

# Bedford Presbyterian Church

105 West Main Street, Bedford, Virginia  
From 1844 to 2020 (176 Years)



## Week of April 26<sup>th</sup>

For the next several weeks we will be sending out a combination of the newsletter and the bulletin to keep you up to date on announcements, prayers, needs and scheduled activities.

Included will be the usual newsletter information along with prayers, scripture and a sermon.

We hope that you can utilize this format to keep up to date while being away from actual services, meetings, activities and watching the online sermon.

Please be in prayer for the end of the coronavirus and healing for those affected by it.



Bedford Presbyterian Church  
serving Christ since 1844

*A Biblically Guided Christian Community,*

*Loving God, Loving Others,*

*Serving the World & Growing Disciples*

**If you are watching the online service this Sunday morning,  
please have this bulletin ready to follow the service.**

## **THE APPROACH TO GOD**

**Prelude**

*"Llanfair"*

***On this Third Sunday of Easter, may the Peace of Christ be with you***

### ***Welcome and Announcements***

- Here is the good news; your purchases at Kroger and Amazon Smile will now return a percentage back to Bedford Presbyterian as contributions, but you must register for us to receive these benefits, more information is in the bulletin. We hope to soon be registered with Food Lion.
- Additional announcements are on the last three pages.

### ***Let Us Join Together for the Call to Worship:***

One: The risen Christ calls us to this place.

**All: As Easter people we come to worship God.**

One: The victorious Christ calls us to be reconciled to God

**All: As Easter people we boldly approach the throne of grace.**

One: The God of new life calls us to live for Him.

**All: As Easter people we would share God's life with the world. In the name of the risen Christ, let us worship God.**

**Hymn:**

*"Lift High the Cross"*

### ***Together Let Us Pray the Prayer of Confession:***

We come before You, O God, confessing the ways we have failed to live as Easter people this week. You know our hearts; You know our good intentions and our struggles to live as faithful people. We try, sometimes we succeed and sometimes we fail. Help us to be as gentle with ourselves as You are and may we realize the true depth of Your gracious love. Amen.

### ***Hear now our Assurance of Pardon:*** (Psalm 103: 8, 10-12)

The Lord is compassionate and gracious; slow to anger and abounding in loving kindness. He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is His loving kindness toward those who fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.

(response)

One: Friends, believe God's Good News

**All: Through Jesus Christ, God's Son, our Savior, we have been forgiven**

### ***Children's Sermon***

**Scripture:** Genesis 16: 1-15

*(For additional reference see: Galatians 4: 21-31)*

## **Worship Song**

*“You Are the God Who Sees”*

### **Sermon:**

**Great or Small, Right or Wrong, God Still Sees and God Still Cares.** Genesis 16:1-15

Gratefully adopted and adapted from “Learning To Wait On God” by David Owens @ SermonCentral.com

How many of you like waiting for things?

How many of you remember the classic 1979 television commercials that showed people waiting for thick, rich Heinz Ketchup to ooze out of the bottle in slow motion while the Carly Simon sang in the background, “anticipation, you’re making me wait”.

An article in Time.com once noted that ketchup flows out of a glass bottle at a rate of .028 miles per hour. I broke that down to the more graspable distance of ½ an inch a second – That is really slow, isn’t it! Of course the catsup speed problem was solved with the advent of the squirt bottle which also transformed this bright red condiment into a handy food weapon. But nothing lasts forever and with plastic now determined bad for the environment we may have to return to glass and to once again impatiently waiting for a perfectly sauced hamburger.

None of us like to wait, do we? We don’t like to wait for ketchup. We don’t like to wait at the checkout line or the red light and we don’t like to wait on God. That’s when some people take matters into their own hands and try to hurry God along, which usually only makes things worse; at least that’s what happened to Abraham and Sarah.

Back at the age of 75, God had promised Abraham and Sarah that a nation of descendants would come from his own DNA; his own flesh and blood. So they waited patiently for their first child...and they waited...and waited... For ten long years, they waited with no child.

Then they decided to help God out. Let’s pick up their story in Genesis 16.

