Bethany
Presbyterian Church

Songs In A Strange Land: I. The Way Back Home

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2026
10:45AM

WWW.BETHANYPRESBY.ORG/SERMONS

To trust in Jesus
To love like Jesus
To grow in Jesus
To bring others to Jesus

WORSHIP THE LORD

WE GATHER

PRELUDE **"Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus"** **Bethany Staff Handbell Choir**
by R. H. Prichard; arr. James D. Kimball
cpr 1993, 2011 Jeffers Handbell Supply

WELCOME **Pastor Brian Janssen**

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING – Candle of Hope **Denise, Michael and Logan Leigh**

CALL TO WORSHIP *(Please Stand)* **Pastor Justin Miller**

Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel,
you who lead Joseph like a flock!
You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh.
Stir up your might, and come to save us!
Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved.
But let your hand be upon the one at your right hand, the one whom you made strong for yourself.
Then we will never turn back from you; give us life, and we will call on your name.
Restore us, O Lord God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved.

HYMN *(Please Stand)* **"Lift Up Your Heads Ye Mighty Gates"** **No. 176**

1 Lift up your heads, O mighty gates:
behold, the King of glory waits!
The King of kings is drawing near,
the Savior of the world is here.

2 Fling wide the portals of your heart:
make it a temple set apart
from earthly use for heaven's employ,
adorned with prayer and love and joy.

3 Redeemer, come! I open wide
my heart to you: here, Lord, abide!
Let me your inner presence feel:
your grace and love in me reveal.

4 So come, my Sovereign, enter in!
Let my new and nobler life begin!
Your Holy Spirit guides us on,
until the glorious crown be won.

CALL TO CONFESSION *(Please be seated)* **Pastor Justin Miller**

PRAYER OF CONFESSION **Pastor Justin Miller**

Gracious God, we confess that we do not always wait for you with patience or hope. We become distracted by the demands of daily life, anxious about the future, and discouraged when the world does not reflect the goodness you promise. We grow comfortable with things as they are rather than longing for the restoration you desire. Forgive us, Lord. Turn our hearts toward you and help us live faithfully in this season of waiting. Remind us that we are the work of your hands, held in your grace and shaped by your love. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON **Pastor Justin Miller**

Hear the good news: The God who calls us to return is the same God who comes to us in mercy. God does not abandon the work of creation or turn away from those who seek forgiveness. In Jesus Christ, God draws near to us, offering grace, restoration, and new life. Whatever the past has held, we can face the days ahead with hope, trusting in the faithfulness of God who makes all things new. **Hallelujah! Thanks be to God!**

RESPONSE *(Please Stand)* **"Gloria Patri"**

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Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

PASSING OF THE PEACE **Pastor Justin Miller**

Since God has forgiven us in Christ. Let us be at peace with one another. The peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all…**and also with you.**

The kids can come forward for the Children's Sermon as you all take a moment to share the peace of Christ with those around you.

WE LISTEN

CHILDRENS SERMON **Debby Hayes**

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION **Pastor Justin Miller**

FIRST READING **Matthew 24:36-44** **Pastor Justin Miller**

But about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. For as in the days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so, too, will be the coming of the Son of Man. Then two will be in the field; one will be taken, and one will be left. Two women will be grinding meal together; one will be taken, and one will be left. Keep awake, therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. Therefore, you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

SECOND READING **Isaiah 64:1-9** **Pastor Brian Janssen**

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence— as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil— to make your name known to your adversaries, so that the nations might tremble at your presence! When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down; the mountains quaked at your presence. From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him. You meet those who gladly do right, those who remember you in your ways. But you were angry, and we sinned; because you hid yourself we transgressed. We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. There is no

one who calls on your name or attempts to take hold of you, for you have hidden your face from us and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity. Yet, O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. Do not be exceedingly angry, O Lord, and do not remember iniquity forever. Now consider, we are all your people.

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord. **People: Thanks be to God.**

SERMON **Songs In A Strange Land: I. The Way Back Home** **Pastor Brian Janssen**

WE RESPOND

THE PRESENTATION OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

THE OFFERTORY **"Creation Will Be at Peace"** **Bethany Choir**

by J. Paul Williams and Anna Laura Page
cpr 1992 Jubilate Music Group, LLC

THE RESPONSE *(Please Stand)* **"Doxology"**

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Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly hosts; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; Amen.

