



# John's Journal

I'm sure that we will see many references over the next month or so about "2020 Vision" - referring to the new year and the numerical reference to perfect vision as our

eye doctors tell us. But as I look to the new year, I think we have to be realistic that nothing we do in life or in the church is going to be perfect. We can strive for perfection, but getting to that 20/20 life is another story entirely.

But the end of another year does give us the opportunity to not only look ahead to the possibilities that lie in front of us, but also to consider the past year and the accomplishments that we have attained and the positives that we can clearly see from our mission and ministry here at Bethany.

2019 has been an eventful year for us. Even though we have seen the inevitable passing of dear members of this family of faith, we continue to be blessed by cherished memories and challenged by the foundations and legacy that they have left behind. Although we didn't have any funerals in 2018, we did have our share in 2019 as I officiated in five services of Witness to the Resurrection.

These included: **Faye Campbell, Ruth Younts, Levi Byrd, Jerry Perdue, and Don Boggs.** Something new I want to try in January is a reading of the Necrology. This will be a simple sharing of the name, followed by the tolling of a bell, and time of silent remembrance of the life and witness of that person. I am planning on including this in the January 5<sup>th</sup> service. I hope that this will be a meaningful addition to our worship and will become a tradition for us moving forward.

2019 has been an interesting year for me in many different ways. In January I began my service to Salem Presbytery, returning to serve on the Commission on Ministry, this time serving as Co-Moderator. It has been a year of learning in this new role, but gratifying as I see the connectional church

at work in a new way. I look forward to continuing in this role for the next couple of years, at least.

January also saw me participate in the annual conference of the Association of Presbyterian Church Educators (APCE) in Galveston, Texas. I have attending these conferences each year for some 20+ years and they are always soul-filling and a wonderful time of reconnecting with dear friends, making new ones, and seeking new ways to enhance my ministry.

It has been a privilege to serve in leadership positions with APCE over the years - some 16 years or so. The past few years I have served as conference photographer, but have been out of leadership positions. That changes this January as I will return to the Leadership Council, serving on the Governance Ministry Team. I am looking forward to working with colleagues to lift up the ministry of Christian Education in our church.

I am looking forward to finishing up a two-year commitment with the General Assembly's Special Committee to Study the Reformed Perspective of Christian Education in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. We have met periodically by video conference call, and met in Montreat a few months ago. We will have another face-to-face meeting in January, preparing our report and recommendations for the meeting of General Assembly in the summer of 2020.

So, life remains full and as we come to the end of another year, it is always gratifying to think back and celebrate the successes and find ways to be better in whatever we are doing.

As we now stand on the threshold of another new year, let us not try to have "perfect" 2020 vision, as that is probably not attainable. But let us instead seek to be faithful disciples of our Lord, righting wrongs were we see them, fighting against injustice and intolerance, and working in all we do to share the love of Christ with everyone we meet. 2020 will certainly be a memorable year if we all do that!

As always, I am grateful to be your pastor.

Grace & peace,



*May the Lord bless our coming year with spiritual growth, love for people, and many opportunities to spread the Gospel of Life.*

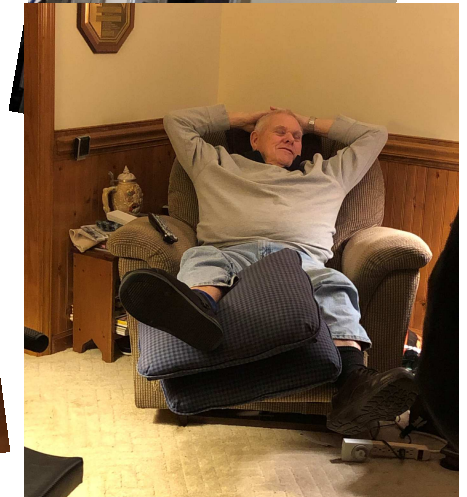
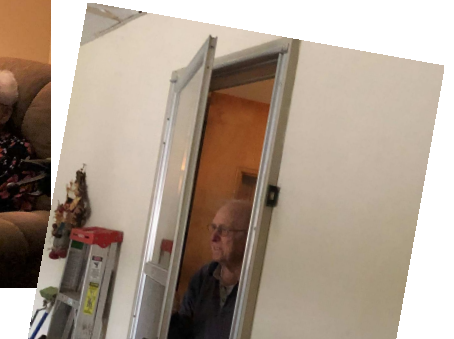
## JANUARY WORSHIP THEMES

