

Star of Bethlehem

"Abiding in Christ, Loving as Christ, Inviting to Christ"



March 2011

SPOTLIGHT ON...



Bob and Helen Meyer

Bobby and I have been looking for a church home for 3 years. When we walked into Bethlehem Presbyterian we felt the Lord had led us to this place. The members were so welcoming, we felt at home right away.

Bobby is from upstate New York and I am from the North Carolina coast. We met in a health club in Charlotte 8 years ago. We became friends and will be celebrating our 5th wedding anniversary in June.

I owned and operated a hair salon, now retired, Bobby is a painting contractor. Our hobbies are dancing, old cars, working out and just being together.

Dr. T has a wonderful message and gets it across with humor and some fine acting. We look forward to many years of fellowship with the good souls at Bethlehem.

Bob and Helen Meyer



Out like a lamb

The March wind roars like a lion in the sky,
And makes us shiver as he passes by.

When winds are soft, and the days are warm and clear,
Just like a gentle lamb, then spring is here.

P.O.W.E.R. PRAYER

Praying Our Way to Easter Radically spells P.O.W.E.R.!

Our Session is asking each of us to be prayed for DAILY throughout the forty days prior to Easter. But for that to happen, we need your help, by your doing three things:

On one of the **P.O.W.E.R. PRAYER** cards, Sign your name, and check where it says "Yes, I will participate in our Bethlehem **P.O.W.E.R. PRAYER Program**. Then place it into the offering plate either Sunday, Feb. 20 or Feb. 27. Or you may mail it to the Church office (there is a space on the card for specific prayer requests, if you would like to use it – requests will NOT be made public);

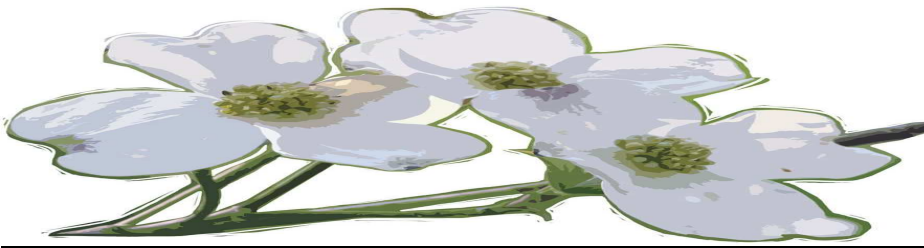
As you leave the March 6 morning worship service, take one card from the basket at the door and then:

PRAY for that person **beginning Wednesday, March 9** (the 1st Day of Lent) each day until Easter (**guidelines and suggestions will be provided in the bulletin for those who may not feel fluent in "prayer"**). Know that someone else will be praying specifically for YOU each day!

That's it! It's as easy as 1-2-3! It is our hope that **EVERY ONE OF YOU** will take part. This is a simple opportunity to minister to one another at a profoundly spiritual level. Prayer changes things!

Special note for those who cannot get to Church: We especially want you to be able to participate! We will see that you soon get a card to fill out and will deliver to you one from the congregation after February 6!

Note to Parents: Please help your child(ren) participate; a child's prayers are special: they tend to be unencumbered by the anti-believing stuff that too often rattles around in our adult heads! So please see that each child has a card filled out for them and that they take one on March 6.



March 2011

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2 7 pm – Presbyterian Women @ Ruth Alexander’s home	3	4 24 hours of poverty	5 Chicken & Dumplings 4 - 8 pm
6 Youth Sunday 1 svc. MPR No JAMS 5 cents a meal offering	7	8 7 pm—Session	9 7 pm—Mission & Service MT P.O.W.E.R. Prayer begins	10	11	12 Spring Forward 1 hour!
13 JAMS—4pm Choir 4 pm Youth 6pm	14	15	16	17	18	19
20 Choir 4 pm Youth 6pm	21	22	23 10am - Congregational Care MT	24	25	26 10am - 1pm Parade of Tables
27 Mission offering for H.E.L.P. Crisis Pregnancy Center Choir 4 pm Youth 6pm	28	29	30	31		



“So how’s it going there at Bethlehem?” I get asked from time to time. Especially at Presbytery meetings and other such events.

