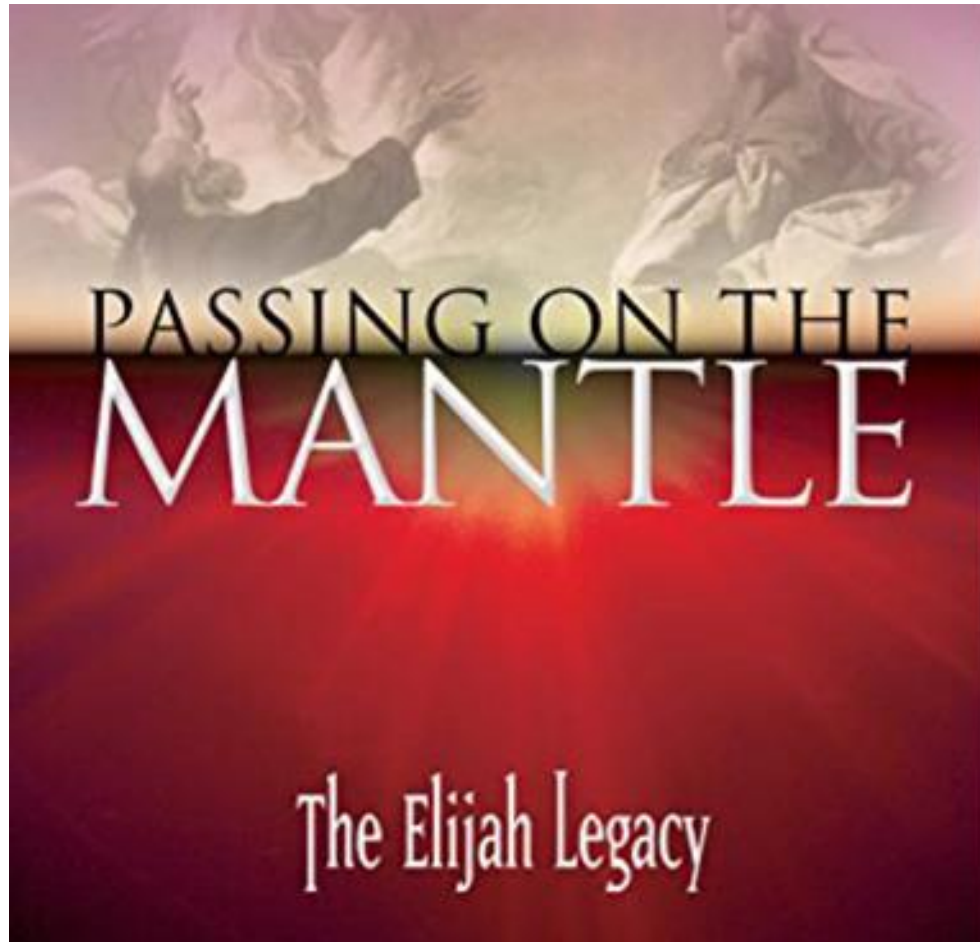


Bedford Presbyterian Church

105 West Main Street, Bedford, Virginia

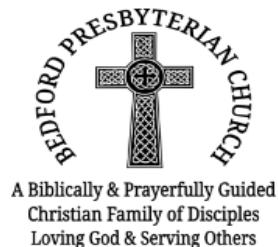
From 1844 to 2025 (181 Years)



Week of August 24, 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: ALOHA- may the breath of God be upon you.

All: And Also With You

Prelude

"How Great Thou Art"

arr: Mark Hayes

Call to Worship

One: Sing to the Lord a new song, His praise from the ends of the earth,

All: You who go down to the sea, and all that is in it, you islands, and all who live in them.

One: Let the wilderness and its towns raise their voices;

All: Let the settlements where Kedar lives rejoice.

One: Let the people of Sela sing for joy; let them shout from the mountaintops.

All: Let them give glory to the Lord and proclaim His praise in the islands.

Hymn

"Sing the Lord a New Song"

Rutledge

Prayer of Confession: (in unison)

Gracious Heavenly Father, You are the source of true aloha. We confess that we have not always lived in accordance with Your loving spirit. We have allowed selfishness, judgment, and disregard to enter our hearts, separating us from You and from others.

