



THIS WEEK AT BETHEL:

August 29, 2021

Office hours: Monday-Thursday, 9am-12pm
Pastor Dave's office hours: Monday, 9am-12pm

Welcome to Worship! We are glad to have you with us today! If you are a first-time visitor, we invite you to complete a communication card, available at the Welcome Table. If you have questions or need assistance, please see an usher or greeter. **Nursery aged children (birth through pre-kindergarten):** please meet the Nursery Attendants at the door closest to the sound board after Children's Sermon.

****NEW!** Want to Assist in Worship Leadership?** A new signup is available on the Welcome Table in the narthex for anyone who is interested in assisting in worship. This includes Acolytes, Altar Care, Clean-up after worship, sharing a Children's Sermon, Greeters, Prayer Leaders, Scripture Readers, Ushers, and Sound, Multi-Media and video recording. As a list of volunteers is compiled, a schedule will be made for all worship gatherings. These opportunities are open to folks of all ages and training is provided! Please contact George Donovan (george@bethelwinchester.com) with any questions or for more information.

Women's Ministry: The August Meeting of the Women's Book Club will be held this Tuesday, 8/31 at 6:00 PM at the Picnic Pavilion. Our book for August is "The Dutch House: A Novel" by Ann Patchett.

Red Wagon Ministry Diaper Drive: Red Wagon Ministry is a non-profit organization created to help collect and donate diapers for CCAP. Red Wagon Ministry is seeking diapers for babies of all sizes, but especially the large sizes of 5 and 6, baby wipes, disposable adult underwear and briefs, incontinence pads, and flushable wipes. Please consider contributing to this worthy cause by donating these items through Sunday September 12th (*God's Work Our Hands Sunday*).

It's Almost Shrimp Boil Time! Join us on Sunday, September 12th from 5:00 to 7:00 pm for our annual Shrimp Boil dinner! The event will be held at the Picnic Pavilion with individual servings offered, instead of the traditional communal style of serving. Please sign up in the Narthex. The cost is \$8/person, paid that evening.

Do you have questions on who to contact? We've put together a list:

- I need to sign up to help in worship - Kristin (communicator@bethelwinchester.com)
- I need to promote a Bethel event - Kristin
- I need to use Bethel facilities - Kim (bookkeeper@bethelwinchester.com)
- I have questions about giving - Kim
- I need to update my information (address/phone/email) - Kim
- I would like to provide a floral arrangement - Kim

Ways to Give to Bethel: Thank you for your continued support of mission and ministry at Bethel! At this time, we are not passing the offering plate during our worship gatherings, but you can leave your offering in the basket on the welcome table, or use one of the methods below:

1. Mail to Bethel at 2077 N Frederick Pike, Winchester, VA 22603
2. Use the "Give Now" button on our website.
3. Donate via text, by sending the dollar amount you wish to give, including a dollar sign, (ie: \$50/\$50.00) to 844-946-2995.

Ministry Spending Plan Update as of July 31, 2021	Actual <u>July 2021</u>	Actual <u>Year-to-Date</u>
Actual Income	\$24,795.70	\$200,279.75
Actual Expenses	\$29,845.90	\$220,467.66
Balance (Shortfall)	\$(5,050.20)	\$(20,187.91)
Balance (Shortfall) with 2021 Payroll Protection Loan Funds of \$35,408	\$(5,050.20)	\$15,220.09

For more detailed financial information, please visit bethelwinchester.com and click on Publications.

*For more news and updates on what is happening at Bethel, checkout our Facebook Page and Website:
www.bethelwinchester.com*



The Heart of the Matter

When clay becomes a pot, it must first have a center. As a potter spins, pushes, and pulls the clay into its final form, it can easily lose its center and become misshapen. Having lost its center, it fails to fully be— a pot, a pitcher, a plate, a thing

of beauty, a vessel for others.

Faith and religious practice have lost their center in today's readings. Quoting Isaiah, Jesus calls into question "This people" that "honors me with their lips" but whose "hearts are far from me" (Mark 7:6). Some in the religious community have begun focusing on surface matters (the washing of hands, what one eats, the traditions of the elders) and have forgotten the core. What really matters is how one's faith is expressed in mercy, in words and actions that build up rather than tear down the neighbor.

In the second reading James wonders about those who look at themselves in a mirror and upon walking away forget who they are (James 1:23-24). For James, they are simply hearers of the word and not doers. Their lives do not reflect the love and mercy that has claimed them.

And so it is with us. We do not live as the people God has claimed us to be. Our lives lose their center. Our faith practices focus on surface things rather than the core. We fail to be what God has created and is creating us to be—vessels poured out for others. We look at ourselves in the mirror and upon walking away forget who and whose we are.

At the heart of the Christian assembly is Jesus—in word, in song, in prayer, in the neighbor, in water, bread, and wine. Jesus, who embodies forgiveness and mercy, is the heart. Again and again, life becomes misshapen. Again and again, the potter reshapes the clay. The splash of a watery cross, the taste of bread and wine: these things center life in Christ. God's mercy washes over us. God's mercy is implanted in us. God creates life anew; deformed hearts are reformed for works of mercy and love.