

JULY 2021

CHURCH NEWSLETTER

Monthly Updates from Bethany Presbyterian Church

Pastor Update

BY: PASTOR BRIAN JANSSEN

I have a hope for us all this Summer. We know that Summer is typically a time of going out, getting away, taking a break. We are in a season now where we can reflect a lot on where we were last year in comparison to this year. Have you done this yet? Maybe you have seen your "memories" pop up on Facebook, mine have been a lot of videos I was producing, trying to help us understand what it means to be connectional and stay in relationship with one another even when we were unable to be together. There was a lot to learn when it came to this, largely because in a crisis the church has been the place of refuge for the country and even for the world. It was so difficult for that to not be the case.

As has been said by me and many others though, as we see cases drop and vaccination increase, we must learn once again what being together looks like and means for us. One thing it must mean though is a reclamation of that aspect of church life that, while understood on a fundamental level, was often taken for granted. The aspect I refer to is that of a family reunion. We have all of us been to one of these gatherings. I must be honest, I love a good family reunion. My wife's family has been having one for over one hundred years, and I have been privileged to attend three of them (last year's having been canceled.) The food and fellowship are always great, the family updates, the prayers that are said. There are games for the kids, there is singing, and laughter. You learn the traditions of the family, not so much through information gained, but through participation and observation. You meet people who are new until one day they are not. You are new at some point and then one day you find yourself in charge of some aspect of the reunion.

This sounds a lot like church to me. Certainly, a church must be more than a family reunion. There must be a vision moving forward, inquiry into what God is doing in and among us, calling, developing, and training new leaders. That will all come in due time. But my sincere hope this summer is that both in our lives at church and away from church we can experience some profound sense of reunion with family and with one another here at Bethany. Building, and rebuilding relationships is risky business. But it is also fun.

HERE'S WHAT'S UP!

2 - MUSIC NOTES

4 - UPCOMING EVENTS

**5 - NEWS AND
ANNOUNCEMENTS**

7 - JULY BIRTHDAYS

The good news about reunions is that they are not packed with pressure. You are invited to encounter your friends and family, to laugh, reminisce and catch up. I hope the reunions we have as we move through the year are exciting and fulfilling. It has been great to meet people who are coming back to church for the first time in a year. Or attending their first in-person meeting in a long time. What's been really amazing is seeing how excited all of you have been to see one another again. My hope is that this will continue throughout the year, and even for years to come.

Music Notes

BY: JOHN HENNINGER

A MUSICAL REUNION

Beginning the Wednesday after Labor Day (September 8), the Bethany Choir will be celebrating a reunion. We have not been able to meet together as a full choir for a year and a half because of the pandemic.

How wonderful a celebration this will be! Choir rehearsal begins at 7:00 p.m. Of course, if you have not been in the choir before, this might be the time to join – we would love to have your voice added to ours. You don't need experience, only a love of the Lord and a willingness to serve Him through music.

We also expect a full return of The Bethany Ringers – watch announcements for times and dates. It was a treat to have the small handbell ensembles participate in Worship this summer.

Find a way this Fall to become involved in Bethany's Music Ministry!

God is Sovereign – Part 2

BY: DOUG BOVARD

As many of you know, my mother recently passed away. However, what she taught me will never pass-away. At a young age she taught me about the sovereignty of God in salvation. I did not understand it at the time, but I remembered her words. She said, "If you become a Christian, know that God chooses you, you did not choose Him." On another occasion, I was reminded that predestination and election are why a neighbor diligently worshiped, prayed and served her church – even though the woman said she did not believe in predestination and election! I didn't understand that either!

Predestination and election (God choosing) have caused confusion and misunderstanding particularly in these present times. I'll try to clarify! In a broad sense, election refers to God choosing to do everything that He does in whatever way He sees fit. He has a predetermined plan. He acts according to His good pleasure and nature. He does what He does without influence or constraint from any outside influence.

