

# Bedford Presbyterian Church

105 West Main Street, Bedford, Virginia

From 1844 to 2020 (176 Years)



## Week of September 20<sup>th</sup>

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.



Bedford Presbyterian Church  
serving Christ since 1844

*A Biblically Guided Christian Community,*

*Loving God, Loving Others,*

*Serving the World & Growing Disciples*

## The Approach to God

One: The peace of Christ be with you

**All: And Also with you**

**Prelude**

*“Alleluia! Sing to Jesus”*

Bill Rutledge

### **Words of Welcome and Announcements.**

- The F.I.R.E. Band concert will be at 7 pm this Saturday at the farmers market. Be sure to tell your friends and family and come enjoy a night of Praise, Promise and Prayer.
- All announcements are printed at the back of this bulletin.

### **Prayer of Invocation:**

O God, You who gave us birth and who will walk with us through our older years, we come to You today to worship and praise You. We call Your name and You answer us. In every age of life You give us what we need. Help us today to have ears to hear the message of Your faithfulness and to celebrate the ways in which You help us to cope with the challenges we face at every age. Surround this congregation today with Your presence, Your love, Your grace. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen

**Introit**

*“God of the Ages, History's Maker”*

Bill Rutledge

### **Prayer of Confession:**

O God, You call and call our names. There are times that we, like Moses, make excuses and ask not to serve You. There are times that we, like Jonah, say we will serve but then turn and go the other way. There are times that we, like Samuel, hear Your voice but lack the knowledge to follow Your call. Help us recognize Your voice in our lives. Give us the eagerness of Samuel to jump up, even in the middle of the night, to respond to Your call. Forgive us when we ignore You or make excuses. Work in us a willing spirit. We pray in the name of the one who calls us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **Assurance of Pardon:** (Matthew 28: 18-20)

As God once sent Moses, So Jesus now sends us saying, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.'

One: Friends, believe the good news of the gospel.

**All: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven! Through Jesus Christ we have been born again to new life.**

**Gloria**

*“Glory Be to the Father”*

## Proclaiming the Word of God

### *Time for all God's Children*

#### **Special Music**

*"People Need the Lord"*

Women's Trio

#### **Scripture:**

Exodus 3:7-14, 4:13-17

#### **Sermon:**

### **Moses, What Do You Have in Your Hand?**

Gratefully adopted and adapted from "What Is That In Your Hand?," by David Elvery and "Bushwhacked," by C. Philip Green @ SermonCentral.Com

On Saturday, November 5, 2011, University of Tennessee freshman Derrick Brodus was just lying on the couch in his fraternity house, waiting for the Tennessee Volunteers football game to start at 7 P.M. Less than an hour before kickoff, Derrick answered his ringing cell phone to hear a voice on the other end telling him that a police escort was on its way to take him immediately to the stadium.

Just minutes before that call, Tennessee backup kicker Chip Rhome pulled a muscle during pregame warm-ups. Starting kicker Michael Parry was already out, injured in Thursday's practice. So one hour before kickoff, the Volunteers were out of kickers.

Derrick, a freshman, had tried out as a placekicker when he enrolled at Tennessee, but didn't make the team. Now, on that particular Saturday, Derrick was the Volunteers' only option.

Minutes after Derrick hung up his phone, the police escort arrived to rush him to the stadium. The team's trainer stretched him in the locker room while he put on pads and a jersey that didn't even have his name on the back.

Even so, Derrick made the most of his opportunity. He made all three of his extra point attempts and kicked a 21-yard field goal at the end of the first half. The Tennessee Volunteers won 24-0.

Back in the locker room after the game, the kicker who began the evening lying on the couch with a bag of chips was the hero of the night. The team cheered as Coach Dooley gave Derrick the game ball. (Graham Watson, "Tennessee grabs last-second kicker off his frat house couch," Yahoo Sports, 11-8-11)

Often that's the way God works in our lives. We're just lying around when God calls us to get off the couch and to use our gifts for His kingdom.

That's what happened to Moses. He spent 40 years living the nobody life of a shepherd when all of a sudden he gets a call from God to leave his comfortable isolation to do something extraordinary. Let's take a moment to update Moses' story to this point.



