

Bedford Presbyterian Church

105 West Main Street, Bedford, Virginia

From 1844 to 2025 (181 Years)



Week of February 2, 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

"My Jesus, I Love Thee"

Jim Hammerly

Words of Welcome

Call to Worship

One: Praise God from the heavens!

All: Praise Him from the skies above!

One: Praise God, angels and all the hosts of heaven!

All: Praise God, all creatures great and small,

One: Let all the earth bring praise to the Lord, at whose word creation came into being.

All: Praise the Lord!

***Hymn**

"All Creatures of Our God and King"
Verses 1,2 & 5

Hymn 23

***Prayer of Confession**

Almighty Father, You are the source of every good and perfect gift. We praise Your name for the greatest and most perfect gift: Your son, our Lord Jesus Christ. In lifting Him up, we humble ourselves before You. We confess to You, not only our sins of not doing what we know is right, but also our sins of doing what grieves You. O Lord, we are weak and feeble, slow to confess our sins and prone to wander from the path of righteousness. Do not deal with us as our sins deserve, but wash us clean in the blood of the Lamb and empower us by Your Spirit to live to honor and serve our Savior King. We praise You that He was born like us that we might become like Him. In Jesus' Name we pray, 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 2: 6-16

Praise Song

"Blessed Be the Lord God Almighty"

Bob Fitts

Sermon

A Pep Rally in Bethel

How many of you remember those pep rallies from your days in high school? Everyone gathered in the grandstands or bleachers of the football field with the cheerleaders and the football team dressed in their uniforms. Sometimes even the high school band would show up and begin playing fight songs. Then the cheering began with the cheerleaders chanting the strengths of the home team while depreciating the abilities of their opponents. Gradually an atmosphere of spontaneous excitement began to take hold, a spirit of joyous anticipation for the upcoming game. If everyone cheered loudly enough, victory would be assured on the gridiron.

Amos, of course, didn't know anything about football or pep rallies, but he did know something about people. In order to get their attention, he'd have to come up with something out of the ordinary. He had an important message to deliver and he needed a sensational way to get it across. That's when a really neat idea came to mind. The people in Bethel, indeed throughout the country of Israel, had a pretty high opinion of themselves. They thought they were a whole lot better than the other nations around them. So why not start by bringing a message of divine judgement against these neighboring countries. Dressed in the humble garb of a prophet, he would immediately command the people's attention if he stood in front of their temple and told everyone about what God was going to do to those nations which surrounded them. Then once he had their undivided attention, he could get down to business, telling the folks in Bethel what the Lord had in store for them.

So Amos stepped up to the place where prophetic messages were delivered and began to speak. He started off with the nation of Syria and their capital city of Damascus, "This is what the Lord says: 'For three sins of Damascus, even for four, I will not turn back My wrath. Because she threshed Gilead with sledges having iron teeth, I will send fire upon the house of Hazael that will consume the fortresses of Ben-Hadad. I will break down the gate of Damascus; I will destroy the king who is in the Valley of Aven and the one who holds the scepter in Beth Eden. The people of Aram will go into exile in Kir'" (Amos 1:2-5). Those who heard what Amos was saying were ecstatic. Syria had been one of their fiercest enemies for centuries. In fact, they had conquered and severely abused those Israelites living along their northern border in Galilee. To hear that the Lord was going to destroy the Syrians and send them into exile was welcome news.

Those listening to Amos said to themselves, "Perhaps this shabby foreigner from down south really does have a Word from the Lord." Amos continued, "This is what the LORD says 'For three sins of Gaza, even for four, I will not turn back my wrath. Because she took captive whole communities and sold them to Edom, I will send fire upon the walls of Gaza that will consume their fortresses. I will destroy the king of Ashdod and the one who holds the scepter in Ashkelon. I will turn My hand against Ekron, till the last of the Philistines is dead,' says the Sovereign LORD (Amos 1:6-8)." The Philistines had been around for a long time occupying a number of cities along the southern Mediterranean seacoast. Israel had fought them over and over again, including David's triumph over Goliath. Nevertheless, they were still in the slave trading business, selling Israelites into bondage to the Edomites whenever they had an opportunity. To be rid of them would be a dream come true.

The crowd listening to Amos was beginning to warm up to this prophet from Judea, especially when he next addressed the people of Tyre, those merchants who lived up north along the Mediterranean Sea. Amos said, "This is what the LORD says, 'For three sins of Tyre, and even for four, I will not turn back my wrath. Because she sold whole communities of captives to Edom, disregarding a treaty of brotherhood, I will send fire upon the walls of Tyre that will consume her fortresses'" (Amos 1:9-10). Tyre had been an ally of Israel dating all the way back to Solomon. They had provided both lumber and skilled craftsmen to help build the temple in Jerusalem. But now those ancient treaties had been broken and like the Philistines, they had sold not only individuals, but entire communities into slavery. The Lord needed to teach those

Phoenicians in Tyre that you don't mess around with God's people. The growing crowds in Bethel were delighted to cheer Amos on as he delivered his message.

