



## **Rick's Reflections**

For the past several Sundays, our Gospel readings have been focused on Jesus' parables as recorded by Matthew. First, there was the parable of the sower, then the parable of the weeds and the wheat, and last week, a whole collection of parables: the mustard seed, the yeast, the pearl, the net. Jesus used these parables to teach his followers about his vision of the kingdom of God. He began each parable by saying, "The Kingdom of heaven is like..." and then proceeds to spin a short, simple tale, filled with memorable characters and striking action. Parables are a usually short fictitious story. Used to illustrate a moral attitude or a religious principle, parables sometimes read like a news story or a series of real events. Allegories are narratives similar to parables in providing an instructive example or lesson. Both of these literary styles may contain symbolic fictional figures, but more importantly, actions of truths or generalizations about the human existence. Listen to this story and see if it might be telling us something...

Do you remember as a kid the challenge of crossing a creek? Some may equate that challenge to a faith journey. We have learned by our upbringing, or Sunday School, or mentors, the way we should be, so we have the 'other side' of the creek in sight. We hop from rock to slippery rock and try to stay dry. Once we find ourselves on a stable rock, the question is, should we take the chance and jump to the next rock? Maybe we need to go sideways to get in a better

position for the next leap. But that doesn't seem right. "We need to be moving forward" not sideways, or even a bit backward. Perhaps that would give us a 'more advantageous' jump to the next rock to continue the forward progress. What if the next rock is slippery? Maybe it's not well balanced and will tip over once we land on it. That's where faith comes in. Listen to the guiding voice. Nothing in our Christian Education says that following the way of Jesus would be easy. Our faith journey does not have to be a straight line, more often than not, it is a zig-zag course, like crossing the creek. We may have gotten our feet wet a few times or made a splash or two, but with God's guidance and assistance, we have always been able to climb out, shake the water out of our eyes, and continue looking for another rock, or another opportunity to continue the journey.

We are living in a time of change, concern, fear, disillusionment, anxiety, uncertainty, uneasiness and any other adjective you want to use to describe our summer. There is the slippery rock of the pandemic and should we worship together, or not. There is changing course as we figure out new ways to do 'church'. There is the unbalanced rock of racial tension that can tip and throw everyone for a spill. In fact, it seems that where ever you look, the footing is unsure. That's where, once again, faith comes in. We need to listen to God's guiding voice. Sooner or later, we might hear it say, "Oh, come on, Just Jump!"

Shalom

*Rick*

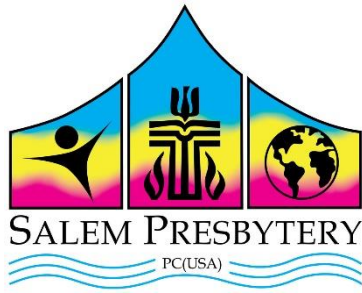


What did John do on his sabbatical?? Well, in addition to rest and relaxation, there was a focus of study and exploration – the Digital Church. Our current situation with having to do virtual church and Zoom everything, this topic is even more important in seeing how the church continues to be the church in a world that is different. John hopes to share some of his findings through a sermon and study series beginning on September 13<sup>th</sup>. This series will be based on the book *Digital Disciple: Real Christianity in a Virtual World* by Adam Thomas. Although the book is a few years old, we can still glean much insight from its chapters, and it will surely lead to some lively conversation.

This will be a six-week series, meeting on Sunday mornings during the Sunday school hour (assuming we are back in the building by that time). Each Sunday's discussion will be centered around the focus of worship on that morning as well. If we are not back in church by that time, it will be a study via Zoom.

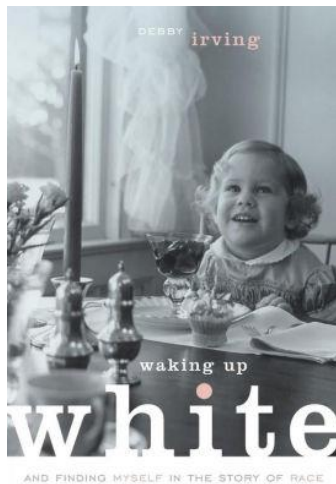
The book is available on Amazon. If you wish to participate in the study, you can order at your leisure, or let Joy know and she can order for you. There will be more detailed information in the September newsletter.

AUGUST



The summer of 2020 will not only be remembered for COVID-19 and all the ramifications of a pandemic on our lives, but also one of great transition for our presbytery. The major change this summer has been the sale of the presbytery office in Clemmons. The sale or lease of the property was one of the recommendations of the Dream Team in the restructuring of the presbytery, as a great cost-saving measure. The Implementation Team reported to the Council, which approved the sale of the property, with the closing being July 31<sup>st</sup>. The staff has already moved out of the offices. Our Transitional General Presbyter and the Office Administrator (Steve and Laurie Scott) are working out of their home. The Financial Administrator Renee Carter, and Administrative Assistant Peggy Trenchard have set up offices in Clemmons Presbyterian Church.

