



John's Journal

I was not quite three-years old the last time Easter fell on April Fool's Day - April 1, 1956 - 62 years ago! It is quite a rare occurrence, only happening four times since 1900. And after this year, it won't happen again until

2029.

There is often a question of why Easter moves around and occurs at different times each year. Why can't it be set at the same time? Well, here's a little history for you.

We know from our study of the Bible, that Christ's death and resurrection occurred around the time of the Jewish Passover feast. The Passover was celebrated on the first full moon following the vernal equinox.

The Council of Nicaea in 325 AD, established that Easter would be held on the first Sunday after the first full moon occurring on or after the vernal equinox. From that time on, the date of Easter depended on the when the first full moon appeared after the beginning of spring (the vernal equinox).

Over the years there have been several attempts to change how the date of Easter is determined. One example comes from the United Kingdom, where the *Easter Act of 1928* was established to allow the Easter date to be fixed as the first Sunday after the second Saturday in April. This law was never implemented, although it still remains on the books.

Also, in 1997 the World Council of Churches proposed a reform of the Easter calculation to replace an equation-based method of calculating Easter with direct astronomical observation. This would have solved the Easter date difference between churches that observe the Gregorian calendar and those that observe the Julian calendar. This reform was set to be implemented in 2001, but has not yet been adopted.

So, that's a little history on why Easter is a different date each year. Obviously, this affects other observances such as Lent, Ash Wednesday, Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Pentecost, and Ascension Day.

All that being said, here we are, celebrating Easter on April 1st. Is this the biggest April Fool's prank ever?

"Where can we find Jesus? He's in the tomb. The body's not there. April Fools!"

But this was no April Fool's joke. This was the real deal. The body wasn't there because this Jesus, this Lord, this Savior, had been raised from the dead.

And that is why we celebrate! This season has always been the most meaningful to me. From the triumphant celebration of Palm Sunday, to the grief and sadness of Maundy Thursday, to the horror of Good Friday, and finally to the glory of Easter Sunday, this season brings meaning to everything else. The cross is empty. The tomb is empty. And empty is everything!

Several of us have been making our way through our Lenten Study Series, Adam Hamilton's *"24 Hours That Changed the World."* Through this series we have looked at the Last Supper, the Garden of Gethsemane, the trial before Pilate, the anger and mob mentality of the crowd, the Crucifixion, and finally the victory of Christ over death.

It has been difficult at times to consider the reality of what Christ had to endure over those 24 hours. But it has also been a powerful reminder that he did all of this for us - for me - for you - for everyone.

Through this study we have come to a clear understanding of Christ's determination to carry out the will of his father. He knew exactly what was going to happen, and although he could have stopped it at any point - he had the power to stop it - he carried through because he knew that it was his father's will and plan for the world.

And in that act - that selfless act of sacrifice - lies our salvation. In that act lies our hope. In that act we see the ultimate expression of God's love for us.

This is no joke, my friends. Easter may fall on April Fool's Day - a day famous for pranks and jokes and fun and games. But this April Fool's Day let us remember the price that Christ paid for us, and let us celebrate with joy and praise as we gather to worship.

Christ did it all for us - no fooling! Happy Easter!



**Join us in celebration of the Resurrection
Easter Sunday, April 1, 2018
Worship at 11:00 am**

**Annoucement of the Resurrection
Unveiling of the Cross
Music, Prayers, and Praise
Service ends on the side lawn with the
Flowering of the Cross (bring flowers)**



Bethany Presbyterian Church
Chancel Choir
presents Robert Ray's

GOSPEL MASS



Sunday, April 8, 2018 - 11:00 am

Bethany Presbyterian Church
1500 S. Main St., Graham, NC
www.bethanypreschurch.org



**We continue our
celebration of the resurrection on
Sunday, April 8, 2018
as our choir and musicians present
Robert Ray's**

Gospel Mass

**The service begins at 11:00 am
Invite a friend and join us for this
truly unique musical celebration!**



THE ANSWER TO

BAD RELIGION

IS NOT

NO RELIGION

A GUIDE TO

GOOD RELIGION FOR SEEKERS,

SKEPTICS, AND BELIEVERS

SUMMER SERMON SERIES

Mark your calendars NOW for this unique Summer Sermon Series: ***The Answer to Bad Religion is Not No Religion***. Using the resource by author Martin Thielen as a guide, John will lead us on this six-week journey, with the following themes:

Week 1: The Answer to Bad Religion Is Not No Religion, but Good Religion

Week 2: The Answer to Judgment is Love

Week 3: The Answer to Negativity is Hope

Week 4: The Answer to Arrogance is Openness

Week 5: The Answer to Division is Community

Week 6: The Answer to Passivity is Passion

Exact dates will be published later, but the series will begin in June, following the May celebrations of Pentecost and Trinity Sunday.

