

Bedford Presbyterian Church

105 West Main Street, Bedford, Virginia

From 1844 to 2024 (180 Years)



Week of October 20th

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

“O Love That Will Not Let Me Go”

Shackley

Words of Welcome

Call to Worship

One: Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord, O my soul!

All: I will sing praises to God all my life long.

One: Happy are those whose help is in God, creator of heaven and earth, who is forever faithful;

All: The Lord protects strangers and upholds the orphan and widow;

One: But the way of the wicked is brought to ruin.

All: The Lord our God will reign forever, for all generations. Praise the Lord!

Hymn

“I’ll Praise My Maker While I’ve Breath”

Hymn 79

***Prayer of Confession:**

Our Father, we come to You now in desperate need of Your forgiveness. We have not made prayer a priority in our lives. We have been quick to rely on our own strength and planning and have subtly moved You to the periphery. Awaken our hearts to lament this folly and this lack of understanding of You and of ourselves. Father, forgive us for dishonoring You with our priorities, allowing our minds to be captivated by temporal things, while remaining unmoved at thoughts of Your grace, Your holiness, Your salvation. May we never forget that You have our souls in Your hands. You uphold us by Your strong right arm. You give us everything we need and indeed, so much more than we deserve. Place in us an ever-growing hunger to know You more so that we can make You known to a world that does not know You. In Jesus’ name 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

PROCLAIMING THE WORD OF GOD

Personal Testimony

John Blair

Anthem

“How Deep the Father’s Love for Us”

Mark Hayes, arr;

Sermon

REACHING OUT TO KNOW THE MIND OF GOD

Artificial intelligence, the ability of a machine to think like a human being, has become a reality in the twenty-first century, but it's origin dates all the way back to the 1930's and 40's. Scientists discovered that they could create a mechanical device that mimicked the electrical impulses that take place in the human brain. In other words they were copying the very way in which human beings are able to think. The development of computers has provided the means by which this technology can be implanted into machines with fully developed cognitive powers, including the ability to carry on a conversation and to achieve intellectual reasoning and problem solving far beyond human capabilities. Even the spell check function on your computer is a low level form of artificial intelligence. Of course, with these technological advances comes the potential for what is good and maybe not so good. Could the creation of artificial intelligence turn against its creator? Remember the movie, 2001 Space Odyssey? A crew of astronauts is sent on a secret mission to the planet Jupiter. Life on board their spacecraft is controlled by a super computer named "Hal." Because "Hal" has been programmed incorrectly, he experiences a mental breakdown, becoming schizophrenic. He turns on the crew and kills everyone, except for one remaining astronaut.

Who knows whether artificial intelligence will be a blessing or a curse for humanity? However, it does raise another question which for us as Christians may be even more interesting. What if we were able to tap into "Divine Intelligence?" What if we were able to reach out and come to a better understanding of the mind of God? Now that would be a real achievement. Gaining access to the thoughts and purposes of the Lord God Almighty would open up whole new vistas of understanding and advancement for mankind. But is that possible? The Old Testament prophet Isaiah threw a great big wet blanket on that idea when he said, speaking on the Lord's behalf, "'For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are My ways your ways,' declares the LORD. 'As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts'" (Isaiah 55:8-9).

Nevertheless, through prayer can we reach out and at least know something of the mind of God? Let's examine two possibilities and see if that might prove to be true. The first is the life and ministry of Jesus. After He was baptized by John the Baptist, what did He do? Matthew, Mark and Luke all say the same thing. He went into the Jordanian wilderness where He spent 40 days fasting. Besides going without food, what else did He do? Being led by the Spirit of God to that desolate location, the answer is obvious. It was a time of prayer, a time to commune with His heavenly Father as He mapped out the future course of His ministry. The gospel of Mark hints at what was taking place during that time by mentioning that Jesus was attended by angels (Mark 1:10). We also know from the Scriptures that it was a time to hear and be tempted by God's adversary, the devil. Rejecting all that Satan had to offer, Jesus was now ready to begin preaching and teaching and healing the sick. Later, near the end of His ministry there was that encounter with Moses and Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration. Once again, whether you call it a time of prayer or a divine meeting, Jesus was receiving instruction and encouragement for the conclusion of His ministry here on earth. Finally, in the Garden of Gethsemane on the last night of His life, what was Jesus doing? He was praying and what was the prayer that He was praying, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from Me. Yet not as I will but as you will" (Matthew 26:39). He was reaching out to know the mind and heart of God and to accept what that entailed, even if it meant death on a cross.