THE PRAYER OF DEDICATION *(Please Stand)*

PASTORAL PRAYER AND THE LORD'S PRAYER **Pastor Brian Janssen**

We pray this in the name of our Savior, who taught us to pray, saying… Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

WE ARE SENT

HYMN *(Please Stand)* **“ Come Thou Long Expected Jesus”** **No. 153**

1 Come, thou long expected Jesus, born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in thee.
Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art;
dear Desire of every nation, Joy of every longing heart.

2 Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a king,
born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.
By thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all sufficient merit raise us to thy glorious throne.

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE **"Fiesta"** **Bethany Staff Handbell Choir**
by John C. Dare cpr. 2006 John Dare Press

WELCOME TO BETHANY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

We are delighted to have you in worship with us this morning!

FOR OUR FAMILIES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN - A Nursery Room is across the hall from the pulpit side of the Sanctuary. It is equipped with a speaker system from the sanctuary so any parent(s) who wishes to stay with their child(ren) in the nursery can hear the worship service. **A Cry Room** is at the rear of the Sanctuary – entry is through a door in the Narthex near the usher's table. *We encourage you to use these rooms as needed.* **Worship Bags** are available for children to use during the worship service. The bags can be found at the Usher's Desk. **Sound amplification devices** are available to those who might need or want to use them. Our ushers are available to help with any needs that you have during worship.

NEWS FOR THE BODY OF CHRIST

Today's ushers are Jim and Judy Davidson, Sue Nagy and Karl Salvini.

The flowers this morning are presented to the Glory of God by Janet Jones in loving memory of her husband, Jim Jones.

A special Thank You to the Bethany Staff Handbell Choir for sharing their talents with us today!

NEW CHURCH DIRECTORY - UPDATE YOUR INFO – If any of your information has changed, please fill out one of the Update Cards located in the Welcome Center as we are preparing for a **new Church Directory**. Place completed card in the basket in the Welcome Center or in the offering plate by **TODAY November 29th, 2026.**

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS – Please see that insert in this bulletin to place your order for Christmas Poinsettias, which will remain on display in the Sanctuary until the Christmas Eve services. Your order form and money can be placed in the offering plate or mailed to the church. Make check payable to Bethany Presbyterian Church with "poinsettia" in the memo line. The cost is $9.00/ea and they are available in Red, White, and Pink. **Deadline for orders is TODAY Sunday, November 29th**. Additional forms are at the end of the pews and also on the table in the Welcome Center.

PROGRAM AND EVENT NEWS

CHILDREN'S WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES DURING THE 10:45 SERVICE
Please note that we have the following Opportunities for children during the 10:45 Service:

Worship and Wonder for Children ages 3 to 2nd grade where children learn more about worshipping God. They are starting the year with the story of the Good Shepherd and then continuing stories of Creation and the Old Testament.

Faith and Friends for children in 3rd through 5th grade where children will explore lessons from the Bible in Life Curriculum through interactive learning, meaningful discussion and hands-on-activities. The Scripture lesson is the same as Sunday School; however, the lesson content and activities are different.

PRESCHOOL REGISTRATION – Preschool registration for the 2026/2027 school year is still open on our website! Contact Danielle Gioia at Gioia.preschool@gmail.com with any questions! We are so excited for the coming year!

ADULT CHIMES AND HANDBELL TREE -We will meet on **Wednesday, December 2nd at 12:30pm** in the choir room. If you are interested in learning to ring, ding, hit, or hammer a joyful noise in worship - please message Nadina for more information about joining us this season at music@bethanypresby.org

ADVENT READING AND DEVOTIONALS- In addition to the Booklet with Home Advent Service Readings, Devotionals and Readings for Kids, Teens, Seniors and/or Anyone are located on a table in the Welcome Center. Please take a copy of one or more of them to celebrate this special Season of Advent.

ANGEL CHRISTMAS TREE - Please keep your eyes open soon for the ANGEL CHRISTMAS TREE for the "Bridgeville Food Bank Children" that will once again be in our WELCOME CENTER. Be sure and take an Angel or maybe even two as soon as you see our tree!

