



The Bethany Banner

Bethany Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church
1454 Highway 161N Clover, SC 29710
Pastor's Study (803) 222-9897 Cell: (601) 577-1357
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December 2017

A Word From the Pastor's Study

From the very beginning of Christianity the Church has always struggled with how best to use the Old Testament. An early church heresy (a false teaching) taught that the God of the Old Testament (a god of judgment) was of a very different kind than the God of the New Testament (a god of love and mercy). This teaching, called Marcionism (after its main leader, Marcion) has never really gone away.

There is little doubt that this idea is a real problem, even in our own present evangelical and reformed circles. We may not always recognize it, but it is an unfortunate reality. One prominent example is the growing absence of the singing of Psalms in the worship of the church, as some say the Psalms fail to give us a fully flushed-out testimony to Christ. However, as J.I. Packer has called them, the Psalms are "God's Own Hymnbook" and present to us, according to Martin Luther, a "Systematic Theology" of our great and glorious God and Redeemer.

For Christians to truly understand the reason for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ we must be not only conversant with the Old Testament, but see the Word of God given to our forefathers in the faith as just as much a testimony to the grace and love of God as is the New Testament. I have somewhat lightheartedly quipped before that Bible publishers should get rid of the blank page they place in the middle of our Bibles to separate the Old and New Testaments as it unnecessarily disrupts the flow of the full revelation of our LORD from Genesis-Revelation.

This month in our preaching we will be looking to that "Older Testament" and examining passages which point forward to the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh. These texts will provide for us a time of reflection and a sober reminder that what begins in the manger in Bethlehem has its fulfilment at the cross at Calvary, and at the end of days culminates in the glorious return of Christ in Victory.



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Sunday Preaching Schedule

December 3 Deuteronomy 18:15-22
December 10 Zechariah 3:6-10
December 17 Isaiah 33:20-24
December 24 Ruth 4:1-12
December 31 Psalm 110:1-7

Bible Reading Plan for Month

December 3-9 Zephaniah 1-3
December 10-16 Habakkuk 1-3
December 17-23 Micah 1-4
December 24-30 Micah 5-7

Important Dates for Dec.

Senior Citizen Luncheon Dec. 9
Annual Congregational Meeting Dec. 10
Christmas Choir Cantata Dec. 17
Christmas Caroling Dec. 21
Christmas Trip to Appalachia Dec. 22

Larger Catechism Question

WLC Question #37

“How Did Christ, Being the Son of God, Become Man?”

“Christ, the Son of God became man, by taking to himself a true body, and a reasonable soul, being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost in the womb of the virgin Mary, of her substance, and born of her, yet without sin.”

Missionary of the Month

The church of the Lord Jesus Christ is a missionary church, seeking to grow the Kingdom by the means of grace. This month we would like to highlight the ministry of Dariusz and Brooke Brycko in Poland. The Brycko's operate a Christian Study Center in the center of Warsaw and are planting an ARP church in that city. The most recent report from World Witness tells us that Lord's Day worship attendance continues to grow to the point where they have gone from meeting in the Brycko's home, to the study center, to now needing a separate facility for worship! Praise the Lord for His gospel work in that land. Please continue to be in prayer for Brycko's, the labors of Dariusz in proclaiming God's truth in Poland, and for their family.



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Youth Corner Announcements

Youth groups will NOT meet on the following Wednesdays through the holidays: Dec. 20th & 27th, as well as Jan. 3rd.

Senior High & college ages are reminded of the Christmas party for senior citizens on Saturday, Dec. 9th from 2-4pm.

All ages are invited to walk through McAdenville on Friday, Dec. 15th. Please meet at the church at 6pm.

Children in grades 6th-12th & our college age youth, are invited to attend a progressive dinner on Saturday, Dec. 16th beginning at 4pm.

Our annual gift exchange will take place after the Cantata on Sunday, Dec. 17th. Parents, please let your child(ren)'s Sabbath school teacher know if they plan to participate.

