

Bedford Presbyterian Church

105 West Main Street, Bedford, Virginia

From 1844 to 2023 (179 Years)

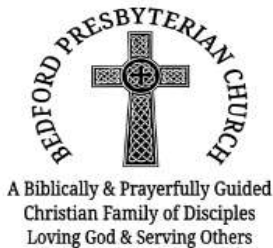


Week of November 26th

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 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

“He’s Been Faithful”

Carol Cymbals

He's been faithful, faithful to me

Looking back, His love and mercy I see

Though in my heart, I have questioned, even failed to believe

But He's been faithful, So faithful to me

Call to Worship

One: Oh give thanks to the Lord; call upon His name;

All: Make known His deeds among the peoples!

One: Sing to Him, sing praises to Him;

All: Tell of all His wondrous works!

One: Glory in His holy name;

All: Let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice!

One: He is the Lord our God; His judgments are in all the earth.

All: He remembers His covenant forever, the word that He commanded, for a thousand generations. Praise the Lord!

Hymn of Praise

“Come, Ye Thankful People, Come”

Hymn 721

Prayer of Confession

God our Creator, we confess that we are people of ashes and dust. You have claimed us in Your covenant, yet we forget Your steadfast love. You seek us out in the wilderness, yet we continue to wander in our sin. Wash us clean, once again, so that we may return to You and follow Your holy ways; through Jesus 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 Be to the Father”

Proclaiming the Word of God

Introduction to Scripture

Scripture

1 Thessalonians 5: 16-18

Praise Song

“Thank You Lord”

Paul Baloche

Sermon

Irregardlessly Thankful

Years ago there was a pastor in Edinburgh, Scotland who was renowned for his pulpit prayers. He always found something to thank God for, even in bad times. On this particular Sunday morning it was raining and cold, almost cold enough for things to start freezing. The rain was coming down in sheets. One of the few congregants who was there that day thought to himself, "The preacher will have nothing to thank God for on a wretched morning like this." Stepping up to the pulpit and lifting his eyes towards heaven, the pastor prayed, "We thank Thee, O God, that it is not always like this."

That pastor was irregardlessly thankful. Now I know the word "Irregardlessly" cannot be found in Webster's dictionary. It's a linguistic invention. Nevertheless, I cannot think of another word which so accurately describes that pastor's approach to thankfulness. Neither can I find another word which so accurately portrays what Paul said in his letter to the Christians living in the city of Thessalonica. He told them as we have already heard this morning, "Be joyful always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18) His admonition to those first century Christians was not only an expression of what he believed, but also an affirmation of what he had personally experienced. Let me explain.

In the sixteenth chapter of the book of Acts in the New Testament, there is an account about Paul and his traveling companion Silas. Because of a civil disturbance involving a slave girl, whom they had freed from demonic possession, Paul and Silas had been severely beaten and thrown into the deepest part of a prison where they were chained to the walls. Instead of being discouraged and complaining about the way in which they had been treated, they started praying and singing hymns to God. Their joy, their prayers and perhaps their expressions of thankfulness had a profound effect upon the other prisoners. They were listening intently to what these new prisoners were saying.

Then suddenly around midnight everything was thrown into a state of pandemonium. A violent earthquake hit the prison and probably the entire city. The walls shook, the chains fell out of the walls where Paul and Silas had been shackled and all the doors of the prison flew wide open. Waking up, the jailer knew that his life would be forfeit if the prisoners escaped. Taking matters into his own hands, he drew his sword and was preparing to kill himself when Paul cried out, "Don't harm yourself. We're all still down here." Running down the steps into the lower chambers of the prison and literally falling to his knees, the jailer implored of Paul, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" Evidentially he had also been listening to this jailhouse prayer meeting. That night he and his entire family became believers and were baptized. A dreadful situation had been completely transformed because Paul and Silas had done precisely what he told the Thessalonians to do. In all of life's situations, especially the more difficult ones, he had told them to always possess a joyful spirit, to be constantly in touch with their heavenly Father through prayer and to remain thankful, no matter what. Or to use that earlier phrase, to be "irregardlessly

thankful.” Now let’s see how these words, especially the last ones, can apply to you and me. Let me suggest three possibilities.