Pastor’s Message

And I shamelessly begin to talk about you. I tell them about the dedicated, hardworking leadership on the Session, Presbyterian Women, and other places. Your children’s ministry, Sunday School, JAMS, Youth Group, Preschool, and Scouting programs. The myriad of people who work behind the scenes, volunteering to do chores - both small and large – that nobody ever finds out who did it. Your extremely competent and cohesive staff. Your great-sounding Praise Band and choir. Your compassion toward one another, toward each other’s families, toward the neighborhood and beyond, and kindness now being stretched to people in crises in a newly developing *Celebrate Recovery* ministry. The warm hospitality toward newcomers. The desire to respect and bless those who might be called the “Old Guard”.

And I tend to go on and on, until either they walk away from ‘bragadocious overload’, I run out of breath, or I somehow come to my social senses and politely ask about their church way before I am really finished talking about you. They are probably lucky I don’t just whip out my big fat wallet and start showing them pictures of you all, like some swelled-up grandpa!



I feel privileged to be living and ministering in such a faith community. You are to me the things Paul calls the believers at Thessalonica (in II Thessalonians 2:19-20):

¹⁹ What is our hope, joy or crown that we can brag about in front of our Lord Jesus when he comes? Isn’t it all of you? ²⁰ You are our glory and joy! - *(Common English Bible)*

¹⁹ You are our hope, our joy, and the crown we will take pride in when our Lord Jesus Christ comes. ²⁰ Truly you are our glory and our joy. - *(New Century Version)*

Who do you think we’re going to be proud of when Our Master Jesus appears if it’s not you? You’re Our pride and joy! *(The Message)*

¹⁹ After all, what gives us hope and joy, and what will be our proud reward and crown as we stand before our Lord Jesus when he returns? It is you! ²⁰ Yes, you are our pride and joy. *(NLT)*

May our Lord continue to bless this congregation. And may you continue to be a blessing to all who come to this people and place called ‘Bethlehem’.

In Jesus,

Dr. T, Pastor



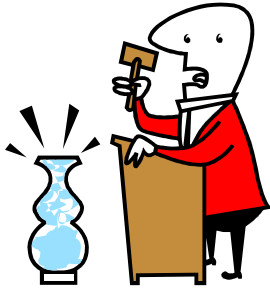
Congregational Giving At A Glance

	<u>February 2011</u>	<u>2011 Year-to-Date</u>
Actual	\$9,315.00	\$37,176.00
Budget		
Difference		

Three Kinds of Giving

“There are three types of giving: grudge giving, duty giving and thanksgiving. Grudge giving says, ‘I have to’; duty giving says, ‘I ought to’ ; and thanksgiving says, ‘I want to’. He latter comes from a full heart. Thanksgiving is an open gate into the love of God”

— Robert N. Rodonmayer




Donations Needed for Silent Auction

So . . . let's think for a minute. What is it that you do well? Do you bake a scrumptious cake or make delicious jam or jelly? Are you

a great cook who would prepare a meal for a family or food for a dinner party? Is your hobby working in the woodworking shop? Could you design and landscape someone's yard? Are you talented at detailing a car? Would you be willing to pet sit for someone going on a trip? Do you know a business that would donate a product or service? Did you receive a gift at some time that you do not plan to use? Are you willing to purchase an item to donate?

These are just a few of the many scenarios that may give you an idea for a way you might be able to contribute to the upcoming Silent Auction portion of the Parade of Tables sponsored by Presbyterian Women. Last year, the Silent Auction brought in almost as much money to our fundraiser as the Parade of Tables itself. This year we are looking for an even bigger participation from all of you. The Parade of Tables event will be held on Saturday, March 26. The Silent Auction will open at 10:00 a.m. with the Parade of Tables luncheon beginning at 11:00. We will need items for the auction the week before (baked or homemade items from the kitchen the day before). Please contact Patricia Kindley (704)753-4782 or Alice Habbal (704) 753-4855 with either questions you may have or information concerning items or services you are willing to contribute. If you call us, then we will not need to call you!

3rd ...Alison Brame, Mary Hall
 4th ...Henry Hall
 7th... Johnny Gordon, Ernestine Helms,
 Jim Vicars
 8th... Jesse Hargett
 10th...Charles Greene
 11th...Judy Johnson
 13th...Mike McConnaughey
 17th...Tom Crawford
 24th...Debbie Watwood
 25th...Libby Duncan
 26th...Virginia Moss
 31st....Joe Cuthbertson

If your birthday is not listed or if you are not sure we have your birthday, please call the church office so we can make sure we have it for the future!



Living as a Christian

It isn't easy to live the Christian life. Some years ago, Dom Helder Camera, Brazil's Roman Catholic bishop, said: "When I gave food to the poor, they called me a saint; when I asked why there were so many poor, I was called a Communist." Do good consistently, and you will pay a price sooner or later.