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Now Sarai, Abram’s wife, bore him no children. She had an Egyptian slave-girl whose name was Hagar, and Sarai said to Abram, ‘You see that the Lord has prevented me from bearing children; go in to my slave-girl; it may be that I shall obtain children by her.’ ... So Sarai, Abram’s wife, took Hagar the Egyptian, her slave-girl, and gave her to her husband Abram as a wife (Gen. 16:1-3)

Notice how verse 1 states that Sarai, Abram’s wife bore him no children. Fairly or unfairly, can you sense who was feeling the greatest pressure...who was feeling like it was her fault that no child had come into their home?

Since God’s specific promise was that an heir would come from Abraham’s own body, and nothing so far had been said about Sarah, she came up with the proposal, that Abraham take Hagar as a second wife.

Practices of bigamy and surrogacy are once again challenging our 21st century ideas of what makes a proper family and certainly our Christian sense of morality. Yet, in the Middle Eastern culture of 4000 years ago, this solution to Sarah's barrenness was quite acceptable. It was even included in some ancient prenuptial agreements that the husband of a childless wife could take her servant as a second wife and any child born of that second union to be regarded as the first wife's child.

So, while what Sarah had proposed was legal, even considered praiseworthy by cultural standards, was it the right thing to do and should they have known better?

I think they should have; both according to their own instincts – since they had not already tried this in their previous 60 years of marriage – and according to Biblical principles, and as proved by the next 15 years of family discord that resulted from their decision.

Why should they have known better? As indicated by the very first commandment given in our Bible, which was later enforced both by Mosaic law and the teachings of Jesus, **this need for a one husband, one wife relationship apparently is built into our psyche. Any other variation seems destined to cause problems as proved by the multiple cautionary tales included in our Bible from Abraham, to Jacob, to David, to Solomon, of men who in taking multiple wives ended up compromising their family peace and in some instances even their relationship with God.**

(Genesis 1:24, Exodus 20:14, Matthew 5:32).

Today, having the benefit of knowing how things unfolded, it's easy to see what Abraham and Sarah should have done. Their biggest problem was that apparently neither Abraham nor Sarah sought the Lord's input. Over and over again in Scripture when the persons involved inquired of the Lord and waited for God's reply, things went much better for them.

How much better things would have been had Abraham gone out under the stars and said, "Lord, Sarah and I are getting older with each passing year, and it is getting harder to wait for the promised child. So we have come up with a possible solution and are wondering what you think about this plan..." Unfortunately, Abraham didn't inquire of the Lord before he and Sarah proceeded with their own plan. Let's see what happened...

Abraham went in to Hagar, and she conceived; and when she saw that she had conceived, she looked with contempt on her mistress. Then Sarai said to Abram, 'May the wrong done to me be on you! I gave my slave-girl to your embrace, and when she saw that she had conceived, she looked on me with contempt. May the Lord judge between you and me!' Abram said to Sarai, 'Your slave-girl is in your power; do to her as you please.' Then Sarai dealt harshly with her, until Hagar ran away. (15:4-6).

Abraham and Sarah's decision to take God's promise into their own hands didn't take long to unravel. The plan for Hagar to become a second wife backfired; rather than bringing joy to the household, it caused everyone to start turning against each other.

No matter how well intentioned, the consequences of sin almost always causes relationships to suffer and it can get ugly fast! In this case generosity, humility and forgiveness quickly exited the entire household to be replaced by jealousy, cowardice and cruelty.

- Hagar despised Sarah,
- Sarah blamed Abraham.
- Abraham then relinquished his leadership in the matter allowing Sarah to abuse Hagar until she ran away.

When Hagar realized she was pregnant, it wasn't just her belly that swelled, her ego did as well. Who could blame her? All Hagar had ever been was a slave, a piece of property to be used by others. When she was first gifted by Pharaoh to Sarah as part of the bride price, Hagar had expected to live an easy life in the palace serving as a genteel handmaid to a noble lady. Instead, she ended up being carried away from her home, to live in a shepherd's tent out in the wilderness, spending her days cooking for an increasingly old man and woman.

