



Bethany Presbyterian Church

Graham, North Carolina

www.bethanypreschurch.org

www.facebook.com/bethanypresbyterian



“The kingdom of heaven is like...”

July 26, 2020 – 11:00, *the Eighth Sunday after Pentecost*

“When the stalks sprouted and bore grain, then the weeds also appeared.”

Matthew 13:26 (CEB)

GATHERING AS GOD’S PEOPLE

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

I awake this day eager to receive divine instruction and to enact your word. As the day unfolds, may I step more deeply into your heavenly realm through loving you and serving your world. Amen.

PRELUDE: *I NEED THEE EVERY HOUR*

Robert Lowery

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

*** CALL TO WORSHIP**

O give thanks to the Lord, call on God's name,
make known the Lord's deeds among the peoples.

**Sing to the Lord, sing praises to God;
tell of all the Lord's wonderful works.**

Glory in God's holy name; let the hearts of
those who seek the Lord rejoice.

**Seek the Lord and God's strength;
seek the Lord's presence continually.**

*** OPENING HYMN: #469 *MORNING HAS BROKEN***

ELEANOR FARJEON

Morning has broken
Like the first morning,
Blackbird has spoken
Like the first bird.
Praise for the singing!
Praise for the morning!
Praise for them, springing
Fresh from the Word!

Sweet the rain's new fall
Sunlit from Heaven,
Like the first dewfall
On the first grass.
Praise for the sweetness
Of the wet garden,
Sprung in completeness
Where his feet pass.

Mine is the sunlight,
Mine is the morning,
Born of the one light
Eden saw play.
Praise with elation,
Praise every morning,
God's re-creation
Of the new day!

OFFERING OURSELVES FOR RENEWAL

A PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Spirit of life, we do not know how to pray as we ought.
Meet us in words written, in words spoken:
intercede for us with sighs too deep for words,
until we shine with hope that is hidden in our hearts,
for we pray in the name of Jesus. **Amen.**

AN OFFERING OF SCRIPTURE

MATTHEW 13:31-33, 44-52

PEW BIBLE, PAGE 1187

Keep these words in your heart. The Lord is our God, the Lord alone.

Thanks be to God.

AN OFFERING OF PRAYERS

Sisters and brothers, God never forgets God's promises; God's covenant endures in each new generation.

We are free to speak the truth about our lives because God's faithfulness embraces us as we examine our hearts.

Lord, you search our hearts and see the places where they are hardened and resistant to your will. In this time of much upheaval and pain, we frequently turn away from those in need, seeking our own security instead of the well-being of all creation. We let petty differences separate us from one another. We allow self-interest to overwhelm your commandment to love our neighbors. We fail to see your image evident in every person. Forgive us, we pray, and in your mercy redirect us so that we can once again walk in your ways. Amen.

AN OFFERING OF SILENCE

What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us?

Sisters and brothers, nothing we have done, nothing we will ever do,

is enough to separate us from the love of God made known in Jesus Christ.

Please turn to your neighbor and share these words of assurance: "In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven."

Thanks be to God.

Since we are justified by faith we have peace with God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

AN OFFERING OF PEACE

May the Peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

(Please take a moment to share the peace of Christ with your neighbor.)

AN OFFERING OF GOD'S GRACE

*** SAYING WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE BELIEVE**

As the people of God gathered in this place, who are we?

We are a community of believers, called by God to WORSHIP, SERVE, TEACH, and SUPPORT.

With the whole church, let us say what we believe:

To be reconciled to God is to be sent into the world as God's reconciling community. This community, the church universal, is entrusted with God's message of reconciliation and shares God's labor of healing the enmities which separate people from God and from each other. Christ has called the church to this mission and given it the gift of the Holy Spirit. The church maintains continuity with the apostles and with Israel by faithful obedience to his call. The life, death, resurrection, and promised coming of Jesus Christ has set the pattern for the church's mission. His human life involves the church in the common life of all people. His service to people commits the church to work for every form of human well-being. His suffering makes the church sensitive to all human suffering so that it sees the face of Christ in the faces of persons in every kind of need. His crucifixion discloses to the church God's judgment on the inhumanity that marks human relations and the awful consequences of the church's own complicity in injustice. In the power of the risen Christ and the hope of his coming, the church sees the promise of God's renewal of human life in society and of God's victory over all wrong. The church follows this pattern in the form of its life and in the method of its action. So to live and serve is to confess Christ as Lord.

(The Confession of 1967, sections 9:31-33)

AN OFFERING OF OUR RESOURCES

Jesus said, The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches. Let us offer our gifts this day, for the kingdom of heaven is near.

