

Bethel Focus

Bethel Presbyterian Church, Organized 1764

God is Working Through Coronavirus

1 Thessalonians 4:1-3:
“Finally, then, brothers, we ask and urge you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God, just as you are doing, that you do so more and more. For you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, your sanctification...”

We’re in the midst of a unique time, to say the least. I certainly can’t remember another instance where this much of our country is shut down. The limitations we’re under have had different effects upon everyone. For some the forced change has been pleasant; one high schooler I know prefers it this way because he can get all his work done online in a couple hours and spend the rest of the time as he wishes. For others it’s completely upended their lives, like college students sent home unexpectedly. Still others face significant disappointments- graduations, trips, and other events have been canceled. Families face new challenges of working from home, kids staying home, and the lack of



connection with friends and extended family. And all of us are subject to uncertainty...how bad is it? Will someone I know contract it? Will I get it? And how long will we be under these restrictions, or worse?

It’s so easy for us to focus on ourselves. About what we’re experiencing. About our difficulties, and our hopes, and our enjoyments. And to an extent that’s necessary; we’ve got lots of decisions to make. But Scripture makes it clear that in all this God has a goal in mind--our sanctification. Or to put it another way, that we might become more like Jesus. After all, that’s why Jesus died for us (Eph. 5:26). It’s what the Spirit works in us (1 Pet 1:2). And it’s to that end that the Father works all things for good (Rom 8:29).

In the midst of all the upheaval, all the change, all the challenge, and the relentless, overwhelming amount of information...have you forgotten this? Have you forgotten that God is working *all things* for your good? And that good, His will for you, is that you would be *more like Jesus*?

In her article “Don’t Forget the Goal,” Kimberly Cornelius helpfully reminds us: “God has so much more in store for me than what I can see right now. Right now, all I can see is an overthrown schedule and a loss of some freedom....But that’s not what God sees....When God looks at my heart—my fears and frustrations about the future, my strong grip on pride—He sees a child who desperately needs to let go of her idols and

April 2020

Sermon Schedule

- 4/5 “Triumph of the Cross”
Colossians 2:9-15
- 4/12 “Resurrection Result...Belief and Life!” John 20:24-31
- 4/19 “Freedom in Christ”
Colossians 2:16-23
- 4/26 “A Perspective & Purpose in Life That Makes All the Difference in the World”
Psalm 71:17-21

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find her shelter in Him. When God looks at my life—my altered schedule, my canceled plans—He sees His own hand moving the pieces of my world with the ultimate goal of conforming me into the image of Jesus Christ.”

She’s so right! God is actively at work in this, as He always is in everything. No matter what you’re specifically going through right now, keep the main thing the main thing. Pursue Christlikeness and hold onto Jesus, no matter what.

In Christ,
Peter

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29	30	31	01 Dan Love	02 Bricen Krashner Sophia Sprouse	03	04 Casey Forrest Joy McCarter Maggie McCarter Steve Sluis
05 Palm Sunday Deacon's Fund Collection Ross Marsh Travis Heffner	06	07 Diaconate Meeting	08	09 Craig Adams Carter Miller	10 Chris Wynkoop	11 Todd Holben Eck Miller
12 Easter Sunday	13 Addison Ferguson	14 Linda Boyd	15 Betty Jo McCarter	16 Chris Wallace	17	18 Patrick Newberry Pat McCormick
19 Choir Practice New Member/Inquirer Class Session Meeting Evangelism & Outreach Team...	20 Ann Carol Love Susan Long Basketball	21 Sara Ann McMullan Basketball	22	23 FLC rsv'd-Set up for...	24 FLC rsv'd-Set up for... Glenn Jackson	25 FLC rsv'd-Set up for... Fellowship Presbytery
26 Choir Practice Int'l Missions Event	27 Basketball	28 Basketball	29 Brandon Wallace Foster Krebs Senior Citizens Luncheon	30 Laura Clinton Miller Brummett Marshall Hoffman	01	02

The Session has decided to cancel all church activities and meetings through April 15 with the exception of Sunday morning worship. We will be streaming worship services on April 5 and April 12 and earnestly desire for you to join us!

The church office will remain open during normal hours during this time.

More communication will be forthcoming from the Session regarding the status of church activities planned April 15 and later.

