

Bethel Focus

Bethel Presbyterian Church, Organized 1764

God's Faithfulness through Missions

As Bethel Congregation prepares for the upcoming Missions Weekend on March 14-16, 2014 let us take a look back to the involvement that Bethel Church has had in missions in the past.

In 1793 Bethel organized two other churches. Then in the 1800s six more churches were organized from Bethel which gave Bethel a total of eight daughter churches. In today's terminology you would say Bethel was involved in church planting.

We find in the early records of the church that in the late 1800s offerings were received for mission causes. In 1876 the Ladies Aid Society was organized and Foreign Missions and Home Missions were two very worthy causes supported by these ladies. In



Sid & Louise Anderson; Susan & Calvin Jett; Pablo, Grace & Velia Chaveria; Ruth & Andres Garza; Pastor John Gess; and Calvin Reese at Bethel's 2013 Missions Conference.

1898 the Ladies Aid Society sponsored the making of the quilt which hangs in the Ladies II Sunday School classroom. The proceeds received from this project were used to support Foreign Missions.

An increasing interest in For-

eign Missions stirred the Southern Presbyterian Church in the early 1900s. The ripples of the movement reached Bethel where the endeavor found a ready advocate in the minister at that time, Rev. William B. Arrowood. In June, 1902, Rev.

Mission Conference: "Great is Thy Faithfulness"

Friday Night 3/14 Ladies Night Supper

6:00 pm Salad Supper
(Jenni, Judi & Pat to organize)

Program (Ruth Garza, Tricia Lee, Kathryn Taylor)

Saturday Morning 3/15 (MOC prepare breakfast)

9:00 am Breakfast by MOC
RUF Report (John)

Michael Lee
Season of Prayer

Saturday Night 3/15

6:00 pm Supper FLC
(Covered Dish) (Nursery provided)
Richard Smith

Jay Joye
Rob Ilderton

March 2014

March Sermon Schedule:

- 3/2 "Count the Cost"
Matthew 8:18-22
- 3/9 "Will You Go?"
Matthew 9:35-38
- 3/16 Rev. Rod Mays
- 3/23 Mr. Will Milks
- 3/30 Rev. Mark Ashbaugh

Men of the Covenant:

The Men of the Covenant will meet Monday, March 3, at 6:30 pm in the Family Life Center. Supper will be provided and the program will be to view and discuss a video from David Barton's American Heritage Series. All Bethel men are encouraged to attend.

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Sunday Morning 3/16

9:30 am Social Time (Coffee, Juice & Donuts)

10:00 am Mexico Partnership News/RUF (Andres Garza & Chris Bowen)

11:00 am Worship Hour-Sanctuary (Rod Mays)

1:00 pm Lunch FLC (Guests, Host families, & Committee members)

God's Faithfulness Through Missions, continued

Fairman Preston, a field secretary for missions, was invited to speak from the pulpit on this subject. The congregation was stirred by his message through the working of the Holy Spirit and decided to support a missionary. The Session authorized that \$600.00 be collected for this purpose. Although the goal was \$600.00, the amount raised was \$650.00. At that time Bethel began the support of Dr. L. O. McCutchen, who served as a missionary in Chunju, Korea. Bethel continued partial support of Dr. McCutchen until he retired in 1946.

Cotton culture for missions was endorsed by the Session in 1904. It was especially recommended for the children of the church but anyone could participate. Each year a quart of cotton seed was given to anyone who would agree to plant and cultivate it for missions. In the fall when the cotton was harvested it was brought to the church, weighed and sent to the cotton gin. Each person was told how much their cotton had sold for and the proceeds were sent to Foreign Missions. Then the annual "Cotton Picnic" was held. The congregation assembled in the church to hear an inspiring missionary address. A picnic dinner on the grounds was held to end the events of the day. This tradition was successfully held for a score or more years.

