



John's Journal

First of all, let me say thank you to all of you who have made such kind comments about my sermons during this Stewardship Emphasis Season. Stewardship sermons are tricky, because talking about money is

sometimes uncomfortable. But, as I promised in the first sermon in the series, I have not mentioned money - yet! That will change at Stewardship Dedication Sunday on November 5th.

But it still doesn't make the subject comfortable, because it is such a personal issue - what we give to the church. Bethany has been blessed over the years with the generosity of so many people, that has enabled us to maintain a cushion to guard against emergencies and unforeseen circumstances.

In addition, we have been able to maintain a budget that supports our ministries, our benevolences, staff, and day-to-day operations of the church.

Our challenge is to grow our budget, so that we can not only grow our programs and ministries, but also grow our benevolent giving. As I mentioned on the first Sunday of our Stewardship season, the budget percentage in our SERVE Ministry area is 6%. Wouldn't it be great if we could be a tithing church - where we could grow that so that it would reflect 10% of our budget? Something to work for!

Stewardship Dedication Sunday is always a special time in the life of a church - when we bring forward our pledge cards to place on the table - a symbolic and literal expression of our commitment and dedication to our church and its ministry and mission.

Please continue to be in prayer, asking what God is calling you to do to support this ministry.

What a fabulous Sunday we had on October 29th as we baptized dear little Meritt Russell, and welcomed Erick and Salina into the Bethany family. I know you will enjoy getting to know them, as they have so much to offer Bethany. Erick works with his dad (our friend Ben Russell) in his facilities management business, so he knows a lot about a lot of stuff! And Salina is a very accomplished

photographer, and has offered her services when they are needed. As I mentioned on Sunday, Erick was in my youth group when I was at First, Burlington. I married Erick and Salina a few years ago, so it is thrilling that they have chosen Bethany as their church home and where they want to bring their daughter up in the faith.

As we enter this month where the idea of thanksgiving is so prevalent on TV, social media, advertising, and everywhere, we do indeed need to pause and remember all that we have to be thankful for.

We have had a fabulous year of celebration of our 125th anniversary. We have celebrated baptisms and new members. Our worship continues to stretch our minds and hearts. We have engaged in challenging and meaningful Bible and books studies. We have celebrated the seasons of the church year. We have seen our children and youth participate in VBS and Montreat. We have cared for the needs of others.

So much, so much, so much for which to be grateful! November indeed is here, and will whiz by like all the other months and we'll be staring Advent right in the face. One thing I am so grateful for is finding our new Advent series for this year. You can read about this on page 3.

I ended my sermon Sunday with a quote from the Rob Bell book that we are studying, *What is the Bible?* I share that again with you here:

"This is why the Bible has such enduring power. These stories insist in a thousand different ways that we don't have to settle, that tomorrow doesn't have to be a repeat of today, that we don't have to be enslaved to fear or despair - that we can change, move, heal, and we can leave behind whatever needs to be left behind so that we can step into a better future."

Grateful for our past and our history, let us not be afraid to step into a better future. Together, we can. Thanks be to God!

Grace & Peace,
John



STEWARDSHIP DEDICATION

S U N D A Y

NOVEMBER 5, 2017

Our worship will include the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and the Dedication of our 2018 pledges as worshippers bring their Pledge Cards and place them on the Communion Table as an act of commitment and dedication. Pledge cards have been mailed out. If you didn't receive one, they will be available on Sunday.





Advent is always seen as a time of preparation - preparation for the joyous good news of the birth of our Lord. This year we will be embarking on a somewhat different approach to Advent, with this unique series, "*Angels Among Us*." Here's a little introduction to the series:

The angels that appear in the story of Jesus' birth would have been very comfortable in our world of tweets and hashtags. Their messages were often short and to the point – their favorite line being #DoNotBeAfraid. As we look at the stories of these winged messengers to Zechariah, Mary, Joseph and the Shepherds and their reactions to them, we will contemplate what messages we can offer that will counteract a culture of fear and bring #morehope, #morepeace, #morejoy, and #morelove to the world.

