



Bethesda Presbyterian Church | Aberdeen, NC | September 2024

A MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR

Dear members and friends of Bethesda Presbyterian,
I pray you are well.

It may sound unbelievable, but this coming month of September marks the beginning of my third year at Bethesda. How time flies. I can remember it like it was yesterday, sitting in the Jesse Wimberly room trying to convince the Pastoral Nominating Committee to commit to keeping me for more than a year!

All this draws my attention back to a lectionary passage we had a few weeks ago. Ephesians 5:15-16 says, “Be careful, then, how you live, not as unwise people but as wise, making the most of the time, because the days are evil. So do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.”

Make the most of the time, the Apostle says. We might be tempted here to think he is saying something like Carpe Diem, “You only live once...” or YOLO. But, no, the Greek word behind “make the most of” is actually more like “to buy up” or redeem. It means something like “invest in this property now because it might be worth something later.” The idea is actually the very opposite of Carpe Diem or YOLO because it seems to suggest, not that time is slipping away and being lost forever, but that we should live wisely because our time accumulates value. In other words, God allows us to invest in these “evil days” so that later, in the Kingdom of God, we will enjoy the profit on the days we have bought up on this side of eternal life by doing the will of the Lord.

Brothers and sisters in Christ, as we commence the new Sunday School year, make the most of the time - and pray that I do too!

Your brother and pastor,
Rev David Priddy

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Celebrations & Concerns

September Birthdays

There were many things to be grateful for at Bethesda in the month of August. Here is a list of a few of the things that happened:

- The Bethesda Youth Group held a lock-in August 2-3; a fun time was had by all.
- August 4, Rev. Michael Bigg, Pastor Priddy's friend from England, preached our sermon.
- The Bethesda Christian Crafters met on the 10th to create more pillowcases for area shelters.
- The Youth Group went to "Tammy's Lake House" on the 17th and had a blast (pictures on page 6).
- There was a very well attended study on how to read the Bible the evening of the 19th.
- Choir practices resumed the 21st.
- There was a successful Blood Drive on the 26th where we collected 30 units (our goal was 22)!
- Merry Hearts Preschool commenced the new school year the week of the 26th.

Prayers and Sympathy:

To the family of Dot Templin upon her passing August 20th. Per her wishes, there will be no funeral.

- 1 Hunter MacIntyre
- 3 Lisa Noyes
Katie Formanski
- 4 Teddi Garren
J.R. Southers
- 5 Kristy Ransdell
- 7 Robert Maloubier
- 8 Sarah Clarke
- 10 Broadus Combs
Jackson Hill
- 11 Amanda Gradzewicz
- 15 Connor Morgan
Skylar Cunningham
- 18 Amelia Grandzewicz
- 20 Jane Sandrock
- 27 Karen Robertson
Bailey Byers
- 28 JJ Southers
- 29 Pat McClain



Music Notes

Fall is a very active time in church music. At Bethesda, this begins with Rally Day and the return of the chancel choir, then ends with Epiphany. Consequently, children's choir practice will resume in October (exact date and time will come later). Presently, our plan is to sing in November and December, take a small break and begin again in March to prepare for Palm Sunday, Lent, and Easter.

Like last year, children's choir will be for grades 2-5 or ages 7-10. Understanding that some people may have questions about that selection, I would like to explain my reasoning. Children need to sing before then, but the focus should be on having fun, singing with others, and establishing a feel for their singing voice, not their speaking voice. One year at Montreat, Helen Kemp, an acknowledged children's choir expert presented a handout entitled, "Body, Mind, Spirit, Voice, Teaching Young Voices." This information became my guiding principle when working with young children. Before the age of seven, many children have not learned to match pitches with an acoustical instrument such as the piano or organ. By second grade, children have at least three years of structured education and can maintain the focus needed to match pitches, learn about their different voices, and learn how to blend their voice with other voices. This starts with unison singing. Some people think that singing a song in unison is easy but that is not true. Many times, even the chancel choir hears, "I need to hear one soprano, not five or one tenor, etc." The children have a thirty-minute rehearsal which is packed with vocal control, extending the vocal range, diction, learning the text, and focusing on how to breathe. One skill that we work on is not singing too loud. There is a temptation to "really sing" when we like a song or want to be sure everyone can hear us. At this age, the "voice box" is still flexible cartilage, not hardened so straining and forcing for loudness is not appropriate and over prolonged use can be harmful.

