

Bedford Presbyterian Church

105 West Main Street, Bedford, Virginia

From 1844 to 2023 (179 Years)



Week of May 28th

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.

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.



A Biblically & Prayerfully Guided
Christian Family of Disciples
Loving God & Serving Others

Bedford Presbyterian is a Biblically and

Prayerfully Guided Christian Family of

Disciples, Loving God and Serving Others

THE APPROACH TO GOD

One: The peace of Christ be with you

All: And Also with you

Prelude

"Battle Hymn of the Republic"

Christy Boone

Words of Welcome

Minute for Missions

Bedford Christian Ministries

Becky Noell

***Call to Worship**

One: O God, we stand on the brink of today; our future is unknown.

All: Anoint our heads with Your Spirit, that we might know the way.

One: O God, we stand in this moment of uncertain needs and concerns.

All: Anoint our hands with Your Spirit, that what we touch, we touch with love.

One: O God, we stand at this place of comfort and stability.

All: Anoint our feet with Your Spirit, that wherever we walk, we walk Your walk.

One: O God, we stand in love and affirmation of You and Your world.

All: Anoint our bodies, minds, and hearts with Your Spirit, that our worship will be filled with signs of Your presence.

***Hymn**

"On Pentecost they Gathered"

Hymn 334

*** Prayer of Confession**

Almighty God, You who call us to prayer and who offers Yourself to all who seek Your face. Pour out Your Holy Spirit upon us today and deliver us from coldness of heart, a wandering mind, and wrongful desire. By the power of Your Spirit, place within us steadfast love and devotion, so that today we may worship and serve You with all our life, through Jesus Christ my 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

1 John 3: 1-3

Hymn

"Spirit of the Living God"

Hymn 492

Sermon

Living as a Christian Family

One of the strangest moments in my life was the day that I happened to glance down at the end of my arm to suddenly realize someone has taken away my hands and replaced them with my father's. The shock of that moment was hard to describe, what I had always thought were my hands had now become older, more wrinkled, more veiny, slightly worn, and somewhat scarred with experience, certainly not the hands I used to have; definitely now my father's.

Or similarly, when you are talking (discussing, correcting, teaching, arguing whatever you want to call it) with your own children and suddenly you hear your mother's words coming out of your mouth. When we start saying things that we swore we would never, never, never say to OUR children, it is in those moments that we suddenly realize ... we have become our parents. That, even if we struggle not to be, there will be traits that have been indelibly etched into our own persona.



It is an inescapable truth. Your heritage and your lineage will have a real and distinct reflection on who you look like, act like, and who you will become. I know there are attributes of our earthly parents that we might never want to reflect, we will spend a great deal of effort and energy in order to overcome those things, but there will always be those birthmarks which link us back to the ones to whom we belong.

This is what the apostle John is explaining in one of my most favorite Bible verses; that we have a very evident parent/child connection, but one that is on a grander, more significant scale than our birthmarks.

The book of 1st John is not long – 5 chapters, 2½ pages of print. But, throughout this letter, you can easily sense John's deep affection for his Christian family. No less than eight times, in directing their attention to what he wants them to learn, John calls them (and us), "*little Children.*" He even opened his letter with, *my little children.* But now, here in chapter 3, he abruptly changes position; no longer does he say, "MY CHILDREN," now he says, "*WE ARE CHILDREN of God.*" He refers to "*we*" and "*us.*" He says that we (himself included) are members of God's family. He goes on further to say that since we are children of God there are certain characteristics that must begin to exhibit themselves in our lives as we continue to take on the likeness of our Father.

Now, while our Bible does talk about God's intention from the beginning of time to adopt believers as His children (*Ephesians 1:5, Galatians 4:3-7, Romans 8:14-16*). What John is describing here is not some off in the future legal adoption process, where one day we get to be called God's children, John says that is what we have become; "*WE ARE GOD'S CHILDREN.*" And in case that wonderful thought just flew over your head, John repeats the idea with even more emphasis.

