

Bedford Presbyterian Church

105 West Main Street, Bedford, Virginia

From 1844 to 2021 (177 Years)



Week of February 21, 2021

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.

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

"Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing"

Decou

Words of Welcome and Announcements

- A reminder that Something More will resume on March 3rd at 3 pm.
- For other announcements, be sure to read the rest of the bulletin
-

Minute for Missions

CarePortal

Becky Noell

Call to Worship (adapted from Psalm 116)

One: What shall I return to the Lord for all His bounty to me?

All: I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord.

One: I will pay my vows to the Lord in the presence of all His people.

All: In the courts of the house of the Lord, in your midst, O Jerusalem. Praise the Lord!

Hymn of Praise

"I Will Call Upon the Lord"

Hymn 653

Prayer of Confession

Creating and Ever-Renewing God, You have made us in Your own image. You have invited us to be recreated in Your image, to let go of everything that masks Your image in us. We confess that we prefer to make ourselves into images of worldly success. We confess that we would prefer to recreate ourselves in the image of upward mobility. We confess that we like the illusion of those masks that we think hide us from Your loving eyes. Awaken our souls to the need for repentance and awaken us to the meaning of our baptismal vows. In Jesus' name, we ask. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

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"

Hymn 734

PROCLAIMING THE WORD OF GOD

Time for all God's Children

Scripture Judges 4:1-10, 4: 14-24, Matthew 23:27

Praise Song *"Wonderful, Merciful, Savior"* Praise Team

Sermon Deborah, a Mother in Israel

Detained on board a British warship just outside the harbor of Baltimore, Maryland, a young lawyer by the name of Francis Scott Key witnessed the bombardment of Fort McHenry during the evening of September 13, 1814. The next morning, seeing that the huge American flag was still flying over the fort, he wrote a patriotic poem entitled "Defense of Fort M'Henry." We know it today as "The Star-Spangled Banner." The same could also be said of a much older poem proclaiming victory, written more than three thousand years ago. It's called "The Song of Deborah," and it's found in the book of Judges, Chapter 5, verses 1-31. It's one of the oldest poetic creations found within the pages of the Old Testament and just like "The Star-Spangled Banner," it not only tells the story of great victory, but was also put to music and actually sung in that long ago time. It's a fitting tribute to a woman who is described in the poem as "a Mother in Israel." This morning, let's discover how she acquired that honorific distinction and see if there are some things about her life that we can apply to our own lives as God's people in this day and time.

We know almost nothing at all about Deborah other than she was the wife of Lappidoth and that she served as a judge in an open air courtroom known as the Palm of Deborah, in the hill country of Israel. To hold such a position, arbitrating disputes and pronouncing judgements, indicated that she was well known, that she had acquired the respect and allegiance of the people and that she did not hesitate to take action either judicially or militarily. In terms of today, we might call her the 'Judge Judy' of the ancient world. In fact, her name literally means 'bee,' and for sure she became a bee in the bonnet, or should I say the helmets of the Canaanites.

Deborah ruled during one of those difficult periods in the life of Israel when the people were oppressed by a dangerous adversary, this time Jabin, a king who reigned in Hazor, a large city in northern Palestine. He had at his disposal a very capable general named Sisera, who commanded nine hundred chariots with iron rimmed wheels, plus a sizable force of infantry. For twenty years this Canaanite king and his allies had ruled over the Israelites, who for the most part were unskilled warriors, with little more than slings and farm tools to defend themselves. Deborah's poetic song in Chapter five paints a very depressing picture of the times. Verses 6 and 7 declare, "In the days of Shamgar son of Anath, in the days of Jael, caravans no longer went through the land, and travelers used the back roads. The towns of Israel stood abandoned, Deborah; they stood empty until you came, came like a mother for Israel." As was often the case during the days of the Judges, the Israelites had turned away from the Lord with devastating consequences, something which we need to heed in our own day and time.

So what was there about Deborah that made her such a compelling individual, befitting a poetic saga, to celebrate her life? May I suggest that there were three reasons. Here is the first. She was a prophetess. We usually think of prophets as being men like Elijah and Elisha. But that was not always the case in the ancient world. Sometimes they were women and moreover, they appear in both the Old and the New Testaments. In the book of Exodus, Miriam, Moses's sister is called a prophetess. The same is true with Anna, in the Gospel of Luke, in the New Testament, who proclaimed that the baby Jesus was the promised Messiah. Peter during his sermon on the Day of Pentecost, quotes the prophet Joel stating, "Your sons and daughters will prophesy" (Acts

2:17). In 1 Corinthians, Paul acknowledges that there were women who prophesied in the churches and during his last journey to Jerusalem, he stayed at the home of Philip the evangelist, who had four unmarried daughters, who also prophesied, Acts 21:9.

