

Bedford Presbyterian Church

105 West Main Street, Bedford, Virginia

From 1844 to 2023 (179 Years)



Week of April 16th

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

"Christ Alone"

arr: Jeff Bennett

Words of Welcome

***Call to Worship**

One: This is the day the Lord has made

All: Let us rejoice and be glad in it!

One: Jesus is risen!

All: Christ is risen indeed!

One: Our celebration of Easter life continues,

All: Let us worship and give praise to God.

***Hymn**

"Alleluia, Alleluia! Hearts to Heaven"

Hymn 289

*** Prayer of Confession**

Merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against You in thought, word and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart and mind and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. In Your mercy forgive what we have been, help us amend what we are and direct what we shall be, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways, to the glory of Your holy name. Through Christ, our Lord. 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

Children's Time

PROCLAIMING THE WORD OF GOD

Introduction to Scripture

Scripture

Matthew 7: 7-11

Song

"The Love Come A-Tricklin' Down"

Jonathan Harris

Sermon

Asking, Seeking, Knocking and Serving in God's Kingdom

A young man goes into a drug store to buy 3 boxes of chocolate. The pharmacist asks, "What size: small, medium, or large?" "One of each." he said, "I've been seeing this girl for a while and she's really beautiful. I want the chocolate because I think tonight is *"the"* night. We're having dinner with her parents and then we're going out. If she lets me hold her hand I'm going to give her the small box, if she lets me kiss her on the cheek I'm going to give her the medium box and if she lets me kiss her on the lips I'm going to give her the big box.

The young man makes his purchase and leaves. Later that evening, he sits down to dinner with his girlfriend and her parents. He asks if he might give the blessing and they agree. He begins the prayer, but continues praying for several minutes. The girl leans over and says, "You never told me that you were such a religious person." He leans over to her and says, "You never told me that your father is a pharmacist."

Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. ...

For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. Matthew 7:7-8

If you guessed that Jesus was talking about prayer, you would be basically right; but not the prayers you were thinking about. What if I told you that "*asking, seeking & knocking*" are not directed towards your daily needs, your life concerns, but towards the life God wants you to live. Let's back things up a bit to make this point clear.

Jesus is delivering what has now come to be known as the Sermon on the Mount. This message is also recorded in Luke's Gospel with slightly different details; one of them being that Jesus was speaking not only to His disciples, but to the crowd who had begun to follow after Him. Luke 6:12-37

The main point of Jesus' entire sermon was how to live as a God honoring person.

- For what should your heart be longing? How to live righteously before God.
- How do you keep God's laws? By honoring them in your heart not just in your actions.
- How do you practice your faith? Quietly and humbly, just you and God in fellowship and conversation?
- How do you pray to God? Not with long-winded, fancy-worded, repetitious prayers, but with a simple heartfelt prayer coupled with seeking to glorify God with your life.
- And for what should you be asking God? (here is the point to notice), you need not be concerned – or praying – about your personal needs, food, clothing, shelter. God knows you need all these and will gladly provide such ...

but strive first for the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Matthew 6:33

So if we place Jesus' "ask, seek, and knock" remarks in context with the rest of his message, Surprise! He is not saying "ask for what you need, persistently pursuing after God until He gives you such" Remember Jesus has just said that God, being a good Father, both knows, and wants to give us, what is good for us ... if – we dedicate our life to first seeking His kingdom and doing His will.

So when Jesus says that, *everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened*, He is talking about our personal relationship with God. Jesus is still on the subject of dedicating our entire life to QUESTING after a God honoring life; *'Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they will be filled.'* Matthew 5:6

For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened.

What if this verse read, "if you don't ask after God, you will get only what you learn second-hand, if you don't seek after God you will never really find Him, and if you don't knock, the important doors will never be opened to you," because that is exactly what is being implied here.

But WHY does Jesus keep emphasizing our need be in persistent pursuit of God? Because any life lived less determined to honor God, is only half the life we could be living. Let me illustrate.

I could ask you, "where do you live?" That will give me some information.