Being irregardlessly thankful, being unconditionally thankful no matter what we’re facing, declares our faith and trust in God. We’ve all heard the story of Job. He loses everything, his flocks and herds, his children, even his health. His body is covered with painful sores. His wife tells him to curse God and die. Three friends arrive and they proceed to tell him how all of these tragedies are somehow his fault. It’s not a pretty scene. Job responds by dismissing their accusations and expressing his desire to meet with God. He wants to know from the Lord Himself why all this pain and suffering had come his way. The ongoing conversation between himself and his three accusers continues for a multitude of chapters in this Old Testament book. Never, however, during this entire conversational diatribe does Job’s faith and trust in the Lord waver, not even one little bit. In fact, he states that he will not turn away from God, even if it costs him his life. He declares, “Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him.” (Job 13:15)

Fortunately, most of us will never have to face what Job encountered. But there are some who have. I’m thinking this morning of Joni Eareckson. She was a bubbly, vigorous teenager before a diving accident paralyzed her from the neck down. The only part of her body she could move was her lips. Like Job she asked God, “Why? Why did you let this happen to me?” Her faith and trust in Him were severely tested. Being strapped to a Striker Frame in which she was turned upside down for long periods of time to keep her alive, was pure torture. It brought her to the point of wanting to die, to end it all. But somehow she held on and her faith rebounded and became the springboard for a worldwide ministry. Not only did she become a recognized artist drawing beautiful pictures holding a felt tipped pen in her lips, she also had the opportunity to speak to young people all across America and was even interviewed by Barbara Walters on the *Today Show*, sharing her faith in God with millions of listeners. She had trusted her life, even her broken body, into the hands of God and that alone was enough.

Her story brings me to the second point in this message. Being irregardlessly thankful enables God to transform life’s tragedies into triumphs. That has certainly been true with regards to Joni Eareckson’s life. She’s about my age now and still serving the Lord. I went online to see what is happening in her life. The website reported that she had been diagnosed with a second bout of cancer and was receiving radiation. This is what she said, “When I received the unexpected news of cancer from my oncological surgeon, I relaxed and smiled, knowing that my sovereign God loves me dearly and holds me tightly in His hands. What good is it if we only trust the Lord when we understand His ways? That only guarantees a life filled with doubts.” Yes, trusting in God, doesn’t mean that we will always understand his ways. However, we do have this promise, a promise to which we can cling to, no matter what we are facing. It’s a promise found in Paul’s letter to the Romans.

You've heard it before. "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to His purpose." (Romans 8:28).

Let me provide you with an illustration of this uncontestable truth. How many of you have ever enjoyed a glass of grape juice? Let me tell you about how it was invented. Years ago in the 1800's a young man desired to be a medical missionary to Africa. He was approved and he and his wife prepared to leave from New York City. Upon further investigation regarding their physical health, it was determined that his wife would not be able to withstand the harsh environment into which they were going. The young man was heartbroken. This had been the goal of his life, to share the gospel with the people of that far off continent. He and his wife returned to the home of his parents. What was he now to do with the rest of his life? How could he serve the Lord as a missionary in a distant country if he couldn't actually go there? His father, a Methodist pastor and dentist, had been experimenting with a non-alcoholic wine made from grapes for the communion services at his church. It was the dawn of the Temperance Movement. The young man thought his father's invention was a great idea and with his dad's blessing gradually transformed it into a profitable business. Even though he could not go to Africa, he could financially support those who did. That became the new goal of this young man's life. The young man's last name was Welch and I suspect all of us know the rest of the story. What could have been a tragedy, an unfulfilled dream, was transformed into a magnificent victory for everyone who loves grape juice.