The Bible repeatedly makes the above points clear. In creation, God created precisely what He wanted (Gen. 1:31). He prescribed and permitted everything in human history in order to accomplish redemption for His people (Isa. 25:1; 46:10; 55:11; Rom. 9:17; Eph. 3:8-11). In the OT, He chose a nation for Himself. Out of all the nations in the world, He selected Israel (Deut. 7:6; 14:2; Ps. 105:43; 135:4).

In the NT, Jesus Christ is called "My chosen One" (Luke 9:35). NT believers are called "God's Chosen Ones" (Col. 3:12; 1 Cor. 1:27; 2 Thess. 2:13; 2 Tim. 2:10; Titus 1:1; 1 Peter 1:1; 2:9; Rev. 17:14). When Jesus told His disciples, "You did not choose me, but I chose you" (John 15:16), He was underscoring this truth. Predestination refers specifically to salvation. God choosing whom He will save. It is God's determination in eternity past to save His chosen people. Ephesians 1:4-6 notes that God "chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him. In love He predestined us for adoption through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of His will, to the praise of His glorious grace, with which He has blessed us in the Beloved." See also Rom. 8:28-30 (aka God's Golden Chain of Salvation); 1 Thess. 1:4; 2 Thess. 2:13; Acts 13:48; 1 Pet. 2:4-10; Rom. 9:14-29.

The Word of God presents God as controller and disposer of all creatures (Dan.4:35; Isa. 45:7; Lam. 3:38). God is ruler of heaven and earth (Gen. 14:19; Isa.37:16) and works all things according to the counsel of His will (Eph. 1:11; Isa. 14:27; Rev. 19:6). He is the heavenly Potter who shapes men according to His own good pleasure (Rom. 9:18-22). In short, God decides and determines every man's destiny and controls every detail in each individual's life (Prov. 16:9; 19:21; 21:1; Ex. 3:21-22; 14:8; Ezra 1:1; Dan. 1:9; James 4:15). This is God being God!

Many more scriptures could be added. Still, people continually have difficulty with predestination and election. Perhaps they have a preconceived notion about how God will act? Do they think their will is outside of God's sovereignty? Do they have God choosing them based on their choosing God? How does our fallen nature play into this?

Consider this revelation which helped me personally with predestination and election. Simply put, no man or committee of men would have originated these doctrines. They must have come from God! Thus, learning to love and embrace them has become foundational to my understanding of the Bible, and has enhanced my love for God. This is an executive summary of a weighty topic. Please send me an email or talk to me at church if you have questions. I am sure Pastor Brian can field your questions as well.

Upcoming Events

**All events subject to change. Please look on the Bethany website for the most up to date calendar of events.*

CHURCH LEADERSHIP MEETINGS FOR JULY

There will be no Team, Deacons or Session meeting in July. The groups will reconvene in August.



BETHANY GOLDEN OLDIES - JULY 15

The infamous Button Boxes will entertain everyone at our meeting on July 15th as we enjoy a picnic lunch. Details will be given at the July meeting for an overnight trip to see "Queen Esther" and "Mama Mia" planned for late fall. Please call Judy 412-279-1975 or Carole Aspinall 412-833-8114 if you have any questions.

BETHANY BLOOD DRIVE: SAVE LIVES - FEED FAMILIES - AUGUST 1

Bethany is partnering with Vitalant to host a "double donation" blood drive campaign, Save Lives - Feed Families. When you sign-up to donate blood, a donation will also be made to the Bridgeville Community Food Bank. Stay tuned for more information!

GOLDEN OLDIES TRIP - AUGUST 11

On Wednesday, August 11, a Lenzner coach bus will leave from Bethany's parking lot to take fifty (50) seniors to Sugar Creek, OH. A fun-filled day with several stops, an Amish meal and musical comedy play are planned. The cost per person is \$113.00, with a check written to Bethany Golden Oldies.

