

Bedford Presbyterian Church

105 West Main Street, Bedford, Virginia

From 1844 to 2022 (178 Years)



Week of January 21th

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

“Be Thou My Vision”

Paul Manz

Welcome and Announcements

- Prayer time meets in the Anna Latimer room following service.
- Boy Scout Spaghetti Dinner , Monday, at 5pm at the Community Center
- Something More will resume Tuesday, January 11th at 3 pm.
- The Congregational meeting is scheduled for January 23rd following service and then join us for a Soup and Pie Potluck afterwards.
- For other announcements, be sure to read the emailed version of the weekly bulletin.

***Call to Worship**

One: Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of our faith:

All: God was manifested in the flesh, vindicated in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory. We have gathered in His presence.

One: Let us worship Him with pure hearts.

All: Amen.

***Hymn of Praise**

“O Sing a Song of Bethlehem”

Hymn 242

***Prayer of Confession:** *Another year in the pandemic*

Holy and merciful God, 2022 brings us yet a third year of the pandemic and we have grown weary of the restrictions, the confinements, and the unknowns that stalk our daily activities. In these days of fear and uncertainty, forgive our little faith. As we continue to stay indoors avoiding crowds, forgive us if we also turn inward, forgetting those in need and neglecting our time with You and Your Word. Have mercy upon us as we pray, free our spirits to fearlessly respond to all the opportunities for new ministry that You bring to us in this new year. In the name of Jesus, our Savior, our leader in faith, 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

Introduction to Scripture

Scripture

Galatians 4: 4-7, Romans 5: 6-10

Anthem

“All Things Work Together for Good”

John Carter

Sermon

In the fullness of time

Portions adapted from: When The Time Had Fully Come, by Steve Shepherd @ SermonCentral.com

A time management expert at a conference was giving a speech about her success in business and how time management played such a huge part in the businesses success. She was engaged with the crowd and they seemed to love her; giving tips and sharing success stories. Suddenly, she realized she had been talking for two hours! She stopped to apologize to the weary group and explained that she had left her watch at home. When a voice came from the audience, "There is a calendar next to you."

Two hours. Not many people these days would tolerate a two-hour message. Having been conditioned by 30 minute TV shows and 15 second commercials, we would have to be vitally interested to stay engaged with anything any longer. Not that it wouldn't be good for us, but we feel like we don't have the time.

Which reminds me of a young preacher. Being new to the church, he asks an Elder "*How long do you want me to preach?*" The Elder replies: "*Son, you can preach as long as you like ... but we leave at noon.*"

Well that's a western way of looking at time. Other parts of the world treat time differently. When African Christians gather to worship, they have no set time for ending the service; it will end when everything that needed to be accomplished has been accomplished.

I was the preacher at one such service. And after 1.5 hours of praying, singing, and worshipping, it was finally my turn to open the Word. Ignorant of their ways and feeling that the service was running overtime, I shortened my sermon. After the service, I was given a gentle scolding from my translator – who knew that I had cut the message short. He said, "*We came to hear God's word. And we should not leave until we have heard all that God would say to us. Never shorten a message that God has given to you to give to us.*"

Such a different view and use of time – of which there are many around our world.

God also has a keen sense of time and has given the best advice when it comes to the use of our time on earth.

Be careful then how you live, not as unwise people but as wise, making the most of the time ... Giving thanks to God at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Ephesians 5:15-20

Be careful then how you live, not as unwise people but as wise, making the most of the time, because the days are evil. So do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit, as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts, **giving thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.** Ephesians 5:15-20

As you read through the Gospels, you should also see how closely Jesus was watching the clock – or in His case the calendar. Jesus was very aware of playing His part in a carefully scripted drama of truly universal proportions.

Jesus knew that He only had so much time to train His disciples and He also knew, as He informed His disciples that He would die on the day of Passover.