Of course, it's easy to say that Jesus was the Son of God and we are not. But don't forget that when Jesus wanted to know what God was thinking and desiring for Him to accomplish, He had to do the same thing that we as God's children have to do. He prayed. The same is true of another servant of God. He was not divine by a long shot. In fact, at first he wanted to destroy this heretical movement which eventually became known as Christianity. On the road to Damascus, of course, all of that changed and he too became a Christian. So how did Paul prepare himself for an evangelical ministry that would stretch all the way across the Roman Empire? Let me share with you a passage of Scripture that is often overlooked. After his conversion and before he started preaching, this is what Paul did. In his letter to the Galatians he wrote, "I want you to know, brothers, that the gospel I preached is not something that man made up. I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ" (Galatians 1:11-12). Then after explaining how he became a believer, he adds, "I did not consult with any man, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before I was. I went immediately into Arabia and later returned to Damascus" (Galatians 1:16-17).

The gospel message of God's salvation was not something that Paul discovered after consulting with the leaders of the early church. He didn't pursue that approach at all. Instead, like Jesus, he spent time alone with God to insure that he had a proper understanding of the mind of the Almighty. In other words he spent a considerable amount of time in prayer. That's why Paul could say to the Christians in Corinth, "We do, however, speak a message of wisdom among the mature, but not the wisdom of this age or of the rules of this age, who are coming to nothing. No, we speak of God's secret wisdom, a wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began" (1 Corinthians 2:6-7). Out there in the desert of Arabia, Paul was able to plug into the mind of God and to discern the wonderful revelation of His plan for mankind's salvation in Christ Jesus.

With all of this in mind, let's return to that question that I raised at the beginning of this sermon. Through prayer can we reach out to know the mind of God? To be perfectly honest, our prayer capabilities in no way measure up to those of Christ and for most, if not all of us they are also inferior to those of Paul. So what are we to do? Has the bar been set so high that knowing anything of the mind and heart of God through prayer is simply beyond us? Perhaps not. Let me share a memory with you from years ago. I was serving as a chaplain intern at Baptist Hospital in Winston-Salem. Under my supervision was a Mennonite lay pastor from Canada. He was there for a 15 week course in pastoral care. One of the things that I quickly realized was that he was a man of prayer. He knew the Lord and communed with Him on a daily basis. The way in which he dealt with people reminded me of the New Testament description of Jesus' life and ministry. His insightful comments and compassionate demeanor drew people like a magnet. In just a few days, not only patients, but nurses and even doctors were seeking his counsel. I was supposed to be his supervisor, but in reality I was his student. Very quickly I began to realize that this rather quiet and unassuming man had access to the mind and heart of God. He knew how to pray.

So what about you and me? As we bring this six week emphasis on prayer to a conclusion, what can we take away from it that will be genuinely beneficial? Here it is. You and I can walk hand in hand with God through prayer. It's simply a matter of whether we want to or not. God will not force us to walk with Him. It's our choice and to be perfectly honest it's not easy. Having gone on a number of back packing trips with my son and others, I can tell you that walking down a trail, sometimes over difficult terrain, requires

both discipline and determination. It's not a stroll in the park. You've got to know what to take, be willing to carry a cumbersome backpack and deal with some harsh realities like sleeping on the ground. It also requires being alert, being aware of what's going on around you, so that you are not surprised by something that could be dangerous. But when you come to the end of the trail and look back over the entire experience you know that every step of the journey was worth it. You have gotten to know those with whom you have been hiking in a far deeper way and in a more meaningful way than what would have ever been possible otherwise.

