

Bedford Presbyterian Church

105 West Main Street, Bedford, Virginia

From 1844 to 2023 (179 Years)



Week of April 2nd

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.



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

"Alas, and Did My Savior Bleed"

Molly Ijames

Words of Welcome

***Call to Worship**

One: On this special Sunday we come to worship, thanking God for the promise of a Messiah and the gift of a Savior.

All: Jesus calls us to demonstrate our faith in our daily living.

One: Like the people long ago, we also welcome Jesus.

All: We prepare ourselves to follow Him to the cross and beyond.

One: Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!

All: Hosanna in the highest!

***Hymn**

"All Glory, Laud and Honor"

Hymn 265

*** Prayer of Confession**

Loving God, today we recall the glad hosannas of those who welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem. Today and every day we want to be people who happily welcome Jesus' presence with us. Help us to let go of whatever hinders us from being humble, as Jesus was; from being obedient, as Jesus was; from being as passionate as Jesus was about ministering your grace to others. Help us to be anxious about nothing, but in all things to trust in Your faithfulness, that Your peace will strengthen and sustain us, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. *(pause for silent prayer)*

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

Children's Time

PROCLAIMING THE WORD OF GOD

Introduction to Scripture

Scripture

Matthew 6: 25-34

Anthem

"Ain't No Rock Gonna' Shout for Me"

Larson

Sermon

The Teachings of Jesus: Don't Worry Be Happy

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

In 1988, Bobby McFerrin wrote a tune, that immediately went to the top of the billboard charts and has since become a perennial summertime beach party favorite – one of the few times when we might actually take its advice seriously.

Here's a little song I wrote
You might want to sing it note for note
Don't worry, be happy.
In every life we have some trouble
But when you worry you make it double
Don't worry, be happy. Don't worry, be happy now.

And so it goes. Bobby actually wrote another 200 verses for his song, all of which were then published as a book.

It's a catchy tune, but not a completely new concept. That same philosophy was espoused by Jesus of Nazareth 2000 years ago, in His Sermon on the Mount. Jesus not only said "*Don't worry*" He backed it up by repeatedly asking, "*Why do you worry?*"

"*Don't worry, be happy,*" but that is a lot easier said than done. Millions of copies of Bobby McFerrin's record have been sold around the world, but it didn't seem to have a major impact on whether or not people stopped worrying.

Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Matt 6: 25

We are fortunate in that most of us don't spend a lot of time worrying about where our next meal will come from, or if we have enough layers to keep us warm in the winter months. But for far too many people, these sorts of concerns do cause daily worry. We also need to admit that, no matter what our circumstances, every single person worries about something, whether it's concerning basic needs or frivolous wants, and everything in between.

People in Palestine Ohio, worry about long-term poisoned air, water, and soil after their recent train derailment. With anti-Semitism again on the rise, Jewish people worry about renewed attacks on themselves and their synagogues. People in Israel and Gaza are concerned that at any moment a missile might drop from the sky, destroying the neighborhood and killing innocent friends and family.

Closer to home, we worry about when the bottom might totally fall out of the stock market again, completely obliterating our retirement savings, or whether a shooter is going to show up in our children's class room.

We live with such fears on a regular basis. Is China spying on us through our cell phones? What if terrorists shut down the national power grid? Could a tornado wipe out my home or my entire home town? Will the next fatal car accident on the news name a member of my family?

These are the things that worry us and make us anxious, and I don't want to downplay the significance of the realities we face. Whether we are concerned about having enough of the

basic necessities like food, clothing, and shelter, or worrying over natural disasters and man-made attacks, these are legitimate reasons for worry.

So with all these truly reasonable concerns, how can Jesus calmly tell us not to worry? Reading this passage, I think, "*Oh how nice: cute birds and pretty flowers,*" but does Jesus REALLY expect me not to worry about making sure my family is safe, fed, clothed, and provided for? This is a pipe dream! How could Jesus possibly expect us to live life not worrying?

But we have to remember, Jesus knows about worry. Even though He is God's son, He was also human like us, with all the same experiences and feelings. I imagine that from time to time Jesus would be walking along with the crowds and His stomach would begin to rumble, and He'd start thinking about where He was going to eat that evening. He might've worried, just a little bit. Or, in sending His apostles out into the world, I am sure He was worried if they actually could disciple everyone, and in teaching others, that they would remember everything He had taught them.

So it's not so much that Jesus is telling us that we should live without worry; rather, I think, He is cautioning us about being consumed by worry. That is why the first thing we should note in this morning's text, is that the word that Christ used for **worry** in the Greek actually meant "**an anxious worry**;" it conveys a sense of continued anxiety.

