



BETHANY IN BERLIN

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Christ's Love Grows Here

Bethany UMC



Newsletter



March 2026 Edition

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Rev. Jacob T. Jackson pastor@bethanyberlin.org 443-953-4550

PASTOR'S WELCOME

Dear Church Family,

Throughout the month of February, we spent our Sunday mornings studying the book of Jude. It is a short letter, but it carries a strong message. Jude was writing to a divided body of believers. There was confusion, false teaching, and tension within the church. As we read it together, it was hard not to notice how much that situation still resonates today.

We also live in a time that feels divided. There is constant noise around us. There are strong opinions, sharp disagreements, and plenty of in-fighting both inside and outside the church. It can be exhausting. It can also be discouraging.

As we move into this season of Lent, we are reminded of something steady and unchanging. We are reminded of the cross of Christ. The cross stands at the center of our faith. It is not our opinions that unite us. It is not our preferences or personalities. It is Jesus. It is His sacrifice. It is His mercy poured out for all of us.

At the foot of the cross, we stand on level ground. We all come as sinners in need of grace. We all come as people who have been forgiven. The cross humbles us. It also holds us together.

My prayer for us this March is that we would keep our eyes fixed on Christ. That we would remember what unites us is far greater than what divides us. And that as we walk toward Easter, we would do so with hearts shaped by the love we see on the cross.

In Christ,

Rev. Jacob T. Jackson



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MARCH

2026

WORSHIP SERVICES

HEY JUDE: THE MOST HOLY FAITH

Jude 1:20-25

"Lord, I Need You"; #355 Depth of Mercy, Can There Be



3/1



3/8

NO ONE COMES TO THE FATHER EXCEPT THROUGH ME

John 14:1-6

"Lord, I Need You"; #361 Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me



3/15

DISTRACTED AND DECEIVED

Luke 21:1-38

"O Come to the Altar"; #298 When I Survey the Wondrous Cross"

MARCH

2026

WORSHIP SERVICES

GIVING IT ALL UP

3/22

Matthew 13:44-53

"O Come to the Altar"; #289 Ah, Holy Jesus

3/29

THE GATES WILL OPEN

Psalm 118:1-2; 19-29

"O Come to the Altar"; #297 Beneath the Cross of Jesus

Worcester GOLD

Worcester County GOLD meets the needs of individuals with low income by providing emergency financial assistance, basic needs items, and four special programs:

- Youth Summer Scholarship Program
- School Supplies for Students
- Thanksgiving Turkey Distribution
- Helping Hands for the Holidays

A network of agents employed by GOLD's community partners come to GOLD on behalf of the individuals they serve. These dedicated case managers, counselors, peer support workers, and social workers (to name a few), come to GOLD to prevent tragic outcomes for their clients. They then work to establish resources for their client to have long-term self-sufficiency.



United in Mission: Shared Ministry & Hub Meetings

Join **Bethany, St. Paul's, Atlantic, Stevenson, Community Church at Ocean Pines, Curtis, New Bethel, Calvary, St. John's, and Showell** as we continue to strengthen our connectional ministry across congregations.



- ✓ Combine Resources and Talents
- ✓ Build Relationships Across Congregations
- ✓ Live Out Our Shared Call to Discipleship

**HUB/SHARED MINISTRY MEETING
MAR 11th, APR 8th, & MAY 6th AT 2 PM
BETHANY UMC**

Focus on service projects for
our community and shared worship
opportunities for our churches

LOCAL 2026 CONFIRMATION CLASS OPTIONS

COMMUNITY CHURCH
OCEAN PINES, MD
WEDNESDAYS
3:30 PM TO 4:30 PM
APRIL 15TH, 22ND, 29TH
MAY 6TH, 13TH, 20TH
CONTACT REV. DALE
(302) 381-8834

BETHANY UMC
BERLIN, MD
FRIDAYS
6 PM TO 7 PM
APRIL 17TH, 24TH
MAY 1ST, 8TH, 15TH, 22ND
CONTACT REV. JACOB
(443) 953-4550

YOUTH FROM OTHER CHURCHES ARE
WELCOME AND CAN JOIN THEIR HOME
CHURCH WITH PERMISSION OF THEIR
PASTOR.

YOUTH WHO ARE IN SIXTH GRADE AND
ABOVE OR WHO ARE TWELVE YEARS OF
AGE AND ABOVE ARE INVITED TO
PARTICIPATE.