As the book of Exodus opens, fearing the numerous Israelites, the Egyptians had not only enslaved them to hard backbreaking labor, but they have also begun throwing Israelite baby boys into the Nile to reduce the population. When she could no longer hide her newborn son, Jochebed, one of the Israelite mothers put her baby in a waterproof basket and let him float away on the Nile, charging his older sister Miriam to watch what might happen to him. As "luck" would have it the baby was found by Pharaoh's daughter who named him Moses and raised him as her own. Forty years later living as a prince in Egypt but aware of his roots, Moses thought no one was watching as he murdered an Egyptian taskmaster for beating an

Israelite slave. But when news of his deed got around, Moses fled into the wilderness where he would spend the next 40 years living as a shepherd and thinking that he had safely escaped his past.



Until one day, now 80 years old, while tending his flock of sheep near the mountain of God, Moses turned aside to curiously observe a burning bush; on fire but unconsumed by the flames. Of course it was a visitation from God, Who had never lost track of Moses' whereabouts and Who now had a task for him; a task for which in the past 80 years God had been preparing Moses to accomplish.

*The Lord said, 'I have **observed** the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have **heard** their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings, and **I have come down to deliver them** from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey... So come, I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt.'* (Exodus 3:7-10.).

The first lesson we should take from today's story is that **God never loses track of you. God sees, God hears, God knows, God cares about what is happening to you, and whether or not you recognize it, God also has a plan for rescuing you or using you to rescue others.**

So God said, *come, I will send you to Pharaoh...*

Now, wait a minute, God. I thought You said YOU were going to deliver them. Why are You asking ME to go?

Out of the ordinary events of his life, God called a fallen leader to once again lead. God called Moses to return to the place of his failure where God would now use him in ways he never expected.

And that's the way God works in our lives, as well. He speaks to ordinary people on ordinary days. He speaks to failures in the familiar routines of their tiresome existence, because He wants to demonstrate HIS power in their lives.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning wrote, *Earth's crammed with heaven, and every common bush afire with God; but only he who sees takes off his shoes— the rest sit round it and pluck blackberries.*"

Friends, don't just sit around plucking blackberries. Take off your shoes and listen to God speak in the ordinary experiences of your life. God wants to use YOU for HIS glory even in places where you think, "That's impossible!"

Last Sunday, you heard Paul Van Dyke announce that the Bedford Presbyterian Nominating Committee was once again looking for people to lead this Church: we need three Elders, two Trustees, and a Deacon. He also said, if we approach you, please don't immediately say "no," because the team has carefully prayed about both you and the task we are asking you to accomplish.

Let's get back to Moses. You would think that Moses would be excited that God is now going to do what he in his own small way had failed to do 40 years ago – which is to liberate his people from slavery. You would think that Moses would also be excited that God was now asking him to leave this hardscrabble backwater life for the glories of Egypt once again, to help God in accomplishing this task.

But, no sooner had God asked him, then Moses came up with a list of not one but four reasons why he was not the man for God's job.

1. *Who am I to do this?* Moses asked. I am a failed nobody.
2. What if the people don't recognize this God Who wants to rescue them?
3. What if they don't believe that God really sent me?
4. And on top of that, I don't speak so good (*we don't know what caused Moses to be "slow of speech," perhaps he was born tongue-tied or stuttered*)

God's first answer should have been sufficient for all of Moses' excuses had he actually stopped making them to listen. God said, **'I will be with you; and this shall be the sign for you that it is I who sent you'**

**Did you hear that?** God told Moses that God Himself would be with Moses, protecting empowering him and very sufficiently proving Himself to any who might be questioning as to whose liberating idea this was.

Moses asks, "Who am I?" and God basically says, **"It doesn't matter who you are, because I am going to be the one doing the work.** Because I am going to be with you, you will succeed in bringing my people out of Egypt back to this very mountain."

You see, Moses had to learn that who he was, was not important. Forty years earlier, he thought he was a **somebody**. He thought he was Israel's deliverer and failed. Now, 40 years later, he thinks he's a **nobody**, but God says, "None of that matters. **What matters is My presence, not your ability or lack of it; you need to trust that I will be there for you.**" That is what God asks us to do as well. He does not ask us to trust in ourselves, but to trust in His presence and His power to accomplish what He asks to you to do.

So the Nominating Committee has been talking to each other and talking to God and they have developed a prospect list and have begun searching the wilderness for those people who will answer God's call to lead this church, if not to the promised land, at least for another three years of our journey. Hopefully, unlike Moses you will not have a list of excuses, but rather will prayerfully consider this call to serve.

So Moses lists out his excuses and God counters.

