



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 January

As I sit and ponder the coming Christmas season, I have already begun to frame this year’s Advent Series. This year we will approach the birth of Jesus with a spirit of joy. The theme for Advent is “Joy to the World.” The sermon series does not directly reference the song we often hear or sing during the holiday season. It is more a focus on the joy and good news associated with the fact that Jesus came into the world as part of God’s plan. The details of that plan are, at times, obscured by trappings that may have nothing at all to do with the events of that night in Bethlehem more than 2000 years ago.

John, in his gospel, tells of the life of Jesus from a different perspective than the other gospels. Rather than starting with angel visits or shepherds; he begins with these words: **In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him not even one thing came into being that has come into being. In Him was life, and the life was the Light of mankind. And the Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not grasp (or overpower) it. (John 1:1-5 NASB)**

Aside from the fact that Jesus is called the Word and the Word is called God, we are told that Jesus is **the Light of mankind**. One significant fact about light is that it overcomes darkness. Jesus is called the light that shines in darkness and the darkness cannot overpower His light.

As I write this article, I was reminded in this morning’s weather segment that tonight we are in the new moon phase so the night time sky will be dark. This will be prime conditions for viewing the Leonid Meteor shower. The little flashes of lights against the dark sky will allow for better chances to see the meteors as they streak across the sky. The light over powers the darkness and not the other way around.

The idea of contrast between dark and light is as old as the earth itself. **In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was a formless and desolate emptiness, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters. Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light. God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. (Genesis 1:1-4 NASB)**

From the beginning, God has called for light to expel darkness. The very season of Christmas is one filled with lights. For many of us, we picture scenes of lights reflected and amplified against the snow-covered landscape. The brightness of light helps to lift our spirits. We revel in seeing our friends and neighbors festoon their homes with many lights. All of these displays lift our spirits and increase our joy.

The most magnificent joy we can experience during this season or any other season is the realization that this baby miraculously born to a young couple in the city of David (Bethlehem) came to bring light into a dark world. The light of God’s love revealed in human form. Jesus said: **I have come as Light into the world, so that no one who believes in Me will remain in darkness. (John 12:46 NASB)**

From the beginning, God’s plan was for us to be **rescued from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. (Colossians 1:13-14 NASB)**

This is the joyous news of the season. God reached out through this tiny baby born and placed in an animal feeding trough. God sent His light into the world so that we might be rescued from darkness into eternal light. Ann and I extend our personal wishes for each and everyone of you to know this joy and to enjoy this Christmas season to the fullest. Our love goes out to you now and always.

~Devotion~

Where Did You Take Your Stress in 2020?

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.” Matthew 11:28 (NIV)

I’ve heard it said that banana bread was the official food of quarantine, and part of the reason many of us *gained* “the COVID-19.” We turned to comfort foods rather than the Comforter. Likewise, Amazon Prime helped us deal with our stress online. From retail therapy to streaming distractions, we self-medicated our way through a very hard year.

Jesus knew our tendency to take our stress to false-fillers and false gods. That’s why He invited us, *“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest”* (Matthew 11:28).

This year wasn’t the first time I found myself turning to something other than God for comfort. In 2014, I was struggling as a young mom. My emotions were all over the place, and I kept turning to the pantry to get me through my days. I could see the way my children crashed after eating candy and knew I was crashing multiple times each day as well. So, I reached out to my friends on Facebook to see if anyone would join me in a 40-day sugar fast, and the response was overwhelming.

There’s something about sugar that has a grip on us, and we know it. We run to it for our comfort and our reward. We turn to it in boredom. We depend on it when life is stressful. We crave it when we’re depressed and use it as confectionary therapy. And even when life is at its best, we celebrate with cake.

My sugar addiction was only exacerbating my problems, not alleviating them. I was up and down on an emotional rollercoaster. I was gaining weight, my muscles and joints were always hurting, and my sleep was fitful. I was grumpy, tired and continued to be impatient with my kids and my husband. *Sadly, sugar wasn’t making me sweet.*

I didn’t need any more conviction; what I needed was transformation. I needed more than a diet; I needed something deep within me to change.

You see, my problem wasn’t merely physical, emotional or relational. At the core, my struggle was spiritual. I didn’t have a sugar problem ... I had a God problem.

I was running from sugar high to sugar high to get me through my days instead of running to the Most High.

Perhaps sugar isn’t your vice, but maybe your phone is. You reach for it when you’re weary and stressed. Instead of bringing your heavy load to the One who made the world, you turn to everyone in the world on the web. Or maybe retail therapy is where you run — not because you have an empty shelf but because you suffer from an empty self. You see, the issue isn’t our highly sugared lattes, mindless scrolling or online shopping ... our issue is that we’ve stopped taking our burdens to God. But the more we turn to other things, the less we find what we need.

Given the stress we’ve experienced this year, I think we could all benefit from a radical pivot. Turning away from that thing we’ve been running to, in order to return to the One who said, *“Come to me.”* That’s exactly what fasting is: setting down something temporary and ordinary to return to the One who is eternally extraordinary.