WALK WITH US THROUGH LENT

BETHANY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

18

FEB

ASH WEDNESDAY | 6:00 PM

A REFLECTIVE SERVICE MARKING THE
BEGINNING OF THE LENTEN SEASON



LENTEN BIBLE STUDY | WED. AT 11 AM

“THE FINAL DAYS” BY MATT RAWLE

FEBRUARY 25 – APRIL 1

JOURNEY THROUGH THE FINAL DAYS OF JESUS’
EARTHLY MINISTRY

29

MAR

PALM SUNDAY | 10:00 AM

CELEBRATE JESUS’ ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM

2

APR

MAUNDY THURSDAY | 5:30 PM

MEAL IN THE UPPER ROOM

AN INTIMATE WORSHIP EXPERIENCE COMBINING
SCRIPTURE, REFLECTION, AND A SHARED MEAL
FEATURING FOODS SIMILAR TO THOSE JESUS AND
HIS DISCIPLES WOULD HAVE EATEN AT THE LAST SUPPER
LIMITED SPACE – ADVANCE SIGN-UP REQUIRED

5

APR

EASTER SUNDAY | 6:00 AM AND 10:00 AM

SUNRISE SERVICE AT ASSATEAGUE STATE PARK | 6:00 AM

BREAKFAST AT BETHANY UMC AROUND 6:45 AM

TRADITIONAL WORSHIP | 10:00 AM

EASTER EGG HUNT FOLLOWING THE 10:00 AM SERVICE

ALL ARE WELCOME. COME AS YOU ARE.

FAMILY WORSHIP NIGHT

Dinner • Worship • Breakout Activities

Bring the whole family for a night of food, fun, and worship! Each evening begins with a shared dinner, followed by a brief worship service featuring contemporary Christian music and a short message. Afterward, kids and youth will go to age-appropriate breakout groups with games, crafts, activities, and meaningful conversation.



Friday, March 20 — 6:00 pm
Friday, April 17 — 6:00 pm
Friday, May 15 — 6:00 pm



Bethany UMC
8648 Stephen Decatur Hwy
Berlin, MD 21811



(410) 641-2186



bethanyberlin.org

All ages welcome!



BETHANY UMC'S

2026 FLEA MARKETS



SAT.
MAY 2

8 AM TO
12 PM

SAT.
SEPT 5



CRAFTER AND BAKE SALE

VENDOR DETAILS
(TABLES AVAILABLE OR BYO)

\$15 FOR
1 SPACE
\$25 FOR
2 SPACES

CONTACT MARY MARTINEZ
OR USE QR CODE TO RESERVE

410-382-2661
MARYM8346@COMCAST.NET



BREAKFAST FOR SALE

VISIT FROM WORCESTER
COUNTY PUP

CHILDREN'S CRAFT
TABLE

LIVE MUSIC

OUTDOOR WEATHER
PERMITTING

BETHANY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
BETHANYBERLIN.ORG
410-641-2186 | INFO@BETHANYBERLIN.ORG
8648 STEPHEN DECATUR HWY
BERLIN, MD 21811

SMALL GROUPS

MARCH

2026

TUES
@
1PM

DISCIPLE CLASS

No meetings this month.

PRAYER GROUP

March 11th
March 18th
March 25th

The prayer group at Bethany is a relaxed group that meets regularly to share prayer concerns, give thanks, and seek guidance from God through collective prayer and reflection.

WED
@
10 AM

WED
@
11AM

MORNING BIBLE STUDY

March 4th - The Final Days Week 1 & 2 (Double session: 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.)
March 11th - The Final Days Week 3
March 18th - The Final Days Week 4
March 25th - The Final Days Week 5

WOMEN'S LIFT GROUP

March 4th
March 11th
March 18th
March 25th

The women's L.I.F.T group at Bethany is a relaxed group that meets regularly over a variety of activities such as watching faith-based TV, studying the Bible, enjoying fellowship, or dinner.

WED
@
6:30 PM

BIBLE STUDY

WEDNESDAYS

11 AM

**JAN 7
-
FEB 11**

THE BIBLE WITH AND WITHOUT JESUS

6-week plan developed by Amy-Jill Levine and Marc Zvi Brettler.
Book Recommended.

THE FINAL DAYS

**FEB 25
-
APR 1**

Lenten Bible Study
6-week plan developed by Matt Rawle. Book recommended.

**APR 22
-
MAY 13**

INTERPRETING HEBREW POETRY

4-week plan developed by The Bible Project. No book required

THE CIRCLE MAKER

4-week plan developed by Mark Batterson. Book recommended.

**MAY 27
-
JUN 17**

SPECIAL SPOTLIGHT

One topic we discuss in new membership classes here at Bethany is the question, “How do I pray?” I find it important to disclose, while there are “wrong” ways to pray, there isn’t one “right” way to pray. Prayer can come in a wide variety of forms and approaches. Simply doing the sign of the cross is just as valid a form of prayer as an hour long contemplative practice. This spring, I had a practice in a “Formation for Ministry” course at Duke to pray over the same passage with 5 different approaches. My chosen passage was Habakkuk 1:2-3, and below are my 5 prayers. I invite you to lift these prayers with me and I hope they can give you a new perspective into your own prayer life.