So when you worry about and go to check on your grandchild out playing in the neighborhood, that's not a problem. But if you become consumed with such worry that you can no longer function, or you never let them outside of the house, then you have a problem. There is a world of difference between concern and anxious worrying. And so Jesus spends the next ten verses explaining why we shouldn't worry.

First because, worry is needless, useless, even dangerous. Jesus began with the most basic concerns of life; our need for food, clothing, and shelter. Now these aren't frivolous concerns. You might be able to run around bare tailed and live under a tree on the island of Tuvalu. But it's a small atoll, so for most of the world that just isn't an option. Besides on Tuvalu, they are really worried about losing their entire island to rising sea levels.

So Jesus begins with the basics. He doesn't say, "*Don't worry about where your next car is going to come from*", He says "*Don't worry about where your next meal is going to come from*" He doesn't say "*Don't worry whether you have Levis or Reeboks to wear*" He says "*Don't worry about what you wear.*"

Now that is not to say that we shouldn't be concerned with the material things of life, or with providing for our families. But the point is, **has worry ever been able to provide anything that we have ever needed?** Nope. Not at all. Here is a wise saying: "*Worry is like a rocking chair, it gives you something to do but doesn't get you anywhere.*" So, worry is essentially wasted energy, energy which could be used a lot more productively somewhere else.

Jesus continues on by drawing a couple of examples from nature to illustrate His point. ²⁶*Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?* Matthew 6:26

Now don't mistake what Jesus has said and start thinking, "*Great! I don't have to do anything but wait for God to provide me with all my needs, and all my wants.*" Christ wasn't talking

about not being gainfully employed, He wasn't talking about not having to work He was talking about worrying.

You don't have to watch a bird very long to realize that theirs isn't a life of ease; they are constantly, building nests, hunting for food, feeding chicks, and avoiding cats. But I would suspect that your average bird doesn't agonize over whether or not there will be another worm to catch tomorrow, or whether she'll be able to find enough twigs to build a new nest.

In a similar thought Jesus asks, *and why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, ²⁹yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these.* Matthew 6:28-29

One of the things I really love about living here in Virginia is the seasonal parade of flowers. It seems like every other week we are presented with another flowering tree, bush, or bulb. Israel also has beautiful flowers and fruit; a wall of flowering bougainvillea is stunning, along with olives, figs, and grapes for the picking. Perhaps the hill on which they were sitting was covered with flowers, so Christ is saying "Look around you, look at the beauty that God has created and yet it doesn't worry!"

If we can concede that God created everything around us, and if we can concede that God created us, then we should be able to concede that the same God who created us can take care of us. **When you think about it, our worrying is essentially a lack of faith in God's promise and ability to provide for us.**

Christ then comes to the point: *can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life?* Matthew 6:27 Pretty much sums it up, doesn't it?

You see, worry is not only needless, for a believer it is also useless. **Worry doesn't change a thing.** Everything that you worry about will fall into one of two categories.

- It is either something you can do something about, or it's something that you can't do anything about.
- And if you can do something about it, then do it. But if you can't do anything then worrying about it isn't going to solve the problem. It won't go away if you worry about it and it's not going to get any smaller. If anything it's going to get bigger and bigger in your imagination.

It's kind of like the guy who had a flat tire on a back road late at night and then discovered that his jack was missing. As he starts down the long dark road to a farmhouse in the distance he gets to thinking,

- "What happens if there's been a lot of break-ins around here lately? And what if the farmer hears me and thinks I'm a burglar?"
- And what if he's bought himself a couple of pit bulls for protection?"
- And what if when I arrive he doesn't give me a chance to explain who I am and when I knock on the door he turns the dogs loose on me?"

Well the closer he got to the farm the more he had convinced himself that the very worst was going to happen. So when he finally got to the house he beat on the door and when the farmer answered the guy shouted, "I didn't want your dumb old jack anyway" and stormed back to his car.

Not only is worry needless and useless but it's also dangerous. **Worry is detrimental to your health.** The two illnesses that most typify our society today are ulcers and coronary disease. Both of which have stress at their root. There are Christians who shun alcohol and tobacco because they are harmful to their bodies and yet the very same people worry themselves into an early grave. Worry is not a harmless pastime, it will make you old and will kill you before your time.

Second, worry is blind. One thing that I remember from High School History, that my teacher was fond of telling us is, "*the one thing we learn from history is that we don't learn from history;*" that applies equally to our worries as well.

