

THE Tower

JULY 2023

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LOVING YOUR NEIGHBOR

July, the month of parades, picnics and fireworks. The month where these events may have you reflecting on events of almost 250 years ago that set into motion these happenings. Events that laid the foundation of the most prosperous country in modern history. Have you ever considered the significance of historical events and what comes of them, whether they lead to great countries or fade into the dustbin of minor happenings? Many times either path could have been the fate of George Washington and the Continental Army which were often near defeat or for one reason or another were going to be unable to continue the struggle for independence.

In the Bethel Bible study of the book of Acts, I find myself considering the similarities of the founding of the United States and the founding of the early Church. In addition to the privations and death and injury risked by those that served in the Continental Army in the fight for independence, the founders that signed their names to the Declaration of Independence were also in danger of being caught and punished. As Benjamin Frank-

lin famously put it, *"We must, indeed, all hang together or, most assuredly, we shall all hang separately"*.

And as the book of Acts documents in the establishment of the early church there were persecutions and executions, most famously the stoning death of Stephen, approved and supervised by the Pharisee Saul. After Saul's conversion on the Damascus Road, he himself suffers numerous beatings and risk of death in his travels to evangelize and encourage the young Christian church then known as The Way.

They seized Paul and dragged him out of the temple, and at once the gates were shut. And as they were seeking to kill him, word came to the tribune of the cohort that all Jerusalem was in confusion. He at once took soldiers and centurions and ran down to them. And when they saw the tribune and the soldiers, they stopped beating Paul.
ACTS 21:31-32

AS THIS ELDER SEES IT

But the difference in these two historical events is that the experiment in self-governance in North America had a real chance of failure, where Christ's new church would not, and could not, have failed.

As the previous Bible study, 52 Weeks With Jesus, study wrapped up everyone shared a lesson that had been impactful for them. There were two different lessons on loving your neighbor and that was my takeaway as I found my commute over Afton Mountain tests this daily with loving my commuting neighbors.

"The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." MARK 12:31

The study of Acts has taken a deep dive into the early Church and its people and has expanded the bigger picture of it in ways that I had not grasped from just pieces of scripture on Sunday or even reading through it

myself. It has given me new respect for the apostle Paul, that he preached from the Old Testament alone as he was laying the groundwork for the New Testament, that even though he had not walked with Jesus, his faith and ministry rivaled the disciples who had.

But rather than any one lesson standing out from the study of Acts, I am encouraged to grow spiritually in discipleship and equipped with increased knowledge and understanding to reach out more with the message of Christ's salvation

And the Lord said to Paul one night in a vision, "Do not be afraid, but go on speaking and do not be silent, for I am with you, and no one will attack you to harm you, for I have many in this city who are my people." Acts 18:9-10

And if the message is not accepted, Paul has shown that I can have a clear conscience as long as I have tried. I can shake out my garments and consider myself innocent.

When Silas and Timothy arrived from Macedonia, Paul was occupied with the word, testifying to the Jews that the Christ was Jesus. And when they opposed and reviled him, he shook out his garments and said to them, "Your blood be on your own heads! I am innocent. Acts 18:5-6

Yours in Christ,
Tim Turner, Elder

ARMOR UP

EPHESIANS 6:10-17

YOUTH ONE DAY
SUMMER CAMP
SUNDAY, JULY 16

RIGHT AFTER CHURCH

LEAVE THE KIDDOS
OR STAY WITH THEM IF YOU WANT

WE'LL HAVE A LESSON,
CRAFTS, GAMES,
WATER GUNS & SNACKS
FUN - FUN - FUN !!

