

Bedford Presbyterian Church

105 West Main Street, Bedford, Virginia

From 1844 to 2024 (180 Years)

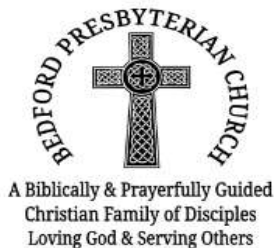


Week of July 14th

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

“Great is Thy Faithfulness”

Faye Lopez

Words of Welcome

Call to Worship

One: The word of God came to Jonah.

All: The word of God comes to us.

One: He calls us to go, despite our fears.

All: He calls us to speak the truth of God.

One: He calls us to love our neighbor and our enemy.

All: He calls us to forgive as we have been forgiven.

One: He calls us to rejoice when one sinner repents, just as all heaven rejoices over us.

All: We welcome His presence in our midst today. We sing praise to You, O God, our Rock and our Redeemer.

Hymn

“We Praise You, O God”

Hymn 726

***Prayer of Confession:**

Holy God, we would rather proclaim death to our enemies, than see them forgiven and redeemed. Forgive our hardness of heart, O God and our reluctance to see Your divine image in those who hate and despise us. Teach us to love our enemies, that our lives may proclaim Your truth— that love is stronger than hate and mercy is greater than vengeance. We ask this in the name of the Prince of Peace. 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 4: 1-11

Praise Song

“Praise to the Lord”

Bob Fitts

Sermon

Blinded by Hatred

A man absolutely hated his wife's cat and decided to get rid of him by driving 20 blocks from his home and dropping him off at a park. When he got home the cat was walking up the driveway. The next day he decided to drive 40 blocks from his home before dropping the beast off. When he got home the cat was sitting in the driveway. Frustrated and angry, the man said, "That does it." He put the cat in the car and drove hundreds of miles away, way out in a remote section of the countryside. A few hours later he called his wife, "Jan, is the cat there?" "Sure," she replied, "why do you ask?" "Could you put him on the phone?" the man said, "I'm lost and need directions."

Hatred is a serious problem. It can lead us astray or in Jonah's case reduce us to an all-consuming rage sitting under a wilted shade tree. It's nothing to laugh about. It can disrupt and destroy our lives and the lives of those living around us. Like Jonah we can become blinded by hatred. In fact, that's the theme of this fourth chapter in the book of Jonah. After preaching to the people of Nineveh, Jonah went out east of the city, made a shelter for himself and sat down to see what would happen. He already had a pretty good idea about what was going to take place. The people had truly repented and he knew that God would forgive them. That was the nature of the God whom he served. He was a God who was always eager to forgive. To be perfectly honest, that's why he had tried to flee on that boat to the far side of the Mediterranean. Jonah hated the Ninevites. He didn't want God to forgive them. He wanted God to destroy them. He hated them so much that he cried out to God, "I am angry enough to die!"

Have you ever been that angry? Have you ever been so filled with hatred that you couldn't see straight anymore? Were you so filled with rage that even for a moment you lost touch with reality? Sadly, in today's world a lot of people find themselves blinded by hatred. All across our land people are brought before a judge for crimes of passion, fancy terminology for violence motivated by hatred. Even when it doesn't express itself through physical violence, the consequences of hatred can be devastating. Years ago during my first pastorate, a neighboring field was filled with what looked like a new kind of crop, growing luxuriantly in the afternoon sun. Inquiring about this new kind of crop, I became the recipient of a humorous reply. "Pastor," the man said, "That's not a new crop. It's a field of weeds. The family of the man who owned that land died three years ago. His family hate each other so much that they have been arguing with one another about who owns it ever since." Instead of producing wheat or corn, the deceased man's family was raising a crop of weed filled discord and strife.

That's what can happen when people let hatred get the best of them and that's why we need to carefully scrutinize this last chapter in the book of Jonah. What is it saying to us? For starters it is reminding us of the origin of hatred. Jonah hated the people of Nineveh and he wanted God to destroy them because they had horribly abused his fellow countrymen. Without going into detail, Nineveh was the capital city of the dreaded Assyrian Empire. They were the crime bosses of the Middle East. If you didn't pay them off with tribute, they would invade your country, destroy your cities and send your people into exile. They were exceptionally cruel, the inventors of crucifixion as a means of striking terror in the lives of their adversaries. Jonah had every reason to hate them because they had cruelly oppressed his people.