If we were to chart the various things that we worry about we would probably discover that most of them are repeats. That is to say that we've already worried about them once, twice, or three times before. And if the truth was known they probably didn't happen then and they probably won't happen now. God didn't forsake you yesterday and He won't forsake you today. God is faithful and we only need to look at how He fulfilled our needs in the past to see that He will fulfill our needs in the future.

So I suppose, what we need to do is to look at all the things that we've worried about in the past and say, "*Well I've already worried over those things so it's useless to spend any more time on them now.*" God has been good and there is no reason for me to suspect that He is going to change, right?

We need only look at the blessings of yesterday to see the promises for tomorrow. Look around you Jesus says, see how God takes care of the flowers and the birds, and then reflect on how much more important you are to Him than they are. Realize that God loved you so much that He sent His only begotten Son, Jesus to die on the cross for you. And if He loved you that much then He's not going to forsake you now.

Finally, worry is irreligious. Christ said it's the heathen who worry. That's true, because to say that we need to worry is to say that God can't or won't take care of His Children; and to say that is to commit blasphemy.

Has God ever let you down?

Has God ever failed you?

To begin to doubt Him now is to ignore all that he's done for you in the past. Our friends, our family, even our earthly parents may disappoint us and let us down but God never will. And so Jesus gives us two solutions to worry.

The first is to seek to live righteously in the kingdom of God, funny how that keeps coming up. Jesus keeps coming back to this principle of putting God's Kingdom first. And it works; have you ever noticed that when you're busy doing God's work, you're too busy to worry.

As followers of Christ, our main objective is to be representatives for God. No matter how noble the other pursuits of our life may seem, our major pursuit needs to be living as faithful citizens of God's Kingdom. The great thing is that when we make that our priority, we can be sure that God will be taking care of the details.

The second thing that Christ tells us to do is to take life one day at a time. The rest of our life is enormous, but today has only twenty four hours in it and that's a big enough bite if we want to use our time wisely. As the apostle Paul advised...

Be careful then how you live, not as unwise people but as wise, making the most of the time ... Ephesians 5:15-16

How might you react if your bank credited \$86,400 dollars to your account every single day, the catch being that the money had to be used up the same day, if not, it's taken away. But the process is then renewed the next day and every other day with \$86,400 being credited to your account daily. I'm sure most people would have no hesitation and would find ways to use most, if not all that money every day! Similarly, God blesses us with 86,400 seconds credited every day, which can never be reclaimed if not used! Let us therefore use all our time wisely and without worry.

Here is another wise saying from days gone by, "*Yard by yard life is hard, but inch by inch it is a cinch.*" Which is exactly what Jesus meant by saying ...

So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today's trouble is enough for today Matthew 6:34

So the entire question about our worrying and the reason why Jesus spent so much time talking about worrying is this: **Do I believe – as Jesus said - that God cares for me? How much faith do I truly have in God's ability to provide for my every need?**

God has told me to *cast all my cares on Him, because He cares for me.* ^{1 Peter 5:7} My past experience certainly has shown that He has cared for me many times, even when I didn't recognize His caring hand in my life. Only later, when I reflected back on the "coincidence" of the day, did I see God's touch.

So somewhere along the line I decided that while I haven't come to the place where I stop worrying all together, but that I could at least limit my worrying to that which I can do something about today! During this day I may fret and stew and imagine the worst, but tonight when I go to bed, I will give this concern to God and let Him worry about it. Since God doesn't worry, neither should I. Don't worry, be happy.

RESPONSE TO THE WORD OF GOD

Creedal Statement (Matthew 6: 31-34)

Therefore do not worry, saying, "What will we eat?" or "What will we drink?" or "What will we wear?" For it is the pagans who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. 'So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today's trouble is enough for today.

Doxology

"Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow"

Hymn 34

Sharing of Joys and Concerns

Prayer of Thanksgiving

As we draw ever closer to Jerusalem, O God, and as we learn more and more about Your Son and what He has offered up for us, we ask You to bless the gifts we offer to You – knowing that they cannot match Your love, but knowing also that somehow, in Your mercy, they will be enough; and so will we, under the mercy of Him who is Your Son, in whose name we pray.

Invitation to Communion

Hymn of Preparation

“Behold the Lamb”

Getty/Townend

Communion

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***

“When I Survey the Wondrous Cross”

Hymn 261

THE SENDING FORTH

****Benediction*** (Romans 15: 13)

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

Postlude

“When in Our Music God Is Glorified”

Mark Hayes

The flowers are given to the Glory of God and in memory of my parents,
Fred and Gloria Wiepert by Lynne Palmer.