Jesus was sometimes considered radical. He talked to a Samaritan woman at a well. He healed and ate grain from a field on the Sabbath. He hung out with sinners.

The Pharisees and the Sadducees didn't work to get rid of Jesus because he spoke of the birds of the air and the lilies of the field. Rather, it was because he denounced the unjust leaders he called hypocrites (see Matthew 23).

Lent is a good time to recall these words of Jesus: "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me" (Matthew 16:24, NRSV).



Love is in the air at preschool! Valentine's Day is always a fun-filled day of games, crafts and mailing each other cards and notes to let them know we love them. We also had fun hunting for shadows and creating silhouettes for Groundhogs day.

The preschool welcomed a new student, Vinnie, during the month of February!

The preschool is now accepting registrations for the Fall Semester. Please call the church office at 704-753-4223 and ask for Robin to receive information and schedule an appointment.

Thank you all for your support of the preschool and our mission.

Please note that we have a peanut allergy alert this year. If any group is using the preschool rooms remember to wash the tables and chairs when food is served and take out the trash.

In Christ's love,
Robin Graham



Thank You

The family of Rachel Helms and Annie May Gilliam wishes to express heartfelt thanks to our Bethlehem Church family for the many kind expressions of sympathy. All the delicious foods, caring phone calls, lovingly sent cards, beautiful flowers and plants, and thoughtful memorials were and continue to be greatly appreciated and will not be soon forgotten. This double whammy was indeed eased by your many kindnesses.



March 2011

March 6 - Youth Sunday—1 service MPR
10:30 Ushers: Danny & Gayle Philemon
10:30 Nursery: Mike & Tana McConnaughey
Open Church: B.B. Haigler
Close Church: B.B. Haigler

March 13
8:45 Greeters: Don & Ann Price
8:45 Nursery: Oscar & Deanna Outen
11:00 Ushers: Tommy & Judy Johnson
11:00 Nursery: Faye Vicars
Open Church: Rex Hovey
Close Church: Tommy & Judy Johnson

March 20
8:45 Greeters: Alisa Wilhelm
8:45 Nursery: Don & Ann Price
11:00 Ushers: Ryan & Mary Knight
11:00 Nursery: Donna Wilhelm
Open Church: Patricia Kindley
Close Church: Ryan & Mary Knight

March 27 -
8:45 Greeters: Tom Aldridge
8:45 Nursery: Volunteer Needed
11:00 Ushers: Bob & Helen Meyer
11:00 Nursery: Jan Haigler
Open Church: Danny Philemon
Close Church: Mike McConnaughey

****Please Note: Please exchange dates with someone if you can not be at church on your assigned Sunday. Thanks you for your help and cooperation.**



March

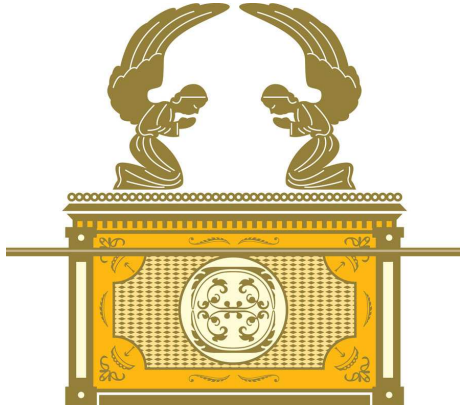
3/11/1974 Wilton & Charlene Abel
3/12/1960 Gerald & Brenda Gaddy
3/23/1991 Tim & Alisa Wilhelm
3/30/1946 Henry & Ruby Hall

If your anniversary is not listed or if you are not sure we have your anniversary, please call the church office so we can make sure we have it for the future!

+ Christian Symbols +

Ark of the Covenant

The ark was at the center of worship for the Israelites. It contained the stone tablets of the Ten Commandments, a pot of manna and Aaron's rod. In the Old Testament, the ark was a visible representation of God's throne, or presence, on earth, where he communed with Moses and the high priests. It also represents our earthly bodies, where the Holy Spirit dwells.

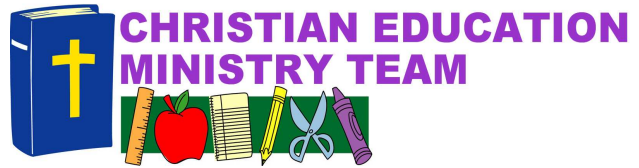


Mission & Service Ministry Team

Mission and Service Ministry Team plans for March's special mission offering to go to H.E.L.P. Crisis Pregnancy Center in Monroe. This center ministers to the emotional, spiritual, and physical needs of over 3,000 clients each year. They provide counseling, Bible study

classes, various parenting classes, and also material things such as car seats, cribs, clothing and all other baby and child "gear".