Having given my reasons for choosing this age group, let me assure you there are always exceptions to any norm. There are younger children who can match pitches, learn the text, usually with parental help, and control their voice well enough to sing with others. If you feel your child is ready, I will be happy to meet with you and see if I think it will work. After all, Mozart started clavichord lessons at barely three years old and wrote his first concerto at four. That God given talent, while rare, could be present among us.

Blessing,
Earlene

Youth and Family Ministry Programs

Bethesda offers programs for the spiritual growth of the whole family.

Family Fun Night The first Sunday of the month from 4:30-6:30 pm. This family Bible Study is perfect for families with children pre-K through 5th grade. It includes dinner, music, games, and crafts.

Faith Weaving Friends This program brings together 2nd-5th graders every third Friday of the month from 5:30-7 pm. It includes fellowship over dinner, Bible study, and fun!

Bethesda Youth Group (BYG) Geared toward 6th-12th grade students, BYG meets some Sundays from 5-7 pm (check the calendar for exact dates). Each meeting includes dinner, recreation, and a Bible Study. **NOTE:** The Youth Group is looking for adult leaders to help plan & lead activities. The church's leadership is currently working to figure out the best way to proceed with our youth program. If you would like to help in any way, please contact the church office

Adult Bible Studies Various Bible studies are offered throughout the year. Check our website for more info or contact the church office to receive notifications.

Presbyterian Women's Circles Our women's Bible Study groups meet monthly from September to May. Bethesda offers four women's circles that meet on various days and times. Please page 8 for all the details and contact information.

Men of the Church Gathering quarterly on the first Thursday of the month, Men of the Church enjoy fellowship over dinner, a devotion, and discuss mission, outreach, and congregational support opportunities. Check the church calendar for meeting dates and times.

Sunday School Classes meet at 10 am on Sundays after the breakfast hour.

- **Nursery** (Ages 0-2) Our youngest learners enjoy time in the nursery reading books, singing songs, and learning through play and exploration.
- **Lower Elementary** (Ages 3 - Kindergarten) Utilizes curriculum to teach foundational Bible knowledge. Children enjoy activities, crafts, games, and imaginative play to learn and reinforce lessons.
- **Upper Elementary** (1-5 Grade) Utilizes age appropriate Sunday School lessons while keeping children engaged through crafts, games, and fun.
- **Junior and Senior High** (6-12 Grade) Studies different books of the Bible, comparing and contrasting stories and characters.
- **Parlor Class** Studies different books of the Bible as well as theological books to gain a deeper understanding of the Word, how it applies to the world today, and to strengthen faith.
- **Jesse Wimberly** (Adult) Utilizes *The Present Word* curriculum series to facilitate instruction and discussion.
- **The Seekers** (Adult) Currently studying the Gospel of John, this class studies and discusses how they can apply God's Word together.

Youth Update

The Youth Sunday School The summer is winding down, the youth have finished up the book of Daniel with the study guide *Be Resolute Daniel* by Warren W Wiersbe. I know most people when they hear of Daniel, they think of dreams, a statue, fiery furnace, the lion's den, and the handwriting on the wall. The last two chapters 11 and 12 look at the future prophecy. Ch. 11 was the prophecy for Daniel but for us it is now history which we can study. Ch. 12 is prophecy for us all which has not happened yet. I asked a couple of questions at the end: 1. Why do we study the book of Daniel and 2. What can we learn from the man Daniel?

Earlier I wrote, the book of Daniel is one of the most criticized books of the Bible by some who do not believe it. They say, Daniel did not write it, it was written after the fact, and so on. But here is something to think about. The book of Daniel is mentioned in 71 passages of the New Testament books. Of course Revelation is the primary book, but we also see Jesus mentions the abomination in the temple (Matt 24:15, Matt 24:21-22, Mark 13:15). In Hebrews 11:33, Ch. 6 is talked about. So, when people ask why we study the Old Testament, we study to learn the history of our faith and have a better understanding of the New Testament. Remember Jesus and the Disciples studied the scriptures of the Old Testament. Ask a youth Sunday School member what we can learn from Daniel!

The book ends with a chorus from a song by Philip Bliss, "*Dare to be a Daniel*"

Dare to be a Daniel, Dare to stand alone!

Dare to have a purpose firm! Dare to make it known.