- Who Am I? God's replies, *it doesn't matter who you are - what is important is who I am and that I will be with you.*
- I won't know what to say (vs 13-14). *"I will tell you what to say."*
- They won't listen to me (vs 3:11). *I will work through you with powerful signs. They will see and believe.*
- I can't speak well (vs 4:10). God replied, *who made your mouth? I will teach you how to speak.*



Do you have similar excuses like Moses? Well God has similar answers for you. We are not going to focus on all of these answers this morning, but I want to point out the single question God asks in the midst of Moses' excuse making. After the third excuse, God simply asks: "***What is that in your hand?***"

"What Lord, I don't have anything in my hand."

"No Moses ... what is that you have in your hand?"

"Oh this ... this Lord ... well it's my staff, just a stick Lord, it's a bit battered - almost time for a new one - but it has served me well."

To Moses his staff was nothing special. It was a walking stick, a weapon, a guide for his sheep. It was a common tool carried by every shepherd, which neither made Moses special or unique. But to God this staff represented Moses' untapped potential if only he would release himself along with his walking stick for God's service.

What happened next? God said, "*Throw that stick on the ground.*"

*Moses threw it on the ground and it became a snake, and he ran from it. Then the LORD said to him, "Reach out your hand and take it by the tail." So Moses reached out and took hold of the snake and it turned back into a staff in his hand. **"This," said the LORD, "is so that they may believe that the LORD, the God of their fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob—has appeared to you."** (4:3-5 NIV)*

A couple of observations here that may be helpful for you as you worry about the nominating committee now making its rounds.

What is nothing to us, is something to God. In Moses' hand this was just a staff. But In God's hand this was anything He decided it to be. And it was. And it was used ...

- To prove to the Israelites that God was with Moses (4:30)
- To confront to magicians in Pharaohs court (7:12)
- To turn the waters of Egypt into blood (7:17-20)
- To bring frogs upon the land (8:5)
- To cause lice to infest the land of Egypt. (8:16)
- To rain thunder, hail and fire throughout the land (9:23)
- To raise an east wind that brought the locusts across the land. (10:13)
- To cause the waters of the Red Sea to stand up like a wall and the bottom of that sea to dry up so the Israelites could pass(14:16)
- To cause the waters of the Red sea to come back, drowning Pharaoh's armies
- Later, to bring forth water from the rock at Horeb to supply the Israelites' thirst (17:5)
- And when attacked in the wilderness by the Amelekites, to bring victory to the Israelite army (17:9)

To think that Moses called it "JUST A STAFF."

So what do you have in your hand that God could use? We can find many other instances of those who thought they didn't have much to offer, but God used what they had mightily.

- All Jochebed had in her hands was some straw, but she wove it into a basket to shelter Moses.
- All Miriam had in her hand was a tambourine, but she used it to lead the people to celebrate God's faithfulness.
- Hannah held a small child in her hand, but when she gave him to God, he became a great prophet.
- All the widow had was enough food for one more meal for her and her son, but God used it to feed her family and the prophet Elijah for the entire famine.
- All the little boy had was a sack lunch, but Jesus used it to feed 5000.
- All Peter held was an empty net, but Jesus filled both the net and his life with newfound purpose.
- In 1984, all that ten Bedford churches had a just little bit of groceries to share, now 36 years later, Bedford Christian ministries serves the entire county helping with power, rent and medical needs along with clothing and households goods. Oh yes, and a lot more groceries to share.

Just some straw—no problem, God can use it!

Just a child—you've got to be kidding, God can change the world with a child!

Just a sack lunch, a fishing net, or some groceries – put them in God's hand and He will use them!

For those of you who doubt - don't doubt. God can use whatever you have, no matter how small for He is truly the God of the impossible. You don't need to be educated, rich, smooth talking, or good looking. God isn't interested in these things, but He is interested in what we have in our hands. We all have something to give. We have life, we have a testimony, we have the word of God, we have prayer, we have material possessions and we have some ability - so stop making excuses and give yourself to God who can do something marvelous with your life.



Would this staff have been able to be used in all these various ways, if it only remained a stick in the hand of Moses? No. To be used, it had to be made available to God for His use. Once Moses released it, it became God's to use as He needed. And WOW! God certainly used that stick a lot.

What would have been the consequences had Moses refused to let go of his staff?

Who knows. Maybe a nation would have remained in slavery, maybe thousands more would have lost their lives, maybe we would not have even heard of Moses at all. What are we missing out on because you are holding onto your staff, instead of giving it up to God. What will we never accomplish as a church, as a body of believers worldwide if you keep what is in your hand for yourself.

So what's in your hand? What are your talents? Have you released such to God? Notice once they are released, God gives them right back - we don't lose anything, it just becomes more valuable.

