

# FEBRUARY THE SPIRIT OF BETHEL 2026



## Bethel United Methodist Church

- 2nd Bethel UM Men 6:00PM fellowship hall
- 3rd Glory Group at noon
- 9th Sally Starr Circle 2:00PM in church library
- Missy Ackerman Circle 6:00PM in church library
- 12th Food Pantry 2:00PM - 4:00PM
- 18th Ash Wednesday Service 6:30PM
- 25th Shut-in meals delivered
- 26th Food Pantry 2:00PM - 4:00PM



The UMYF continues to meet Sundays at 5:30PM.

The Pastor's Bible Study on Wednesdays at 10:30AM.

Wednesday Night Suppers 5:30PM followed by the Pastor's Bible Study, Children's Time, and chancel choir practice at 6:00PM.



from the  
**PASTOR**

### "WHAT IS SUPER BOWL, ANYWAY?"

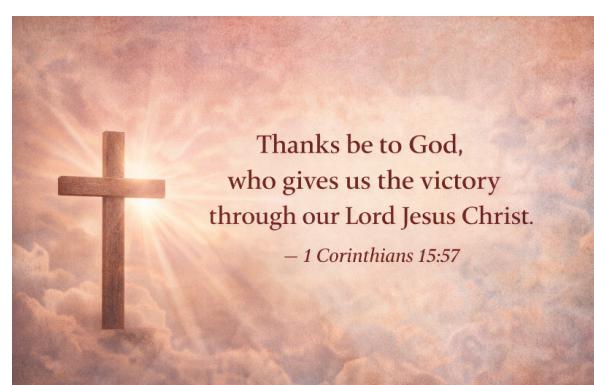
There are numbers of answers to that question, but the most obvious one directs our attention to the media event this Superbowl Sunday evening. About one hundred thousand fans will be there in person, some having paid \$3,000, or at times even much more, for one ticket for the cheapest seats in the Stadium. Millions of others will be watching the Super Bowl on television, and sponsors of the telecast will pay 7.5 million dollars for a thirty-second commercial.

A "Superbowl", is a game in which the champions and near-champions vie with each other for the most prized award in the National Football League. So, the church is the real Superbowl, where eternal values are matched up against fleeting secular interests. It is the arena with the highest stakes of all, where God's love, mercy and grace are brought to bear upon the human condition.

Christ ultimately is victor, but there are many temporary setbacks, so that the outcome is frequently in doubt. The best of our intentions are left unfulfilled - - the "busted plays" of this life, leave us dazed and confused - - and we are no better than the Apostle Paul who found that he did not do the things he should, and often did the things he should not.

The hour of decision has come, and it is not nearly so important as to the winner of the Superbowl, as it is to determine that Jesus Christ is the Lord of Life. When his all-victorious love has won us over, when we are firmly rooted and fixed in God (as Charles Wesley's hymn suggests), he is the apparent winner - - but that is not the case. We are!

- Tresco E. Shannon





## Memorials and Honorariums

*In Memory of Johnny and Paige Peurifoy* given by Tony & DeLoris Hamilton

*In Memory of Trent Copeland* given by Tommy & Amanda Fulton



## NURSING HOMES/SHUT-INS/DISTANT MEMBERS

Jane Brown, Nina Crosby, Sarah Anne Dean, Lynn Harrison, Joy Lawson, Vera Newington, Jeanine Price, Rusty Riddle, Kay Speaks, Miriam Westbury

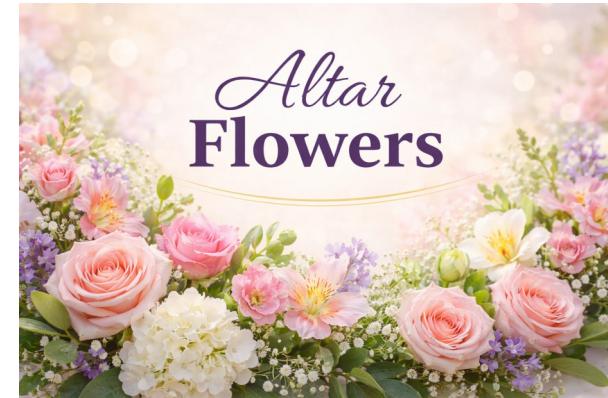
## MILITARY SERVICE

Cody Keeney, Elijah and Kaeleigh Forni, Jackson Long, Matthew Mangum, Jordan Ray, Tristan Ray

## Altar Flowers for 2026

Dates for altar flowers for the 2026 calendar year are available for signup. This is a beautiful way to honor or remember loved ones, celebrate special dates, or simply offer praise and thanksgiving.