I dare you to be a Daniel.

Sept 21: Possibly the next Henster Adventure:

Clues:

1. We will take a hike/a walk about where it began. So, you will need to wear walking shoes.
2. It will be a first for an Henster Adventure. No other of the Henster's kids have been there or done it.

Keep Your Light Shining!!!

Henster (Henry)

Lake Fun with BYG



Evangelism

The Heidelberg Catechism Study

As Kay begins her weekly presentation of the Heidelberg Catechism, let's take a look at the whys and wheres. A catechism is "a summary of the principles of a Christian religion in the form of questions and answers, used for the instruction of Christians." The Presbyterian Church focuses on two catechisms: the Westminster Shorter Catechism (1648) and its precursor the Heidelberg Catechism (1563). A catechism has three primary purposes: it

- 1) Outlines the essentials of the Christian faith.
- 2) Applies the message of Christianity in individual lives.
- 3) Provides a basis for a pastoral ministry and discipline.

To understand the Heidelberg Catechism, let's begin with a little history. From the third century to the sixteenth century, Christian doctrine was expressed in Creeds, such as the Nicene or Apostles Creed. In 1517, Martin Luther posted his *95 Theses* (over the abuses of the Roman Catholic Church) on the door of Wittenberg castle. The posting was quickly translated from Latin into German making it more accessible to the masses. It was distributed and became widely influential. The Roman Catholic Church objected and condemned Martin Luther, drawing him under the ire of the Holy Roman Emperor. However, many of the German nobility, as well as other supporters, declared that "their allegiance to God trumped their allegiance to the Emperor."

In 1529, these supporters/protesters became to be known as "Protestants." After almost 50 years of lack of unity in religious instruction among Protestants, Elector Fredrick III of Palatine (Germany) decided to formally incorporate these Creeds and reforms into a doctrine for the education and use in Palatine. He personally oversaw the creation of this first Catechism, which became known as the Heidelberg Confession in 1563. The document is divided into 52 sections, a section for each Sunday. It consists of 129 questions and answers divided into three parts:

- 1) The Misery of Humanity
- 2) The Redemption (or Deliverance) of Humanity
- 3) The Gratitude due from Humanity (for such a deliverance)

Now after nearly 500 years, this catechism still proves to be a fruitful way of teaching the faith today.

The Heidelberg Catechism study will commence the week of September 15.

Fellowship



PICNIC AND RALLY DAY KICKOFF– Let's kick off Rally Day with some end of summer fun! Mark your calendars for **Saturday, September 7th from 5:00 to 7:00** for hot dogs and fixings at our McKeithen Building. The Recreation Committee is hosting a **corn hole tournament**. **Sign up ahead of time at <https://shorturl.at/Qhx9Y>** or the day of. We will also have a **waterslide for the kids** (wear your suits!) and everyone gets to help churn our **homemade ice cream!**



Rally Day & Children's Church Graduation

The new Sunday School year will begin Sunday, September 8th. Join us for a big breakfast at 9 am, meet the teachers, and find out who the new Bible Trivia champions will be!

During worship service, we will graduate our 2nd graders from Children's Church and commission our Sunday School teachers.

Children's Church is for children in Pre-K (age 3) through 1st grade.

Presbyterian Women



The Presbyterian Women's Circles at Bethesda will be starting back in September. If you are interested in joining a circle or finding out more information, you may contact one of the leaders.

