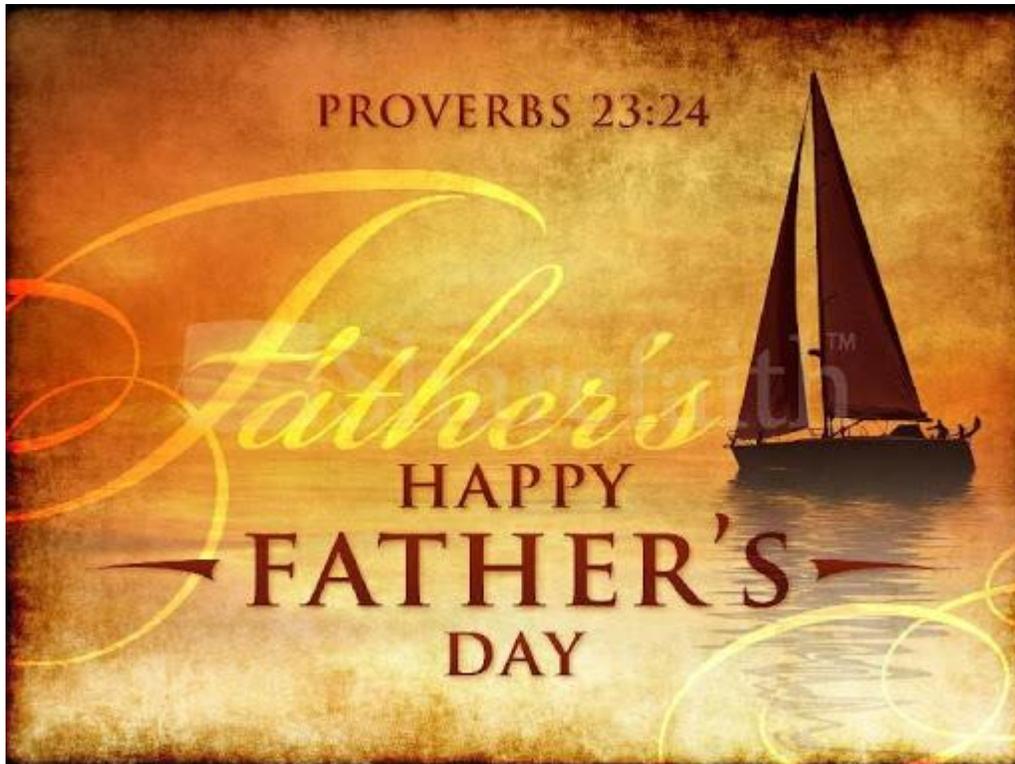


Bedford Presbyterian Church

105 West Main Street, Bedford, Virginia

From 1844 to 2020 (176 Years)



Week of June 21st

We will continue sending out this combination of the newsletter and bulletin to keep you up to date on announcements, prayers, needs and scheduled activities for those that are uncomfortable to attend service yet.

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.



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

Bill Rutledge

One: The peace of Christ be with you

All: And Also with you

Welcome and Announcements

- We wish all the father's a Happy Father's Day!
- Please adhere to the re-gathering notes during service to keep yourself and everyone else safe.
- Please let the ushers dismiss you at the end of service.
- Any other announcements are printed at the back of this bulletin.

Call to Worship:

One: Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name.

All: Who forgives all our iniquity, who heals all our diseases. Who redeems our life from the pit, who crowns us with steadfast love, who satisfies us with good as long as we live.

One: Bless the Lord, all His hosts, His servants that do His will!

All: Bless the Lord, all His works, in all places of His dominion! Bless the Lord, O my soul!

Introit

"Be Still"

Praise Team

Prayer of Confession:

Eternal and merciful God, we acknowledge that we are too inclined toward anger, jealousy and revenge, to ambition and pride, which often give rise to discord and bitter feelings between others and us. Too often have we thus both offended and grieved You, our long-suffering Father. Forgive us our sins and permit us to partake of the blessing You have promised the peacemakers, who shall be called the children of God. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon:

(The apostle John wrote to us ...) My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; he is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world

One: Brothers and sisters believe the Good News.