We will be conducting a Baby Bottle Drive through out the month of March. Look for baby bottles to be distributed to fill up with loose change. We will have these available the 1st Sunday and will collect them the last Sunday of March. We hope you will enjoy participating in this collection for the women and children of H.E.L.P. Crisis Pregnancy Center. If you have any baby or child "gear" you would like to donate to the center please contact Maryann Cuthbertson @ 704-753-3366.



The Christian Education Ministry Team remains hard at work to spread God's word. The Team has already selected a VBS theme and one co-director. Someone will soon be contacting you about serving in VBS this summer August 1-4. Mark your calendars! Save that date! Remember just like it takes a whole village to raise a child, it also takes a whole church to plan and "carry out" a great VBS.

Goals were set for the year 2011 by the Christian Education Ministry Team. One goal stated that the team will clean and organize all Sunday School areas of the church. There seems to be a recurring message about "everything has a place and everything should be in its place" from the pulpit lately! This certainly makes sense when you have to try to locate something at the church. Andy and Alison have cleaned the CE room at the church office. The Craft Room and the Learning Temple have been organized so that when visitors to the church want to see what type of facilities we have for Sunday School, we don't want to hesitate to show off our beautiful Bethlehem! Children and adults respond to a neat environment! Studies prove that adults think clearer and students' behavior improves when the surroundings in which they are learning are kept neat and orderly. With this in mind, the CE team hopes to teach and develop respect for God's House, Bethlehem. Make an effort to pick up behind yourself in Sunday School, throw away any old papers or trash, straighten up the books. This can be accomplished easily by stopping class about three minutes early. Have everyone in each class help to "pick-up, straighten-up, fix-up, and put everything in its place before leaving the room. This not only helps our surroundings look so much better, but it also puts a smile on God's face for He sees that we care!

Pray without ceasing

"Faith is to the soul what life is to the body. Prayer is to faith what breath is to the body. How a person can live and not breathe is past my comprehension, and how a person can believe and not pray is past my comprehension, too."

—J.C. Ryle

Session Briefs for February 8, 2011

Stated Session meeting was held in the Jones Classroom. Rev. Thomas, moderator, opened the meeting with prayer. Eight elders present, one excused.

Polly Knight presented the devotion entitled "Who Packed Your Parachute?"

Rev. Thomas expressed thanks to the congregation for all the help, support, love and care that has been shown in our church family. Also, he and Magda will be visiting family in Puerto Rico during February 14 – 25.

Ministry Team Reports:

Treasurer's Report – Bill Moss stated the budget is not complete and recommended postponing the congregational meeting until February 27th with Session approval. Through February 7th of 2011, the church treasury has a balance of \$9,152.59

Building and Grounds – Bill Moss reported for B.B. Haigler that a thermostat in the MPR is not working and will be replaced with warranty. Also, plumbing problems in the kitchen and ladies bathroom are being attended to.

Christian Education – Judy Johnson reports the team is working on obtaining a co-director and leaders for our Bible School this summer.

Congregational Care – Polly Knight stated the team has been busy meeting the needs of our congregation.

Evangelism – Patsy Cuthbertson listed the team members: Robin Castorina, Amy Currie, Jan Haigler, Tana McConnaughey, Ann Price and Eric Thomas. The team is working on the following:

Contacts with church visitors

Easter cards to be mailed

New member list being drawn up

Rev. Thomas conducting a new member class on February 27 and March 6

Mission and Service – Charles Greene reports the team plans to focus on Jaars in May and the Gideon organization in July or August.

Preschool – Carolyn Gordon reported that a new student has enrolled in the program. The information distributed about our preschool program was well received in the community.

Worship – Faye Vicars expressed thanks for a great Scout Sunday.

Old Business:

The Session voted to implement the Celebrate Recovery program at Bethlehem.

February 27 – Congregational meeting to review budget and ministry team leader reports.

New Business:

Charlotte Presbytery meeting at First Presbyterian Church, Concord - Saturday, February 13.

Prayer Concerns:

Baby Liam Craig, Margie Hooper (Patsy Cuthbertson's friend), Betty Hill (Polly Knight's sister), L.W. Greene (Charles Green's brother) and attendants to Presbytery meeting.