See what love the Father has given us, That we should be called children of God and that is what WE ARE.... Beloved, WE ARE GOD'S CHILDREN Now! 1 John 3:1-3

Let this idea roll around in your mind for a while, feel the hope, the joy, the excitement, of knowing that **right now God sees you as His child. Right now, along with His firstborn son – your brother Jesus – you are a fellow heir in the kingdom of God; you are a member of God’s family** (Romans 8:17).

We are not MERELY CALLED children of God, we ARE children of God – right now. Right here where you sit, tomorrow when you wake up, and the day after that, and the day after that, you ARE and continue to be God’s child; born again by His indwelling and cleansing Holy Spirit that God sent to live within you.

If you haven’t underlined these three verses in your Bible, do it now! Write them out on a post card and stick them up on your refrigerator, or better still on your bathroom mirror, so that every morning with the first glimpse of your not so currently pretty face, you will be reminded that YOU ARE GOD’S CHILD, a living breathing member of God’s family right now!

John then goes on to explain, that while we may not fully understand what it means to be a child of God right now, it does not make us any less so. We still have much to learn, much growing to do. But our lack of fully knowing who we are, does not negate what we are, because this rebirthing and adoption into God’s family was not dependent on us; it was all and only because of the overwhelming love that God has always held for us.

John finishes by saying that while we really cannot fully understand what all this means right now – ourselves being God’s child and living as God’s child, even what our future life may be – but one day we will; on that day when we are standing face-to-face with our Father.

What we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is. 1 John 3:2

So, while we are God’s child right now, we are also BECOMING – No longer just children – but Godly adults just like our Father. This is how, the apostle Paul explained our birthing, adoption, and one day fully becoming Godly.

the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. Philippians 1:6

So while we ARE God’s children NOW, we are still GROWING, being “*perfected*” as Paul would say, to look like our Heavenly Father.

But also, hear this: **while becoming and being God’s child is not dependent upon you, growing and maturing as His child, developing Godly attributes (your Godly birthmarks) is something you do assist in.** Just like various characteristics of your build along with what you do or say, will reflect your likeness and heritage from your earthly parents, as you grow as God’s child, living in God’s family, you should begin to reflect the attributes of your Heavenly Heritage, your Father’s likeness.

And all who have this hope in [God] purify themselves, just as He is pure. 1 John 3:3

Thus for the Christian, our life as a Believer is not one of just getting legally adopted and then sitting around waiting for God to take us home – instead – having also been born again, from above, we are to be **ACTIVELY WORKING** at becoming more like our new parent.

A few years back, Amy Grant wrote a song about having her father's eyes. While she began by referring to the shape and color of her own eyes, by the end of the song, you knew she was talking about growing to see with her Heavenly Father's eyes; beginning to view the world through God's eyes; her Father's eyes.

In the same way, the apostle John is saying that when you fully realize whose child you are right now, then you will strive to live a life that reflects that very truth. You were not adopted into God's family to simply sit around and wait for Christ to return, you have a lot of growing and doing to be doing as you develop your Father's eyes.

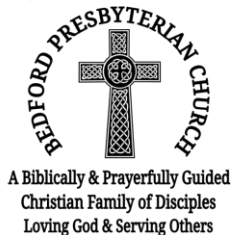
If you are indeed God's child right now, can you find evidence in your life that you are becoming more like your Father? This is in fact what the entirety of John's letter is about, beginning to act and look like what you have become; what you are right now: God's child, growing up to look like your heavenly Father. Which brings up what I have been intending to talk about with you all along.

In your bulletin today, is the revised purpose statement that you as a church developed during our recent congregational self-study, for this portion of God's family in which you now live.

Take it out and look at it.