Advent 1 - December 3rd: Luke 1:5-25, 57-80 - Make Ready a People: #morehope

Advent 2 - December 10th: Luke 1:26-56 - Nothing is Impossible: #morepeace

Advent 3 - December 17th: Matthew 1:18-25 - Do Not Be Afraid: #morejoy

Advent 4/Christmas Eve - December 24th: Luke 2:1-20 - This Will Be a Sign: #morelove (NOTE: Christmas Eve is on a Sunday this year. The Sunday morning service will be a special Christmas presentation by our choir, while our 5:00 Christmas Eve Service will be our traditional service of communion and candlelighting.)

Sunday after Christmas - December 31st: Matthew 2:1-23 - Get up and Go: #morelife



Planting Seeds

The following is an excerpt from the book *Putting the Amazing Back in Grace*, by Presbyterian author, Ann Weems.

My father's wheelbarrow
was filled with children.
Jostled and laughing,
we bumped along to the garden,
where we were taught to plant.
The first thing we learned
was to get on our knees.

The man who came to see my father
wasn't smiling when he said hello.
He and my father sat in the study
for more than an hour.
We waited in the wheelbarrow.

True to his promise, our father
took us to the garden, where we
got on our knees and planted seeds,
even though our father said
we might be living somewhere else
when the flowers bloomed.

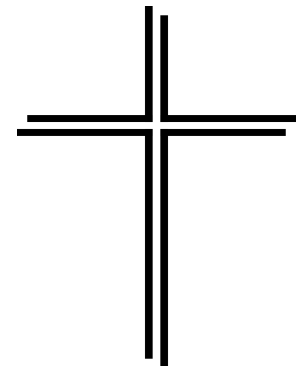
My father said there were people
in the church who didn't want him
to preach about peace
and racial equality
and higher wages for the poor.
These people told my father
to stick to the Bible.
Uh-oh, my brother said.
So I said it too.
Uh-oh.

Sometime later the voting began.
The Session voted to take
the matter to Presbytery.

The Presbytery voted that
my father should resign
for "the unity of the church."
The Synod voted that my father
should not resign because he was
a righteous man who had preached
the gospel of Jesus Christ.
The congregation voted "overwhelmingly"
that they wanted my father to stay.
"Overwhelmingly" meant most,
but not all.
My father said it was those few
that worried him.
Contentiousness had been planted, he said,
and it was growing like a weed.
Uh-oh.

My father resigned because he didn't want
to spend his ministry on quarrelsomeness
when there were so many matters
of justice and mercy in this world,
so many people who needed
the compassion of the Church.
Besides . . . he was tired of all the voting . . .
as though we in the Church could vote
people in and out of the Kingdom of God.

My father's wheelbarrow belongs to my brother.
He fills it with laughing children
and takes off for the garden
to teach them how to plant.
The first thing they learn is
to get on their knees.
The harvest belongs to God.





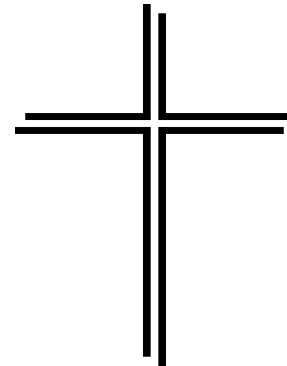
November 5th / Stewardship Dedication Sunday /
Sacrament of the Lord's Supper
1 Timothy 6:6-19
Why Church? Reason Four: Money Matters (Support)
November 12th:
Matthew 25:1-13
The Power of the Hidden Influencer
November 19th:
1 Thessalonians 5:1-11
Silicon Faith
November 26th:
Ephesians 1:15-23
The Holy Autocorrect

d365
devotionals 365 days a year

Check out the daily
devotions online at

www.365.org

Also posted daily to
Bethany's Facebook
page.



Graham High School Choir to Sing

We are thrilled to announce that the Graham High School Choir will make a return appearance at Bethany, singing in worship on Sunday, November 19th. We are grateful to director, Jennifer Wells for working to make this possible. We look forward to this special day!

