

Bedford Presbyterian Church

105 West Main Street, Bedford, Virginia

From 1844 to 2024 (180 Years)

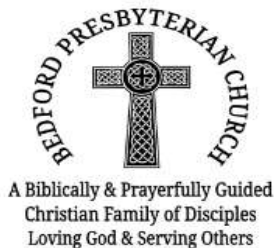


Week of July 7th

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

"America the Beautiful"

Bill Wolaver

Words of Welcome

Minute for Missions

Society of St. Andrews

Ben Breene

Call to Worship

One: Sing joyfully to the LORD, you righteous; it is fitting for the upright to praise Him.

All: Sing to Him a new song; play skillfully and shout for joy.

One: Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, the people He chose for His inheritance

All: In Him our hearts rejoice, for we trust in His holy name.

Hymn

"God of the Ages, Whose Almighty Hand"

Hymn 728

***Prayer of Confession:**

God, our Father, You have blessed us as a nation and yet we have turned away from You. We are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have spent our money on that which is not food and have squandered our time on that which is not life. We have offered our hearts to that which is not love and have pledged our allegiance to that which is not God. In Your mercy, open our eyes that we might comprehend the calamity that awaits us unless we repent. Like the ancient city of Nineveh, may we repent quickly and turn to You for mercy. 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

PROCLAIMING THE WORD OF GOD

Introduction to Scripture

Scripture

Jonah 3: 1-10

Praise Song

"It Is Good"

Paul Wilbur

Sermon

SACKCLOTH AND ASHES

One Sunday morning a man visiting a church in a distant town was surprised when the sermon was only ten minutes long. The pastor apologized to the congregation for the brevity of his message. He explained that his dog was very fond of paper and had eaten the concluding pages of his sermon manuscript. Greeting the minister at the end of the service, the visitor said, "I would appreciate it if you would let me know if your dog ever has any puppies. I'd like to give one to my pastor."

Like that pastor's abbreviated sermon, I would like to share just three things with you this morning about the passage of Scripture that was read a few moments ago. **Jonah preached. Nineveh repented. God forgave.** Let's take a look at the first one. **Jonah preached.** He preached one of the shortest sermons that has ever been recorded, "In forty days Nineveh will be destroyed." It was a powerful message and he preached it over and over as he walked throughout the city. It was powerful because it was God's message. Isaiah, another Old Testament prophet, speaking for the Lord said, "As the rain and snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for sower and bread for the eater, so is My word that goes out from My mouth; it will not return to Me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it" (Isaiah 55:10-11). God gave a powerful message to Jonah for the people of Nineveh and He had a specific purpose in mind when He gave it to him.

That specific purpose is the second thing that I want to share with you this morning. **Nineveh repented.** In both word and deed they turned aside from their wickedness. They believed God's message and decided that everyone should fast and pray and put on sackcloth as a visible expression of sorrow for their sinfulness. Even the king got involved, stepping down from his throne, taking off his royal robes, putting on sackcloth and sitting in ashes. The animals within the kingdom also participated in the fast and were dressed in sackcloth. What the people of Nineveh did is a vivid reminder that true repentance brings about a genuine change in what we say and how we live. Pride is replaced by humility. Sin is cast aside and replaced with righteousness as well as a desire to seek God's forgiveness. The king of Nineveh said, "Everyone must pray earnestly to God, and must give up his evil ways and the wrongs he is doing. Perhaps God will change His mind; perhaps He will stop being angry, and we will not die" (Jonah 3:9).

This brings us to the third and most important thing that thing that we need to consider in this third chapter of the book of Jonah. **God forgave.** God saw what the people of Nineveh had done and how they had given up their evil ways. So He did not punish or destroy them. He forgave them. Throughout the Bible there are countless references to God's desire to forgive a sinful humanity. Let me share two of them with you. In the early days of the church many believed that a day of divine wrath and judgement was just around the corner. Writing to them, the apostle Peter reminded these early Christians in his letter to them that God is patient, "not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9). This same thought is also expressed in the pages of the Old Testament. When God gave the Ten Commandments to Moses, He came down from Mount Sinai in a cloud and passed before Moses declaring, "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin" (Exodus 34:6-7). One of God's most enduring character traits is forgiveness.

So what does all of this have to say to us on this first Sunday after the celebration of our nation's independence, the 4th of July? First, because we are God's people we have an obligation to share God's Word with a lost and dying world. Like Jonah we too must go to the Nineveh's of this world and proclaim both God's judgement of sin and His desire to forgive. Jonah did not want to go to Nineveh, but that was his duty and his responsibility. He was a spokesman for God and so are we. If we don't tell people about God and how they can be saved from everlasting judgement, who else is going to do it? Speaking to the

Christians in Rome, Paul wrote. "How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news'" (Romans 1:14-15)! The people of Nineveh were saved because Jonah preached to them. We too have that same obligation and in the future I plan to present a series of sermons on how we too can be messengers of hope and salvation to those living around us.