Everyone is invited to go Christmas Caroling on Thursday, Dec. 21st. Please meet at the church at 4pm. We will end at the church and pizza will be served.

Our annual present delivery to Appalachia will be on Friday, Dec. 22nd. If you would like to go please sign up on the rear pew so we can arrange enough transportation. We will meet at the church at 6:45am.

Please remember to pray for the children who will receive the shoeboxes that were collected for Operation Christmas Child.

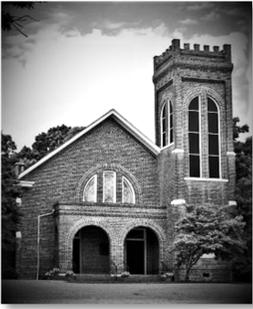
The magic of Christmas is NOT in the presents, but in His presence!

Session Report

The session met Thursday November 16 at 7:00pm for their regularly scheduled meeting. Items taken up included the Treasurer's Report, Deacon's Report, setting date for Rev. Glaser's installation (Jan. 7th), and discussing potential new members. The session also approved a new order of service (**see page 5**), the 2018 Bethany ARP Budget, and declared the day of the congregational meeting (Dec. 10th, after worship) for approval.

Deacon's Report

The Deacon's met November 5th before Sabbath School. They discussed the new floor in the Fellowship Hall, the need for a new deep freezer in the kitchen (since purchased), possibly a new A/C unit for the pastor's study, and approved the 2018 Bethany ARP Budget to be sent to the Session for vote and discussion.



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Christian Education Report

The Christian Education Committee met at the church on November 14th at 7pm. Issues discussed included the current Sabbath school curriculum, help needed for volunteers for various activities, and the need to begin planning (already!) for Vacation Bible School.

Mention was made that the committee is looking for an interested volunteer to lead VBS in 2018.

Wednesday Prayer Meeting

In December at 6:30pm we will continue using "The Bruised Reed", sermons by puritan author & pastor Richard Sibbes, as the starting point for our devotional.

We cordially welcome all to come!

Monthly Prayer Requests

This December we have many particular prayer needs before us. We will continue to be in prayer for a presbytery and nation that we will covenant to prayer for through this month. We are going to

highlight Second Presbytery, especially the Troy ARP Church, and the nation and people of Yemen.

Prayer Needs:

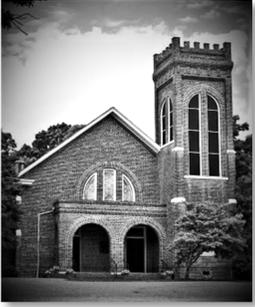
Chuck Walker, Dollie Douglas, Hayes Faulkner, Sarah Faulkner, Janice Patterson, Kelly Fowler, Winifred Callister, Peggy Wells, Theodore McClure, Crystal Costner, Geneva Smith, Bible Release Time, Good News Club, Andrew Brunson, Rev. Gentry McColm, Rev. George Bush, Lois Moody, Alex (Grier's friend), John Bailey, and Samantha Johnson.

The President, end of abortion, our nation, our military, and the Persecuted Church.

Psalm of the Month

*"Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel,
You who lead Joseph like a flock;
You who dwell between the cherubim,
shine forth! Before Ephraim, Benjamin,
and Manasseh, Stir up Your strength,
And come and save us! Restore us, O
God; Cause Your face to shine,
And we shall be saved!"*

Psalm 80:1-3



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As mentioned in the Session Report, through consultation with Rev. Glaser, the Session has approved a new order for Sabbath morning worship to begin **December 3rd**. Below is the new order of worship on the Left, with the old/current order of worship in the Right column to show the changes. If you have any questions please feel free to get in touch with Rev. Glaser.

New Order of Service

Prelude
Welcome and Announcements
Silent Prayer
Call to Worship
*Bible Song
*Invocation and Lord's Prayer
*Scripture Reading
The Giving of Tithes and Offerings
Offertory
Children's Lesson
*Bible Song
Pastoral Prayer
Anthem
*Sermon Text
Sermon
*Hymn
*Benediction From God's Word
*Doxology
*Postlude

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