



The Good News of Bath Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

The Mission Statement of the Bath Christian Church is:

*“To serve the living God, to nurture our personal faith,
& to witness the good news of God’s love to others.”*

~Pastor Jim’s Thoughts for May~

As we emerge from an April that none of us could have predicted in January, we now face a new month. During April, we learned some new words and practices that left us with a limit to our ability to freely move around as we have become accustomed. We learned about “social distancing” and “stay at home” while we were seeking to lessen the spread of a new strain of virus that threw the globe into an international pandemic.

Aside from our frustration, many of us learned that we had more time available than our normal busy lifestyle affords. How did we fill this time? Maybe we did puzzles with our family. Maybe we cleaned out closets that we never dared to approach earlier. Maybe we read books that we never had time for previously. Perhaps, we started to read the Bible only to find a new frustration.

Most of us have, at one time or another, determined to read the Bible. Not a few have abandoned their attempt because they were over-whelmed by the volume of varying text, boring history, or an inability to wrap our finite brain around a book that describes an infinite God. This is a common complaint that I have heard more than a few times. To help with these problems, I will share some ideas that I found in an article written by Sonya Downing, a contributing writer for the blog Christianity.com.

Ms. Downing suggest that sometimes our approach to reading the Bible is not realistic or effective. Many people pick up their Bible resolved to read it from Genesis 1:1 through to Revelation 22:21 only to find they stall quickly and their mission to read the Bible is abandoned. So, how should we read this book from God?

Maybe the real question we need to answer is “Why should we read this book from God?” The whole point of reading the Bible is to grow closer to God. We read the Bible so that we may learn to live and love like Christ did.

For many of us, we view reading the Bible as a chore. It is an item on some imaginary check list that we need to do to be pleasing to or to win favor with an unapproachable God. When David wrote: **But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night. (Psalm 1:2 NASB)**, we find it hard to imagine someone who delights in reading the Bible.

Maybe the first step in approaching the Bible is to change our image of God. God is a loving father who wants only the best for us. He has left us a rather long and detailed letter (containing 66 books) in which He shares the things that make Him happy, the things that make Him angry, the things that make Him sad, it contains the things that He chose to share with us. Do you want to be closer to God? Read His letter to you.

Now we have the reason to read the Bible established, we need to come up with the “How” for reading. As I stated earlier, reading from Genesis to Revelation is not an easily achieved task nor is it very effective in helping us to draw closer to God. We need a systematic and logical approach that will help us read this letter from our loving Father. We need to find a starting point that will open the door for the next step and aid in our understanding and growth. Consider these steps as a good beginning point. We will look at reading the Bible as a building project.

The foundation— Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, collectively called the gospels, tell the story of Jesus’ ministry, death, and resurrection. Nothing in the Bible makes sense without Jesus, so read these four books first.

The side walls— Acts tells the story of how God worked in the early Church, which showcases God’s power. Romans complements that display of power with an explanation of what salvation actually means. Understanding God’s power and His decision to use that power for mercy is crucial and revealed in the books of Acts and Romans. They should be the second stage of our building project. Continued

The front and back walls— The Old Testament’s eclectic mix of law, prophecy, stories, and poetry shows all the times that God loved and redeemed Israel over the centuries. The Old Testament shows that God had planned redemption from the beginning. After we have learned about the Christ, we begin to see, from the Old Testament, the enormity of God’s plan.

The windows and doors— Windows let in light, and doors let in people. The instructional letters of 1 Corinthians through Jude shed light on how Christians should live, and they invite both Jews and Gentiles into a home with God. We read this part next so we can see what everyday life looks like when we live it for God.

The roof— Revelation completes the Bible the way a roof completes a house. The visions God showed John describe the victory of God over Satan in the redemption story He wrote for us. Since this happily-ever-after doesn’t make sense without the once-upon-a-time and all the events which are unfolded in the rest of the book. Save Revelation for last.

To wrap-up, we need to read passages in the context where they appear. What? Try to understand who is speaking, to whom, and on what topic. The Bible is conveniently divided into chapters and verses to facilitate our searching for passages but those chapters and verses may interrupt the original passage. An example is the often-quoted verse from Jerimiah where we find: **For I know the plans that I have for you,’ declares the LORD, ‘plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope. (Jeremiah 29:11 NASB)**

This is addressed to the nation of Israel and not to an individual. While it offers hope, it is often lifted out of context and addressed to an individual.

The point is, as you read, read enough to see the complete picture of the passage that you are reading.

My admonition is to read the Bible prayerfully. For some, reading first thing in the morning is beneficial while others may prefer to read just before retiring for the night. Either way is fine. Pick up the Bible and come to know a father who loves you beyond your wildest dreams and has given you more than you can think or ask.

