Genesis 28:17 (NRSV)

17 And he was afraid, and said, “How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.”

Jacob was afraid, God is so awesome. Jacob’s experience was so amazing with angels traversing a ladder between heaven and earth. Then God spoke to him as he was leaving the Promised Land about the promise he had made to his father and grandfather and about the time he would return to this Promised Land. God promised to take him along his journey and bring him back. Jacob believed he had come to the house of God, and this was the gate of heaven.”

Why did your forefathers name this place Bethel? I suspect they all knew that Bethel means House of God. Perhaps they looked back at the story of Jacob as he was leaving the promised land, running in fear of Esau, instructed by his parents to go find a wife among his kinsmen and not to marry a woman from among the tribes around them in the land that God was giving to them.

They probably wanted, like David the King to build a house to honor God. But I suspect, like Jacob, they also wanted it to be a gate to heaven, a place where people meet with God and find promises renewed even when current circumstances might not be promising.

It would be 20 years before Jacob would head back to the Promised Land. He would be tricked regarding his wives and have his wages changed ten times. But God would appear to him and tell him it is time to go home. He would leave Laban in fear and approach Esau in fear but God remained faithful.

Coming to his homeland he would forget to go to Bethel, instead his family would be tempted to assimilate with those same folk Jacobs parents had warned him not to marry. Ultimately they would take up the God’s of the people of the land and come to great shame. They would even commit murder and bring danger to their very existence.

But God, is faithful and he appeared to Jacob saying. “Arise, go up to Bethel, and settle there. Make an altar there to the God who appeared to you when you fled from your brother Esau.” So Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, “Put away the foreign gods that are among you, and purify yourselves, and change your clothes; then come, let us go up to Bethel, that I may make an altar there to the God who answered me in the day of my distress and has been with me wherever I have gone.” Gen 35:1-3.

So as Lent approaches perhaps it is time for the people of Bethel to follow this example and reclaim themselves as God’s people and this place for what it was meant to be, The House of God and a gateway to heaven.

Pastor Tim
UPCOMING EVENTS

March 5th  6:00  Shrove Tues. Breakfast
March 6th  11:00  Sunshine Club - Speaker: Sammy Way
             6:00  Ash Wednesday Service
March 7th  6:30  Trustees Meeting
March 12th 6:00  Church Council meeting
March 23rd 9:30-11:30  Hartsville Dist. Clergy Session with Bishop Holston
March 26th  Deadline for submitting to items for Crossroads.
            6:30  Mens Meeting
March 26th  11:00  Emanuel Soup Kitchen
March 31st  6:00  5th Sunday Singing

Children's Corner

April 13th  Easter Extravaganza
July (TBA)  VBS: Roar! Life is Wild, God is Good

BYG NEWS

March 3rd  6:00  BYG
March 10th  6:00  BYG
March 17th  6:00  BYG
March 24th  6:00  BYG
March 31st  6:00  5th Sunday Singing

Missions

Kairos Prison Ministry will be March 6-10 at Camille Griffin Graham Correctional facility for women. Please begin praying for the team, officers and the women at the prison to see and receive the love of Christ. Prayers, cookies and green agape $$$ are needed. I will pick up all the donations from Bethel on Tuesday, March 5th.

“I was in prison and you visited me.” Matthew 15:36. Thank you for your generous support of this ministry.

Linda Barnard
803-436-5896

Lenten Project

This year the Lenten Project will be to sponsor Sumter Salkehatchie Camp. This mission project that is housed at Bethel during one week in the month of June repairs homes in the Sumter community. Many of the homeowners that the volunteers help have not been able to afford to make the many repairs needed or have not been able to find assistance from other agencies in our community

Salkehatchie Summer Service, LLC is a part of the Methodist church. Each volunteer pays a fee to be able to attend on the 42 camps that operate during the summer in communities across the state. The camps receive a portion of this fee. As the cost of building materials go up, the fees alone are not enough to make repairs on homes and fund the other essential items that are required to support a camp. In 2017 construction cost increased to an average of $4500.00 The roof that was put on a home last summer averaged $200.00. That was just one part of that home’s budget. Many of the homes that are referred to us come with numerous request for repairs on floors, bathrooms, and kitchens.