BETHANY DEACONS BACKPACK DRIVE - The Bethany Deacons are hosting another backpack drive to gift to the Southwood Boy's home. These bags will be gifted to every new admission throughout the 2027 year. **We will be collecting donations until TODAY, November 29th.** You will be supporting the purchasing of the backpack and the essential items we provided them with: socks, towels, toothbrush, shampoo, a Bible and more! All items are purchased and put together by the Deacons. Cash or checks made out to Bethany Presbyterian Church with **"backpack"** in the memo are accepted. You can drop an envelope with cash or a check in the collection bag on the poster in the Welcome Center, place it in the offering collection plate or give to Edgar Shaffer.

ANGELS FOR THE SOUTHWOOD BOYS – Thank you to everyone who has taken a gift tag. We still have 5 left so please see Laura Dugan or stop at the table in the Welcome Center if you would like to take one. Many of the Boys have never received a Christmas Gift so we hope to help them have a very Merry Christmas. A bin will be located in the Welcome Center for Gift Collection and they should be returned unwrapped (can be in gift bags) by **Sunday, December, 13th**.

SECRET SISTERS 2027- Although the date has passed for signing up to be a Secret Sister in 2027, we wanted to make sure that we didn't miss anyone; therefore if you still would like to be a Secret Sister next year and forgot to fill out the questionnaire, we are extending the Sign-up until **TODAY Sunday, November 29th**. The forms are located on the table in the Welcome Center or you can contact Judy Davidson, Pat Mishizen or Laura Dugan for a copy. Completed forms can be placed in the Secret Sister Box in the Office Workroom.

BETHANY NATIVITY "LIGHT UP " NIGHT- This **Thursday, December 3rd at 6:30pm**, BLOOM will hold a **"LIGHT UP"** Night at the Bethany Nativity located on the front lawn of the Church. Please join us for some spiritual words and caroling at the nativity with our Bloom Musicians and Singers. We also invite you to bring your favorite Christmas Cookies or Dessert for some socializing with hot drinks and additional music after the caroling.

CHRISTMAS CANTATA - **Cantata Sunday is December 13**, and the Bethany Choir is very excited to share this glorious and inspirational Cantata with you! From the publisher's website: "*God Is With Us* is traditional in style, but features innovative twists and turns. It combines exciting and moving classical music by Faure, Beethoven, Vivaldi, Tchaikovsky and Billings with some of the world's most loved Christmas Carols. It begins with the awe-filled simplicity of Gregorian Chant and concludes with a fun, festive journey through favorite carols with a Nutcracker flair. And in between, one experiences indescribably beautiful music, worthy of the celebration of such a glorious and miraculous event." (alfred.com)

We have had so much fun working on our Vivaldi Glorias, Joy to the Worlds, and Nutcracker inspired selections, and we know you will all BOTH enjoy and be uplifted by this Cantata that fills our hearts with worship! Please join us at the 8:15 for excerpts of the Cantata, at the 10:45 for the full Cantata, or log in online at our website to listen if you aren't able to attend.

SECRET SISTER NEWS - The Secret Sister Reveal Luncheon for the 2026 Secret Sisters will be held on **Sunday, December 6th at 12:00pm** in the Fellowship Hall. Please plan to attend to discover who your Secret Sister was this year. Contact Judy Davidson at 412-343-7530 or Pat Mishizen at 412-417-3541 if you have any questions.

THE INTERSECTION – A BIBLE STUDY FOR PARENTS – Join us for an Informational Gathering next **Sunday, December 6th, between the 8:15 and 10:45 worship services in the Library**. Parenting brings plenty of questions, joys, challenges, and opportunities for growth, including in our own faith. Join Pastor Justin for an informal gathering to learn more about a Bible study for parents at Bethany. We are tentatively planning to start this Bible study at the beginning of next year as a new Sunday school class. This gathering is an opportunity to connect with other parents, share what you might hope to gain from a Bible study, and help shape its direction. Whether you're looking to deepen your own faith, explore Scripture alongside others in a similar season of life, or reflect on what it means to nurture faith in your children, we'd love to hear from you. No commitment is necessary at this stage, just come share your thoughts and help us imagine what this group could become!

LAURELVILLE MUD WEEKEND - is quickly approaching! All 6th - 12th grade students are invited to come to LMW **December 11th - 13th**. There are information packets on the Ministry Table in the Welcome Center. It is a great weekend of fun, high-energy worship, messages, discussions, and of course the MUD! Cost is $150 ($30 deposit to save your spot, then $120 remaining balance to be paid by December 1st.)