Hatred can be motivated by many things, but when you get right down to it, the origin of hatred is rooted in abuse. It can be verbal or physical, personally experienced, or observed in the lives of others. We feel violated because of what someone said or did to us or to someone else. It can be as simple as a harsh word, a disregarded promise, or a case of hurt feelings. It can also be as serious as what took place between Jacob and Esau. As you remember from the Biblical account in Genesis, Jacob deceived his elderly and nearly blind father, Isaac and stole the birthright that should have been given to his older brother Esau. As a result, the Bible says, "Esau held a grudge against Jacob because of the blessing his father had given

him. He said, ‘The days of mourning for my father are near; then I will kill my brother Jacob’” (Genesis 27:41). In other words, Esau wouldn’t do anything until after Dad died, but when that happened, he would have his revenge. That’s why Jacob fled from home and years later was petrified when he and his family returned to face his brother Esau.

Yes, hatred can have a devastating effect upon those who are hated. It can also have a devastating effect upon the hater. The picture of Jonah sitting outside of the city of Nineveh is a perfect example of what hatred can do to the hater. Jonah was miserable, sitting there in the blistering heat. He was so hot that he was about ready to faint. Instead of rejoicing with the people of Nineveh who had repented, there he was, sulking all by himself, bitter and angry that the city had been spared. He was consumed by his anger and not only that, he was also angry with God. He complained, “Lord, let me die. I am better off dead than alive” (Jonah 4:3). Hatred can do nasty things to us. It isolates us. It separates us from others, at times even those we love and it separates us from God. That’s what I discovered years ago. Two brothers hated one another and that hatred destroyed not only their lives, but also the lives of their families. They would never have darkened the front door of a church, except perhaps when they were residing in a coffin.

So what can we do about that kind of hatred, the kind of hatred that can ruin our lives, just as it did Jonah’s? It may be nothing more than a slight offense, a disagreement with someone who has offended us. Big or small, even a small dose of resentment is dangerous. It can wound personal relationships, it can keep us out of church and it can put us in a prison of bitter isolation from God and one another. Thankfully, God has provided us with a remedy in Paul’s letter to the Christians in Ephesus. He says, “Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you” (Ephesians 4:31-32). That’s precisely what God was trying to do when He caused a plant to grow over Jonah. Jonah was delighted by this new addition to his life. Now he could sit in the shade. The next day, however, at God’s command, the plant was eaten by a worm and died. Once again, Jonah was sweltering in the bright sunlight and he was upset, muttering to God about his right to die. This turn of events gave God an opportunity to confront Jonah with a singularly important spiritual truth. The LORD said to Jonah, “You didn’t grow the plant that withered away and yet you felt sorry for it. How about all those people in Nineveh. Aren’t they more valuable than a little bit of vegetation? Don’t I have the right to show compassion and pity on them. After all there are at least 120,000 innocent children in that city” Jonah 4:10-11. In other words, forgiveness and compassion need to replace anger and hatred, especially when the objects of our hatred are like those children in Nineveh.

So in closing let me share the “brownie story” with you. It will sum up everything that I have been trying to say, everything that, indeed, God is trying to say to us. A young woman by the name of Susan was a caregiver. She didn’t volunteer for the job. It was thrust upon her. She was responsible for the care of her elderly grandfather-in-law who took delight in criticizing her. In his eyes, she could do nothing right. Worse still, he always sat in the kitchen with his leg propped up on a stool to help ease the pain that was continuous. One day Susan was working in the kitchen and she accidentally bumped his bad leg. A string of curse words exploded from his lips. Susan was reduced to tears—tears of anger, hurt and genuine hostility. She hated this mean spirited devil who dominated her life. What could she do to quieten her own feelings as well as reduce the animosity that they obviously had for one another? She thought for a moment remembering what Jesus had to say about forgiving one another. Then an idea popped into her head. She remembered that granddaddy loved brownies. So she fixed a batch and put the still warm pan on a table close to where he was sitting so that he would smell the brownies when he woke up. His angry tirade had so exhausted him that he had fallen asleep. In a few moments the waft of the cooling brownies stirred him to consciousness. Susan was on the other side of the room fixing dinner. With tears running down his face, grandpa called her over, “Can you forgive me? I’m a cranky old man who doesn’t appreciate all that you do

for me.” Pulling a chair up beside her grandfather-in-law, they shared a brownie with one another as well as the beginning of a new relationship. As the writer of the book of Hebrews in the New Testament reminds us, “See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many” Hebrews 12:15.

RESPONSE TO THE WORD OF GOD

Worship Song

“How Deep the Father’s Love For Us”

Stuart Townend

Affirmation of Faith

We believe in the lavish God who clothes the wild flowers, dressing them so superbly that they outdo Solomon in all his glory; who is the true Friend of all creatures great and small.

We believe in Jesus Christ who is full of grace and truth and the giver of abundant life. He is the Faithful One who sweated drops of blood in the garden and because of His great love was obedient unto death.