So we see Jesus, especially in His final week both instigating and going along with a higher plan which ended with His death precisely on Passover; and His return to life some three-days after. Jesus was following a plan that He himself had help lay down – from the very beginning of time.

As our scripture today explains it:

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son ... in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. Galatians 4:4-5

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children.

When was this time? Again, one cannot read the Bible without getting the sense that the entire course of human history – from our very beginning until the very end – has also been carefully plotted out on some heavenly calendar. So, Jesus' arrival on Earth appears to have been carefully planned for that particular time when most of the human race (from Africa to Europe) was very closely connected under Roman Rule: it was a world largely at peace with good roads to everywhere, one language, and a religious vacuum.

As the Greek word for fullness implies Jesus' birth was that time when everything was just right, it was the pregnancy carried to full-term, the cup filled to the brim, the net filled to bursting, it was at just the right time.

According to God's spiritual sense of timing, Jesus death was also precisely at that time when we humans were most hopelessly lost. The Bible says, that *God Proved his love for us in that while we were yet enemies – Christ died for us.* (Romans 5:8)

Ernest Hemingway once said: "*Life is just a dirty trick, a short journey from nothingness to nothingness. There is no remedy for anything in life. Man's destiny in the universe is like a colony of ants on a burning log.*" Hemingway sounded like a man with no hope for anything good in life. He took his own life at the age of 61.

In 1927, the USS submarine S-4 was rammed by another ship and quickly sank. The entire crew was trapped beneath the water. Heroic efforts were attempted to rescue the crew – but to no avail all hands were lost. But near the end a diver finally got down to the stricken sub and placed his helmeted ear to the side of the vessel and listened. He heard a tapping noise. One of the last few survivors was tapping out a question in Morse Code. The question came slowly: "Is... there... any... hope?" ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_S-4_\(SS-109\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_S-4_(SS-109)))

This seems to be the cry of all humanity: "Is there any hope?"

God's answer is: ***when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children***

I do believe that's God's timing is perfect. God's timing was right on! Aren't you glad you're living on this side of the cross? Those who came before could only live in hope that one day the promised Messiah would come, but we live with the historical assurance of Jesus' birth and His death; we still count our years from the days of that world changing event. **Ano Domini** (In the year of our Lord)

But notice that there is one more sense "of the fullness of time" that also applies to you and me personally.

... *And because we are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!'*
Galatians 4:6

*In the fullness of time, God sent His Son, so that we might receive adoption as children ... And because we are children, **God has sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts**, crying, 'Abba! Father!' So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.*

At the precise right time in history, God sent His son into the world, to bring about the redemption of all who would one day return to Him in faith. In the same way, in our personal history, when we are most ready, when we are ripe for the harvest, God sends the spirit of His son into our hearts. As He waited for the right time in history, so also God waits for the fullness of time in our lives – I presume, for a certain level of spiritual maturity.

You know you're getting mature when:

- You look forward to a dull evening.
- Your back goes out, but you stay at home.
- 95% of the time you spend in front of a computer is for real work.
- Your children are beginning to look middle-aged.
- When on vacation your energy runs out before your money does.

Spiritual maturity could be defined in many ways, depending on whom you are or where you are in life. Some people are still not mature at 60 or 70, whereas others may be very mature as a teenager; I've known a couple of those – I was not one of them

It takes a while for some people to become spiritually mature, to a point where they are workable or perhaps useful to God – so each of us also have our own timetable with God. When the fullness of our time comes God sends the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father."

In other words, God is both the Creator and is also the re-creator of our human soul.

It is God who makes both our birth and rebirth possible. We can't do either for ourselves.

- When the time is right, God births us, pushing us out of our mother's womb.
- Also, when the time is right God rebirths us, spiritually awakening us
- And when the time is right, God will bring us home.

But we do have a small part to play in our spiritual rebirth: we have to answer God's call. We have to repent, we have to think again about our life, we have to turn around and start walking back homeward. Our part in our rebirth is the day when we lodge our faith in Gods Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ.

