



Bethany Presbyterian Church

Graham, North Carolina

www.bethanypreschurch.org

www.facebook.com/bethanypresbyterian

June 25, 2023 – 11:00 am

Fourth Sunday after Pentecost



When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;
when through the rivers, they won't sweep over you.
When you walk through the fire, you won't be scorched
and flame won't burn you
Isaiah 43:2 (CEB)

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! Parts of today's liturgy are from Ruth Burgess, Summer: Liturgical Resources for May, June and July including Eastertide and Pentecost (Glasgow: Wild Goose Publications, 2020); the Presbyterian Mission Agency, "8 Habits of Evangelism," <https://8habits.org/>; and LiturgyLink.

TRINITY CHIMES

PRELUDE: *Let Peace Descend*

LANI SMITH

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

***PROCESSIONAL HYMN #489:** *Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty*

BENJAMIN SCHMOLCK

Open now thy gates of beauty,
Zion, let me enter there,
Where my soul in joyful duty
Waits for God who answers prayer;
O how blessed is this place,
Filled with solace, light, and grace!

Gracious God, I come before Thee,
Come Thou also down to me;
Where we find Thee and adore Thee,
There a heaven on earth must be;
To my heart O enter Thou,
Let it be Thy temple now.

Speak, O Lord, and I will hear Thee,
Let Thy will be done indeed;
May I undisturbed draw near Thee,
While Thou dost Thy people feed.
Here of life the fountain flows,
Here is balm for all our woes.

***OPENING SENTENCES**

"WONDER AND WORSHIP," STEPHEN M. FEARING

Today we sabbath, we take rest in the Lord our God.

We put aside productivity to wonder and worship.

Today we sabbath, to do a different kind of work.

We have gathered to do liturgy, the work of the people.

Today we sabbath, for the world does not revolve around us.

We revolve around God and God's goodness and grace.

Come, let us worship God!

***GATHERING PRAYER**

FROM "OPENING PRAYER," AISHA BROOKS-JOHNSON

God of grace and grand invitation,

We give you thanks for you have set a table before us with love, joy and peace.

You invite us to be nourished by your presence, purpose, and power.

Give us the strength to taste and see that you are good.

Help us to know that you have declared that we are good and good enough.

We give you thanks for the waters of baptism wherein you have named us and claimed us as your own.

Through your sacred waters, we have been sealed and set apart to reflect your goodness and your mercy.

We are yours, children of the covenant, people of faith.

This day and always, let the waters of peace wash over us again.

Let the waters of renewal revive us again.

Let the waters of justice and courageous compassion fill our cups till they overflow to the lives of all we meet.

***For the daily bread and cup that touch our lips and fill our bellies,
nourish and nurture us throughout the day.***

***For the moments when we see water and feel water, may we remember our baptism
and know that we are beautiful, whole, complete, and wholly thine.***

For those who cannot find daily bread and cup, for those who cannot feel and find water that renews, may we work, fight and pray until all may have their fill and be at peace.

In the name of Jesus we pray, *Amen.*

OFFERING OURSELVES FOR RENEWAL

A PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

"Curiosity and Wonder," Stephen M. Fearing

As children welcomed to your presence,
instill within us a sense of curiosity and wonder
as we gather to listen to your Word. *Amen.*

ENCOUNTERING SCRIPTURE

PSALM 23

PEW BIBLE, 680

ISAIAH 43:2

PEW BIBLE, 884

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

AN OFFERING OF OUR PLEDGES

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

*HYMN OF THE DAY #341: *Blessed Assurance, Jesus is Mine!*

FANNY JANE CROSBY

Blessed assurance: Jesus is mine!
O what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood.

Refrain:

This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Savior all the day long;
This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Savior all the day long.

