

# *The Open Door*

Bethel Presbyterian Church, PCUSA  
Kingston, TN

Volume 23, Issue 5

May 2026

*In this Issue:*

*Session Highlights*  
*HOME Focus Items*  
*May Birthdays*  
*Upcoming Events*  
*Music Updates*  
*Earth Care Update*

*Hands of Mercy*  
*Focus Foods*  
*for May*  
*Canned Meat (Tuna,*  
*Chicken, Spam)*  
*Collection via Youth pulling*  
*wagon Third Sundays*

## Overture for the General Assembly 2026

Important for Roane County farming. Benefits of supporting the farmers in our committee and in the Kingston Farmers Market. Rationale Summary: World food supplies depend upon improving the condition of soils worldwide, which have deteriorated under excessive use of tillage, chemical fertilizers, and pesticides. Modern science tells us that regenerative farming practices can build sustainable soil and enhance the nutritional benefits of food, while decreasing costs of inputs for farmers. But government policies and (some) farming culture are slow to support adoption of these better practices at sufficient scale. These farming

practices can enable more farmers to stay on their lands, enabling economic resurgence of rural communities, and that can provide careers for young people who face insecurities in an age of robots and artificial intelligence. Regenerated soil can sequester more carbon, helping to slow climate change, and it can store water for timely use by green plants, reducing the severity of both floods and droughts. As people of faith who honor Christ's teachings to feed the poor, people and institutions of PCUSA can help in discernment and implementation of scientific information that makes it possible to meet this responsibility.

--Elaine Steele,  
Kingston Lakeside Market

With 1 new great grandbaby here and another due any day, a "Nana Shower" was the perfect way to celebrate. It was such a fun party and we appreciate all the love, well wishes and gifts that we received. A special thanks to Jan who came up with the idea and Ms. Marge who gave a helping hand from afar. I've always said it takes a village, and our Bethel family is the best village around. Thanks again for always being there for us.  
Linda, Travis and our ever growing family.





## May Birthdays

- 1 Avery Parish
- 2 Jennifer Vandever
- 4 Bram Hyder
- 5 Carol Whitnall
- 6 Joe Coen
- 7 Samantha Rybka
- 8 Nidia Crocker
- 9 Rachel Dailey Gallaher
- 11 Erick Crocker
- 12 Celia Simon
- 16 Jim Hines
- 18 Linda Gerth
- 19 Maggie Dungan
- 20 John Carter
- 23 Chuck Bunch
- 24 Marianna Oonk  
Kalyani Purushotham
- 26 Mark Patton  
Jane Walsh
- 28 Robert Vickers
- 29 Donald Cross
- 30 Julie Bunch Barber  
Karen Hart
- 31 Vernon Law



## Session Highlights April 19, 2026

**Cynthia Wakefield did the Session devotion.**

**Worship Attendance:** the March 2026 average in-person Sanctuary attendance was 60 (actual head count).

**Christian Education** - The Easter Egg Hunt on Easter Sunday was a success, even though it was held indoors because of the weather. Jan Rybka has volunteered to teach Sunday School during the summer; Kathy Banker will assist her. Jan Rybka has also volunteered to be in charge of Bible School, which has been tentatively set for July 25th.

**Finance** - The Trustees have structured four Bethel CD accounts to mature at roughly 90 day intervals. This ensures that Bethel has some cash readily available for unanticipated costly repairs or equipment replacement for our building.

**Parish Life** - May 2 - Women's lunch at noon; May 3 - fellowship lunch and graduation - Sophia Crocker and Pedro Crocker; June 14 - Cook out at church; July - no luncheon; August 9 - Undie Sunday, blessing of the pack back, and kids friendly fellowship lunch.

**Personnel & Staff Support** - Regina Durham has done an outstanding job of reviewing and revising/simplifying the objectives and performance review sheets for the Bethel Staff.