The same is true when you go for a prayerful walk with God. It will require time, getting to know Him and learning how to follow His leadership. It will take some training, studying His guidebook, the Bible, because God will never tell you or show you anything that violates His Word. It will take some stamina and discipline, developing a regular prayer routine and keeping it, even when you don't want to. Finally and most importantly, it will require being conscious of the one who walks beside you, the Holy Spirit, being alert to what He wants to tell you and show you on your journey through life.

In the fifth chapter of the book of Genesis, we are introduced to a man by the name of Enoch. You know what's so special about him? Only one thing. He walked with God, another way of saying that he and the Lord had an abiding relationship with one another through prayer. That relationship was so strong that Enoch received a special invitation from God. The Bible says, "Enoch walked with God; then he was no more because God took him away" (Genesis 5:24). In other words, he received an invitation to spend all of eternity in the presence of His heavenly Father. May it be said of each of us that like Enoch, we too knew how to walk with God.

RESPONSE TO THE WORD OF GOD

Worship Song

"Earnestly"

Tommy Walker

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

See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know Him. Thank you, Father, for making Yourself known to us. Bless these offerings and help us use them to make You known to the world. 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**

"More Love to Thee, O Christ"

William H. Doane

THE SENDING FORTH

Benediction

Postlude

"Lobe den Herren"

Max Reger

The flowers are given to the Glory of God and with Blessings to our Lord and Savior,
by Philip and Sherry Parker.

Disaster Relief

With a second hurricane impacting our nation this week, disaster relief has become an immediate need, especially in the South. Clean-up efforts are continuing both here in Virginia, North Carolina and states further south. We can help through organizations such as the Red Cross, Samaritan's

Purse, and our own Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. Reach out to any of these agencies' websites and they will provide instructions on how to assist financially and personally. Also, we have received word from one of members, Linda Benton, about another way in which we can reach out to those in need. That information was shared as a Grace Note this past week and will be repeated once more in the coming week.

Hand in Hand with God through Prayer

This morning we conclude our prayer emphasis as we reach out to know the mind of God. Coming to a better understanding of what God desires for us to know about the way in which we can live a more productive and meaningful way of life with Him and with one another is vitally important. On Wednesday we will also conclude our video series on prayer hosted by Jim Cymbala, pastor of the Brooklyn Tabernacle in New York City.

October 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2 <i>Something More, 3 pm</i>	3	4	5 <i>Men's Breakfast 9 am</i>
6 <i>10 am Worship Communion</i>	7	8	9 <i>Deacon's Meeting 1pm</i> <i>Something More, 3 pm</i>	10	11	12
13 <i>10 am Worship 5¢ a Meal BCM collection</i>	14	15	16 <i>Something More, 3 pm</i>	17	18	19
20 <i>10 am Worship Ecumenical Youth CC, 6pm</i>	21	22	23 <i>Something More, 3 pm</i>	24	25	26
27 <i>10 am Worship Congregational meeting Potluck</i>	28	29	30 <i>Something More, 3 pm</i>	31		

Joys- October 20th

Joy- What a glorious Fall day! Wonderful music and message.

Concerns- October 20th

Avery: Tinkie, hospice care

Barnes: Kim Hedrick- (friend) cancer

Jerry Dillon (nephew) health issues

Jody Lineberry- leukemia treatment unsuccessful

Benton: Judy (friend) son in critical condition

Connie Thomas (friend) broke hip and arm in fall

Jill (friend) fell, broke arm

Nicole- (stepdaughter) in Asheville helping Helene victims

Blair: Philip Davis recovering from surgery for melanoma

Boone: Roslyn Reynolds, (friend) upcoming surgery

Mark Luft (neighbor) fell, rehab, family issues

Tammy (friend) open heart surgery

Neighbor lost husband now moving

Goode family on loss of son

Callahan: Mary Jane (friend) in remission

Steve Chaffin (friend) blood clots

Compter: Jeannie, Seth (both friend) health issues

Scott and Robin Umphlet, Scott is ill after a trip abroad.

