

Bedford Presbyterian Church

105 West Main Street, Bedford, Virginia

From 1844 to 2021 (177 Years)



Week of October 3rd

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.



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

"Oh, That I Had a Thousand Voices"

Paul Manz

Welcome and Announcements

- Offering Plates currently are not being passed. They are located at the front and rear of the sanctuary along with 5 ¢ a meal offering baskets. You can place your offering as you enter or leave the church.
- Prayer time meets in the Anna Latimer room following service.
- Adult Sunday School has resumed, meeting at 9 am in the fellowship hall. We hope to see you there.
- For other announcements, be sure to read this version of the weekly bulletin.

Call to Worship

One: Praise the Lord! Praise Him from the heavens. Praise Him from the heights. Praise Him, all His angels, sun, moon and shining stars, stormy wind fulfilling His command!

All: Praise the Lord! Praise Him from the earth, mountains and hills, fruit trees and cedars! Wild animals and cattle, creeping things and flying birds! Kings of the earth and all peoples, young men and women alike, old and young together!

One: Let every living thing praise the Lord,

All: Praise the Lord!

Hymn of Praise

"Let the Whole Creation Cry"

Hymn 6

Prayer of Confession:

Holy and merciful God, in these days of fear and uncertainty, forgive our little faith, forgive our selfishness and forgive our carelessness. As we stay indoors, forgive us if we also turn inward, forgetting those in need and neglecting our time with You and Your Word. Have mercy we pray, in the name of Jesus, our Savior. 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 to the Father"

Bill Rutledge

Proclaiming the Word of God

Time for all God's Children

Scripture

Joshua 6: 1-5, Hebrews 11:30

Anthem

"King of Glory, King of Peace"

K. Lee Scott

Disclaimer: Material from this message was adapted in part from messages found on the Sermon Central website.

An elderly Florida lady having finished her shopping was returning to her car, where she found four men in the act of leaving with her vehicle.

She dropped her shopping bags and drew her handgun, proceeding to scream at them at the top of her voice, "I have a gun and I know how to use it! Get out of my car, you scumbags!"

The four men didn't wait for a second invitation, but got out and ran like mad. The lady, somewhat shaken, loaded her shopping bags into the back of the car and got into the driver's seat. She was so shaken that she could not get her key into the ignition. She tried and tried and then it dawned on her why.

A few minutes later she found her own car parked four or five spaces farther down. She loaded her bags into her car and drove to the nearest police station.

The sergeant to whom she told the story was laughing so hard he was crying and pointed to the other end of the counter, where four pale men were reporting a carjacking by a crazy elderly woman described as white, less than 5' tall, glasses and curly white hair, carrying a very large handgun.

No charges were filed.

A crazy old lady with a handgun—that'll scare the dickens out of you! That's not a battle I would want to fight. But, today we are talking about the other battles in our lives, the real ones and why we don't need to be afraid if God is fighting for you.

"**Don't be afraid,**" is one of the most oft-repeated commands in the Bible. I've read that it's repeated 365 times—enough for every day of the year! (*I don't know if that's true—but it's repeated a lot!*). In these Biblical stories we are hearing, God not only tells us not to fear, but why.

The first reason is that just as God promised Joshua, so He also promises us, "**Don't be afraid, for I am with you wherever you go.**" Moses had told the people to follow Joshua, then Moses had died and there stood Joshua – all alone facing 2.5 million people on the wrong side of the flooded Jordan River with no way across. That's when God spoke to him saying, *be strong, be courageous, I will not fail or forsake you. As I was with Moses so I will be with you* (Josh 1:5-9). God is with you always, even when everything seems to go wrong, even in your biggest challenge and in turbulent times. God is with you always, wherever you go —so don't be afraid.