SPRING BOOK STUDY

There is a danger in the church of a post-Easter lull . . . after all the build-up to the celebration of the resurrection, there is a natural waning of enthusiasm and excitement. NOT THIS YEAR!!

Beginning on Tuesday, April 17th, we will begin a six-week (skipping the Tuesday of the May Session meeting) Spring Book Study, looking at Shane Claiborne's fascinating work, ***Jesus for President***. Here's an excerpt from the Introduction:

"This book is a project in renewing the imagination of the church in the United States and of those who would seek to know Jesus. We are seeing more and more that the church has fallen in love with the state and that this love affair is killing the church's imagination. The powerful benefits and temptations of running the world's largest superpower have bent the church's identity. Having power at its fingertips, the church often finds 'guiding the course of history' a more alluring goal than following the crucified Christ. Too often the patriotic values of pride and strength triumph over the spiritual virtues of humility, gentleness, and sacrificial love."

Over the six weeks, we will explore these topics:

Introduction: A Book to Provoke the Christian Political Imagination

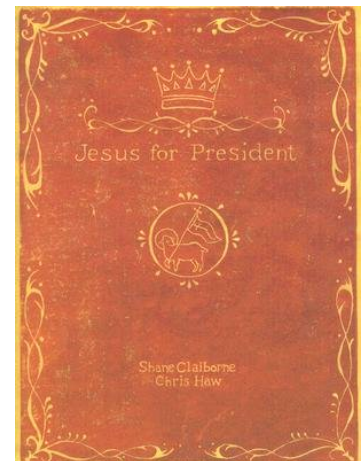
Section 1: Before There Were Kings and Presidents

Section 2: A New Kind of Commander-In-Chief

Section 3: When the Empire Got Baptized

Section 4: A Peculiar Party

Books are available on Amazon for approximately \$10. You may order your own or the church can order one for you. Sign-up forms will be available in the church office, or online on our website. Don't miss out on this fascinating and intriguing study.





APRIL 1ST - EASTER SUNDAY:

John 20:1-18

The April Fool

April 8th:

Special Musical Presentation

Gospel Mass

April 15th:

Acts 4:32-35

Facebook Church

April 22nd:

Acts 4:5-12

Augmented Reality

April 29th:

John 15:1-8

How to Be a Branch

audio sermons
listen anytime,
anywhere

There are three ways to listen to audio of our Sunday sermons:

On our website: www.bethanypreschurh.org

On our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/bethanypresbyterian

Or by going to: www.buzzsprout.com/9198

April 29, 2018

Casual Dress Sunday

Less formal worship

Lots of great music

Powerful message

Great Bethany fellowship!

5TH SUNDAY



April 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<div>1</div> <div>Easter Sunday</div> <div>9:45 AM Sunday School</div> <div>11:00 AM Worship</div>	<div>2</div> <div>7:00 PM Circle #4</div>	<div>3</div> <div>7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal</div>	<div>4</div>	<div>5</div>	<div>6</div>	<div>7</div>
<div>8</div> <div>Special Choir Pres.. for Cope Mass</div> <div>9:45 AM Sunday School</div> <div>11:00 AM Worship</div>	<div>9</div> <div>10:00 AM Circle #1</div> <div>7:00 PM Circle #3</div>	<div>10</div> <div>7:00 PM Session Meeting</div>	<div>11</div> <div>7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal</div>	<div>12</div>	<div>13</div>	<div>14</div>
<div>15</div> <div>9:45 AM Sunday School</div> <div>11:00 AM Worship</div>	<div>16</div>	<div>17</div> <div>7:00 PM Spring Book Study</div>	<div>18</div> <div>7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal</div>	<div>19</div> <div>6:00 PM Men of the Church Dinner Meeting</div>	<div>20</div>	<div>21</div>
<div>22</div> <div>9:45 AM Sunday School</div> <div>11:00 AM Worship</div>	<div>23</div>	<div>24</div> <div>7:00 PM Spring Book Study</div>	<div>25</div> <div>7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal</div>	<div>26</div>	<div>27</div>	<div>28</div>
<div>29</div> <div>9:45 AM Sunday School</div> <div>11:00 AM Worship</div>	<div>30</div>	<div>1</div> <div>7:00 PM Spring Book Study</div>	<div>2</div> <div>7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal</div>	<div>3</div>	<div>4</div>	<div>5</div>

Your Church Staff:

Pastor: Rev. John W. Johnson

Director of Music: Christopher Bagley

Office Administrator: Joy Saleeby

Bookkeeper: Pam Hurt

Elders:

Chip Allen

A. J. Campbell

Sandy Cook

Karen Maxwell

Ron Osborne (Treasurer)