Another transition that will take place will be the retirement of Rev. Steve Scott, our Transitional General Presbyter. He will remain through the end of his contract which is at the end of August. We wish Steve well as he enters this new phase of his ministry. Continue to keep our presbytery and staff in your prayers as we make our way, not only through a pandemic, but also through major changes within the presbytery itself. We continue to pray for God's guidance in leading us to new and exciting opportunities.



## Let's Talk About Race

The issue of race relations in our country goes back decades and even centuries. The summer of 2020, which began with the killing of George Floyd on Memorial Day, has brought these issues to the front burner in very real and vivid ways. As a church, we cannot avoid what's going on in the world around us and are called to respond as Christians during difficult times.

As we consider our response, we would like to offer a **Fall Book Study**, looking at Debby Irving's book ***Waking Up White and Finding Myself in the Story of Race***. This book study is tentatively scheduled to take place on Thursday evenings (either in person or virtually, depending on our situation at that time).

We begin our discussion with the understanding that we don't have all the answers, but with the understanding as well that to ignore what is happening in the world around us is to abdicate our responsibilities as citizens of the world and followers of Jesus Christ. Please consider joining us for this important discussion. The book is available on Amazon. There will be more details in the September newsletter.

One of the challenges that we face during this unprecedented time of "virtual services" is the inclusion of music as a component of the ministry shared by the congregation. Whether vocal or instrumental, solo, small ensemble or congregational singing, we recognize the importance of this ministry.

Please take time to read the following excerpts from the article taken from one of our denominational communication resources in May. If you have any thoughts or suggestions about music during our services or if you have any interest in participating, feel free to share your ideas with me.

Submitted by Christopher A. Bagley, Director of Music

## Church music and COVID-19

Presbyterian Mission

May 22, 2020

**Some tips on providing and sharing music during and after the pandemic**

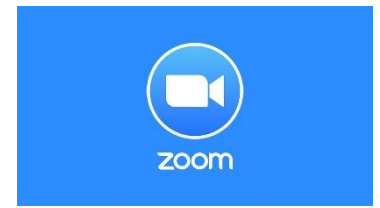
*by Presbyterian Association of Musicians | Special to Presbyterian News Service*



LOUISVILLE — *These ideas are offered for congregations as they navigate the return to public worship and seek to bridge online and in-person gatherings. These suggestions may need to be adapted for a particular context of ministry. They should be undertaken only insofar as local resources and current conditions allow.*

- Provide hymnals for each household or invite people to procure their own. Make use of these hymnals in online worship and encourage members to employ them for personal study, devotion, prayer, or in music making.
- Recruit choir members and other singers in the congregation to call or video chat other members and sing a favorite hymn for them, or record in advance and send by email. This may serve as an entrée for pastoral care, outreach or fellowship.
- When congregational singing is not possible, worshipers may read and pray the words of hymns in silence while they are interpreted on the organ, piano, or other instrument(s).
- Identify musicians who live in the same family or household and have been sheltering in place together and invite these persons to contribute collaborative video or audio recordings for online worship. When it is safe to gather outdoors or at a distance in the sanctuary, these persons may also present musical offerings in public worship.
- Select a hymn or song for the week, perhaps based on the biblical readings used in public worship or a season in the Christian year. Invite members to study, pray, sing, illustrate, or even memorize the selected hymn each week.
- Include meditations on hymn texts in sermons, educational offerings, church newsletters, social media posts and other avenues for formation and communication. Hymn texts are a valuable resource for theological reflection because they are often so memorable, evocative, concise and accessible in their articulation of the faith.
- Do what you can with what you have — and trust in God's grace. Try not to be anxious about keeping up with the most technologically adventurous or proficient congregations on the internet. Just glorify and enjoy God, worshiping and making music to the best of your ability at this time. Perhaps it was for times such as these that the psalmist exhorted us: "Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the Earth" (Psalm 100:1)

## **UPDATED INSTRUCTIONS!**



The past month or so has had us gathering to worship “virtually” using the Zoom video conferencing platform. It has been gratifying to see more and more of you joining us on Sunday mornings, but there were others who had some issues connecting. Hopefully these instructions can help get more of us together this Sunday.

If you are using a laptop or desktop computer, you can connect to a Zoom meeting on your web browser (Chrome, Safari, etc.). If you connect on a smartphone or tablet, you can also connect via a web browser, but it is easier to download the Zoom app from your App Store (it is free).

