



*June 2017*

## PARSONAL PONDERINGS

At its May meeting, Session asked me to address the rumors about my leaving. Setting aside for a moment the logical impossibility of that request – rumors by their very nature are unaddressable since their sources are anonymous – I am glad to address the concern that some may have that I have plans to leave Bethel.

I don't.

Perhaps the April *Ponderings* was a bit too whimsical to be clear, but Nancy and I meant it when we wrote,

“We are thankful that God’s plan and our desire for Paul to remain as pastor at Bethel seem to be aligned!”

and

“...as you have walked with us thus far, we ask that you continue that walk.”

Perhaps all the comings and goings to SC have been confusing. Nancy and I are happily married and intend to stay that way, so sharing life with callings in two locations requires extra travel. Believe me, it is a LOT better and more sustainable than all the comings and goings to DC!

The irony is that this whole business purchase, new house, and relocation of Nancy from DC to SC has come about as a means for me to be able to continue to serve at Bethel, while at the same time responding to the evolving needs of our family. The crisis of whether to stay at Bethel happened over 6 years ago when we discerned Nancy’s call to Bread for the World not even two years after responding to God’s call and yours to Bethel. A lot of our prayer at the time was “God, what are you thinking?!?!” But he gave us what we needed for those two calls, and reminded us that it was a lot less difficult than what those in military service have to manage. So when our new situation cuts the distance in half and makes two days together nearly every week a viable plan, and otherwise enables us to financially and logistically handle our family goals and responsibilities, it makes saying “Yes!” to God’s continued call at Bethel pretty easy.

How long will God call me to stay? I don’t know. I never have. If you want me to be more definitive, then remember the email of May 21 headlined, “Bethel Outdoor Worship & Picnic is ON!” and consider whether it matters what I think. God likes to laugh at my pronouncements.

Here’s what I *can* say:

- I am not looking to leave. I have no Personal Information Form on file, I have no resume prepared, nor am I preparing either PIF or resume. I am not job hunting in any way.
- Nancy and I believe that if y’all at Bethel continue to support my ability to spend a couple of days with my wife most weeks, which this is joyfully sustainable for the long run.
- Discernment intensifies with changes. We’ll always welcome your prayers and wisdom.
- Someday I will leave Bethel. It may be by retirement, it may be by God’s call elsewhere, or it may be by death. God will not leave, and God will provide.
- I love you folks, and I delight in serving you as pastor.

So to the concerned neighbor who says, “I’m sorry to hear your pastor is leaving,” feel free to reply, “Pastor Paul would be honored to know that would make you sorry, but believes that your grief is premature.” And if you have concerns yourself, please come talk with me!

Joyfully in Christ,

Pastor Paul

## HAVE YOU HEARD?

### Wish List

#### BETHEL'S WISH LIST

These are items you may purchase or give donations towards an item as a memorial or honorarium.

- American and Christian 3 feet by 5 feet flags for Memorial Garden
- Session House Fund
- Instrument/Music Fund
- Lockable collection box used for sales, Love Offering, donations; etc.
- Shelving for storage in closet beside stage in Fellowship Hall
- Storage shed

Please see Jerry Nix if you are interested in helping obtain any of these items. Thank you!

### Address Needed

If anyone has a current address for Rev. Earl Woodall, please give it to Sharon Smith. We have been mailing the Beacon to him for many years now. All of a sudden, the last one we mailed came back to the church unable to forward.

## COMMITTEES

### Education

*Hear ye! Hear ye!*

You are invited to be a part of the *Mighty Fortress – 2017 VBS*, where kids learn that in Jesus *the Victory is Won!* Jesus is our champion. He acts through His Word and keeps His promises to be our rock and our salvation—our fortress and sure defense.

So, raise your banner! In Jesus, the Victory is Won!

July 18 – 21 (Tuesday – Friday)

5:30 – 6:00pm: Meal

6:00 – 8:30pm: VBS



Vacation Bible School is such an important outreach ministry for the children in our community. It's an opportunity to plant the love & understanding of Christ in a child's heart. VBS is a big undertaking & requires many volunteers to make it successful. Please consider volunteering this year. Each "activity area" has an easy-to-follow booklet, so everything is all prepared for you. Please sign-up & make this the best VBS yet!