Now today, here is the next truth for us to learn: **Don't be afraid, for the Battle is the Lord's.** Which is where today's story begins, with a song we learned all wrong a long time ago. The song goes, *Joshua fit de battle of Jericho and the walls came atumblin down.* WRONG! Joshua fought no battle. He and all the soldier's in Israel simply walked, watched, and waited as God directed and God brought the walls "atumblin down." In fact the lesson from Jericho that God wanted to teach Israel is that if they in faith obeyed His commands - no matter how crazy such may seem – then God would win the battle for them; God's crazy plans for the assault on Jericho were designed to teach Israel that the battle is always the Lord's (1 Samuel 17:47). So let's get the story straightened out and then we will proceed to the application.

First, why Jericho? Did you know that Jericho was probably the oldest city to ever exist? Because there were plenty of freshwater springs nearby, people were probably settling there as early as 10,000 B.C. Then round 8,000 B.C., they built the first protectively walled city in history. Actually

multiple versions of the town of Jericho had been built and destroyed before Joshua came and each time the walls got bigger. The Jericho of Joshua's day was a wealthy, powerful, well-armed city sitting on the primary trade route through the land of Canaan. If they were going to capture the Promised Land, the Israelis would have to start with Jericho.

Jericho was not a huge city, but it was incredibly fortified with double walls protecting an area of approximately 10 acres inside; each wall approximately 40 feet tall and 6 feet thick. There were houses built between the walls in some places, which is where Rahab's apartment probably would have been. Approximately 20,000 people normally lived inside the city, but many more had probably come into town seeking refuge from the approaching Israelite army.

The city was prepared for attack. How could Israel break through these walls? They couldn't starve them out. There were fresh water springs inside the walls and the Spring Harvest had just taken place, so they had plenty of food and water. Trusting in their impermeability, Jericho was counting on a lengthy siege, which would give the neighboring kingdoms time to amass an army and attack Israel as they wasted time trying to gain an entrance. As the Bible said, *the doors of Jericho were shut, no one came in, and no one left.*

You can imagine how Joshua felt looking at these massive walls for the second time. It was probably these same walls of Jericho that had earlier discouraged the original 12 spies causing them to return with a bad report of "well-fortified cities" (Deuteronomy 1:28). **So the walls of Jericho had to come down, this city had to be decisively and quickly defeated, both to send a signal to the other Canaanite kingdoms that Israel was unstoppable and to send a clear signal to the Israelites that with God on their side anything is possible.** Which is why Joshua was given these very strange directions for the conquest of Jericho.

A fully armed division of 40,000 soldiers were to march once around the city once a day for six days and then return to camp -- a full circuit taking approximately one hour (4:13). The soldiers were to keep completely silent, returning no insults or challenges coming from the city walls; they were there simply to accompany and protect the Ark of the Covenant and the priests who were blowing on seven shofar (ram's) horns. On the seventh day, they then marched 7 times around and at the end of the seventh circuit with a loud blast of the horns and a great shout from the soldiers, the walls would come tumbling down. The soldiers were then to rush in taking the city, killing all the inhabitants, and burning everything to the ground as a sacrifice to God while also sending a terrifying warning to the rest of Canaan about any thoughts of resisting Israel's approach.

For the Israelis, the clues that this was God's fight not theirs, were the presence of the **Ark**, the blowing of **seven rams horns**, and the other multiples of seven: **seven days of circuits**, with seven circuits on the seventh day:

- First because the presence of the Ark meant that God was circling the city.
- Second, the multiple numbers of seven meant that this was a sacred event taking place. The Hebrew word translated "seven" (shevah) comes from a root that means "**to be full, to be satisfied.**" Thus, the number seven speaks of God's ability to finish whatever He started.
- Finally, rather than silver horns which were used to call the people to battle, the priests were blowing ram's horns which were used to announce celebrations, such as the year of Jubilee (Lev. 25:10). Thus the priests were declaring this as a Jubilee event, the year of Israel's in their new land.

So this whole spectacle was meant both as a test of Israel's faith and proof of God's ability win the battle. When the strongest city in Canaan, at God's command, fell without a fight, and all the soldiers had to do was walk, watch, wait, and then light the fire. Which is exactly what took place.

