From Todd

Last month, we had a luncheon at Bethel for new and prospective members. We had over 30 people to come and learn about Bethel and what it means to be a part of our community of faith. It was a great lunch. By far, the best part of the lunch was the introductions, one introduction in particular. At the beginning of lunch, I asked people to introduce themselves and tell us a little bit about themselves. The highlight of the luncheon came to us via Rachel McClellan. Rachel is 9 years old. She told us she was a student and she shared several of her hobbies. Then she ended her introduction with the following words, “Last of all, I think I’m pretty awesome!” At that point Rachel had us in the palm of her hand. Everyone rolled with laughter.

I’ve been thinking about Rachel’s comment. Not many of us would stand up and proclaim to the world, “I think I’m pretty awesome!” Some of us wouldn’t do it because we might think it’s bragging. However, I suspect that most of us wouldn’t do it because we just don’t believe that we’re “awesome.” I run into a lot of people who think just the opposite. The voice inside many of us proclaims things like, “There’s nothing special about me” or “I’m just a nobody” or worst of all, “I’m worthless”. That’s a far cry from, “I think I’m pretty awesome.”

Here’s where Rachel’s comment struck home; the Bible tells us we are made in the image of God. We often proclaim and sing “Our God is an Awesome God.” Since God is an Awesome God, filled with awe and wonder, shouldn’t some of that “Awesome” be imprinted in the strands of our God-breathed DNA? Psalm 139 affirms this truth. Verses 13 and 14 read, “For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.”

Think about those words. God knit us together. I don’t know much about knitting, but it seems to be a task where great care is taken. Then God says we are fearfully and wonderfully made and that God’s works are wonderful. That’s us: wonderful! Would it be going too far to say we are made with a sense of awe? Can we call ourselves awesome? Now take a look at the final line of verse 14. It says, “I know that full well.” Do we really live as though we know full well that we are made with a sense of awe and wonder? Many of us don’t know this full well. Perhaps we are afraid to embrace the truth of this statement for some reason.

Rachel’s comment led me to think about one of my favorite quotes that I think holds great truth. The quote is by Marianne Williamson from her book entitled, A Return to Love. She writes, “Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, ‘Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous?’ Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small does not serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won’t feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine, as children do. We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It’s not just in some of us; it’s in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others.”

Did you catch the line that says, “We are all meant to shine…as children do”? I want to thank Rachel for shining, for showing us how to shine and for reminding us that we are fearfully and wonderfully made in the image of an Awesome God.
As I write this report, the world outside is lovely once again in this springtime of the year.

It’s been a busy time, but a very rewarding time for members already active in our ministry. Easter cards have been sent, Easter visits have been made, visiting 13 members of Bethel in about 6 days. Everyone was delighted by their visits and their lilies, generously given after services on Easter Sunday from our members who wished them to bless others, and of course by their baskets taken for them to enjoy!! Messages have been returned to the church and phone calls have been made from those who could reach back out to us with thanks for remembering them. Blessings go both ways in this ministry, once again Alease Frady had taken to her crochet needle and sent lap blankets for 6 others to use. Already 3 of them have been given out. She asked especially for Mrs. Betty Welday to receive one of her blankets and for Maxine Dragnich to have one, those were delivered that very day and they were so happy to receive them, especially knowing their friend had made it for them.

Last Wednesday night was especially blessed by the turnout of members who wish to be a part of this ongoing ministry. This ministry is evolving and we are excited to see what God will do through our church family and this community. By the time you read this, Dr. Bagby will have spoken to us on two Wednesday nights, leading and advising us in the ways of more effective visiting and ministry. I am sure we are all going to be better informed and more confident of our roles in this ministry as we move forward in the teachings of Dr. Bagby.

Please continue to pray for our Care Team and the service we hope to provide to our homebound members as we grow in number and in need here at Bethel. And remember, there is always room for anyone to join the team!

Shirley Lewis
Care Team Leader

Psalm 108

My heart is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast; I will sing and make melody. Awake, my soul! Awake, O harp and lyre! I will awake the dawn. I will give thanks to you, O Lord, among the peoples, and I will sing praises to you among the nations. For your steadfast love is higher than the heavens, and your faithfulness reaches to the clouds. Be exalted, O God, above the heavens, and let your glory be over all the earth.

