



# The Crossroads

Bethel United Methodist Church, Oswego  
December 2018



*A Word From Our Pastor...*    Read Luke 3:7-18

John is preaching a Message in the wilderness: He is preparing the way for the Lord. How do we do that this advent season?

The people of Israel feel that their religion is lacking something. They want and need something more. Why else would they accept at the hands of this prophet from the wilds a baptism of repentance? John himself is there to insist that their plunge into the river is not the end of their striving, but only the start.

You'd think that he would be happy, this John, at thousands climbing out of the river, signing themselves up as new and improved People of God.

But he won't let it rest! He doesn't care if they have a family tree that goes back to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. What John wants is to see lives that have been transformed, lives tuned in to a different frequency than they were before. He calls us to repentance and cares enough to insist we get it right.

He's not interested in people's roots, their membership cards, their family connections. He's interested in their fruits: what they are doing now with mercy on their minds, what they are doing now for God's own pleasure and purpose.

What concerns John whether they are moving down Repentance Road in the direction of the Kingdom of God, whether they are striding one step at a time toward being the people God created them to be.

John the Baptist is a holy embarrassment! During these December days all the world appears caught up in decorating and sentimentalism, a false spirituality where hearts are warmed by indigestion more than the love of God.

So what does John the Baptist do? He stands up and shouts that we are no better than a bunch of baby snakes! He doesn't care who we are, where we come from, what beliefs we hold. John gets right into our faces like the best friend we ever had and demands that we repent.

The guy's for real! This is why I love the Baptizer. He expects more from us than the world does, more than we expect of ourselves.

When we get absorbed with who's got the best decorated holiday tree, John points to the ax lying at the roots of every tree and reminds us that fruitless ones will soon be firewood.

When we start singing about chestnuts roasting on an open fire, John starts shouting about our need to be wholesome wheat lest we become burning chaff on another open fire.

Those times we get impressed with ourselves, self-satisfied, self-congratulatory, John is there to remind us, in no uncertain terms, that God can just as well turn stones into saints should we choose to live unfaithful lives.

The message is clear and the people around John hear and respond to his call that they repent. "What should we do?" That is the question they ask him. And to each one John Responds Meet the Need Next to You

Pastor Tim

[UPCOMING EVENTS](#)

Dec 4<sup>th</sup> 5:30 Sunshine Club  
 Dec 9<sup>th</sup> Deadline for Christmas box for Austin Smith  
 9:00 Sunday School  
 10:00 Children's Christmas play (combined service)  
 Dec 16<sup>th</sup> 9:00 Sunday School  
 10:00 Adult Choir Cantata (combined service)  
 Dec 18<sup>th</sup> Church wide caroling for shut-ins with hot chocolate and cookies afterwards.

Dec 2<sup>nd</sup> 6:00 in FLC  
 Dec 9<sup>th</sup> 6:00 in FLC  
 Dec 16<sup>th</sup> 6:00 GIANT SARAN WRAP BALL CHRISTMAS PARTY  
 Dec 23<sup>rd</sup> no meeting  
 Dec 30<sup>th</sup> 6:00 in FLC

Sunshine Club

The next meeting of the Sunshine Club will be on Tuesday, December 4<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 PM. Following a brief business meeting, the group will be entertained by a musical Christmas program presented by some of the many talented members. Then we will all enjoy a soup and sides supper. All are welcome to attend.

**Children's Corner**

We would like to thank Alyssa for volunteering to direct the children's Christmas program. **Practices will be every Sunday at 5:30 in the FLC. In order for this to be successful we need all of our children to arrive on time and attend each practice. There are many speaking parts this year and it will take all of our children to make this play the best we have done yet.**

The children's committee met on October 21st. The following activities were planned for our children. Please save this and post it so your family can participate in the activities.