July BIRTHDAYS

Bruce Lamond, IV	-----	7
Cindy Almarode	-----	10
Linda Lamond	-----	11
Betty Schooley	-----	12
Phyllis Cash	-----	15
Denise (Pilson) Roop	---	17
Danny Goodson	-----	12
Isabelle Leonard	-----	28

July ANNIVERSARIES

Dale & Kay Thompson	-----	July 7, 1967
David & Betty Schooley	-----	July 8, 1967
Harry & Robin Moffett	-----	July 10, 1998
Puggie & Carol Sprouse	-----	July 16, 1968
James & Cynthia Williams	-----	July 17, 1982
John & Stephanie Davis	-----	July 30, 1988
Bruce & Linda Lamond, Jr.	-----	July 30, 1988

Anniversary Acknowledgment:

July 7, 1967 would also have been Frank & Brenda Shifflett's anniversary. Frank, we are thinking of you and remembering you and your family in our prayers, this first year without your beloved Brenda.

Prayer REQUESTS OR CHANGES

If you have any changes, additions or updates to the Prayer List please contact:

Tammy Barbour @ 540-471-0450 or
Ellen Fitzgerald @ 540-292-2914

To keep the Prayer List as up to date as possible, names will be removed from the list after eight weeks unless Tammy, Ellen or the Office has been notified otherwise.

BETHEL SESSION MEETING JUNE 25, 2023

Notes of Importance for the Congregation

The Bethel Session met, Sunday, June 25, 2023, at the Pavilion in the Woods. A quorum was present with 9 Elders in attendance. The meeting was moderated by Derek Almarode.

General Business:

The meeting was opened with prayer. The Session discussed several matters of business.

- Discussed and approved having 1 service in July, August and September inside so that we can enjoy our beautiful sanctuary and AC. The dates will be July 9, August 6 and September 3.
- Communion will be inside Sunday, July 9, 2023.
- There will be a one day Youth Summer Bible Camp immediately after church on July 16.
- Well wishes for a safe trip to Robert Olson's mission trip to Baja July 7-17
- Worship will go back inside beginning October 1.
- Meeting was closed with Prayer by Derek Almarode. Thanks to him for his service!



Respectfully,
David Schooley
Elder David Schooley
Clerk of Session

Middlebrook

PARADE





Middlebrook PARADE



It is Summertime at Bethel, and what a season we have planned. Come one, come all. We are very pleased to announce Summer Church! Worship is every Sunday morning at the Chapel weather permitting. Remember, temperature, isn't inclement weather. Just around the corner in July we will be sharing traditional communion services with all who come to the Lord's table. Lots of activities planned for this summer so please don't miss out. As always, our doors are open, and we welcome all!

Communion Sunday July 9, 2023

Bible Study - In Acts 2 we learn that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit onto the disciples of Jesus was empowering. As his disciples today, our words and actions also bear witness to Jesus, and the Holy Spirit touches hopeless, hungry, and hurting hearts through us! During this season God wants to grow His Church by deepening our walk with Christ, and to grow His Church by receiving those who seek to know God through Christ. Friends, the image of our Heavenly Father is within us and we are pleased to have others see God in us.

Independence Day - For the July 4th weekend we will honor our country with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, and by singing, "God Bless America" at our service on Sunday July 2, 2023. Also we will have a parade float again this year at Gypsy Hill. Come join us and help us praise God for His work in us and in our country. Friends, we are valued because we are God's creation, knowing this we have purpose and reason to respect and care for others, just as God cares for us. God wants to use you and me to reveal Himself to someone who needs His grace, forgiveness, and hope of everlasting life. No better time than now to bring someone to the Lord. Galatians 5:1 So, Christ has truly set us free. Now make sure that you stay free, and don't get tied up again in slavery to the law.

Summer Bible Camp - Bethel will again be hosting a one-day Summer Bible Camp. We had great success with our event last year and so we have decided to kick it off again. Details will be forthcoming in the weekly bulletins.

It is an honor to serve as your shepherd, we know that time always brings about change. I am so thankful for the positive changes here at Bethel, and for all the hard work of the officers and members. All of you are simply top-notch folks. To our community and our friends, I invite each of you to visit

with us and see the great things that we are doing here. We would love to hear from you and see you anytime. Enjoy your summer, be safe and God's blessings to you.

