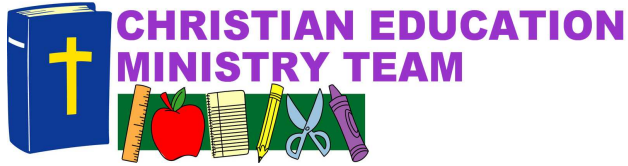


Star of Bethlehem

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



May 2011



Palm Sunday, April 17, all ages of children from preschool to fifth grade were treated to a hot dog lunch right after the worship service. Pat Sloan had decorated cupcakes and had made delightful "bird's nests" treats for everyone to enjoy! The preschool children took their baskets out front of the old fellowship hall to peek through all of the plants to find hidden eggs! "Station Rotation" was filled with fun activities at six different stations from decorating cardboard eggs, making bunny baskets, the Easter shuffle, drawing the three main things that happened to Jesus during the Passion Week, guessing the number of jelly beans in the jelly bean jar, and an egg toss into butterfly nets with everyone winning a prize. The members of the Christian Education Ministry Team helped at every station and served lunch to everyone. What a hard working group of people devoted to spreading God's Word!

Helen Steiner Rice wrote a poem called "Widen My Vision" that is an inspiration for all .

" God, open my eyes so I may see
And feel Your presence close to me,
Give me strength for my stumbling feet
As I battle the crowd on life's busy street,
And widen the vision of my unseeing eyes
So in passing faces I'll recognize
Not just a stranger, unloved and unknown,
But a friend with a heart that is much like my own.
Give me perception to make me aware
That scattered profusely on life's thoroughfare
Are the best gifts of God that we daily pass by
As we look at the world with and unseeing eye.



The mission emphasis for the month of May is JAARS. We will have Mr. Nard Puyao from the JAARS Center as a guest speaker on May 15th for both services. A field trip to the JAARS Center in Waxhaw is planned for Saturday, May 21st. We will have a sign up sheet for this trip. The website for the JAARS Center is www.jaars.org. We hope you will enjoy the guest speaker and support our mission for May.

And He said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation". Mark 16:15

NEW OPPORTUNITY

The Mission & Service team is sponsoring a new opportunity for WIDOWS AND WIDOWERS to meet together in a support group here at BPC. This group will be open to church folk as well as others in the community who would like to fellowship together.

The first meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, May 17th @ 10:00 a.m.** in the church fellowship hall. Light refreshments will be served.



Just a reminder...

On Mother's Day, May 8th, there will be one worship service in the sanctuary. Make your plans now for this special service. All other worship services in May will be at the regular time.



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 Dr. T away— Andy preaching	2 7pm— Evangelism MT	3	4 Golf Outing @ Charlotte National 7 pm – Presbyterian Women	5 National Day of Prayer	6	7 5:45 pm - Bethlehem Cruiseline
8 Happy Mother’s Day 1 service— Sanctuary 9:30 SS 10:30 Worship	9	10 7 pm—Session	11 11:30am—Senior Lunch 7 pm—Mission & Service MT 7 pm— Christian Education MT	12	13	14
15 JAARS Speaker - Nard Puyao	16	17 10 am - Widow/ Widowers Support Group	18	19	20	21 Church-wide trip to JAARS
22	23	24	25 10am – Congregational Care MT	26 Preschool Graduation	27	28
29	30 Memorial Day	31				

I really can't say I have ever given it any thought. But apparently someone has! I wonder how many people have?

It was a headline on the Microsoft News website, as if crucial breaking news: "Can You Rock Coral Lipstick at 60?" I'm not certain just how someone can "rock" lipstick, but I think it has something to do with looking groovy/super-cool... Maybe even "purdy".



I am amazed by what seem to grip our culture so much of the time. "Who will get voted off the island NEXT? Who will be the best star dancer? Who might be the next discovered superstar singer (oh, be still my heart!)? And, "How 'bout them Braves?" And Ooooo; a royal wedding!

I don't know that any of those things are bad. But they surely do distract us, don't they? We Presbyterians used to be known for our astonishing focus. Focus upon God's Word. Focus upon our worship of the Living God in the ways He has said are pleasing to Him. Focus upon living like those called to be holy, joy-filled followers of Jesus.