Though modern archeology blames both the draining of the Jordan river and the fall of Jericho's wall on an earthquake – which could have happened, God often uses natural phenomena to accomplish miraculous events – the evidence from the ruins of Jericho is that the walls did fall outward and that everything in the city had been set to the torch (they actually found jars full of grain not quite yet burned). They also found one section of the wall, containing apartments that didn't fall down (Rahab's apartment?). Coincidences? With God there are no coincidences.

Now think about this for a moment from Jericho's point of view. One morning 40,000 armed soldiers – nearly double the number of the city's inhabitants – begin silently circling the walls accompanying the Ark and seven priests who are blowing rams horns. This probably both terrified and confused those inside. Armed and ready for battle they stood at the walls and watched. But after one circuit the parade returned to camp.

Then, each day as the event was reenacted, their terror and confusion would increase; what was their enemy up to? But by the seventh day and now with seven hours of circling, they were perhaps getting bored, getting confident that their walls were truly impermeable! Until with just a shout, the walls came down and in the confusion the enemy rushed in. **There was no battle of Jericho, this was God's choreographed celebration to assure both Israel and the rest of the world, that the battle belongs to the Lord.** So if you are on the Lord's side, there is no reason to be afraid; if not, you should be afraid, very afraid.

Which brings us to today's application.

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| God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; what is weak in the world to shame the strong; ... things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, so that no one might boast in the presence of God. 1 Cor. 1:27–29 paraphrased |
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God's plan for the conquest of Jericho was seemingly foolish, but it worked. God's wisdom is far above ours and He delights in using people and plans that seem foolish to the world (Isa. 55:8–9). Whether it's Joshua with trumpets, Gideon with torches and pitchers, or David with his sling, God delights in using weakness and seeming foolishness to defeat His enemies and glorify His name.

For us the lesson is the same as it was for Israel. ***Don't be afraid, for I am with you wherever you go, and the battle always belongs to the Lord.***

Whether we realize it or not, like it or not, we Christians are still locked in a global spiritual battle for the souls of humanity. "The world, the flesh, and the devil" (Eph. 2:1–3) are united against Christ and His people, just as the nations in Canaan were united against Joshua and the Israelis.

As Pastor Warren Wiersbe noted in his commentary,

"It's unfortunate that many of the "militant songs" of the church have been removed from some hymnals, apparently because the idea of warfare disturbs people. But these zealous editors with scissors seem to have forgotten that the main theme of the Bible is God's holy warfare against Satan and sin. In the beginning, God declared war on Satan, and one day He will declare the victory when Jesus comes as a conquering king to establish His kingdom" (Genesis 3:1, Rev. 19:11–21, Wiersbe page 396)

Too many Christians want to emphasize “peace and goodwill” while ignoring the spiritual battle against sin. This means they’ve already lost the victory and are working for the enemy. We must never forget Paul’s warning about the savage wolves that are ready to destroy the flock (Acts 20:28–29). The Christian’s warfare is not against flesh and blood, but against enemies in the spiritual realm and the weapons we use are spiritual (Eph. 6:10–18, 2 Cor. 10:3–6).

A pastor attended a court hearing to protest the building of a tavern near his church and a public school. The lawyer for the tavern owners said to him, “I’m surprised to see you here today, Reverend. As a shepherd, shouldn’t you be out taking care of the sheep?” The pastor replied, “Today I’m fighting the wolf!”

Since the apostle Paul often used the military image to describe the Christian life, we dare not ignore the subject (Eph. 6:10ff; 2 Tim. 2:1–4; Rom. 13:12; 1 Thess. 5:8). Israel’s victory at Jericho illustrates three principles of spiritual conflict and victory applicable to our lives today, no matter what challenges we may be called to confront.