Glenn Patterson

Jean Payne

Nancy Purcell

Brandon Troxler

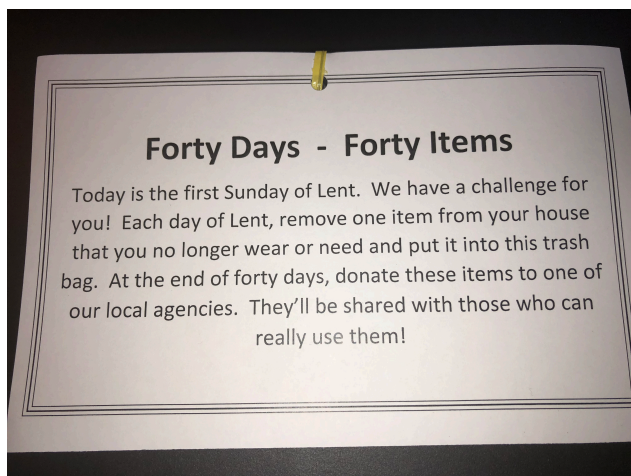
Rick Purcell (Clerk of Session)



The Session met for its regular monthly stated meeting on March 13th. Here are some highlights:

- Heard a devotion from Karen Maxwell
- Welcomed new members Linda and Bill Abplanalp by Letter of Transfer from Shiloh Presbyterian of Burlington
- Approved minutes from the February meeting
- Heard a financial report from Treasurer, Ron Osborne
- Were reminded about upcoming Salem Presbytery offering "Creating a Culture of Generosity" with a plea for several to join John in participating
- Were reminded of Maundy Thursday worship / will be joined by friends from Shiloh Presbyterian / we are invited to join them at their Good Friday service
- Were reminded of the Easter Egg Hunt on March 24th
- Heard a report from John about his participation in the NEXT Church Conference in Baltimore
- Heard Joys and Concerns and offered prayers.

**NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY, APRIL 10, 2018
ELDERS OF THE MONTH FOR APRIL
RON OSBORNE AND BRANDON TROXLER**



How's your 40 Days-Forty Items Lenten Challenge coming? Is your closet getting cleaned out? With Lent coming to an end on Easter Sunday, now is the time to get your items ready for donation to the charity of your choice.

We do want to create a bulletin board with pictures of all of our donations. You may send an electronic copy of your picture to the church office. Call Joy if you have any questions.

Thanks for your participation in this Lenten challenge, and we look forward to seeing you pictures!



WELCOME

New Members



Linda and Bill Abplanalp
1030 Glenview Ln.
Burlington, NC 27215
336.584.9236



Sandy and Ben Russell
4557 Sartin Rd.
Burlington, NC 27215
336.421.6237



Men of the Church Dinner Meeting



Thursday, April 19th - 6:00 pm
Recreation Building





REPORT THROUGH END OF FEBRUARY

Year-to-date Actual Income	\$29,032.71
Year-to-date Actual Expenses	\$26,075.84
YEAR-TO-DATE SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	\$2,956.87

Ways to support Bethany Presbyterian Church

1. Place cash or check in the offering plate on Sunday.
2. Mail in check to church office.
3. Use your bank's online bill pay to send a payment to the church.
4. Setup an Electronic Funds Transfer from your savings or checking account on our website or scan the QR code below.
5. Use your debit/credit card on our website or scan the QR code below.
6. Make a gift of stock or other appreciated securities. Contact the church office for more information.
7. Remember the church in your will and your estate plans.

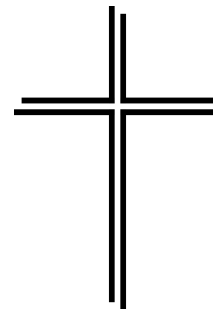
GENEROSITY:

GIVING • GOING • GROWING

The Session, at its February meeting, passed the 2018 budget which does include a considerable deficit. Even though we still remain in a positive situation at the end of February, the challenges remain. The Session will continue to monitor our financial health, and will re-visit the budget mid-year to determine necessary steps to insure our continued mission and ministry.

In the meantime, if you have the ability, and would like to amend your pledge, this can be done at any time and would be greatly appreciated. You can do this by either putting a note in Pam Hurt's box, or by calling her at the church (she is at the church on Tuesday afternoons).

Bethany has been blessed in the past with very generous donors. The challenge for 2018 is to continue their legacy as we move forward in faith, so that the mission and ministry of Bethany can continue.






