



John's Journal

As we have progressed through these hot summer months, I have enjoyed digging into Ephesians and this current sermon series. As I said when we started, I'm sure I've preached from Ephesians at some point

over the years, but never with this focus and attention on the entire book. It has been gratifying and enlightening to me, and I hope to you as well.

One book that I know I have never preached from is Revelation. And that's what stands before us in August - a four-week sermon series on Revelation. (See page 5 for themes and texts.)

As I've told folks about this sermon series, there's always this response of "Oh my! I can't believe you've got the guts to tackle Revelation!"

I think Revelation has gotten a bad rap. For as long as people have read this amazing piece of literature from John, there have been attempts to interpret the meaning of every minute detail of every vision that John had.

With all the vivid imagery in the book, it has long been used as a foretelling of the end of time. And because of that, it has long been seen as a book of gloom and doom - this is what is going to happen if we don't straighten up.

As in all biblical scholarship and interpretation, we have to remember the context. We have to remember that John was writing to seven specific churches for specific reasons. Yes, his visions were dramatic and detailed, but he was writing out of concern for these churches.

And so, Revelation is not so much a book of gloom and doom, as it is a book of hope. And that's what I will be working to convey over the four Sundays of this series. I hope by the end of the series that you, too will be able to see it as a book of hope.

Summer has been a time of change and excitement for me. In June Debbie and I got to travel to California to see our daughter Jackie, and her husband Tave. At that time we already had gotten the glorious news that they were expecting and that we were going to be grandparents! We are all just over-the-moon excited over the new addition to the family. Jackie is doing remarkably well, has passed

the first trimester hurdle, and is due in early January. We can't wait to welcome this new little one to the family!

Then in late June, I was faced with cataract surgery on my right eye. I have always had bad vision, having gotten glasses in the second grade. My vision had deteriorated over the years, and the cataract just made it that much worse. I was ecstatic when my vision was tested after the surgery and it was 20/20! Now, I can't wait for the left eye to be done, which is scheduled for August 16th. Your prayers for another successful surgery are appreciated.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention another milestone that happens in August, and that is Debbie's and my 25th anniversary! It's hard to believe that she has put up with me for a quarter of a century! We were planning a big road trip across the country to see Jackie and Tave, but thought better after considering August and the desert! We're still planning to do that in the spring, but a new grandbaby may change those plans as well. We are planning to get away for a few days to celebrate. I am grateful every day that God brought us together. I can't imagine my life without her, and her girls - and now two sons-in-law, three grand-dogs, and a grandson on the way. God is good, and I ain't lyin!

I would close by highlighting our upcoming book study that begins in late August. I have long admired Rob Bell for his straight-forward approach to the gospel. His writing is humorous, approachable, clear and concise, and right to the point. He has a way of cutting through all the noise, to get right to the heart of our faith. And so I would encourage you to sign up for this book study and come join the fun! It is sure to be a rewarding time together.

Every day I am amazed at the good fortune I have of being your pastor. I know that I am nowhere near perfect, but I keep plugging away, and together we can continue to build up this little corner of God's kingdom at the fork in the road.

Grace & Peace,

John



Join us for Vacation Bible School at Bethany Presbyterian on August 11th and 12th! We will gather on Friday from 5:30 - 8:30 pm and then on Saturday from 9:00 am - 12:00 noon. We can't wait to see you here! Use the form below to register (bring by or send to church office) or register online on our website.

Child's First Name _____ Child's Last Name _____

Parent/Guardian Name _____

Street Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone (where parent can be reached) _____

Email _____

Date of Birth of Child _____

Gender _____



May 29, 1892 was perhaps just another ordinary day in Graham, North Carolina, but it was anything but ordinary for the folks just south of Graham as that was the day that Bethany Presbyterian Church was organized and chartered. As we celebrate the 125th Anniversary of this event, we rejoice in remembering our wonderful kickoff celebration in January, and the fabulous day on May 28th as we reunited with former pastor Rev. Norman Whitney, who came and preached on this day closest to the actual anniversary date.

But the celebrations don't end here! See below for what is to come:

Saturday, September 23, 2017

- Concert by singer/songwriter/author **David LaMotte**

Sunday, September 24, 2017

- **Reaching Higher**
- Culmination of 125th Anniversary Celebration
- Welcoming PCUSA Stated Clerk **J. Herbert Nelson** as guest preacher and **David LaMotte** as guest musician
- 125th Anniversary Celebration Luncheon following worship