According to our understanding of Scripture and our core values

Bedford Presbyterian is a Biblically and Prayerfully Guided Christian Family of Disciples, Loving God and Serving Others



- We are a **Christian Family of Christ's Disciples**. We belong to the family of God. We are the brothers and sisters of the Lord Jesus Christ. We are His followers, disciples who are both learning and putting into practice what He has taught us. We seek to be a reflection of His life and ministry as we live out our lives each and every day (1 John 3:1 and Ephesians 4:11-13).
 - We are a **Biblically and Prayerfully** guided **Christian Family**. We believe that the Bible is God's inspired Word and our only authoritative guide for knowing how to live the Christian way of life. We additionally possess a prayerful desire to discern and pursue the Lord's leadership through the power and presence of the Holy Spirit (2 Timothy 3:16 and 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18).
 - We are a **Christian Family Loving God and Serving Others**. We express our love for God through worship which encompasses both our weekly gatherings as a Christian family and our individual lives through personal devotion to Christ. We also love God by serving others. This includes our church's membership, our friends and family, those who live around us, and the larger body of humanity in the world (Matthew 22:37-40 and 1 John 3:16-17).
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WE ARE A CHRISTIAN FAMILY: Christ's disciples, Biblically and Prayerfully guided, Loving God and Serving Others

Reading through it, I could not help noticing one particular phrase that you included four times in this short statement: **WE ARE A CHRISTIAN FAMILY.**

This is the same truth that the apostle John wanted to bury deep in your heart by saying *BELOVED, WE ARE GOD'S CHILDREN NOW.*

In this self-declaration that you have composed, you describe five characteristics, not only five birthmarks but also five goals which you have set for yourselves as God's children living in this family.

- That you are a **BIBLICALLY** guided family.
- That you are a **PRAYERFULLY** guided family.
- That you are a family of **DISCIPLES**; meaning that you are followers of God's ways for living and working in this world.
- And that you intend to continue demonstrating your family connection, your Father's characteristics by **LOVING GOD** and **SERVING OTHERS.**

As John would also underscore later in this same letter...

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. 1 John 4:7

There's no escaping that the most obvious birthmark, the most prominent characteristic, that we can display from our heavenly Father is LOVE.

- Our love for God,
- Our love for God's family, each one of God's children living with us here,
- And our love for all others whom God also loves.

God is love. 1 John 4:7

For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son John 3:16

God proved His Love in that while we were enemies Christ died for us. Romans 5:8

And, God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to US. Romans 5:5

Like parent, like child, our prominent birthmark should be God's love, evident in every aspect of our daily lives, daily actions. That why the apostle Paul could boldly declare that among these three Godly birthmarks: **faith, hope, and love, the greatest has always been love.** 1 Corinthians 13:13 And, if we don't have this love, God's love living in us, then... we are nothing.

Yes this is a great purpose statement which you have written for this particular portion of God's family of which you are a part - God's children right here, right now. It certainly describes what you have in many ways become, but it also challenges you to keep becoming even more, in order to live up to that name "**Christian family,**" by which you now identify yourselves.

May this self-declaration serve as your call to continued growth in those Godly birthmarks where growth will always be needed; such as declaring this church to be guided by **prayer.** Prayer has always been a main source of power and guidance for believers, but how have you, how will you, incorporate prayer further into your personal and church life?

Also you have identified yourselves as “**disciples.**” Yet, discipleship is certainly not a training program from which any of us will ever receive a diploma for having completed all the coursework. **Discipleship is a lifestyle**, yes **another birth mark** of our Godly heritage; one in which we are to be daily following and continuing to learn from Jesus our Savior, until that day when we stand before Him to hopefully hear those words, “*well done, good and faithful servant.*”

I guess that is a diploma of sorts which we can look forward to receiving from Jesus someday; to be named, as He named His own disciples, no longer “*servants,*” but now “*friends.*” John 15:15

At that same graduation supper, Jesus again brought up our main godly birthmark of “love” with which you have also charged yourselves; to be showing your love for God by your love of others.