Finally, being irregardlessly thankful opens the door to God's salvation in Christ Jesus. What if Paul and Silas had not responded to their imprisonment in the way they did? What if they had just sat there in prison grumbling and complaining about the way they had been treated? Would this New Testament account end in the way that it did? No, I don't think so. The jailer might have very well killed himself realizing that his life would be forfeited in exchange for the escaped prisoners. Fortunately, that did not happen. He and his family were saved. They met the Lord Jesus Christ as well as I suspect a good number of those prisoners. As you will remember, the prisoners didn't flee. They were all still there even though the doors of the prison had been thrown wide open.

The fact of the matter is, we draw other people to God when we rise above life's tragedies and disappointments. When we can be thankful, even when life is headed in the wrong direction, it makes a difference. The year-end report of a New York businessman was not good. Sales were off. Debts had increased. The future was uncertain. The financial secretary was reluctant to present his report to the owner of the business. But he did. Instead of becoming angry, his employer said, "In spite of everything, it has been a very good year. We didn't cut corners and we didn't deal dishonestly, even though we were losing tons of money. Those losses brought me to my knees in prayer on more than one occasion, but they also instilled a measure of hope for the Lord has said, 'No good thing will be withheld from those who walk uprightly.'" In response, the financial secretary replied,

“Sir, your steadiness under severe testing has made me want to know Christ as you know Him. Indeed, it has been a good year.”

Being thankful, no matter what, is a character trait that every Christian should strive to possess. It declares our faith and trust in the Lord. It enables God to transform life’s tragedies into triumphs. Finally and most importantly of all, it opens the door of salvation for those who know Him not. This year’s Thanksgiving Holiday has come and gone, but being irregardlessly thankful is a celebration that we need to observe each and every day.

Response to the Word of God

| | | |
|-------------------------------|--|---------------|
| Doxology | <i>“Praise God from Whom all Blessings Flow”</i> | Hymn 34 |
| Prayer of Thanksgiving | <i>Thanksgiving Litany</i> | See last page |
| Piano Dedication | | See last page |
| Hymn | <i>“When In Our Music God is Glorified”</i> | Hymn 7 |

Sharing of Joys and Concerns

Lord’s Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy Name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

| | | |
|-------------|---|---------------|
| Hymn | <i>“My Heart is Filled with Thankfulness”</i> | Getty/Townend |
|-------------|---|---------------|

The Sending Forth

Benediction

| | | |
|-----------------|----------------------------------|--------------|
| Postlude | <i>“Praise Him, Praise Him!”</i> | Bill Wolaver |
|-----------------|----------------------------------|--------------|

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

In Appreciation and Gratitude

This morning we wish to express our appreciation and gratitude to Paul and Nancy Van Dyke and Paul’s daughter, Valerie, for the gift of the grand piano that has been given to our church. May the music of this beautiful instrument draw us closer unto the Lord as we honor Him in our praise and worship.

A JOURNEY TO CHRISTMAS

During the month of December, we would like to invite you to go with us on a journey to Christmas. It will not be a difficult journey. You will not have to pack a lot of luggage or drive long distances. Rather it will be a journey of the mind and heart back to that first Christmas so long ago. Along the way we will meet a lot of interesting people. Each of them has a story to tell about their own journey to Christmas and the way in which God reached out to touch and transform their lives. Each of them will also help us to discover a number of Old Testament prophecies which were fulfilled when God sent His Son into our world. Based upon the New Testament accounts of the birth of Christ and the events and times in which His birth took place, we will be embarking upon an exciting adventure. Please join with us on our journey to Christmas and be sure to invite family and friends. Listed below are the places we will be visiting and the people with whom we will be meeting.

- December 3—Zachariah and Elizabeth at the Temple in Jerusalem
- December 10—Mary and Joseph in the village of Nazareth
- December 17—Wise Men in a City of Persia
- December 24—Shepherds in the Fields of Bethlehem
- December 31—Herod at the Palace in Jerusalem

