



Bethany Presbyterian Church

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

September 15, 2024 – 11:00 am
Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost



"Milky Way," Bryan Jones

Then he brought Abram outside and said, "Look up at the sky and count the stars if you think you can count them."
He continued, "This is how many children you will have." Genesis 15:5 (COMMON ENGLISH BIBLE)

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 LiturgyLink, <https://www.liturgylink.net>.

TRINITY CHIMES

PRELUDE: *To Walk in Faith*

DAVID PAXTON

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PROCESSIONAL HYMN #263: *Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise

WALTER CHAMBERS SMITH

Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
In light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
Most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,
Almighty, victorious, Thy great name we praise.

Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light,
Nor wanting, nor wasting, Thou rulest in might;
Thy justice, like mountains, high soaring above
Thy clouds, which are fountains of goodness and love.

To all, life Thou givest, to both great and small;
In all life Thou livest, the true life of all;
We blossom and flourish as leaves on the tree,
And wither and perish; but naught changeth Thee.

Thou reignest in glory, Thou rulest in light,
Thine angels adore Thee, all veiling their sight;
All praise we would render; O help us to see
'Tis only the splendor of light hideth Thee!

***OPENING SENTENCES**

"LOOK TO THE STARS," TERI PETERSON

Look to the stars – filling the sky with light!

God's word is a light, shining bright in the darkness.

Look to the stars – spread across the universe, farther than any eye has seen.

God is everywhere present, whether we go to the ends of the earth or the depths of the sea.

Look to the stars – more than we even have numbers to count.

God's grace is beyond imagining, beyond language, beyond counting.

Look to the stars – signs of God's promise, shining through all generations.

We come to worship God, in whom we trust.

***GATHERING PRAYER**

***Grant us, O Lord,
the grace always to do and think
what accords with your purpose;
that we, who cannot exist without you,
may be enabled to live according to your will;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, forever and ever. Amen.***

RESPONDING TO OUR PRAYERS

Hear our prayer, O Lord.
Hear our prayer, O Lord.
Incline Thine ear to us and grant us Thy Peace. Amen.

OFFERING OURSELVES FOR RENEWAL

A PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

God our helper,
by your Holy Spirit, open our minds,
that as the scriptures are read
and your word is proclaimed,
we may be led into your truth
and taught your will,
for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

ENCOUNTERING SCRIPTURE

LUKE 3:8

PEW BIBLE, 1247

GENESIS 15:1-6

PEW BIBLE, 15

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

AN OFFERING OF OUR PLEDGES

OFFERTORY

***DOXOLOGY #579:** *Glory Be to the Father*

HENRY W. GREATOREX

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen, Amen.

*BLESSING OUR GIFTS

***HYMN OF THE DAY:** *Pass Me Not, O Gentle Savior*

FANNY J. CROSBY

Pass me not, O gentle Savior,
Hear my humble cry,
While on others Thou art calling,
Do not pass me by.

Refrain:

Savior, Savior,
Hear my humble cry;
While on others Thou art calling,
Do not pass me by.

Let me at a throne of mercy
Find a sweet relief;
Kneeling there in deep contrition,
Help my unbelief. **[Refrain]**

Trusting only in Thy merit,
Would I seek Thy face;
Heal my wounded, broken spirit,
Save me by Thy grace. **[Refrain]**

Thou the Spring of all my comfort,
More than life to me,
Whom have I on earth beside Thee?
Whom in heav'n but Thee? **[Refrain]**

TELLING THE TRUTH ABOUT OURSELVES

"YOU MAKE PROMISES,,," TERI PETERSON

Let us come together to tell the truth about ourselves.

You make a lot of promises, God, and we confess that sometimes we don't believe them.
It feels like we are alone out here, like we'd better take matters into our own hands.

Your promise of abundant life, your promise of your presence, your promise of a future with hope –
sometimes we just can't see how they can be true.
***And yet you call us to run the race, to hope in things we cannot see,
to follow though we do not know where you are going.***

Forgive us, O God, our insistence on certainty.
***Your faithfulness reaches to the skies, beyond what we can imagine.
Forgive our fearful hearts, our unwillingness to go into places we don't know,
our idolatry of self-reliance.***

Reveal to us again your loving presence,
that we may grow to reflect your faithfulness.

Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

silence

AN OFFERING OF GOD'S GRACE

I proclaim to you in the name of our promising God that:
You are enough.
You are forgiven.
You are loved.
Alleluia! Thanks be to God!

RESPONDING TO GOD'S GRACE #324: *Open My Eyes That I May See*

CLARA H. SCOTT

Open my eyes, that I may see
Glimpses of truth Thou hast for me;
Place in my hands the wonderful key
That shall unclasp and set me free.

Silently now I wait for Thee,
Ready, my God, Thy will to see;
Open my eyes, illumine me,
Spirit divine!

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

THE WORD IN MUSIC: *Be Strong in the Lord*

TOM FETKE

THE WORD PROCLAIMED

Sermon: *"Promises for the Future"*

REV. JON PHILLIPS

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.*

***CLOSING HYMN #411:** *Arise, Your Light is Come*

RUTH DUCK

Arise, your light is come! The Spirit's call obey,
Show forth the glory of your God, which shines on you today.

Arise, your light is come! Fling wide the prison door,
Proclaim the captives' liberty, good tidings to the poor.

Arise, your light is come! All you in sorrow born,
Bind up the broken-hearted ones and comfort those who mourn.

Arise, your light is come! The mountains burst in song!
Rise up like eagles on the wing; God's power will make us strong.

***SENDING**

Go out into the world in peace.
Love the Lord your God
with all your heart,
with all your soul,
with all your mind;
and love your neighbor as yourself.
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE: *Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart*

FRANKLIN RITTER/A.H. MESSITER

** Please stand in body or spirit.*



Our Faith Community @ Work

WHAT'S HAPPENING

September Scout Fall Popcorn Sale

September starts the kick off for the Fall popcorn sale for the Scouts. The order sheet is located in the Welcome Center. Any questions, please contact Jeff Benes 336-675-9086 or benes.nc@att.net.

October 1st 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

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

How we can help S.A.F.E. for the month of September? They are asking for **soup** and **rice**. S.A.F.E. will be closed the 1st and 5th Saturday of the Month. Consider donating your plastic and paper bags.

Save the Date

- **Saturday, October 26th 1:00pm – 4:00pm Fall Festival**

This Week's Calendar:

Sunday, September 15th Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

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

Wednesday, September 18th

6:30 – Choir Practice

Sunday, September 22nd Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

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

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love learn serve



Session

Moderator: Rev. Jon Phillips

Clerk: Randy Cousins

Treasurer: Glenn Patterson

Class of 2024:

Karen Maxwell

Kim Snyder

Tracey Troxler

Class of 2025:

Donna Mitchell-Ayers

Tina Patterson

Nancy Purcell

Class of 2026:

Chip Allen

Jean Payne

Ben Russell

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Staff

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

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Office Administrator: Joy Saleeby – admin@bethanypreschurch.org

Bookkeeper: Pam Hurt – finance@bethanypreschurch.org

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