That evening Jesus gave to all of us in His Christian family, what He called a “**new commandment;**” that we are to love each other in the same way that He has shown His love for us. And Jesus was very clear that, just as He had done, **such love means our willingness to lay down our lives for one another.** How will you demonstrate this essential godly birthmark – in a growing way – both within this family and also to those living outside? Jesus made no secret that the sharing of such unconditional love is the main birthmark of our disciplined life within the family of God.

By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another. John 13:35

I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.’ John 13:34-35

Can you feel the rhythm of God’s beating heart – God is love – that most prominent family birthmark which should be evident in every one of us, every day, all our lives? Can you feel it in this Church? Can your neighbors feel it?

Love, love, love, love,
the gospel in a word is love,
Love your neighbor as your brother,
love, love, love.

Well, that’s all I want to say to you today. In this purpose statement, you have attempted to describe who you are and who you want to become; those birthmarks of our heavenly Father that should be visibly evident every day of your life.

So let’s pray about this, asking God’s Holy Spirit, to reveal both where we have grown and also where we have sadly fallen short of our birthright; and how we can continue to growing until we act, think, and respond, even more like God our Father, whose child we are right now.

RESPONSE TO THE WORD OF GOD

Hymn

"Here I Am, Lord"

Hymn 559

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

"Doxology"

Hymn 44

Sharing of Joys and Concerns

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Gracious God, Your Spirit has entered our lives that we may be blessed. We are indeed blessed. We give You thanks for the gift of Your Spirit and for the many other gifts yet unknown to us. As we dedicate ourselves to You with these gifts, continue to empower us to do Your will in this world, for the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ. 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**

"Wind Who Makes All Winds That Blow"

Hymn 333

THE SENDING FORTH

***Benediction**

May God's opinion matter far more to you than man's opinion. May His dreams for you speak louder than your fears. May you refuse to read into situations that make you anxious. May Jesus' promise to protect and provide be enough for you. May His forgiveness wash over every sin from your past. And may you rise up in the knowledge that He's made you brand new, through and through. No spot or stain on you! #SusieLarsonBlessings

Postlude

"America the Beautiful"

Christy Boone

The flowers are given to the Glory of God and in loving memory of my husband Roy, by Sally Cram.

Joys- May 28th

Joy- Sally Cram thanks the youth for cleaning her yard

Joy- All camp costs are covered, thank you!

Joy- Kathy Griggs shared her thanks for new grandbaby

Joy- Thank you Bill Rutledge for the impromptu concert

Joy- Barbara Nichols' daughter is fine and doing well

Concerns- May 28th

Avery: Tinkie & Frank , hospice care

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

Judy- fell and broke two ribs, doing better

Boone: Michael Bamber (friend) recovering from chemo

Tony Martin- stroke, long time Bedford resident

Don Bartz (brother-in-law) pneumonia, blood clot in leg

Callahan: Mary Jane (friend) cancer

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

Travel mercies as they visit Larry's brothers

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

Janice Campbell-(friend) under hospice care

Ryan- (grandson) searching for faith

Lory Graham (friend) health issues, Carolyn, wife caretaker

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

Prayers for everyone on dialysis

Goodman: Morgan (friend) serious health issues

Grigg: Beth Falwell- starting cancer treatments

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: Prayers for family on passing of Patty
Bill (Brother) – daughter medical problems

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
John Hargett (friend) woke up paralyzed

Narwid: Ed- not doing well

Nichols: for family who doesn't know the Lord

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

Schubert: Gerda- multiple strokes

Smith: Dorothy Smith- (John's mother) pray she comes to the Lord
Marcus (Sonya's brother) surgical biopsy June 7th

Stetson: Clay Ramsey- thyroid cancer
Nick, Tiffany & Savannah (doing better) home, hoping to do better there

Stevens: Jackie Landis- heart problems
Sharon Johnson (daughters co-worker) loss of husband

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
Tornado destruction across country