~Devotion~

Continue to Bear Good Fruit

When my husband, Carey, was 12 years old, his dad had a massive stroke and died four days later. His mother was left destitute with five children. This included Carey, three girls, and a three month old baby boy. Since the children's father had been a golf professional, they lived at the country club. When he died, the family was forced to find somewhere else to live.

Carey's mom, later called "Mammaw" by my children and me, took the \$3,000 her husband left in a life insurance policy and searched for another home. She ultimately purchased a tiny, rundown two-bedroom house for \$1,500. She used most of the remainder of the insurance money to enclose the back porch for a much needed third bedroom.

Outside this dilapidated house was a gnarled pear tree, its limbs twisted and broken. Mammaw hated the way that old tree looked, but she couldn't afford to pay someone to cut it down and haul it away.

The first year they lived there the ugly old tree yielded a few pears. The next year, she watered it and put a few iron nails around it, hoping they would act as fertilizer. She was pleasantly surprised when the tree produced a good crop of pears that summer.

The old tree, once thought of as worthless and unsightly, became a wellspring for Mammaw's generosity. Over the next 45 years of her life, she canned over a thousand jars of its fruit. She put up pears, pear preserves, and her own original pear relish. These were received as welcomed gifts by friends and family.

Much like that old pear tree, our bodies age and become wrinkled and misshapen. We may think of ourselves as ugly and unproductive, but thankfully, the Lord does not look at the things people look at.

"People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart." 1 Samuel 16:7 (NIV)

We need Living Water, the nourishment of God's Word, and the fruit of the Holy Spirit to be productive and share our blessings with others. Until the day we die, we are to continue to bear the fruit of the Spirit of love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. (See Galatians 5:22).

The fruit of the Spirit is a wonderful gift of encouragement we're to offer to others.

"Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing."
1 Thessalonians 5:11 (NIV)

We can be generous and bless others when we share this tasty fruit.

www.cbn.com/devotions

**Sometimes
when you're
in a dark
place, you
tend to think
you have been
buried
What if you've
been
planted?**

.....mindfullyglam.com

~May Schedules~

Greeter Schedule:



May 3 Rachel Jordan
 May 10 Claudia Alligood
 May 17 Phil McRoy
 May 24 Barbara Morris
 May 31 Marcia Norman

Flower Schedule:



May 3 Joyce & Mark Aydlett
 May 10 Shannon Blackstone
 May 17 Jane & Richard Wright
 May 24 Kandice & Billy Dean
 May 31 Sarah & John Burgess

Nursery Schedule:



May 3 Cynthia Stell & Linda Heath
 May 10 Connie & Roger Winstead
 May 17 Ellen Heck & Julie Crawford
 May 24 Cassandra & Ronnie Gilbertson
 May 31 Jessie Brooks & LaDonna Younger

Reminder: At least 1 person should be in nursery by 9:45 AM and remain for late arrivals.

Children's Moment Schedule:



May 3 Brenda Godley
 May 10 Mother's Day Committee
 May 17 Kids of God's World
 May 24 Becky McRoy
 May 31 Darlene Ormond

Serving Schedule:

May 3

Elders: L. Wingate & J. Barnhill
 Deacon of Wk: L. Wingate & B. Dean
 Deacons: B. Dean, E. Gurganus
 L. Gurganus & B. McRoy

May 10

Elders: J. Barnhill & C. Dupree
 Deacon of Wk: J. Barnhill & B. Norman
 Deacons: B. Norman, L. Schmitt
 R. Smith & B. Tuten

May 17

Elders: C. Dupree & G. Morris
 Deacon of Wk: D. Dupree & D. Woolard
 Deacons: D. Woolard, L. Woolard
 D. Adams & C. Cartwright

May 24

Elders: G. Morris & H. Robertson
 Deacon of Wk: G. Morris & P. Chrismon
 Deacons: P. Chrismon, B. Dean
 E. Gurganus & L. Gurganus

May 31

Elders: H. Robertson & S. Stell
 Deacon of Wk: H. Robertson & B. McRoy
 Deacons: B. McRoy, B. Norman
 L. Schmitt & R. Smith

~Announcements~

All activities of the church are postponed until further notice due to the coronavirus outbreak. If you need to meet with Pastor Jim Cullen he currently is in the church office annex Monday-Thursday 8:00am-12noon or by phone 252-939-5937. Feel free to reach out to him for any needs you may have.

A reminder to worshippers desiring to contribute tithes and offerings during coronavirus church closing, they can be mailed to Bath Christian Church, PO Box 300, Bath, NC 27808 Attention: Treasurer.

Be sure to check the church website for Pastor Jim's midweek messages and the Sunday Sermons. These are located on the website under Sermons and then click on Video. Click on the word Sermon to find a printed version.