Now being offered as a wife to Abraham, according to current custom Hagar should no longer have been treated like a slave; so she couldn't help but thinking that both her status and future prospects were greatly improved; as the mother of Abraham's future heir... with time and patience all this would belong to her son and for her, life might finally be easy.

We are not told of Hagar's specific actions or words, but she must have been doing that which clearly indicated her new found aspirations along with her contempt for Sarah.

Sarah, now experiencing disrespect from her former slave, while also observing Abraham's apparent pleasure with his pregnant second wife, rather than owning up to her own mistake, she then blamed everything on her husband. Declaring that this was Abraham's fault, Sarah - too late – called for the Lord to enter into judgment between the two of them. But what could God now do to relieve the problem which these two had brought upon themselves.

In response, rather than protecting his second wife as he should have, Abraham caved in to Sarah's anger sending Hagar back into a life slavery under her now very jealous mistress who then mistreated her until she ran away.

When the Angel of the Lord found Hagar, she had already been gone for a week or more, having walked some 50 miles down a wilderness road – headed back to Egypt. Apparently no one had even noticed when Hagar went missing, or if they had noticed, they didn't care.

In many ways, Hagar was the innocent victim of Abraham and Sarah's lack of faith and now their cruelty. She hadn't asked for any of this – Hagar the slave was simply doing her servant work around the house one minute and the next thing she knew she was wearing a wedding dress and being led away to the marriage tent by an 86 year-old groom.

How sad that this supposed God honoring family was apparently unconcerned about the life and safety of this young, pregnant woman and the desperation they had driven her to, now walking alone through the wilderness with its predators and harsh conditions.

While Abraham and Sarah didn't seem to care about Hagar, God certainly did, and that is perhaps the most important lesson we need to learn from this story. Whether great or small, whether right or wrong, God still sees us and cares for us. Even God's heroes must answer for their misdeeds and there is no one too small, too insignificant to be beneath God's care and concern. The last portion of this chapter, shows how, all along God had also been watching out for this young pregnant slave and her future son and He sent His own personal messenger down to assure her of this.

Apparently Hagar realized that she wasn't speaking to just any stranger when the Angel of the Lord challenged her: "*Hagar, servant of Sarai, where have you come from, and where are you going?*" She replied honestly, "I'm running away from my mistress Sarai," (vs. 8). Then with God's assurance that her own offspring now shared in His covenant promises to Abraham - that one day Ishmael's heirs would also be an equally countless multitude – the angel of the Lord sent her back to submit to Sarah.

While we might wonder at the wisdom of this arrangement, apparently it was the safest and best circumstance for Hagar to continue living in Abraham's tents until such time when God would reveal His next plans for her and her son's life. Abraham must have "manned" up enough to somewhat shield her and Ishmael from Sarah's wrath because Abraham obviously loved and cared for Ishmael; at one point even asking God to make this child his rightful heir (Genesis 17:18).

But Hagar must certainly have wondered at the rest of the prophecy concerning her future son.

*The angel of the Lord said to her, 'you shall bear a son and you shall call him Ishmael, for the Lord has given heed to your affliction. He shall be a wild ass of a man, with his hand against everyone, and everyone's hand against him; and he shall live at odds with all his kin.'* (vs.9-12)

Ishmael, the name Hagar was instructed to give to her son meant, "God hears," because the Lord had heard her cry of distress. This name would also be her constant reminder that the God of Abraham was also watching after her and her son. In awe of her experience she named the well where the angel had met her, "God who sees me." So, Hagar returned to the tents of her former husband and mistress where Ishmael was born.

As promised her son was a troublesome thorn in Abraham and Sarah's side for the next 15 years of his young life and thereafter for all of Abraham's future heirs up until this present day. As Christian speaker Randy Harris remarked, "When God first heard Sarah's idea, I'm guessing he shook his head and said, 'Well, there goes peace in the Middle East for the next 5000 years!'"

Interestingly The Koran, the holy book of the Muslim faith, maintains that it was Ishmael who should have received Abraham's blessing only to have it stolen by Isaac; which according to custom was the way it should have been. But as He has often proved in other Biblical stories, God does not seem at all bound to follow custom, especially when He can more clearly see what is in one's heart.