June 2023

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4 <i>10 am Worship Communion Retirement Potluck Prayer Time</i>	5 <i>Cub Scouts</i>	6	7	8 <i>Deacon's 3:30 pm</i>	9	10
11 <i>10 am Worship Rev. Philip Parker 5¢ a Meal Prayer Time</i>	12 <i>Cub Scouts</i>	13	14	15	16	17
18 <i>10 am Service Rev. Philip Parker Session Prayer time 3pm Ecumenical Youth</i>	19 <i>Cub Scouts</i>	20	21	22 <i>Cancer Support</i>	23	24
25 <i>10 am Service Rev. Philip Parker Prayer Time</i>	26 <i>Cub Scouts</i>	27	28	29	30	

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Activities for week of May 28th

Sunday: 10 am Worship

Prayer time following service

Monday: Office Closed

Cub Scouts

Sunday: June 4th

10 am Worship, Rev. Salley's last service

Communion

Retirement Potluck following service

Prayer time following service

May Birthdays

Venus Gould – 28

June Birthdays

Dot Kuhn – 7

Gloria Saunders- 11

Dave Stetson - 12

Hugh Saunders - 19

Betty Salley – 25

June Anniversaries

BJ & Heather Poindexter - 11

Jim and Joy Barefoot - 21

David & Kathy Grigg - 21

Philip & Sherry Parker - 28



To commemorate the retirement of Pastor John Salley, there will be a special service on Sunday, June 4th, his last Sunday as our pastor. After the service there will be a potluck luncheon in the Fellowship Hall.

Please bring your favorite dish.

A special cake and ice cream for dessert will be provided by the church.

Come join us to see him off and wish him well.

The Bedford Hiking Club is Back Afoot

Rev. Salley may be retiring from the Church, but not from Walking. One of his retirement pastimes will be to continue offering almost-every-monthly hikes for all interested parties. The next walk is planned for **Memorial Day Monday**, in hopes of catching the Rhododendrons still in bloom up on the Black Rock portion of the AT. This approximately 3 mile roundtrip is not only good for dog-walking, but we should meet several thru-hikers so bring along some trail magic.



We will carpool from the church at 9 am, or you can meet us up at the starting point at 9:30 (*the horse meadow halfway between mile marker 81 and 80 – but let me know if you take this option*). **Cancelled in the case of Rain.**

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BCMA FOOD PANTRY MOST NEEDED ITEMS
CHILDREN'S ITEMS ARE THE PRIORITY FOR SUMMER

- CAPRI SUN OR KOOL-AID JAMMERS
- POP TARTS
- CEREAL BARS
- CANNED TUNA
- CANNED SPAGHETTI PRODUCTS
- FRUIT SNACKS
- PEANUT BUTTER OR CHEESE SNACK CRACKERS
- SINGLE SERVE COOKIES (COME IN LARGE CONTAINERS)
- SINGLE SERVE CHEESE ITEMS (WHALES OR GOLDFISH)
- FRUIT CUPS, PUDDING CUPS OR JELL-O CUPS

CLEANING ITEMS FOR FIRST-TIME CLIENTS

(These items can be found more reasonably priced at Dollar Tree)

- LAUNDRY DETERGENT
- DISH DETERGENT
- BLEACH
- INDIVIDUALLY WRAPPED TOOTHBRUSHES

NEEDS ON A REGULAR BASIS

- TOILET PAPER (LARGE PACKAGES)
- SUGAR
- COFFEE

TRANSITION NEWS...

The Bedford Presbyterian revised Purpose Statement, developed during the congregational self-study, has been approved by Session and Bill Mitchell has come up with a new Logo to match. Here they are:

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More Transition News....

The Sunday, May 21st congregational meeting to form a Pastor Nominating Committee has elected the following members. **David Stetson, Judy Blair, James Fleming, Nick Dewitt, Paul Van Dyke, Deanna Rutledge & Shawn Webb**. Please keep these in your prayers as they attend two upcoming training sessions before developing our church's Mission Information Form; after that they can begin looking for our pastor.