So there are a number of women, like Deborah, in the pages of the Bible who possessed the gift of prophesy, one of the gifts of the Spirit as outlined in Paul's first letter to the Corinthians. But what does that mean? The word 'prophet' is quite ancient in origin. It means "one who utters a communication." So taking it a step further, if a prophet is a prophet of the Lord, it means "a person who delivers a message from God," and that is precisely what Deborah did. She summoned Barak, the son of Abinoam, in the tribe of Naphtali and told him, "The Lord, the God of Israel commands you, 'Go, take with you ten thousand men of Naphtali and Zebulun and lead the way to Mount Tabor. I (referring to the Lord) will lure Sisera, the commander of Jabin's army, with his chariots and his troops to the Kishon River and give him into your hands'" (Judges 4:6-7).

Her prophetic ministry, as well as the other prophetesses mentioned in the Bible, is a reminder that the Lord has on occasion imparted a special gift to women that we need to not only acknowledge, but recognize as vitally important to the work of the Lord. Sometimes this gift is described as a woman's intuition, but it should never be taken for granted. For example, if Pilot had listened to his wife, he might not have gone down in history as the man who crucified the Christ. The Scriptures record that while Pilot was interrogating Jesus, his wife sent this message to him, "Don't have anything to do with that innocent man, for I have suffered a great deal today in a dream because of Him" (Matthew 27:19). Unfortunately, Pilot did not take her warning seriously, and you, of course, know the rest of the story.

But here is a story of which you are not aware. In my second church, there was a woman, whom I believe was a prophetess. Her name was Judy. She was a quiet woman. She never asserted herself in the affairs of the church, but early on I realized that there was something different about her, an ability to see and understand things that most people would never be aware of. On one occasion she came to me and said, "I sense that things are not well with your mother. I don't know what it is, but I definitely feel that you should bring her to live with you and your wife." My mother was getting up in years, living by herself in our family home hundreds of miles away. Judy had never met her, but there was something in what she said that had the ring of truth about it. I went home, made arrangements and brought Mom to live with us for an extended period of time. I was and remain thankful for Judy's prophetic ministry to me and my family.

Have you ever thought about the fact that when Jesus was raised from the dead, He appeared first of all not to the disciples, but to the women who had been a part of His ministry, women like Mary Magdalene? They were the first ones to greet Him and the first ones to authenticate His resurrection. In a sense, like Deborah, they were prophetesses, delivering a message from the Lord and I suspect that if we were more diligent in listening, there might yet be some prophetesses among us, even today. They have a vital role to play because, like Deborah, they have a heart for God, they can hear His voice in a way that we sometimes miss. We need to listen to them.

But here's something else about Deborah that we need to remember. She was a provider, an individual who took care of her people and it wasn't just the wise counsel she offered when she sat in judgement under her palm tree, she was the one who held the people of Israel together during a very difficult time. Israel was not yet a nation, just a collection of tribes. It would have been very easy for them to just disintegrate and be absorbed into the cultures of the other nation's surrounding them. In fact, that's almost what took place. There were no other leaders among the people. As is clearly stated in verse 8 of Deborah's Song, "Yet not a shield or spear could be

seen among the forty thousand warriors in Israel.” In other words, the men of Israel had turned into a bunch of cowards, unwilling to defend their land. Even Barak, who had been chosen by God to lead the army of Israel was scared. He refused to go into battle without Deborah by his side. She would have been content to remain behind. She was a judge, not a warrior. But to save the nation, she agreed to go into battle with Barak and his army. There was one caveat, however. “If I come with you,” she said, “there will be no honors for you or your men. The Lord’s victory over Sisera will be at the hands of a woman,” and so it was and so it usually is when God’s men shrink from their duties and responsibilities.

Do you remember the drama that we hosted for our 175 anniversary? Remember that first scene when Mrs. Thomas Leftwich visits the home of one of the church’s elders, J.C. Hopkins. She informs him that the Presbyterians in Bedford need their own church building in which to worship on Sundays. She then proposes that the four elders each contribute \$100 for the four corners of the building. She states that her husband had already agreed to contribute his one hundred. Then she turns to Mr. Hopkins. He begins to stutter and vacillate. She then declares, “I’m going to stay right here and enjoy your hospitality until you agree.” Was it not for her, we would not be sitting in this sanctuary this morning! Mrs. Leftwich was a Deborah in the life of our church and from its beginning to this very day, there have been many other Deborah’s just like her, women who held this church together through thick and thin. We need to remember and thank them for all that they have done and are still doing.