audio sermons
listen anytime,
anywhere

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

On our website: www.bethanypreschurch.org

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

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



November 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>29</p> <p>5th Sunday @ Bethany</p> <p>Stewardship III</p> <p>9:00 AM 5th Sunday</p> <p>Breakfast</p> <p>9:45 AM Sunday School</p> <p>11:00 AM Worship / with Communion and Baptism</p>	<p>30</p> <p>Halloween</p>	<p>31</p>	<p>1</p> <p>6:00 PM "What is the Bible" Book Study</p> <p>7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p>
<p>5</p> <p>Daylight Saving Time ends</p> <p>Stewardship Dedication Sunday</p> <p>9:45 AM Sunday School</p> <p>11:00 AM Worship</p>	<p>6</p> <p>7:00 PM Circle #4</p>	<p>7</p> <p>7:00 PM "What is the Bible" Book Study</p>	<p>8</p> <p>7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>9</p> <p>Veterans Day observed</p>	<p>10</p> <p>Veterans Day</p>	<p>11</p>
<p>12</p> <p>9:45 AM Sunday School</p> <p>11:00 AM Worship</p>	<p>13</p> <p>10:00 AM Circle #1</p> <p>7:00 PM Circle #3</p>	<p>14</p> <p>7:00 PM Session Meeting</p>	<p>15</p> <p>7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18</p>
<p>19</p> <p>9:45 AM Sunday School</p> <p>11:00 AM Worship</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p> <p>7:00 PM "What is the Bible" Book Study</p>	<p>22</p> <p>7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Thanksgiving Day</p> <p>OFFICE CLOSED</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p>
<p>26</p> <p>9:45 AM Sunday School</p> <p>11:00 AM Worship</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p> <p>7:00 PM "What is the Bible" Book Study</p>	<p>29</p> <p>7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>30</p> <p>Session Retreat</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>2</p>

Your Church Staff:

Pastor: Rev. John W. Johnson
Director of Music: Christopher Bagley
Office Administrator: Joy Saleeby
Bookkeeper: Pam Hurt

Elders:

A. J. Campbell
Ron Kimrey
Karen Maxwell
Ron Osborne (Treasurer)
Glenn Patterson
Jean Payne
Nancy Purcell
Brandon Troxler

Rick Purcell (Clerk of Session)



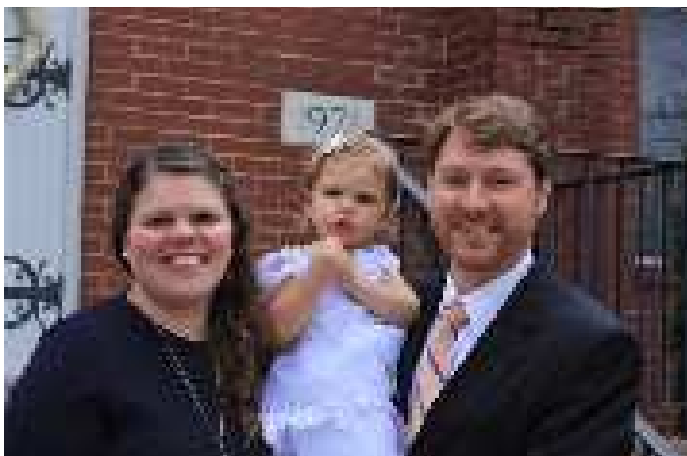
Please keep your Session in your prayers as they will gather for their annual training session and retreat on December 1 and 2. This year the retreat will be in town, meeting at the manse across the street on Friday evening and Saturday morning. Your prayers are appreciated as the Session prepares itself for 2018.



The Session met for its regular monthly stated meeting on October 10th. Here are some highlights:

- Heard a devotion from Nancy Purcell
- Continued discussion and book study of *Spiritual Leadership for Church Officers* by Joan Gray
- Discussed further the issue of selling rental property / agreed to proceed with sale / called for Congregational Meeting to approve concept of sale
- Heard a financial report from Treasurer, Ron Osborne
- Received a reminder of stewardship season and themes
- Heard plans for Officer Retreat in December / will meet at manse December 1-2
- Heard a report from ad hoc committee concerning rental of Rec Building and policies pertaining to that / approved new policies and guidelines, including new pricing structure
- Heard a report from Nominating Committee regarding nominees for Class of 2020 / called for Congregational Meeting to elect
- Were reminded of 5th Sunday on October 29th / breakfast / baptism / welcoming new members
- Heard report on plans for fall youth outing
- Heard staff report from Chris Bagley
- Heard staff report from John

NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2017
ELDERS OF THE MONTH FOR NOVEMBER
RON KIMREY AND GLENN PATTERSON



Welcome our newest members
Erick, Salina, and Meritt Russell

2167 Canterbury Drive
Burlington, NC 27215





As we begin to think about Thanksgiving and Christmas and all the holiday feasts that we will be attending, we must also think about those of our community who struggle to find their next meal. As a way of highlighting the plight of so many of our neighbors, we will be having a special Thanksgiving food drive. You are asked to bring non-perishable food items to church on Sunday, November 12th and 19th. Please take items out of bags, and place on or around the communion table in the sanctuary. These donations will be blessed as part of worship on November 19th and distributed to local agencies.