Salkehatchie Summer Service was founded to make homes safer, drier and warmer. Sumter Salkehatchie needs donation of gift cards from Lowes or Walmart or monetary donations to help with building supplies. If you make a donation with a check please write it to Bethel and put Salkehatchie in the memo line.

Sumter Salkehatchie Thanks all of you for your continual support.

Fran Marshall

Sunshine Club

The next meeting of the Sunshine Club will be on Wednesday, Feb 6th at 11:00 AM. Our speaker will be Sammy Way, a popular local historian. We will have a pot luck lunch following the meeting. All are welcome.

Judy Feeney
THANK YOU

Dearest Pastor Tim, Ann, and my very loved Church and Family:

From the beginning of our long journey, you have prayed for us. I have always said that Bethel is a church of great prayer warriors for God and others. You have wrapped our girls and me in such a warm embrace of God’s love.

Thank you for all the support through gifts of good and more; and to Betsy and Mark for the beautiful music. We are so blessed.

We love each of you and send our prayers to you always.

Kathy Lowder, Ansley and Richard, Rhett, Nancy Hunter and Michael and the Grandchildren

Resurrection

God’s compassionate kiss compares to whispering winds
Enfolding our souls; affectionately releasing all sins
His loving arms are fragile as feathered dove wings
Sheltering broken and withered spirits, the heart gently sings

The chapters in our lives melt into a single day
Tattered and torn pages; weathered form into decay
God has predestined plans; our new Book of Life is born
A New Creation develops and remolded are the worn

Trees sway with laughter form soft caressing breezes
Dead leaves are revived as spring rain tickles and teases
Streams appear to dance that once were stagnant and dry
Heavens glories burst forth with light, tears flow as angels cry
No more trials and tribulations; just promised peach for all mankind
Colorful skies rejoice with music; love embraces the wearied mind
Forgiveness is the answer, surfacing is a new life, a new world
Gratefully resurrected, answered prayers, love is inevitably unfurled!

Brenda Outlaw
In Memory of the Boykin and Outlaw Families

Emanuel Soup Kitchen

March

Baked Ham (purchased by Missions)
Brown Rice 6 (9 x 13) pans
Green Beans 5 gallons
Deviled Eggs 75 halves (3 dozen plus 3 eggs)
Peach Cobbler 6 (9 x 13) pans
Rolls (provided by Bess)

Brown Rice Recipe

2 cups uncooked rice
1 can beef consomme’
1 can beef broth
1 soup can of water
1 stick of butter
1 package of Lipton Onion Soup Mix

Mix all ingredients except butter. Place in a deep 9 x 13 pan. Chop butter evenly over the mixture. Bake at 350 degrees for 1 hour.

Peach Cobbler Recipe

2 large (28oz) cans of peaches, drained
1 cup flour
1 cup sugar
1 egg
1 stick butter

Place drained peaches in a well greased deep 9 x 13 pan. Mix flour, sugar and egg. Pour this evenly over peaches. Chop the stick of butter evenly over flour mixture. Bake at 325 degrees until golden brown. (40-45 min).

'IF YOU CANNOT FEED A HUNDRED PEOPLE, THEN JUST FEED ONE.”–Mother Theresa
HAPPY BIRTHDAY

2   Amy Frey
4   Jeannie Nelson
7   Brandon Lowder
8   Stella McCoy
9   Deloris Hutson
     Talon Ardis
13 Carol Halgren
     Rochelle Hiott
     Jimmy Wylie, Sr
14 Jennifer Pring
     Kathy Saintsing
16 Linda Lavender
18 Jimmy Miles
19 Kris Kamin
20 Lee Marshall
     Todd Wagoner
21 Marvin Robinson
23 Rachel Castro-Cooper
24 Linda Bradham
     Marilyn Ham
25 Jimmy Craven
27 Lydia Castro-Cooper
28 Christian Frey

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

23 Jimmy & Kathy Lowder