What would happen if you laid down everything you’ve been turning to and started this next year with your eyes on Him?

It was never banana bread’s job to comfort us during these “unprecedented” times. It was never coffee’s job to give us the strength to get through 2020, or social media’s job to meet our deepest social needs when we’re social-distancing. It was never food’s job to fill the holes and make us whole. Only Jesus can make us whole ... and holy. And only by taking our heavy load to Jesus can we finally find the rest and help we’ve been craving.

Dear Lord, nothing has worked to set me free from the compulsive way I turn to other things when I could be turning to You. I need more of You and less of the stuff that leaves me hungry. Take all these heavy idols I’m laying down and teach me to lean into Your gentle refining. Take my life as I empty it out and fill me with Yourself. Your Word proclaims: “It is for freedom that Christ has set us free” (Galatians 5:1a, NIV). I’m choosing to believe that’s true. Set me free! In the bondage-breaking, freedom-giving, sweet name of Jesus, Amen.

Wendy Speake

~Board Minutes~

The Board of Bath Christian Church met November 1, 2020 with Starley Stell, Chairman, presiding. Louis Gurganus led the group in the opening prayer. Minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved. Claude Dupree gave the monthly and quarterly financial reports. Becky McRoy motioned to accept the reports as presented. The quarterly report will be distributed to members.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Starley stated that the slate of Elders and Deacons had been presented to the congregation at the annual Congregational meeting in October. The slate was accepted as presented.
2. The minister stated that problems with the camera/video equipment still exist and the committee involved with the project is working to correct the issues.

NEW BUSINESS

1. The installation of the Elders and Deacons will occur on November 29.
2. The Elder and Deacon of the week will continue to serve communion in the annex.
3. Time change was discussed for Board meetings. Approved time will be that during Daylight Saving Time the board will meet at 7:30PM: During Eastern Standard Time meetings will begin at 7:00.
4. Officers for the Board will be elected at the December meeting.
5. Discussion followed concerning observing the traditional events of the Christmas season. The Chrismon Tree and Advent programs will continue. The Christmas Eve Candlelight Service will be decided upon at the December board meeting.
6. Leon stated that some church activities such as Family Night, Men's Breakfast, CMF and CWF were not meeting at this time due to the pandemic. He asked, "Should we follow these same rules for other planned events that could involve larger groups? The group agreed that the same rules should be followed.

7. Alex Shreve, Youth Director, shared the activities of the Youth Groups.

MINISTERS REMARKS

1. Reported on activities including: 2 hospital trips in Greenville, 109 phone calls, issues with the camera, 2 hospital visits in October, 104 visits, 1 funeral.
2. Asked for prayers for Carolyn Ambrose who is to have surgery Nov. 2.

Gerald Morris closed the meeting with prayer.

June Wallace, Secretary

*Words are like keys
if you choose them
right, they can open
any heart and
shut any mouth.*

thefunnybeaver.com – Pinterest

**The razor blade is
sharp but can't cut a
tree; the axe is strong
but can't cut the hair.
Everyone is important
according to his/her own
unique purpose.....
Never look down on
anyone
unless you are admiring
their shoes.**

redditt.com - Pinerest

The Good News - January 2021

Page 3

~CWF~

~January Schedules~

The Bath Christian Church CWF met in the Fellowship Hall on Tuesday December 8, 2020 for our Christmas meeting. There were fourteen ladies present: Alice Wingate, Nancy Hill, Betty Schmitt, Jessie Brooks, Gale Walton, Linda Heath, Rachel Jordan, Debbie Smith, Sandra Dupree, Claudia Allgood, Joyce Aydlett, Nelda Ormond, Barbara Morris and Cynthia Stell.

Barbara presided and opened with prayer. Claudia read the devotion "A Slice of Life."

The offering was collected. Nelda gave the treasurer's report.

Business:

Debbie read the names on our Shut-In list and new names were added. Deliveries will be made on Tuesday, December 15, 2020.

The Nominating Committee (Joyce, Betty and Debbie) met and Joyce gave the following recommendations for officers:

President - Claudia Allgood

Co-President - Nancy Hill

Secretary - Gale Walton

Treasurer - Nelda Ormond

Linda moved to accept the recommendations of the committee. Alice seconded. Carried.

The Budget Committee (Rachel, Claudia, Marcia and Nelda) met and Rachel reviewed the budget items. After some discussion, Nancy moved to accept the recommendations of the committee.

Betty seconded. Carried.

On December 12, 2020 the CWF will have a Christmas Goodies and Desserts Drive-Thru in the Church parking lot. The hours are 9:00 am - 12:00. Please have your items at the Fellowship Hall on Friday, December 11, 2020 by 3:00 PM.

Nancy closed our meeting with prayer.

Everyone brought goodies to exchange and carry home to enjoy.

Respectfully submitted,
Cynthia Stell

The Greeter, Serving, and Children's Moment Schedules will not be printed again until we can enjoy worshipping together without the fear of spreading the coronavirus.