Forgive us for failing to see the sacred breath and the divine essence within ourselves and others. We are truly sorry for the hurt we have caused in our relationships and in our actions. May Your Spirit of Aloha heal us and guide us towards a deeper understanding of love and unity. We desire to live lives that reflect the true meaning of Aloha, radiating Your love and peace to all we encounter. May we be a source of healing and reconciliation in our communities and in the world. 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 Patri**

"Glory to the Father"

Bill Rutledge

PROCLAIMING THE WORD OF GOD

Introduction to Scripture

Philip

Scripture Reading

1 Kings 19:19-21

Choir Anthem

"Ekolu Mea Nui"

Robert Nawahine

Sermon

The Passing of the Mantle

A number of years ago we celebrated the 175th anniversary of our church. It was a special occasion. It took place over an extended period of time and included a lot of different events and activities. One of them was a worship service in which former pastors participated. Afterwards a photograph was taken on the front steps of the church. Many of those ministers were wearing stoles, brightly colored bands of cloth worn around their necks and stretching down on either side of their robes. Why do ministers, especially those in the more traditional Christian denominations, wear this kind of regalia when they lead in worship? Have you ever thought about that? I did and for that reason decided to do a little research. The wearing of stoles has a lengthy history dating back hundreds of years. Their exact origin is unknown, perhaps all the way back to the first centuries of Christianity. What they represent, however, is easier to discern. They indicate that an individual has been set aside for a special purpose. They have been called to serve the Lord, ministering in His name and authority.

Such was also the case thousands of years ago when Elijah anointed Elisha with the mantle of prophetic authority. Elijah took it from around his own shoulders and placed it upon the shoulders of Elisha. Its appearance was probably far different from the attractive stoles that ministers wear today. Instead, it may have been a cloak made from the hairy hide of a sheep or a goat. In fact, it may have had such a distinctive appearance that everyone who saw it immediately recognized that the person who wore it was a prophet, a spokesman for God. That was certainly the case with regards to Elisha and those within his family who celebrated this event. Let's examine the passage of Scripture that was read this morning as well as the things that lead up to it.

Elisha, whose name means "God is salvation," was a member of a prosperous farming family. In fact, he was the overseer or manager of twelve yoke of oxen, 24 animals who were plowing the fields of his father. This was no small farming operation. One day while he was plowing with one of those twelve pairs of oxen, a guest arrived. He was no ordinary guest. He was Elijah the prophet, a man whose presence generated both awe and fear among those whom he met. He was the one who at the Lord's command had brought a three-year drought upon the land and he was also the one who had led a spiritual revival on the slopes of Mount Carmel. Dressed in an outfit that clearly marked him as a prophet, everyone knew that he possessed awesome spiritual authority and power. The question, therefore, arose as to why he had chosen to show up at this farm. It didn't take long to find out. Taking off his prophetic mantle or robe, his designation as a prophet of God, Elijah placed it upon the shoulders of Elisha. Everyone knew what that meant. Elijah had chosen Elisha to be the next prophet of Israel. Elijah was both old and tired. He had served the Lord for many years. During his sojourn at the mountain of God, when he fled from the wrath of Jezebel, God had instructed him to choose a successor and the man whom God had chosen was Elisha.

Having placed the prophetic mantle upon the shoulders of Elisha, Elijah turned as if he was preparing to leave. Elisha knew he was facing a life changing decision. He could stay and continue to work on his father's farm, perhaps inheriting it in the future, or he could become a student, an apprentice, of the renowned prophet Elijah. The answer was quick in coming. Elisha stepped aside from plowing. Then he ran after Elijah and told him, "Let me say goodbye to my family and then I will come and follow after you." Elijah responded by stating, "What have I done to you," meaning are you sure you know what you are deciding to do?

Elisha was sure. He slaughtered the two oxen with whom he had been plowing, used the wood of the ox yoke to build a fire to cook the meat, and invited his family and co-workers to a going-away party. Afterwards, he left behind everything that he had known. He said goodbye to his family and any future plans he might have had. He became the companion of Elijah, serving as his attendant. From that point on he would be known as a son of a prophet, a person who had given up everything to serve the Lord. It was a role which he would assume in the future when Elijah was taken up into heaven in a fiery chariot. When that time arrived, he would acquire the spiritual authority and power which his predecessor had possessed. In fact, just before Elijah was carried away, Elisha asked for and received a double portion of his mentor's spirit, the ability to perform signs and wonders and fearlessly proclaim the "Word of the Lord."

Now what does this account from the pages of the Old Testament have to say to us this morning as we welcome Ben Banner and his family into the life of our church family? There are several things that I would call to your attention. First, God has blessed this church for a long, long time. All anyone has to do is read the history of our church to see God's hand at work in its life and ministry. Beginning as a mission in the 1760's, this church has enjoyed periods of both growth and decline. In 1844 it moved into its new sanctuary, the building in which we are seated this morning. The church grew in membership until the Civil War when it reached a low point of just 39 members in 1865. Thankfully, better times lay ahead and

the church became a focal point in the life of the town of Bedford. One of the most significant events in its history took place during the Second World War. Dr. John Gray, the longest serving and perhaps the church's most beloved pastor, presided over the town's tragic loss of life when so many of the Bedford Boys were among those killed on Omaha Beach in Normandy, France on June 6th, 1944. As news arrived of what had transpired on that day, the doors of the church were continually open as a place for the Bedford community to meet, grieve and pray. Growth followed during the late 1940's and 50's with the church at one point having a membership of just over 400. However, like so many churches in America, the last half of the twentieth century and the first part of the twenty-first century have not been kind to church membership, especially in congregations associated with the more traditional Christian denominations.