Those who indicated they would like to go at the June Oldies meeting will get a form in the mail to complete and return with the check. Trip registration forms will also be at the Welcome Desk at the church. Please return your registration form ASAP. Paid in full guarantees your seat until we have 50.

ANNUAL CHURCH PICNIC - AUGUST 22

We are excited to announce the Annual Church Picnic is back this year on August 22 at Chartiers Park. Let's gather and celebrate together once again as we see friends and family that we have been apart from for so long. Stay tuned for more information!



MARK YOUR CALENDAR: PIRATES GAME - AUGUST 27

Join Bethany for a night out at the ball game. Let's gather together to enjoy each other's company and hopefully a Bucco's win! Stay tuned for more information!

News and Announcements

GUEST PREACHER - JULY 4

On Sunday, July 4, Ralph Lowe, Director of Justice Ministries at the Pittsburgh Presbytery, will serve as our guest preacher for both services.

SUMMER WORSHIP HOURS

We will transition to our summer worship schedule on June 20. Sunday morning worship services will be at 8:15 and 10:00 a.m. A replay of the 10:00 a.m. service will be available on our website.

Bulletin and Past Worship Services: www.bethanypresby.org/sermons

JUNE FOOD BANK STATISTICS

The Bridgeville Community Food Bank assisted 120 families in June, including 43 children, 83 adults and 87 of the elderly.

JULY SPECIAL OFFERING: ADULT MISSION TRIP

The special offering envelope for July supports all of Bethany's Adult Mission Trips. This includes trips to West Virginia, Haiti, Malawi, and any other adult mission trips approved by the mission team and Session. Thank you for your contribution to this great program for the youth of Bethany and the community! www.bethanypresby.org/giving



SUMMER SERVICE RECIPIENT: HOPE TROTTA

Congratulations to Hope Trotta for being selected for the Summer Service program with the 2021 New Wilmington Missionary Conference. Summer Service is an opportunity for a select group of young adults to experience mission first hand. Each year a small group is chosen to spend six weeks experiencing a different culture and engaging in short term mission projects. This year's group will be traveling to Arizona, New Mexico, and possibly Mexico.

Hope is currently a junior at Geneva College, studying Communication Disorders and Psychology. When asked how can we pray for her as she prepares for her trip, she replied, "Please pray for safe travels and good health. Also, for patience as our trip's plans may change and that we keep open hearts to what God has planned for us this summer, wherever it may be."

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: VBS SET UP

VBS is looking for volunteers to help with setup on Sunday, July 18 after the second service. If you are interested in helping get ready for this special week, please contact the church office.

ASSOCIATE PASTOR SEARCH COMMITTEE: THE SEARCH HAS BEGUN

As we begin our active search for an Associate Pastor, the Search Committee is asking for the congregation's prayers. We recognize the sense of urgency to find a colleague for Pastor Brian and would appreciate your prayers to help us to be patient and to be open to hearing God's voice in our decisions. While we can't always share details of the work we are doing, we promise to provide frequent updates as appropriate so that you will know of any specific prayer needs we might have. Thanks!

Ryan Wolstoncroft (chair), Tom Aspinall, Kara Julius, Jackie Nixon, and Peggy Walsh

BETHANY MOPS MEETINGS STARTS SEPTEMBER 2 AND 9

Bethany MOPS is doing something we've never done before....TWO groups to serve ALL our mamas. The afternoon session will meet starting September 2 from 6:30-8:30 p.m. on the first and third Thursdays of the month. The morning group will meet starting September 9 from 9:15-11:15 a.m. on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month. Childcare will be provided at both meetings! Come join us as we laugh, cry, have our cups filled, and walk through motherhood together.

We are also always seeking volunteers to help with childcare. MOPS would welcome any one who has their clearances or has babysitting experience.

WARNING: DO NOT FALL VICTIM TO SPAM EMAILS/CALLS

Please remember that Bethany Presbyterian Church will NEVER ask for any sort of money or donation to be sent directly to Pastor Brian. There has been an increase in cyber-attacks against churches recently and we ask you to remain vigilant. If something seems off please report it as spam.