Abraham was 87 years old when Ishmael was born. He and Sarah will now have to wait another 13 years before God fulfills His promise of birthing a full heir to the both of them. We know nothing of these intervening years but they probably continued to be difficult ones for Hagar and Ishmael, because soon after Isaac is born, Sarah will demand “that this slave woman and her [now 15 year old] son” be cast out of their tent. This time God counseled Abraham to comply with Sarah’s demands promising that Ishmael as an offspring of Abraham would also grow into a nation (Genesis 21:8-14)

Once again the Angel of the Lord then rescued Hagar and Ishmael from a desperate situation, settling them in the wilderness where Ishmael grew into manhood to fulfill the troublesome prophecy made about him.

There is at least this redemptive end to the story of Abraham, Sarah, Hagar, and Ishmael. According to scripture, when Abraham finally died at the age of 175 years, both of his sons Isaac and Ishmael together buried him in the cave beside his beloved wife Sarah. (Gen. 25:9)

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So what lessons can we learn about our relationship with God from this story of Abraham, Sarah and Hagar?

One lesson we learn from this episode in Abraham’s life is to...

Ask God for direction. He doesn’t expect us to do it on our own.

We must not proceed in any decision or direction until we have adequately laid it before the Lord and awaited God’s input. The old saying, “It is easier to ask for forgiveness than permission” is not a good approach to following after God. **Hudson Taylor** once said, “**God’s work, done in God’s way, will never lack God’s supply.**”

One of the fundamental problems with Abraham and Sarah’s plan was that it grew from a mindset which said: “God has shown me the goal but it’s up to me to figure out how to reach that goal. God isn’t getting the job done, so he needs me to do it.”

God had a plan for fulfilling His promise, and His plan was for a child to be born from Abraham through Sarah, not Hagar, and it would be born at a time when it was an obvious miracle, given by God and evident to all who witnessed it.

So when our lives are not as fruitful as we think they should be or we are not accomplishing as much as we think we should, or the church is not growing the way we expect it, then we try to ramp up our effort – more committee meetings, bigger fundraising drives, more outreach programs – let’s get going people – it all depends on us!

Do you see how wrong that is? The Bible teaches that unless the Lord builds the house the laborers work in vain (Psalm 127:1). Our task as Christians is to faithfully follow God’s already

revealed will for our lives and then when God wants us for a specific task, we will be ready for Him to show it to us.

In the application portion of his letter, Paul pleaded with the Roman Christians to do just this.

*I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.*

Romans 12: 1-2

A second lesson we learn from this episode is...

**not to take pride in ourselves, but to humbly consider how we might use God's gifts to serve others.**

Take Hagar for an example – her initial arrogance was shameful. In her defense, she probably did not know the God of Abraham until He introduced Himself to her. She acted the way we often act when we forget that everything comes from the Lord. Hagar had no more control over becoming pregnant than did Sarah, so why take pride in being pregnant as if she had done it and then look down on someone who had not gotten pregnant? I am sure that after she met the Angel of the Lord, Hagar returned to Abraham's tents a different person from the one who had run away.

All the talents and abilities that we have are God's gifts to us. This is true with your fast feet, or your beautiful face or voice, or your organizational skills, or language skills, or knack for fixing things, or the ease with which you make friends – they all come from the Lord! So Paul's very next advice to those Roman Christians was,

*For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another.* Romans 12:3-5.

Let's learn to be humble about all we are and have and to give God the glory for what He has given.

A third lesson we can learn is that

**God sees and is always with us.**

I was surprised the other day to learn that “Aloha” the traditional Hawaiian greeting and “Sawubona” the most common greeting in the Zulu language literally mean the same thing: “I see you, you are important to me and I value you.” The last, least, and lost, often feel invisible to others and perhaps even to God. A greeting such as “Aloha, Sawubona” makes the other person visible to us, reminding us to love them who ever and where ever they are.