October to December:

Play practice each Sunday afternoon at 5:30, except the Sunday after Thanksgiving

- December: 9<sup>th</sup>: Items due for the Christmas box to be sent to Austin Smith
- 9<sup>th</sup>: Christmas Play, performance during the eleven o'clock service
- 20<sup>th</sup>: Church wide caroling for our shut-ins with hot chocolate and cookies after the caroling
- TBA: Parents' Night Out, night of the Lee Altman class party

February: 8<sup>th</sup>: Movie night at the church with supper

February 10<sup>th</sup>: Valentine's Party during children's church

April: 13<sup>th</sup>: Easter Extravaganza

December Missions

A huge THANKS to those people who made generous donations to Missions last month-whether for postage for Operation Christmas Child boxes or a contribution to Missions. We were lowest financially in many years. It's built up some now enabling us to help ones in need.

Bethel filled 85 Operation Christmas Child boxes.

A Word from Yuri Lopez

Dear Bethel UMC

During this season of GRATITUDE, I have much to THANKFUL for, and that includes YOU! Thank you for your partnership and support in helping Leverage Sports and mentors to empower at-risk children and families to WIN on the field and in life. I am so grateful for you all. Please know that I am continue praying for YOU.

Yuri Lopez  
 Philippians 4:17-19

If you would prefer to receive the Newsletter, please let me know by either calling the office at 803-469-2452 or emailing me at [bmethodist@ftc-i.net](mailto:bmethodist@ftc-i.net)

## Emanuel Soup Kitchen

### **December**

**Barbeque** 25 pounds (Purchased by Missions)

**Hash** 5 gallons (Purchased by Missions)

**Rice** 6 pans 4 c. of uncooked rice per pan

**Coleslaw** 5 pans 1 med. head of cabbage

**Hamburger Buns** 75

**Banana Pudding** 6 lasagna size pans

### Banana Pudding

1 gallon of pre-made banana pudding  
(this can be purchased at Cash and Carry)

1 package of frozen coconut

1 bunch of bananas, sliced

Vanilla Wafers

1 small carton of Cool Whip

Cover the bottom of the pan with vanilla wafer.  
Combine the pudding, bananas, and coconut and  
spread over the wafers. Top with a small carton of  
Cool Whip, and refrigerate overnight.



As we are about to begin a new year, it is time to  
commit. How are you following Christ? In the end, God  
works in our world one person at a time. The hungry are  
fed, the thirsty are refreshed, the naked are clothed, the  
sick are treated, the illiterate are educated, and the  
grieving are comforted, one person at a time.

What will you do to help, not the church, but you  
personally? After all, He beckons each one of us to follow  
individually. Will you follow Him to the soup kitchen, to  
the homeless shelter, to the shut-ins dying of loneliness,  
to the jobless neighbor who's children need shoes? Are  
you following or are you stuck in "park" with your motor  
idling?

In Galatians 2:10, Paul writes "All they asked was that  
we continue to remember the poor, the very thing I was  
eager to do."

The need for believers to care for the poor is a  
constant theme in the Scripture. But often, we do  
nothing, caught up in meeting our own needs and  
desires. Perhaps we do not want to see poverty or  
perhaps we just look away. But, if we are a follower of  
Jesus, our faith demands that we care for the poor and  
feed the hungry. The world is filled with poor people,  
here and in other countries. What can you do to help?  
Are we "eager" as Paul was to remember the poor,  
needy, and hungry?



**HAPPY BIRTHDAY**



**HAPPY ANNIVERSARY**

Dec 1 Robert Frazier  
Dec 2 Kathryn Spann  
Dec 4 Linda Barnard  
Dec 8 Linda Bailey  
Dec 9 Lee Lowder  
Dec 10 Dan Feeney, Sr  
Dec 11 Mary Lowder  
Dec 16 Ryan Williams  
Dec 18 Buck Mazingo  
Dec 20 Charlotte Marshall  
Dec 21 John Rivers  
Dec 23 Joey Bailey  
Lola Deese  
Dec 24 John Brown  
Sadie Craven  
Laura Grace Wylie  
Dec 28 Marie Burns  
Marena Spann  
Dec 29 Jean Graham  
Dec 30 Rodney McDaniel  
Dec 32 Richard McDaniel  
Gwen Windham

Dec 27 Jim & Linda Barnard  
Dec 30 Joey & Jan Bailey