Thank you for your continued support

| DESCRIPTION | BUDGET FORECAST 2023 | ACTUAL OCT 2023 | ACTUAL YTD 2023 |
|---|----------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| TOTAL UNRESTRICTED INCOME | \$ 196,609.00 | \$ 17,948.93 | \$ 168,812.04 |
| -- CONGREGATIONAL GIVING FOR GENERAL OPERATIONS | \$ 145,000.00 | \$16,770.24 | \$ 157,023.52 |
| -- MISCELLANEOUS INCOME | \$ 51,609.00 | \$ 1,178.69 | \$ 11,788.52 |
| TOTAL BUDGETED EXPENSE | \$ 202,875.70 | \$ 8,987.40 | \$ 135,302.31 |
| BUDGETED SPENDING (OVER) UNDER INCOME | \$ (6,266.70) | \$ 8,961.53 | \$ 33,509.73 |

November 2023

| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
|---|-----------|-----------|--|--|-----------|---|
| | | | 1 <i>Something More, 3pm</i> | 2 | 3 | 4 <i>Daylight Savings time ends Turn Clocks back one hour</i> |
| 5 <i>10 am Worship Rev. Philip Parker Communion</i> | 6 | 7 | 8 <i>Something More, 3 pm Office closed</i> | 9 | 10 | 11 <i>Veterans Day</i> |
| 12 <i>10 am Worship Rev. Philip Parker 5¢ a Meal BCM collection</i> | 13 | 14 | 15 <i>Something More, 3pm</i> | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 19 <i>10 am Worship Rev. Philip Parker Harvest Home Potluck</i> | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 <i>Thanksgiving Day Office closed</i> | 24 | 25 |
| 26 <i>10 am Worship Rev. Philip Parker</i> | 27 | 28 | 29 <i>Something More, 3pm</i> | 30 | | |

Joys- November 26th

Joy- Eunice thanks you for all the prayers, her nephew is doing well.

Joy- Melanie Tolley- thanking the church of the use of Community Center to hold Christmas Charity event.

Concerns- November 26th

Avery: Tinkie, hospice care

Barnes: Kim Hedrick- (friend) colon cancer

Mark- (nephew) open heart surgery, caregiver of special needs adult

Benton: Tracey Thomas (daughter's friend) transplant problems

Tom Wilson- (friend) melanoma

Fed Beeson- (brother-in-law) upcoming surgery

Blair: Ecumenical youth group

Boone: Linda Cole- heart transplant

Don Bartz- (brother-in-law) enlarged hand

Callahan: Mary Jane (friend) cancer

Steve Chaffin (friend) blood clots

Compter: two brothers- unbelievers

Prayers for friends to come to the Lord

Michael Compter- (brother) heart failure

Steve & Mary- (friends) Steve disabilities

Zoey Fisher-(child) reversal colostomy surgery

Vicky-(friend) recurring lymphoma

May- (friend) breast cancer

Larry- back out

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

Janice Campbell-(friend) under hospice care

Ryan- (grandson) searching for faith

Ben Thomas (son) severe vertigo

Lory Graham- (friend) health issues, wife caretaker

Brenda Wilkerson- UVA- seizures

DeHart: Dawn's mother gall bladder surgery

Michael Rutter- septic shock, amputation

Easter: Ruby Key (friend) cancer

Dallas (friend) heart issues

Foster: Ron (brother-in-law) out of hospital into home

Howard & Lynn (brother) difficulty with legs, wife dementia

Tom- home , kidney infection

Prayers for everyone on dialysis

Goode: prayers for Eunice, health issues

Rodney & Connie Groggins (husband's cousins) Connie

Alzheimer's, Rodney caregiver, health issues

Cynthia- (friend) physical therapy

Grigg: Beth Falwell- starting cancer treatments

Heinrich: Steven - (grandson) autoimmune disorder

Barbara Lore- (Helen's sister) heart problems

Kuhn- Kibbey: Phyllis Smith (friend) heart attack

Lambert: Margaret caring for brother, strokes

Mauser: Joyce Reese- (friend) health problems

Steven-(son's boss) going blind

Barbara (AL's sister) intense headaches

Gayle- doing better

Morris: all law enforcement, firefighters and all other first responders

Forensic scientists who deal with crime

Kyle Coble- (cousin) leukemia

Rev. Pam Ledbetter, recovering from stroke

James Morgan (cousins husband) spot on lung

John Hargett (friend) slow recovery may never walk

Ron- heart issues, home

Margaret- gastric issues

Narwid: Ed- not doing well

Nichols: for family who doesn't know the Lord

Saunders: (Ronnie) Colin Bridges- (grandson)