### Evangelism

*Evangelism* - sharing the Word of God with others -- isn't an exclusive job of the "Evangelists." As part of the Great Commission ([Matthew 28:19](#)), evangelism is a calling on all Christians. However, it's more than a commandment. Evangelism is an honor, a joy, and a pleasure! It is also important to show God's love; our actions shout louder than our voices. We are living examples of the grace of God, and our attitude towards others should impact their lives.

Taken from: [allaboutgod.com](#)

### Ministry

All are welcomed to join the Golden Gang on June 9<sup>th</sup> at Village Grill in Burlington at 11:30 AM for lunch. Please contact Beth Andrews if you will attend so she can save you a place at the table.

### Missions

The June Quarter Pennies for Hunger offering will be received on Sunday, June 26.

We encourage everyone to support this worthwhile mission to address hunger domestically and abroad.

The March Quarter offering was \$143.50.

A gift to the **Pentecost Offering** helps the church encourage, develop, and support its young people, and also address the needs of at-risk children. 40% of the Pentecost offering can be retained by individual congregations wanting to make an impact in the lives of young people within their own community. The remaining 60% is used to support ministries of the Presbyterian Mission Agency:

## BY GIVING TO THE PENTECOST OFFERING

you're supporting ministries that unite young people and inspire them to share their faith in Christ.



- [Young Adult Volunteers](#)
- [Ministries for Youth](#)
- [Children-at-Risk](#)
- [Pentecost Offering Financials](#)

Upcoming Events for the Mission's Committee:

June 4- Pentecost Offering

June 19- Mission's Committee Meeting at 7 pm

June 26- Pennies for Hunger

August- Back to School Food collection

September 9- Annual Yard Sale

### **Ruling Elder Nominating Committee**

Thanks to all who prayed for our members as the Nomination Committee moved through the elder call process. We are excited about the Bethel members that have been called by God to allow their names to be placed in nomination for elder. The members called are Marilyn Hartis, Ralph Alexander, and Sharon Smith for 3 year terms and Scott Amoriello for a 2 year term. These members will be placed before the congregation on June 4 for election. Thanks again to all who prayed and worked through this nomination process.

### **Session**

The Session voted by email to approve the Property Committee's request to:

- Clean and paint all doors, trim and baseboards in the Fellowship Hall
- Paint railings on all buildings
- Paint columns and beams on the outside of the Fellowship Hall
- Cost for above will be \$2,750

The Session met on May 21<sup>st</sup> and passed the following actions:

- Elected Sherri Amoriello, Jim Flippin and Darren Stroud to Evaluation Process Team
- Added to Bethel Wish List-storage building, shelving and donation box
- Approved Elder slate of nominees
- Called Congregational Meeting on June 4 after worship for election of Elders

### **Stewardship and Finance**

An audit of our financial records has been completed. The financial auditor remarked that our treasurer has done a diligent and thorough job and should be commended. Thanks Linda Seawell for all your efforts.

The figures for the month of April are as follows:

Giving: \$11,220.45

Expenses: \$8,065.79

The figures for the year to date time period are as follows:

Giving: \$34,479.45

Expenses: \$30,952.65

For the month of April, we gave more than we spent, and for the first four months of the year, we also gave more than we spent. What a tremendous blessing for these amazing April figures as well as the year to date figures. As always, thank you for your continued support of the mission and ministry of Bethel Church through the giving of your monetary resources. With those figures in mind, that means that we need to collect \$1,964.00 each week in order to meet our 2017 budget of \$103,208.00. Thank you to each one of you who turned in your Time/Talent Pledge sheets. We have received a few more since we last reported to you. We received a total of 27 pledge sheets. Thank you for pledging your time and talent to the work of Bethel Church. You are an amazing group of people who continue to give of your monetary resources as well as your time and talent in so many different ways. We are so grateful for all that you do!!

## Worship



**PENTECOST** is a festival observed by members of the Christian faith in celebration of the descent of the Holy Spirit on the apostles of the resurrected Jesus Christ after his ascension into heaven.

As told in Acts 2:1-13, the disciples were afraid after Christ left and ascended into heaven. Hence, they gathered inside a room to pray. While they were in the middle of their prayers, they heard a loud blowing sound and tongues of fire were marked on the heads of each disciple. This miraculous event gave strength and courage to Jesus' disciples to spread the Gospel to different places.

The name of the event originates from the Greek word "pentekoste," which translates to "fiftieth," and is named as such because it takes place 50 days after Easter Sunday, or on the seventh Sunday after Easter.