In fact, more and more people joined the multitudes who were listening to Amos as he continued his diatribes against the nations surrounding Israel. They were really taking a shine to this itinerate prophet who spoke with such conviction and zeal. One after another he recited God's judgement against Edom for their unwarranted aggression, against Ammon for their disregard for pregnant women, against Moab for their desecration of the dead and then lastly against Judah, their southern neighbor. The people of Bethel were surprised to hear Amos speak of his own countrymen, charging them with disregarding God's laws and decrees as well as worshipping false gods. After all, they were fellow Hebrews, worshipping the same God.

Listening with eager anticipation, they were not prepared for what Amos was getting ready to proclaim. He cried out in a loud voice for all to hear, "This is what the LORD says, 'For three sins of Israel, even for four, I will not run back My wrath. They sell the righteous for silver, and the needy for a pair of sandals. They trample on the heads of the poor as upon the dust of the ground and deny justice to the oppressed. Father and son use the same girl and so profane my holy name. They lie down beside every altar on garments taken in pledge. In the house of their god they drink wine taken as fines'" (Amos 2:6-8). The people listened in stunned silence as Amos went on to declare that the God who had blessed them in the past would now crush them like a cart collapsing under the weight of its load. It was literally a message too heavy to bear.

So what if anything does this account of Amos' pep rally in Bethel have to say to us this morning? There are three things that we need to take to heart. First, just as in the days of Amos, we live in a dangerous world where a lot of bad things are happening. All around the globe people are being abused. Our enemies, like the new axis of evil—Russia, China, Iran and North Korea—are mistreating their own populations while trampling on the freedom of others. The horrific war in Ukraine, which has claimed hundreds of thousands of lives, is but one example. Closer to home in places like Cuba and Venezuela people are also being trampled under the feet of oppressive regimes. Additionally, Christians are often being singled out for the most heinous treatment. Just recently I read an account of what took place in the African nation of Uganda. A family—father, mother and grown son—decided to turn from Islam and become Christians. Knowing the hostility of their Muslim neighbors, they tried not to attract too much attention. Nevertheless, after their former acquaintances found out that they were believers, they came one night and set their house on fire, burning to death the family inside.

Yes, bad things are happening all around the world and for that reason here is the second thing that this passage of Scripture says to us. God has a special place in His heart for the abused and the downtrodden. When individuals or nations take advantage of people and especially when they take advantage of His people, the Lord is not happy and He brings judgement against them. History bears this out. Of all the nations that Amos mentioned, every one of them met disastrous consequences soon after he delivered his prophesies. The Assyrian Empire swept in and conquered them all. The only one which survived was little Judea and even they almost didn't make it. Had it not been for a godly king named Hezekiah, they too would have been vanquished.

Finally, here is the third thing we need to remember. During Jesus' Sermon on the Mount he said, "Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the same measure you use, it will be measured to you. Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye" (Matthew 7:1-4)? That's precisely what had taken place during Amos' condemnation of all the other nations. The people of Bethel were all too anxious to recognize and rejoice in the sins and shortcomings of other countries, without giving serious consideration to their own. The same thing can be true for us. Finding fault with

others, but disregarding some of the same things that need to be changed in our own lives is a serious mistake, a mistake that God will not overlook.

In the weeks to come we're going to discover three things that were serious problems in the culture and way of life in ancient Israel, three things that Amos condemned in his prophetic messages. Then with the help of God's spirit of discernment, we're going to see if there are some things that need to be changed in our lives both individually, as a church family, and as a nation. These next three weeks may not be a pep rally, but they could prove to be the kind of experience that makes us a better and more godly people.

RESPONSE TO THE WORD OF GOD

Communion Song	<i>"Come to the Table"</i>	Martin J. Nystrom
Communion	<i>"Jesus Spreads His Banner O'er Us"</i> <i>"Come With Us, O Blessed Jesus"</i>	Instrumental
Doxology	<i>"Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow"</i>	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	<i>"Jesus! What a Friend for Sinners!"</i>	Hymn 90
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THE SENDING FORTH

***Benediction**

Postlude	<i>"Postlude on 'Hyfrydol'"</i>	Robert Lau
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Amos Sermon Series

Beginning last Sunday and continuing in the weeks to come, we will be exploring the book of Amos in the Old Testament. In order to come to a better understanding of what took place in that day and time as well as insights for our lives today, there are three things that we need to do. First, read the book of Amos, selecting both modern and traditional translations. Second, review the sermon manuscripts that are available at church and on the church's website, bedfordpresbyva.org. Finally, go on line or acquire a Biblical commentary about Amos to learn more about this amazing prophet. All of these resources will enable you to come to a greater appreciation for what Amos had to say and how his prophetic messages still speak to us today.

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 <i>Fun & Games</i> 1pm
16 <i>10 am Worship</i> <i>Scout Sunday</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- February 2nd

Joy- Betty Goodman, welcomes 19th great grandchild

Joy- Deanna- thanking everyone for the wonderful Fun & Games

Joy- Ellen Foster thanking everyone for their concerns and help

Joy- Lori- good to see Ellen back in service

Concerns- February 2nd

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

Praying Sally will be able to get out soon

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

Granddaughter, massive heart attack

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) passes away, 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 back in hospital
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 February 2nd

Sunday: 10 am Worship
Communion

Wednesday: Something More 3 pm

Sunday: February 9th
10 am Worship
5¢ a Meal Offering
BCM donation/collections

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.