Scott- (son-in-law) doing well

Scheurer: Jim Hedrick- (friend) cancer

Bob Lindell-(friend) prostate cancer

Sonny (son) doing well

Smith: Dorothy Smith- (John's mother) not feeling well

Stetson: Clay Ramsey- thyroid cancer

Nick, Tiffany, Savannah- Savannah back in ICU

Stevens: Jackie Landis- heart problems

Two firefighters who suffered falls

Carrie Stevens- (daughter) cancer tests

Van Dyke: Rich Anderson (nieces' husband) recovering

Prayers for our nation and our President

Prayers for healing the divisive spirit among our leaders/nation

Russian invasion ends and not resort to nuclear weapons.

Prayers for new residents to come to worship with us

Prayers for Ukraine

Pray for World Peace

Prayers for Israel

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Activities for week of November 26th

Sunday: 10 am Worship

Wednesday: 3 pm Something More

Sunday: December 3rd

10 am Worship

Communion

Session

1st Sunday of Advent

November Birthdays

Dianne Fain- 29

Barry Schubert- 30

December Birthdays

Nancy Dwyer - 4

John Blair- 10

Bill Mitchell - 17

Shawn Webb - 18

Kathy Chryssikos - 24

Gayle Mauser - 30

December Anniversaries

Ken & Charlotte McManis - 3

Al & Gayle Mauser - 12

Roy & Libby Monk - 20

Trees for First Responders and Health Care Workers

It's that time of year when we spread a little Christmas joy to those who must work over the holiday weekend. They give of themselves all year long and we want to give back and let them know in a small way, that we do appreciate their service. On Saturday, December 16th, the Ecumenical Youth Group will be "decorating" small Christmas trees with snacks that can be wrapped with string and hung on the trees. If you have a small 3-foot tree that you can donate, please drop it off at the church before the 16th. We also ask that you donate the snacks that we will need to hang on the trees before then also. After these trees have been "decorated," we will ask for folks to deliver them to various locations around the town and county. If you have any questions you can get in touch with Judy Blair. Thank you for joining us in this important ministry of service.

A LITANY OF THANKSGIVING

(From the Book of Common Prayer)

L: Let us give thanks to God our Father for all God's gifts so freely bestowed upon us. For the beauty and wonder of Your creation, in earth and sky and sea.

P: We thank You, Lord.

L: For all that is gracious in the lives of men and women, revealing the image of Christ,

P: We thank You, Lord.

L: For our daily food and drink, our homes and families, and our friends,

P: We thank You, Lord.

L: For minds to think, and hearts to love and hands to serve,

P: We thank You, Lord.

L: For health and strength to work and leisure to rest and play,

P: We thank You, Lord.

L: For the brave and courageous, who are patient in suffering and faithful in adversity,

P: We thank You, Lord.

L: For all valiant seekers after truth, liberty, and justice,

P: We thank You, Lord.

L: For the communion of saints, in all times and places,

P: We thank You, Lord.

L: Above all, we give You thanks for the great mercies and promises given to us in Christ Jesus our Lord;

P: To him be praise and glory, with You, O Father, and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.

DEDICATION LITANY

For Our New Piano

LEADER: How good it is to give thanks to You, O LORD,

PEOPLE: To sing in Your honor, O Most High God,

LEADER: To proclaim Your constant love every morning and your faithfulness every night,

PEOPLE: With the music of stringed instruments and with melody on the harp.

LEADER: Your mighty deeds, O LORD, make us glad;

PEOPLE: Because of what You have done, We will sing and play with joy.

LEADER: Eternal and creative God, creator of all, we give You thanks for this day, we praise You for the freedom we enjoy to worship You. With joyful hearts, we turn to You. Accept our dedication of this beautiful grand piano with its delicate pianissimos and its gloriously loud fortissimos. Let each note be a prayer vibrating with life and love as we worship and praise Your Holy name. In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen