

Bedford Presbyterian Church

105 West Main Street, Bedford, Virginia

From 1844 to 2025 (181 Years)



Week of January 26, 2025

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

"Fairest Lord Jesus"

Faye Lopez

Words of Welcome

Call to Worship

One: The Lord reigns, let the earth be glad; let the distant shores rejoice.

All: For You, Lord, are the Most High over all the earth; You are exalted far above all gods.

One: Light shines on the righteous and joy on the upright in heart.

All: Rejoice in the Lord, you who are righteous, and praise His holy name.

***Hymn**

"Rejoice, the Lord is King!"

Hymn 342

***Prayer of Confession**

Most Gracious and Merciful Heavenly Father, hear our prayer. We know that the blank slate of a new year seems so promising – We haven't done anything too awful, not yet. And we know that the blank slate of a new year is also an illusion; Time continues, and our lives flow from one day to the next, from one year to the next. In this time, we know we are sometimes remarkable and generous, bearing light to the shadows, and we know we are sometimes full of despair and selfishness, hoarding light and goodness for ourselves. We invite You on our journeys, O God. We seek Your presence with us in the darkness and the light, In our remarkable moments and our awful ones. We seek Your presence, and bask in Your love, through Christ. 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"

Bill Rutledge

PROCLAIMING THE WORD OF GOD

Scripture

Amos 1: 1-2, 7: 10-15

Praise Song

"Victory Chant" & "Wonderful, Merciful Savior"

Sermon

Amos, a Man with a Mission

Years ago I was asked to teach the young people's class during Vacation Bible School. The teens were somewhat leery of the pastor being their teacher, but they were downright depressed when they discovered that we would be studying the book of Amos in the Old Testament. How could some long dead prophet have anything to say that would be relevant or helpful for teenagers? Fortunately, with a little friendly persuasion from their parents, they showed up for class and much to their surprise discovered that the book of Amos was a lot more interesting than they had ever imagined. In fact, one of them asked me when the class was over, "Do you think any of the things that Amos talked about could happen today?"

That's a good question and one that I hope you will ask when we conclude our study of the book of Amos. Beginning today and continuing in the weeks to come we're going to be taking a look at this book of Old Testament prophecy. It's nine chapters long and falls within that category of sacred writings known as the "Minor Prophets." These books are found at the end of the Old Testament. In ancient times when writings were inscribed on scrolls, all twelve of these books were placed on one scroll and that's how they got their name. The larger prophetic books of the Old Testament like Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel each had their own scroll. They were known as the major prophets. Amos and his eleven companions were designated as being "minor prophets," not because what they had to say was of lesser value and inspiration, but simply because their books were a lot shorter than the other larger prophetic writings. In fact, what they had to say was often of significant importance, such as Micah's prophecy, another minor prophet, who foretold that Jesus would be born in Bethlehem. So this morning let's begin our study of the book of Amos. It is located between the books of Joel and Obadiah. Let's also take a look at the life and times of this Old Testament prophet. In doing so, it will hopefully help us to come to a better understanding of both the man and the message which God told him to proclaim.

To begin with, let's take a look at what was going on in that part of the world where Amos lived. Israel, once a great and mighty nation, had been split apart by a civil war. Instead of one country, there were now two, Israel to the north and Judah to the south. Sometimes they were friendly towards one another and at other times they were adversaries. Religiously, they both honored the God of Abraham and Moses, but there were some distinctive differences. Judah continued to worship the Lord at the temple in Jerusalem and they observed the doctrines and traditions of their ancestors more rigorously than their neighbors to the north. Israel, on the other hand, was more open to religious diversity, incorporating the practices and beliefs of the nations around them. For example, they built two worship centers, one to the north at Dan and another near the southern border with Judah. Located in the town of Bethel, worship was conducted at a temple with two golden calves. Instead of going to Jerusalem, people could come to this religious shrine and offer their sacrifices. They were told that the God of Israel was enthroned upon these divine beasts, reminiscent of the golden calf that their ancestors had briefly worshipped during their exodus from Egypt.

Now that you hopefully have a better understanding of the life and times in which Amos lived, let's take a look at who he was and where he came from. Amos was a resident of Judea, the southern kingdom. He lived in a little place known as Tekoa, located in the Judean hill country south of Bethlehem. It was a small town with limited opportunities for those who lived there. In terms of employment Amos had two jobs. He was a shepherd and a dresser of sycamore trees. That second job involved harvesting the fruit of the sycamore tree, a nut of little nutritional value. It provided the kind of food that you ate when nothing else was available. To say the least, Amos came from a rural and disadvantaged background. You might even call him a country bumpkin. But in terms of his relationship with God and his ability to perceive and proclaim a message from the Lord, he had few equals. He was in every sense of the word a true and fearless prophet.

In fact, he felt led of the Lord to deliver a message from the Almighty to the people of Israel, the northern kingdom. This involved a journey on foot of about 40 miles. More importantly, it involved a journey from the rural countryside to a bustling urban center with an important religious shrine. He was stepping into an economic and social environment far different from what life was like in Tekoa. Under the leadership of Jeroboam II, the king of Israel, the northern kingdom was prospering both financially and politically. The country had risen to a place of prominence in that part of the world, especially with regards to the international trade routes that crisscrossed their nation. People were flocking to Bethel, a city with a religious heritage dating all the way back to those ancestral days when the patriarch, Jacob, had encountered the Lord on a staircase to heaven one night during a dream. The priests who ran the temple in Bethel were enjoying increased attendance and bountiful offerings. Outsiders upsetting their lucrative religious festivities were not welcomed.

That, in fact, was exactly what Amos intended to do. His name means “burden” and he had every intention of living up to his name, especially with regards to being a burden for those who were leading God’s people astray. So he packed his bags and headed up north on a special mission. He knew what God had asked him to do. Although he was just an ordinary laborer, he knew the Lord and he knew the Word of the Lord, the accounts which had been handed down to him about how God had revealed Himself to his ancestors. He knew that the Lord had high expectations for His people. Had not the Lord told Moses to deliver this message to the Israelites at Mount Sinai, “Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be My treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation” (Exodus 19:5-6). Unfortunately, those ten tribes to the north, the ones which rebelled after the death of King Solomon, had broken faith with God. They gave Him lip service, but their hearts were elsewhere. The time had come to confront them and give them an opportunity to repent and confess their waywardness. Otherwise God’s judgement would be severe. Someone had to warn them. Yes, he might be a little shabby in appearance and yes, his speech might be a mite rough around the edges, but Amos knew that God had given him a mission, a divine assignment that those rich folks in Bethel desperately needed to hear.

So what does this introduction to Amos and the mission that God gave to him have to do with us today? The best explanation comes in the form of a man I met years ago by the same name. He was Amos Britt. Amos was a fisherman who lived near the Pamunky River in New Kent County, Virginia. He had a little boat, a skiff, and he fished with a net and a hand line. He earned just enough money to keep a roof over his head. He was a roughhewn man who had lived a hard life. Alcohol had nearly destroyed him, but in his later years he had come to faith in Jesus Christ. Wanting to make up for the mistakes of his past, he took upon himself the mission of being a witness for Christ to his grandchildren and some of the other kids who lived in his neighborhood. Each Sunday he loaded them up in his old Plymouth station wagon and brought them to church. That was the joy of his life, seeing those youngsters learn about Jesus.

I still remember him with a great fondness of both mind and heart. Here’s why. Just like Amos of the Bible, Amos Britt was a man of limited resources. He lived in a tiny shack and probably didn’t have much of an education. Nevertheless, he knew that God loved him and he wanted to return that love by doing something that he believed would make a difference. That difference was picking up and driving a carload of kids to church. What about you and me? Is there a special mission, something that the Lord has laid upon your heart that you can do for Him. Why not spend a little time in prayer and meditation, asking God, “What can I do for You and Your people? It may not be a great thing, Lord, maybe something quite simple. But whatever it is Lord, give me, even me, a mission that I can do for the sake of your Kingdom. In this day and in this time, make me an Amos.”

RESPONSE TO THE WORD OF GOD

Hymn

"Take My Life and Let It Be"

Hymn 466

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

Dear God and Father, we come before You now to give You thanks for all that You have given to us, not least of which is Your grace that we have found in Your Son, Jesus Christ. We give this offering out of an overflow of Your kindness towards us and we pray that through these gifts Your Word would spread, bringing You the glory and honor that You deserve. We pray these things in Christ's name and for His glory, 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**

"Come, All Christians, Be Committed"

Hymn 459

THE SENDING FORTH

***Benediction**

Postlude

"The Acts of God are Righteous"

Walther

The flowers are given to the Glory of God and in memory of Walter Benton and his parents, Aubery and Mildred Benton, by Linda Benton

Amos Sermon Series

Beginning this Sunday and continuing in the weeks to come, we'll be taking a look at an Old Testament book of prophecy that may be unfamiliar to you. Even though Amos, the author of the book, grew up in a time far distant from our own, many of his prophetic messages still ring true today. We'll take a look at a number of them and see how they apply to our own lives in twenty-first century America.