So, don’t be afraid, if we are on the Lord’s side we will always fight our battles from a position of victory

As God told Moses on the shores of the Red Sea, *the Lord will fight for you; you need only be still*, now he assures Joshua that the victory was already won before he ever set his foot on the field of battle. *Then the LORD said to Joshua, “See, I have delivered Jericho into your hands, along with its king and it’s fighting men (6:2).* Both times, God was declaring victory before fighting even began.

As Christians, we forget that we live in a position of victory. We often give up or give in, when we should be striving on because we have already won the battle. The New Testament makes it abundantly clear that Jesus has defeated Satan and has conquered death. The final victory has already been won. **Even though the enemy fights on, the war is over and the victory has been secured. In the scope of things, we may take a few lumps and may have some failures but in the end we win.**

The victory is ours; we need to start living like it. One of the last things Jesus told His disciples was,

I have said this to you, so that in me you may have peace. In the world you face persecution. But take courage; I have conquered the world!

John 16:33

But victory flows out of obedience. Before any battle can be won there has to be a plan to win the victory. This means that a sound and reasonable plan must be developed and then executed.

There were at least five ways to conquer a walled city in that day: by scaling the wall using ladders or ramps, by digging tunnels underneath the walls, by using battering rams to break open the city gates or else to smash a hole in the walls, by laying siege to the city until the people were starved into surrender, or by using some means of deception such as a truce or ambush. There can be no doubt that Joshua had something like this in mind before God laid out His plan victory: quietly march around the city with priests blowing rams horns, waiting for God to knock the walls down.

From a military standpoint, this plan was foolishness. There are times when God wants us to do things that others may think is foolish. The Apostle Paul understood this, when he wrote "*For the foolishness of God is wiser than man's wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man's strength.*" (1 Corinthians 1:25) With all the power and an angelic army available to Him, it seemed foolish for Jesus to quietly surrender and let Himself be killed. But in His death, defeating the Devil, paying our debt and freeing us from sin, Jesus accomplished far more than He ever could in His life. Scripture says for us to follow the lead of Jesus who trusted God, His Father to win the battle for Him. (Hebrews 12:1-3)

So, while the battle always belonged to the Lord, this Jericho plan was all about getting the people of God on the same page with God. Why did God make the plan last seven days? One commentator said that God knew it would take that long before the people would fully accept His plan. **Faith grows out of obedience.** The people of Israel were humbled before the enemy and the people of Jericho stopped seeing them as a true threat. They were humbled before God accepting the plan He had given to them. There are times when we need to humble ourselves before we can see victory.

We also need to wait for God to work.

Patience is a virtue, but there are a lot of times when we would like to be less virtuous and for God to get things done more quickly. We are a society that hates to wait. We are the people of microwave meals and fast food. We want to be in and out of the stores as fast as possible. We hate standing in line and traffic jams send our blood pressure skyrocketing.

The plan that God laid out for Joshua was going to take seven days to complete and there would be no fighting until the seventh day. Over the week the people would have circled Jericho 13 times. This would have been a long process. The seventh day involved seven times around the city. This could have taken anywhere between seven to fourteen hours to complete. This would have involved a great deal of patience.

Day after day the Israelites got up and marched around the city and the walls still stood. They didn't even budge one time. Over and over again, they circled Jericho and nothing gave any sign that God's plan was working.

Their walk revealed nothing to them, but showed a great deal about them. The people revealed their trust in God. As the people walked around Jericho their faith was growing. They knew the battle was already won and that the city was theirs. All they needed to do was walk, watch and wait.

The same is true of us today. We need to keep **walking** with Jesus, taking action where we have been told to move, but also **watching** for His work to be completed and **waiting** for His return. **Walking is an action, watching shows awareness, waiting is an attitude of faith.**

The war has been won, but our battles are not over, when we walk with God in faith, He makes the impossible a reality and we win the victory. Faith enables us to live in the victory that God means for us to have even in the midst of the fight. As the writer of Hebrews noted, "By faith the walls of Jericho fell, [only] after the people had marched around them for seven days." (11:30).

The walls came down not by force or fighting, not even by faith, the walls came down by God's hand, the soldiers need only to keep the faith and watch Him work.