- But it will not bring me to your house.
- I will not know how you live.
- I will not know what your neighborhood looks like.

Conversely, if I don't, I'm really saying, "I'm not interested in knowing anything about you."

Isn't it the same with our relationship with God? To ask is, first, to acquire basic information.

If I ask, I learn.

- It leads to knowing, not just that there is a God.
- But what kind of God is He?
- What does the Bible tell me about God?
- Is He still the same with me, as He was with those I read about in the Bible?

The answers to those questions then lead us to ask some basic questions about our own life.

- Can we still act and think and believe the way we used to?
- Can we hang out with our old friends?
- Do we have to change our attitudes?
- Do we have to change our choices, our values?

These are all important questions, but just our "asking" is still in the kindergarten phase of spirituality; look at what Hebrew people were taught to ask:

ASK now about former ages, long before your own, ever since the day that God created human beings on the earth ... Deuteronomy 4:32

The Bible continues on

***ASK** from one end of heaven to the other: has anything so great as this ever happened or has it's like ever been heard of? Has any people ever heard the voice of a god speaking out of a fire, as you have heard, and lived? Or has any god ever attempted to go and take a nation for himself from the midst of another nation, by trials, by signs and wonders, by war, by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, and by terrifying displays of power, as the Lord your God did for you in Egypt before your very eyes? Deuteronomy 4:32-34*

In other words, ask people about the stuff that happened to before you met God, which are good questions to ask. Now, here is the answer that God gave them in reply.

To you it was shown so that you would acknowledge that the Lord is God; there is no other besides Him. Deuteronomy 4:35

These were the basic questions that gave the people Israel their foundation.

Crossing the Jordan River, they were instructed

*Each of you is to take up a stone on his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the Israelites, to serve as a sign among you. In the future, when your children **ASK** you, 'What do these stones mean?' tell them that the flow of the Jordan was cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD. When it crossed the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. These stones are to be a memorial to the people of Israel forever." Joshua 4:5-7*

They were taught to ask. These days, we tell our children "Don't ask me!"

Then, when Jesus came along, God said we could ask for more:

Whatever you ask for in prayer with faith, you will receive. Matthew 21:22

If we don't know that WE CAN ASK, we're going to be stuck trying to work things out ourselves. The basics of "believing" come from learning that WE CAN ASK.

*If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the **Holy Spirit** to those who ASK him!' Luke 11:12-13*

That's basic information. That is our starting place. Ask Him, so that God might give you His Holy Spirit to live with you, and guide you further along into God's truths.

Our whole relationship with God is built around ASKING.

If any of you is lacking in wisdom, ask God, who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly, and it will be given you. James 1:5

Of course, the Bible is talking about GODLY WISDOM. Want it ??? ASK!
You can't get anywhere with God until you have this basic understanding. Writing to believers, the Apostle John said,

Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have boldness before God; and we receive from him whatever we ask, because we obey his commandments and do what pleases him. 1 John 3:21-22

The more you obey and seek to please God, THE MORE YOU CAN ASK. I told my teenagers... you want the car? Hold your tongue. Clean your room. Treat your Mom right. You DON'T want the car? Fine. Keep on truckin'!

ASKING: That's the basics!

But then after asking about God comes SEEKING after God.

I love those who love me, and those who seek me diligently find me - God.
Proverbs 8:17

This is step 2. In order to seek, I must first know that there is something TO SEEK.

King David wrote, *One thing I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after: to live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple.*

Psalms 27:4

In order to seek, I have to have grown a desire for more.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.
Matthew 5:6

- I have to develop a craving.
- To seek is to invest time in the quest.
- I have to be willing to hunt for something more than what I currently have.

If I ask for your address, and I really want to find you, then I have to SEEK you out! I have to make an effort.

- Jesus as the "truth," IS NOT just a truth.
- Jesus as the "way," IS NOT just a way.
- The life Jesus offers IS NOT just a life.

I have to WORK to find THE TRUTH, THE WAY, THE LIFE!