Beginning in 1940 Foreign and Home Missions were consistently mentioned in the histories written by the women. A "Foreign Mission Season" was held for many years. Inspirational speakers, usually missionaries home on leave, were invited to speak during this time. Study books regarding missions were read and discussed by the women. Special offerings were taken regularly for missions. Used clothing was collected and sent to foreign and home missions. Various

items were collected and taken to Thornwell Orphanage, the County Home and the County Prison.

In the late 1980s and continuing until now Bethel emphasizes missions during a weekend in the spring of each year. Missionaries from foreign mission fields and also representatives from local mercy ministries are invited to speak about their work.

In the mid 1990s Bethel began organizing mission trips. For several years groups went to West Virginia and North Carolina to assist families in need and to help spread the Gospel. In 1998 the first mission team was sent outside the country to Monterrey, Mexico.

Missionaries throughout the world receive financial, prayer and personal support from Bethel. Bethel supports many local ministries and through the Deacons Fund (offering taken the first Sunday of each month) many local families are given assistance to help with food, utilities,

rent, etc.

Bethel has assisted in the support and training of young men to enter the ministry and has provided housing and financial support for men from Mexico to receive training at RTS, Charlotte, NC.

Through God's Faithfulness for the past 250 years, the willingness and faithfulness of the Bethel congregation and the capable leadership that God has provided, "Bethel Presbyterian Church exists as a fellowship of believers to make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:19). Together, we strive to glorify our sovereign Lord through vibrant, God-centered worship; to equip every member for works of service; and to be salt and light by proclaiming the gospel in word and deed."

By Cary & Helen Grant

Outside Bethel Church in Apodaca (a suburb of Monterrey, MX).



February Session Minutes

The Session and Diaconate of Bethel Presbyterian Church met jointly Sunday, February 9, 2014 at 2:00 PM in the Conference Room of the Family Life Center with Moderator, Rev. John Gess, for the regular scheduled joint quarterly meeting.

The meeting was called to order and opened with the reading of the Scriptures from 1 Corinthians 13 and prayer by the Moderator.

A quorum was present. Elders present: Neil D. Allen, J. Brent Clinton, Robert N. Boyd, Frank C. Falls, Robert C. Love, Jr., D. Ross Love, Steven H. Linder, James G. Long, Timothy G. Marsh, and Robert B. Meek, Jr. The following Deacons were present: Brett Brackett, Keith Brackett, Calvin Reese, Steve Britt, Adam Coble, Larry Falls, Albert Krashner, Don Love, Corey Clinton, and Ruben Trevino. Also present was Assistant Pastor, Rev. Mark Ashbaugh.

A motion was M/S/A to approve the minutes of the January 5, 2014 Session meeting, as written and mailed to each Session member, and as amended to indicate that the January 25, 2014 Fellowship Presbytery meeting was held at Filbert PCA instead of at Christ Ridge PCA.

Steve Britt gave the Deacons Report and reviewed the minutes of the January 7, 2014 and February 4, 2014 Deacons meetings. A motion was M/S/A to approve the Deacons report, Deacons minutes, financial report, and actions taken.

The Church Membership Roll was reviewed by the Session, and a motion was M/S/A to defer action for one month, while the Church Staff will attempt to contact those so indicated as inactive members.

General Assembly will meet June 17-19, 2014, in Houston, TX.

A motion was M/S/A to approve payment of airfare for Rev. Mark Ashbaugh to attend a minister's conference on April 21-24, 2014, in Jackson, MS.

A motion was M/S/A to adopt a plan of Congregational oversight by the Session that encourages families to engage in evangelism, through the development of an evangelism prayer list, and networking.

Bobby Love gave a report on the Fellowship Presbytery Meeting he had attended on January 25, 2014 at Filbert PCA in Filbert, SC. A motion was M/S/A to approve his report and to commend him for his diligence.

Bobby Love reported on his review of the 2013 Bethel WIC Church History, as prepared by Mrs. Helen Grant. A motion was M/S/A to approve the history and to commend Mrs. Grant for her diligence.