All: Through Christ we have been forgiven, in Christ we have been saved, with Christ we are now children of God.

Gloria

"Glory Be to the Father"

Proclaiming the Word of God

Time for all God's Children

Solo

"How Deep the Father's Love"

Maggie DeWitt

Scripture:

Genesis 25: 19-34

Sermon:

Beans, birthrights, blessings and the plans of God

Three men were sitting in the room for expectant fathers waiting for word on the arrival of their infants.

A while later a nurse comes in and announces to one of the men that his wife had just given birth to twins. *"What a coincidence,"* he said, *"I play for the Minnesota Twins !"*

About twenty minutes later another nurse comes in and announces to the second gentleman that his wife had given birth to triplets. *"That's amazing,"* he said, *"I work for the 3M company."*

Upon hearing this the third man fell off his chair and fainted - after those who were present were able to revive him, they all inquired as to why he had fainted. He said *"Because I manage a 7-11 store!"*

Our story today is about twin brothers: Esau and Jacob.

- At the surface it is also a story about how, undeterred by the participants' twists and turns, the blessings of God were still passed along according to the promises He had made to Abraham.
- But more importantly, this is also a story which teaches that OUR receiving of God's blessing is always wholly dependent upon HIS grace, not our efforts.
- No matter who you are – good or bad – your successes in life have only come to you through God's love for you.
- No matter what you think of yourself you are constantly being guided through life, by God, even if many of the bumps in your road are a result of you own doings.

So let's begin untangling this Peyton Place of a Biblical drama, this mess of bad decisions which will still lead to God's results.

The story opens with Isaac, who by God's grace was miraculously born to a couple well past childbearing age as the singular fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham that his descendants would one day be as numerous as the stars in the sky and the sand on the seashore.

However, in order for God's promise to ultimately be fulfilled, it would have to continue being passed along through multiple generations. So next Isaac had to sire children, but just as was the case of Isaac's mother, Rebekah at first was barren. However, unlike his parents who tried to fix the problem themselves, Isaac trusted God to provide. Verse 21 says, Isaac prayed to the Lord for his wife, because she was barren; and the Lord granted his prayer, and his wife Rebekah conceived.



Isaac and Rebekah did everything right. Isaac was the son of promise. Rebekah was from the right family and was handpicked by God himself to be Isaac's wife. Yet from the start of this pregnancy, their family life would be troubled because the twin brothers conceived in her were so different that they viciously fought each other even in the womb, so much so that Rebekah feared for her own life.

Rebekah, now seeking God's assurance in this matter is told that two nations were at war within her and, in spite of their outward appearance, one would be stronger than the other and the elder would serve the younger; which is the way things ultimately worked out for these two brothers but not until many years after their deaths.

Esau, the first born was his papa's proud son: redheaded and hairy, he was a rough rugged man's man who loved to hunt but he was also vengeful, impulsive, and negligent of his responsibilities in life.

The other brother Jacob, was a Mama's boy: fair skinned and quiet, preferring to stay at home and take care of the farm. But he was also a schemer always looking for ways to reverse the tables on his elder twin, who simply by being born a few minutes earlier was unfairly destined – according to Jacob's thinking – to become the head of the household, the recipient of a double inheritance and his boss for life.



You know how the story plays out. Both brothers having now grown to adulthood, Jacob was probably at one of the family's shepherd camps when Esau staggers in from the hunt demanding to be fed lest he die. Jacob seizes the opportunity to require of Esau, in exchange for food, first an oath giving up his birthright. You might also know that God greatly disapproves of such thoughtlessly given oaths and requires that they be honored (Ecclesiastes 5:4-6).

Esau said, "I'm feeling faint."
"Aw," said Jacob, "no you ain't."
"Poppa's blessing," Esau cried,
"Is mine by rights, but I'll have died
Of hunger first. For pity's sake—
My birthright for your lentils, Jake."
"Your birthright?" Jacob murmured. "Sold!"
"Dig in before the stuff gets cold."
(Jeanne Steig, "Twins".)