Sometimes the greatest battles we face will not be against others or other things. Sometimes they are against ourselves.

What battles are you fighting?

What battles haven't you let God fight for you?

Are you willing to give up your plans and get on the same page with God?

- With Jesus, you are already in a position of victory
- but victory flows out of your obedience
- as you wait for God's timing, not your own

Let's pray about this.

Response to the Word of God

Hymn

"Faith is the Victory"

John Yates

Sharing of Joys and Concerns

Prayer of Thanksgiving

All that we are, all that we ever hope to be, all come as a gift from You. So help us now in our living and in our giving to be freed by that reminder. Receive these offerings from who we are and what we have and for what we hope and use them in Your gracious service for turning this world upon Your axis of providence. This we pray, these we give, in the name of Christ. Amen.

Invitation to Communion

Communion Hymn

"I Come with Joy"

Hymn 706

Communion

"Father, We Thank Thee"
"In Remembrance"

Louis Bourgeois
Beryl Red

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.

Hymn

"Give Thanks"

Hymn 359

The Sending Forth

Benediction (Romans 15: 4-7)

For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Postlude

"In Thee is Gladness"

Michael Burkhardt



Revival at Salem United Methodist Church

Beginning on Sunday, October 3, and continuing through Thursday evening, October 7, Pastor Philip Parker will be preaching a series of sermons from the Book of Daniel. This Old Testament book presents very poignant "Lessons in Living" for our own day and time.
Each of the evening services begins at 7:00 pm.



Adult Sunday School has resumed in the fellowship hall.
We begin class promptly at 9 am, to allow sufficient time for discussion after the lesson.
Hope to see you there!!!

Roanoke Holiday Pops Is Back!!!!



We have been able to reserve three tables for the Roanoke Holiday Pops Concert that will be on Friday, December 3rd, 7:30 at the Salem Civic Center. The tickets are \$49.00 each. For those who have never attended, it is a great way to kick off the Christmas season. With tables that are on the Civic Centers main floor we are able to bring appetizers to share and that is a big part of the fun and fellowship. Please call Judy Blair to reserve a seat or if you have any questions. 540-587-9416

Joys- October 3rd

Praise- Dot Kuhn-Kibbey thanks everyone for their concerns over the loss of her granddaughter

Praise- Barbara Nichols thanks everyone for their concerns over the loss of her sister