Day 1

Blessing Prayer

Lord, when I feel overwhelmed by the hardships in my own life, remind me to pause and recognize that there are many who are carrying burdens far heavier than mine. When I am tempted to believe my struggle is the whole world, open my eyes to see the suffering around me, not with guilt, but with compassion. As Habakkuk cried, “How long, O Lord, must I call for help?” so many are crying out today, and I lift them before You.

Bless those trapped in addiction. Those who feel powerless, ashamed, and alone. Break chains that seem unbreakable, and surround them with help, healing, and hope.

Bless those who sit behind prison walls. Give them mercy, repentance, protection, and a future not defined by their worst mistakes.

Bless those who are unemployed and uncertain, whose dignity feels shaken and whose families feel the weight of need. Provide work, provision, and peace.

Bless those facing serious illness, chronic pain, or terrifying diagnoses. Be their strength when their bodies fail and their comfort when fear rises.

Bless those mourning loved ones, whose hearts feel hollow. Hold them close, and remind them that death does not have the final word.

Lord, hear their cries. Let Your justice, mercy, and healing flow. In Jesus’ name, amen.

SPECIAL SPOTLIGHT

Day 2

Praise Prayer

Lord, You are good, and Your goodness is everywhere if I have eyes to see it. When Habakkuk cries, "Why do you make me see wrongdoing and look at trouble?" I confess that my heart often echoes that same question. I can become so focused on what is broken in the world that I forget how much beauty You continually place before me.

But today I praise You for what You have already shown me. I praise You for creation. For skies that declare Your glory, oceans that remind me of Your power, and seasons that reveal Your faithfulness. I praise You for the life of Jesus Christ, for His compassion, His teaching, His sacrifice, and His resurrection, proving that darkness never gets the final word.

I praise You for the family You are building in my life: for Yvonne, for Savannah, and for Jude. Each one a gift I could never earn, each one a reminder that You are still creating and still blessing. I praise You for a loving church family that supports me, encourages me, and walks with me through joys and burdens.

I praise You for the education You have provided, an opportunity at a university I never would have dreamed I could attend. I praise You for stability, for a comfortable life, for daily provision, and for health and strength that carry me through each day.

Lord, forgive me when I focus on trouble more than Your goodness. Train my heart to see You at work. You are worthy of my praise. In Jesus' name, amen.

Day 3

Contemplative Prayer

God, so often I bring these same questions before You. Your Word gives language to what my heart feels. As Habakkuk cries out, "O LORD, how long shall I cry for help, and you will not listen? Or cry to you 'Violence!' and you will not save? Why do you make me see wrongdoing and look at trouble? Destruction and violence are before me; strife and contention arise."

SPECIAL SPOTLIGHT

Lord, I confess that I have prayed words like these. I have looked at the world, at people I love, at situations I cannot fix, and I have wondered why the brokenness seems so loud and so constant. I have asked why You allow me to see what I cannot carry. I have asked why I notice what is wrong more easily than what is right. I have asked why justice feels delayed, why healing feels slow, why peace feels distant.

But today, God, I do not come only to ask. I come to listen.

I am listening, Lord.

Quiet my mind. Still my racing thoughts. Silence my need to control outcomes.

Slow my heart enough to recognize Your presence. Let Your Spirit speak in ways I cannot manufacture. If there is conviction I need to receive, give it gently but clearly. If there is encouragement I need, speak it deeply.

Lord, I am listening. And I am asking for something actionable. What can I do, God? Who can I love today? Who can I serve? What step of obedience are You putting in front of me?

Speak, Lord. Your servant is listening. Amen.

Day 4

Concession Prayer

Lord, Your Word says through Habakkuk, "O LORD, how long shall I cry for help, and you will not listen? Or cry to you 'Violence!' and you will not save?" And God, when I hear that word violence, I realize how quickly my mind narrows it down to the most obvious forms: physical harm, weapons, bruises, bloodshed.

But You see deeper than what I first imagine.

Because violence can also look like oppression that is normalized. It can look like cruelty wrapped in policy. It can look like racism that goes unchallenged, poverty that is ignored, abuse that is hidden, and exploitation that is excused.

Violence can look like words spoken to tear someone down, systems that crush the vulnerable, or silence that protects the powerful.

SPECIAL SPOTLIGHT

And Lord, I confess my own sin. I confess the times I have stayed quiet when I should have spoken. I confess the moments I have heard harmful jokes, degrading comments, or hateful opinions and let them pass because I didn't want conflict. I confess the times I have seen injustice or manipulation and chose comfort over courage. I confess that there are moments when I recognize violence, whether in speech, behavior, or culture, and I do not speak against it.