So when the time is right and the person is ripe, that's when God will send His Spirit into their hearts and God will become their Father. That is the day when they cry out, "Abba, Father."

But notice this important difference. God has always sent His Spirit to work "on" people all the time. Jesus said, that when the Holy Spirit came, it would convict the world of sin and convince the world that Jesus is the Son of God. So ever since the days of Jesus, God's Spirit has been at work in our world and in our personal lives.

But God only sends His Spirit to reside in our hearts when we are ready, in the fullness of our time when we get to the point of surrendering our life to Christ and not before! God's timing is always perfect!

Time is so precious. We only have so much of it and only God knows when our time will run out.

Last week after a long life, Betty White died just days before her 100th birthday. Also last week, many would say that Bob Saget died too soon, at the age of 65 and in the middle of a comedy tour seeking to bring more laughter into our world. This last Tuesday a friend of Paul Van Dyke and myself, Thomas Blythe died fighting for every last moment of his life.

Any of us can leave this world at any time. Health declines, accidents happen, hearts stop. We all need to be walking with the Lord so as to be ready when our time comes to leave this world.

God entered into our world at just at the right time and He enters into our lives at just the right time. So now is a new year, another year for us and just the right time for us as God's children, to be wisely using our time for his glory.

Or as the Bible more pithily phrases it:

'Sleeper, awake! Rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.'

Let's pray about this.

Response to the Word of God

Worship Song

"Abba Father"

Steve Fry

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

"Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow"

Hymn 34

Sharing of Joys and Concerns

Prayers of the People

Father, in this new year and always, we ask You to bless not only our friends and relatives but all those that You care deeply for. Show them a new revelation of Your love and power.

Holy Spirit, we ask You to minister to their spirit in these fearful days. Where there is pain, give them Your peace and mercy. Where there is self-doubt, release a renewed confidence through Your grace. Where there is need, we ask You to meet their needs above and beyond what they even expect. Bless their homes, families, finances, their goings, and their comings. We ask this in the name of Your son our savior, Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray.

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.

Closing Hymn

"Blessed Assurance"

Hymn 426

The Sending Forth

Benediction

The love of God be upon you; the peace of Christ be in you; and the comfort of God's Spirit be with you; and with your children; from this day that we have here today, until the day of Christ's glorious return

Postlude

"And Can it Be"

Robert MacDonald



**Join us for a Soup and Pie Potluck following the
Congregational Meeting on January 23rd.**

Encountering God through His Creation

This past Sunday, a number of people spoke to me about the class I will be teaching on “Encountering God through His Creation.” The class will begin meeting this coming Sunday, January 9th at 9:00 am in the fellowship hall. I’ve tried to get in touch with everyone who spoke to me about the class, but just in case I have not contacted you, please know that you and, indeed, all who are interested are welcome. See you Sunday as we begin this fascinating study on how God has chosen to reveal Himself through His creation in the pages of the Bible and down through the centuries of Christian history. Philip



This December, Presbytery of the Peaks churches donated more than \$34,000 towards the Kentucky Disaster Relief efforts! These funds have gone to the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) to assist with the pressing needs of the community in and around Mayfield, Kentucky. PDA sent two volunteers immediately to the devastated areas to assist in addressing the short and long term needs of the people in the community.

Thank you for the compassion and generosity of the Peaks Presbytery congregations!