- **Sunday School for Youth and Children** / Meets on the second floor of the Education Building at 9:45 each Sunday
- During **Worship**, children are invited to sit in designated pew (nearest the choir loft) / there are activities provided

- Our **Nursery** is staffed by a professional, paid worker, as well as volunteers each Sunday morning.
- Watch your calendar and inbox for special activities for our young people throughout the year.

find your place

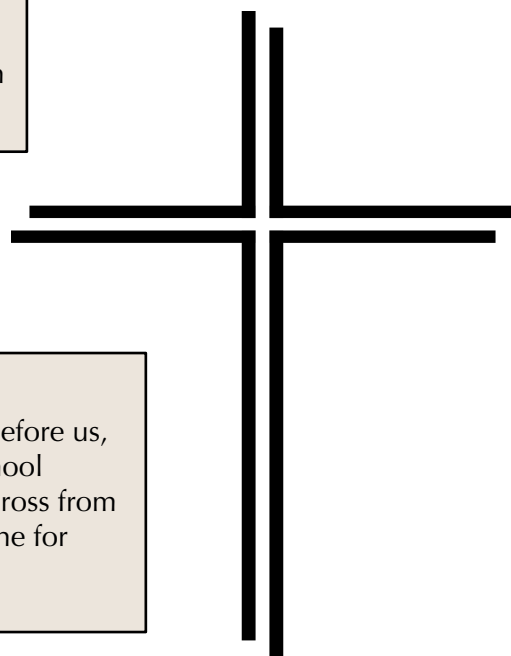
Adult Ministry



Christian Education Opportunities

The Fellowship Class - Bible study class using our denomination's Present Word Curriculum

The Young @ Heart Class - meets across from the church office / currently using the Uniform Lesson Series



Scholarships Available

Thanks to the generosity of faithful members of Bethany who have gone before us, we have a healthy Scholarship Fund to assist those pursuing post-high school education. Applications for scholarships are available in the mailboxes across from the church office. Call the church office for more information. The deadline for submitting an application is April 30th.



Presbyterian Women Circles April Schedule!

Circle #1: Monday, April 9th at 10:00 am

Circle #3: Monday, April 9th at 7:00 pm

Circle #4: Monday, April 2nd at 7:00 pm

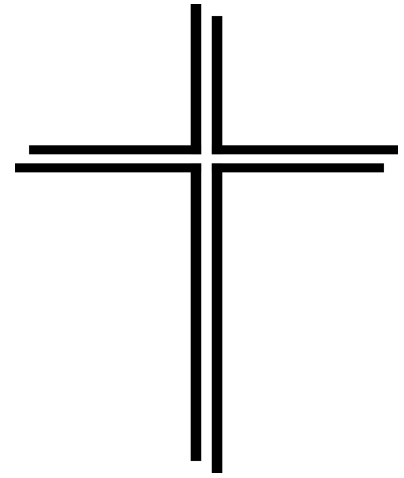
April Birthdays and Anniversaries!

Happy Anniversary to:

Judy & Darrell Homes	April 7
Joan and Jerry Perdue	April 21

Happy Birthday to:

Sandy Russell	April 1
Dusty Kimrey	April 8
Don Boggs	April 10
Tommy Lane	April 12
April Troxler	April 12
Gerald Donley	April 17
Abby Straughan	April 17
Eleanor Thompson	April 23
Maureen Kelly	April 24
Morgan Troxler	April 27



A Note About Notes!

Beginning with the March Session meeting, the Session began sending out cards to a segment of the congregation. Each month cards will be sent out, with everyone in the congregation receiving a card by the end of the year. These cards are intended to send a message to everyone that you are valued, your participation is appreciated, and to let you know that the Session is holding you especially in prayer during that particular meeting.

John will also be sending out personal notes each week, also with the goal of reaching every member of the congregation by the end of the year.

Both of these efforts are an attempt to keep in touch, to be in prayer for each other, and to build and strengthen our community.

Bethany Prays

Bill Faucette	Jack Cook	Shannon Russell
Faye Campbell	Polly and Dick Wilson	Shelvia Russell
Frances Nolan	Teresa Wilborn	Mary Moore
Layla Benoklen	Tiffany Tauchren	Barbara Cousins
Ida Whitney	Jean Berry	Pat Kennedy
Rachel Poteat	Christy Lutterloh	Donna Mitchell-Ayers
Jeremy Harden	Eleanor Thompson	Pete Campbell
Anne McDaniels	Nancy Sutton	Ruby Martin
Mike Sutton	Norma Proctor	Levi Byrd
Stewart Dillard	John and Ann Sutton	Ruth Younts
Ben Johnson	Peter Slater	Diane Bullis
Diane Miller	Joey Leake	



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GRAHAM, NC 27253
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office@bethanypreschurch.org

Website:

www.bethanypreschurch.org

Facebook:

www.facebook.com/bethanypresbyterian

Twitter:

@bpresbyterian

bethany presbyterian

love learn serve