Next Session meeting will be March 8, 2011 at 7:00 in the Jones Classroom. Don Price will have the devotion.

In Christ,



P-R-A-Y-E-R Helps

P stands for “Praise.” We are talking about *Christian* prayer—not the prayer of one who prays simply out of fright or confusion, not the prayer of the “last resort,” but real Christian prayer that flows from a relationship with Christ – must begin here. Without the primacy of praise, prayer quickly degenerates into a plea-bargaining session with God. We praise God for Who He is, and What He has done. The very *foundation* of prayer is the relationship which you enjoy with your Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who is worthy of all praise.

R stands for “Repent.” Repentance is literally described in Scripture as a 180-degree turn, an honest recognition of the sins which I have committed (or *am* committing) and a genuine resolve to *turn straight-away* from those sins. Repentance is not a one-time act, done the moment a person accepts Jesus Christ and never again. Instead, repentance is a *daily necessity* for any believer who’s serious about his or her relationship with Christ. And, what better time to engage in the act and discipline of *repentance* than during the act of prayer?

A stands for “Ask.” Prayer is a time for us to *ask* God for the things we need! Now, you may think, “That’s the most obvious statement I’ve heard today.” Yet did you know that many Christians are actually reluctant to use their own prayer time to make requests of God? Perhaps *you* feel that way yourself. You feel so inadequate before the throne of God, so unworthy of any favor from God, that you just don’t feel right asking God for *anything*. Yet *asking* God for the things we need in prayer is *crucial* to biblical prayer, so the *last thing* God wants is for you or me to be *scared* to ask for the things we need! Do you feel unworthy? Undeserving of any favor from God? *That’s the whole point! That’s the meaning of “grace.”*

Y stands for “Yield.” *Give in*—that’s a simple definition of “yield.” Allow God to do His work and plant His will in our lives. Now, yielding really goes hand-in-hand with the 2nd step, “**Repenting**.” You see, “repenting” is all about *turning back to God*, and abiding in Him in obedience and purity. “Yielding” is all about *opening up to God*, and allowing Him and His Word and His will to abide in us.

E reminds us to “**Expect Results**.” It’s so sad that so many believers really don’t have any great expectation regarding what God can and will do in response to prayer. For them, prayer is *not* tapping into the overflowing power of a living God; prayer is simply a human ritual designed to provide a little reassurance and comfort through the saying of the prayer. But Scripture *demands* that we have *great expectations* about God’s response to prayer! In fact, we are told by God’s Word that *unbelief will hinder our prayers!* Do you believe that prayer is *powerful*? Jesus believed it—he declared in Matthew 17:20 that if you prayed in faith, you could move mountains, and “nothing will be impossible for you”! James believed it—he declares in James 5:15, “The prayer of faith *will* save the sick.” Prayer is powerful and earth-shaking, but *only if we expect it to be!* “Expect results.”

R reminds us to “**Return Often**.” The disciples in the early church went to great lengths to pray. They prayed in all circumstances, at all times, for all reasons. They prayed in prison. They prayed while traveling from house to house. They prayed at church (during regular meetings and for special occasions, like the time the believers gathered to pray for Peter’s release from prison). They truly put into practice Paul’s admonition to “Pray *without ceasing*.” And you can do it too! Return to prayer as often as you need—you don’t have to pay “per visit;” you’ve got a lifetime pass with unlimited usage.



A great fit

A caller to Christian radio station KLOVE spoke of the amazing way God restored her struggling marriage. On the weekend that she and her husband separated, they each attended different services on different days at their large, multi-campus church.

For an object lesson, the pastor had purchased three 1,500-piece puzzles and given one piece to each worshiper that weekend. The woman took hers home and placed it on her dresser.

That Sunday, the husband stopped by the house to do yard work. When the woman walked by her dresser, she noticed that another puzzle piece was attached to hers — and it fit. It was the piece her husband had received at church.

The woman said that was a loud sign from God that she and her husband “fit” together and would be okay. Life and marriage aren’t always perfect, but she framed the puzzle pieces “as a constant reminder to our covenant to each other” and to God’s promises.