Diaconate Meeting: April 7, 7:00pm.
Session Meeting: April 19, 2:00pm, Conf. room.
New Member/Inquirer Class: April 19, May 3, 10 during SS hour.
Int'l Missions Sunday: April 26 with Gary Watanabe.
Senior Citizens Luncheon: April 29, 12:00pm, FLC.



Session Minutes

The Session of Bethel Presbyterian Church met Sunday, March 1, 2020, at 9:45am in the Conference Room of the FLC with Moderator, Rev. J. Marcus Van Vlake.

The purpose of the meeting was to ordain and install one new officer. The Moderator then explained and reviewed the procedures for the ordination and installation of the following officer, to take place during the morning worship service: Deacon to be ordained and installed – Kyle Mounts.

MSA to adjourn the meeting with the Benediction following morning worship, and the Session and officer-elect were dismissed to Sunday school with prayer by the Moderator.

The meeting was closed with the Benediction at the conclusion of the morning worship service by Rev. Van Vlake.

The Session of Bethel Presbyterian Church met Sunday, March 8, 2020 at 2:00 PM in the Conference Room of the Family Life Center with Moderator, Rev. J. Marcus Van Vlake, for the regular monthly meeting. A quorum was present. Elders present: J. Brent Clinton, Christopher L. Wallace, Steven T. Britt, Robert C. Love, Jr., Calvin B. Reese, Steven H. Linder, D. Ross Love, Joseph P. LeMoyné, James G. Long, and Timothy G. Marsh. Also present were Adam Coble, Deacon Chairman, Tom Cuffman, Treasurer, Rev. Peter Scheidt, Assistant Pastor, James W. Heard, Pastoral Intern, and Bob Richards, Elder Emeritus/Trustee.

MSA to elect Robert C. Love, Jr. to serve as Acting Clerk for the meeting.

Adam Coble, Chairman of the Diaconate, gave the Deacons Report and reviewed the minutes of the March 3, 2020 Deacons meeting. Additionally, he reviewed the Financial Report dated February 29, 2020, all of which are appended to the file copy of these Session minutes. MSA the Deacons Report, Financial Report, minutes, and actions/recommendations, and to provide the Deacons flexibility regarding investment term for renewal of the Building Fund Certificate of Deposit (C.D.) which matured March 4, 2020, as well as to provide that monies from the Building Fund bank account be transferred and invested in the C.D. Adam and Tom were dismissed with prayer by Brent Clinton.

Marcus, in keeping with the plan to devote 20 minutes of each monthly meeting to an “Equipping” discussion, reviewed chapters 3 & 4 of the book “*The Shepherd Leader*”, by Timothy Z. Witmer. A revised reading schedule for the book was made available, so that the study can be completed prior to the September 11-12, 2020 Shepherd Leader Conference to be held at Bethelwoods. This session was closed with prayer by the pastor.

MSA a revision to Bethel’s Vision Statement, to read as follows: All for the glory of God, Bethel Presbyterian Church will be a faithful resource church that is healthy and growing in order to multiply God’s kingdom locally, regionally, and internationally. We have a vision to reach and make disciples in our community and to further multiply gospel mission by equipping our leaders and our congregation for ministry and facilitating assimilation into the body of Christ.

MSA as Bethel’s logo the horizontal rendering depicting the front of the church sanctuary building with the inscription, Bethel Presbyterian Church, PCA *Timeless Truths for our Changing Community*, a copy of which is appended to these minutes (top logo), and as recommended by the Logo Committee Chairperson.

Marcus provided, as information, that designated members of the Personnel Review subcommittee will receive information from potential Assistant Pastor candidates, for their review this week.

Rev. Peter Scheidt provided the Session with an update on his transition to Bethel, and the work with Youth programs and other ministry.

James Heard provided the Session with an update on his and Jillian’s progress in school.

MSA a promotional Vacation Bible School video being presented to the congregation prior to Morning Worship, as well as via other communication means, subject to Session review of the video.

A discussion was held regarding a continuing communication plan of Session determined priorities, especially concerning personnel staffing. Additionally, Bobby Love and Bob Richards provided a brief update on the Session directed building project objectives, in working with Carolina Engineering Solutions to bring additional information to the Session for review and to facilitate decision making.

MSA the request of Ruthanna Elizabeth Wilson Marshall, Timothy David Marshall, and Jonathan Charles Marshall, to transfer membership to Temple Presbyterian Church, PCA, York, SC.

MSA the following vacation dates for Marcus: March 20 & 22, April 15, 16, and 20-23.

