

Bedford Presbyterian Church

105 West Main Street, Bedford, Virginia

From 1844 to 2024 (180 Years)

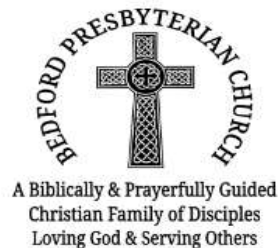


Week of February 4th

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.



*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

“Come Just As You Are”

Mark Hayes

Words of Welcome

Call to Worship

One: Sing praises to God and to His name!

All: Sing loud praises to Him who rides the clouds.

One: His name is the Lord, rejoice in His presence!

All: Father to the fatherless, defender of widows—this is God, whose dwelling is holy.

One: God places the lonely in families; He sets the prisoners free and gives them joy. But He makes the rebellious live in a sun-scorched land.

All: Praise the Lord; praise God our Savior! For each day He carries us in His arms.

Hymn

“Sing Praise to God Who Reigns Above”

Hymn 56

Prayer of Confession

Father, Your word says that when we discriminate among ourselves, we become judges with evil thoughts. Forgive us for not seeing people as You see them. As we reach out to others, help us to not be choosy. We pray that we will see each person as Your amazing creation. Help us love them in a way that reflects Your heart. In our seeing and in our loving, let them feel Your love. In the One who died for everyone – 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”

Rutledge

Proclaiming the Word of God

Introduction to Scripture

Scripture

James 2: 1-13

Anthem

“Sing to the Lord”

Medema

Sermon

Putting Your Faith to Work- Pandora's Box

We've all heard this saying, "Be careful. Don't open Pandora's Box." The saying comes from Greek mythology and describes what happened when Pandora opened the box that had been entrusted into her care. In the original telling it was not a box, but instead a great big urn. When Pandora opened it, all the ills and misfortunes that plague humanity were released into the world. I'm pretty sure that James was not thinking of Pandora's Box when he wrote the passage of Scripture that was read this morning. However, perhaps he should have because showing favoritism is like opening a Pandora's Box of troubles and woes. Favoritism is defined as "the showing of more kindness and indulgence to some person or persons than to others." It is also described as "being unfairly partial." All of us, I am sure, have seen or been made aware of situations where favoritism was shown. Whether at home, at work, or even in the church, it can bring about great harm. Showing favoritism is most assuredly like opening Pandora's Box. These are some of the things that can emerge when people feel that they have been unfairly treated: jealousy, resentment, aggression, anxiety, depression and lots of bad behavior.

You have probably seen some of it in the work place when the boss gives promotions to those who are his friends. Or the child who receives special attention by his or her parents when the other siblings are all but forgotten. Yes, favoritism can even worm its way into the life of a church. In fact, Paul describes just such a situation in his first letter to the Corinthians. In the early days of the church, Christians would gather together for what has come to be known as love feasts. Everyone would bring something to share, sort of like a covered dish dinner. Then at the conclusion of the dinner, the church family would celebrate the Lord's Supper together. Unfortunately things had gone terribly wrong at Corinth. Here is what Paul had to say about the way that celebration was being conducted in their church. "It's not the Lord's Supper you are concerned about when you come together. For I am told that some of you hurry to eat your own meal without sharing with others. As a result, some go hungry while others get drunk. What? Is this really true? Don't you have your own homes for eating and drinking? Or do you really want to disgrace the church of God and shame the poor? What am I supposed to say about these things? Do you want me to praise you? Well, I certainly do not!" (1 Corinthians 20-22) In other words, the wealthier and more well to do folks in the church were excluding the poorer members from sharing in the bounty that should have been shared with everyone. It was a clear case not only of discrimination, but of favoritism. As is clearly indicated, Paul disapproved of this kind of behavior. Furthermore, there were repercussions. Paul accused those who were pursuing this kind of behavior of profaning the Lord's Supper, partaking of it in an unworthy manner. As a result he told them, "That is why some of you are weak and sick and some have even died." (1 Corinthians 11:30)