FLOWERS – Please see the sign-up sheet in the Welcome Center for 2027 for sanctuary flowers. The cost is $40 per vase. Please be sure to put “Flowers” in the memo line on your check made out to Bethany Presbyterian Church, which can be placed in the offering plate or mailed to the Church Office. The Church Office will give you a call the week prior to the date you sign up for to confirm the flower and color you prefer along with any dedication information you would like to appear in the bulletin.

URBAN IMPACT EVENT- Urban Impact is one of Bethany’s Mission Partners and **this Friday, December 4th and Saturday, December 5th** they will hold their 17th annual production of **Light the Night**, a FREE Christmas celebration at Christ Church at Grove Farm, 249 Duff Road in Sewickley, Pa. If you would be interested in attending, this event is free for the whole family to enjoy, but they kindly ask for you to register on their website to help them plan ahead. Due to a set number of seats, space is limited. Registered attendees will get priority access into the show. Walk-ins are welcome, however, we cannot guarantee seating in the sanctuary and may need to direct non-registered attendees to the overflow room. The show features students from the Urban Impact Foundation Performing Arts Academy telling the story of Christ’s birth and the hope that faith in Jesus Christ can bring to humankind. See how this story of hope, wonder, and redemption still transforms lives today.

CHURCH FINANCES AS OF NOVEMBER 22, 2026

Thank you for your continued support.

	2026 YTD ($)	2025 YTD ($)	+/- ($)
Contributions*	$ 512,540	$474,198	$38,342
General Fund Subsidies (Transfers)	332,935	310,015	22,920
Charitable Remainder Trust Income	27,237	-	27,237
Investment Income **	13,321	13,609	(288)
Total General Fund Income	$ 886,033	$ 797,822	$88,211
Year to Date Budget	822,120		
+/- Budget	$ 63,913		

*For purposes of this report, any prepaid pledges have been spread over 52 weeks.

** Investment income is updated monthly upon receipt of investment statements.

A friendly reminder from the Stewardship team, please write the amount of your giving on the outside of the envelope when turning in your offering. This helps make the job of those counting much easier.

QR Code for online giving

November Special Offering - Membership Support Fund

The special offering envelope for November supports the Membership Support Fund. This fund benefits Bethany members in need of assistance. Online giver? Not receiving envelopes? You can still donate to this special offering either by selecting "Membership Support" in the online giving portal or noting that your donation is for the Membership Support Fund on your check or a pew envelope.

Thank you for your contribution to Bethany members in need through the Membership Support Fund!

December Special Offering – Christmas Joy / Mission Flights International

The special offering envelope for December supports the Christmas Joy offering. 50% of this collection supports the Presbytery Christmas Joy offering which helps current and retired church workers in their time of need and develops our future leaders at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges.

The other 50% will support Missionary Flights International (MFI), a faith based nonprofit mission aviation organization operating flights between Florida and areas of need in the Caribbean. MFI's mission is to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ in partnership with Bible-centered missions by providing reliable transportation and logistics service. MFI flies missionaries, their families, and household effects to and from the field. MFI also transports work teams and their equipment for short-term ministry. MFI receives mail and cargo for mission work that the staff handles with care and delivers as soon as possible.

WEEK AHEAD

Sunday, November 29
First Sunday of Advent
8:15AM – Worship
9:30AM - Sunday School
10:45AM – Worship
NO Adult and Youth Ukulele Practice
NO YOUTH GROUP TONIGHT

Monday, November 30
4:30PM - Body Carpenter Workout
6:30PM - Men's Huddle Group

Tuesday, December 1
10:00AM – Additional Choir Rehearsal
6:00PM Session/Deacons Meeting Optional Dinner
7:00PM Session/Deacons Meeting
7:00PM – ALANON

Wednesday, December 2
9:30AM – Staff Handbell Choir
10:00AM – Fellowship of Prayer
11:30AM – Knitters
12:00PM – Golden Oldies Staff Meeting
12:30PM – Adult Chime Practice
6:45PM – Choir Practice

Thursday, December 3
12:00PM – Rotary
6:30PM – Bloom Light Up Night
7:00PM – Dartball
7:00PM – AA

Friday, December 4

Saturday, December 5

Sunday, December 6
Second Sunday of Advent / Communion
8:15AM – Worship
9:30AM - Sunday School
10:45AM – Worship
Adult and Youth Ukulele Practice after 10:45 Service
12:00PM – Secret Sisters Reveal Lunch
12:00PM – Food Bank Kids Christmas Party
5:00PM – BYG Group Night