- January 5th:**  
Ephesians 1:3-14  
*Take a Breath, Paul!*
- January 12th:**  
Isaiah 42:1-9  
*What's Our Why?*
- January 19th:**  
John 1:29-42  
*Jesus and Airbnb*
- January 26th:**  
Matthew 4:12-23  
*(Not) Walking in the Light*

***Men of the Church***  
***Oyster Stew***  
***Tuesday, January 21st***  
***6:00 pm***  
***Rec Building***



# Christmas Caroling 2019



**Your Church Staff:**

*Pastor: Rev. John W. Johnson*

*Director of Music: Christopher Bagley*

*Office Administrator: Joy Saleeby*

*Bookkeeper: Pam Hurt*

**Elders:**

*Bill Abplanalp*

*Chip Allen*

*Helen Brown*

*Randy Cousins*

*Karen Maxwell (Clerk of Session)*

*Tina Patterson*

*Nancy Purcell*

*Ben Russell*

*Tracey Troxler*

*Glenn Patterson (Treasurer)*



**The Session met for its regular monthly stated meeting on December 10<sup>th</sup> . Here are some highlights:**

- Heard a devotion from A. J. Campbell
- Heard the moving and heart-felt Faith Statements from our three elders-elect and sustained their examinations
- Set the date for Installation of Officers for January 12, 2020
- Heard joys and concerns of the congregation
- Received a treasurer's report from the treasurer
- Continued a discussion of issues around our cleaning service.
- Discussed increasing Chris' hours beginning the first of the year
- Chris reminded the Session of the Christmas music program on December 22<sup>nd</sup>.
- The Session was reminded of Christmas Eve service at 5:00 - including communion
- Session notebooks for 2020 were distributed with new Ministry Teams encouraged to look at responsibilities listed and make any necessary changes.

**NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY, JANUARY 14TH  
ELDERS OF THE MONTH FOR JANUARY  
NANCY PURCELL AND HELEN BROWN**

**A Special Thank You**

A very special thank you goes to our Elders who are rotating off the Session at the end of 2019. Please express your gratitude to **A. J. Campbell, Ron Osborne, and Jean Payne** who have served faithfully, with good humor, and with unyielding dedication to their calling as an elder. Thanks also to **Ron Osborne**, who is rotating off of his service as Church Treasurer, and **Rick Purcell** who is completing his duties as Clerk of Session.



The **Service of Ordination and Installation** of our newly elected elders will be held during morning worship on **Sunday, January 12, 2020**. Please be in prayer for these new officers, as well as the entire Session as a new year begins!



# January 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>29</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9:45 AM Sunday School</li> <li>11:00 AM Worship</li> </ul>	<p>30</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10:00 AM Circle #1</li> <li>7:00 PM Circle #4</li> </ul>	<p>31</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Year's Eve</li> <li>Church Office Closed</li> </ul>	<p>1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Year's Day</li> <li>Church Office Closed</li> </ul>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p>
<p>5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9:45 AM Sunday School</li> <li>11:00 AM Worship</li> </ul>	<p>6</p>	<p>7</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal</li> </ul>	<p>8</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal</li> </ul>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>11</p>
<p>12</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9:00 AM Installation of New Officers</li> <li>9:00 AM Baptism of the Lord</li> <li>9:45 AM Sunday School</li> <li>11:00 AM Worship</li> </ul>	<p>13</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7:00 PM Session Meeting</li> </ul>	<p>14</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal</li> </ul>	<p>15</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18</p>
<p>19</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9:45 AM Sunday School</li> <li>11:00 AM Worship</li> </ul>	<p>20</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>John Away - Special General Assembly</li> <li>Martin Luther King Jr. Day</li> <li>6:00 PM Men of the Church Oyster Stew</li> </ul>	<p>21</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal</li> </ul>	<p>22</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p>
<p>26</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9:45 AM Sunday School</li> <li>11:00 AM Worship</li> </ul>	<p>27</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>John Away - APCE Little Rock</li> </ul>	<p>28</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal</li> </ul>	<p>29</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p>	<p>1</p>



**FINANCIAL REPORT - END OF NOVEMBER 2019**

Year-to-date Actual Income	\$141,953.73
Year-to-date Actual Expenses	\$150,810.32
<b>YEAR-TO-DATE SURPLUS (DEFICIT)</b>	<b>-\$8,856.59</b>

You will notice the figures above reflect a deficit in our budget through the end of November. This was expected as the Session did approve a deficit budget at the beginning of the year. The good news is that the deficit is not as big as we had anticipated!