Forgive me, Lord. Forgive me for being more concerned with being liked than being faithful. Forgive me for ignoring the cries of those who are hurting.

Forgive me for my silence, when silence becomes agreement.

Give me a heart that grieves what grieves You, and a voice that reflects Your truth. Make me bold, but also humble. Teach me to speak with love, but never at the cost of justice.

Lord, cleanse me and change me. In Jesus' name, amen.

Day 5

Lament Prayer

Lord, I come to You with the words of Habakkuk because they still feel painfully true: "O LORD, how long shall I cry for help, and you will not listen? Or cry to you 'Violence!' and you will not save? Why do you make me see wrongdoing and look at trouble? Destruction and violence are before me; strife and contention arise."

God, sometimes it feels like the deeper I look into the world, the more I see the same kinds of broken systems Habakkuk was grieving. The wrongdoing is not always loud or obvious. It is woven into economies, industries, and comforts that I benefit from every day. And I don't know what to do with that weight. Lord, I lament for children in the Democratic Republic of Congo who are dying or suffering in mines so the world can have cobalt for phones, batteries, and electric cars. God, it breaks my heart that progress for some comes at the expense of the lives of the poor and powerless. I lament that children bear burdens they never chose.

SPECIAL SPOTLIGHT

I lament, Lord, the billions of animals forced into unnatural conditions, crowded, drugged, and treated like machines, so we can have cheaper food and endless convenience. I lament the cruelty that becomes normal when profit is the goal.

And Lord, I lament the new technologies that promise a better future while quietly harming the same communities already struggling. I lament AI data centers being built where resources are drained and neighborhoods are further disadvantaged. I lament that those with the least power often pay the highest cost.

God, it feels like destruction and violence are still before us. Strife and contention still rise. And I confess I feel overwhelmed, even numb.

How long, Lord? How long will injustice be the price of comfort? Have mercy. Open eyes. Change hearts. Bring justice where there is exploitation, and compassion where there is greed. Teach me how to live faithfully in a world like this. Remind me that You see it all, and You have not abandoned Your creation.

In Jesus' name, amen.



CHURCH CALENDAR

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 10 AM Sunday Service & Children's Sunday School SUM Fresh Fruit Collection	2	3	4 NO Prayer Group 10 AM Bible Study 6:30 PM LIFT Group	5	6	7
8 10 AM Sunday Service & Children's Sunday School Trustee/Finance Meeting	9	10	11 10 AM Prayer Group 11 AM Bible Study 2 PM HUB Meeting 6:30 PM LIFT Group	12	13	14
15 10 AM Sunday Service & Children's Sunday School UMCOR Special Offering Hymn Sing, 2 PM Showell UMC	16	17	18 10 AM Prayer Group 11 AM Bible Study 12 PM NOW Meeting 6:30 PM LIFT Group	19	20 6 PM Family Worship Night	21
22 10 AM Sunday Service & Children's Sunday School	23	24	25 10 AM Prayer Group 11 AM Bible Study 6:30 PM LIFT Group	26	27	28
29 10 AM Palm Sunday Service & Children's Sunday School 11:15 AM Church Council	30	31				

BETHANY BIRTHDAYS

2 - Brayden Butler
3 - Bill Shockley
7 - Audrey Ferguson
13 - Eliza Ferguson

15 - Melody Moore
19 - Dan Ringenary
20 - Richard Boord

21 - Megan Cooke
21 - Cynthia Grant
24 - Carole Snair
28 - Ed Porter

EXTENDED PRAYERS

1. Baby Hazel
2. Cathy
3. Catherine
4. Gloria
5. Joanne
6. Kim
7. Kristy
8. Wilma
9. Kevin and Linda Anderson
10. Russel Bagnall, Jr.
11. Callie Biter
12. Melody Bennett
13. Drew & Cassidy Bolyard
14. Patricia Brodsky
15. Scott and Mary Collins
16. Evan Craig
17. Brantley Cropper
18. Francis Daigre
19. Barbara Eftekhar
20. Jen Elliott
21. Shirley Feldhaus
22. Bette Finley
23. Richard Finley
24. Sharon Goetz
25. CJ Hebert
26. Rebekah Jackson
27. Helen Maloney
28. PJ Maloney
29. Jenna Martin
30. Debbie May
31. Nathan Mitchell
32. Lily & Joe Nicoso
33. Suzanne Nimmo
34. Pat Parks
35. Liberty Porch
36. Mason Prather
37. Rick Rosensteel
38. Andrew Schauer
39. Carol Snair
40. Ryan and Chrissie Spencer
41. Carson Taylor
42. Roger Taylor
43. Frank & Nancy Tribuno
44. Charles W.
45. Joyce Wagner
46. Peggy Warfield & family
47. Ken & Judy Williams