Bethany Presbyterian Church

Graham, North Carolina
www.bethanypreschurch.org
www.facebook.com/bethanypresbyterian

August 31, 2025 – 11:00 am
Twelfth Sunday of Pentecost

GATHERING AS GOD'S PEOPLE

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

Welcome to our service of worship. Although we are worshipping in a variety of locations, we still affirm that God is present in our worship, whether in-person or virtually. Our prayer is that all who worship with us this day will truly feel the presence of God in this time. Know that you are loved and we are so glad you are here!

TRINITY CHIMES

PRELUDE: *Nearer My God to Thee* — ROBERT J. HUGHES (BASED ON THE TUNE: BETHANY)

WELCOME

***OPENING HYMN #473:** *For the Beauty of the Earth* — FOLLIOTT SANDFORD PIERPOINT

For the beauty of the earth,
For the glory of the skies,
For the love which from our birth
Over and around us lies.

Refrain:
Lord of all, to Thee we raise,
This our hymn of grateful praise.

For the wonder of each hour
Of the day and of the night,
Hill and vale, and tree and flower,
Sun and moon, and stars of light. **(Refrain)**

For the joy of ear and eye,
For the heart and mind's delight,
For the mystic harmony
Linking sense to sound and sight. **(Refrain)**

For the joy of human love,
Brother, sister, parent, child,
Friends on earth and friends above,
For all gentle thoughts and mild. **(Refrain)**

For Thy Church, that evermore
Lifteth holy hands above,
Offering up on every shore
Her pure sacrifice of love. **(Refrain)**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING SENTENCES

Gathered to worship God,
we are all right where we belong.
Called to this celebration of worship by God's Spirit,
we approach God with joy in our hearts.
Nourished by the love of Jesus, God's Son,
we gladly feast at this banquet of grace.

GATHERING PRAYER (HEBREWS 13)

Help us show hospitality to strangers, Merciful One, for many have entertained angels unaware while doing so. Move us to treat one another as we would have others treat us, lest we find ourselves tortured or imprisoned with no one to our aid. May we always seek to do good and share from our abundance, for these things are pleasing in your sight. In your holy name, we pray. Amen.

OFFERING OURSELVES FOR RENEWAL

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (BOOK OF COMMON WORSHIP, PHILIPPIANS 2:5-11)

Christ Jesus, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness.
And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross.
Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess to the glory of God: Jesus Christ is Lord! Amen

*HYMN OF THE DAY #364: *I Sing a Song of the Saints of God* LESBIA SCOTT

I sing a song of the saints of God,
Patient and brave and true,
Who toiled and fought and lived and died
For the Lord they loved and knew.
And one was a doctor, and one was a queen,
And one was a shepherdess on the green:
They were all of them saints of God, and I mean,
God helping, to be one too.

They loved their Lord so dear, so dear,
And God's love made them strong;
And they followed the right, for Jesus' sake,
The whole of their good lives long.
And one was a soldier, and one was a priest,
And one was slain by a fierce wild beast;
And there's not any reason, no, not the least
Why I shouldn't be one too.

They lived not only in ages past,
There are hundreds of thousands still;
The world is bright with the joyous saints
Who love to do Jesus' will.
You can meet them in school, or in lanes, or at sea,
In church, or in trains, or in shops, or at tea;
For the saints of God are just folk like me,
And I mean to be one too.

Telling the Truth About Ourselves

Our God is a generous God, bestowing grace immeasurably, loving us beyond what we can imagine, and forgiving us before we know to ask.
To this God of generosity, love and forgiveness we now turn as we confess our sins.

Holy God, we compare ourselves with others, wondering if we are better than them.
We judge one another, trying to justify ourselves.
We seek to establish our superiority by assuming positions of honor. Forgive us, we pray.
Free us to see ourselves truthfully and to love one another with humble, gracious spirits. Amen.

An Offering of God's Grace

God alone has the authority to judge, and by the grace of Jesus Christ,
God has declared that we are forgiven of all our sin.
Thanks be to God!

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

A Prayer for Illumination

Open our hearts and minds, O God, by your Holy Spirit's power, that as scripture is read and the Gospel announced, we might receive with open hearts whatever you speak to us this day. Amen.

Encountering Scripture

Psalm 81:1, 10-16 — pew Bible, 729

Luke 14:1, 7-14 — pew Bible, 1270

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

The Word in Music: *Be Thou My Vision* — Arranged by Heather Sorenson

The Word Proclaimed

Sermon: *"The Guest List"* — Rick Purcell, CRE

Prayers of the People

THE 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.