RSVP
répondez, s'il vous plaît

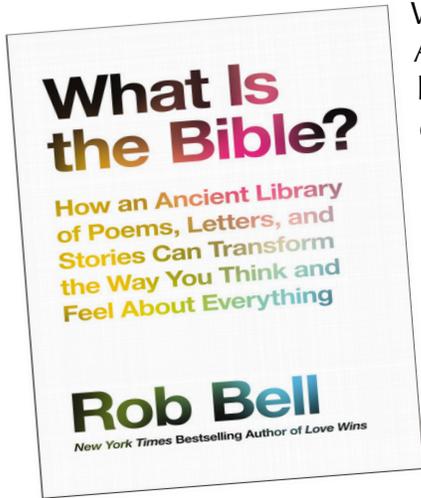
As noted above, the culmination of our 125th Anniversary Celebration is coming up in September. Special invitations will be going out soon, so be on the lookout. **If you know of someone who needs to be on the invitation list, please let Tina Patterson know ASAP.**

So we can have an accurate count of how many will be attending this final celebration luncheon, **please RSVP once you get your invitation.** Or, you can go to our website, and fill out the form there. Here's the link to the reservation page: <http://www.bethanypreschurch.org/anniversary-celebration.html>.

We have a lot to celebrate and this will be a fabulous culmination to our year-long celebration. Get your reservations in now!



New Book Study Starts in August!



We are so excited to offer this new 12-week book study, beginning in late August. As noted on the book cover to the left, we will be studying Rob Bell's latest book *"What Is the Bible?"* The studies will be held on **Tuesday evenings, beginning on August 29th**, but will not meet on the second Tuesdays of the month as that is the time set aside for the Session meeting. The study will conclude on the first Tuesday in December. The only charge for the study is the cost of the book. It can be purchased on Amazon for \$17.00 for hardcover, and \$15.00 for Kindle edition.

Here's what the book description on Amazon says: "Rob Bell, the beloved author of *"Love Wins"* and *"What We Talk About When We Talk About God,"* [as well as the popular Nooma video series] goes deep into the Bible to show how it is more revelatory, revolutionary, and relevant than we ever imagined—and offers a cogent argument for why we need to look at it in a fresh, new way.

In Love Wins, Rob Bell confronted the troubling questions that many people of faith were afraid to ask about heaven, hell, fate, and faith. Using the same inspired, inquisitive approach, he now turns to our most sacred book, the Bible. What Is the Bible? provides insights and answers that make clear why the Bible is so revered and what makes it truly inspiring and essential to our lives.

Rob takes us deep into actual passages to reveal the humanity behind the Scriptures. You cannot get to the holy without going through the human, Rob tells us. When considering a passage, we shouldn't ask "Why did God say . . .?" To get to the heart of the Bible's meaning, we should be asking: "What's the story that's unfolding here and why did people find it important to tell it? What was it that moved them to record these words? What was happening in the world at that time? What does this passage/story/poem/verse/book tell us about how people understood who they were and who God was at that time?" In asking these questions, Rob goes beyond the one-dimensional question of "is it true?" to reveal the Bible's authentic transformative power.

Rob addresses the concerns of all those who see the Bible as God's Word but are troubled by the ethical dilemmas, errors, and inconsistencies in Scripture. With What Is the Bible?, he recaptures the Good Book's magic and reaffirms its power and inspiration to shape and inspire our lives today.

Registration can be completed by sending in the form below, or by registering on Bethany's website. There is a link on the home page to register. Join us for this exciting and timely journey as we explore the age-old question, "What is the Bible?"

"What Is the Bible? Book Study Registration

Name _____

Email Address _____

_____ I will purchase my own book.

_____ Please order a book for me. (Bring payment by church office.)

DEADLINE FOR REGISTRATION IS SUNDAY, AUGUST 20TH



JULY WORSHIP THEMES

August 6th:

TBA

TBA

August 13th:

Revelation 4:1-11

The Heavenly Throne

August 20th:

Revelation 5:1-13

Flash Mob Messiah

August 27th:

Revelation 6:1-8, 7:9-17

Getting Past Tilt

September 3rd:

Revelation 21:1-6; 22:1-5

Better City, Better Life



Check out the daily
devotions online at

www.365.org

Also posted daily to
Bethany's Facebook
page.



August 13th

Revelation 4:1-11

The Heavenly Throne

August 20th

Revelation 5:1-13

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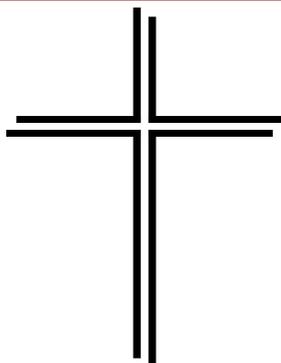
audio sermons
listen anytime,
anywhere

There are three ways to listen to audio of our Sunday sermons:

On our website: www.bethanypreschurch.org

On our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/bethanypresbyterian

Or by going to: www.buzzsprout.com/9198



August 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30 Fifth Sunday @ Bethany 9:45 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Worship	31 John on Vacation					
6 John on Vacation 9:45 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Worship / Rev. Sam Jenkins, guest preacher	7	7:00 PM Session Meeting	8 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	9 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	10 Vacation Bible School	11 Salem Presbytery
13 9:45 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Worship	14	15 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	16 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	17	18	19
20 9:45 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Worship	21	22 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	23 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	24	25	26
27 Blessing of the Backpacks 9:45 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Worship	28	29 7:00 PM "What is the Bible" Book Study	30 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	31	1	2

Your Church Staff:

Pastor: Rev. John W. Johnson
Director of Music: Christopher Bagley
Office Administrator: Joy Saleeby
Bookkeeper: Pam Hurt

Elders:

A. J. Campbell
Ron Kimrey
Karen Maxwell
Sherrie Moore
Ron Osborne (Treasurer)
Glenn Patterson
Jean Payne
Nancy Purcell
Brandon Troxler
Rick Purcell (Clerk of Session)

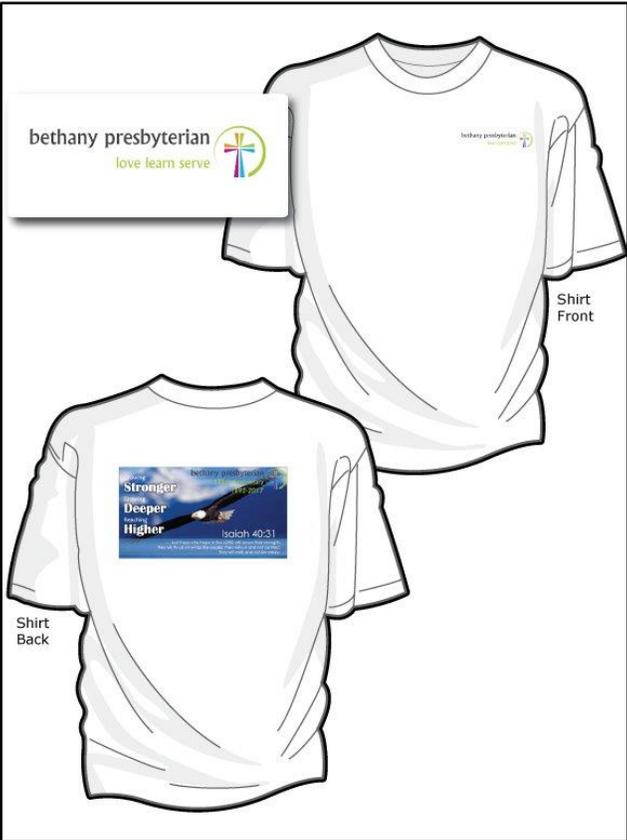


The Session met for its regular monthly stated meeting on July 11th. Here are some highlights:

- Heard a devotion from Glenn Patterson
- Continued discussion and book study of *Spiritual Leadership for Church Officers* by Joan Gray
- Received a thank-you note from Paige Butts
- Received a letter of appreciation and certificate in recognition of our 125th Anniversary from J. Herbert Nelson, Stated Clerk of the Presbyterian Church (USA)
- Heard a financial report from Treasurer, Ron Osborne
- Approved new check signers
- Entered into a lengthy discussion regarding the rental property and what to do with it after renter moves out. Elders were given several options which will be discussed at the August meeting.
- Received information from Brandon Troxler regarding dates and info for Vacation Bible School, August 11-12
- Discussed the T.E.A.M. Dinners and decided to table these until 2018 considering all the big events in the fall
- Heard staff report from Chris Bagley, including his report from the Worship and Music Conference in Montreat June 25-July 1st
- Heard staff report from John, with information about his summer plans.

**NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY, AUGUST 8, 2017 - 7 PM
ELDERS OF THE MONTH FOR AUGUST
BRANDON TROXLER AND SHERRIE MOORE**

**ANNIVERSARY T-SHIRTS NOW AVAILABLE
COME BY CHURCH OFFICE
LIMITED NUMBER AVAILABLE!!
CHILD AND ADULT SIZES
\$20.00 EACH (2 FOR \$35.00)
CASH, CHECK, OR CREDIT CARDS**



David LaMotte

“charm, stories, humour,
insightful songs, sweet voice
and dazzling guitar ability.”

- *BBC Radio Belfast*



Photo by Rodney Smith

In concert / Bethany Presbyterian Church / Graham, NC

Saturday, September 23rd - 7:00 pm

Tickets available now!

There is no cost for tickets but tickets are required for admission. Credit cards accepted at the door.

Use the URL below or search for David LaMotte on Eventbrite

Donations will be received at the door, with a suggested donation of \$20 per person.