Thanks for participating in this important project.






Financial Reports

REPORT THROUGH END OF SEPTEMBER

Year-to-date Actual Income	\$123,678.55
Year-to-date Actual Expenses	\$131,719.40
YEAR-TO-DATE SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	\$8,040.85

"LIFE IS NOT MEASURED BY HOW MUCH YOU OWN"

— LUTHER KING, JR.



As you can see from the above figures, our deficit at the end of September is certainly a concern. Unfortunately, a good portion of this deficit is due to unpaid pledges. There is approximately a \$8,600 shortfall in projected income from membership pledges through the end of September. Thanks to good stewardship, our expenses are actually below budgeted figures for the same time period. Getting behind on your pledge is easy to do - we've all been there. The Session is committed to good, faithful stewardship and encourages all who may have fallen behind, to consider making every effort to keep pledges up to date. To those who have done so - many, many thanks! Let us all commit to erasing this deficit over the next couple of months so we can end 2017 in the black! You may mail in a check or drop it in the offering plate on Sunday, or pay by credit/debit card through our website.



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www.bethanypreschurch.org/online-giving



- 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

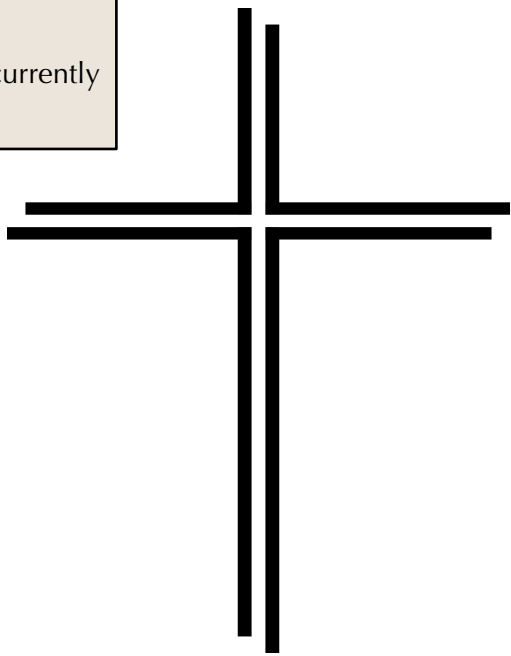


Christian Education Opportunities

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

The Seeker's Class - meets in the church office / currently using The Wired Word curriculum



Presbyterian Women Circles November Schedule!

Circle #1: Monday, November 13th at 10:00 am

Circle #3: Monday, November 13th at 7:00 pm

Circle #4: Monday, November 6th at 7:00 pm

November Birthdays and Anniversaries!

Happy Anniversary to:

Abby & Paul Straughan	November 11
Betty & Don Boggs	November 16
Barbara & Guy Sinclair	November 20

Happy Birthday to:

Randy Cousins	November 2
Reis Smith	November 7
Pat Kennedy	November 9
Susie Hunley	November 11
Paul Straughan	November 11
Joyce Mize	November 15
Guy Sinclair	November 16
Becky Eatmon	November 19
Nancy Sutton	November 21
Karen Maxwell	November 22
John Snyder	November 26
Brandon Troxler	November 28



Thank you to the generosity of those who have made Memorial Gifts in memory of Harold Baldwin:

Fellowship Class
 Bobby & Joyce Peele
 Ms. Carla Oakley
 Diane Bullis
 Jack & Shirley Austin, Jr.
 Pearl M. Howe
 Lisa F. Kirkpatrick
 Darrell & Judy Holmes
 Barbara Cousins
 Randy Cousins
 Mary E. Thompson
 Sara Sizemore



Bethany Prays

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



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