In fact, one day Queen Elizabeth I was talking about Christian Protestants in general (i.e., non-catholic Christians). Speaking of protestants she said, "While many of them are reformed, some of them are more reformed than others." She was talking about the Presbyterians!

I wonder if she would say that about our Presbyterian denomination now? About Bethlehem Presbyterian Church? About me? How easy it is for us to just wash along in the cultural norms and fads.

I don't think we have to completely disengage from our culture to keep from "getting tainted". After all, we DO live in the world. And we are to be sharing the Good News of Jesus: how He came to work forgiveness for us, and to start us on the joy-filled road to living the life God has clearly outlined in the Bible.

But we DO have to keep our guard up. And our focus has to stay on what is really important. Else, we may wake up some day in a distraught anxiety attack wondering about our "Rock Coral Lipstick"!

Just something to think about.

In Jesus,
Dr. T.

God of the little things

Little things matter. When God gets involved in the minutiae of life, unmistakably intervening in the smallest details of our day-to-day dilemmas, it means he cares enough to bother with what's bothering us. The God who created the vast universe works through life's circumstances to bring about his good purposes. That's big.

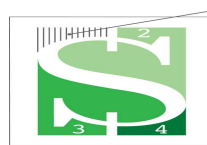
We know, too, that if God is involved in our everyday lives, he's also working on the more complicated situations — the big things. He might just be working behind the scenes.

When troubles come and God seems not to notice, think of times when he's intervened. Recount and revel in them. Rest assured in God's perfect plan for big and small. "We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28, NRSV).

On perseverance

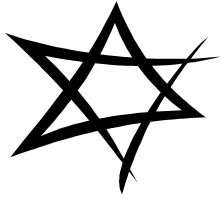
**Success is failure turned inside out,
The silver tint on the clouds of doubt,
And you can never tell how close you are,
It may be near when it seems afar.
So, stick to the fight when you're hardest hit
It's when things go wrong that you mustn't
quit.**

—Author unknown



**Congregational
Giving
At A Glance**

	<u>April 2011</u>	<u>2011 Year-to-Date</u>
Regular Offerings	\$11,228.86	\$62,309.39
Mission Offerings	\$ 946.97	\$ 4,065.62



Are you interested in going to Israel? Pastor Mike Ward is taking another group to Israel in October 2011. Folks are signing up and seats are getting scarce. If you are interested in going, there are brochures available in the sanctuary with all the tour information.

Do you need batteries for your hearing aid? Alice Habbal has 40 (size 13) batteries she would love to give away to a new home. Call Alice if you are interested.



BLESSINGS ON YOUR BIRTHDAY

5th ...Shan Brantley
 7th ...Robin Castorina
 10th...Gerald Gaddy
 12th...Olivia Brame
 13th...Magda Thomas
 15th...Barbara Hinson
 16th...Brenda Huntley
 18th...Scott Ferreira
 25th...Tim Wilhelm, Katie Younce
 29th...Ken Porter, Phyllis Thomas

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!



Believe + Receive = Become

To all who **received** him, to those who **believed** in his name, he gave the right to **become** children of God. (John 1:12)

Believe

It is important to **believe** the right things. The Bible presents certain truths that we need to understand and agree with.

Receive

It's not enough to just believe these things. The Bible says that "even the demons believe....and shudder" (James2:19)

We need to act on what we believe and **receive** the forgiveness and life that Jesus offers.

Become

When we sincerely believe in and receive Jesus' forgiveness and leadership, the Bible is clear that at that moment, we are forgiven of all our sins and we **become** his adopted son or daughter.

It's **Believe + Receive = Become**. Where do you think you are in the spiritual equation?

These ideas were part of the 6-week course *Becoming A Contagious Christian* which began in March for our Adult Sunday School Classes. The study was designed to help everyday Christians – like you and me- to confidently and effectively spread our faith to people we know.

In Matthew 28, Jesus commands his followers to "go and tell" and to share the gospel message. We strive to do that in a variety of ways so that those we love - friends, neighbors and all people - will believe and dwell with us in heaven. That is our hope and prayer and why we want to become "Contagious Christians."

