That Millions Of People Can't Stop Talking About.

The publisher says this latest ground-breaking book by Mel Robbins teaches you how to "stop wasting energy on what you can't control" and provides advice in eight key areas of life "giving you the mindset and tools to unlock your full potential." Robbins is a bestselling author, former defense attorney and CNN legal analyst. She is a motivational speaker who has been widely praised for her Mel Robbins podcast.

## OUR BOOK CART

Stop by this cart beside the Library desk to see books and pamphlets that might interest you. No need to check out anything here. Just take whatever you want.

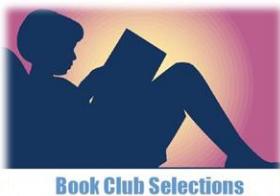
Here are some of the titles recently on the cart: Light for My Path for Grandparents, Responding to God, The Grieving Child in the Classroom, Participating: Alzheimer's Research, The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life, A Walk With God, Helping Children Cope With the Death of a Loved One, Behavioral Health Among College Students (information about peer pressure and other challenges).

**Your Library Staff**

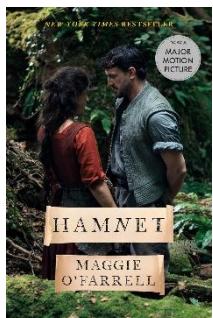
# BOOK CLUB

Our Book Club delves into a wide range of books to broaden our insights and viewpoints.

The group gathers for discussions at Panera Bread in South Park Shops every third Friday of the month at 7PM. We welcome you to join us!



Book Club Selections



## Friday, February 20<sup>th</sup> 16<sup>th</sup> – Hamnet by Maggie O'Farrell (321 pages).

The bestselling author of *The Marriage Portrait* delivers a deeply moving novel about the death of Shakespeare's eleven-year-old son, Hamnet, and the years leading up to the production of his great play.

England in 1580: The Black Death creeps across the land, an ever-present threat, infecting the healthy, the sick, the old and the young alike. The end of days is near, but life always goes on.

A young Latin tutor—penniless and bullied by a violent father—falls in love with an extraordinary, eccentric young woman. Agnes is a wild creature who walks her family's land with a falcon on her glove and is known throughout the countryside for her unusual gifts as a healer, understanding plants and potions better than she does people. Once she settles with her husband on Henley Street in Stratford-upon-Avon, she becomes a fiercely protective mother and a steadfast, centrifugal force in the life of her young husband, whose career on the London stage is just taking off when his beloved young son succumbs to sudden fever.

*Hamnet* is mesmerizing, seductive, impossible to put down—a magnificent leap forward from one of our most gifted novelists.

## YOUTH RETREAT



The Youth Retreat to Jumonville will be **February 13-15, 2026**. Contact Meredith Steinhagen, Youth Coordinator, for more details. All junior and senior high school aged students are welcome to join us for this fun weekend event. We're hoping for snow!

---

## FIRST BETHEL MEN'S GROUP



The next Men's Group meeting is Saturday, February 7<sup>th</sup> at 8:30AM. The men also gather informally for breakfast on Wednesdays around 9AM at the Eat 'N Park in South Park Shops.

The men coordinate local service projects and assist with various Nurture, Outreach and Witness ministries within and beyond our walls.

---

## MARTHA CIRCLE

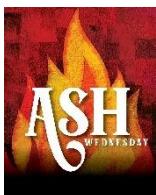


Martha Circle is a time for the ladies to be together for fellowship, service and connecting with other women of our faith community. The next Martha Circle meeting is scheduled for February 11<sup>th</sup> at 1PM.

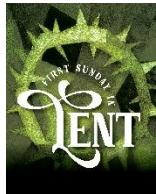
Contact Donna Hennen or Lea Cook for more information.

---

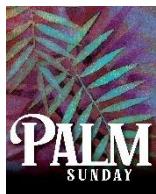
# LENTEN AND EASTER SERVICES



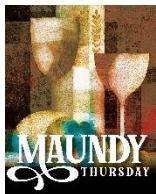
**ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE**  
**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18<sup>TH</sup>**  
**7:00PM**



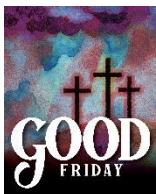
**FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT SERVICE**  
**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22<sup>ND</sup>**  
**9:30AM**



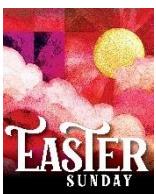
**PALM SUNDAY WORSHIP**  
**SUNDAY, MARCH 29<sup>TH</sup>**  
**9:30AM**



**MAUNDY THURSDAY SERVICE**  
**THURSDAY, APRIL 2<sup>ND</sup>**  
**7:00PM**



**GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE**  
**FRIDAY, APRIL 3<sup>RD</sup>**  
**7:00PM**



**EASTER SUNDAY SUNRISE SERVICE**  
**SUNDAY, APRIL 5<sup>TH</sup> 7:00AM**  
**EASTER SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE**  
**SUNDAY, APRIL 5<sup>TH</sup> 9:30AM**

## STAY CONNECTED !



The **MyUCD** app not only contains contact information and family photos for our congregation, but it also has contact information for our church and staff, **AND links to access weekly announcements, online giving, and the church calendar.**

There are two easy steps to install the app. Download the **myUCD** app to your smart phone and enter your family's personal household access code. From there, it's easy peasy!

If you missed the email with your code, contact the Church Office at 412-835-0700 or via email [FBUMC@Verizon.net](mailto:FBUMC@Verizon.net). There is also a list of the access codes in the Narthex.

---

## First Bethel's Mission Statement

*“Nourish Every Body,  
Stimulate Every Spirit,  
Satisfy Every Soul,  
for the Glory of God”*



# First Bethel United Methodist Church

Bethel Park, Pennsylvania  
THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

5901 Library Road

Bethel Park, PA 15102

<http://www.firstbethelumc.org>

**Church Office**

**412-835-0700**

[FBUMC@Verizon.net](mailto:FBUMC@Verizon.net)



**Kings School Kids**

**412-835-6141**

[KSK10@Verizon.net](mailto:KSK10@Verizon.net)

**Pastor:** Rev. David Ewing

Mobile: 412-818-0889

[PastorDavid@FirstBethelumc.org](mailto:PastorDavid@FirstBethelumc.org)

**Office Manager:** Lisa Stefanowicz

[OfficeManager@FirstBethelumc.org](mailto:OfficeManager@FirstBethelumc.org)

**Choir Director and Organist:** Phil Himmler

**Director of Maintenance:** Jim Howells

## KINGS SCHOOL KIDS

**Director of KSK:** Mary Beth Deckard

**Assistant Director of KSK:** Nicole Crisson

**KSK Office Administrator:** Charlene Phillips



<https://www.facebook.com/FirstBethelUMC/>

**KINGS LIGHT DEADLINE:** The 20<sup>th</sup> of each month is the deadline for submissions for the next issue of the King's Light. Please have your information submitted on time to avoid the disappointment of not having it appear in the next edition. Send via email to Gloria Stephan, editor or send to [FBUMC@Verizon.net](mailto:FBUMC@Verizon.net)

FIRST BETHEL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

5901 LIBRARY ROAD

BETHEL PARK, PA 15102-3398

[www.firstbethelumc.org](http://www.firstbethelumc.org)

*February 2026*

*King's Light Newsletter*