Without faith it is impossible to please God, for whoever would approach Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who seek him. Hebrews 11:6

Sincerely, intensely, determinedly, with purpose ... if I seek, I will be rewarded. **But, seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.** Matthew 6:32-

33

WHAT THINGS????? An abundant life: Spiritual. Physical. Emotional. Social. Financial.

When I first asked, I got answers. When I begin to seek I get MORE THAN JUST ANSWERS!

The Lord looks down from heaven ... to see if there are any who are wise, who seek after God. Psalm 14:2

Or to put it more bluntly...

"Seek Me and live" – God Amos 5:4

First ASK, then SEEK, then KNOCK

Writing from heaven to the churches, Jesus said, *I know your deeds. See, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut. I know that you have little strength, yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name.* Revelation 3:8

By asking and then seeking, I am led to doors. *Jesus said, I am the gate (the door). Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture.* John 10:9

Jesus also said ...

'Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the road is easy that leads to destruction, and there are many who take it. For the gate is narrow and the road is hard that leads to life, and there are few who find it. Matthew 7:13-14

The Special Things of God that are hidden from most people are behind this door. But when I find it, and I knock, it is opened to me. When I knock on God's door, what do I find? LIFE and a LIVING RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD!!

Happy is the one who listens to Me, watching daily at My gates, waiting beside My doors. For whoever finds Me finds life ... Proverbs 8:34,35

This is not just about living a godly life, it is also spiritual revelation; my opportunity to KNOW God in a way that can only be attained by those who – *hungering and thirsting for righteousness*, begin asking, seeking, and then knocking at God's door.

In closing, here was Paul's final prayer for his friends in the Ephesus Church; I am sure he is still offering the same prayer for you....

I pray that, according to the riches of His glory, God may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through His Spirit; that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love.

And [I pray] that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Ephesians 3:17-19

Ask, seek, and knock, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God; this is what we need to pray about today and every day for the rest of our earthly life.

RESPONSE TO THE WORD OF GOD

Worship Song

"He Is Good"

Hernandez/ Nelson

Creedal Statement

This is the gospel which we have received, in which we stand and by which we are saved. If we hold it fast that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day, according to the scriptures. And that He appeared first to the women, then to Peter and the Twelve and then to many faithful witnesses.

We believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God.

He is the first and the last, the beginning and the end; He is our Lord and our God. Amen.

Doxology

"Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow"

Hymn 34

Sharing of Joys and Concerns

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Ever-living God, the resurrection of Jesus fills us with hope and joy. Because He lives we can live with a new sense of purpose and commitment. Help us live our Easter lives and mission as we offer ourselves and our gifts to bring new life to others, in Jesus' name. Amen.

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**

"Lift High the Cross"

Hymn 287

THE SENDING FORTH

***Benediction** (Jude 24-25)

To Him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before His glorious presence without fault and with great joy -- To the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen.

Postlude

"All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name"

arr: Jeff Bennett

The flowers are given to the Honor and Glory of God, by Dave and Lori Stetson.

Joys- April 16th

Joy- On April 30th, we will recognize five new members

Joy- to see Harold Neal and son in church

Joy- John Smith praised the Deacons for their work

Concerns- April 16th

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

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

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

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

Goodman: Prayers for Betty during this time

Morgan (friend) serious health issues

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- chemo and radiation

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
James Morgan (cousins husband) spot on lung

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)

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 across country

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>NO Something More</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>Office closed Cub Scouts</i>	11	12 <i>NO Something More</i>	13	14	15
16 <i>10 am Service Session Prayer time 3pm Ecumenical Youth</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 <i>10 am Service Prayer time New Member Sunday Ice cream on the Lawn</i>						

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 16th

Sunday: 10 am Worship
Session
Prayer time following service
Ecumenical Youth, 3pm

Monday: Cub Scouts

Wednesday: 3 pm Something More

Sunday: April 23rd
10 am Worship
Prayer time following service

April Birthdays

Sherry Parker - 18
Tricia Schubert - 23
Al Mauser - 24
Richard Tate - 29

April Anniversaries

Fred and Sandy Scheurer - 22
John and Sonya Smith - 30