



Bethany Presbyterian Church

Graham, North Carolina

www.bethanypreschurch.org

www.facebook.com/bethanypresbyterian

August 22, 2021 – 11:00 am

Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost



*“While he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was moved with compassion.
His father ran to him, hugged him, and kissed him.”
Luke 15:20 (CEB)*

“You’ve got to be very careful if you don’t know where you are going, because you might not get there.” - Yogi Berra

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.

TRINITY CHIMES

PRELUDE: *Prelude on “Nyland”*

WILLIAM BARNETT

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

AN OFFERING OF PEACE

May the Peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

(Please take a moment to share a socially-distanced peace of Christ with your neighbor.)

* **GATHERING SONG:** *Lord, Prepare Me*

JOHN THOMPSON / RANDY SCRUGGS

Lord, prepare me to be a sanctuary, pure and holy, tried and true.

With thanksgiving, I’ll be a living sanctuary for you.

(Repeat as directed)

* CALL TO WORSHIP

Do you feel it? God’s kingdom is beneath our feet.

We live in the new creation shaped by God out of our brokenness.

Do you know it? God’s reconciling love in Christ has shattered our ways of viewing people.

No longer do we label our sisters and brothers, we welcome them with open arms.

Do you believe it? God has made everything, including us, new,
and sends us forth to share this good news with everyone!

* **OPENING HYMN #476:** *O Worship the King, All Glorious Above!*

LYONS

*O worship the King, all glorious above!
O gratefully sing God's power and God's love:
our shield and defender, the Ancient of Days,
pavilioned in splendor and girded with praise.*

*O tell of God's might; O sing of God's grace,
whose robe is the light, whose canopy space,
whose chariots of wrath the deep thunderclouds form;
and bright is God's path on the wings of the storm.*

*The earth with its store of wonders untold,
Almighty, your power has founded of old;
established it fast by a changeless decree,
and round it has cast, like a mantle, the sea.*

*Your bountiful care what tongue can recite?
It breathes in the air; it shines in the light;
it streams from the hills; it descends to the plain,
and sweetly distills in the dew and the rain.*

*Frail children of dust, and feeble as frail,
in you do we trust, nor find you to fail;
your mercies, how tender, how firm to the end,
our Maker, Defender, Redeemer, and Friend.*

OFFERING OURSELVES FOR RENEWAL

A PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

AN OFFERING OF SCRIPTURE

LUKE 15:11-32

Holy Wisdom, Holy Word.

Thanks be to God.

PEW BIBLE, PAGE 1272

AN OFFERING OF PRAYERS

Holy God, Word Shaper: you are not our accountant, but our salvation; you are not angry at us, but you forgive us; you are not our enemy, but the One who runs towards us with wide open arms, throwing steaks on the grill to celebrate our newness!

Jesus Christ, Shaper of our story: you travel to that distant country called our sin to bring us home once again; you share your inheritance with us so we might be blessed; you know the famine of our spirits and fill it with your hope.

Holy Spirit, Life Shaper: surrounded by your grace, we offer glad cries of salvation; encircled by your constant love, we shout for joy; enclosed in your comforting arms, nothing can overwhelm us.

God in Community, Holy in One, from now on we will remember our life in you, even as we pray.

We know our faults -- the way we have treated others, our alienation from God, our unwillingness to be faithful people. We will not hide our sin or remain silent, but confess them to the One who surrounds us with steadfast love.

On this very day we admit all the lengths to which we go so we might avoid you. You offer us that kingdom of joy and wonder, yet we would hide in places where temptation waits. You invite us to feast on your grace and peace, but we stubbornly refuse, because you also welcome those we call 'outsiders.' We are quick to see all the mistakes that those around us make, but hope you will ignore our foolish choices.

Celebrating God, before we come to our senses, we find you running towards us, sweeping us up in your arms, tears of grace mingling with our cries of confession, a mighty river washing away our sinful ways to restore us to

new life. In Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, we find no limitations on your grace, no reservations about your love, but a feast that overflows with wonder, a place we can finally call home.

AN OFFERING OF SILENCE

AN OFFERING OF GOD'S GRACE

God rolls away everything that stands in our way - our past, our sin, our pain, our hesitation, and reshapes us into new people living in the new creation. What wonderful grace. We are forgiven!