Concerns- April 2nd

- Avery:** Tinkie, hospice care, Frank, cancer returned
- Barnes:** Kim Hedrick- (friend) cancer
Ruth (sister) broke back, surgery
- Benton:** Tracey Thomas- (daughter's friend) having problems with transplant
High school friend- prayers
Sister-in-law, breast cancer
Tom Wilson- (friend) melanoma
Linda- personal issues
- Blair:** Larry (John's brother) heart attack, 2 stents, home
Steve Arrington- (friend) not doing well
Marshall Dunlap- (friend) cancer
Ecumenical youth group
- Boone:** Michael Bamber (friend) recovering from chemo
Tony Martin- stroke, long time Bedford resident
- Callahan:** Mary Jane Long (friend) kidney removed
- Clarke:** Weebie- hospice care
- 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
Zoey Foster- (child) injury to abdomen, doing well
Vicky- (friend) recurring lymphoma
May- (friend) breast cancer
Barbara- MRI
- Cram:** Winslow's-(friends of Sally) family & medical problems
Janice Campbell-(friend) under hospice care
Ryan- (grandson) searching for faith
Al & Gayle- Gayle health issues, Al caretaker
Lory Graham (friend) health issues, Carolyn, wife caretaker
Anna Michnevich: (friend) 94 yr. old fell and broke arm
Frank Siciliano (brother-in-law) gall bladder surgery
- Creasy:** Walker Wright (Elizabeth's brother) stroke
- DeHart:** Dawn's mother radiation treatments
- DeWitt:** Gerald's father in rehab, then assisted living
- Dwyer:** West-(friend) cancer surgery
- Easter:** Ruby Key (friend) cancer
- Foster:** Ron- (brother-in-law) to get out of hospital and into home
Howard & Lynn (brother) difficulty with legs, wife dementia
Tom- breathing problems, sinus infection
Prayers for everyone on dialysis
- Goode:** Michelle, husband's sister surgery went well
- Goodman:** Prayers for family on the passing of Charles
- Harris:** Jim-kidney stones
- Heinrich:** Steven - (grandson) autoimmune disorder
Barbara Lore- (Helen's sister) heart problems
- Kuhn- Kibbey:** Dot- idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis, wet macular degeneration

Dick- macular degeneration, taking shots
Dick's sister (Kibbey) - dementia, Washington state

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

Meyers: Patty- in pain, cancer, waiting on surgery, alpha gal

Morris: all law enforcement, firefighters and all other first responders
Families of those who serve
Kyle Coble- (cousin) leukemia
Rev. Pam Ledbetter, auto-immune, diabetes
For our church as we go through transition
Ron- back spasms, in Oakwood

Narwid: Ed- not doing well

Neal: Harold- Alpha Gal, can only see shapes, back brace

Nichols: for family who doesn't know the Lord
Gracie Murphree- for their safety

Palmer: Family friend, health issues, recovering from surgery

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

Scheurer: Jim Hedrick- (friend) cancer
Bob Lindell-(friend) prostate cancer
Sonny (son) doing well

Smith: Dorothy Smith- (John's mother) pray she comes to the Lord
Marcus (Sonya's brother) upcoming medical tests

Stetson: Clay Ramsey- thyroid cancer
Nick, Tiffany & Savannah (doing better)

Stevens: Jackie Landis- heart problems
Bill Gray- loss of leg, cancer
Smith Farris- (friend) recovering from surgery, pneumonia
Keith Burnett- heart problems
Mel Nowlin- (former firefighter)
David Overstreet- (daughter's friend) heart attack

Van Dyke: Donna Mannel (friend) MS
Rick Anderson (niece's husband) home recovering

Winberry: Chris- severe heart issues, improving
Tom & Dee-(brother) COPD, maybe hospice, prayers for family

Prayers for our nation and our President

Prayers for those dealing with loneliness

Prayers for healing the divisive spirit among our leaders/nation

Russian invasion ends and not resort to nuclear weapons.

Nations to stand up for freedom.