Evangelism Team



We devoted the month of April to learning about why we celebrate Easter. Dr. T taught us that Jesus love me for the Bible tells me so and God so loved the world that He gave his only son. Jesse Lowder, Cody's Grandpa, presented each child and teacher with a beautiful cross! We continued celebrating Spring by learning about eggs, chicks and farm life. The children also planted a garden around the playground. Thank you to all from Building and Grounds who helped get this ready for us.

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.

I am seeking a person with knowledge of grant funding and writing. If you or anyone you know would e able to help me please call the church office Monday through Thursday.

Thank you for all of your support of the preschool and our mission. Here are a few items we are in constant need of and would appreciate any donations:

- Paper towels
- Copy Paper

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.



May

- | | |
|------------|------------------------------|
| 5/17/1962 | Tilden & Vivian Belk |
| 5/ 29/2009 | Scott & Mary Ann Cuthbertson |

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!



May 2011

May 1 -

- 8:45 Greeters: The Holeman Family
- 8:45 Nursery: The McConnaughey Family
- 11:00 Ushers: Tilden Belk
- 11:00 Nursery: Donna Wilhelm
- Open Church: Rex Hovey
- Close Church: Tommy & Judy Johnson

May 8 - *Mother's Day 1 service in sanctuary*

- 10:30 Ushers: Louie & Nancy Brantley
- 10:30 Nursery: Jan Haigler
- Open Church: Patricia Kindley
- Close Church: Ryan & Mary Knight

May 15 -

- 8:45 Greeters: The McConnaughey Family
- 8:45 Nursery: Don & Ann Price
- 11:00 Ushers: Daphne Caldwell
- 11:00 Nursery: Brenda Huntley
- Open Church: Danny Philemon
- Close Church: Mike McConnaughey

May 22 -

- 8:45 Greeters: The Outen Family
- 8:45 Nursery: VOLUNTEER NEEDED
- 11:00 Ushers: Tom & Louise Crawford
- 11:00 Nursery: Kerry & Jessie Price
- Open Church: Don Price
- Close Church: George Sloan

May 29 -

- 8:45 Greeters: Danny & Gayle Philemon
- 8:45 Nursery: The Sherwood Family
- 11:00 Ushers: Bob & Amy Currie
- 11:00 Nursery: Lazette Thomas
- Open Church: Tom Aldridge
- Close Church: Tilden Belk

****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.**



Mission & Service Ministry Team

We want to thank each and every one of you for the tremendous support you have shown in your giving to our missions projects thus far in 2011.

Here is a recap:

\$396.00 Year to date giving for 5 cents a meal
\$399.00 February collection for Loaves & Fishes
\$638.30 March collection for HELP Crises Pregnancy Center

In addition to the monetary collection for the Pregnancy Center, there were several large baby items donated as well. And of course, we continue throughout the year with our food donations to Loaves & Fishes (plastic bins located in both worship centers).

We lift up in prayer the recipients of these offerings.



1. *You Know You Might Be in a Redneck Church if...*The finance committee refuses to provide funds for the purchase of a chandelier because none of the members knows how to play one.
 2. *You Know You Might Be in a Redneck Church if...*When they learn that Jesus fed the 5000, people ask whether the two fish were **BASS** or **CATFISH**, and what **BAIT** was used to catch 'em.
 3. *You Know You Might Be in a Redneck Church if...*When the pastor says, "I'd like to ask Bubba to help take up the offering," five guys and two women stand up.
 4. *You Know You Might Be in a Redneck Church if...*Opening day of deer season is recognized as an official church holiday.
 5. *You Know You Might Be in a Redneck Church if...*A member of the church requests to be buried in his 4 wheel-drive truck because "It ain't never been in a hole it couldn't get out of"
 6. *You Know You Might Be in a Redneck Church if...*People think "rapture" is what you get when you lift something too heavy.
 7. *You Know You Might Be in a Redneck Church if...*The choir robes were donated by (and embroidered with the logo from) Billy Bob's Barbecue.
 8. *You Know You Might Be in a Redneck Church if...*The collection plates are really hubcaps from a '56 Chevy.
 9. *You Know You Might Be in a Redneck Church if...*Instead of a bell you are called to service by a duck call.
 10. *You Know You Might Be in a Redneck Church if...*In a congregation of 500 members, there are only three different last names in the church directory.
 11. *You Know You Might Be in a Redneck Church if...*The minister and his wife drive matching pickup trucks.
 12. *You Know You Might Be in a Redneck Church if...*The communion wine is Boone's Farm "Tickled Pink".
 13. *You Know You Might Be in a Redneck Church if...*"Thou shall not covet" applies to how you look at your neighbor's huntin' dogs, too.
 14. *You know You Might Be in a Redneck Church if ...*The final words of the benediction are, "Y'all come back now, Ya hear".
- You Know You Might Be in a Redneck Church if...* You hear this list, but you simply say, "Will, that all just sounds pretty **NORMAL** to me!"

