

Bedford Presbyterian Church

105 West Main Street, Bedford, Virginia

From 1844 to 2024 (180 Years)

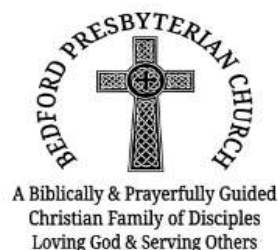


Week of June 30th

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

"Like a River Glorious"

Faye Lopez

Words of Welcome

Call to Worship

One: Let all that I am praise the Lord;

All: With my whole heart, I will praise His holy name.

One: Let all that I am praise the Lord;

All: May I never forget the good things He does for me.

One: He forgives all my sins and heals all my diseases. He redeems me from death and crowns me with love and tender mercies. He fills my life with good things. My youth is renewed like the Eagle's!

All: Let all that I am praise the Lord; with my whole heart, I will praise His holy name.

Hymn

"Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven"

Hymn 82

***Prayer of Confession:**

Wondrous God, we confess that at times our doubts and fears overwhelm us like ocean waves pulling us into the depths. Forgive us when we lose sight of the joy of Your love and instead fall into despair and gloom. Lift up our spirits, Lord, and help us to remember the promise of new life here and now, not just the hope of resurrection for the future. We give thanks for Your Son, Jesus the Christ, who continues to offer us new life, who continues to turn us around and upside down, who continues to break down the walls of death in our own lives. Forgive us, restore us and renew us. In the name of our risen Savior, Jesus the Christ, we pray. Amen.

***Assurance of Pardon (responsive)**

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

Praise Song

"All the Earth"

Parachute Band

PROCLAIMING THE WORD OF GOD

Introduction to Scripture

Scripture

Jonah 2: 1-10

Song

"The Ballad of Jonah"

Praise Team

Sermon

In the Belly of a Whale

A teacher asked her class if they knew anything about whales. One little girl spoke up and said that Jonah was swallowed by a whale. The teacher smiled and then said that she didn't think that was very likely because, even though whales can be really big, their throats are not big enough to swallow a man. But the little girl was adamant. She said that Jonah was swallowed by a whale. Growing impatient, the teacher repeated that whales can't swallow human beings. It was physically impossible. In response, the little girl said, "When I get to heaven, I'll ask Jonah." Now clearly perturbed the teacher remarked, "What if Jonah went to hell?" The little girl replied, "Then you can ask him!"

The account of Jonah being swallowed by a whale has been debated for a long time. In fact, at times it has become so contentious that the whale not only swallows Jonah, but the entire message of this Old Testament book. Nevertheless, it is still a topic of continued fascination. Some of a more liberal mind set say that the book of Jonah is not historical. It's a parable, a story that should not be taken literally. Others respond that there are, indeed, sea creatures that can swallow a human being and share reports of events where people were actually found alive after being swallowed by a denizen of the deep. Finally, there are some who declare, "Why all the discussion? Isn't God capable of creating just the right creature to do His bidding? After all, the Bible doesn't say he was swallowed by a whale, but instead by a great big fish." Regardless of where you stand in this continuing debate, I agree with the little girl. When we get to heaven we can ask Jonah and get everything straightened out. In the meantime, let's see what this second chapter in the book of Jonah has to say to us this morning.

For starters, let's imagine what it was like for Jonah to be incarcerated in the belly of that great big fish for three days. I don't know about you, but I would be scared out of my mind. It would be a terrifying experience. However, even without being swallowed by a whale or a great big fish, there are some experiences in life that can be almost as frightening. Sometimes we face emotional traumas that are just as scary as anything we might encounter physically. Take, for example, the woman who arrived at the counselor's office years ago. She was the mother of three children, one of whom was mentally challenged. She had just received a pink slip from her employer. Not only that, several months earlier her husband had left her, but not before emptying out the family's bank account. To put it mildly, she was devastated. She was beside herself with anxiety and worry. She had been swallowed by a terrifying set of circumstances.

Like her, I suspect there have been times in all of our lives when we can identify with this lady. Perhaps the situation we found ourselves in was not as horrendous. Nevertheless, we felt like we had been consumed by a monster from the deep. Perhaps it was the loss of employment, a health crisis, a family dispute, or the prospect of facing financial ruin. In any case, whether we are an innocent victim of circumstances beyond our control or have brought one or all of these problems upon ourselves, we can certainly understand and sympathize with Jonah as he cried out to the Lord, "The waters closed in over me; the deep surrounded me; weeds were wrapped around my head at the roots of the mountains. I went down to the land whose bars closed upon me forever" (Jonah 2:5-6). Throughout the Scriptures, this is a familiar cry uttered by those who are facing difficult, sometimes impossibly difficult situations. The writer of Psalm 69 cries out, "Save me, O God, for the waters have come up to my neck. I sink in the miry depths, where there is no foothold. I have come into the deep waters; the floods engulf me" (Psalm 69:1-2). So let's be honest, all of us face trials and tribulations in life. It's a part of the human experience and sometimes those trials and tribulations are like being cast into the belly of a great big whale.