Family of Will Betonhauser on sudden passing

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: Lucile Kesterson (Dawn's mother) aging memory issues

Julian Kesterson (Dawn's stepdad) nursing home, multiple falls

DeWitt: Families of 2 young men recently killed in car accidents

Easter: Ruby Key (friend) cancer

Jim (brother) 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- in hospital, moving to Oakwood

Prayers for everyone on dialysis and those in paths of storms where centers are gone.

Froberg: 10-week-old great niece, cranium surgery went well

Goode: Amy (niece) biopsy

Goodman: continued prayers for those effected by Helene

Grigg: Beth Falwell- starting cancer treatments

Chris Mays- diabetic complications

Grubb: John cancer, more testing, upcoming surgery

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

Harris: Jim, back pain

Heinrich: Steven - (grandson) autoimmune disorder

Barbara Lore- (Helen's sister) heart problems

Kuhn-Kibbey: Dot reinjured her back

Lambert: Margaret sciatica pain, arthritis

Mauser: Joyce Reese- (friend) health problems
Steven-(son's boss) going blind
Barbara (Al's sister) intense headaches
Gayle- home

McManis; Charlotte, doing better

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

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
Margaret's brother in NC prayers for those impacted by storm

Narwid: Ed- not doing well

Riley: Christine stroke, Elks home

Rutledge: friend in Hawaii health issues
Granddaughter broken leg

Salley: Jillian Salley complicated pregnancy

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
Marcus Walker- (brother) laid off from job
John- psoriatic arthritis

Stetson: Nick, Tiffany, Savannah- Savannah, home
Morgan (nephew) life decisions

Stevens: Jackie Landis- heart problems
Earl Carter- health issues

Van Dyke: Prayers to solve evil in country
Marilyn (92 yr old neighbor) fell, broke leg

Watkins: family of Dr. Wells, son COPD in hospice, daughter-in-law passed away

Webb: Family on passing of Aunt.

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 October 20th

Sunday: 10 am Worship

Wednesday: Something More 3 pm

Sunday: October 27th

10 am Worship

Congregational Meeting

Potluck- Fall Favorites

October Birthdays

Libby Monk – 21

Jim Barefoot - 28

Ann Marie Fleming - 28

Linda Benton -30

October Anniversaries

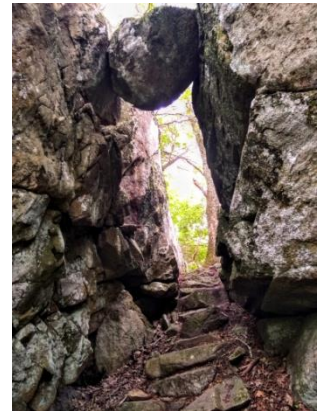
James & Ann Marie Fleming - 28

Paul & Nancy Van Dyke - 30



Bedford Hiking Club heads to the very top!

Join us on Saturday, **October 26th** as we take in the last of the fall colors from the top of Apple Orchard Mountain, the highest point on the Virginia AT. This easy 2 mile circle walk – up the trail then back down the service road – travels along one of the most beautiful sections of the AT bringing you to an open meadow, beside the radar dome, featuring scenic views of the Shenandoah valley and mountain ranges all the way back to Roanoke. Since this is such a short walk, why don't you pack a picnic meal to enjoy up on the meadow.



For those who want to carpool, we will leave from the church at 9a. or you can meet us at the pull off beside the radar station driveway around 9:30 (*just let me know if you choose this option*). In case of rain the hike will be rescheduled for November 2. For more info, contact jtsalley@gmail.com.

Congregational Meeting

October 27th following service to approve the Session nominees.

Please plan on staying after service for the meeting and then join us for a Potluck Luncheon.