When your weekly e-newsletter is sent on Thursday or Friday morning, it will include a link to this Sunday’s service. **DON’T CLICK ON THE LINK UNTIL YOU ARE READY TO CONNECT ON SUNDAY MORNING!**

When you click on the link, it will send you either to your web browser or the Zoom app. If you get a pop-up question about permission to connect, just say yes.

You will first be sent to a “waiting room” for a brief time, until one of the hosts of the meeting will let you in. This is a security feature that we have added to help protect us from having folks that are up to no good getting in the meeting.

Once you are in the meeting, make sure that your video is on. Go to the bottom left corner of your screen (on a computer; tap the screen on a tablet or phone) and make sure there’s not a red line through the video camera icon.

If you are on a laptop or desktop, it’s better if you enter full screen mode.

You can also connect from a cell phone or land line. The phone-in number with the meeting ID number will be included in the email with the link.

One important note: if you phone in on a land line, there is no way to mute you, so all audio from your connection will be heard by everyone. Keep that in mind!

If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to either email or text me. (Call the church if you don't have my number - I don’t want to put my phone # out for scammers to grab it!)

Another option for joining the service will be on Facebook Live - hopefully! There is a feature of Zoom which allows direct streaming from Zoom to Facebook live. We actually got this to work on April 26<sup>th</sup>, so hopefully the bugs have been ironed out and there will be this option as well.

If you want to learn more about Zoom, you can go to their website ([www.zoom.us](http://www.zoom.us)) where there are lots of tutorials, or just go to YouTube and search for Zoom tutorials.

And we remember that the church is not closed. The building is, but the people are the church and we will continue to gather in this way. It is such a wonderful thing to see everyone’s faces appear on my screen every Sunday. Join us!

JWJ

**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 June 9th via Zoom. Here are some highlights:**

- Heard a devotion from Bill Abplanalp
- Heard joys and concerns of the congregation
- Received a treasurer’s report from Glenn Patterson
- Helen Brown brought up suggestion made by Joy Saleeby for elders to make contact with all members. Call list will be sent to elders by Helen.
- Landscaping of church properties has been completed. Thanks to all in congregation who assisted with recent landscaping projects.
- Discussed our current worship realities and the positive responses we’ve had.

**NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY, AUGUST 11th**

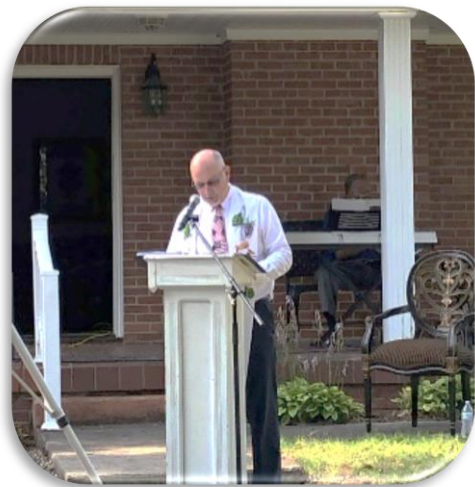
**ELDERS OF THE MONTH FOR AUGUST  
TINA PATTERSON AND BEN RUSSELL**



**Missed a Sunday? Check out our sermons online!**  
There are three ways to listen to audio of our Sunday sermons:

- On our website: [www.bethanypreschurch.org](http://www.bethanypreschurch.org)
- On our Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/bethanypresbyterian](http://www.facebook.com/bethanypresbyterian)
- Or by going to: [www.buzzsprout.com/9198](http://www.buzzsprout.com/9198)





# Bethany Gathers Outside





Dear Bethany Presbyterian,  
Thank you so much for scholarship that I was awarded. It will be put to good use at Elon! I am very grateful that I have grown up in such a loving church and have had so much support from you all throughout my education.  
Love,  
Morgan Troxler

Bethany Presbyterian,  
Thank-you so much for the extremely generous scholarship for next school year. No doubt it will help out tremendously. I am so lucky to have a church family who has been so supportive of me for 20 years now. The generosity Katie and Lexie Glenn have shown to so many students in the church is truly insurmountable. I hope everyone is staying well during the craziness of our current situation and once again, thank-you so much.  
With Love,  
Seth Smith

Dear Bethany Church Family,  
Thank you very much for awarding me this scholarship. Although my senior year didn't quite end the way I anticipated, I'm looking forward to good things at Elon. I'm beyond grateful to have such a supportive church family.  
Love,  
April Troxler

Thank You!  
The scholarship money will help me attend NC State University and help my family afford it!  
Haidyn Warren

Dear Bethany Presbyterian Scholarship Committee,  
Thank you for taking time to read and acknowledge my application. The scholarship you have awarded me greatly helped in purchasing textbooks for my two summer classes. I have received a 4.0 GPA for my summer courses. As times are uncertain, we are reassured by the love of Jesus. While it is difficult to keep a positive outlook on the world and the people within it, we know as Christians that we are all brothers and sisters within Christ. Thank you again for the consideration, and generosity.  
Best Regards,  
Alex Bullis





**GIVE+**Church

**Giving to your church is as easy as 1-2-3**

Go to the App Store or Google Play and search for "GivePlus Church" to download for FREE.