However, those trials and tribulations can become the impetuous for us to look beyond ourselves and cry out to God and that's precisely what Jonah did. Chapter two, verse one says, "From inside the fish Jonah prayed to the LORD His God." In fact, almost all of chapter two is a prayer. What kind of prayer did he pray? First of all it was a prayer of deep distress. Jonah thought he was going to die, banished from God's

presence in a watery grave. But it was more than just a prayer of distress. It was a prayer of spiritual discernment. Jonah came to the realization that he was not alone. God was right there with him in the belly of that whale. He said, "When I felt my life slipping away, then, O LORD, I prayed to You, and in Your holy Temple You heard me" (Jonah 2:7). In the moment of his greatest need, Jonah reached out to God and he was not disappointed.

Years ago I read this account of a businessman who had been kidnapped by Venezuelan terrorists. For three and a half years he was held as a prisoner in the Amazon jungle. Often masked and sometimes shackled, he was moved from camp to camp while his captors demanded a huge ransom. With hair down to his shoulders and a beard longer than Rip Van Winkle's, he was often at the point of absolute despair. He told his captors to kill him. Then one day he saw an ant carrying a huge crumb of food and that reminded him of the tremendous strength that God has built into all of His creatures. It also reminded him of the strength that God had given him to endure those years of desperation and loneliness in the jungle. He felt closer to God than he had ever felt before. In the article he wrote about his captivity, he said, "A kind of serenity had come to me, a kind of acceptance. I felt closer to God in my solitude than I had ever felt in my life."* Like Jonah and perhaps like you in the midst of despair and loneliness at some point in your life, instead of feeling all alone, you discerned, you realized, that God was with you and His peace and His presence sustained you and strengthened you. Paul echoes this truth in his letter to the Philippians. He says, "Do not be anxious about anything but in everything by prayer with supplication, let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and their minds in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:6-7).

Fortunately for Jonah and hopefully for all of us when we find ourselves in similar situations, knowing that God is near can replace our doom and despair with a sense of inner joy. Jonah cried out, "I will sing praises to you; I will offer you a sacrifice, and do what have I promised. Salvation comes from the LORD" (Jonah 2:9). He wasn't sure what would happen, but he now knew that God was not only with him, but in charge of what would happen to him. If God still wanted to use him, he would offer a sacrifice, his own life and he would go to that dreaded place, the city of Nineveh. And guess what? That was exactly what God wanted to hear. The last verse in this chapter declares, "Then the LORD ordered the fish to spit Jonah up on the beach and it did" (Jonah 2:10). Jonah was delivered from his watery grave.

In the account of the man who was kidnapped by the terrorists, the very same thing happened. Watching that ant convinced him that God still had a plan for his life. He prayed, "I trust You Lord. I place my life in your hands." Still watching that ant carrying the huge piece of bread, he heard a rustle at the hut's door. A man was standing there without the mask that his captors always wore. It was a policeman in a uniform. He had been delivered from his captivity and was soon returned to a joyous reunion with his family. He was not, however, the same man that he had been. Like Paul he had learned to be content in whatever situation he found himself, because he had discovered we can do "all things through Christ who strengthens us" (Philippians 4:11-13).

The same is true for you and me. Like Jonah and like the prisoner in the jungle, we too can rise above even the most desperate of situations through the strength that God gives us in Christ Jesus. In fact, it was this very same strength from God that Christ alluded to when he compared Himself to this prophet of old. He said, "For as Jonah was three nights and three days in the belly of a whale, a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Matthew 12:40). Jesus was, of course, referring to His death and resurrection. It was a promise that would be fulfilled when Christ was raised from the dead. It's also a promise that God has made to each and every one of us. Even when we find ourselves in the belly of a huge, monstrous whale, we too entrust our lives into God's care. We too can be raised to a newness of life, both for the here and now as well as for the forever after.

RESPONSE TO THE WORD OF GOD

Worship Song

“Lord, From Sorrows Deep I Call”

Papa/Boswell

Affirmation of Faith

I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord. Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried.

On the third day He rose from the dead; He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting. Amen.

Doxology

“Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow”

Hymn 34

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Lord, in our distress we called to You and You answered us. From deep in the realm of the dead we called for help and You listened to our cries. With shouts of grateful praise, we bring our offerings this day. Use these gifts to proclaim to the world that salvation comes from the Lord. 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.

***Hymn**

“Song of Jonah”

Seerveld

THE SENDING FORTH

Benediction

Postlude

“Voluntary”

Samuel Wesley

The flowers are given to the Glory of God and in memory of our son Kevin, on his birthday, Jay & Venus Gould.

Men’s Breakfast

Because the first Saturday in July is so close to the 4th of July, we will not be having our monthly Men’s Breakfast in July.

July 2024

| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7 <i>10 am Worship Communion</i> | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14 <i>10 am Worship 5¢ a Meal BCM collection</i> | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 21 <i>10 am Worship</i> | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 28 <i>10 am Worship</i> | 29 | 30 | 31 | | | |

Joys- June 30th

Joy- A big thank you to the Van Dyke's for the wonderful picnic and to Capt. Vic for the boat excursions.