Friendship Circle

Leader - Carolyn Burns

Phone 910-315-5914

Meets the 1st Monday of every month

***September meeting is September 9 due to Labor Day**

Meeting time is 10 am in the classroom across from the ladies parlor

Martha's Circle

Moderator - Nancy High

Phone 919-749-0706

Meets 1st Tuesday of the month starting in September 6 pm
in the ladies parlor

Young Women's Circle

Moderator - Mary Katherine White

336-978-5779

Meets 3rd Tuesday of the month at 6 pm in the ladies parlor

Circle #4

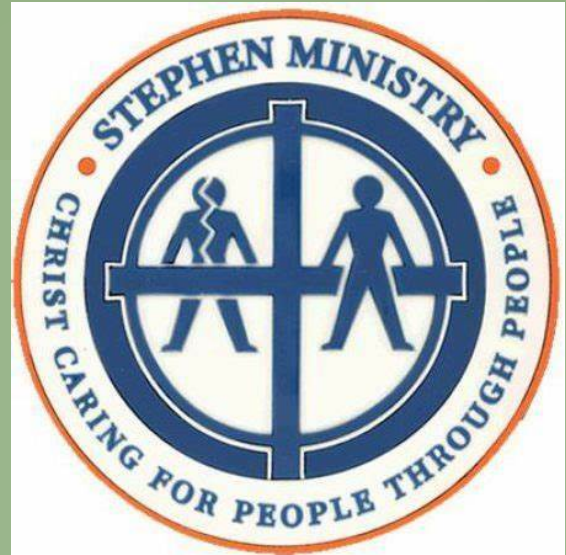
Leader - Linda Parke

910-603-7214

Meets 1st Tuesday of each month in the ladies parlor at 10 am

Stephen Ministry

Who was St. Stephen?



Saint Stephen is the namesake of the Stephen Ministry. Who was he and why should there be a ministry in his name?

St. Stephen was believed to be a Hellenistic Jew, who, as we would say today, was a bit of a rabble-rouser. He fought the Temple cult of Jerusalem over the recognition of the Christian church and also fought the Christian apostles over the care for elderly women, widows, and orphans (the poor in general). He was martyred for the former and canonized for the latter (some churches argue that he was canonized for both, but that is beyond our discussion.)

With respect to the latter, he antagonized the apostles sufficiently to be chosen to, "pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty - caring ministry -" (Acts 6). As such, he became the first of seven Deacons ordained by the Christian church to provide "pastoral" care.

The role of a Deacon in the Presbyterian church is ". . . To minister to those who are in need, to the sick, to the friendless, and any who may be in distress both within and beyond the community of faith." Stephen Ministry is essentially an lay-ministry extension of the ordained Diaconate.

In other words, St. Stephen, the first Deacon begot the ordained Diaconate, and the commissioned lay-ministry for pastoral care. Stephen Ministry is a lay-ministry for pastoral care.

Opportunities, Initiatives, & Administrative Notes



A large old white oak tree fell at Old Bethesda picnic grounds during the last major rain storm. The tree was quickly removed and new table construction will hopefully be completed by Homecoming at the end of the month.



There has been some vandalism around the church property. The staff has been busy rectifying the issues and installing cameras around campus.



Join the **Christian Crafters** for a pillowcase sewing event. Everyone is welcome. No sewing experience needed. Bring a snack to share. Sept. 14th from 9 to 11:30 in the Fellowship Hall.

Volunteers Needed to create bulletin boards around the church campus occasionally. Please call the office if you'd like to help!

History Corner

The Pilot, Thursday, September 22, 1955 - Found, abbreviated for space, and submitted by:
- Shaw Ray

Clan Donald Gathering Adds New Feature to Bethesda Homecoming

MacDonalds and their kinsmen including the MacAlisters and MacQueens, will observe "Clan Donald Day" at Old Bethesda Presbyterian Church near Aberdeen Sunday in connection with the annual homecoming events at the church. An address by Maj. Reginald H. Mac Donald, retired British Army officer, will be part of the day-long homecoming celebration. Maj. MacDonald, native New Zealander, is a great-great grandson of Allan and Flora MacDonald, who came to North Carolina from Scotland's Isle of Skye prior to the American Revolution. Flora MacDonald is the famous heroine for whom the college at nearby Red Springs is named. The Major, who holds the Order of the British Empire (OBE), served in World War I on the Indian Frontier on the Northwest Frontier of India. He now leads all MacDonalds in the United States who claim kinship with the clan's High Chief, Lord MacDonald, whose ancestral seat is Armadale Castle on Skye. Maj. MacDonald will be introduced by J. Talbot Johnson, Aberdeen attorney.



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<https://bethesdapres.church>

[Facebook.com/bethesdapres](https://www.facebook.com/bethesdapres)

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Sunday Schedule

9:15 Breakfast

10:00 Sunday School for all ages

11:00 Worship Service

See our calendar on our website for days and times of youth events.



*101st Anniversary of the first
Homecoming*

at Old Bethesda

Guest Preacher:

Rev. Maureen Paterson

Join us for our annual Homecoming celebration at Old Bethesda Church.

Worship service begins at 11:15 am.

Join us for food and fellowship on the picnic grounds following the service.

SUNDAY ● SEPTEMBER 29