Finally, Deborah was a protector. She watched over her people and was willing to put her own life on the line when need be. She accompanied Barak to Mount Tabor and was there in the thick of it when the battle took place. Now just in case you want to know, this is what happened. The description of the battle is briefly noted in the poem, verses 19-21. Sisera and his army arrived in the valley below Mount Tabor, a place where they could utilize their chariots to full advantage, except for one thing. It rained and it rained a whole lot. In fact, the God of Israel, sent the rain. He arrived as the poem states in its early verses from Mount Sinai with thunder and lightning and literally turned the battlefield into a quagmire. Can you imagine the scene, the panic as horses and chariots became stuck in the mud, as soldiers lost their footing, as ten thousand Israelites came rushing down the mountain into their ranks? It was a rout, a total victory, courtesy of the Lord and His rain storm. The only one who got away was General Sisera and even he had an unfortunate acquaintance with a tent peg at the hands of a woman, Jael, just as Deborah had prophesied.

So Deborah was not only a prophetess and a provider, she was also a protector. Now, let’s be honest, most women are not going to find themselves on a battlefield, although in today’s armed forces, that’s becoming a more prevalent possibility. However, women, God’s women, still serve as protectors, even if it is in a different kind of way. Let me share this story with you, one that I heard many years ago. It was a testimony given by a pastor’s wife at a summer youth conference. This is what she said, “I grew up on the wrong side of the tracks. I was a lonely little girl, wearing a dirty dress, looking through the window into a Sunday school classroom on the nicer side of town. I knew I didn’t belong, that I didn’t have parents who loved their children like the ones inside that classroom. I was an outcast, but oh how I wanted to be inside that beautiful place with all the pretty pictures on the walls. I was so entranced that I didn’t even hear the outside door open until the teacher in the classroom beckoned to me and said, ‘Would you like to come inside?’ At first I was scared, but her smile was so warm that I couldn’t resist. And later with new shoes and a new dress that she purchased for me and my very own pocketbook, I began going to Sunday school every Sunday, became a Christian, years later met my husband and am now a pastor’s wife. Without her loving care and protection, I would not be standing before you this morning.”

During the last week of Jesus' life, He said, "O Jerusalem, O Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often have I longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing" (Matthew 23:37). That's what Jesus wanted to do, to gather up His people like a mother hen and protect them under the wings of His loving presence. He wanted to be a Deborah and that's what He wants all of us to be, both men and women, Deborahs who hear His voice, who provide for the needs of others and who shelter them under the wings of His abiding love.

RESPONSE TO THE WORD OF GOD

Solo

"Jesus, Lover of My Soul"

Medema

Affirmation of Faith

Creed

Myself, do not forget God's teaching, but let your heart keep His commandments; for length of days and years of life and abundant welfare they will give you. Do not let loyalty and faithfulness forsake you; bind them round your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. So you will find favor and good repute in the sight of God and of people. Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make straight your paths.

Doxology

"Doxology"

Hymn 34

Sharing of Joys and Concerns

Prayers of the People

The needs of this world still come to Your door, O God. Receive these offerings we bring. Use them in touching lives in significant ways: ways that bring strength, ways that renew hope, ways that lift up and reach out with love that You would still make incarnate. May we be the body of Christ today and may these gifts above all else exercise Christ's ministry. Amen.

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.

Closing Song

"May Your Presence Go With Us"

Don Moen

THE SENDING FORTH

Benediction

May the God of hope fill you with all joy in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit

Postlude

"All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name"

Decou



Lent Began February 17th

If you are interested in a devotional to follow during Lent, there are some at the back of the Sanctuary and in the hallway outside of the office.



Everyone knows the story of Samson, that mighty warrior with a full head of hair who defeated the Philistines. But do you really know him and how he came to such a tragic end? This coming Sunday we'll complete our sermon series on the Judges of Israel. In preparation for this final message, you are encouraged to read Judges 13:1-16:31, as we examine the life of Samson, the man who tried to serve two masters.

Joys- February 21st

Joy to see Bill Mitchell, Patty Meyers and Dianne Fain in service.

Concerns- February 21st

Avery: Rev. Frank and for Tinkie who has dementia

Barnes: Kim Hedrick- (friend) health issues

Eunice- sciatica, torn rotator cuff, doing better

Benton: Roger (friend) in rehab

Linda Crawford- (friend) mass on lung (after beating cancer)