Flower Schedule:

- January 3 Rachel & Cliff Jordan
- January 10 Cynthia & Starley Stell
- January 17 Sylvia & Jamie Barnhill
- January 24 Terry & John Everett,
Rodney Bowen
- January 31 Linda & Gerald Heath

.....

Nursery (Little Lion's Class) Schedule:

- January 3 Lexi Clark - Teacher
Debbie Smith - Assistant
- January 10 Lexi Clark - Teacher
Darlene Ormond - Assistant
- January 17 Lexi Clark - Teacher
Sandra Dupree - Assistant
- January 24 Lexi Clark - Teacher
Cynthia Stell - Assistant
- January 31 Lexi Clark - Teacher
Linda Heath - Assistant

January Birthdays

January 1	James Shivley
January 3	Marla Waters
January 4	Tina Clark
January 5	MaKayla Gilbertson
January 6	Jamie Barnhill John Everett
January 10	Cynthia Stell
January 16	Pearson Chrismon
January 24	Jean Mink Hunter Williams
January 28	Jim Cullen Ronnie Gilbertson Sallie LaCava
January 31	Sylvia Barnhill

Church Website

A reminder to check the church's website bathchristianchurch.com for our pastor's midweek messages and Sunday sermons. **Our 10:00 AM Sunday Morning Services are currently being live-streamed.** Our Youth Director, Alex Shreve, has a Bath Christian Church Youth Facebook Page.

Church Calendar

The church calendar for January, 2021 is not attached since all activities are currently cancelled. We will print the calendar again when normal activities resume.

~Announcements~

Church Opening

We opened our sanctuary for Sunday morning services at 10:00am on June 7, 2020. We have practiced social distancing in entering, seating, interacting with one another and leaving. To our knowledge we have not had any COVID-19 issues. We encourage everyone who feels safe in the modified service to consider rejoining us.

Vulnerable populations have been encouraged to stay home for their own safety.

At the present time we are offering only the 10:00am service, NO Sunday school. Our Nursery (Little Lion's Class) was sanitized and reopened October 4th with Lexi Clark Teacher and volunteers assisting. Proper cleaning protocol is in place before and after each service. The Youth have relocated from the Fellowship Hall back to the Annex Wing. Other church functions will be phased in as the coronavirus levels down (or out) and following state and national guidelines.

Eagles Wings

The Eagles Wings basket is located outside the Fellowship Hall daily. Thanks for continuing to support this worthy and needy cause as we have recently seen a decline in contributions. Your nonperishable items are greatly needed as Eagles Wings is experiencing a spike in new clients during the coronavirus outbreak and a lot of families are without income. 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 which can be placed in the basket along with other items.

Please make the church secretary aware of church directory additions/changes including birthdate (month/day).



Prayer Requests : Church Family Prayer Concerns:
Carolyn Ambrose; Charlie Clark;
Ella Mae Smith & Michael Corless;
Ann Cullen; Bill Cutler; Peggy Davis;
Neil Duncan; Liz & Pete Fell; Beverly & John Holt;
Jackie Mullen; Harold Ormond; Carol Richardson;
Gary Sheppard; Beverly & Ron Tincher,
Jeannie Woolard; caregivers & **Unspoken Requests.**

Friends & Community Prayer Concerns: Jane Bass;
Amanda Boyd; Susan Boyd; Tony Boyd; Tilman Carter;
John Conway; Anthony Cutler; Cleve Edwards; Esther
Flowers; Dianne Floyd; Chris Gibbs; Gail Gibbs; Larry
Green; Pauline Gurganus; Chris Harris; Hunter Hasty;
Mike Isbell; Billy Jefferson; Sue Kemmer; Linwood
Lewis; Jamie Locklear; Mavis Owens; Mike Painter;
Wilson Paul; Linda Poore; Jim Potter; Stephanie Sabbra;
Dean Sheppard; Raymond Spencer; Don Steffa; Bonnie
Swain; Susie Swinson; Roger Tuning; Faye Waters;
Oscar Webster; Deanna Woolard; Margaret Ann Woolard;
Wendy Woolard; teenagers throughout the world, those
affected by the coronavirus, & **Unspoken Requests.**

The families of: Katherine Adams, Myra Marie Alligood,
Bill Barber, Mary Pinkham Bridgeman, Virginia
Chrismon, Larry Cofer, Sam Coffield, Naomi Fulcher,
Jean Gunnels, Betty Hindsley, Gerlaine Houston,
Marlene Jennerjohn, Kimberly Jones, Charles Lueck,
Regina Matos, Michael Schatz, Tim Sparrow, Jim Speaks,
Faye Warner, Linda Witchell, Daryl Woolard, Bill
Zachman,

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: Pete Fell, Bob Miller.

Please submit news to me
for the February newsletter by
9:00 am Friday, January 22nd. Thank you!
You can contact Jessie Brooks at 252-945-6362
or via email: jessiebrooks5@yahoo.com. OR
secretary@bathchristianchurch.com