



Bethesda Presbyterian Church | Aberdeen, NC | July 2025

# A MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR

Dear members and friends of Bethesda,

As I write the July message for the Beacon, the New Testament lectionary reading from Galatians 6:1-17 is on my mind. There, St. Paul gives the church at Galatia a list of admonitions for making a faithful community work. This chapter speaks of exercising a “spirit of gentleness” to transgressors (v.1), “bearing” with one another (v.2), and “doing what is right” (v.9). What stands out though is the Apostle’s constant allusion to labor. He tells the congregations that they will have “burdens” (v.2), that they “must test their own *work*,” (v.4) and “carry their own loads” (v.5). He talks about sowing and reaping (v.7-9) and “work[ing]” for the good (v.10). For someone who is always talking about the supremacy of faith over works, Paul sure makes the Christian life, especially life together, look arduous. That is not exactly what we want to hear during summer—the time of breaks, vacations, and rest—but it does remind us that a successful church (at least, successful from a biblical point of view) is a church where its members (and friends) are putting in effort to build up the community. So, I want to encourage you to hear these words, inwardly digest them, and pray for the strength and wisdom to know where your labor might build up Bethesda Presbyterian.

Even though it's summer, as the Apostle says to the Church at Galatia, “let us not grow weary in doing what is right” (v.9).

With affection in Christ,  
Rev. David Priddy

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The Beacon will be abbreviated during the summer months.



# Celebrations & Concerns

## July Birthdays

The month of June has brought the beginning of summer and a somewhat lighter schedule on the church campus. Never-the-less, we had many things happening. We celebrated the Ascension of our Lord along with Communion the first Sunday in June. The second Sunday was Pentecost and our Youth/Graduation Sunday. It is always nice to have our youth participate in the worship service. We hosted both a wedding and a funeral at Old Bethedsda. Pastor David had a successful work-study in England. Our Blood drive collected 21 units of blood, and we elected our Nominating Committee for 2026. VBS set-up is in full swing in preparation for a successful event.



Please continue to keep the entire Boles extended family in your prayers upon the death of Larry Boles, Richard and Jamie's father.

- |    |                 |
|----|-----------------|
| 1  | Sarah DeSpain   |
| 2  | Amy Hand        |
| 3  | Somer Lee       |
| 4  | Robert Leach    |
| 6  | Sara Wilson     |
| 7  | Evelyn Patton   |
| 8  | Terry Carpenter |
| 11 | Gladys Harris   |
| 12 | Jacques Wood    |
| 13 | Hunter Pages    |
|    | Hugh Joyce      |
|    | Cullen Martin   |
| 15 | Grant Martin    |
|    | Rick Noyes      |
|    | Hannah Ough     |
| 17 | Cathy White     |
| 18 | Laura Hill      |
| 20 | LoJuanna Pages  |
|    | Bill Ficklin    |
| 24 | Doug Williams   |
| 25 | Sharon Fogleman |
|    | Leah Proctor    |
| 27 | Taylor Wynn     |
| 28 | Molly McClain   |
|    | Reggie Smith    |
| 29 | Sadie Ransdell  |
|    | Susan McNeill   |



# Evangelism

As we individually and collectively evangelize, it is important to “build our house on solid ground.” One of our strongest foundations is the Nicene Creed. Adopted originally at the First Council of Nicaea in 325 and later amended at the First Council of Constantinople in 381, the Creed encapsulates the foundational beliefs of Nicene Christianity. Over the next couple of months, we will examine the historical background, theological meaning, and ongoing relevance of the Nicene Creed to our Christian faith.

As with all foundational documents, there was much debate over its wording. St. Athanasius, a theologian, ecclesiastical statesman, and Egyptian national leader, was the chief defender of Christian orthodoxy in the early 4th century. Athanasius wrangled for six decades with the best minds of the day and endured persecution from politicians for the sake of the Gospel. Athanasius view of Christ as being of one substance or essence with the Father was in opposition to the popular Arian view led by Arius, a presbyter from Alexandria, who argued that Christ was a created being and thus subordinate to God the Father. Athanasius died in 373, but his ideas and arguments did not die with him. The Council of Nicaea in 381 adopted his reasoning which expresses both Christ’s deity and his humanity. We can thank Athanasius for our current Nicene Creed expressing Christ’s deity - “very God of very God” - and Christ’s humanity - “he was made man”. He is as such the God-man “for us and our salvation.”