**Property** - no date has been set for the Dedication Service for the plaques.

**Service** - Follow-up/ updates on Tech 4 All - 14 people have signed up for the computer class which began on April 20. The next Laundry Night will be on May 12. The 25th anniversary of Love Kitchen on 03/14/2026 went very well, with Bethel having a strong presence there. The grand opening of the new Family Promise Thrift Store (across the street from Kyker's Funeral Home) at 501 Morgan Street, NE in Harriman was on April 1, 2026. All 23 Garden Grants (\$40.00 per grant) have been mailed.

**Alf Rybka** will be the Commissioner to the May 12th Presbytery meeting at Washington Presbyterian Church in Corryton.

The next Session Meeting will be Sunday May 17, 2026,

Cathy McDowell  
Clerk of Session

Seeking Sextons  
for May, June, July  
Signup sheet in  
Gathering Area.

Remember



- Friday, May 1, World Walk as 1 Labyrinth Day, 1:00
- Sunday, May 3, Congregation Potluck Lunch & Senior Graduation Recognition
- Tuesday, May 12, Community Laundry Night, 6 to 8
- Sunday, May 17, Hands of Mercy food pantry collection – canned meat
- Sunday, May 17, Session meeting after worship
- Friday, May 22, “Kingston Recital Event” in sanctuary at 7:00



As John Knox Center enters into this new chapter, we are encouraged by the support this special place receives from everyone who has ever felt the presence of God here. We are grateful for the support of so many churches and families that have found renewal and inspiration in our lake waters and well-worn rocking chairs. We are grateful for the support of this presbytery, which continues to be an incredible partner in this shared ministry. OMT and the John Knox Center staff know we have been entrusted with the profound privilege of ensuring John Knox Center continues to be that refuge of creation set apart to ensure all can feel the presence of God and the love of Christ, now and in the generations to come. We covet your prayers as we continue in this work, and we are excited about all that will come from it. Indeed, a new thing is springing forth.

The Outdoor Ministry Team  
Presbytery of East Tennessee

We want to hear from you! In the coming weeks, the Outdoor Ministry Team will host in-person and virtual listening sessions about the past, present, and future of the John Knox Center. We want to hear your John Knox stories, your experiences before and during this time of transition, as well as your hopes for what you would like to see John Knox Center focus on going forward.

***The in-person meetings will be on May 3rd at Cleveland Presbyterian Church (433 N Ocoee St, Cleveland, TN 37311) and May 31st at Farragut Presbyterian Church (209 Jamestowne Blvd, Farragut, TN 37934), starting at 2pm.***

***The virtual meetings will be on April 23rd and May 7th, on ZOOM starting at 7pm. The link to the ZOOM is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83773640741>.***

# Ministry in Action Recital Series Update

The Recital Series of Kingston offers recitals and concerts in Bethel's historic sanctuary as a musical experience gift to the community. This cultural outlet provides free exposure to artists and instruments many may not have access to otherwise (Irish bands, bagpipes, bells, harp). Conversation in Bethel's Gathering Area after events affords engagement with the musicians as well as other enthusiasts. A season typically consists of three or four events during that year.

Concerts with talent from far and wide are held on different days of the week and times of day to make these musical offerings accessible to more people. Once upon a time, this was the Kingston Noontime Recital Series held on Fridays with

closer to home groups. For example, the Brownies and Bluegrass program was provided by the Roane State Bluegrass Band at Fort Southwest Point amphitheater in April 2021, Dianne Griffith's voice recital was held in November 2020, and Lyric Rivera's flute recitals were played between 2018 and 2022 with accompanist Dustin Lin.

Bethel contributes through a Budget line item under the Service Team (\$1000 for year 2026), Designated Funds (\$2500 on hand), and occasionally memorial resources (\$4300 Aileen Terry bequest). Various financial support started in 2022 and has blossomed to the current level. Individuals may give to Designated Funds at any time.

**2022:** Harp Encounter with

Amy Carty; Piano Virtuoso with Slade Trammell; Bach Flute Sonatas with Lyric Rivera.