Due to an increase in fees, we are transitioning to a new platform for online giving to the church. We believe this option will be easier to use, decrease fees that the church pays, and will increase our giving. This giving platform is sponsored by and run through The Presbyterian Foundation.

For those who are currently using our online giving on our website, you may continue to use that for the next little bit, but it will be disabled soon. Pam will be contacting those who are using it, to notify them of this action. The link to the new website is already on the home page of the website.

One added feature - also free - is the option of using an app on your smartphone. Just to go your app store and search for "GivePlus Church" and download it for free. You can then search for Bethany and follow the instructions.

There are two documents that you will find useful in answering your questions about this new electronic giving portal. They are on our website here: <http://www.bethanypreschurch.org/online-giving-faq.html>

In this time of upheaval in our normal routines, it is important to remember that the work of the church continues as we continue to live up to our commitments. We are confident that this new platform for electronic giving will be a great enhancement to our stewardship efforts at Bethany.

Please make every effort to keep your pledge up-to-date, either giving by check or using this convenient method of giving online - securely and safely.



**FINANCIAL REPORT - END OF June 30, 2020**

|  |                     |
|--|---------------------|
| Year-to-date Actual Income                       | \$68,761.29         |
| Year-to-date Actual Expenses                     | \$82,139.80         |
| <b>YEAR-TO-DATE BUDGET SURPLUS<br/>(DEFICIT)</b> | <b>-\$13,378.51</b> |

**Scan this QR code for direct access to our new Online Giving Platform**



## August Birthdays and Anniversaries!

### Happy Anniversary to:

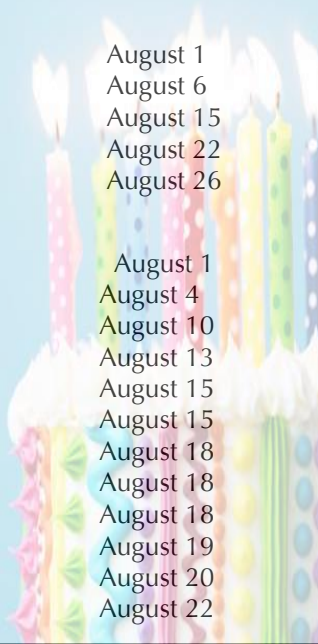
Debbie & John Johnson  
Tina & Glenn Patterson  
Linda & Bill Abplanalp  
Nancy & Mike Sutton  
Kasey & Brent Dampier

August 1  
August 6  
August 15  
August 22  
August 26

### Happy Birthday to:

Ruby Martin  
Jean Payne  
Darrell Holmes  
Zach Wagner  
Millie Fuller  
Emerson Davis  
Donna Mitchell-Ayers  
Gina Wagner  
Robert Cousins  
Shelvia Russell  
Sue Kimrey  
Betty Boggs

August 1  
August 4  
August 10  
August 13  
August 15  
August 15  
August 18  
August 18  
August 18  
August 19  
August 20  
August 22



## 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



## Find your place!

### ADULT MINISTRIES

#### Christian Education Opportunities

**The Fellowship Class** - Bible study class using our denomination's *Present Word* curriculum. The class will resume when we return to our normal schedules.

## Bethany Prays

Christopher Bagley  
Frederica Beatty  
Jean Berry  
Jack Cook  
Bill Faucette  
Christy Lutterloh  
Norma Proctor  
Joan Richardson  
Nancy Sutton  
Tiffany Tauchren  
Eleanor Thompson  
Randy Thompson

Carol Brooks  
Pat Kennedy  
Mary Moore  
Peter Slater  
Diane Miller  
Barbara Cousins  
Ben Johnson  
Joey Leake  
Pete Campbell  
Shannon Russell  
Glenn Thompson  
Alex Thomas

Janie Holt Clapp  
Stewart Dillard  
Richie Fishburne  
Jeremy Harden  
Shirley Lane  
Ruby Martin  
Anne McDaniels  
Shelvia Russell  
John & Ann Sutton  
Mike Sutton  
Katherine Turner  
Ida Whitney



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Facebook:

[www.facebook.com/bethanypresbyterian](http://www.facebook.com/bethanypresbyterian)

Twitter:

[@bpresbyterian](https://twitter.com/bpresbyterian)

bethany presbyterian   
love learn serve