Broken, we are made whole; lost, we are brought home; empty, we are filled with songs of gladness. We rejoice and give thanks to God who has graced us with mercy. Amen.

* **RESPONDING TO GOD'S GRACE:** *Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines on Me*

PAUL VASILE

Glory to God, whose goodness shines on me, and to the Son, whose grace has pardoned me, and to the Spirit, whose love has set me free. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.

World without end, without end. Amen. World without end, without end. Amen.

World without end, without end. Amen. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.

AN OFFERING OF OUR RESOURCES

* **A DOXOLOGY:** *We Lift Our Voices*

DWIGHT LILES

We lift our voices; we lift our hands; we lift our lives up to you: we are an offering.

Lord, use our voices; Lord, use our hands; Lord, use our lives; they are yours: we are an offering.

All that we have, all that we are, all that we hope to be, we give to you, we give to you.

We lift our voices; we lift our hands; we lift our lives up to you: we are an offering; we are an offering.

* **PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

LISTENING FOR GOD'S VOICE

THE WORD IN MUSIC

THE WORD PROCLAIMED

Sermon: ***The Gospel According to Baseball: Rounding Third and Heading for Home***

REV. JOHNSON

* **HYMN OF PREPARATION:** *For Everyone Born* (see page 5)

SHIRLEY ERENA MURRAY

SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

May Abba our God be with you!

And also with you!

Lift your hearts to the One who welcomes us home.

We open them to our God, who runs to embrace us with grace.

Sing glad songs to the One who provides this feast.

We join in singing to God, who throws a party for us in this place.

On those days you called creation from the hiding places of your imagination, . . . So you sent Jesus, your Son, to lead us back from the dead so we might celebrate your life. With all the prodigals as well as the pious, with all the saints as well as the sinners, with all the faithful, we sing to you:

Holy, holy, holy, God who reconciles us to yourself. All creation is glad and rejoices. Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is the One who finds the lost and guides them home. Hosanna in the highest!

Holy are you, God of prodigals, and blessed is Jesus Christ, in whom there is no deceit . . . As we remember how he welcomed those we overlook, as we celebrate at the feast which is offered in his name, we would reflect on that mystery we call faith:

Christ died, to be our salvation; Christ was raised, to be our reconciliation; Christ will return, to lead us home.

On this day, Parenting God, pour out your Spirit on the gifts of the bread and the cup . . . And on the very day when all time will end, we will gather with your family around your table, our voices singing through all eternity glad songs to you: and praying as Christ taught us:

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.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

COMMUNION BY THE PEOPLE

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

In gratitude, in deep gratitude for this moment, this meal, these people, we give ourselves to you.

Take us out to live as changed people because we have shared the Living Bread and cannot remain the same.

Ask much of us, expect much from us, enable much by us, encourage many through us.

So, Lord, may we live to your glory, both as inhabitants of earth and citizens of the commonwealth of heaven. Amen.

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD AS WE LEAVE TO SERVE

* CLOSING HYMN #430: *Come Sing, O Church, in Joy!*

DARWALL'S 148TH

*Come sing, O church, in joy! Come join, O church, in song!
For Christ the Lord has led us through the ages long!
In bold accord, come celebrate the journey now and praise the Lord!
Long years have come and gone, and still God reigns supreme,
empowering us to catch the vision, dream the dream!
In bold accord, come celebrate the journey now and praise the Lord!
Let courage be our friend; let wisdom be our guide,
as we in mission magnify the Crucified!
In bold accord, come celebrate the journey now and praise the Lord!
Come sing, O church, in joy! Come join, O church, in song!
For Christ the Lord has triumphed o'er the ages long!
In bold accord, come celebrate the journey now and praise the Lord!*

* SENDING

God sends us forth,

to be reconcilers of the broken and oppressed.

Jesus, our Brother, sends us to welcome everyone.

We will embrace the prodigals with joy, we will make a feast for all of God's people.

The Spirit sends us with arms full of healing.

We will go to bring hope to all we meet.

* CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

* POSTLUDE: *Christ for the World We Sing*

LANI SMITH / DE GIANDINI

* *Please stand in body or spirit.*

769 For Everyone Born

E *Leader or All* *A2*

1 For ev - ery - one born, a place at the ta - ble,
 2 For wom - an and man, a place at the ta - ble,
 3 For young and for old, a place at the ta - ble,
 4 For just and un - just, a place at the ta - ble,
 5 For ev - ery - one born, a place at the ta - ble,

E *A2* *Bsus* *B*

for ev - ery - one born, clean wa - ter and bread,
 re - vis - ing the roles, de - cid - ing the share,
 a voice to be heard, a part in the song,
 a - bus - er, a - bused, with need to for - give,
 to live with - out fear, and sim - ply to be,

F#m7 *E/G#* *A2* *Bsus*

a shel - ter, a space, a safe place for grow - ing,
 with wis - dom and grace, di - vid - ing the pow - er,
 the hands of a child in hands that are wrin - kled,
 in an - ger, in hurt, a mind - set of mer - cy,
 to work, to speak out, to wit - ness and wor - ship,

E *Bsus* *E* *Bsus*

for ev - ery - one born, a star o - ver - head,
 for wom - an and man, a sys - tem that's fair,
 for young and for old, the right to be - long,
 for just and un - just, a new way to live,
 for ev - ery - one born, the right to be free,

Refrain *B* *All* *E* *E/G#* *A2* *Bsus* *B*

and God will de-light when we are cre - a - tors of jus - tice and

E *E/G#* *A2* *Bsus* *B*

joy, com - pas - sion and peace: yes,

C#m *C#m/B* *A2*

God will de-light when we are cre - a - tors of jus - tice,

Bsus *B* *E* *(^)* *Fine* *A2* *E* *Bsus* *B*

jus - tice and joy!



Our Faith Community @ Work

WORSHIP Ministry: (Lead Elders: Nancy Purcell and Helen Brown)

WELCOME to this service of worship at Bethany Presbyterian Church (PCUSA). Whether you are a member or a visitor we are so glad that you are worshipping with us this morning and pray that this time of worship will be both renewing and rewarding for you. If you have any questions about Bethany, please speak to the pastor or call the church at 336.227.4041. You can find us online through our website at www.bethanypreschurch.org; on Facebook at www.facebook.com/bethanypresbyterian; or on Twitter by following [@bpresbyterian](https://twitter.com/bpresbyterian).

“I will show love to those who were called unloved and, to those who were called ‘not-my-people’, I will say ‘you are my people’ and they will answer, ‘you are our God.’” (Hosea 2:23) Bethany Presbyterian Church is a place where the mind is nourished as well as the spirit, and where we affirm the dignity and worth of every person. As we are all created in the image of God, we believe discrimination is incompatible with Christ’s Gospel of unconditional love. While we celebrate our Presbyterian identity, we acknowledge that we are not alone on the path to understanding God. We invite conversations that move us to seek a deeper understanding of life in the Spirit. **Be who you are and be welcome here.**

Audio Recordings of each Sunday’s sermons are available through a link on our website, on our Facebook page, or at www.buzzsprout.com/9198. A **Live Stream** and a **Video Recording** of our Live Stream are available on our Facebook page and on our website.

Resources used in today’s worship:

- *Presbyterian Outlook* Liturgical Resources
- *A Wee Worship Book* - Wild Goose Worship Group
- *Glory to God* Presbyterian hymnal
- *The Text This Week* website (www.textweek.com)

A Note About the Offering: As we have returned to worship as the pandemic has been becoming less and less a threat, we have continued the practice of not passing the offering plates at the time of the offering during our service, thus decreasing the threat of spreading germs. Instead, you are invited to make your contribution in one of four ways: drop it in the offering plate that is located at the narthex door (before worship) and in the narthex (following worship); mail it in to the church; drop it off at the church in person; or, use our quick and secure online giving platform. This can be accessed through our website, or by scanning the QR code on the last page of this bulletin. Thanks for your generosity and cooperation.

As the threat of the pandemic does ease somewhat, we are still not completely out of the woods. Recently the CDC adjusted the guidelines for wearing masks, suggesting that all persons - vaccinated or not - wear masks indoors in areas that are experiencing more infections. We will continue to urge our congregation to use their own best judgment in whether to wear a mask in worship, always remembering our hope to keep all worshippers healthy and free from infection.