In this passage, the psalmist sings praises to God and invokes the instruments to do the same. Perhaps you have considered singing or playing an instrument, but have been reluctant to do so. May I encourage you to get involved with the music program at Bethel? Several options are available:

- Fellowship of the Strings (see Elizabeth Bradbury for more information).
- Hand Bell Choir (see Bill Carlson for more information).
- Adult Choir – Meets on Wednesday evenings at 7:30 p.m. (see Gayle Taylor for more information).

The following small musical groups are forming (see Gayle Taylor for more information):

(a) Men’s Ensemble
(b) Men’s quartet (looking for a lead singer for this group)
(c) Women’s trio
(d) Sign language group
(e) Expressive movement

Bethel Scholarship

Bethel Baptist Church Scholarship applications are due May 3, 2015. Applications are available from the church office and on the table in the entrance to the People of Hope Center. For more information, please contact Teeny Hudson.
I feel blessed to have been given the opportunity to serve as preschool director for almost 10 years. Every day I think about how precious the children are, how much they have learned, what sweet friends they are, and how fond I am of their parents and grandparents.

May is always a busy month for us! Chapel will be on May 4 at 9:40 and our preschool moms are invited to visit their child’s class for Muffins for Mom at 9:30 on May 7. Please come and support us at Chick-fil-A. Our Spirit Night is on a different night. It will be on Wednesday, May 20. We will all have fun at our family picnic on the playground and picnic tables on May 21, rain date May 22. We will be enjoying and practicing a lot of music and also participating in our usual WEE Learn curriculum activities, lunch bunch, art enrichment, library, Spanish, and end of the year assessments of the children’s progress.

May 17 is Preschool Recognition Sunday. If you would like to see and hear these little ones sing and welcome their families, please come on Sunday, May 17 and remain afterwards for lunch and fellowship.

Bethel Preschool presents “OCEAN ADVENTURES” SUMMER CAMP June 1 – June 4, from 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. This is a week of fun and learning about the secrets of the ocean, including crafts, outside play and even a water day. The cost is $85 and is open to the community. Children must be potty trained and at least three years old by September 30. Our next WEE Committee meeting is on May 28, at 7 p.m.

The following people are scheduled to serve in the nursery for this month. Please remember to arrive no later than 10:20 a.m. THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR SERVING.

- May 3 — Jim and Elaine Bradley
- May 10 — Bruce and Shirley Lewis
- May 17 — Paige Rider and Pat Herndon
- May 24 — Tom and Brenda Kagels
- May 31 — Dave and Brenda Jeter

If for some reason you are unable to keep your commitment, please contact Bruce Lewis at (804)794-6585 or Brenda Peck at (804) 897-5768.
Dear Bethel Church,
Thank you so much for sending Shirley Lewis with the beautiful Easter Lily. It is all bloomed out now and we enjoy it every day. I plan to plant it in my flower bed for next year. Irving fell again, sore but okay. We look forward to see you all soon.
Anne and Irving Jamerson

To My Church Family,
I want to say a heart felt “thank you” for the Easter lily and the very welcome Easter basket delivered to me yesterday. It’s so heart warming to be remembered in such a thoughtful way.
Sincerely, Ann Beacham

Dear Bethel Family,
Thank you for the Easter basket filled with “goodies”. Also, I love the Easter lily you brought. It has 4 blooms now and 3 more to open. What a beauty. It is wonderful that you do these nice things. I appreciate it very much.
May God bless you all.
Sincerely, Alease Frady

Dear Bethel Church.
I would like to thank everyone for all the cards, gifts, emails and well wishes I received for “Administrative Professionals Day” I was truly overwhelmed. Thank you so much for making me feel very much appreciated.
Linda Gardner

On Sunday, May 17, we will begin our service by welcoming our preschool families and thanking them for entrusting their children to the care of our preschool. The children have been practicing a special song for us so you won’t want to miss this service. After worship, there will be a church-wide picnic and we are inviting the preschool families to join us for lunch so we can get to know them better. Bethel is providing chicken and drinks, but we are asking our members to please bring an extra large side dish (or two) so we will have plenty of food for our guests.