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/david-lamotte-in-concert-tickets-32860578876>

www.davidlamotte.com





Financial Reports

Report through end of JUNE	
Year-to-date Actual Income	\$82,356.22
Year-to-date Actual Expenses	\$87,759.58
Year-to-Date Surplus (Deficit)	\$5,403.36

"LIFE IS NOT MEASURED BY HOW MUCH YOU OWN."

LUKE 12:15, NLT



online GIVING
easy. fast. effective.

www.bethanypreschurch.org/online-giving



IS YOUR PLEDGE UP TO DATE?

IT'S EASY DURING THE BUSY SUMMER SEASON, WHEN SCHEDULES ARE DIFFERENT, TO GET BEHIND ON YOUR PLEDGE. THE EXPENSES OF THE CHURCH CONTINUE, HOWEVER. PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU ARE CURRENT WITH YOUR PLEDGE, SO THAT THE MISSION AND MINISTRY OF BETHANY CAN CONTINUE UNABATED. YOUR GENEROSITY IS APPRECIATED!





Children and Youth Ministries

- **Sunday School for Youth and Children** / Meets on the second floor of the Education Building at 9:45 each Sunday
- During **Worship**, children are invited to sit in designated pew (nearest the choir loft) / there are activities provided
- Our **Nursery** is staffed by a professional, paid worker, as well as volunteers each Sunday morning.
- Watch your calendar and inbox for special activities for our young people throughout the year.

find your place
Adult Ministry

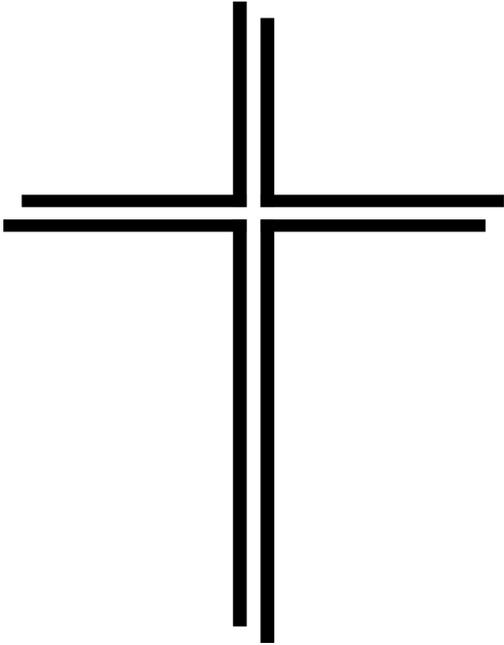


Christian Education Opportunities

The Fellowship Class - Bible study class using our denomination's Present Word Curriculum

The Young @ Heart Class - meets across from the church office / currently using the Uniform Lesson Series

The Seeker's Class - meets in the church office / currently using The Wired Word curriculum



It's hard to believe it's back-to-school time already, but August is the month when students get back at it. As a way of showing our support, we will have a "Blessing of the Backpacks" during morning worship on August 27th. All students are invited to bring their school backpacks to church for this special occasion. Tags will be given out to remind students that they have a church that loves them and prays for them.

August Birthdays and Anniversaries!

Happy Anniversary to:

Debbie & John Johnson	August 1
Tina & Glenn Patterson	August 6
Tammy & Richard Patterson	August 18
Nancy & Mike Sutton	August 22

Happy Birthday to:

Ruby Martin	August 1
Jean Payne	August 4
Richard Patterson	August 8
Darrell Holmes	August 10
Marilyn Petit	August 11
Zach Wagner	August 13
Millie Fuller	August 16
Emerson (Emmie) Davis	August 15
Donna Mitchell-Ayers	August 18
Samantha Patterson	August 18
Gina Wagner	August 18
Robert Cousins	August 17
Shelvia Russell	August 19
Sue Kimrey	August 20
Betty Boggs	August 22
Jo Robertson	August 30

Bethany Prays

Bill Faucette	Diane Miller	Frances Nolan	Christel Schappacher
Jack Cook	Peter Slater	Teresa Wilborn	Shannon Russell
Joey Leake	Layla Benoklen	Mary Moore	Rachel Poteat
Ida Whitney	Tiffany Tauchren	Jeremy Harden	Christy Lutterloh
Jean Berry	Barbara Cousins	Eleanor Thompson	Harold Baldwin
Pat Kennedy	Anne McDaniels	Duffy Strigo	Stewart Dillard
Mike Sutton	Nancy Sutton	Ben Johnson	Gloria Carden Woods
Infant Sandie Ruth Majors	Norma Proctor	Faye Campbell	Pete Campbell
	John and Ann Sutton	Polly & Dick Wilson	Donna Mitchell-Ayers



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bethany presbyterian

love learn serve