Our service this morning includes the **Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper**. Please be attentive to the instructions that will be given during the announcement time. All necessary precautions are being taken to insure that as the elements are being served that everyone is safe and the chances of any spreading of virus is at a minimum.

This morning John completes a five-week **Sermon Series** entitled ***“The Gospel According to Baseball.”*** Through this series we have seen how the struggles and triumphs in the game of baseball can be translated to the game of life, and our life of faith. As John comes closer to his retirement, this series is a tribute to John’s father, Rev. John S. Johnson, Jr., who instilled in John not only a love of the church, but also a love of baseball.

We are looking forward to the **celebration of John’s retirement this Saturday, August 28th**. The Bethany family will gather here at the church at 3:00 for a baseball-themed celebration with John and his family. Then, at 6:30, those invited will gather at Burlington Beer Works for a celebration with the community. Please make sure you have submitted your RSVP to Tina Patterson for the afternoon event, and either online or to Debbie Johnson for the evening event.

Next Sunday, August 29th marks John's final Sunday before his retirement. We have a glorious morning of worship planned, with special music from our visiting brass ensemble (that have played here before), Sylvester Allen singing, some surprises along the way, and John's final sermon, "*Clear Eyes, Full Heart, Can't Lose.*" What a joy it will be to have a full sanctuary as we celebrate John moving into this new phase of life and ministry.

SERVE Ministry: (Lead Elders: Randy Cousins and Tina Patterson)

Our ongoing prayer list is below. Please let the church office know if there are any changes.

Bill Faucette	Diane Miller	John & Ann Sutton
Jack Cook	Peter Slater	Ruby Martin
Joan Richardson	Joey Leake	Teresa Wilborn
Shannon Russell	Ida Whitney	Tiffany Tauchren
Katherine Turner	Jean Berry	Barbara Cousins
Jeremy Harden	Christy Lutterloh	Pat Kennedy
Anne McDaniels	Eleanor Thompson	Mike Sutton
Alex Thomas	Nancy Sutton	Ben Johnson
Stewart Dillard	Norma Proctor	Grace Johnson
Shelvia Russell	Christopher Bagley	Frank Wrenn
Carol Brooks	Randy Thompson	Sylvia Donley
Janie Holt Clapp	Glenn Harden	Joyce & Norman Mize
	Debbie Walters (Smith family neighbor)	

TEACH Ministry: (Lead Elders: Tracey Troxler and Shelby Smith)

All are invited to take advantage of the several educational opportunities for all ages on Sunday mornings. Sunday school classes begin at 9:45 a.m.

Fellowship Class (Fellowship Classroom – by ramp door) - NOT CURRENTLY MEETING DUE TO COVID

This class is using our denomination's *Present Word* curriculum and lives up to the class name in all aspects of their life here at Bethany.

Children (Upstairs – the really, really green room!)

This class for younger children is using our denomination's *We Believe* curriculum in introducing our children to the faith.

Youth (Upstairs, across from the choir room)

Using a variety of creative curricula, this class explores topics that relate to faith and adolescence.

SUPPORT Ministry: (Lead Elders: Chip Allen, Ben Russell, and Bill Abplanalp)

Elders of the Month for August are **Tracey Troxler** and **Randy Cousins**.

This Week's Calendar:

Today:

- 9:45 – Sunday School for all ages (as scheduled)
- 11:00 – Worship / Sermon Series - *The Gospel According to Baseball - V* / Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

Saturday, the 28th:

- 3:00 - John's Retirement Celebration with the Bethany community (Fellowship Hall)
- 6:30 - John's Retirement Celebration with the wider community (Burlington Beer Works)

Sunday, the 29th:

- **JOHN'S FINAL SUNDAY**
- 9:45 – Sunday School for all ages (as scheduled)
- 11:00 – Worship with special music and some surprises!

Session

Moderator: Rev. John W. Johnson

Clerk: Randy Cousins

Treasurer: Glenn Patterson

Class of 2021:

Nancy Purcell

Ben Russell

Tracey Troxler

Class of 2022:

Bill Abplanalp

Helen Brown

Tina Patterson

Class of 2023:

Chip Allen

Randy Cousins

Shelby Smith

bethany presbyterian

love learn serve



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Bookkeeper: Pam Hurt – finance@bethanypreschurch.org

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