Since the date of Pentecost is dependent on the date of Easter, its date also changes each year dependent upon Easter's established date for that particular year. Hence, for 2017, Pentecost will be celebrated on Sunday, June 4.

The Pentecost festival is very special because it marks the beginning of Christianity and the start of the Great Commission as detailed in the Bible passage Matthew 18:19-20. *"And I tell you more: whenever two of you on earth agree about anything you pray for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. 20 For where two or three come together in my name, I am there with them."*

Essentially, celebrating the Pentecost reinforces the multilingual, multiracial and multicultural mission of the Church, in which all people live harmoniously in a community that is drawn together by God's love in Christ.

Special thanks to everyone who helped make our May activities so much fun and appreciated. Ladies of the church felt very special after the Mother's Day service. Greyson and Jerry started that service with a very touching song and the wonders of the day continued. All ladies received pink carnations to thank them for their love and care of all of us. A very special announcement was made that Bethel could look forward to a new member of the congregation as Ashley and Stephen Smith are expecting their first child.

Even though the weather would not permit us to have May Day Worship outside, a wonderful service was enjoyed as Greyson and The Monroe Doctrine presented toe-tapping music for all our listening pleasure, the congregation sang two very familiar hymns everyone enjoyed singing, a delicious meal was shared that met our physical need as the service had met our spiritual need. As if that weren't enough, our graduates for this school year were honored. A number of guests joined us for this day and shared that they would return, especially if we promised good music and good eats again. A number of our committees worked together to make sure this day was very special and we offer our thanks to everyone who made it such a success!!

June dates to remember are June 4, First Sunday in the fellowship hall, where we will celebrate in red for Pentecost. Education Committee will provide refreshments. Our Worship and Music Committee will meet on the 8<sup>th</sup> at 7 and then two more important dates need to be marked on our calendars. June 11 will be Homecoming and invitations are being mailed to invite former members, pastors, friends, and family members to come join us for this day. Our guest minister will be Joe Brown who says he is looking forward to returning to Bethel as he is an elder here and a Commissioned Lay Pastor who has been serving the Dogwood Acres Presbyterian Church for a number of years. \*Everyone is being encouraged to bring covered dishes for us to enjoy lunch together following our worship service. June 18<sup>th</sup> will give us the opportunity to honor the men of our church as we celebrate Father's Day and thank our men of the church for all they do. Please invite others to come join us on that day as well.

Concerns continue to be shared that the congregation does not know a great deal of the music that is being chosen for worship. Our committee hears what you are saying and is trying to encourage the use of our hymnals more and the singing of songs enough times to make everyone feel more comfortable. Please share your thoughts and requests with Greyson so that we can learn new songs and sing those familiar ones that many have learned through the years. It was wonderful to hear everyone singing the two hymns that we shared during our May Day worship service. It was obvious that everyone knew those numbers as they sang with much enthusiasm.

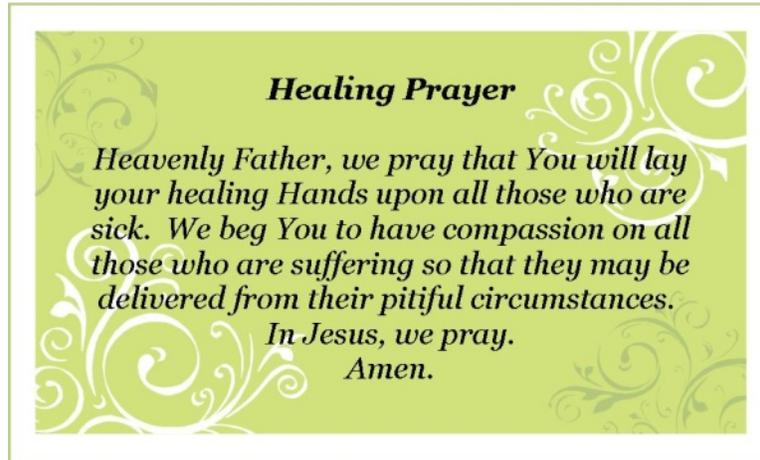
Your Worship and Music Committee is always open to hearing suggestions from the congregation but please know that old saying "If we keep doing everything the way we have always done it, we will keep getting the same old results" and that may mean people stop coming to worship because we are not doing anything new or more creative. We are trying our best to strike a happy balance but we may want to consider having a hymn of the month or something similar so that we will sing something often enough to allow all to feel comfortable singing.