... God bless; and don't fergit to say yer prayers!

Session Briefs for April 12, 2011

Stated Session meeting with seven elders present, two absent, met at the church and Rev. Thomas, moderator, opened the meeting with prayer. Bill Moss presented a devotion "The Cross of Christ" from I Corinthians 1:18.

Pastor's Report -

Rev. Thomas shared comments concerning the amendments to be voted on at the May 17th Presbytery Meeting.

- 10-1 New form of government
- 10-2 Confession of Belhar
- 10-A Removing "Fidelity and Chastity" from the Book of Order

- Also, Rev. Thomas gave an update on leadership training currently underway for Celebrate Recovery. Start date for the program should be in early 2012.

- Rev. Thomas shared his upcoming schedule:

- A. April 24 – May 3, Back packing
- B. June 8 – 11, Exodus International Freedom Conference, Asheville, N.C.
- August 25 – 27, PCUSA concerned pastors gathering (possible attend), Minneapolis, MN.

Treasurer's Report – Bill Moss presented a financial report for January 1 – April 12 showing a deficit of \$5,074.91.

Ministry Team Reports:

Building & Grounds – B.B. Haigler reported that quotes are being received for the office roof to be repaired or replaced. A heating unit will be installed in the serving room next to the kitchen and the decorating committee will address the use of an outside bench being given by Tilden and Vivian Belk.

Christian Education - Judy Johnson reported that plans for Bible School are continuing and on Palm Sunday, K – 5 students will celebrate three events of Easter called "Station Rotation" immediately after morning worship.

Evangelism – Patsy Cuthbertson reported on contacts made in March and that cards were mailed out to inactive members and visitors with church Easter schedule.

Mission and Service – Charles Greene was pleased at the response to the baby bottle collection for the Crisis Pregnancy Center. In April, we will focus on the Easter offering, One Great Hour of Sharing.

Preschool – Plans are being made for Mother's Day and graduation in May.

Worship – Faye Vicars' committee will be making plans for Mother and Father's Day. Both designated days will be celebrated with a combined service in the sanctuary.

Maundy Thursday service will be led by Rev. Thomas with a Passover meal, light supper and Holy Communion. **Old Business:** Bethlehem will have two elder commissioners attending the Presbytery Meeting on May 17th at 10:00 a.m. at Albemarle Road Presbyterian Church in Charlotte. Judy Johnson and Carolyn Gordon will be the elder commissioners with Faye Vicars- 1st alternate and Patsy Cuthbertson- 2nd alternate.

Prayer Concerns: Judy Johnson, Faye Vicars, Carolyn Gordon, Doris Greene, Ebb Griffin, Margie Hooper, church youth and leaders on beach trip. Next Session meeting will be May 10, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. in the Jones Classroom. Faye Vicars will have the devotion.

Rev. Thomas dismissed the meeting with prayer.
In Christ,
Don Price



A child's perspective

A group of second-graders was quizzed about what ingredients their mothers are made of. One child said, "God makes mothers out of clouds and angel hair and everything nice in the world, and one dab of mean."

To the question "What does your mom do in her spare time?" one youngster said, "Mothers don't do spare time."

When the children were

asked "Why did God give you your mother and not some other mom?" one child replied, "God knew she likes me a lot more than other people's moms like me."

.....
: "If you have a mom, there is nowhere you are
: likely to go where a prayer has not already been."
:
: - Robert Brault
:



**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**

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

St r 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.