Please contact the church office to reserve your Sunday.



## Why Sunday Worship Matters

(Especially in Winter)

Winter has a way of slowing us down. Shorter days, colder weather, and busy schedules can make it tempting to stay home. Yet it is often during these quieter, heavier seasons that worship matters most.

Gathering on Sundays grounds us in something steady when the world feels uncertain. Worship reminds us that we are not meant to walk our faith alone. When we sing together, pray together, and listen for God's voice together, we strengthen one another in ways that carry us through the week.

Sunday worship is also an act of **love**. Our presence encourages the person sitting nearby. Our prayers lift burdens we may not even see. Simply showing up says, "*You matter, and we belong to one another.*"

In winter especially, the church becomes a place of light and warmth — a reminder of God's constant love and faithfulness. When we gather, we are renewed, reassured, and sent back out to live that love in the world.

*"Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together... but encouraging one another."*

— Hebrews 10:24–25

# Love in Action

Love is more than a word—it's something we live out every day.

In this season often associated with hearts and cards, we are reminded that God's love is deeper, stronger, and far more enduring. At Bethel, love looks like caring for our neighbors, sharing meals, lifting one another in prayer, and welcoming all with open hearts. This month, we celebrate the many ways love is lived out among us.



**...a full pantry, where neighbors receive food with dignity and kindness, and volunteers faithfully stock shelves, pack bags, and offer prayer. It is a reminder that hunger doesn't take a season off, and that through caring hands and open hearts, God's love continues to be shared one family at a time.**

"I was hungry and you gave me food."

— Matthew 25:35



**... a seat at the table, where Wednesday night suppers bring people together for nourishment, conversation, and fellowship. It is a place where no one eats alone, relationships are strengthened, and community is built around shared meals and shared lives.**

"They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts."

— Acts 2:46

**... a knock on the door, as meals are delivered to our shut-in members along with conversation, prayer, and companionship. These visits remind our homebound friends that they are not forgotten, and that the church continues to surround them with care and concern.**

"Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ."

— Galatians 6:2



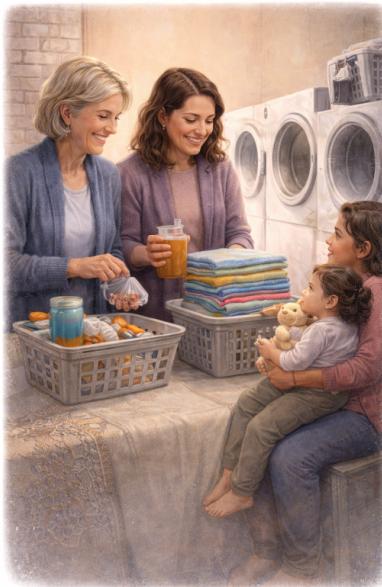


At Bethel,  
love looks  
like...

... **warmth in winter**, as coats are collected and shared with those in need. Through this simple act of generosity, comfort and care are extended, reminding others that they are seen, valued, and wrapped in compassion.

***"If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person?"***

— 1 John 3:17



... **clean clothes and fresh starts**, as support is given for laundry days that ease a quiet but heavy burden. By helping meet everyday needs, we offer dignity, encouragement, and hope—one small act making a meaningful difference.

***"Give, and it will be given to you."***

— Luke 6:38



... **welcoming the stranger**, as we collect items and offer support to International teachers in our county. Through hospitality and generosity, we help them feel valued, supported, and truly welcome within our community.

***"Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers."***

— Hebrews 13:2



Love is not just something we talk about at Bethel—it is something we live out together.



Through each act of service, every shared meal, and every prayer offered, God's love is made visible in our community. Thank you for being part of a church where love shows up in meaningful and lasting ways.

***"Let all that you do be done in love."*** — 1 Corinthians 16:14



Love is often easy to define, but harder to live out. We speak of love often, yet our words and actions do not always reflect it. At times, love is replaced by impatience, harshness, or silence when compassion is needed most. This is not a reminder meant to accuse, but an invitation to reflect.

Love is not unkind or dismissive.

Love is not gossip shared under the guise of concern.

Love is not insisting on being right instead of being understanding.