The moral of this little poem is that since he was still walking and talking, Esau was not on the verge of death. But even as an adult, all he ever cared about rather than anyone else or any future responsibilities were his own immediate wants – in this case his hunger. Thus, as the Bible noted, he sold his birthright for a bowl of beans.

At the age of forty, Esau would again prove his self-serving self-absorption by taking two wives for himself from among the local populace, a stunt that deeply grieved his parents and one which he would later again repeat simply as an act revenge against them for letting Jacob go with the

blessing. These acts of defiance against his parent's wishes tells a lot about Esau's basic personality and why he did not qualify to be the head of the household. Which is why it was Rebekah, perhaps also remembering the earlier prophecy, who instigated and then guided Jacob into stealing the blessing. Jacob may have stolen the blessing, but it was Rebekah's plan and persistence which brought it to pass.



For a little something more than what you learned in Sunday School, realize that the occasion for the theft of the blessing was that Isaac now being 140 years old, blind, and thinking that he was near death, thus wanted to settle his estate. While this picture depicts Jacob as a much younger person, by this time he would have been 77 years old, single and still living at home... talk about a slow bloomer.

But regardless of God's plans, sin must have its recompense. So at the age of 77, having captured both the blessing and in theory a double portion of his father's estate, Isaac instead finds himself penniless and fleeing for his life into a time of exile, never again to see his mother and for the next 20 years to in his turn be tricked and robbed by his uncle Laban. But along the way he also sires twelve sons and a daughter. One of them being Joseph, whom through his own series of Godly guarded misadventures would not only end up saving all the people in Egypt during a time of famine, but would also by moving his entire family down to Egypt begin the 400 year period of exile in which the sons of Israel would grow into the nation of Israel to one day return to the land ... just as God had prophesied to grandfather Abraham so many years previously.

It will take three more episodes to tell you all the stories of Jacob's misadventures at the home of his Uncle Laban which began with his falling madly in love with Rachel Laban's youngest daughter, only to be tricked into first marrying Leah, her older sister. This then launched Rachel, Leah and two of their handmaids into a baby making contest that ended with 12 sons and a daughter. But along the way, by hard work and shrewd management of Laban's flocks, Isaac earned enough money to return his now very large family and holdings back home that is if Esau doesn't kill him when he gets there. But all these are stories for another day.

What remains for us today is to take a personal lesson from Esau and Jacob's lives according to the prophecy given about them before their birth.

We know from the Biblical record that some 80 years before these brothers' birth, God had told grandfather Abraham of his descendants' eventual journey down to Egypt only to emerge some 400 years later as a nation ready to claim the Promised Land. We also know how the path to that fulfillment traveled through Isaac, to Jacob, and on to Joseph and his eleven brothers.

What you may not know is that brother Esau, as prophesied also grew into the nation of Edom which flourished for over 500 years in the region just east of the Promised Land. The beautiful city of Petra carved into the red cliffs of Jordan - one of the wonders of the ancient world that has also played a bit part in several movies – was the capital city of Edom.

400 years later, Edom would oppose Israel's return to the land and would eventually be defeated and subjugated by King Saul of Israel and his brilliant general David. Thus in accordance with the

prophecy given before their birth, the younger brother's nation proved to be stronger of the two and older brother's nation would be their servants.

So how does God's grace, providence, and dare I say it even predestination, play out in your life as it did in the lives of these warring siblings?

First you should note that like Esau and Jacob, even from our very start, God sees the whole of our life, not only who we are now but who we will become someday. All this figures into His plans for shaping our life and future.

In Psalm 139, King David would write

I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made... Your eyes beheld my unformed substance and in your book were written all my days, when none of them as yet existed.

Psalm 139:14-16

So what we become has everything to do with God's grace directing our lives.