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

Tonya Blair's friend-(Shelly Longnecker) recurring cancer

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

Judy Jockets- (sister's friend) lung cancer

Jim Cutler- (LHS teacher) stage 4 lung cancer

Dennis S. - terminal pancreatic cancer

Jean- (cousin) home after battling covid, has COPD

Kenny Johnson-(friend) heart attack

Don Bartz- (brother-in-law) pacemaker, heart valve replacement

Casdorph: friend who had quadruple bypasses

Compter: two brothers- unbelievers

Prayers for friends to come to the Lord

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

DeWitt- Tammy's mom in rehab, dad is home

Dills: Katy Neel- lymphoma- chemo

Fain: Dianne- stents inserted, home, doing well

Fleming: family dealing with addiction and self- esteem

Their children- having difficulties

Foster: Joyce Abbott- (former member) cancer

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

Craig Nielson-(nephew) in hospital with covid

Howard-(Tom's brother) thyroid and other health issues

Tom- pneumonia

Goodman: Charles- health issues

Randall Sales-(SRHS coach) cancer

Katherine Saunders- (Hugh's daughter) hospice

Grigg: Danny Miller- (co-worker) bladder cancer

Heinrich: Steven - (grandson) autoimmune disorder

Barbara Lore- (Helen's sister) heart problems

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

Dot- idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis, wet macular degeneration

Grandson- alcoholism

Dan Withers- (friend) inoperative cancer

Mauser: Joyce Reese- (friend) health problems

Steven-(son's boss) going blind

Norma Jean- (Gayle's sister) medical issues

Gayle- recovering from carpal tunnel surgery, home and doing well

Meyers: Patty- doing better

Patty McKinney- (friend) home now

Mitchell: Bill-doing better

Morris: Lisa (Robert's wife) lung cancer, beginning treatment

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

Forensic scientists who deal with crime

Doris Jean Coble- (cousin) in nursing home

Riley: Christine- fell, injured arm

Saunders: (Ronnie) Colin Bridges- (grandson)

Scott- (son-in-law) doing well, still undergoing chemo

Ronnie- worried about children

Scheurer: Jim Hedrick-(friend) cancer, partial lung removed

Bob Lindell-(friend) prostate cancer

Sonny- (son) colon cancer

Mike Shelton- Lynchburg ICU, infection, doing better

Smith: Dorothy Smith (John's mother) moved into assisted living; pray she comes to the Lord

Bill & Marie Walker- (Sonya's parents) continue doing well

Stetson: David Wykle- passed away, prayers for family

Clay Ramsey- thyroid cancer

Dr. Fessler- went blind, in hospital

Stevens: Jackie Landis- heart problems

Mike Elliston- asthma

Bill Gray- loss of leg, cancer, covid-19

Russell- upcoming knee surgery, May 5th

Toney: Karen Hyde-(friend) bladder cancer

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

Van Dyke: Donna Mannel- (friend) MS

Prayers for all front line workers, Drs, nurses, first responders

Prayers for our nation and our President

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 to speak and listen to those who are different



Bedford Christian Ministries is in need of the following:

Mixers

Toasters

Coffee Makers

Can Openers- manual and electric

Microwaves

Blenders

Air Fryers

Towels/ Wash Cloths

Full, Queen and King, sheet sets

Diapers

School Supplies

If you can help, you can drop off your purchases at the church office or at BCM, Monday, Tuesday and Friday.

Three more ways to support Bedford Presbyterian



CREDIT CARD! -- If you wish to make a donation to the Church using your 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.

CLICK 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). Register Bedford Presbyterian as your charity of choice and Amazon will .5% of your entire eligible purchase price to the church.

CLICK 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.

Click for more information: <https://www.kroger.com/i/community/community-rewards>

It's not much.... but every little bit helps.



Capital Campaign

The funds raised by the 175th campaign are nearly depleted and a new campaign "Moving in Faith" has begun to address some exterior maintenance and repair issues, as well as some interior lighting upgrades. Some items are critical such as painting the steeple. Others, like new doors to the fellowship hall and sanctuary are not so critical but will soon become so. Our goal is \$45,000.00 over the next two years. Move forward in faith and give to the "Moving in Faith" capital campaign.

**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 February 21st

Sunday: 10 am Worship with Rev. Philip Parker
Prayer time in fellowship hall after service

Monday: Quilters- 6 pm

Tuesday: NO Something more, resumes March 3rd

Sunday: February 28th
10 am Worship with Rev. Philip Parker
Prayer time in fellowship hall after service

February Birthdays

John Salley -23

Janis Easter - 26

Richard Overstreet -27

Karen Overstreet -28

Here's a list of our shut-ins, please take time to send a card or
give them a call, to let them know you are thinking of them.

Covid Shut-ins

Mr. & Mrs. Roy Cram
Mr. & Mrs. Lester Heinrich
Mr. & Mrs. Dick Kibbey
Mr. & Mrs. Al Mauser
Mr. & Mrs. Ron Morris
Mr. & Mrs. Harold Neal
Ms. Lynne Palmer
Mrs. Christine Riley
Mrs. Judy Toney
Ms. Gloria Saunders
Mr. Ronnie Saunders
Ms. Mary Wilkes

Long Term Shut-ins

Anne Arthur
Rev. Frank & Tinkie Avery
Pat Clarke
Janet Eagler
Ann Fowler
Dorinda Hopkins
Doris Koch
Ruby Page