- God saw Abraham and Sarah, and God also saw Hagar and Ishmael within her.
  - God sees you and me, too! He sees us at our best and He sees us at our worst.
  - God sees what we are facing and what we need.
  - God sees how hard we are trying to be faithful and to please Him.
  - God sees how overwhelmed you are in caring for your children, your spouse, or your aging parents.
  - God sees the challenges you are facing at work, or school, or in your marriage.
  - And God sees when loneliness eats away at you.
- God sees. God cares. And God is with us and will help us.

When God sees us in the hard place, His will is usually not for us to run and hide from the difficulty but to stay and allow Him to mold us through the hard times. He told Hagar to go back and submit to her mistress and that He would be with her in this. God enabled Hagar to do the hard thing, and He will do the same for us.

Finally, this fourth lesson, sort of grows out of the first:

**Learn to patiently wait upon the Lord.**

Multiple times, scripture encourages us to be patient with God’s timing.

Psalm 33:20 says: We wait in hope for the LORD; he is our help and our shield.

Psalm 27:14 says: Wait for the LORD; be strong and take heart and wait for the LORD.

Isaiah 40:31 says: those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

But waiting is hard to do. We like things to be fast.

- We like fast food, and the fast lane.
- We want instant downloads and overnight delivery.

Why do we like things fast? Because our rich consumerist culture has conditioned us to be impatient by our ability to get just about anything we want as soon as we want it.

Patience is one of our lost character strengths that perhaps this quarantine can re-teach us.

So we missed our monthly barber or hair and nail appointments... think of how much more you will get for your money when next you sit in their chair.

So we have run out of television programs to watch... it is time to pick up a book or plant the garden.

It is usually in waiting that God does His best work in us.

Richard Hendrix said: "*Second only to suffering, waiting may be the greatest teacher and trainer in godliness, maturity, and genuine spirituality most of us ever encounter.*"

When we are forced to wait, the Lord helps us acquire an appreciation for the blessing to come. Meanwhile, while we wait, God builds our maturity so that when the fulfillment does come, we are prepared to enjoy His blessing to the fullest.

In his book, *Sabbatical Journeys*, Henri Nouwen writes about some friends of his who were trapeze artists - They were called "the Flying Roudellas."

They told Nouwen there's a special relationship between flyer and catcher on the trapeze. The flyer is the one that lets go, and the catcher is the one that catches. As the flyer swings high above the crowd on the trapeze, the moment comes when he or she must let go. Then, as they arc out into the air, their job is to remain as still as possible and wait for the strong hands of the catcher to pluck them from the air. "*The flyer must never try to catch the catcher.*" The flyer must wait in absolute trust. The catcher will catch him, but he must wait.  
(John Ortberg, "Waiting on God," *Preaching Today* #199)

So it is in our relationship with God - we must never try to catch the Catcher. We must learn to wait with patience and absolute trust - God will catch us if we wait.

But if we try to help Him out, we could end up falling flat on our faces. So we must wait on Him who hears and sees us. It's the only way to fly! It's the only way to experience all that God has for us.

Let us pray about this.

***Brief Prayer – Lord's Prayer:***

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

***Praise Song***

*"He is Able"*

***Birthdays and Anniversaries:*** We wish Richard Tate a happy birthday on the 29<sup>th</sup> and happy anniversary to John & Sonya Smith on the 30<sup>th</sup>.

***Closing Prayer and Benediction:***

Ever-living God, the resurrection of Jesus fills us with hope and joy. Because He lives we can live with a new sense of purpose and commitment. Help us live our Easter lives and mission as we offer ourselves and our gifts to bring new life to others, in Jesus' name.

*Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be the glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen. (from Ephesians 3:20)*

**Postlude:** "Cwm Rhondda"

**GOOD TO KNOW:** The first letters of the Greek declaration: "Jesus Christ, God's son, Savior" spell the Greek word for "fish." Which is why the fish became an ancient Christian symbol.



