



Join the Story.

*Celebrating History - Honoring Community
Inspiring the Future*

Welcome!

Bethel is preparing to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. All Bethel residents and organizations are invited to contribute their events to our anniversary calendar. We invite you to be part of our story.

Guidelines for the Program Submission Document

All Connecticut programs, from celebratory to exploratory to commemorative, are welcome. Please work to make everyone from across Bethel's communities feel welcome. To achieve this, all projects, events, and programs require mutual respect and empathy, and all activities should be accessible to as many people as possible. Please consider how you will attempt to accommodate socioeconomic, physical, language, and other potential barriers to access.

We look forward to receiving your submission.
The Bethel 250 Commission

Bethel Theme: "Our American Story"

Bethel's theme aims to showcase as many Bethel stories as possible. Storytelling can take many forms; it is not limited to a person speaking to the crowd. How might you use the power of storytelling in your event?

Eligibility Criteria:

1. Any program that ties to Declaration of Independence is eligible for consideration for inclusion in the Bethel 250 calendar and promotion.
2. Events should tie to our theme
3. Events are not limited to the Revolutionary War period.
4. It must connect to Bethel in some way – even if we were still part of Danbury.
5. Your event can relate to events **after** the nation's founding. Bethel did not exist as a town in 1776, so in addition to the events associated with the Declaration, how have Bethel citizens continued to our society growing into the principles of the document ever since? Some examples:

- Moments when groups gained suffrage, civil rights, or other political recognition.
- Local innovations and contributions that reflect Declaration ideals
- Community efforts to expand liberty, equality, or participation

Some ideas and questions to spark your imagination from the Federal and State commissions.

- We can pause and reflect on the past.
- Events can connect the past to the future – what will be our legacy in 250 years?
- Honor the contributions of individuals who built this country/state/town
- Highlight the spirit of innovation
- Imagine what the next 250 years might look like for future generations
- What/Whose stories remain untold in our community?
- How can and has business/ industry affected our society?
- What role did our community play in the events leading up to and following the signing of the Declaration of Independence? (even though we were in Danbury)
- What makes us unique?
- What does the pursuit of happiness mean?
- How did the natural environment shape our community?
- How has our understanding our history evolved over time?
- What is History? How does it differ from “the past”
- Who are our town’s knowledge keepers and how can we share their stories/insights?
- What are the rights *and responsibilities* of being an American citizen? How can understanding the origins of our government inform civic engagement today?
- How do we determine who is an American?
- What is a representative democracy? How do we encourage or discourage participation and representation?
- How have our founding documents changed in the last 250 years? Why? Are there new documents we should add?
- Communication happens with more than words. It can be art, theatre, games, fashion, puzzles, activities, anything you can think of!