



Equipping the Saints

“And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.”
Ephesians 4:11-12 ESV

Church was never intended to be the spiritual equivalent of a spectator sport. Yet, somehow, this is how it has come to be treated, not only by many Christians; but by their pastors as well. Those who serve as ministers of Christ can easily approach their calling as though it is their job to please their people. While those who are under their care can hear them in such a way as to think it is indeed their job to do just that. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that congregations expand and shrink on the basis of perceived performance ratings.

Quite the opposite from being a spiritual theatre intended for the entertainment of the saints, church is actually a spiritual bootcamp where they are to be equipped for service and prepared for cosmic warfare. This is precisely what Paul tells the Ephesians whose churches were coming unstuck because of misperceptions over what church was meant to be and how its spiritual leaders were meant to discharge their calling as servants of the risen Lord.

Not only does Paul remind believers in this region that pastors are specific gifts of the ascended Christ – along with apostles, prophets and evangelists – for their edification; but, in conjunction with those who serve as shepherd-elders, their goal is ‘to equip the saints for the work of the ministry’ (Eph 4.12). In other words, each member of the church as the body of Christ is not only meant to see they have a specific place and role within that body; but also, that

they be equipped and enabled to fulfil it.

We perhaps instinctively read this in light of the various programmes a church may run and the need to find volunteers to staff them. But the apostle has something far more radical in mind.

He sees the church as what John Stott calls, ‘God’s new Society’ made up of a rich range and blend of all kinds of people, from the entire spectrum of age groups and ethnic and social groupings as may be found in the local ‘parish’ the church happens to serve.

In that sense, the congregation or congregations in the area around Ephesus were meant to stand out through being attractively different from the secular and other counterparts which were there as well. This could only come about, as Paul goes on to state bluntly, ‘...as each part is working properly’ (Eph 4.16).

In other words, what the church needs more than anything is not merely gifted children’s workers, or those who can run other ministries, but Christians who each make a unique contribution to God’s new community by virtue of who and what they are in Christ.

Their personal gifts and personality are not taken away through conversion. Instead, by virtue of being ‘made new in Christ’ those abilities and traits are redirected as they are pressed into their Saviour’s service. Just as each member of our natural families has their own unique contribution to make to family life, how much more is this true for God’s family and its influence on the wider human family.

Often people looking for a new church ask the question, ‘What can this church give me, or do for me?’ (It is the spiritual expression of the consumerism so common in today’s culture.) Instead, the

Sermon Schedule

- 7/4 “Our Omnipotent God”
1 Kings 18:17-41
- 7/11 “Jesus Christ is Lord”
Philippians 2:5-11
- 7/18 “God’s Work and Good Purpose of Obedience”
Philippians 2:12-13
- 7/25 “Faith and Faithfulness”
Philippians 2:12-18

real question should be, ‘How might I be able to serve this congregation under its pastoral oversight and care?’

Our instinct may well be to answer, ‘Not much!’ But Paul does not permit such a response. As he tells the Corinthians, even those members of the body that seem insignificant, even embarrassing, have a unique place and are designed to make a unique contribution. There should be a place for people of all educational and practical abilities, from the whole cross-section of social backgrounds. Indeed, even those with mental and physical disabilities should be appreciated as having a place and role in the church that will enrich the wider congregation in ways that often proves surprising.

The more the church in our day rediscovers this ancient truth from the church in Paul’s day, the more we will be equipped and enabled to serve Christ effectively. As we serve the church family where he places us and, by extension, the wider communities where he has placed us, he will use us to extend his kingdom. In so doing, we will all play our part in encouraging our brothers and sisters in Christ and reaching a lost world with the good news of his great salvation.

Mark Johnston

<https://www.reformation21.org/blog/equipping-the-saints>

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27	28	29	30	01 PCA General Assembly Good Samaritans- FLC Rsv'd Amber Weatherby Gunther Griffin Men's Basketball	02 PCA General Assembly Russ Gibson	03 Jenny Richards
04 Deacon's Fund Collection Adam Coble Judi Love Independence Day Harper Anne Krebs	05	06 Diaconate Meeting Men's Basketball	07 Benjamin Ramsey	08 Men's Basketball	09	10 Lindsay Bowman Hoffman
11 FLC-Rsv'd Currence Family... Observance of the Lord's... John Clinton Molly Wynkoop Session Meeting	12 VBS	13 VBS Amanda Brummett Men's Basketball	14 VBS	15 VBS Albert Krashner Sam Slavens Men's Basketball	16 VBS	17 Harper Bourque Jackson Lee VanVlake
18 FLC-Rsv'd Robinson Family... David Drechsler Fred Hallman	19 Don Love Haley Burton Macie Clinton	20 Barbara Byars Larry Schropp Men's Basketball	21 Bobby Love	22 Joint Circle Meeting Men's Basketball	23 Linda Farrant	24 Neil Allen
25 Wedding Shower- Hailey Jackson Catherine Pursley	26 Courtney Ramsey	27 Aubree Britt Men's Basketball	28 Kim Britt	29 Will Holben Samantha Howland Asher Griesman Men's Basketball	30 Jackie Hinkle	31

Good Samaritans: Low Country Boil, July 1, 5:00 pm, FLC.

Diaconate Meeting: July 6, 7:00pm, Sanctuary.

Observance of the Lord's Supper: July 11.

Session Meeting: July 11, 2:00pm, Sanctuary.

VBS: July 12-16, 9:00 am—11:45 am.

