



# WELCOME to Bedford Presbyterian Church! Fall 2021

## September 12 – 10 AM

**We are glad that you are here!**

**If you're here for the first time, you are most welcome.**

**If you're here for the first time in a long time, you are most welcome.**

**If you're here because this place is your church home, you are most welcome.**

### **What we hope for you. . .**

That you will be blessed as you worship God with our church family.

That you will participate, fully, in the worship service – songs, readings, and prayers – standing and sitting.

That you will feel safe in our well-ventilated Sanctuary. That you will feel welcome here.

### **What we need from you. . .**

In the interest of public health and safety, and in keeping with our church's Covid-19 guidelines. . .

1. Please wear a *mask over your nose and mouth\** while you are inside the building.
2. Please try to maintain 6 feet of physical distance from one another while you are inside the building. We know. . . It's hard, especially if you haven't seen a good friend for a while.
3. Please stay in your pew for the entire service. We'll be Passing the Peace at a distance.
4. If you need to use the restroom, you are welcome to do so at any time.
5. If you choose to make an offering, please place it in the offering plates that are located near the doors to the sanctuary. Thank you!

\*Note: As we are filled with gratitude and relief for the progress that Covid-19 vaccinations have made in making our normal activities safer, the Session and Covid-19 Task Force of Bedford Presbyterian Church continue a steady and planned approach to safety protocols. We are guided by science and theological and pastoral consideration for *all* who participate in the life of the church. Recognizing the broad intergenerational nature of our congregation and current limitations of vaccine access – especially for children under 12 – we continue to follow the health and safety “best practice” guidelines set forth by our state *and recent guidance from the CDC regarding the Delta Variant* and ***WILL continue to mask for all our indoor gatherings***. Your health and safety are our top priority.

Thank you for your understanding, your flexibility, and your love for God and neighbor!



# Bedford Presbyterian Church

Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost  
September 12, 2021 at 10 AM

## GATHERING TOGETHER

Chimes

Gathering Music

Cassie Murai, piano

Welcome and Announcements

Pastor John Sawyer

## PREPARING FOR THE WORD

Call to Worship (Responsive – from Psalm 19)

Elder Kathy Loveless

Look at the heavens!

**They are shouting the glory of God.**

The days and nights declare the magnificence of God's creative works.

**Their voice goes through all the earth and their words reach the ends of the world.**

Let our words of praise be acceptable to you, O Lord, our rock and our redeemer.

**Let us worship God, together.**

\*Hymn # 35

"Praise Ye the Lord, the Almighty"

LOBE DEN HERREN

\*Prayer of Confession and Assurance of Pardon (Standing-Unison) Elder Kathy Loveless

**You have called us, O God, and we have refused to listen. You have stretched out your hand and we have not taken it. We have taken what you have given us and used those gifts to hurt others and defy you. We have refused to be tamed by your wisdom. Forgive our inability to recognize you and live out the reality of your gospel. Give us the insight we need to understand your place in our lives so that our words and actions reflect the glory of God in the lives of others. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**

The law of the Lord is perfect, and it revives the soul; the decrees of the Lord are sure and make wise the simple; the precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is clear, and it enlightens the eyes. Hear the good news! In Jesus Christ, the living Word, we are forgiven. . .

**. . . and freed to try again. Thanks be to God! Alleluia! Amen.**

\*Sung Response (Hymn # 582)

GLORY TO GOD (Vasile)

*Glory to God, whose goodness shines on me,  
And to the Son, whose grace has pardoned me,  
And to the Spirit, whose love has set me free.*

*As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.*

*World without end, without end. Amen. . . (repeat)*

*As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.*

## ENCOUNTERING THE WORD

Children's Sermon

Pastor John Sawyer

*Following the Children's Sermon, children (3 years old – 5<sup>th</sup> grade)*

*are invited to go to Sunday School by meeting their teachers at the closest exit.*

*At the end of the worship service, parents may pick children up in the Fellowship Hall.*

**Prayer for Illumination**

Elder Kathy Loveless

**First Scripture Reading**

James 3:1-12

Listen now for the Word of God.

**Our ears are open. . .**

**Second Scripture Reading**

Mark 8:27-38

Pastor John Sawyer

. . . The Word of God for the people of God.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Sermon**

“Who Do You Say That I Am?”  
(The Real Answer Might Surprise You!)

Pastor John Sawyer

**RESPONDING TO THE WORD**

**\*Hymn # 738**

“O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee”

MARYTON

**Statement of Faith – from The Confession of 1967 (9.06-07)**

Deacon Belinda King

**God’s reconciling work in Jesus Christ and the mission of reconciliation to which he has called his church are the heart of the gospel in any age. Our generation stands in peculiar need of reconciliation in Christ. . . In Jesus Christ, God was reconciling the world to himself. Jesus Christ is God with humankind. He is the eternal Son of the Father, who became human and lived among us to fulfill the work of reconciliation. He is present in the church by the power of the Holy Spirit to continue and complete his mission. This work of God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is the foundation of all confessional statements about God, humanity, and the world. Therefore, the church calls all people to be reconciled to God and to one another.**