Prayers for new residents to come to worship with us

Prayers for our constant responders

Prayers for Ukraine

Pray for World Peace

Earthquakes in Turkey & Syria

Tornado destruction in Mississippi, Alabama and Georgia

April 2023

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1
2 <i>10 am Worship Palm Sunday Communion Prayer Time</i>	3 <i>Cub Scouts 3pm Called Session Meeting</i>	4	5 <i>Something More 3pm</i>	6 <i>Maundy Thursday, 7pm</i>	7	8 <i>New Members class</i>
9 <i>10 am Worship Easter Sunday 5 ¢ a Meal Prayer Time</i>	10 <i>Cub Scouts</i>	11	12 <i>NO Something More</i>	13	14	15
16 <i>10 am Service Session Prayer time</i>	17 <i>Cub Scouts</i>	18	19 <i>Something More, 3 pm</i>	20	21	22
23 <i>10 am Service Prayer Time</i>	24 <i>Cub Scouts</i>	25	26 <i>Something more, 3pm</i>	27 <i>Cancer Group, 6pm</i>	28	29

30

*10 am Service
Prayer time*

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 April 2nd

Sunday: 10 am Worship
Palm Sunday
Communion
Prayer time following service

Monday: Cub Scouts
3 pm Called Session Meeting

Wednesday: Lenten Lunch, 12 pm, MSUMC
3 pm Something More

Thursday: 7 pm Maundy Thursday Service

Friday: Good Friday Service, 12 pm at Washington St. Baptist (no meal)

Sunday: April 9th
10 am Worship
Easter Sunday
5¢ a Meal Offering
Prayer time following service

April Birthdays

Margaret Lambert - 4
James Fleming- 11
Sherry Parker - 18
Tricia Schubert - 23
Al Mauser - 24
Richard Tate - 29

April Anniversaries

Dave and Lori Stetson - 1
Ron and Margaret Morris - 8
Russell & Scarlett Stevens- 8
Fred and Sandy Scheurer - 22
John and Sonya Smith - 30

Dear Church family,

The next few months will see the start of our journey, transitioning from Rev. John Salley's leadership to calling a new pastor. We described the near-term steps in the recent congregational meeting (*which can be seen on YouTube at the end of the March 12 worship service video*). But we have also summarized them here. In addition, Becky Noell will be setting up a visual cork board display on the first floor hallway marking our progress in this process.

The Presbytery counsels us to give the congregation time to consider or reconsider its mission going forward and consequently the key requirements for a new pastor. They recommend that we do a new church self-study based on new survey information.

- Thus we are asking you to **please come to church early, before the service begins (9:30 to 10:00am), on one of the next two Sundays, March 26th or April 2nd to fill out a Church Vitality Survey**; the survey is anonymous. If you are unable to take the survey one of those two days, please contact the office to make alternative arrangements. Shut-ins will have the survey brought to them.
- Once the survey has been analyzed by PCUSA and returned to us, there will be a congregational work session on a Saturday -- date still to be announced -- to create or update our mission statement. When this statement is complete, the Session will need to approve it and then ask the Presbytery for permission to form a Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC.)
 - When permission has been granted to form a PNC, the session will schedule a congregational meeting to nominate and elect a PNC.
 - The Session suggests restricting the PNC to no more than 5-7 members.
 - Any active church member is eligible to serve on the PNC
 - Nominations will be accepted from the floor and then voted upon.
- Once the PNC is formed, there will be an education session to brief the PNC members on their task.
- The PNC's first action is to create a "*Ministry Information Form*" (MIF) which builds upon our mission statement to describe the candidates that would best fit our church. This form will be approved by the session and forwarded to the Presbytery.
- After this, the PNC will operate independent of the Session and in secret. The Presbytery will provide "*Pastor Information Forms*" (PIFs) for the PNC to consider. In addition, the PNC can look anywhere else to find suitable candidates.
- Through a careful interview process, the PNC will choose one candidate to present to the congregation who will then vote on whether to offer a call.
- Once the congregation approves the candidate, that person will be examined by the Presbytery. If the candidate is already a Presbyterian minister or a minister from another reformed denomination the examination is routine. If the person is a seminary graduate, but not yet ordained, or is a minister from a non-reformed denomination, the review process is more extensive. If the Presbytery approves, then the process is complete.

In the interim, once Rev. Salley retires and until a new pastor starts his/her tenure, the session is responsible for filling the pulpit and all other pastoral tasks with the help of the deacons. The Presbytery will provide a moderator for session meetings.

While the process is complex and time consuming, it has been done 25 times before. It has taken as little as seven months to as long as two years.

If you have any questions, please contact the pastor, or any member of the Way Forward committee:
Ann-Marie Fleming, Becky Noell, Philip Parker, Bill Rutledge or Paul Van Dyke.

Stay tuned for more information on celebrating Pastor Salley's retirement!

Sincerely,
The Session