**2023:** Four Leaf Peat, Tennessee's Premier Traditional Irish Band; RSCC Cool Breeze Jazz; Rebonica: Dueling Sopranos; Christmas Harp with Amy Carty

**2024:** Vox Grata women's chorus; Jazz and Jars; Christmas Bells of Bethel

**2025:** Trio voice recital featuring Luggie, Peavyhouse, and Rocklein accompanied by Trammell; An Afternoon Jazz Festival with saxophonists Patrick Langham, Caleb Sherrod, and Their Band.

**2026:** An Afternoon in the Highlands with traditional Scottish bagpiper Tracy Jenkins. What can you do? Your faithful giving to Bethel supports this program. Share news of this music gift with others.

Next Love Kitchen is June 13 at Rockwood First Presbyterian Church. Attendees love playing Bingo after eating, so we need Bingo prizes!

- Saturday, May 2, Women's Lunch, Fellowship Hall
- Sunday, May 3, Congregation Potluck Lunch & Senior Graduation Recognition
- Tuesday, May 12, Community Laundry Night, 6 to 8
- Sunday, May 17, Session meeting after worship
- Friday, May 22, "Kingston Recital Event" in sanctuary at 7:00 ·

Sunday, June 7, Bethel Arts Ministry, art show in the Gathering Area

- Saturday, June 13, Love Kitchen, Rockwood Presbyterian Church, eat at 4:00
- Sunday, June 14, Cook out at church
- Sunday, June 21, Session meeting after worship
- Sunday, July 19: No Session meeting in July, no potluck in July
- Saturday, July 25: Vacation Bible School, 9 to 1



## Fellowship Meals

### Upcoming Dates

- May 18-** fellowship lunch pot luck after church- Recognizing Levi Parish (University of Alabama and Ansley Langham (Emory University) granddaughter of Dianne and Gary Griffith
- June 8-** fellowship lunch pot luck after church
- July 13-** fellowship lunch pot luck after church
- August 10-** fellowship lunch pot luck after church- Back to School theme??



kingstonlakesidemarket.com

First day for 2026 was full of vendors and busy. Everyone was happy and ready to share. Lots of children and dogs made for excitement. Every Saturday morning!

## Music Makes your Heart Sing

On Friday, May 22, at 7:00pm, please join us in the sanctuary for a very elegant evening of music with the Trio Appassionata. With unsurpassed musicality and passion, violinist Christine Lau, cellist Amanda Parker, and pianist Slade Trammell transport your very soul to thrilling heights you didn't know you could reach! Such passionate playing of the Romantic composers Brahms and Arensky, with this level of technical finesse, I dare say, is something

Kingston has never ever experienced, nor is likely to again. We will take a moment to remember a special friend of the Recital Series during this concert, and a surprise guest artist will make an appearance on the program. Don't miss this very, very special event. Free and open to all, with a lovely reception following the program.

--Becky Price

How to Contact Bethel	
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	Bethel Treasurer <b>Linda</b> Brown betheltreasurer@bethelpcusa.org
	Clerk of Session <b>Cathy</b> McDowell sessionclerk@bethelpcusa.org
	Administrative & Accounting Assistant <b>Open Position</b> betheljobs@bethelpcusa.org
	

# Bethel Recertified as an Earth Care Congregation

Bethel has been recertified as an Earth Care Congregation for its environmental stewardship achievements in worship, education, facilities, and outreach actions in the life of the church. On Earth Day 2026, we recognize the great gift of God's creation and we celebrate all the ways Bethel participated toward the recertification in the last year.

"A Guide to Greening Presbyterian Churches" provides congregations with resources and instructions for becoming and recertifying as an Earth Care Congregation. You are invited to participate as individuals by completing similar actions in your home. This PCUSA guide document is attached to this email and contains a wealth of

material on understanding and striving for eco-justice. Buying from Eco-Palms for Palm Sunday, encouraging local gardening, recycling, and nurturing native plants on church grounds all count for ECC.