Joys – January 16th

Joy- John S. thanked the church for time off to spend with dad

Joy- Van Dykes joy of safe travels to get Jeff home and visit Nancy's mom

Joy- Patty M. had 3rd CAT scan, no cancer

Concerns- January 16th

Avery: Tinkie, hospice care

Barnes: Kim Hedrick- (friend) cancer

Joey Hedrick- (Kim's husband) cancer

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

Kim- sister's neighbor- thyroid cancer

Carolyn- (friend) diagnosed with bone cancer

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

Troops deployed to South Africa

Steve Arrington- (friend) pneumonia, possibly covid

Marshall Dunlap- (friend) cancer

Chris & Tonya- covid

Boone: Don Bartz- (brother-in-law) waiting on PET scan results

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

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, still struggling

Roy – more medical testing

Easter: Joe Donahue (friend) covid

Ruby Key (friend) foot is not healing

Fleming: family dealing with addiction and self-esteem

Their children- having difficulties

Christopher- grandson- cancer

Foster: Joyce Abbott- (former member) doing better

Howard- (Tom's brother) problem with legs

Phyllis Smith- daughter has covid

Goodman: Charles- health issues, heart monitor, dialysis

Mike Virts- (nephew) may have liver transplant

Graboyes: Leslie's dad- fell broke hip, recovering from surgery

Grigg: Danny Miller (co-worker) cancer relapse

Harris: Judy- having difficulty swallowing, eating

Heinrich: Steven - (grandson) autoimmune disorder

Barbara Lore- (Helen's sister) heart problems

Hopkins: Mark- colon cancer, chemo

Kuhn- Kibbey: Nancy & Jeff Milton (friend) both in memory care

Dot- idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis, wet macular degeneration

Dick- macular degeneration, taking shots

Mauser: Joyce Reese- (friend) health problems

Steven-(son's boss) going blind

Barbara-(Al's sister-in-law) intense headaches

McManis: those suffering from starvation in foreign countries
Areas hit by tornados especially hospitals

Meyers: Brother and great nephew covid

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

Neal: Harold, home, on oxygen
Whitney Janet's (friend) kidney removed

Nichols: JC (nephew's son) mitochondrial disease

Poindexter: Heather- rheumatoid arthritis, looking for rheumatologist
Brett- friends 4yr old, brain infection, recovering from surgery

Rutledge: Sherry (friend) covid complications

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, recovering from surgery

Smith: Dorothy Smith- (John's mother) pray she comes to the Lord
Bill Walker- (Sonya's dad)good results from tests

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: Wesley-(grandson) Crohn's disease

Van Dyke: Donna Mannel (friend) MS
Eleanor- (Nancy's mom) stable, nursing home, pray for Salvation
Nancy's brother-in-law , Gary Roesch passed away, prayers for family

Winberry: Chris- severe heart issues. Some improvement
Tom & Dee-(brother) COPD, maybe hospice, prayers far family

Prayers for Afghanistan citizens

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

Prayers on ways to help Massanetta, who are hosting 50+ Afghan immigrants

Prayers for those that were affected by the tornados

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 January 16th

- Sunday: 10 am Worship
9 am Sunday School in fellowship hall
Session
Prayer Time following service
- Monday: Cubs
- Tuesday: 3 pm Something More
6 pm Quilters
- Sunday: January 23rd
9 am Sunday School in fellowship hall
10 am Worship
Congregational Meeting
Soup & Pie Potluck
Prayer Time following service

January Anniversaries

Bill and Janet Yodis – 24

Biblical Book Notes

We are coming to the day when we celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. On this topic and so many others, the church library has good reads to offer! The following books will be available at the back of the Sanctuary for checkout, or browse the library collection anytime. If you cannot make it in person, contact Lynne Palmer, your church librarian, who can arrange for home delivery.



- Rick Warren, **The Purpose of Christmas.** In this brief and readable gem, Warren reminds us that this is a time for celebration, salvation and reconciliation.
- Fulton Oursler, **The Greatest Story Ever Told.** Oursler invents a fictionalized narrative to flesh out New Testament events with imaginative dialogues. In this book Jesus emerges as "the compassionate, forceful Son of God, sent into the world to bring new life and hope..."
- J. Vernon McGee, **Ruth and Esther, Women of Faith.** This book highlights the relationship of the Book of Ruth to redemption.