## Concerns- April 26<sup>th</sup>

**Barefoot:** Jim- having outpatient surgery to remove abscess Friday, then returning home

**Barnes:** Troy- (friend) stage 4 lung cancer

**Benton:** Brandon- (nephew) and family, son in ICU

Russ Conner- (son-in-law) working in Africa

**Blair:** James Thorne- (scout) rare skin infection, doing better

Katy Neal- (LHS student) scleroderma

Glen Murgacz- (friend) biopsy for bladder cancer

**Boone:** Jim Hedrick - (friend) recovering from gall bladder surgery, waiting for more surgery

Michael -(son) out of work during pandemic

**Chryssikos:** Linda Arendt- (neighbor) disabled

**Clarke:** Ben Daniel - (Pat's grandson) deployed to Syria late summer

**Cram:** Winslow's-(friends of Sally) family & medical problems

Janice Campbell-(friend) under hospice care

Military away from home

**Diddams:** Lois- problems with medications

Paul (brother)- loss of wife, not doing well

**Dills:** Kathy & her father

**Dwyer:** Karen Huddle- (friend) health problems

**Fleming:** family dealing with addiction and self- esteem

Steve Trombecky- (friend) home recovering

**Foster:** Thomasine Davis- (aunt) hospice care

Joyce Abbott- (former member) cancer

Andre Nemenek- (Shepherds table cook) prostate cancer

**Gaston:** Joseph (former pastor) prostate cancer surgery May 6th

**Goodman:** Barry Owen-(friend) cancer

Randall Sales-(SRHS coach) cancer

Katherine Saunders- (Hugh's daughter) hospice

**Heinrich:** Steven - (grandson) autoimmune disorder

Barbara Lore- (Helen's sister) heart problems

**Koch:** Doris- fell, broken hip, at home

**Kuhn- Kibbey:** Nancy Milton- (friend) cancer, Alzheimer's

Rachel Rutledge-(granddaughter) experimental treatment

Dot- health issues, macular degeneration

Grandson- alcoholism

Eric Bryant- diagnosed with MS

**Ledden:** John- heart problems

**Mauser:** Joyce Reese- (friend) health problems

Steven-(son's boss) going blind

Tom & Betty Clark- downsizing, and Betty has new pacemaker

Norma Jean- (Gayle's sister) broken collar bone

Pat- (Al's sister) diabetes

**Morris:** all law enforcement, firefighters and all other first responders

Forensic scientists who deal with crime

Rev. Pam Ledbetter-(friend) autoimmune disease

Doris Jean Coble- (cousin) in nursing home

**Palmer:** Lynne- broken hip from fall, at home

**Salley:** David Etheridge- (fellow pastor) terminal cancer

Emily Salley- (sister-in-law) invasive breast cancer

**Saunders:** (Ronnie) Colin Bridges- (grandson)

Scott- (son-in-law) chemo and radiation

**Scheurer:** Jim Hedrick-(friend) cancer

Bob Lindell-(friend) prostate cancer

**Smith:** Sonya's parents, moving to Liberty Ridge

**Stetson:** James & family-(son) in Colorado, has virus

**Stevens:** Jackie Landis- heart problems

Zeph Cunningham- travel mercies

**Toney:** Judy- may start radiation soon

Karen Hyde-(friend) bladder cancer

Mike Gillespie- (friend) hospice care

Cal Rice- (former pastor) bone cancer, refused treatment

Nancy Jordan-(neighbor) recovering from surgery

**Van Dyke:** Thomas Blythe- (friend) in hospital, fever, internal bleeding

**Weeks:** Mary Lohmeyer- (friend) doing well

**Wilkerson:** Ricky Wilkerson-(Dan's cousin) cancer

**Yodis:** Linda Goshorn- (former member) fractured ribs and punctured lung from fall, recovering at home

**Prayers for those dealing with loneliness**

**Prayers that anti-Semitism be erased**

**Prayers for healing the divisive spirit among our leaders/nation**

**Prayers for an end of the coronavirus and healing for those infected**

## **A Thoughtful Perspective on our Covid Quarantine**

(Contributed by Ron Morris)