This brings us to a second observation. Over the years God has sent a variety of pastors to serve this congregation. Some stayed only for a short while and others served for many years. Our previous pastor, John Salley, was our pastor for sixteen years. His tenure was the second longest. Some of our church's pastors came from Virginia and neighboring states. One came from as far away as Fort Lauderdale, Florida. They ministered to the congregation in a variety of different ways helping the congregation to face the various challenges confronting the church. Each of these pastors was skillful and dedicated in different ways. Some were inspiring preachers. Others were gifted administrators. Some were quite young when they arrived, fresh out of seminary. Others were older, having served in other Presbyterian churches before coming to Bedford. Some had a more pronounced influence upon the life of the church than others. But without exception, each of them was a man of God, who was called by God just like Elisha, to minister to the needs of the household of the Lord in Bedford. Some, like Wilson Rowe, were noted for their inspiring and thought-provoking sermons. Others were known for their devotion to the principles and doctrines of Presbyterianism, like John Shepperson who served in the 1800's. Some, like our most recent pastor, John Salley, championed a way of life built upon the Scriptures. Each of these men were like Old Testament prophets, called by God to deliver His message to His people.

Finally, there is a third observation that I want to share with you. There comes a time when the mantle of leadership is transferred from the shoulders of one of God's servants to the shoulders of the one who will follow after him. That is what transpired when Elijah anointed Elisha and that is what is taking place in the life of our church today. Of course, there will be a time of transition just like there was in the days of Elijah and Elisha. There was still work for the aged Elijah to do, like confronting king Ahab because he stole a neighbor's vineyard, even plotting behind the scenes to have the man killed. For the most part, however, this was a time of apprenticeship, teaching the younger Elisha what would be expected of him as a spokesman for God. For the most part, this does not apply to our new pastor. He arrives having served two churches in California. Nevertheless, there will be times when he will need a helping hand from all of us as he assumes the duties and responsibilities of being our pastor.

There is one more observation that is crucially important. After Elijah placed the mantle of leadership on the shoulders of Elisha, how did everyone respond? They had a party. They enjoyed a time of fellowship, celebrating with Elisha the new calling which he had received from God. Today, we need to follow their example. For that reason, we are going to have a fellowship potluck dinner in the fellowship hall after the service this morning. It will be a time for us to celebrate the arrival of our new pastor. It will also be a time to give thanks for our entire pastoral staff and for all of those who work so diligently to guide and direct the work of God's kingdom in this church. In the past we have called this fellowship dinner and day "Aloha Sunday." It is my understanding that "aloha" can have a multitude of meanings including not only "hello," but gratitude, kindness and peace, among a number of other possibilities as well. So let this day be our "aloha" Sunday for Ben and Tiffany and their family as well as "thank you" to Bill and Deanna, and Lana as well as for all of those who have so faithfully served the Lord in the past and who will continue to faithfully serve Him in the future right here at Bedford Presbyterian Church.

RESPONSE TO THE WORD OF GOD

Worship Song

"I Give You My Heart"

Rueben Morgan

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

As we present our offerings today, we are reminded of Your great love which is boundless and beyond measure. Help us to reflect Your love in all that we do. May these gifts be used to spread Your love to others, bringing hope and healing to a world in need. Thank You for Your love that never fails us. 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

"Blessed Assurance"

Hymn 426

THE SENDING FORTH

Benediction

Postlude

"Praise to the Lord, the Almighty"

Diane Bush

The flowers are given to the Glory of God and in memory of our parents,
Joe & Ann Solon and Jerome & Rosabelle Salley,
by Betty & John Salley

The Passing of the Mantel

In the book of 1 Kings in the Old Testament there is a marvelous account that can best be described as the "Passing of the Mantel." One day while Elisha was plowing a field, the aged prophet Elijah approached him and threw his mantel or cloak over the shoulders of this young man. It was a visible declaration that the Lord had chosen Elisha to become the next prophetic leader of the people of Israel. Our worship service this morning is an opportunity for us to follow in their footsteps as we ask the Lord to anoint and empower the life and ministry of our new pastor, Ben Banner.

Looking to the Future

I would like to thank our church family for the privilege of serving as your interim pastor during the past two years. It has been a joyous and heartwarming experience for both Sherry and myself as we have served our wonderful church family. The time has now come for me to turn over the reins of pastoral leadership to our new pastor. I do so in the assurance that the Lord will bless his ministry at Bedford Presbyterian in the days to come. Remember him and his family in your thoughts and prayers as together we strive to serve and honor the Lord Jesus Christ.