AN OFFERING OF OUR GIFTS

OFFERTORY

***DOXOLOGY #428:** *We Give Thee But Thine Own* — WILLIAM WALSHAM HOW

We give Thee but Thine own,
Whate'er the gift may be;
All that we have is Thine alone,
A trust, O Lord, from Thee.

***BLESSING OUR GIFTS**

***CLOSING HYMN #472:** *O Sing to the Lord* — GERHARD M. CARTFORD

Oh, sing to the Lord, oh sing God a new song,
Oh, sing to the Lord, oh, sing God a new song,
Oh, sing to the Lord, oh, sing God a new song.
Oh, sing to our God, oh sing to our God.

By His holy power our God has done wonders.
By His holy power our God has done wonders.
By His holy power our God has done wonders.
Oh, sing to our God, oh sing to our God.

So dance for our God and blow all the trumpets.
So dance for our God and blow all the trumpets.
So dance for our God and blow all the trumpets.
And, sing to our God, and sing to our God.

***SENDING**

Go forth from this place to serve God and your neighbor in all that you do.
And may the blessings and peace of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
keep you this day and always. Amen.

POSTLUDE: *Alleluia* — GEORGE BLAKE

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** Please stand in body or spirit.*

Our Faith Community @ Work

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Sundays, 9:45am Bible Study – Evie C. Marshall Room

Wednesdays, 10:00am Bethany Exercise Class - Evie C. Marshall Room

On Wednesdays at 10:00am in the Evie C. Marshall classroom we will start our exercise classes. We will meet weekly to start with and set up additional time for those who cannot meet at this time. Our instructor is Richard Mann, who has certification in senior training, plus several other certifications. The exercises we will be learning are mainly for stretching and strengthening will the goal to help balance and mobility, and to improve overall individual independence.
If you are interested in the classes and have not yet registered, come between 9:30 and 9:45 on Wednesday, prior to the class, to meet Richard and get registered. We are hoping to keep the class at no or little cost to each individual. Come join us for fun and fellowship.

Tuesday, September 2nd Alamance Co. Mobile Library

Starting in June the Alamance County Public Libraries mobile library with be at Bethany on the first Tuesday of each month. The mobile library will be in the church parking lot 10:30 – 11:30.
Please stop by and "check-out" this wonderful service the library has to share

Tuesday, September 2nd 10:30am The Women of Bethany Church Gathering

The Women of Bethany Church will come together on Tuesday, September 2nd at 10:30am in the Evie C. Marshall classroom. We will **not** have a meeting in August.

S.A.F.E. (Southern Alamance Family Empowerment)

How can we help S.A.F.E. for the month of **August**? They are asking for **Canned Chicken, Canned Tuna, 1 lb. bags of Rice and Spaghetti. Breakfast items (Cereals, Granola Bars, Oatmeal, Breakfast Bars), Children and Adult diapers and Feminine products.**
S.A.F.E. will be closed the 1st and 5th Saturday of the Month.
Consider donating your plastic and paper bags.

This Week's Calendar:

Sunday, August 31st - 12th Sunday after Pentecost

9:45 – Bible Study - Evie C. Marshall classroom

11:00 – Worship (In-Person & Live Stream)

Monday, September 1st - Labor Day - Church Office closed

Wednesday, September 3rd

10:00 – Exercise class - Evie C. Marshall classroom

6:30 – Choir Practice

Sunday, September 7th - 13th Sunday after Pentecost - Communion & Pennies for Hunger

9:45 – Bible Study - Evie C. Marshall classroom

11:00 – Worship (In-Person & Live Stream)

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1500 S. Main Street
Graham, NC 27253
www.bethanypreschurch.org
336.227.4041

Session
Moderator: Rick Purcell, CRE
Clerk: Randy Cousins
Treasurer: Glenn Patterson

Class of 2025:
Donna Mitchell-Ayers
Tina Patterson
Nancy Purcell

Class of 2026:
Chip Allen
Jean Payne
Ben Russell

Class of 2027:
Karen Maxwell
Kim Snyder
Brandon Troxler

Staff
Pastor/CRE: Rick Purcell – *pastor4bethany@gmail.com*
Director of Music: Christopher Bagley – *bethanypresmusic@gmail.com*
Office Administrator: Joy Saleeby – *office@bethanypreschurch.org*
Bookkeeper: Pam Hurt – *finance@bethanypreschurch.org*

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