All that you are, all that you will become. All that you have, all that you will ever attain – all is due to God's grace. Above all, salvation is due entirely to God's grace so that it depends on nothing in human beings. I know of no teaching in scripture that arouses more anger and opposition; but opposed or not, it is true and most practical...

(JM Boyce, Genesis, vol. 1, p. 735).

Phillip Yancey describes grace in his book 'What's So Amazing About Grace'. ...

"Grace means there is nothing we can do to make God love us more—no amount of spiritual calisthenics and renunciations, no amount of knowledge gained from seminaries, no amount of crusading on behalf of righteous causes. And grace means there is nothing we can do to make God love us less—no amount of racism or pride or pornography or adultery or even murder. Grace means that God already loves us as much an infinite God can possibly love."

While there are theologians who actively oppose this idea of God having so much control over our lives, declaring that it stifles initiative while encouraging irresponsibility, even sin, the truth is that a proper understanding of God's grace can make us into much more god honoring people.

- Because grace **discourages boasting** when we realize that we have only achieved everything we have in life and even our salvation only through God's loving intervention in our lives.
- Thus a proper understanding of how grace works in our life not **only encourages our love for God**, but also **our desire to share this message of God's love with others**.

Remember that "grace" and "mercy" are ultimately terms of love not judgment; MERCY is not getting what you deserve. GRACE is getting what you do not deserve. Neither brother deserved the successes they would enjoy in later life, nor to sire the nations that would grow out of them. But by God's grace both brothers ended up playing their part in moving His covenant with Abraham forward to its eventual fulfillment in the person of Jesus of Nazareth.

And while we do not know what kind of faith Esau ended up with, we do know that Jacob who in one sense wrestled with everyone he ever met – even God – came to the end of his life humbly dependent upon the God of his grandfather Abraham, to guard and bless his life. This lively faith he also passed along at least to his next youngest son Joseph, which would help Joseph not only prosper in the midst of great oppression but also in his turn to keep moving God’s promises forward.

We may never be privileged to know the part we are playing in moving forward God’s - our ultimate loving Father’s - plans for the salvation of our world ... but rest assured each one of us is doing so, as we seek to honor Him in all aspects of our life.

Let’s pray about this.

Praise Song

“Great is the Lord”

Praise Team

Response to the Word of God

Affirmation of Faith

Celtic Creed

We believe in God above us, maker and sustainer of all life, of sun and moon, of water and earth, of male and female. We believe in God beside us, Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh, born of woman, servant of the poor, tortured and nailed to a tree. A man of sorrows, He died forsaken. He descended into the earth to the place of death. On the third day He rose from the tomb. He ascended into heaven, to be everywhere present and His kingdom will come on earth. We believe in God within us, the Holy Spirit of Pentecostal fire, life-giving breath of the Church, Spirit of healing and forgiveness, source of resurrection and of eternal life. Amen.

****Doxology***

Traditional

Sharing of Joys and Concerns

The Sending Forth

Pastoral Prayer:

Generous God, You have given us life, a place to live in and people to live with. Open our eyes to each other and to all our brothers and sisters, especially the poor, the oppressed, the alienated. Make us humble enough to help and comfort them, so that Your love and justice and peace may come to them. We make bold to consecrate ourselves and our gifts to You and to the service of others, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

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

Benediction

Postlude

“I Danced in the Morning”