We believe in the extravagant God who turns the other cheek, goes the second mile, turns water into the very best wine, brings healing with His every touch and who welcomes a woman’s love as she fills the house with unforgettable fragrance.

We believe in the redeeming God who spared no cost, forgave even His brutal captors, had time for a dying thief at His side and who on the third day did a thing so prodigious that even His friends were beside themselves with joy.

We believe in the God of Jesus Christ, the Source of abundance wherever we turn and no matter what we do. Amen

Doxology

“Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow”

Hymn 34

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Almighty Compassionate God, You care for all people, whether they are here around us or in far off places. You care enough to call us to bring the good news to them. Thank You for Your compassion, Your care, Your mercy and the good news of Your son, Jesus Christ. Bless these gifts that we bring, for You call us to not only go, but to give that the world might know You. In Jesus’ name we pray. 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**

“The Terrible Sin of the People of Ninevah”

Carolyn Gillette

THE SENDING FORTH

Benediction

Postlude

“The Ash Grove”

Dale Wood

The flowers are given to the Glory of God and in memory of my brother and mother, who both had birthdays in July. Michelle Goode

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 Guest Speaker Potluck Ice Cream</i>	29	30	31			

Concerns- July 14th

- Avery:** Tinkie, hospice care
- Barnes:** Kim Hedrick- (friend) cancer
Jerry Dilion-(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
Scott and Robin Umphlet, Scott is ill after a trip abroad.
- 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
Ann Marie- not feeling well
- Foster:** Ron (brother-in-law) in home
Howard & Lynn (brother) difficulty with legs, wife dementia
Tom
Prayers for everyone on dialysis
- Goode:** Rodney & Connie Groggins (husband's cousins) Connie Alzheimer's, Rodney caregiver, health issues
Julie Parks (friend) knee replacement this week
- Goodman:** John Ramsey (nephew) open heart surgery
- 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
Sonya and family on passing of father
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: looking for caretaker for aunt
Weeks: Edith, home, not doing well

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 14th

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

Sunday: July 21st
10 am Worship

July Birthdays

Larry Compter- 18
Nancy Van Dyke - 22
Jay Gould – 31

Potluck and Ice Cream Social!!!!

Let's end the month of July on a delicious "high note." We are having a covered dish luncheon in the fellowship hall on Sunday, July 28. Bring your favorite dish for everyone to enjoy, but skip the dessert. The Fellowship Committee will be serving your favorite flavor of ice cream.

Guest Speaker

On July 28th, Reverend Hein Vermaak will be our guest speaker. Hein and his family recently immigrated from South Africa. Please give a warm welcome as he shares God's Word with us.

Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child

Last year our church supported Operation Christmas Child, a ministry of Samaritan's Purse. We provided shoeboxes filled with gifts for children overseas. We discovered that finding and purchasing appropriate items for the shoeboxes can take a lot of time and money. This year a special opportunity has arisen for us to save on both. WOW Supplies, located at 3406 Forest Brook Road in Lynchburg is hosting an open house, July 20th, 10 am to 4 pm. If you would like to go and purchase supplies for your shoebox at greatly discounted prices, please meet at the church, 9:30 am on July 20th and we can ride together.

The Men's Breakfast will resume on September 7th at 9am.

So gentlemen mark your calendar and come enjoy great fellowship and food!

Jonah 4: 1-11 (Good News Version)

Jonah's Anger and God's Mercy

1 Jonah was very unhappy about this and became angry.

2 So he prayed, “Lord, didn't I say before I left home that this is just what you would do? That's why I did my best to run away to Spain! I knew that you are a loving and merciful God, always patient, always kind, and always ready to change your mind and not punish.

3 Now then, Lord, let me die. I am better off dead than alive.”

4 The Lord answered, “What right do you have to be angry?”

5 Jonah went out east of the city and sat down. He made a shelter for himself and sat in its shade, waiting to see what would happen to Nineveh.

6 Then the Lord God made a plant grow up over Jonah to give him some shade, so that he would be more comfortable. Jonah was extremely pleased with the plant.

7 But at dawn the next day, at God's command, a worm attacked the plant, and it died.

8 After the sun had risen, God sent a hot east wind, and Jonah was about to faint from the heat of the sun beating down on his head. So he wished he were dead.[a] “I am better off dead than alive,” he said.

9 But God said to him, “What right do you have to be angry about the plant?” Jonah replied, “I have every right to be angry—angry enough to die!”

10 The Lord said to him, “This plant grew up in one night and disappeared the next; you didn't do anything for it and you didn't make it grow—yet you feel sorry for it!

11 How much more, then, should I have pity on Nineveh, that great city. After all, it has more than 120,000 innocent children in it, as well as many animals!”