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

God of seeds and yeast, hidden treasure and fishing nets, we offer you these our gifts as a sign of our commitment to you and your ways in this world. Give us confident faith that believes you are at work right now bringing forth growth in and around us, growth that will in turn bring forth new life. Bless this offering that it might be the leaven that creates the bread of life and the treasure that enables others to know of your love. In Christ's name we pray. **Amen.**

* HYMN OF THE DAY: #293 *THIS IS MY FATHER'S WORLD*

F.L. SHEPPARD

This is my Father's world,
And to my listening ears
All nature sings, and round me rings
The music of the spheres.
This is my Father's world:
I rest me in the thought
Of rocks and trees, of skies and seas--
His hand the wonders wrought.

This is my Father's world:
O let me ne'er forget
That though the wrong seems oft so strong,
God is the Ruler yet.
This is my Father's world:
The battle is not done; Jesus
who died shall be satisfied,
And earth and heaven be one.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND 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.

LISTENING FOR GOD'S VOICE

THE WORD PROCLAIMED

Sermon: "The kingdom of heaven is like..."

Rick Purcell, CLP

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD AS WE LEAVE TO SERVE

* CLOSING HYMN #536: *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.
Lord, make us more loving;

Lord, make us more loving;
Lord, make us more loving,
until we meet again:
loving, loving, loving,
until we meet again.

Lord, make us more patient;
Lord, make us more patient;
Lord, make us more patient,
until we meet again:
patient, patient, patient,
until we meet again.

Lord, make us more faithful;
Lord, make us more faithful;
Lord, make us more faithful,
until we meet again:
faithful, faithful, faithful,
until we meet again.

*** CHARGE**

Go - as seed and yeast, willing to lose your life in the larger purposes of God.

Go - as fisherfolk and treasure seekers, pouring out your days in search of hidden grace.

BENEDICTION

May God, who searches the heart, Jesus, whose love overcomes all division,
and the Spirit, which helps us in our weakness, continue to lead you into life
that you may serve with abandon and joy.

** Please stand in body or spirit.*



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).

Obviously, due to the ongoing health crisis surrounding the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus, we are not worshipping in person at this point in time, but rather gathering virtually using the Zoom meeting platform. Each week the congregation will be emailed a link by which everyone can join the meeting using their computer, laptop, smartphone, or tablet. John will lead worship in this manner, and congregants are invited to participate as they are able. For those who are unable to connect via Zoom, we are also hoping to be on Facebook Live as well. We are still trying to work out some glitches in that.

For those unable to get the link via email, it will also be on our Facebook page, and on our website.

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 **Video Recording** of our Zoom worship will be available on our Facebook page and on our website.

Resources used in today's worship:

- *Feasting on the Word* worship resources
- *Ministry Matters* website (www.ministrymatters.com)
- *Homiletics Online* website (homileticsonline.com)

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	Shirley Lane
Teresa Wilborn	Shannon Russell	Ida Whitney
Tiffany Tauchren	Mary Moore	Katherine Turner
Jean Berry	Barbara Cousins	Jeremy Harden
Christy Lutterloh	Pat Kennedy	Anne McDaniels
Eleanor Thompson	Donna Mitchell-Ayers	Mike Sutton
Nancy Sutton	Pete Campbell	Steward Dillard
Norma Proctor	Ben Johnson	Shelvia Russell
Alex Thomas	Katherine Bayliff and Family	Robert Sykes
Randy Thompson	Glenn Thompson	Ritchie Fishburne
Frederica Beatty	Carol Brooks	Janie Holt Clapp
Christopher Bagley	Lou Crutchfield	Jean Payne

TEACH Ministry: (Lead Elders: Karen Maxwell and Tracey Troxler)

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. (Classes will resume when we return to having church in person!)

Fellowship Class (Fellowship Classroom – by ramp door)

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 July are **Bill Abplanalp** and **Chip Allen**.

This Week's Calendar:

Today:

- 11:00 – Worship Online

Wednesday, the 29th:

- 7:00 – Choir Practice (not meeting)

Sunday, August 2nd:

- 11:00 – Worship Online

bethany presbyterian

love learn serve



Session

Moderator: Rev. John W. Johnson

Clerk: Karen Maxwell

Treasurer: Glenn Patterson

1500 S. Main Street

Graham, NC 27215

www.bethanypreschurch.org

336.227.4041

Class of 2020:

Chip Allen

Randy Cousins

Karen Maxwell

Staff

Pastor: Rev. John W. Johnson – pastor@bethanypreschurch.org

Director of Music: Christopher Bagley – music@bethanypreschurch.org

Office Administrator: Joy Saleeby – office@bethanypreschurch.org

Bookkeeper: Pam Hurt – finance@bethanypreschurch.org

Class of 2021:

Nancy Purcell

Ben Russell

Tracey Troxler

Elder Emeritus: Bobby Peele

Elder Emeritus: Don Boggs

Class of 2022:

Bill Abplanalp

Helen Brown

Tina Patterson

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Bethany Presbyterian is a Stephen Ministry Congregation

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