BETHLEHEM PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



SATURDAY, MARCH 5, 2011

4PM - 8 PM EAT IN/TAKE OUT



TICKETS ARE \$7.00 FOR ALL U CAN EAT:

*** *HOMEMADE DUMPLINGS & CHICKEN***

*** *GREEN BEANS***

*** *SLAW***

*** *ROLLS***

*** *DRINK***

*** *HOMEMADE DESSERTS***

***This is our annual fundraiser for our local missions, so please plan to join us
for a delicious meal and wonderful fellowship !!***

Bethlehem Presbyterian Church 7608 Concord Hwy. Monroe, NC 28110

704-753-4223



**BETHLEHEM
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

**8TH ANNUAL
GOLF OUTING**

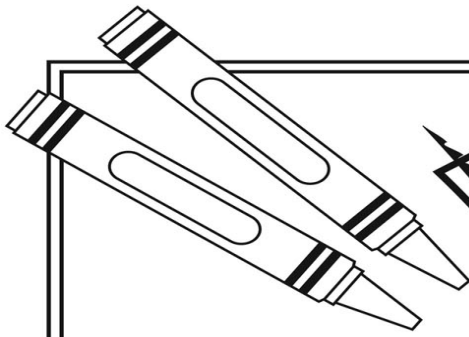
**CHARLOTTE
NATIONAL GOLF CLUB**

**MAY 4, 2011
1:00 pm Tee Time**



Box lunch, dinner, 2 mulligans, 1 skirt, ice cream, door prize drawing and entry into team putting contest included in entry fee of \$75.00.

**Call for more information or to register:
704-221-2874 or 704-753-1834**



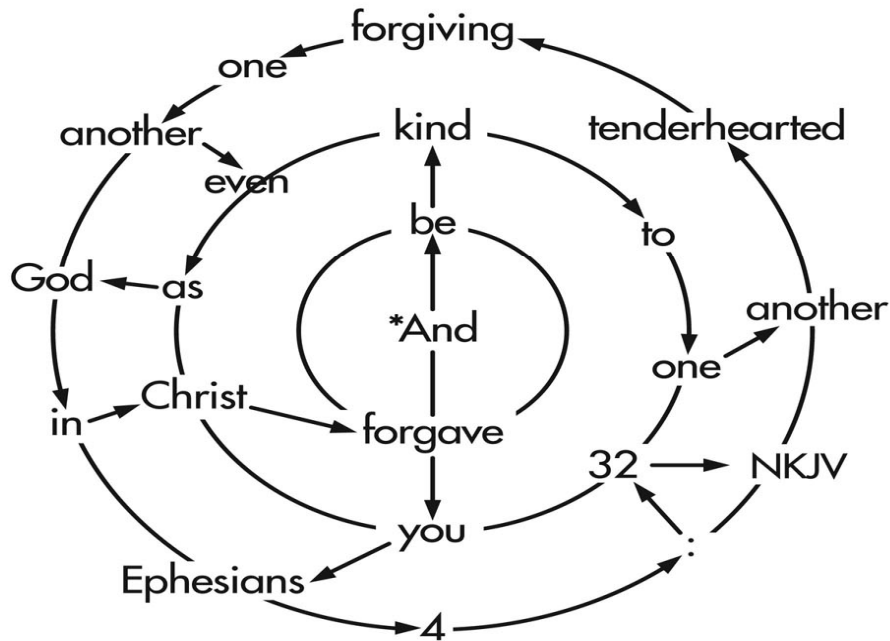
PUZZLE

WHY FORGIVE?



This Bible verse teaches an important lesson about how we should treat others – and why.

Directions: Start with the asterisk in the center circle and follow the arrows. Write the words in order on the blanks below.



“And _____ ,
 _____ , _____
 _____ , _____
 _____ .”
 _____ , _____

Answers: And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you. Ephesians 4:32, NKJV

Bethlehem Presbyterian Church
7608 Concord Highway
Monroe, North Carolina 28110
(704) 753-4223
www.bethlehemchurch.net

Star of Bethlehem

Bethlehem Presbyterian Church

Mission:

To glorify God
by leaving a legacy of faith
to succeeding generations through
the proclamation of the good news of Jesus
in word and deed,
by the power of the Holy Spirit.

We will accomplish our mission by:

Abiding in Christ - *I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing* - John 15:5

We are a community of believers who seek to dwell in the presence of Jesus and who strive to grow into maturity in our relationship with God in Christ. We will encourage others to do the same.

Loving Others as Christ - *This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends.* - John 15:12-13

We are a community of believers who seek to respond to Jesus' grace in our lives by loving others with his love.

Inviting others to Christ - *"Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved." But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him? And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent? - Romans 10:13-15a Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.* Matthew 28:19-20

We are a community of believers who blessed by the presence of Jesus and provision of God the father will invite all those within our sphere of influence into the saving presence of Jesus.