A motion was M/S/A to record in the minutes that Bethel Presbyterian Church provides the use of the manse, utilities included, to the Senior Pastor at fair rental value. A motion was M/S/A to record in the minutes that Bethel Presbyterian Church provides the use of the Kendrick House to the Assistant Pastor at fair rental value. A motion was M/S/A to record in the minutes that Bethel Presbyterian Church provides use of the Price House to the Pastoral Intern at fair rental value.

A motion was M/S/A to approve Neil Allen as Session representative on the Good Samaritans Committee. A motion was M/S/A to approve the 2013 Annual Statistical report for Bethel as presented by the Clerk of the Session,

a copy of which is appended to these minutes.

A motion was M/S/A to approve payment in the amount of \$286.88 for FICA tax related to 2013 retirement contributions, on behalf of Rev. Mark Ashbaugh.

A motion was M/S/A to approve reimbursement by separate check, for health insurance premiums paid to Blue Cross/Blue Shield of South Carolina for Rev. John Gess and family, upon receipt of proof of coverage and amount of premiums.

A motion was M/S/A to approve payment of health insurance premiums for Rev. Mark Ashbaugh and family, by direct payment of invoices by Bethel, to the insurance provider.

A motion was M/S/A to make a part of Session records, the January 12, 2014 250th Anniversary Celebration presentation by Dr. Lacy K. Ford, Jr., the children's message given by Mrs. Jenny Richards, and the sermon given by Rev. Wallace Tinsley, copies of which are appended to these minutes.

A motion was M/S/A to approve allowing non-members who are regular worship service attenders, and who are approved by the WIC, to participate in nursery duty during morning worship services.

A motion was M/S/A to allow Ruben Trevino to form a committee, and report back to the Session in the May joint meeting, that will consider how to promote the liberality of giving within the congregation.

A motion was M/S/A to adjourn. The meeting was closed with prayer by Neil Allen.

Robert C. Love, Jr.
Clerk of Session

Bethel Presbyterian Church

Presbyterian Church in America
Organized 1764

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Prayer Requests:

Pastor John Gess, Assistant Pastor Mark Ashbaugh, and Intern Will Milks, as they preach and minister to the Bethel congregation, and for their families.

Please pray for the Lees. Pray for God's protection as we travel, and God's voice as we share about the ministry of reconciliation. Please keep our kids in your prayers also.

Our upcoming Missions Conference and all the events of the 250th Anniversary Celebration, that God would be glorified, the gospel would be clear, and His kingdom would be advanced.

Session and Diaconate members, WIC officers, Sunday School

teachers, Bible Study leaders, Youth leaders/teachers, giving thanks for their faithfulness and willingness to serve.

Missionaries throughout the world, as well as local ministries such as Habitat for Humanity, God's Kitchen, Clover Area Assistance Center and Biblical Studies Released Time. Please pray fervently for the work in Northern Mexico, for "great boldness to keep preaching the gospel.....' (Acts 4:29) because we all know that the gospel is the only hope we can have in the midst of fear and violence around our cities. Yes, we need courage and valor, but to bring hope that transforms our cities in Northern Mexico." (Quote from a letter from Andres Garza.)

Our college students, and expectant mothers and their unborn babies within the church family.

Our soldiers serving in Afghanistan, Europe & Iraq: James Pittman, III (nephew of Victoria & Steve Linder), John Rice (grandson of Joe & Phyllis Wysor) recovering from injuries from a roadside bomb explosion, Greg Sandifer, and Ted Trevino.

Charlotte Barnett, Monnie Blackman (C. Robinson's sister, lupus), Loma Burton, Abe Craddock (friend of J. LeMoyne, emphysema), Susan Heffner (undergoing chemo), Elaine Honeycutt (P. Brannock's sister-in-law, cancer), Sherer Gordon Hopkins, Bob Kenley, Herb LeMoyne (J. LeMoyne's brother, Parkinson's disease), Harold McCarter, Jesse Patino (B. Love's brother-in-law, lymphoma), Jim Pittman (V. Linder's brother, prostate cancer, has spread to his spine), Bobby Wallace.