After all his excuse making, Moses finally owned up to God, "**I just don't wanna go!**" But God said "**O yes you are going**" – it's never wise to tell God "no" – "but since you have made a fuss about this, I will allow your older brother Aaron to be your mouthpiece and assistant." Aaron did

assist Moses quite ably in the Exodus, but little did Moses know that his big brother would later cause all kinds of trouble for him in the wilderness – in the form of a certain golden calf – but that’s a story for another day.

There is an amazing postscript to this account which I believe is important to note. If we had continued on we would eventually read “*So Moses took his wife and sons, put them on a donkey and started back to Egypt. **And he took the staff of God in his hand.***” (4:20).

What did Moses take in his hand?

It was no longer his staff, but God’s. He went to Egypt to do God’s work, with a promise of God’s power and with God’s tools. When we do God’s work, we do it not only in His strength, but with His provisions. If we make ourselves, our gifts and talents available to Him, He takes them and stamps His name on them. It is not our voice that we sing with, it is God’s. It is not our skill that we teach with, but God’s. It is not our hands that we work with, but God’s. It is not our compassion that we help with, but God’s.

What do you use to minister in this church? Is it your gifts and abilities, or is it God’s? Have you handed them across to God to use as He sees fit or are you still holding on to them, not yet willing to share?

So what should we take home with us today?  
How about two questions that we need to ask ourselves.

**What ministry or task has God spoken to me about and what am I going to do about it?**

**No matter how small, what do I have in my hand that I can use for God’s work?**

God can use your service for Him and make an incredible impact. God needs you, the world needs you, the church body needs you - will you take your place in the body and help us change this community?

So what do you have in your hand? And what are you going to do with it? Remember the choice is up to you, but I pray that we, like Moses, would be surprised and even terrified at times by the power of God’s staff in our hands.

## Response to the Word of God

**Solo**

*“Moses”*

Bill Rutledge

### ***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***

### ***Sharing of Joys and Concerns***

### ***Prayers of the People***

Thank You, God, for the gifts of creation You have given us. For the abilities You have given that allow us to live, breathe, move and have our being. For the talents You have given that enable us to make a living and provide for our family's needs and the needs of others. For the responsibility You have entrusted us with to care for creation, to care for our brothers and sisters and to share Your love with the world. Bless the gifts we give back to You that they might be used for those ministries most in need. Bless us in Your service and use our lives to help create new life in the world.

### ***Lord's Prayer*** *Now let us pray together the prayer our Lord taught us*

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.

## **The Sending Forth**

### ***Benediction*** *(from: SusieLarsonBlessings)*

May God's opinion matter far more to you than man's opinion. May His dreams for you speak louder than your fears. May you refuse to read into situations that make you anxious. May Jesus' promise to protect and provide be enough for you. May His forgiveness wash over every sin from your past. And may you rise up in the knowledge that He's made you brand new, through and through. No spot or stain on you!