## Stephen Ministry

In our role as Stephen Ministers, we are continually faced with sorrows from our care receivers, fellow care givers, and ourselves. It is at these times, we must remember Paul’s writings to the Philippians, where he talked of contentment and joy through sorrow during his imprisonment. Chris Bruno talked about this in his recent book, “Sharing Christ in Joy and Sorrow.”

To speak of joy through sorrow is one thing; to live it is another. As I write this, many of you are encountering joy through sorrow that is only possible in Christ. You may have recently lost a family member; have a serious illness in the family; have relational problems; and/or have the “normal” problems of every day life like a leaking faucet, a sunburn, arthritis pain, or a car problem. Yet in all these things, we can say that we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us.

We must remember that we are not alone in our suffering, for we are truly united to the sufferings of Jesus Christ and so also united to one another. As Paul was supported by the believers (Philippians), we too with Christ can walk through our sorrows with the confidence that it will not always be so. And, as we can walk through our sufferings, we can have deep joy in Christ together, now and forever. Therefore, may the Lord give us grace to to see both the joy in sorrow in our union with Christ and fellow Christian’s, and let this grace increasingly shape us into the image of Christ as we anticipate life with him forever.



# Music Notes

Thank you to Katherine Stuber, Davis Clark, Mikaela Priddy, and Kim Clark for presenting the special music during June. Many of you let me know how much you appreciated their music. During July we have more specials including the quartet, the children of VBS, Kelly Clark, and a hymn sing of old fashioned hymns. If you have a special old hymn that you would like sung, please let me know. On the first Sunday, we will be celebrating 'Freedom' both in word and song. Hope to see you there. Blessings Earlene

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## Presbyterian Women

Circles are taking a summer break, and will resume in September. In keeping with our Year of Bethesda Heritage, we will welcome Don McLeod, a local Scottish historian, on Sunday, July 13th at 2:00 P. M. Don will present a program on the early Scottish Presbyterians in the area, with a power point presentation. He has a lot of interesting information on the importance of the Presbyterian Church to our earliest settlers. Light refreshments will follow the program.

Bethesda Christian Crafters will NOT meet in July.





VBS Amazon Wishlist: <https://bit.ly/bpcvbs25>

Sign Up Genius: <http://bit.ly/vbsfood25>

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As the summer warms up, the youth have been reading 1 Peter during Sunday School between everyone's vacations. For only five chapters, Peter gives us some insight on how to live. Peter addresses how we should react to rulers, 2:17 *Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honor the king; wives and husbands, suffering for doing good.* 3:8-9 *Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble. Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.* Verses 10-13 discusses the tongue and what evil it can cause. Peter also tells us to be prepared to tell anyone about Jesus but with gentleness and respect. Peter goes on and says for us to keep a clear mind, be self controlled for we can pray, love each other, show hospitality without grumbling, use our gifts God gave us to serve others, and the list goes on. In Ch. 4 Peter tells us that we might suffer for believing but we should rejoice in that suffering. In Ch. 5 Peter tells the Elders to be shepherds to God's flock. 5:6-9 *Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings.*

So, if you have not read 1 Peter in awhile, now might be a good time for you read and study it. It will help remind us on how to behave and live in the world.

July is a busy month for the youth. They are helping out at VBS, then the following week heading to Montreat.

Also, be on the lookout for the next Henster Adventure: Wet and Wild or Wild and Wet. Maybe it will be a little cooler.

Keep Your Light Shining!!



# History



## Faith Presbyterian Church

The Friends of Faith Committee was initially formed in 1990 in response to the dissolution of the worshipping congregation to ensure the historic preservation of the property. Friends of Faith, Inc. was established as a non-profit corporation in 1993. The original Board of Directors included former members of Faith Church, members of Bethesda Presbyterian Church, and local community members. The group was instrumental in obtaining the historic designation, replacing the roof, painting the exterior, and providing much-needed upgrades including HVAC, electrical systems, and bathrooms.

Our reconstituted Board members include decedents of members of Faith United Presbyterian Church, people who grew up in the church, a Bethesda Church member, and a retired minister. They have recently recieved their renewed Federeal tax-exempt status as a non-profit organization. The goals of the present-day committee retain the wishes of the original group. Friends of Faith, Inc. intends for Faith Church to be used for special worship services, and for informational and educational programs conducted under the direction and auspices of the Board, as well as for periodic historic public viewings. Friends of Faith, Inc. shall restore, preserve, protect, and maintain this historically significant site whilst promoting the story and history of Faith Church and the people connected. If you are interested in supporting this project, please speak to Julie.



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<https://bethesdapres.church>

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### Summer Sunday Schedule

10:00 Sunday School

11:00 Worship Service

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