Concerns- June 30th

Avery: Tinkie, hospice care

Barnes: Kim Hedrick- (friend) cancer
Jerry Dillion-(nephew) health issues

Benton: Judy (friend) son in critical condition
Connie Thomas (friend) broke hip and arm in fall

Boone: Roslyn Reynolds, (friend) upcoming surgery

Callahan: Mary Jane (friend) in remission
Steve Chaffin (friend) blood clots

Compter: Jennie & Seth (both friends) have health issues

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

Garrett Winslow – struggling, autism
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 gallbladder surgery
Michael Rutter- amputations

DeWitt: assistants husband broke leg using roto tiller

Easter: Ruby Key (friend) cancer

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

Foster: Ron (brother-in-law) in home
Howard & Lynn (brother) difficulty with legs, wife dementia
Tom
Prayers for everyone on dialysis

Gillespie: Paul looking for job

Goode: Rodney & Connie Groggins (husband's cousins) Connie Alzheimer's, Rodney caregiver, health issues

Julie Parks (friend) knee replacement this week

Goodman: for those impacted by Midwest storms

Grigg: Beth Falwell- starting cancer treatments
Chris Mays- diabetic complications

Grubb: John suffering from bad cough

Hann: Alice's brother, congestive heart failure, cancer

Heinrich: Steven - (grandson) autoimmune disorder
Barbara Lore- (Helen's sister) heart problems

Mauser: Joyce Reese- (friend) health problems
Steven-(son's boss) going blind
Barbara (Al's sister) intense headaches
Gayle- in Oakwood, room 218

McManis; Charlotte doing better

Monk: Libby's mother, Mary Duncan, Bedford Nursing Home Oak

Morris: all law enforcement, firefighters and all other first responders
Forensic scientists who deal with crime
Rev. Pam Ledbetter
James Morgan (cousins husband) spot on lung

Narwid: Ed- not doing well

Riley: Christine stroke, Elks home

Rutledge: friend in Hawaii with health issues

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: Nick, Tiffany, Savannah- Savannah, back in hospital

Stevens: Jackie Landis- heart problems

Deputy Chief Matt Scott, surgery went well tests negative

Van Dyke: prayers for Jeff, son, looking for new job

Webb: prayers for Shawn's great aunt

Weeks: Edith, Lynchburg General

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 June 30th

Sunday: 10 am Worship
 Thursday: July 4th, office closed
 Saturday: NO Men's Breakfast
 Sunday: July 7th
 10 am Worship
 Communion

July Birthdays

Lois Diddams - 2
 Helen Heinrich - 4
 Ryan Johnson- 6
 Margaret Morris - 9
 Charlotte McManis- 11
 Janet Yodis – 13
 Larry Compter- 18
 Weebie Clarke - 22
 Nancy Van Dyke - 22
 Jay Gould – 31

Something More

The Something More discussion fellowship meetings at the church have concluded for the summertime. They will resume in September. In the meantime you can still be involved in personal Bible study related to each Sunday's sermon. Under the discipleship heading on our church's website, (bedfordpresbyva.org) you will find a drop down box for "Something More." Each week questions will be posted on that site to provide you with an opportunity to do a little research on your own.

Jonah Sermon Series

Our interim pastor will be bringing a four part series of sermons from the book of Jonah. Each sermon will be devoted to one of the chapters in this short prophetic book in the Old Testament.

Please plan to attend and bring a friend. It's a whale of a tale!

June 30—"In the Belly of a Whale"—Jonah 2:1-10

July 7—"Sackcloth and Ashes"—Jonah 3:1-10

July 14—"Blinded by Hatred"—Jonah 4:1-11

Thank you for your continued support

| BPC Financial Snapshot | | | | | | |
|--|--------------|--------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|
| General Operations Contribution Income | | | | General Operations Expense | | |
| | Forecast | Actual | YTD Ahead/(Behind) | Monthly Expense Target | Actual Expenses | YTD (Over)/Under Spent |
| May 2024 | \$ 17,100.00 | \$ 15,791.00 | \$ 7,721.34 | \$ 17,034.05 | \$ 11,479.63 | \$ 27,316.78 |

Jonah 2: 1-10
(Good News Version)

1 Then Jonah prayed to the Lord his God from inside the fish.

2 "In my distress, O Lord, I called to you, and you answered me. From deep in the world of the dead I cried for help, and you heard me.

3 You threw me down into the depths, to the very bottom of the sea, where the waters were all around me, and all your mighty waves rolled over me.

4 I thought I had been banished from your presence and would never see your holy Temple again.

5 The water came over me and choked me the sea covered me over completely, and seaweed wrapped around my head.

6 I went down to the very roots of the mountains, into the land whose gates lock shut forever. But you, O Lord my God, brought me back from the depths alive.

7 When I felt my life slipping away, then, O Lord, I prayed to you, and in your holy Temple you heard me.

8 Those who worship worthless idols have abandoned their loyalty to you.

9 But I will sing praises to you; I will offer you a sacrifice and do what I have promised. Salvation comes from the Lord!"

10 Then the Lord ordered the fish to spit Jonah up on the beach, and it did.