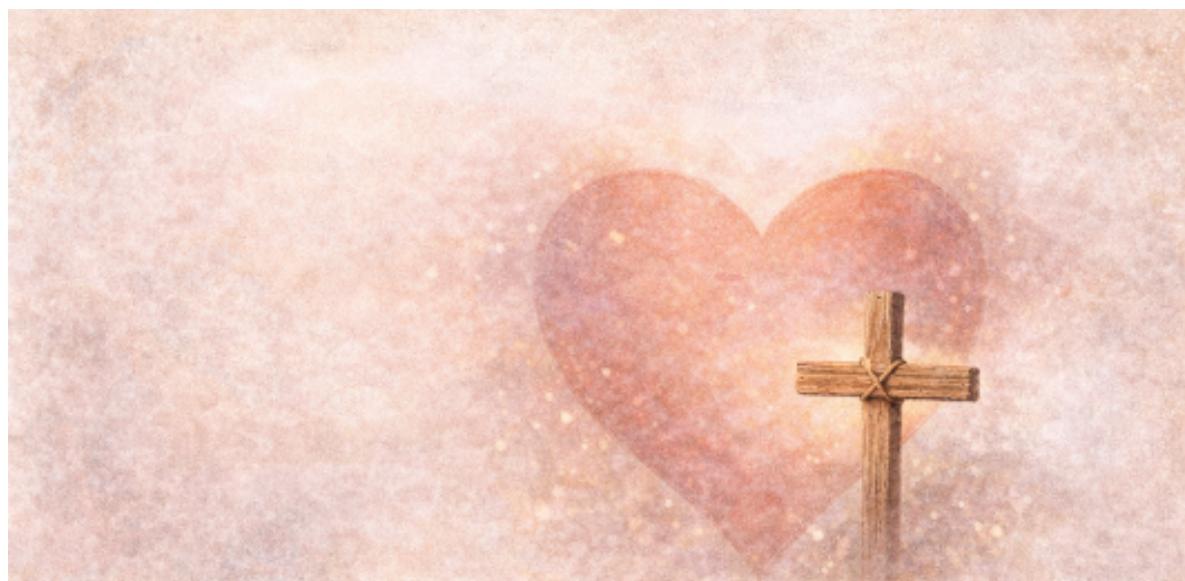
Love is not withholding grace when it is most needed.

Love is not convenient—it requires intention and humility.

"Love is patient; love is kind... it is not self-seeking."

— 1 Corinthians 13:4–5

As we reflect on what love is not, we are gently called back to what love truly is—patient, kind, and rooted in Christ.



## — *Love Lived Out* —

### A Word of Thanks to Joey McLaine

As we reflect on what love looks like—and what love is not—we are reminded that love is most clearly seen through faithfulness and service. Few embody that kind of love more fully than JOEY McLAINe.

Joey recently stepped down from his role as Chair of the Trustees, but his dedication to Bethel leaves a lasting mark. He was always available whenever a need arose, spending countless hours caring for this church and its facilities. From overseeing major projects like the replacement of our roof and addressing leaks in the steeple, to responding to late-night alarm calls, Joey consistently put Bethel first.

Many times, he was awakened in the middle of the night by an alarm and never hesitated to get out of bed and make the trip to the church to check things out. Even after suffering a serious head injury from a fall while doing just that, Joey's commitment did not waver.

Joey's service was not about recognition—it was about love. Love for this church. Love for its people. Love expressed through sacrifice, responsibility, and faithfulness.

*Thank you, Joey, for showing us what love lived out truly looks like.*

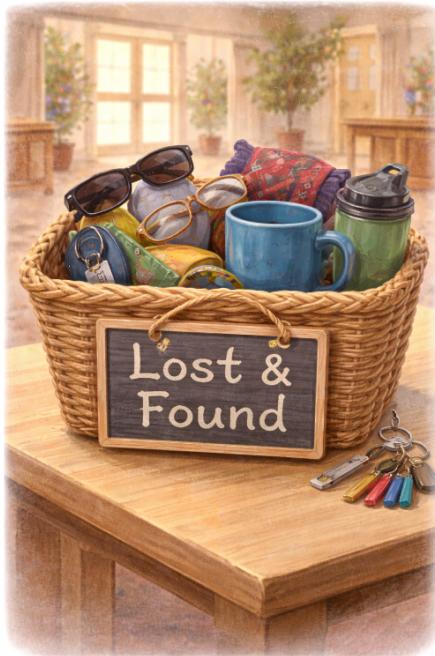


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<https://digitalcookie.girlscouts.org/scout/troup4914c376?fpkp=1>



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**The Lost & Found has a way of telling stories—a mug left behind after fellowship, a pair of glasses set down during conversation, a small reminder of moments shared. If something didn't make it home with you, it may be waiting in the church office.**



**March newsletter**