1. There are no bombs raining on our heads.
2. I am not a prisoner held in solitary confinement, as millions are.
3. I am not a refugee trying to escape with my life.
4. I am not standing in line waiting to fill a pot of water.
5. I have access to fresh food and I'm not starving.
6. I have hot running water.
7. My country has not been ruined by years of war.
8. I can reach my friends by phone and check in on them.
9. My friends check in on me because they care about me.
10. Any whiplash I feel about this strange turn of events is in itself a sign of privilege.
11. More than half of the world would gladly trade their everyday problems for the modest inconveniences I am experiencing.
12. I may have anxious dreams but I'm dreaming them on a proper bed and I'm not sleeping on the sidewalk.
13. By staying at home, I'm helping the planet rest.
14. As long as I have my mind I can create, imagine, dream and not be lonely.
15. This global crisis connects me to people around the world and reminds me of our common humanity. This is a good thing.
16. When something tragic happens to another country next time, I will respond to it not with superiority, but humility and recognition.
17. I will fight for positive changes and economically just policies in my own country.
18. I am surrounded by books.
19. I am surrounded by love.
20. The tulips have already begun to bloom.

## April Clerk's Corner

- Congratulations to Scarlett Stevens, who was examined and unanimously approved as elder-elect. She will head the Fellowship Committee. Scarlett will be ordained when church services resume.
- With our sincere thanks, the 2020 Nominating Committee has been dissolved.
- In case you wondered- membership is now at 120 with the death of Emilie Citty on March 30.
- Talk about giving back! Presbytery is trying to offset ill effects of closures on the church's financial position. They sent a letter informing us that first quarter of Covenant payment will be forgiven and included a \$1,000 check.
- The Church-wide Garage Sale has been postponed indefinitely.
- In this time of special need, John encourages everyone to call people when they come to mind and to include a time of prayer with them.
- You probably figured this out: church services and activities are cancelled and virtual services will continue until the state mandate is lifted.
- Our thanks to the Deacons, who have divided up the membership list and have called those in isolation to check on their needs.
- Kudos to all those who have helped to make our virtual services possible, especially to John Salley, Bill Mitchell, and Bill Rutledge.
- Did you notice? Robert, our sexton, has put down bags of dirt and grass seed.
- Good news! General operations cash balance has improved to over our \$10,000 preferred minimum for the first time since May 2019.
- You can shop for a good cause—Bedford Presbyterian Church! Shopping on Amazon Smile and in Kroger stores can now return a percentage of your purchases as a contribution to Bedford Presbyterian. But you have to designate us as a charity on Amazon and register Bedford Presbyterian on your Kroger card. More information is included in this bulletin.
- To make giving easier, once we figure out the details, a Donate button will also be added to the website.
- More good news! People who don't itemize their taxes will get an additional \$300 tax deduction for charitable contributions made this year (check with your tax professional for details).
- Keep praying and keep those contributions coming: if giving continues close to normal, we will have no financial issues.



Dear Bedford Presbyterian Church,

Congratulations on your enrollment into the Kroger Community Rewards Program. Your participants may begin enrolling upon receipt of this letter.

You have been assigned a new NPO (Non-Profit Organization) number HV363.

Please refer to this number in all future correspondence.

To Use the Kroger Community Rewards Program:

Simply encourage your participants to visit <http://www.kroger.com>, once logged into their Kroger account they can search for Bedford Presbyterian Church either by name or HV363 and then click Enroll. New users will need to create an account which requires some basic information, a valid email address and a rewards card.

**\*Customers must have a registered Kroger rewards card account to link to your organization.**

**\*If a member does not yet have a Kroger rewards card, please let them know they are available at the customer service desk at any Kroger**

REMEMBER, purchases will not count for your organization until after your participants register their rewards card. Participants must swipe their registered Kroger rewards card or use the phone number that is related to their registered Kroger rewards card when shopping for each purchase to count.

Thank you!

Kroger Community Rewards Department

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Thank you for continuing to send in your contributions and pledges.  
You can mail your pledge or contribution or you can drop by the office,  
Mon-Thurs between 8 am -12 pm.

**Do you enjoy yardwork?** If you do, we are looking for volunteers to work in the church yard mowing grass, weed eating and doing general yard work. If you are interested, please let the office know.

**Happy Birthday!!**

Richard Tate- 29th

**Happy Anniversary!!**

John & Sonya Smith- 30th