Perfect submission, perfect delight,
Visions of rapture now burst on my sight;
Angels, descending, bring from above
Echoes of mercy, whispers of love. **(Refrain)**

Perfect submission, all is at rest,
I in my Savior am happy and blest,

Watching and waiting, looking above,
filled with His goodness, lost in His love. **(Refrain)**

TELLING THE TRUTH ABOUT OURSELVES

"GRACIOUS FRIEND," ALMA FRITCHLEY

Gracious friend, and God of compassion,
we reach out to you for understanding whilst hardly understanding ourselves.

We turn to you for eternal truths yet we can barely look ourselves in the eye
when our words are less than honest.

We ask that our open hearts be blessed by you
yet dither and deny when your existence is questioned and challenged.

We take part in catastrophic wars yet turn to you looking for peace,
and fail to understand when war rages on.

We ask that poverty ends here, ends now, yet look over our shoulder in horror
when a hand is held out in desperation.

***God of our understanding, help us to see the real face:
ours and yours.***

***Help us to see the real needs, ours and theirs,
and help us catch a glimpse of a world that can be.
Amen.***

Time of silence

AN OFFERING OF GOD'S GRACE

I proclaim to you in the name of the Living Word that:

You are enough.
You are forgiven.
You are loved.

Alleluia! Thanks be to God!

RESPONDING TO GOD'S GRACE: *Spirit of the Living God*

DANIEL IVERSON

Spirit of the Living God,
Fall afresh on me,
Spirit of the Living God,
Fall afresh on me.
Break me, melt me, mold me, fill me.
Spirit of the Living God,
Fall afresh on me.

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

THE WORD IN MUSIC: *An Offering of Grace*

REV. CARLOS A. YOUNGER

THE WORD PROCLAIMED

Sermon: *"Habit 3 – Sacraments"*

REV. PHILLIPS

CELEBRATING OUR GRADUATES

LITANY FOR OUR GRADUATES

"Litany and Prayer for our Graduates," John Ballenger

You have grown up here on the stories of God.
We have told them to you, sung them to you, acted them out –
hoping to teach them to you,
and, in turn, with gratitude,
listened to you tell them to us, singing them, acting them out –
teaching us in the process.

*We have tried to live them – as best we could –
confessing our failures –
confessing too, our assurance that it is far better
to have tried to live these stories and fallen short of their fullness,
than to have given up on the possibilities within them
and never tried to live them at all.*

*We have prayed for you more than you know –
both in frequency and in urgency.
Amidst our prayers, we give thanks for you continually.
And today, we celebrate your achievement with pride in what you've done...
and in who we see you becoming.*

*We will not put words in your mouths – words of profession, words of commitment,
and we pray less than you claim any particular propositions of belief
than we believe in the stories you've grown up with and on –
the possibilities of the world being turned upside down and inside out.*

*We pray these stories will sustain you, encourage you,
inspire you, transform you, accompany you wherever you go, whatever you do –
because these are the stories, we believe,
so much richer than most any story in our culture –
the stories of great inversion, of tremendous surprise,
of profound wonder, of deep joy,
of God's truth and grace, God's love, and the redeeming of all creation.*

These are the stories we pray you remember, reread, rethink, and choose –
Choose to live toward – choose to live into.

*We have no more important gift to offer you.
These are the stories we pray you come to deem worth your own selves.
This we pray today, and through the years to come, Amen.*

PRESENTATION OF OUR GRADUATES

CHARGE FOR OUR GRADUATES

"PRAYER FOR SCHOOL LEAVERS," SALLY FOSTER-FULTON

Today, as you take yet another step on your journey,
we want you to know that our love and admiration
and prayers surround you.