“This is the day the Lord has made,” is the theme for this month. Creation—what a wonderful time for this theme. The trees, the flowers and nature at its best. Also, the month of May will close the year for our preschoolers. The library will have on display Mother’s Day, Father’s Day and summer books. Cindy and I have enjoyed watching all these children grow. It’s always sad to see the classrooms empty and all the art that the children have worked on gone and the halls so quiet.

The library will continue working through the summer. There are books to be put in order. There is a workroom that needs to be organized. Even though we are a small church there is work to be done all year. If you would like to help us in these projects, please contact Barbara Bell or the church office.

Have a wonderful summer with your children and remember to keep reading.
Barbara Bell, Media Library Director

Our next lunch is set for May 6, at 12 noon. We will meet at the Italian Delight in South Creek Shopping Center in Powhatan. Everyone will be responsible for the cost of their own lunch. Please call the church office if you plan to attend so we can make the appropriate number of reservations. All men are invited.

Worship Schedule
May 3 we meet in the Sanctuary
May 10 we meet in the People of Hope Center
May 17 we meet in the People of Hope Center
May 24 we meet in the Sanctuary
May 31 we meet in the People of Hope Center
**May Birthdays**

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**Happy Mother's Day**

**Sunday, May 10**

*Join us on May 6 at 6:30 p.m. in the People of Hope Center. Pastor Todd will begin an in-depth study on the book of Acts. We'll see how this exciting and drama-packed book can inform our lives today. This will be a fun and interactive study. We hope to see you there!*
Ivan Parker in Concert, Sunday, May 24, 6 p.m.

In 2008 Ivan recorded a very special song entitled "I Choose" which topped the charts at the number #1 position. This message became universal for Ivan and his audience as the lyrics of hope and encouragement rang out to a hurting world that they have the power to choose life over death, joy over sorrow and faith over hopelessness. "The choice we have to follow God in the good times and the bad is easy once we make the decision to simply choose God."

Josh Parker, Ivan’s son will be joining him at Bethel. Josh is a gifted musician and plays the electric guitar. This will be a Gospel Music concert you won’t want to miss.

*No Admission fee. A love offering will be received.*

For more information please call the church office at 804-794-8590 or go to www.ivanparker.com

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VBS July 19 - 23
6 to 8 p.m. each night.

Join us as we set out on a journey to uncharted territory where we will encounter the unexpected around every bend. On this expedition of a lifetime, we will need to stick close to our guide in order to survive. We will discover that Jesus is the ultimate guide on this journey. We will learn to trust Him as Savior as we walk along the journey of life becoming more like Him as we travel and experience the adventures in The Overlook Worship Rally, Tangled Branch Tree House Bible Study, Shady Grove Crafts, Boulder Bridge Missions, Rushing Waters Music, Rappelling Ravine Recreation and Survival Springs Snacks. This will be a journey of a lifetime.

If you would like to help with this adventure, please contact Mary Florence at 677-5432.
Bethel Baptist Church is pleased to offer a preventive health event. Life Line Screening, a leading provider of community based preventive health screenings, will host their affordable, non-invasive and painless health screenings on 7/2/2015. Five screenings will be offered that scan for potential health problems related to: blocked arteries which is a leading cause of stroke; abdominal aortic aneurysms which can lead to a ruptured aorta; hardening of the arteries in the legs which is a strong predictor of heart disease; atrial fibrillation or irregular heart beat which is closely tied to stroke risk; and a bone density screening, for men and women, used to assess the risk of osteoporosis. Register for a Wellness Package which includes 4 vascular tests and osteoporosis screening from $149 ($139 with our member discount). All five screenings take 60-90 minutes to complete. Also, we are happy to announce that Life Line Screening is working with us to provide our members $10 additional discounts off of a screening package in addition to a $10 donation to Bethel Baptist Church. Please note that you must sign up on either the provided registration sheet or by calling the special Helping Hands registration number, which is 1-800-324-9458, in order for us to receive our $10 donation as well. If you prefer to visit the exclusive Helping Hands website to register, you may do so by visiting www.helpinghandsforhealth.com. You must sign up one of these three ways in order to get both the $10 discount as well as the $10 donation for our organization.