**Call for the Offering**

Deacon Belinda King

**Offertory**

Sarah Murai, solo

*At this time, you are invited to offer your tithes and offerings.  
Offering plates are placed at every exit in the sanctuary  
and you may leave your offering there on the way out, today,  
or you may also make an offering through our church’s online giving website  
(<https://bedfordpresbyterian.org/giving/one-time-gifts-pledges/>),  
or by scanning this QR code and making a donation.*



*Your giving has a direct impact on the ministry and mission  
of Bedford Presbyterian Church! Thank you!*

**\*Song of Response (Hymn # 609)**

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

***Praise God, from whom all blessings flow.  
Praise God, all creatures high and low.  
Alleluia, Alleluia!  
Praise God, in Jesus fully known:  
Creator, Word, and Spirit one.  
Alleluia, Alleluia! Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!***

**\*Prayer of Dedication** (Unison)

Deacon Belinda King

**God of wisdom, may this offering serve as a powerful witness to the world in need. Guide us as we administer the gifts that you have given us for the building of your kingdom. In Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.**

**Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer** ("debts/debtors")

Pastor John Sawyer

**Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.**

### GOING FORTH IN GOD'S NAME

**\*Hymn # 687**

"Our God, Our Help in Ages Past"

ST. ANNE

**\*Charge and Benediction and Peace**

May the peace of Christ be with you.

**And with you.**

**Postlude**

*\*(stand in body, or in spirit)*



**Liturgists and Leaders in today's worship service –**

The Reverend John Sawyer, Pastor  
Mrs. Barbara Flocco, Director of Music  
Elder Kathy Loveless, Liturgist  
Deacon Belinda King, Liturgist  
Cassie Murai, Special Music  
Sarah Murai, Special Music

Marc Murai and Elder Michael Chen, Sound and Video Technicians  
Members of our IT and Communications Committee and Covid-19 Task Force

Bulletin materials and liturgy have been adapted by The Reverend John Sawyer from *Feasting on the Word*.

Information on ways to access audio and video versions of today's service can be found at [www.bedfordpresbyterian.org](http://www.bedfordpresbyterian.org).



**Sunday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>**

*"fALL Welcome Sunday"*

Worship at 10 AM – World Communion Sunday

Welcome Party at 11 AM

Outdoor Activities, tours of the Mission Outpost, and more!  
Whether you are coming back to BPC or joining us for the first time, Welcome Home!

## 35 Praise Ye the Lord, the Almighty

1 Praise ye the Lord, the Al - might - y, the King of cre -  
 2 Praise ye the Lord, who o'er all things so won-drous - ly  
 3 Praise ye the Lord! O let all that is in me a -

a - tion! O my soul, praise him, for he is thy  
 reign - eth, shel - ters thee un - der his wings, yea, so  
 dore him! All that hath life and breath, come now with

health and sal - va - tion! All ye who hear, now to his  
 gen - tly sus - tain - eth! Hast thou not seen how thy de -  
 prais - es be - fore him! Let the a - men sound from his

tem - ple draw near; join me in glad ad - o - ra - tion!  
 sires e'er have been grant - ed in what he or - dain - eth?  
 peo - ple a - gain; glad - ly for aye we a - dore him.

This very strong 17th-century German hymn employs many phrases from the psalms, especially Psalms 150 and 103:1-6. It did not receive an effective English translation until the mid-19th century, but has remained popular ever since, thanks in part to its stirring tune.

## 738 O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee

1 O Mas - ter, let me walk with thee  
 2 Help me the slow of heart to move  
 3 Teach me thy pa - tience, still with thee  
 4 In hope that sends a shin - ing ray

in low - ly paths of ser - vice free;  
 by some clear, win - ning word of love;  
 in clos - er, dear - er com - pa - ny,  
 far down the fu - ture's broad - ening way;

tell me thy se - cret; help me bear the  
 teach me the way - ward feet to stay, and  
 in work that keeps faith sweet and strong, in  
 in peace that on - ly thou canst give, with

strain of toil, the fret of care.  
 guide them in the home - ward way.  
 trust that tri - umphs o - ver wrong.  
 thee, O Mas - ter, let me live.

In honestly admitting the limits of human ability, this prayerful hymn does not seek a sense of God's presence for self-comfort but for strength and companionship in pursuing the tasks that God sets before us. The author specifically chose this tune to accompany his words.

## 687 Our God, Our Help in Ages Past

(Psalm 90)

1 Our God, our help in a - ges past, our  
 2 Be - neath the shad - ow of thy throne thy  
 3 Be - fore the hills in or - der stood, or  
 4 A thou - sand a - ges in thy sight are

hope for years to come, our shel - ter from the  
 saints have dwelt se - cure; suf - fi - cient is thine  
 earth re - ceived its frame, from ev - er - last - ing  
 like an eve - ning gone, short as the watch that

storm - y blast, and our e - ter - nal home:  
 arm a - lone, and our de - fense is sure.  
 thou art God, to end - less years the same.  
 ends the night be - fore the ris - ing sun.

- 5 Time, like an ever rolling stream,  
 bears all our years away;  
 they fly forgotten, as a dream  
 dies at the opening day.
- 6 Our God, our help in ages past,  
 our hope for years to come,  
 be thou our guard while life shall last,  
 and our eternal home.

Many people sing this hymn unaware that it paraphrases Psalm 90, partly because this text speaks so immediately to the human condition. Since the middle of the 19th century, it has usually been joined to this tune named for the London parish where the composer was organist.