The last two months of the year are historically strong months for giving. Let us work together to see if we can end the year in positive numbers (as we did in 2018)!

Your generosity to Bethany enables us to continue the mission and ministry of this great church. We are grateful that we can build upon a strong foundation as we move into a bright tomorrow!



**UPDATE ON STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN:** First of all, thanks to all of you who have made your financial commitment through your pledges to support the mission and ministry here at Bethany for the year 2020. It is because of you that we can continue to thrive here at the “fork in the road!”

At the December meeting of the Session, our bookkeeper, Pam Hurt, submitted a report from the pledges that have been received so far. As of this writing, we have received a total anticipated income of \$157,393 for the coming year. This marks an increase of 0.077% over the past 12 months. It is true that the increase is not overwhelming! But with many churches facing financial hardships with giving decreasing, we are grateful for your response and that with your continued giving, our ministry can thrive.

If you have not had an opportunity to submit a pledge card, they can be obtained in the church office at any time, and returned to Pam Hurt.

Thanks to all again and let us all rejoice in this positive report! Thanks be to God!



## January Birthdays and Anniversaries!

### Happy Anniversary to:

Becky & David Eatmon January 6  
Nancy & Rick Purcell January 23  
Joyce & Bobby Peele January 24

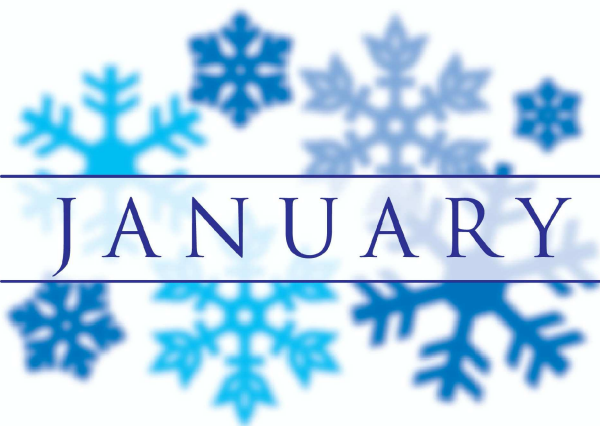
### Happy Birthday to:

Joy Saleeby January 6  
Sarah Osborne January 6  
Foy Bayliff January 7  
Bill Abplanalp January 10  
Mike Sutton January 17  
Mary Moore January 21  
A. J. Campbell January 23  
Norman Mize January 24



## Children & Youth Ministries

- **Sunday school for Youth and Children** / Meets on second floor of Education Building at 9:45 each Sunday
- During **Worship**, children are invited to sit in designated pews (front rows on north side) / there are activities provided
- Our **Nursery** is staffed by a professional, paid worker, as well as volunteers each Sunday.
- Watch your calendar and inbox for special activities for our young people throughout the year.



### Christian Education Opportunities

**The Fellowship Class** - Bible study class using our denomination's *Present Word* curriculum.

**Winter Bible Study** - watch for news about an upcoming winter study beginning soon!

### *Bethany Prays*

Bill Faucette  
Shirley Lane  
Ida Whitney  
Diane Miller  
Jack Cook  
Joan Richardson  
Teresa Wilborn  
Tiffany Tauchren  
John & Ann Sutton  
Peter Slater  
Joey Leake  
Shannon Russell  
Mary Moore

Rachel Poteat  
Jeremy Harden  
Mike Sutton  
Stewart Dillard  
Shelvia Russell  
Ruby Martin  
Katherine Turner  
Jean Berry  
Christy Lutterloh  
Eleanor Thompson  
Nancy Sutton  
Norma Proctor  
Randy Thompson

Barbara Cousins  
Pat Kennedy  
Donna Mitchell-Ayers  
Pete Campbell  
Alex Thomas  
Robert Sykes  
Frederica Beatty  
Glenn Thompson  
Foy Bayliff  
Ritchie Fishburne  
Janie Holt Clapp  
Ben Johnson  
Carol Brooks



**BETHANY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
1500 S. MAIN STREET  
GRAHAM, NC 27253  
336.227.4041**

**Email:**

***office@bethanypreschurch.org***

**Website:**

***www.bethanypreschurch.org***

**Facebook:**

***www.facebook.com/bethanypresbyterian***

**Twitter:**

***@bpresbyterian***

**bethany presbyterian** 

**love learn serve**