**Postlude**

*“O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing”*

Bill Rutledge

### Joys- September 20<sup>th</sup>

**Joy** – Jay and Eunice celebrating 55 years of marriage- congratulations!

**Van Dyke:** church family not here physically with us, but are here with us

### Concerns- September 20<sup>th</sup>

**Barnes:** Kim Hedrick- (friend) health issues

Eunice- sciatica

Loss of Eunice's brother, who passed away last Sunday

**Benton:** Linda Crawford- (friend) cancer, good test results

**Blair:** Katy Neel- (LHS student) lymphoma- chemo

Glen Murgacz- (friend) terminal brain cancer

Rhonda Witt- (neighbor) hospitalized with blood infection, home now

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

Roy Graeber- (Sammy's cousin)- recovering from intestinal surgery

Judy Jockets- (sister's friend) lung cancer

Jim Cutler- (LHS teacher) stage 4 lung cancer

**Carey:** Laura- prayer outreach ministry, boldness and protection

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

**Compter:** friends exposed to Covid

Elizabeth- (friend) nearing end of life, not a believer

Bob- (friend) Parkinson's

Michael Compter-(brother) heart failure

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

Janice Campbell-(friend) under hospice care

Ryan- (grandson) searching for his faith

**Diddams:** Lois- problems with medications

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

**Dills:** Katy Neel- lymphoma- chemo

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

Steve Trombecky- (friend) home recovering

Christina- (daughter) lives in Covid hotspot

**Foster:** Joyce Abbott- (former member) cancer

Andre Nemenek- (Shepherds table cook) prostate cancer

Mike Milton- (friend Donna Cone's brother) tested positive

Marian Kelly- (friend) breast cancer, mother's caretaker

**Goodman:** Randall Sales-(SRHS coach) cancer

Katherine Saunders- (Hugh's daughter) hospice

**Gould:** cousin in Texas has virus

have cousins in Lake Charles, LA

**Griggs:** Danny Miller- (co-worker) bladder cancer

**Harris:** Judy- doing better

Jim- recovering from knee surgery

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

Barbara Lore- (Helen's sister) heart problems

**Koch:** Doris- stroke

**Kuhn- Kibbey:** Nancy Milton- (friend) cancer, Alzheimer's  
Dot- idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis, wet macular degeneration  
Grandson- alcoholism

**Mauser:** Joyce Reese- (friend) health problems  
Steven-(son's boss) going blind  
Norma Jean- (Gayle's sister) medical issues

**Meyers:** Scouts needing new meeting place and Scout Master

**Mitchell:** Bill- cancer, chemo and injections

**Monk:** Libby- hurt her hip and in pain

**Morris:** all law enforcement, firefighters and all other first responders  
Forensic scientists who deal with crime  
Rev. Pam Ledbetter-(friend) home, doing well  
Doris Jean Coble- (cousin) in nursing home  
Neal & Win Holland- in Australia, whole family has Covid

**Richwine:** Joan- sciatica

**Salley:** Emily Salley- (sister-in-law) recovering, good test results  
West Coast dealing with fires, Gulf hurricane aftermath

**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  
Sonny- (son) colon cancer

**Smith:** Dorothy Smith (John's mother) moving into assisted living, prays she comes to the Lord  
Kathi McCarl- (friend) had back surgery, not lucid after surgery

**Stetson:** David Wykle- lymphoma

**Stevens:** Jackie Landis- heart problems  
Mike Elliston- asthma

**Toney:** Karen Hyde-(friend) bladder cancer  
Cal Rice- (former pastor) bone cancer, refused treatment

**White:** Robert- pacemaker and defibrillator implanted

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

**Prayers for those dealing with loneliness**

**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**

## Three new ways to support Bedford Presbyterian Church ministries

**CREDIT CARD!** -- Go to the Bedford Presbyterian Website and look for the DONATE button. Donations through the website will be charged a 2% processing fee by the Presbyterian Foundation.

For more information:

<https://www.bedfordpresbyva.org/donate.html>



**SHOP ONLINE!** – on your web browser or cell phone app shop at Amazon Smile ([smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com)). Register Bedford Presbyterian as your charity of choice and Amazon will .5% of your entire eligible purchase price to the church.

For more information: <https://smile.amazon.com/>



**SHOP IN THE STORE** – Link your Kroger Card to Bedford Presbyterian Church as your charity of choice and a percentage of all your purchases will be contributed to the church.

For more information:

<https://www.kroger.com/i/community/community-rewards>



# F I R E

**A Night Full of Praise, Promise and Prayer**

**Bedford Farmers Market**

**Saturday, September 26th, 7-9 pm**

**Bring a chair and social distance, for a free live performance**

**by the F.I.R.E. Band**

**Thank you for continuing to send in your contributions and pledges.  
You can mail your pledge or contribution (also 5 ¢ a meal and Heifer) or you  
can drop by the office, Mon-Thurs between 8 am - 4pm.**

**Activities for week of September 20<sup>th</sup>:**

**Sunday:** 10 am Worship

11:30 am Prayer Time in the fellowship hall

**Monday:** Quilters- 6 pm

**Tuesday:** Something More- 4:30 pm, in-person and ZOOM

**Saturday:** Quilters all day, fellowship hall

F.I.R.E. concert in farmer's market, 7 pm

**Sunday:** September 27<sup>th</sup>

10 am Worship with Rev. Philip Parker

11:30 am Prayer Time in the fellowship hall

**Would you prayerfully consider helping to lead our Church?**

Our Church nominating committee has several openings and is now prayerfully looking for 6 people to serve in leadership positions for class of 2023 (a 3-year term). If the Holy Spirit is speaking to you about the possibility of serving in any of these areas, please talk with: Paul Van Dyke, Russell Stevens, Sonya Smith, Dot Kuhn, or the pastor

Elder in charge of Discipleship

Elder in charge of Finance

Elder in charge of Worship

Deacon

2 Trustees



**Happy Birthday!**

Barbara Saunders- 20th

Dick Diddams- 21st

Sydney Dills- 24th

Ron Morris- 24th

Morgann Dills- 25th