Bill Rutledge

Joys- June 21st

Barnes: Joy to be back in church and the wonderful music is a joy

Toney: Joy that Judy has finished the radiation treatments

Concerns- June 21st

Barnes: Kim Hedrick- (friend) health issues

Benton: Linda Crawford- (friend) cancer, chemo

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

Katy Neel- (LHS student) scleroderma

Glen Murgacz- (friend) biopsy for bladder cancer

Boone: Jim Hedrick - (friend) recovering from partial lung removal

Michael -(son) out of work during pandemic

Ray Graeber- (Sammy's cousin)- recovering from colon surgery

Nancy Boone- (Sammy's cousin's wife) cancer

Chryssikos: Linda Arendt- (neighbor) disabled

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

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

Janice Campbell-(friend) under hospice care

Mary Keys- (friend) ICU, blood infection, heart problems, stroke

Military away from home

DeWitt: Terry Sharp- (cousin) ceases chemo treatment- hospice

Diddams: Lois- problems with medications

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

Dills: Katy Neel- lymphoma

Fleming: family dealing with addiction and self- esteem

Steve Trombecky- (friend) home recovering

Political leaders to never close churches again

Foster: Thomasine Davis- (aunt) hospice care

Joyce Abbott- (former member) cancer

Andre Nemenek- (Shepherds table cook) prostate cancer

Ellen- recovering at home

Glass: Ken (Steve Glass' father) fell, broke hip and shoulder

Goodman: Barry Owen-(friend) cancer

Randall Sales-(SRHS coach) cancer

Katherine Saunders- (Hugh's daughter) hospice

Family of Catherine- (Betty's sister) passed away

Travel Mercies for Charles and Betty

Gould: Jay- waiting for heart bypass surgery

Harris: Judy- recovering from throat procedure

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

Dot- idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis, wet macular degeneration

Grandson- alcoholism

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, tested positive for Covid-19

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

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, partial lung removed

Bob Lindell-(friend) prostate cancer

Stetson: James & family-(son) in Colorado

Stevens: Jackie Landis- heart problems

Toney: Judy- finished radiation

Karen Hyde-(friend) bladder cancer

Mike Gillespie- (friend) hospice care

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

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

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

Prayers for our divided country and the violence occurring

Prayers to speak and listen to those who are different

The Church Regathers !!

Dear Church Members and friends, what a joyous time it will be after 11 weeks apart, to regather in worship. But do not fool yourselves, we are still in the middle of the Covid19 pandemic. So for the foreseeable future, worship services will be designed to limit the spread of this virus. Please note the following guidelines as you prepare to come to worship . Thank you, John.

1. If you have a pre-existing medical condition, if you feel sick, or if you believe you may have been exposed to the virus, **PLEASE STAY HOME** for at least 2 weeks while continuing to worship with us through the video broadcast.
2. Unless you need the elevator, **please enter the church through the front door.**
3. **Wear a face mask** while entering and leaving the church. Courtesy face masks – disposable and permanent for you to take home – are available at each entrance.
4. **Upon entering**, place your offering (regular & 5¢ a meal) in the plates or baskets at each entrance. If you want a **Daily Bread** booklet or if **communion** is to be served, pick these up as you go to your seat.
5. Let the ushers guide you to socially distanced seating, where bulletins are placed. **Take seats closer to the front** and let latecomers sit further back.
6. Go directly to your seats to quietly enjoy the prelude music. Save your greetings and conversations with fellow members for AFTER THE SERVICE when you can safely do so OUTSIDE.
7. **During the service**, please just listen to the music or sing quietly to yourself.
8. Children will stay with their family, there will be no nursery, no gathering for children's sermon, and no children's church.
9. If you must use the restroom, wash your hands thoroughly.
10. After the service, please **let Ushers dismiss you from your seats** (moving from back to front)
11. After the service, **please linger on the lawn**, while wearing your face mask, where you can greet and visit with fellow worshippers.
12. Use a non-touch way of greeting fellow worshippers before and after the service.

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.**

Even though we aren't meeting as normal, **5 ¢ a meal offerings and Heifer** are still welcomed and encouraged. Just mail them in as you do your pledges and contributions, with a note in the memo line.

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.



Something More: Coming to a Computer near you

Yes, we are indeed working to restart a hybrid version of our popular mid-week Bible Study with some people attending in person and others by way of Zoom. Look for an email which will ask what would be the best time for the meeting and whether you prefer to join with us physically or virtually.... See you soon, one way or another.

Happy Birthday!!

Betty Salley- 25th

Happy Anniversary!

Jim & Joy Barefoot- 21st

Dave & Kathy Grigg- 21st