WIC Joint Circle Meeting: July 22, 6:30 pm, FLC.

Session Minutes

The Session of Bethel Presbyterian Church Sunday, June 13, 2021 at 2:00 PM in the conference room of the FLC with Moderator, Rev. J. Marcus Van Vlake, for the regular monthly meeting.

The meeting was called to order and opened with the reading of the Scriptures from Ephesians 4:11-16 and prayer by the Moderator.

A quorum was present. Elders present: Robert C. Love, Jr., Calvin B. Reese, Corey C. Clinton, Steven H. Linder, D. Ross Love, Joseph P. LeMoyné, James G. Long, Timothy G. Marsh, L. Christian Griesman, and W. Hampton Stowe, III. Also present were Adam Coble, Diaconate Chairman, and Gunther Griffin, Pastoral Intern.

Michael James Herrmann and Krista Renee Herrmann were examined for membership on transfer of letter; David Timothy Nix, Renee Burrell Nix, Eva Jillian Nix, Daniel Clay Seaford, Sarah Marie Greulich, and Kenneth Russell Gray were examined for membership on reaffirmation of faith. Each candidate for membership gave their personal testimony and answered in the affirmative the questions for membership from the Book of Church Order, Chapter 57-5. MSA the examination of, and to receive as communing members of Bethel, all candidates. Non-communing children include Conner J. Herrmann, Clara E. Herrmann, Cora R. Herrmann, and Kennedy Gray. The Session offered the right hand of fellowship, and all new members were dismissed with prayer by Joe LeMoyné.

Adam Coble gave the Deacons Report and reviewed the minutes of the June 8, 2021 Deacons meeting. Additionally, he reviewed the Financial Report dated May 31, 2021, all of which are appended to the file copy of these Session minutes. MSA

the Deacons Report, Financial Report, minutes, and actions/recommendations. Adam was then dismissed with prayer by Ross Love.

MSA the minutes of the May 16, 2021 Session meeting as written, and emailed to the Session.

Marcus took some time in Elder Shepherd training in a discussion of Chapter 7, Knowing, of the Session's study of the book, Gospel Coach. Marcus then prayed in encouraging the Elder Shepherd Leaders in truly "knowing" those congregants assigned to their care.

Bobby Love provided a brief update on the Duke Energy land transaction.

There was a brief discussion on the building renovation project, regarding the Informational Presentation made to the congregation by Neil Allen, following Morning Worship.

Marcus provided an update on the Assistant/Associate Pastor search and requested the Session to continue in prayer on this matter.

MSA vacation for Marcus for June 22 – July 4, and to approve Nate Groelsema, RTS Director of Admissions and Recruiting, to preach on June 27th, as well as to approve Gunther Griffin to preach on July 4th.

MSA that effective June 20th the combined adult Sunday School class, that had been meeting in the FLC, will meet in the Covenant Class Sunday School classroom in the Educational Building; also, effective July 11th the Providence/Fellowship class will meet in the Providence classroom in the Educational Building and the LIFE class will meet in the conference room of the FLC. The Ladies Sunday School class will continue to meet in the Ladies Sunday School classroom.

MSA to return to the "normal" Communion process for the July 11th observance of The Lord's Supper, and to no longer use the "Pre-Packaged" Elements.

MSA to have a covered dish meal following Communion on October 10, 2021.

Hamp Stowe, as Session representative to the Bethel Cemetery Association, reported on the Cemetery Association's Annual Meeting held on June 6, 2021. MSA Hamp's report and to commend Hamp for his diligence in serving in this capacity.

The next Session meeting is scheduled for July 11, 2021.

MSA to adjourn.

The meeting was closed with prayer by Chris Griesman.

Robert C. Love, Jr., Clerk of Session

Financial Update:

MULTIPLY Building fund

Balance May 31: \$1,477,047

May: \$48,709

Tithes and Offerings

2021 Budget: \$601,407

YTD May 31: \$237,819

May: \$54,418

Building Plans Update:

We are currently working on building plan options and we are making some progress. We will communicate updates with more information for congregational consideration and approval as soon as we can. Given circumstances, we do not yet know when appropriate time to begin project might be... THANK YOU for your continued patience and prayers!

Ministry Spotlight

Clover School District Backpack Program Food Collection

As you know, the Deacons hosted a food collection for the Clover School District Backpack Program on Sunday, June 13th.

The backpack program provides meals for children in our community that will not have regular meals over the summer months.

Well, the Bethel family responded to the call! You folks donated about 1000 pounds of food- all of which was delivered to CSD!

While unloading the truck, we realized God's timing was perfect; many of the items they usually have on storage shelves for meals were just about gone. They were extremely grateful to have those shelves restocked.

The Deacons are so encouraged by how this body time and time again steps up to quietly and humbly share Jesus through service and acts of kindness in a world desperate for His love.



PRAYER Requests



- The Van Vlake family
- New Assistant Pastor search
- Intern Gunther Griffin and his wife Sam
- Intern Chad McKinnon his family
- Elders, 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 through the country and 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
- Bobby Armstrong (brother-in-law of S. McCarter Mizell, cancer), Bobby Boyd, Rick Duke (cancer) and wife Judy (friends of C. Davis), Kathy Forester (E. Moseley's sister, breast cancer), Matthew Hall, Miriam Hovis, Charlotte Jackson, Mrs. Rita Jackson, 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), Scott Wallace (breast cancer) and Norm West.