Here's the second thing that this passage of Scripture tells us. God was going to destroy Nineveh because they were known throughout the Middle East for their wickedness. What about America? Are we following in the footsteps of the people in Nineveh? When I look around and see the kinds of things that are going on in our country today, I cannot help but conclude that we have become a truly pagan nation. Our cities are unsafe, filled with violence. The moral and sexual restraints of the past have been cast aside and replaced with unrelenting permissiveness. Like the ancients who sacrificed their children as burnt offerings to pagan deities, we have sacrificed millions of innocents on the altar of abortion, over 60 million since 1973 and that infamous court decision. America today is not the same nation that I grew up in as a child. Of this I am confident. Unless there is a great, national movement of heartfelt repentance, we will perish. God will bring judgement against us and it may arrive much sooner than we expect. Times of great revival have redeemed our country in the past going all the way back to the Great Spiritual Awakening in the 1700's. Now as never before, we need a great spiritual awakening of genuine repentance. Otherwise there may not be many more 4th of July celebrations in America.

Finally, I am reminded of how Jesus compared the people of Nineveh to the people of His own day and time. He said, "The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgement with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and now one greater than Jonah is here" (Matthew 12:41). God forgave the people of Nineveh and saved them from destruction because they repented and turned back to God. Jesus was not so sure that the Jewish people to whom He was preaching would do the same thing. Instead of repenting and heeding God's message of forgiveness, they did just the opposite. They condemned Jesus to death and nailed Him to a cross while shouting these words at Pilate, the Roman governor, "Let His blood be on us and on our children" (Matthew 27:25). Their shouts were prophetic. Approximately 37 years later the Jewish people revolted against Rome and lost. They were cast out of their country, their beautiful temple in Jerusalem was leveled to the ground and they and their children down through a multitude of generations became refugees without a homeland to call their own. God wanted to forgive and bless the Jewish people. He wanted them to embrace Christ and share the message of God's salvation with all the world. They refused.

Their failure precipitated disaster, not so much because of what God did but because they turned aside from the one and the only one who could save them, the Lord Jesus Christ. It is my solemn and heartfelt prayer that we as a nation, and most assuredly those within our nation who claim to be Christians, will refrain from following in the footsteps of those who have turned their backs on God and His Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. Instead, may we hear and embrace these words of hope and deliverance from God's Word, "If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land" (2 Chronicles 7:14).

RESPONSE TO THE WORD OF GOD

Worship Song

"Ninevah"

Brooke Ligertwood

Communion

*"Father, We Thank Thee"
"Come with Us, O Blessed Jesus"*

Instrumental

Doxology

“Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow”

Hymn 34

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Faithful God, we worship You with grateful hearts, for You have brought us from death to life! We are awed that You gave Your beloved Son Jesus for our salvation. He is the Lamb You provided, the perfect offering to take away the sins of the world. Help us to share Your kindness every day. By Your Spirit, may our church’s ministries bring hope and new life to our neighbors. We dedicate these tithes and offerings 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.

****Hymn***

“If My People’s Hearts are Humbled”

Hymn 383

THE SENDING FORTH

Benediction

Postlude

“Navy Hymn”

John Innes

July 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4 <i>Happy 4th of July, office closed</i>	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- July 7th

Joy-Margaret Morris, joyful grandchild recovered after allergic reaction to peanuts

Joy- Dianne Fain of God's gift of her daughter on this day.

Joy- Christy Boone her friend Rosalyn recovering from surgery at home

Concerns- July 7th

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

Jill (friend) fell, broke her arm

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: assistant's 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

Mausser: 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 July 7th

Sunday: 10 am Worship
Communion

Sunday: July 14th

10 am Worship
5¢ a Meal Offering
BCM donations/collections

July Birthdays

Margaret Morris - 9
Charlotte McManis- 11
Janet Yodis – 13
Larry Compter- 18
Nancy Van Dyke - 22
Jay Gould – 31

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!

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

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

Jonah 3: 1-10 (Good News Version)

1 Once again the Lord spoke to Jonah.

2 He said, "Go to Nineveh, that great city, and proclaim to the people the message I have given you."

3 So Jonah obeyed the Lord and went to Nineveh, a city so large that it took three days to walk through it.

4 Jonah started through the city, and after walking a whole day, he proclaimed, "In forty days Nineveh will be destroyed!"

5 The people of Nineveh believed God's message. So they decided that everyone should fast, and all the people, from the greatest to the least, put on sackcloth to show that they had repented.

6 When the king of Nineveh heard about it, he got up from his throne, took off his robe, put on sackcloth, and sat down in ashes.

7 He sent out a proclamation to the people of Nineveh: "This is an order from the king and his officials: No one is to eat anything; all persons, cattle, and sheep are forbidden to eat or drink.

8 All persons and animals must wear sackcloth. Everyone must pray earnestly to God and must give up their wicked behavior and their evil actions.

9 Perhaps God will change his mind; perhaps he will stop being angry, and we will not die!"

10 God saw what they did; he saw that they had given up their wicked behavior. So he changed his mind and did not punish them as he had said he would.