The Session of Bethel Presbyterian Church met Thursday March 19, 2020 at 12:30 PM in the Conference Room of the Family Life Center with Moderator, Rev. J. Marcus Van Vlake (via conference call), for a called Session meeting.

The meeting was called to order and opened

with the reading of the Scriptures from Proverbs 3:5–6 and prayer by the Moderator.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss our worship and activity schedule in light of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) that is affecting our country at this time.

A motion was made, seconded and approved, in keeping with the guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and The President of The United States’ Coronavirus Guidelines for America, to cancel all church activities through April 4, 2020 with the exception of corporate worship.

A motion was made, seconded and approved to make arrangements to hold virtual, not physical, corporate worship services for the next two Lord’s Days March 22 and March 29, 2020. The goal is to have no more than 10 people present at Bethel during this virtual service.

James Heard will communicate through the Bethel Member email loop on how the congregation can participate via Facebook Live (you do not need to have an account to view and the service is free). Worship guides will be printed and be available to be distributed as can be accommodated. The worship guide will also be available via the church website.

Adam Coble will communicate via the Bethel Member email loop on how our members can participate in worship these two Sundays by the giving of their tithes and offerings online.

The Session was also encouraged to check on their folks in their respective Shepherding groups for those that may not have access to email and/or the internet to view a virtual service.

A motion was made, seconded and approved to adjourn.

The meeting was closed with prayer by Neil Allen.

Neil D. Allen, Clerk of Session

Financial Update:

MULTIPLY Building Fund Balance Feb. 29: \$1,082,079

February: \$26,933

Tithes and Offerings

2020 Budget: \$671,274

YTD Feb. 29: \$78,999

February: \$44,738

International Missions Spotlight

Gary and Lois Watanabe-Nagoya, Japan



Gary was born and raised in Okinawa, Japan. Lois was raised as a missionary kid in Africa, mostly Kenya. They met at Columbia International University and were married in Columbia, SC.

Gary and Lois first became part of a PCA church plant in Hawaii, then went to Westminster Theological Seminary in California. Gary was later

ordained by the South Coast Presbytery (CA) in 1986.

From 1989 to 2001 Gary and Lois served as MTW church planting missionaries in Mexico, helping plant churches in Mexico City and Monterrey, Mexico.

From 2001 to 2006 Gary and Lois assisted the MTW Philippines church planting center in training, equipping, and mentoring national pastors.

Gary and Lois have worked with Redeemer City to City (RCTC) in New York from 2007 to 2014: networking, training, and coaching locally and globally.

Because of the rapid growth of church planting and partnership needs in Asia, the Watanabes moved to Tokyo in 2015 then to Nagoya in 2016 to set up and direct the Joy of Japan Center for Church Planting & Development (JOJC) under the Christ Bible Institute in a partnership between CTC Asia Pacific and MTW Japan.

Gary and Lois have three adult children and five fun-loving grandchildren who help keep them young!

Prayer Requests:

- The Van Vlakte family.
- Assistant Pastor Peter Scheidt and his wife Bekah.
- New Assistant Pastor search.
- Pastoral Intern James Heard and his wife Jillian.
- Elders and Deacons, WIC officers, Sunday School teachers, Bible Study leaders, Youth leaders/teachers, giving thanks for their faithfulness and willingness to serve.
- Local ministries such as God's Kitchen, Clover Area Assistance Center and Biblical Studies Released Time.
- Reformed University Fellowship.
- Our missionaries serving throughout the country and throughout the world.
- Our community and our country.
- Please pray for the lost that don't know of or believe in Jesus. Pray as well for Bethel and other bible believing and gospel preaching churches to be blessed in our efforts to evangelize and make disciples locally and to the ends of the earth.
- Our college students.
- Expectant mothers and their unborn babies within the church family.
- Anna Bennett (breast cancer) and family, (friends of the Falls family), Rick Duke (cancer) and wife Judy (friends of C. Davis), Judy Ferguson (healing from surgery), Margaret Ann Ferguson, Kathy Forester (E. Moseley's sister, breast cancer), Matthew Hall, Miriam Hovis, Martha Kendrick, Jan Kombs (friend of J. LeMoyne, stroke), Herb LeMoyne (J. LeMoyne's brother, Parkinson's disease), Dana Massey (advanced brain cancer, friend of S. Burns), Annie Mae McDaniel (J. Ferguson's mother), Jim Pittman (V. Linder's brother, cancer) and Adam Stowe (leukemia).