*We offer our hands to hold yours,
our hearts to cheer yours,
and our feet to join you when you need us to walk with you.*

*We send prayers aloft that your lives will not offer what you expect exactly,
but that life will continually surprise you.*

*We pray that you will be used by the God who created you,
led by the Christ who teaches you,
and challenged by the Spirit
who leads you on.*

PRAYER FOR OUR GRADUATES

Eternal God,
in your will our lives are lived,
and by your wisdom truth is found.
We pray for graduates who finish a course of study,
and move on to something new.
Take away anxiety or confusion of purpose,
and give them confidence in the future you plan,
where energies may be gathered up
and given to neighbors in love;
for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN #332: *Live into Hope

JANE PARKER HUBER

Live into hope of captives freed,
of sight regained, the end of greed.
The oppressed shall be the first to see
the year of God's own jubilee!

Live into hope! The blind shall see
with insight and with clarity,
removing shades of pride and fear,
a vision of our God brought near.

Live into hope of liberty,
the right to speak, the right to be,
the right to have one's daily bread,
to hear God's word and thus be fed.

Live into hope of captives freed,
From chains of fear or want or greed.
God now proclaims our full release
To faith and hope and joy and peace.

***SENDING**

"CLOSING PRAYER," AISHA BROOKS-JOHNSON

Wonder-working God,

Take our lives and shape us in the image of our faithful Savior, Jesus Christ.

Take our ordinary days and fill them with extraordinary wisdom, endurance, passion,
mercy and grace that can only come from you.

Take our attraction to distraction and exchange it for a peaceful pursuit of
righteousness, hope, truth, and love.

By the Holy Spirit's power, give us spiritual senses that allow us to perceive your presence in each moment and to be present with you and others each day.

*Through grace on display for all to see,
Give us eyes filled with compassion.
Give us ears ever ready to hear.
Give us hearts reflecting your glory.
Keep us mindful.
Keep us tender.
Keep us present.
Keep us gentle.
Keep us strong.*

By your power and your ever-flowing Spirit, make us more and more like you. **Amen.**

CHORAL BENEDICTION: *Shalom to You*

ELISE S. ESLINGER

Shalom to you now, Shalom, my friends.
May God's full mercies bless you, my friends.
In all your living and through your loving,
Christ be your Shalom, Christ be your Shalom.

POSTLUDE: *More Than Conquerors*

GERALD PETERSON

* Please stand in body or spirit.



Our Faith Community @ Work

WHAT'S HAPPENING

July 15 Neighbor Days – Vacation Bible School

It's a beautiful day in our neighborhood for a one day Vacation Bible School for all ages! We have programming in the spirit of our favorite Presbyterian pastor, Fred "Mr." Rogers. Come join us (and Daniel Tiger too!) for a fun day of learning and playing together. Kids will spend time singing, making crafts, and learning how to be a good neighbor. Adults have an opportunity to study neighbor and neighboring in the Bible. Parents may choose to either spend the day, or part of the day with their kids or in the adult class.

All are welcome. Please register online at www.bethanypreschurch.org/neighbor-days-2023.html

July 16 Neighbor Days - Worship

We will continue our Neighbor Day celebration with a worship service in the spirit of Mr. Rogers. Let's worship our God and celebrate and serve our neighbors! Invite your family and friends!

July 25th Alamance Co. Mobile Library

The Alamance County Public Libraries 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.

Bethany Scholarships Awarded

Thanks to the Katie and Lexie Glenn Scholarship Fund, Bethany awarded five scholarship this year. This year's scholarships were awarded to:

Bricen Bullis
Alex Harden
Lauren Kimrey
Macie Smith
April Troxler

This Week's Calendar:

Sunday, June 25th - Fourth Sunday after Pentecost

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

Wednesday, June 21st

6:30 – Choir Practice

Sunday, July 2nd - Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

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



Session

Moderator: Rev. Jon Phillips

Clerk: Randy Cousins

Treasurer: Glenn Patterson

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Class of 2023:

Chip Allen

Randy Cousins

Shelby Smith

Class of 2024:

Karen Maxwell

Kim Snyder

Tracey Troxler

Class of 2025:

Donna Mitchell-Ayers

Tina Patterson

Nancy Purcell

Staff

Transitional Pastor: Rev. Jon Phillips – pastor@bethanypreschurch.org

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