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITY: NURSERY VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We have begun a search to find a new Nursery Director. As we continue this search, we would appreciate your help in providing volunteer coverage for our nursery on Sunday mornings. Please consider helping with this important ministry. Volunteer or Learn More: Contact office@bethanypresby.org



ANNUAL BETHANY GOLF OUTING

On June 26, Bethany friends and family gathered for our Annual Golf Outing. It was a wonderful day full of fellowship and a little friendly competition. Thank you to everyone who helped make it such a tremendous success.



July Birthdays

| | | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 07/01 Georgina Townsend | 07/09 Zackary Rutkowski | 07/19 Madison Zombek | 07/24 Deanna Lambert |
| 07/01 Neva McAuley | 07/09 Dean Wolstoncroft | 07/19 Claudia Ziegler | 07/25 Payton Miller |
| 07/03 David Calgaro | 07/10 Kim Hartnett | 07/19 Joan Kundra | 07/25 Nicolette O'Brien |
| 07/03 Malinda Fink | 07/10 Doug Barbish | 07/19 Bruce Haviland | 07/25 Robert Loebig |
| 07/03 William Koch Jr | 07/10 Renee Rusko | 07/19 Jan Underwood | 07/27 Paige Morse |
| 07/04 Tara Krieger | 07/10 Madison Galbraith | 07/19 Landon Jackson | 07/27 Ellen Zissis |
| 07/04 Hunter Briggs | 07/11 Evelyn Barbish | 07/20 Victoria Segeleon | 07/27 Mary Wells |
| 07/04 John Talerico | 07/11 Larry Poglein | 07/20 Deborah Gossic | 07/28 Robbie Best |
| 07/04 Ruth Jones | 07/12 Gloria Sinkovitz | 07/20 Kyle Sharp | 07/29 Aiden Sisk |
| 07/05 Audrey Blackstock | 07/12 Melina Shildt | 07/21 William Miklavic | 07/30 Nathan Gibson |
| 07/05 Shirley Ellis | 07/12 Thomas Jones | 07/22 David Colton | 07/30 Zachary McGinnis |
| 07/05 Shawn Ruehle | 07/13 Mary Brubaker | 07/22 Emma Underwood | 07/30 Tyler McGinnis |
| 07/06 Martha Gabelhart | 07/13 Barry Fricker | 07/22 Alexander Goff | 07/30 LuAnne Pattison |
| 07/06 Jason Franchi | 07/14 Dean Nock | 07/22 Karin Cellone | 07/31 Ainsley Link |
| 07/06 Rebecca Lewis | 07/15 Richard Bartolomeo | 07/23 Jason Sommerfield | 07/31 Domenic Poiche |
| 07/06 Julia Casciola | 07/16 Diane Cook | 07/23 Michael Casciola | 07/31 Naomi Unghajer |
| 07/06 Bill Faulkner | 07/17 Nolan Strouse | 07/23 Gabriella Schinosi | 07/31 Alexandria Tumulty |
| 07/06 Samantha Faulkner | 07/18 Hope Trotta | 07/23 John Hunter | 07/31 Clara Talerico |
| 07/09 William Just | 07/18 John Sienerth | 07/24 Mark Rackley | |
| 07/09 Frederick Gerstacker | 07/18 Daniel Timco | 07/24 Jessica Mendenhall | |

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

JULY 19-23 | 9:00 - 12:00



JULY 19-23

9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Learn More, Volunteer and Register:
www.bethanypresby.org/event/vbs

BETHANY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
740 Washington Avenue
Bridgeville, PA 15017

Phone: 412-221-5132
Fax: 412-220-9107
office@bethanypresby.org
www.bethanypresby.org

NON-PROFIT
ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
BRIDGEVILLE,
PA 15017
PERMIT #38