Bethany Presbyterian Church

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

September 14, 2025 – 11:00 am
Fourteenth 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: *If Thou Art Near* — J.S. BACH (ARRANGED BY L.N. PORTER)

WELCOME

***OPENING HYMN #376:** *Love Divine, All Love's Excelling* — CHARLES WESLEY

Love divine, all loves excelling,
Joy of heaven to earth come down,
Fix in us Thy humble dwelling,
All Thy faithful mercies crown!
Jesus, Thou art all compassion,
Pure, unbounded love Thou art;
Visit us with Thy salvation,
Enter every trembling heart.

Breathe, O breathe Thy loving Spirit
Into every troubled breast!
Let us all in Thee inherit,
Let us find the promised rest;
Take away the love of sinning;
Alpha and Omega be;
End of faith, as its beginning,
Set our hearts at liberty.

Come, Almighty to deliver,
Let us all Thy life receive;
Suddenly return, and never,
Nevermore Thy temples leave.
Thee we would be always blessing,
Serve Thee as Thy hosts above,
Pray, and praise Thee without ceasing,
Glory in Thy perfect love.

Finish, then, Thy new creation;
Pure and spotless let us be;
Let us see Thy great salvation
Perfectly restored in Thee;
Changed from glory into glory,
Till in heaven we take our place,
Till we cast our crowns before Thee,
Lost in wonder, love, and praise.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING SENTENCES (BASED ON LUKE 15:1-10)

Have you come here to grumble?
No! We are here to rejoice!
Oh. Are you lost?
No! We are found!
Okay, I see. Do you seek a welcome at this table?
Yes! We are here to let go of the past and begin fresh.
We are here to celebrate the joy of heaven.
We are here to feast with Christ, our Lord!
Wonderful! You are in the right place.
You are welcome here.
Let's worship God together!

GATHERING PRAYER (LUKE 14, LUKE 15)

O God of heaven and earth, bless us with your mercy and grace.
Enter our hearts and make us holy.
Be our Shepherd and guide us in your ways, that we might not wander alone.
Hear our cries and gather us to yourself, that we may be one with each other,
through the power of your Holy Spirit. Amen
(B.J. Beu)

OFFERING OURSELVES FOR RENEWAL

*Affirmation of Faith

(from The Confession of 1967, Inclusive Language Text)

In Jesus of Nazareth, true humanity was realized once for all. Jesus, a Palestinian Jew, lived among his own people and shared their needs, temptations, joys, and sorrows.
He expressed the love of God in word and deed and became a brother to all kinds of sinful men and women. But his complete obedience led him into conflict with his people.
His life and teaching judged their goodness, religious aspirations, and national hopes.
Many rejected him and demanded his death. In giving himself freely for them, he took upon himself the judgment under which everyone stands convicted. God raised him from the dead, vindicating him as Messiah and Lord. The victim of sin became victor, and won the victory over sin and death for all.

*Hymn of the Day : *Love Lifted Me*

James Rowe

I was sinking deep in sin,
Far from the peaceful shore,
Very deeply stained within,
Sinking to rise no more;
But the Master of the sea
Heard my despairing cry,
From the waters lifted me–
Now safe am I.

Refrain
Love lifted me, Love lifted me,
When nothing else could help,
Love lifted me;
Love lifted me, Love lifted me,
When nothing else could help,
Love lifted me.

All my heart to Him I give,
Ever to Him I'll cling,
In His blessed presence live,
Ever His praises sing.
Love so mighty and so true
Merits my soul's best songs;
Faithful, loving service, too,
To Him belongs. **[Refrain]**

Souls in danger, look above,
Jesus completely saves;
He will lift you by His love
Out of the angry waves.
He's the Master of the sea,
Billows His will obey;
He your Savior wants to be–
Be saved today. **[Refrain]**

Telling the Truth About Ourselves

(based on 1 Timothy 1:15) & (Psalm 51:1-10)

In the very beginning, God made us in God's own image. And yet, in the most common of human actions, we stray from God's pure intentions for us. Let us return to our Lord, acknowledging our mistakes both individually and as a community.

God of loving kindness, have mercy on us. According to your multitude of tender mercies, blot out our transgressions, thoroughly wash us from our iniquity, and cleanse us from our sin.
We know our transgressions, our sin, our evil done against you as we distort your love and corrupt your creation.
From the moment of our conception we have worked to separate ourselves from your love.
You desire truth in the inward being; therefore teach us wisdom, purge and clean our hearts, put your Spirit anew within us.
Let us hear joy and gladness so that our ragged bones might rejoice with you.

An Offering of God's Grace (based on 1 Timothy 1:14,16)

Hear the good news:
With utmost patience, Christ offers mercy so that we may thrive in eternal life.
In Christ's name, we are forgiven!
Thanks be to God!
May the grace of our Lord overflow for you with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

A Prayer for Illumination (based on Luke 15:1-10 & Psalm 51:10)

Lord who welcomes sinners, send your Spirit to sit with us as we hear your Word proclaimed.
Find us where we are lost, create in us clean hearts, and help us to see the joy of your mercy. Amen.

Encountering Scripture

Psalm 14 pew Bible, 672

Luke 15:1-10 pew Bible, 1271

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

The Word in Music: *Without Him* Isaac "Ike" Williams

The Word Proclaimed
Sermon: *"The Magnificent Search"* Tim Parker, 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 #85:** *What Wondrous Love is This* AMERICAN FOLK HYMN

What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul,
What wondrous love is this, O my soul!
What wondrous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss
To bear the heavy cross for my soul, for my soul,
To bear the heavy cross for my soul!

To God and to the Lamb, I will sing, I will sing,
To God and to the Lamb, I will sing;
To God and to the Lamb who is the great I Am,
While millions join the theme, I will sing, I will sing;
While millions join the theme, I will sing!

And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on, I'll sing on.
And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on;
And when from death I'm free, I'll sing and joyful be,
And through eternity, I'll sing on, I'll sing on.
And through eternity I'll sing on.

***SENDING**

Go out with joy to love God, love yourself, and love your neighbor.
The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Alleluia! ***Alleluia!***

POSTLUDE: *All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name* FRANKLIN RITTER (TUNE: CORONATION)

** 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 have our exercise classes. Come join us for fun and fellowship.

Tuesday, October 7th Alamance Co. Mobile Library

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, October 7th 10:30am The Women of Bethany Church Gathering

The Women of Bethany Church will come together on Tuesday, October 7th at 10:30am in the Evie C. Marshall classroom.

Saturday, October 25th 11:30am – 2:00pm Fall Festival – Recreation Area

Our annual fall festival is back!
There will be food and fun activities for all ages, including face painting, balloon art, and games.
We will be joined this year by several of the First Responders in Alamance County.
All are welcome. There is no entry fee.

We need volunteers – please let Tina Patterson/Nancy Purcell know if you are interested in helping.

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

How can we help S.A.F.E. for during the **Fall months**? 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, September 14th - 14th Sunday after Pentecost

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

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

Wednesday, September 17th

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

6:30 – Choir Practice

Sunday, September 21st - 15th Sunday after Pentecost

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

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

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worship serve teach support

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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*
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