Perhaps it was just such a situation that led James to speak about favoritism in his letter to fellow Jewish Christians. Let's see what he had to say. He begins by giving us an example reflecting the days and times in which he lived. Let's take a look at verses one through four. In the ancient world wearing a ring was a sign of wealth and prestige. The more rings you wore the higher your standing on the social ladder. It was easy therefore to welcome those kind of folks with open arms as opposed to those of lesser stature. Their financial standing could be beneficial to the life of a church. James, however, had a problem with that kind of prejudice. He rightly called it the kind of discrimination which was motivated by greed. Look what these rich people have to offer as opposed to those who are needy and will drain our resources. Perhaps he was remembering what had happened right there in Jerusalem in the early days of the church. A dispute had arisen. The Greek speaking widows, women who had no means of supporting themselves since that were not natives of Judea, would be left out in the daily distribution of food. Like the situation in Corinth, it was an obvious example of favoritism, showing more regard for the one group of people as opposed to another. The formation of the deacons in Acts, chapter six, had solved the problem, but it was a reminder of what could happen. Therefore, James spoke about it in his letter.

Then in verses five through nine, he went on to remind his readers that God had “chosen the poor in eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom.” He was, in fact, reflecting what Jesus had to say as well as what Jesus did. Jesus loved everyone, but he had a special place in His heart for the poor and the lowly. Yes, on occasion He ate in the homes of the wealthy and spoke about the Kingdom of God with those who were well educated and well to-do like Nicodemis. However, if you examine the Scriptures, you find Him spending most of His time with those on the sidelines of life—the hungry, the sick and the forgotten. When Jesus returned to Nazareth and spoke in the local synagogue quoting the prophet Isaiah He said, “He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor,” (Luke 4:18) In fact, in referring to the royal law, James was reminding his readers that Jesus said that caring for one’s neighbors was the second great commandment. Not only that, if you remember the parable of the Good Samaritan, one’s neighbor is not only the person who lives next to you, but any person who needs your love and attention.

Then to wrap things up James says that showing favoritism makes an individual a law breaker. Even if he keeps all of the other laws, he or she is still a law breaker if this one is broken. Sort of like driving down the road. You may stop at every red light and use your turn signal every time you make a turn. But if you get caught for speeding, even if you have kept all of the other laws about good driving, you’re still a law breaker. So realizing that we’re all prone to step over the line now and then, even with regards to how we treat others, its better, James says, to be merciful instead of judgmental, looking down on those who are less fortunate and perhaps even less deserving than we are. Otherwise, we too might find ourselves in the judgement seat of the accused when we stand before God.

So what does this have to say to you and me, especially as we prepare to partake of the Lord’s Supper. One memory from my early days in seminary speaks eloquently to what James is saying to us. A fellow student was the pastor of a country church. Not too far from the church there was a small, Native American Indian reservation. It was an impoverished community with a lot of children. The pastor’s heart went out to them and he invited them, especially the children, to come and be a part of their Sunday school. The tribal group took him up on his offer and sent a number of their children to the church one Sunday. After the service was over and the children had returned home, the leaders of the church came to the pastor. They said, “We don’t want those kind of children to come to our church. You should not have invited them.” In response, the pastor replied, “In that case, you will need to call a new pastor. I will not be a part of a congregation that discriminates against those who so desperately need the love of Jesus.” I’ll always remember his courageous stand against those whose favoritism was so un-Christlike. And that’s why I’m glad to be a part of a church that opens its arms and embraces all of those who are in need. May it be never be said of us that we play favorites at Bedford Presbyterian.

Response to the Word of God

| | | |
|------------------|--|--------------|
| Hymn | <i>“I Stand in Awe”</i> | Hymn 53 |
| Communion | <i>“You Satisfy the Hungry Heart” “In Remembrance of Me”</i> | Instrumental |
| Doxology | <i>“Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow”</i> | Hymn 34 |

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Heavenly Father, thank You for Your loving mercy toward me in that while I was yet a sinner, Christ died for me. As I go about my days in this world that is full of so many judgmental attitudes and actions, may I show forth Your love and mercy to those around me so that they would see Christ in me, to Your praise and glory. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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.