September 2025

| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 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 <i>Yard Sale Women's Bible Study, 10 am</i> |
| 21 <i>10 am Worship</i> | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 28 <i>10 am Worship</i> | 29 | 30 | | | | |

Joys- August 24th

Joy- What a joy to welcome the Banner family!

Joy- Michelle Goode praised Dianne Fain for beautiful floral arrangements

Joy- Ellen Foster shared that her older sister felt so welcomed

Concerns- August 24th

Avery: Tinkie, prayers for family on passing

Barnes: Shannon Sledd (niece) cancer uterus

Jerry Dillon (nephew) health issues

Jay's grandniece, husband pancreatic cancer surgery

Niece complications from surgery

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

Blair: Dr. Cohen stroke

Bill Dwyer complications from knee surgery

Brunot: Jim's brother Bill, completed chemo

Jim's mother fell

Cindy's brother- health issues

Uncle Dave is in ICU

Callahan: Mary Jane (friend) doing better

Steve Chaffin (friend) blood clots

Compter: Jeannie, Seth (both friend) health issues

Bob (friend) doing better

Laurie: mother has cancer

Michael (brother) fell broken lumbar

Jean (friend) family having strife

Cram: Winslow's-(friends of Sally) family & medical problems

Garrett Winslow – struggling, autism, abandoned

Janice Campbell-(friend) under hospice care

Ryan- (grandson) searching for faith

Lory Graham- (friend) health issues, wife caretaker

Brenda Wilkerson- UVA seizures

Tom Winslow friend recovering from surgery

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

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

Dwyer: Bill recovering from knee replacement

Easter: Jim (brother) now cancer free

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

Michael Kay (friend) last stages of lung cancer

Prayers for 85 yr old sister caring for 59 yr old son with Downs syndrome

Harold Jackson- health issues

Friends cousin- serious car accident, injured eye

Foster: Lynn (sister-in-law) dementia

Goode: Prayers for goals with Christmas boxes

Sandra Grover- breast cancer

Heber Himmelwright was just diagnosed with Guillain–Barré

Lindsey Blanton is battling leukemia again.

Goodman: Grandson traveling to Brazil for mission work

Grigg: Chris Mays- diabetic complications

Grubb: son-in-law health issues

Harris: Jim, back pain

Judy- sister-in-law has cancer

Heinrich: Steven - (grandson) autoimmune disorder
Barbara Lore- (Helen's sister) heart problems
Hopkins: son-in-law health issues
Kuhn-Kibbey: David Rutledge, (son) remission, doing well
Dot- Dot not feeling well
Mauser: Joyce Reese- (friend) health problems
Steven-(son's boss) going blind
Barbara (Al's sister) intense headaches
Gayle- home
McManis: for grandson leaving USMC
Morris: Robert- recovering from surgery
Morris: all law enforcement, firefighters and first responders
Forensic scientists who deal with crime
Rev. Pam Ledbetter
Neal: bladder cancer, health issues, Oakwood- 225
Nichols; Gracie Murphree blood pressure, multiple strokes
Rutledge: friend in Hawaii health issues
Saunders: Ron, fell broke all right side ribs
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
Marcus Walker (Sonya's brother) prostate cancer
Stetson: Nick, Tiffany,
Morgan (nephew) life decisions
Stevens: Jackie Landis- heart problems
Matt- lung cancer, still suffering
Chief Hops not doing well
Wilkes: prayers for extended family

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 August 24th

Sunday: 10 am Worship

Aloha Sunday

Potluck

Sunday: August 31st

10 am Worship, Rev. Ben Banner

August Birthdays

Ann Fowler-27

William Hopkins-29

Donna Henderson- 31

September Birthdays

John Grubb- 1

Bill Yodis- 2

James Harris 12

Sandy Scheurer 12

David Henderson - 12

Deanna Rutledge 16

Dick Kibbey 17

Harold Neal 19

Barbara Saunders 20

Dick Diddams 21

Ron Morris 24

Jay Barnes 29

September Anniversaries

Jay & Eunice Barnes 11

Gerald & Tammy DeWitt 19

The Annual Centerfest Yard Sale is a month away- Saturday, September 20th!!!

If you have anything to donate, please wait until Monday September 15th to bring to the church,

NO CLOTHES PLEASE.

Any funds raised will be used to defray costs for Operation Christmas Child.

Aloha Sunday

Today we are recognizing the ministers who serve our church family. It will be a special celebration as we honor Ben Banner, our new pastor, Bill Rutledge, our minister of worship, and Philip Parker, our interim pastor. After the worship service this morning, everyone is invited to remain for a potluck luncheon in the fellowship hall. There will be lots of Hawaiian dishes along with home cooked favorites for everyone to enjoy.