February 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1 <i>Men's Breakfast</i> 9 am
2 <i>10 am Worship</i> <i>Communion</i>	3	4	5 <i>Something More,</i> 3 pm <i>Music Course</i> 6 pm	6	7	8
9 <i>10 am Worship</i> <i>5¢ a Meal</i> <i>BCM collection</i>	10	11	12 <i>Something More,</i> 3 pm <i>Deacons' 1 pm</i> <i>Music Course</i> 6 pm	13	14	15
16 <i>10 am Worship</i>	17	18	19 <i>Something More,</i> 3 pm <i>Music Course</i> 6 pm	20	21	22
23 <i>10 am Worship</i>	24	25	26 <i>Something More,</i> 3 pm <i>Music Course</i> 6 pm	27	28	

Joys- January 26th

Joy- John Blair thanks all the helpers at the Warming center

Joy- John Grubb thanks everyone for their calls, prayers and concerns

Concerns- January 26th

Avery: Tinkie, hospice care

Barefoot: Jim, home, continues to improve

Barnes: Kim Hedrick- (friend) cancer

Jerry Dillon (nephew) health issues

Jody Lineberry- leukemia treatment unsuccessful

Benton: Nicole- (stepdaughter) in Asheville helping Helene victims

Boone: niece undergoing radiation treatments

Brunot: Jim's brother Bill, completed chemo

Concern about drones in New Jersey

Callahan: Mary Jane (friend) in remission

Steve Chaffin (friend) blood clots

Compter: Jeannie, Seth (both friend) health issues

Bob (friend) in hospital with Covid

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

Frank Sicillano (brother-in-law) cancer in pain

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

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

Easter: Jim (brother) cancer

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

Previous Pastor heart surgery went well

Foster: Ron (brother-in-law) hospice, prayers for family

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

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

Bob- (Ellen's brother) heart surgery went well, home

Goode: (friend) Tommy Atkinson stroke

Goodman: Friend Betty is near death

Grigg: Chris Mays- diabetic complications

Grubb: John cancer, recovering from surgery, doing well

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

Harris: Jim, back pain

Judy- shoulder replaced

Heinrich: Steven - (grandson) autoimmune disorder

Barbara Lore- (Helen's sister) heart problems

Kuhn-Kibbey: Dot reinjured her back

Sarah McCabe Oakes,(friend) amputation leg, pelvis

Lambert: Margaret sciatica pain, arthritis

Linton: Candy (Parker's friend) health issues from car accident

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
Granddaughter had a seizure

Morris: all law enforcement, firefighters and all other first responders
Forensic scientists who deal with crime
Rev. Pam Ledbetter
Elisa- (daughter-in-law) family needs

Nichols: shooting in Ohio

Rutledge: friend in Hawaii health issues

Saunders: Gloria

Saunders: Ron, home recovering from double pneumonia
Special prayers for California and people in track of fire
Son-in-law, cancer not spreading

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 in LA are okay
Morgan (nephew) life decisions
Cook at Shepherd's Table, baby in NICU

Stevens: Jackie Landis- heart problems
Matt- lung cancer, still suffering
All Virginia towns impacted by hurricane
Chief 'Hops' cancer that is spreading, UVA
Wilson Stevens- better back at work
People in LA and first responders

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 January 26th

Sunday: 10 am Worship

Congregational Meeting

Soup & Pie Luncheon

Wednesday: Something More 3 pm

Saturday: Men's Breakfast 9 am

Sunday: February 2nd

10 am Worship

Communion

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

Beginning February 5th, the music department will be offering a course for beginners in "How to Read Music." It will run every Wednesday from 6 to 6:30pm and will last for 6 weeks. If anyone is interested, let Bill Rutledge know so that he can print enough copies of the book.

Something More

Come and join us on Wednesday afternoons at 3:00 pm for a time of Bible study and fellowship. It's a lively discussion on all kinds of things related to our walk with Christ as well as an opportunity to dig a little deeper into the spiritual truths of God's Word presented during our worship services on Sunday mornings.

Weather Reminder

This has been a cold and snowy winter. We will inform our church family by Grace Notes and announcements on local TV when our services have been cancelled. However, always monitor the weather situation at your home. If it looks like things could be challenging, like icy roads, please stay home and watch the service online at bedfordpresbyva.org. We want everyone to be well and safe during these cold wintry months.

Men's Breakfast

The weather got in the way of our Men's Breakfast in January. We're going to try again this coming Saturday, February 1st, 9:00 am in the fellowship hall. All the men of our church are invited and encouraged to attend for a hearty breakfast and a lively time of discussion as we get our men's ministry up and running in the new year.