Ushers/Greeters for June are: Linda Seawell, Ben Miles, John Paisley and Jim Flippin.

## COMMUNITY

### St. James United Methodist Church

There will be a Fish Fry/Hot Dog/Bake/Yard Sale on June 10<sup>th</sup> from 9-3. The church is located on 6301 Burlington Rd. Sedalia, NC. Yard Sale Tables (no food please) are \$10. To reserve a table call 336-449-7174 by May 27. Please leave contact information. Fish plate is \$8 with choice of two sides. Hot dog combo is \$3 with chips and drink.



### Prayers of the People

Facing or recovering from surgery: Jenny Bodkin(5/11), Paula Hoeger (5/11)

Testing, Rehab, Illness, Injury and/or Hospitalized: Kay Baker-respiratory, Bill Burney-weakness, John Burney-heart, Lynn Dawson-ankle, Daniel Marsh-eye, Lois Miles-MRI, Ed Rich, Jr.; Brenda Wall-bronchitis

Chronic or life-threatening disease, including cancer, COPD, etc.: Karen Lowe Blalock-early Alzheimers, Lee Bumgarner-lung cancer, Maurice Cawn-cancer, Bobby Chappell-pancreatic cancer, Paula Hoeger-cancer, Gail Hooks-pancreatic cancer; Von Ingle – brain cancer, Floyd Joyce-coma, Hannah Lambert-16 with ALS, Charles Long-heart/cancer/memory, Jeff Perkins – MS, Ed Rich, Jr.-marrow transplant; Larry Sprinkle-chemo, radiation, heart fluid & financial strain,

Grieving: friends and family of Terry Dicky

Homebound: Annie Alcon, Robert & Frances Alcon, Sonny Allen, Inez Dunn, John Key, Eileen Lowe, Mary Norman; Bill Overman

Other or unspecified concerns: President Trump & all leaders, ending hunger; persecuted believers; Christy Rhodes Machak in Bangladesh, all who don't know Jesus, conflict in Syria, North Korea, NC neighbors and others affected by recent storms; Howard & Peggy Dawson's granddaughter Catherine in Italy

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### July

14-Golden Gang/Cracker Barrel  
18-21 VBS

### August

11-Golden Gang/Carter's  
Back to School Food Drive

### September

9-Annual Yard Sale  
11-Golden Gang/Olive Garden  
17-Youth Sunday

### October

1-World Communion Day  
13-Golden Gang/Red Lobster  
15-Autumn Leaf Celebration

### November

12-Veteran's Day  
10-Golden Gang/Bethel  
11-BBQ Fall Festival  
26-Christ the King Communion

### December

3-Hanging of the Greens  
8-Golden Gang/Blue Ribbon  
24-Christmas Eve  
Candlelight Service



# JUNE 2017



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Education Committee 7 PM  Stephen & Ashley Smith Anniversary	2 John & Natasha Nix Anniversary	3 Work Day 8 AM 
4 Day of Pentecost Communion (Wear Red)  Election of Elders  Charlie Sheets Birthday	5 Sonny & Eva Allen Anniversary  Scouts 6:30 PM	6	7 Choir Practice 7 PM  	8 Worship Committee 7 PM	9 Golden Gang Village Grill Burlington 11:30 AM	10 Marilyn Hartis & Anita Broome Birthdays  Work Day Rain Date 8 AM
11 Homecoming    Guest Minister Joe Brown	12 Stewardship & Finance 7 PM	13 Property Committee 7 PM	14 Evangelism Committee 1:00 PM  Choir Practice 7 PM  Carolyn McLean Birthday	15 Jeffrey Allgeyer Birthday	16 Dennis Green Birthday	17 Annie Alcon Birthday
18  	19 Mission Committee 7 PM  Beacon Articles Due  Scott & Anna Amoriello Anniversary  Scouts 6:30 PM	20	21 Choir Practice 7 PM  	22	23 Misha Rhodes & Kristy Geringer Birthday	24
25 Pennies for Hunger    Linda Seawell Birthday	26 Cole Amoriello & Michele Terry Birthdays	27 Joe & Susan Brown Anniversary	28 Choir Practice 7 PM	29 Joe & Julie Allgeyer Anniversary	30 Sylvia Overman & Inez Dunn Birthdays	