Message
FROM THE PULPIT

In Christ, Derek

¹³ You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. ¹⁴ For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself."

GALATIANS 5:13-14

SERVING CHRIST AT BETHEL WILL BENEFIT YOU!!

Each of us have our own individual needs and reasons for participating in church life. Even though we may not know you personally, we believe that God knows you and loves you. He can direct your life as you draw nearer to Him. One way to grow closer to Him is attending Bethel.

Here are a few benefits of worshipping with us:

- Maybe you're struggling with a specific question or need some direction in your life. Maybe you just need to feel God's love and know that He is here. We assure you that God is here and we promise that you can find him here as you experience His presence.
- Jesus commanded, "This is my body broken for you, take, eat, do this in remembrance of me". Here at Bethel, we take part in the Lords table and so can you.
- What we learn at church gives us guidance on how to follow God, improves our spirituality, and live better lives. You can be uplifted here at Bethel by fellow believers and by the opportunity to serve and worship our Savior.
- Church is a community where we can socialize and support each other. You can make friends, feel a sense of belonging, and build a support network that you can rely on. Here at Bethel we are family, welcome home!
- Bethel is home to many! We worship Christ daily in our actions and our deeds. Christ leads us to find those lost to His word. We believe we are called to serve Him in all that we do. Bethel and the family here serve as the foundation to our spiritual life. In Hebrews 10:24-25 we learn the following, "And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and do good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near."



ELDERS

Class of 2023

BOB OLSON
DAVE SCHOOLEY
TIM TURNER

Class of 2024

TAMMY BARBOUR
BRIAN LEE
DALE THOMPSON
JILL WEBB

Class of 2025

CINDY ALMARODE
DEREK ALMARODE
WADE CASH
PENNY LEE

Clerk of Session

DAVE SCHOOLEY

DEACONS

Class of 2023

ELLEN FITZGERALD
CHARLIE JOHNSON

Class of 2024

MITCH LATHROP
D.W. MILLER

Class of 2025

HARLEIGH LEE
KATIE MCELVEEN

TRUSTEES

Class of 2023

BILL BRUBECK
JAMES WILLIAMS

Class of 2024

GUY D. BROOKS

Class of 2025

CHARLIE JOHNSON
BILLY WADE

CHURCH STAFF

JoAnn Pendley

PIANIST, ORGANIST
BELL CHOIR AND CHOIR

Lois Stogdale

DISBURSING TREASURER

Kay Thompson

RECEIVING TREASURER

John & Donna Bush

CUSTODIANS

Carol & Puggie Sprouse

CUSTODIANS



UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

INCLUDING OUR COMMUNITY
FAMILY OF FAITH

Tuesday, July 4th - Happy Birthday America Parade

AT GYPSY HILL PARK

RIDE ON THE FLOAT OR WALK ALONGSIDE!!

Sunday, July 9th - 11:00

COMMUNION - WORSHIP INSIDE

LEMONADE ON THE LAWN AFTER WORSHIP

Sunday, July 16th - Summer Bible Camp

IMMEDIATELY AFTER WORSHIP

Saturday, July 22nd

DINNER AND A MOVIE

BY THE MEN OF THE CHURCH

Sunday, August 6th

WORSHIP INSIDE

Sunday, August 27th - Homecoming

Sunday, September 3rd

WORSHIP INSIDE

Sunday, September 24th -

Last Sunday in Outside Worship

Sunday, October 1st

Back to Inside Worship

Every Thursday - 6:30

BIBLE STUDY AT BETHEL

30 LESSON STUDY ON THE BOOK OF ACTS

YOUTH COMMITTEE

Meets the last Sunday
of each month.

SECURITY COMMITTEE

Meets the 3rd Sunday
of each month.

welcome
HOME