Concerns- October 3rd

Avery: Tinkie, in special care at Elks Home

Barnes: Kim Hedrick- (friend) cancer

Joey Hedrick- (Kim's husband) cancer

Benton: Linda Crawford- (friend) not doing well, chemo

Roger- (friend) in rehab

Roger Harris- (friend) recovering

Kim- sister's neighbor- thyroid cancer

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

Boone: Judy Jockets- (sister's friend) lung cancer

Jim Cutler- (LHS teacher) stage 4 lung cancer

Dennis Sulka- terminal pancreatic cancer

Roy Graber- (Sammy's cousin) intestinal surgery

Garland Craun- non-Hodgkin's lymphoma

Linda Bartz- (sister) treatment for GBS, doing better

Tammie Welge –(friend) pacemaker and fibrillator put in

Casdorph: (friend) Franklin, wife Linda, cancer

Ashley- (friend) father in hospital

Sarah- (friend) has Delta variant after being vaccinated

Chryssikos: Kathy- home

Compter: two brothers- unbelievers

Prayers for friends to come to the Lord

Bob- (friend) Parkinson's

Michael Compter- (brother) heart failure

Steve & Mary- (friends) Steve disabilities

John & Bobbi- (friends) John's mom passed and now Covid

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

Janice Campbell-(friend) under hospice care

Ryan- (grandson) searching for faith

Nancy Holmes- (friend) stage 4 ovarian cancer, chemo, surgery

Gayle Mauser- health issues

DeHart: Dick Hatch- fell and broke hip

Eagler: Janet – in Bedford Hospital, possible sepsis

Fleming: family dealing with addiction and self-esteem

Their children- having difficulties

Dominic- (Ann Marie's brother) hospital, mental confusion, encephalitis

Foster: Joyce Abbott- (former member) doing better

Howard- (Tom's brother) problem with legs

Goodman: Charles- health issues, heart monitor, dialysis

Randall Sales-(SRHS coach) cancer

Mike Virts- (nephew) cancer, surgery went well

Raymond & Carries Wood- lost daughter to covid

Michael McGuire- (grandson) injured in training, doing well

Graboyes: Leslie's mom, Janice, hospice, not eating

Brenda & Willie-(friend) Brenda under hospice care

Harris: Judy- not doing well, doing PT

Heinrich: Steven - (grandson) autoimmune disorder
Barbara Lore- (Helen's sister) heart problems

Hopkins: Mark- colon cancer, chemo

Kuhn- Kibbey: Nancy Milton & husband (friend) both in memory care
Jeff Milton- back surgery, aneurysm
Dot- idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis, wet macular degeneration
Will Hunter- (grandson) covid 19 in hospital, doing better
Family prayers- loss of granddaughter- Katie Stanley

Mauser: Joyce Reese- (friend) health problems
Steven-(son's boss) going blind
Barbara-(Al's sister-in-law) intense headaches

McGuire: Catherine- struggling from knee surgery

Morris: all law enforcement, firefighters and all other first responders
Forensic scientists who deal with crime
Doris Jean Coble- (cousin) in nursing home

Nichols: JC (nephew's son) mitochondrial disease

Saunders: (Ronnie) Colin Bridges- (grandson)
Scott- (son-in-law) terminal brain cancer

Scheurer: Jim Hedrick- (friend) cancer
Bob Lindell-(friend) prostate cancer
Sonny (son) colon cancer, taking radiation and chemo

Smith: Dorothy Smith- (John's mother) pray she comes to the Lord

Stetson: Clay Ramsey- thyroid cancer
Katy Dubinski-(daughter) friend Michelle, depression
Kaleb- (grandson) pneumonia, possible feeding tube

Stevens: Jackie Landis- heart problems
Duncan Elliston- (fireman)
Bill Gray- loss of leg, cancer
Jessica Canfield- (friend) struggling after surgery

Toney: Cal Rice- (former pastor) bone cancer, refused treatment
Mike Stafford, (neighbor) stroke
Brother- Jack- has malignancy on head

Van Dyke: Donna Mannel (friend) MS
Eleanor- (Nancy's mom) stable, nursing home, pray for Salvation
Thomas Blythe- (friend) in rehab, taking treatment

Prayers for Afghanistan citizens, those in path of CA fires and those affected by Hurricanes.

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 for those infected

Prayers to speak and listen to those who are different

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 -4 pm.

Activities for week of October 3rd

Sunday: 9 am Sunday School
10 am Worship
Communion
Prayer Time following service
Monday: Quilters, 6 pm
Cubs
Saturday: Prayer Table- Farmer's Market
Sunday: October 10th
9 am Sunday School
10 am Worship
Session
Prayer Time following service

October Birthdays

Kathy Grigg- 5th
Scarlett Stevens- 6th
Lori Stetson- 9th
Philip Parker- 11th
Janet Neal- 14th
Libby Monk- 21st
Patty Meyers- 21st
Jim Barefoot- 28th
Ann Marie Fleming- 28th
Linda Benton- 30th

October Anniversaries

Jay & Venus Gould- 5th
James & Ann Marie Fleming- 28th
Paul & Nancy Van Dyke- 30th

CARE TO SHARE A PRAYER with a neighbor?

Bedford Presbyterian will have a "Prayer Table" set up at the Farmer's Market offering conversation and prayers to all who walk up. **We also need two others to join her each week just to share conversation and pray with anyone who stops by our table.**

Contact Barbara Nichols for more information: 714-822-0216.

Farmer's Market: October 9th & 22nd