Rules for the Road Ahead (my road)

Dear Church family,

I am writing this with all the mixed emotions that necessarily are a part of saying good-bye to folks who, for sixteen years, have been an important part my life. As I begin my retirement, while hoping that we will always continue as friends – *and that you will continue to invite us to dinner & game nights* – I can no longer be your pastor.



I leave confident that God will continue to care for and meet all your needs. The Session is also working diligently to make your time between installed pastors as short as possible; they may even be able to hire a interim pastor for the in-between time.

Leaving a congregation that has become so dear is not easy. I know that in the days to come, I will continue to feel like your pastor; such separations always come with a level of grief. It will be tempting to try to keep up with the church's life, of which my own life has been so much a part. I suspect that some of the same feelings might be true for you as well ... that it may take some time before another becomes your "pastor."

We can help each other through this. Having a good deal of experience with pastoral transitions, Peaks Presbytery has developed guidelines which provide clear boundaries for me as a departing pastor. Fundamental to these guidelines is the simple reminder that when a pastor leaves a congregation, while it does not mark the end of our love and care for each other, it must mark the end of our pastoral relationship.

Toward this end, after June 4th I will not involve myself in any part of Bedford Presbyterian's Church life. For the sake of the next pastor's success, it would be inappropriate for me to continue as your theological advisor, Biblical instructor, officiant for weddings or funerals, or as your pastor in times of family crises.

As one who poured much energy, time and emotions into this congregation, I want Bedford Presbyterian to prosper. Consequently, you will find no greater advocate than me of your next pastor. Please do not force me to choose between my love for you and the success of your next pastor by asking me to perform pastoral duties that rightly rest with him/her.

Now on to some good news. Though she is my wife, the Session has approved Betty's request to continue on as a member of this church. Normally it would not be advisable for even the pastor's spouse to remain after the pastor's departure, but a couple of circumstances make this continued relationship appropriate.

1. She has developed deep friendships over the years in this church, which has always treated her more like a member rather than as its "first lady."
2. Since I intend to do a lot of much needed Sunday pulpit supply for area churches, this leaves Betty with the choice of either following me around to a different church each week, joining another church which she would usually attend alone, or just staying home; none of which are healthy options for her.

But Betty can only remain as a member under the same onus that applies to our other pastoral leaders (Bill Rutledge & Philip Parker). Whether publicly or privately, she can neither criticize, nor listen to criticism of the new pastor.

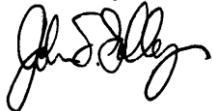
If Betty finds herself in disagreement with the next pastor, her only option is to graciously and quietly withdraw from membership.

So please! Do not ask her opinion on the new pastor, or, "what might John think of this?" because she can only answer – as I will, if you ask me – "*that it is not my place to comment on this matter.*"

I know it may be difficult for us to continue as "friends, but not advisors," but please trust that experience has taught, when a pastorate is ended, the responsibility of leadership and care must end as well. For the sake of the pastor leaving a field, but even more for the sake of the church, we need to honor an ethic of separation.

I hope you welcome your next pastor with the same warmth and love that you gave me when I arrived as a stranger among you. I will try to honor you by focusing my energy on that which God has determined for my future and will joyfully, in whatever I do, share all that you have taught me about being a pastor.

Sincerely,



Rev. John Salley

Here are **EMERGENCY CALL GUIDELINES** for any needed pastoral care while Bedford Presbyterian is between installed pastors.

1. **With a weekday pastoral need** such as a hospitalization, death, family crisis, or simply a "wellness check" for a shut-in, please **call Lana at the Church office:** 540-586-5284. She will send the proper ministry team out.

For an overnight or weekend emergency (*when the church office is closed*)

Call: Philip and Sherry Parker. Cell: 540-875-6681, 540-875-6682

Or: John and Judy Blair. Home: 540-587-9146 Cell: 540-871-0547

Or: Dave and Lori Stetson. Cell: 540-589-8029, 540-632-9332