



Bethany Presbyterian Church

Graham, North Carolina

www.bethanypreschurch.org

www.facebook.com/bethanypresbyterian

September 17, 2023 – 11:00 am

Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost



"Bedouin Tent and Camel," UncleBucko (Flickr)

The LORD said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh and say, 'Me give birth? At my age?' Is anything too difficult for the LORD? When I return to you about this time next year, Sarah will have a son."

Genesis 18:13-14 (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 Kimberly Bracken Long, ed., Feasting on the World: Worship Companion (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2014); and LiturgyLink, <https://www.liturgylink.net>.

TRINITY CHIMES

PRELUDE: *I've Found a Friend*

ROY DANIELSON

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

***OPENING HYMN #466:** *O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing*

CHARLES WESLEY

O for a thousand tongues to sing
My dear Redeemer's praise,
The glories of my God and King,
The triumphs of God's grace!

Jesus, the name that charms our fears,
That bids our sorrows cease;
'Tis music in the sinner's ears,
'Tis life, and health, and peace.

Christ breaks the power of reigning sin,
And sets the prisoner free;
Christ's blood can make the sinful clean,
Christ's blood availed for me.

My gracious Master and my God,
Assist me to proclaim,
To spread through all the earth abroad
The honors of Thy name.

*OPENING SENTENCES

"PSALM 96," ANDY JAMES

O sing to the Lord a new song, all the earth.
Bless God's name and tell of God's salvation from day to day.
Ascribe to the Lord glory and strength, O people;
give God all glory and honor!
Bring an offering, and come into God's courts;
worship the Lord in holy splendor, now and forevermore.

*GATHERING PRAYER

God of wonder, you appeared to Abraham as three persons;
you reveal your fullness in your Son Jesus Christ.
Your Spirit fills your people with hope
through the peacemaking cross of Jesus.
Gather us as Christ's faithful disciples
and empower us with his good news,
in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ. ***Amen.***

*RESPONDING TO OUR PRAYERS: Hear our Prayer, O Lord (Choir 1st time; Congregation 2nd time)

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 of redemption, summon us to Sarah's joy, and Abraham's wonder, through the word and work of the Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ our Lord, in whose name we pray. ***Amen.***

ENCOUNTERING SCRIPTURE

MARK 10:27

PEW BIBLE, 1230

GENESIS 18:1-15; 21:1-7

PEW BIBLE, 17-18;21

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

AN OFFERING OF OUR PLEDGES

OFFERTORY

***DOXOLOGY #592:** *Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow*

THOMAS KEN

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*BLESSING OUR GIFTS

***HYMN OF THE DAY #306** *Fairest Lord Jesus*

MUNSTER GESANGBUCH

Fairest Lord Jesus,
Ruler of all nature,
O Thou of God to earth come down,
Thee will I cherish,
Thee will I honor,
Thou, my soul's glory, joy and crown.

Fair are the meadows,
Fairer still the woodlands,
Robed in the blooming garb of spring:
Jesus is fairer,
Jesus is purer,
Who makes the woeful heart to sing.

Fair is the sunshine,
Fairer still the moonlight,
And all the twinkling starry host;
Jesus shines brighter,
Jesus shines purer
Than all the angels heaven can boast.

TELLING THE TRUTH ABOUT OURSELVES

The mystery of God brings the promise of life,
but we doubt the Spirit's power to overcome death.
The resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Son,
reveals that nothing is impossible with God.
Let us now tell the truth about ourselves and receive new life.

***Triune God, Holy Three, Holy One, we confess that we do not know how to look for you.
We do not sense your nearness, and if there are angels among us, we are unaware.
We do not show the hospitality to strangers that Abraham showed to you.
We do not trust that our hardships can be transformed by your Spirit.
O Covenant-keeper, forgive us.
Let us laugh with joy because your grace has made peace among us.
Send us out with this good news so that others will also receive your blessings;
through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.***

Silence

AN OFFERING OF GOD'S GRACE

I proclaim to you in the name of our mysterious God that:
You are enough.
You are forgiven.
You are loved.

Alleluia! Thanks be to God!

***RESPONDING TO GOD'S GRACE #837 (GLORY TO GOD):** *What a Fellowship, What a Joy Divine*

ELISHA A. HOFFMAN

What a fellowship, what a joy divine,
leaning on the everlasting arms;
what a blessedness, what a peace is mine,
leaning on the everlasting arms.

Leaning, leaning,
safe and secure from all alarms;
leaning, leaning,
leaning on the everlasting arms.

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

THE WORD IN MUSIC: *Inside Your Kingdom*

TIMOTHY G. BUSHONG

THE WORD PROCLAIMED

Sermon: *"The Blessing of Hospitality"*

REV. PHILLIPS

BLESSING OF THE BLANKETS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

"LAUGHTER," NATHAN WILLIAMS

THE LORD'S PRAYER

*... Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by 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 #263:** *Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise*

WALTER C. 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, unchanging, 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!

***SENDING**

"SET APART," NATHAN WILLIAMS

People of God, you were set apart before you came into being,
to proclaim the goodness and grace of our God,
in word and in deed, wherever you go.
Go out into the world this week, sharing God's love with all people
in Jesus' name.
And may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit,
be with you now and forever.

***CHORAL BENEDICTION:** *Lord, Make Us More Holy*

Lord, make us more holy,
Lord, make us more holy,
Lord, make us more holy,
Until we meet again.
Holy, holy, holy,
Until we meet again.

POSTLUDE: *Bound for the Promised Land*

HUGH S. LIVINGSTON, JR. (BASED ON "PROMISED LAND" AN AMERICAN FOLK HYMN)

** Please stand in body or spirit.*



Our Faith Community @ Work

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Tuesday, September 19th 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

Saturday, Sept 30th Blessing of the Animals – Recreation Area

Save the date! More information to come. We will bless our beloved animals in a service near the commemoration of St. Francis of Assisi.

Sunday, October 1st 11:00 World Communion Sunday Brunch Church – Fellowship Hall

Join us for our brunch church service – bring your appetites and a desire for worship and fellowship done in a creative way that remembers how the first church came together.

Saturday, November 4th Fall Festival – Recreation Area

Save the date! Our Fall Festival is back! More information to come.

Sunday, November 5th 11:00 A Service for All the Saints

Our annual commemoration of all in our congregation in and in our hearts who have died in the past year.

This Week's Calendar:

Sunday, September 17th - Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

9:45 – Adult Sunday School - Bible 101 - Evie C. Marshall classroom

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

Wednesday, September 20th

6:30 –Choir Practice

Sunday, September 24th - Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

9:45 – Adult Sunday School - Bible 101 - Evie C. Marshall classroom

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

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Session

Moderator: Rev. Jon Phillips

Clerk: Randy Cousins

Treasurer: Glenn Patterson

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

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Staff

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

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