Closing Hymn

"Be Doers of the Word of God"

Carolyn Gillette

The Sending Forth

Benediction

Postlude

"Postlude on 'Ellacombe'"

Payne

Inclement Weather

It's that time of year when the weather can throw us some curves. When inclement weather creates circumstances that are potentially dangerous, we will send out a "Grace Note" announcing that Sunday worship services and/or other activities are cancelled. We will also send notification to WSLS, WSET and WDBJ. As always, however, use your best judgement when venturing out during inclement weather. We want everyone to be safe and secure.

February 2024

| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
|--|-----------|-----------|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4 <i>10 am Worship Communion</i> | 5 | 6 | 7 <i>Something More, 3 pm</i> | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 11 <i>10 am Worship 5¢ a Meal BCM collection</i> | 12 | 13 | 14 <i>Something More, 3pm</i> | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| 18 <i>10 am Worship</i> | 19 | 20 | 21 <i>Deacon's 1:30 pm Something More, 3pm</i> | 22 | 23 | 25 |
| 25 <i>10 am Worship</i> | 26 | 27 | 28 <i>Something More, 3pm Lenten Lunch</i> | 29 | | |

Joys- February 4th

Joy- Michelle Goode thanks everyone for their prayers during her illness

Joy- of the wonderful Message Rev. Morrison brought us

Concerns- February 4th

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

Blair: Ecumenical youth group

Boone: Linda Cole- heart transplant

Don Bartz- (brother-in-law) in hospital, pneumonia

Karen Mann- (friend) stroke, in rehab

Callahan: Mary Jane (friend) cancer

Steve Chaffin (friend) blood clots

Donnie (husband) upcoming back surgery MRI

Compter: two brothers- unbelievers

Prayers for friends to come to the Lord

Michael Compter- (brother) heart failure

Steve & Mary- (friends) Steve disabilities

Vicky-(friend) recurring lymphoma

May- (friend) breast cancer

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

Garrett Winslow

Janice Campbell-(friend) under hospice care

Ryan- (grandson) searching for faith

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

Fleming: Dominick (Ann Marie's brother) heart surgery successful

Foster: Ron (brother-in-law) in home

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

Tom- home

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

Those held hostage in Gaza

Grigg: Beth Falwell- starting cancer treatments

Chris Mays- diabetic complications

Heinrich: Steven - (grandson) autoimmune disorder

Barbara Lore- (Helen's sister) heart problems

Kuhn- Kibbey: Phyllis Smith (friend) heart attack

Dot- fell broken ribs, vertebrae, long recovery

Lambert: Margaret caring for brother, strokes, doing better

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

James Morgan (cousins husband) spot on lung

John Hargett (friend) slow recovery may never walk

Ron- pacemaker, at home

Ann Ortega- tumor near pancreas

Narwid: Ed- not doing well

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) that she comes to the Lord

Stetson: Clay Ramsey- thyroid cancer

Nick, Tiffany, Savannah- Savannah back in hospital

Stevens: Jackie Landis- heart problems

Two firefighters who suffered falls

Webb: Shawn caretaker to aunt and grandma

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 February 4th

Sunday: 10 am Worship

Communion

Wednesday: 3 pm Something More

Thursday: Choir Practice 10:30 am

Sunday: February 12th

10 am Worship

5¢ a Meal Offering

BCM collections/Donations

February Birthdays

Judy Blair - 6

Lester Heinrich - 7

Heather Poindexter -12

BJ Poindexter -13

Ken McManis -13

John Salley -23

Janis Easter - 26

Richard Overstreet -27

Karen Overstreet -28

February Anniversaries

Jim & Judy Harris - 13