The church calendar for May, 2020 is not attached since all activities are currently cancelled. We will print the calendar again when normal activities resume.

May Birthdays:

May 3	Evyn Gilbertson
May 7	Caroline Morris
May 11	Louis Gurganus
May 18	Lynn Wingate Davis
May 25	Mark Godley
May 28	Gray Lewis
May 29	Sarah Stone

Church Directory Update: Christy Drake, 3207 Possum Track Rd., Chocowinity, NC 27817, Phone 252-402-4239.

Please make the church secretary aware of church directory changes.

Eagles Wings

Thank you for continuing to support the Eagles Wings food pantry. Since the Church and Fellowship Hall are currently closed due to the coronavirus outbreak Joyce and/or Mark Aydlett are placing the basket on the bench outside the fellowship hall daily. Your nonperishable items are greatly needed as Eagles Wings anticipates a spike in new clients during this time. Monetary gifts are also needed but do not leave cash in the basket. Checks are accepted made payable to Eagles Wings. There is still a need for plastic grocery bags. Bags can be placed in the basket along with other items.

Recognition of our Graduates

It is that time of year to bring recognition to our 2020 graduates. Due to Covid-19 we do not have a set date for our Graduate Recognition Sunday at this time. However, there will be a special Sunday designated for honoring them in the future. Eighth grade, high school, college graduates, and marshals will be recognized.

If you have family members you wish to have recognized in our June newsletter and on our [to be determined] Graduate Sunday please contact Nancy Hill 402-7388 or Alex Shreve 725-2019. You may also contact the church office 923-4140. We need the **full given names** of high school graduates for the imprinting of their Bibles. For college graduates, please include the college and degree received. Please provide this info no later than May 18 to be included in the newsletter.

*****Do not assume that a graduate's name will be included. We try very hard to not overlook anyone and we depend on the information we receive. Please submit all names by the deadline. Thank you.**



Prayer Requests : Church Family Prayer Concerns:

Bill Bertram; Charlie Clark; Ella Mae Smith & Michael Corless; Bill Cutler; Bobby Drake; Neal Duncan; Marian Everett; Liz & Pete Fell; Beverly & John Holt; Jackie Mullen; Carol Richardson; Gary Sheppard; Beverly & Ron Tincher, caregivers &

Unspoken Requests.

Friends & Community Prayer Concerns: Olivia Armstrong & her mother Lee; Jane Bass; Rickie Bause; Mark & Mary Scott Baver; Frankie Black; Vera Boseman; Judy Boyd; Susan Boyd; Barbara Britt; Roy Buck; Tilman Carter; Virginia Chrismon, John Conway; Evan Cornelius; Colt Cowell; Anthony Cutler; Glenda Douglas; Sylvester Ebersson; George Elliott; Deborah Everette, Esther Flowers; Dianne Floyd; Chris Gibbs; Gail Gibbs; Danny Gonzales sister; Larry Green; Pauline Gurganus; Jon Hadel; Amy Adams Hardee; Chris Harris; Hunter Hasty; Mike Isbell; Billy Ivey; Vickie Jessen; Sheila Cox Jones; John Kelly; Sue Kemmer; Linwood Lewis; Ronnie Martin; Carol McRoy; Allison Mills; Josh Moye; Alvin Norman; Stephen Oden; Gladys Owens; Emily Page; Mike Painter; Wilson Paul; Brian Peele; Cynthia Pendleton; Joyce Pitt; Larry Poore; Brandi Robbins; Wendy Rouse; Larry Rowe (CT's friend); Stephanie Sabbra; Dean Sheppard; Michael Spencer; Raymond Spencer; Don Steffa; Susie Swinson; Sonya & Roger Tuning; Heather Van Staalduinen; Becky Sheppard Waters; Faye Waters; Ronnie Watson; Miranda Woolard; Wendy Woolard; teenagers throughout the world; students/teachers/families; those affected by the coronavirus & Unspoken Requests.

The families of Betty Beacham, Jesse Boyd, LaRue Evans, Lucille Evans, Bonnie Kelly, Mark "Oz" Osnoe, Jonathan Prechtl, Jule Purvis, Joe Thurman, Marie Owens Toler.

Military Prayer List:

Jim Bass, Blane Boyd, Chase Brooks, Zack Cook, Timm Cox, Will Cutler, Zack Davis, Grant Fath, Kerry Mills, Hayden Tankard, Grayce Woolard, Lucy Wallace.

In Nursing Homes: Dorothy Mathews, Bob Miller.

Please submit news to me
for the June newsletter by
9:00 am Thursday, May 21st. Thank you!
You can contact Jessie Brooks at 252-945-6362
or via email: jessiebrooks5@yahoo.com. OR
secretary@bathchristianchurch.com