The Earth Care Congregation program is housed under the Presbyterian Hunger Program, in belief that hunger, sustainable living, poverty, and environmental destruction are linked areas of concern, constantly interacting with, and impacting one another. Earth Care Congregations are congregations that have committed to the "Earth Care Pledge" and accomplished a specific number of actions toward caring for God's Earth in four categories: wor-

ship, education, facilities, and outreach.

See a map of all the 2026 Earth Care Congregations here: <https://tinyurl.com/pcusaec-cmap>.

Bethel's contact is Elaine Steele. All ideas are welcome for 2026 activities.



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**Reminder:** Copies of each month's Open Door are accessible from Bethel's website: [bethelpcusa.org](http://bethelpcusa.org) Also, copies of each week's bulletin announcements and a link to Bethel's online directory. Print copies are available in the Gathering Area.



You are invited to a Ladies Luncheon on Saturday, May 2, at noon in Bethel's Fellowship Hall. The menu consists of chicken salad croissants, pimento cheese croissants, salad, fruit, pasta salad, and dessert for \$7. Invite a friend! Reservation deadline is Wednesday, April 29. Contact is Rebecca Pierce.

# Summer Sunday School Update

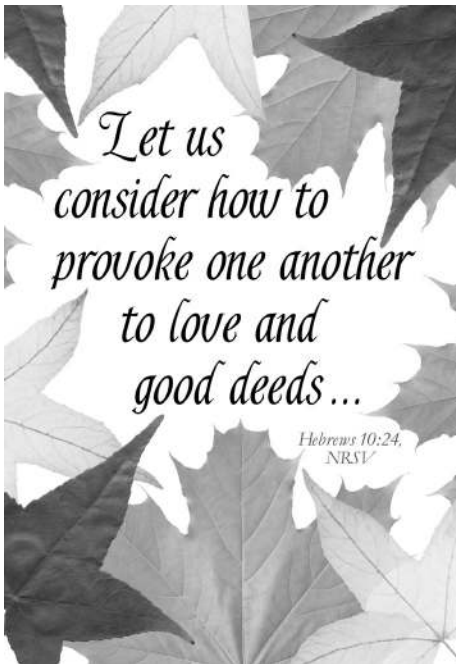


**Summer Sunday School** – Jan Rybka and Kathy Banker have volunteered to teach Sunday School during the summer from May 31st until August 2nd. The time will remain the same as regular Sunday School 9:30-10:30 and music at 10.30. The class will be inter-generational (K-6) and use games and activities to reinforce topics that have been learned throughout the regular Sunday School year.

**VBS** – Jan Rybka has also volunteered to be in charge of Vacation Bible School which has been tentatively set for Saturday, July 25th. The title is

“Community Garden” which will stress building community. The youth will review the creation story and Matthew 25. They will go to the Kingston Market, which is a community project that provide vegetables, fruits, meats, breads and goodies for sale. The youth will return to the church to plan and prepare their lunch. After lunch, they will participate in a Community Garden activity designed to build team skills and reinforce Matthew 25.

Kathy Banker and Suzanne Lukat Christian Education Team  
Co Moderators



## More Upcoming Events

- Sunday, June 7, Bethel Arts Ministry, art show in the Gathering Area
- Saturday, June 13, Love Kitchen, Rockwood Presbyterian Church, eat at 4:00
- Sunday, June 14, Cook out at church
- Sunday, June 21, Session meeting after worship
- Sunday, July 19: No Session meeting in July, no potluck in July
- Saturday, July 25: Vacation Bible School, 9 to 1
- Sunday, August 9: Undie Sunday & Kid-friendly Fellowship Lunch
- Sunday, August 16: Session meeting after worship

*Bethel Presbyterian Church*  
*203 South Kentucky Street*  
*Kingston, TN 37763*



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