

Bethel United Methodist Church

Fifth Sunday of Easter

Heritage Sunday

April 28, 2024

Pastor: Ralph Wrightstone

Music Director: Travis Oaks

Lectionary Scriptures

This Week: Acts 8:26-40; Psalm 22:25-31; 1 John 4:7-21; John 15:1-8

Next Week: Acts 10:44-48; Psalm 98; 1 John 5:1-5; John 15:9-17

Welcome & Announcements, Birthdays, Anniversaries

***Hymn:** *"Shout to the Lord"* TFWS 2074

A time for Sharing Stories and Memories

***Responsive Call to Worship:**on back of page

***Affirmation of Faith** (Apostle's Creed)

***Gloria Patria**

Scripture Reading: Psalm 22:25-31

***Hymn:** *"How Great Thou Art"* UMH 77

Youth Message: Connections in High Places

Presentation of Offerings and Thanksgivings

***Doxology**

Joys, Concerns, Pastoral Prayer & Lord's Prayer

Special Music

Message: "To Abide"

Scripture: John 15:1-8

***Hymn:** *"The Church in the Wildwood"* CH 121

***Closing Chorus & Benediction** "Bind Us Together"

**Please stand if able*

Call to Worship

Leader: Let us draw closer to the Lord Who is our only true source of life.

People: For we are the branches that grow from God's Vine.

Leader: The Lord is our source for all that is truly good,

People: And we are the branches, called upon to bear God's good fruit.

Leader: Let us give praise then to the living Lord with all that we are!

Prayer Of Confession: Lord, we are slow to admit that too often we have been unfruitful branches of Your Vine. Too often we have forgotten the love and mercy we receive from You. Too often we have failed to share Your love with the world. Forgive us, Lord, and help us to accept Your loving pruning that we might bring forth much good and wonderful fruit for You. In Christ we pray. Amen.

Calendar of Events

Today: 5th Sunday after Easter, Heritage Sunday at Bethel Pond, dinner after

Next Sunday: 6th Sunday after Easter, Communion

May 12 – Mother's Day – no dinner on this second Sunday because of today

All Week: Keep Safe and Pray

Worship, Educational and Outreach Opportunities

Today: Interactive Online Service thru link on Bethel Web Site, Service page

Prayer Concerns

Bethel UMC, The UMC, Our Country, all of those affected by the storms, those in Military Service, Police, Fire, EMS first responders, Healthcare professionals and home caregivers, Teachers, Students; Pastor Ralph & Judy Wrightstone; Kathie & Al Adams; Lexie Allen; Judy Goreau; Savannah Lantz; Nan Lindsey; Tina Rucker; Melanie Worley Sanders; Pat Singletary; Lomax Willis, Lawson Wooley; Lon & Lucy Wright; Howard & Ruth Zody;

Please use a prayer request form, in the narthex, to submit requests for adding to the Prayer Concerns in the worship bulletin

Devotionals: *The Upper Room* and *Our Daily Bread* are daily devotional booklets that are available in the Narthex. Please take one or both and enjoy!

Bethel Website: <http://www.bethelumctlh.org>

Recordings of recent sermons are available on the web site

Recordings of sermons or services are available on CD by request

Contact: Church phone: 850 576-1454 email: bumctlh@gmail.com

Pastor phone: 591-9785;

email: wrightstone@embarqmail.com

Apostle's Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty
maker of heaven and earth;

And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord:
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried;
the third day he rose from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen

Gloria Patria

Glory be to the Father
and to the son
and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning,
is now and ever shall be,
world without end.
Amen.

Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.
Praise Him all creatures here below.
Praise Him above ye heavenly hosts.
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.
Amen

The Lord's Prayer

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 trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil,
for thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory
forever. Amen.

Shout to the Lord

My Jesus, my Savior Lord,
there is none like You
All of my days I want to praise
The wonders of Your mighty
love.

My comfort, my shelter
Tower of refuge and strength
Let every breath, all that I am
Never cease to worship You.

Shout to the Lord,
all the earth, let us sing
power and majesty,
praise to the King

Mountains bow down
and the seas will roar
at the sound
of your name.

I sing for joy
at the work of your hands,
forever I'll love you,
forever I'll stand.
Nothing compares to the
promise I have in you.

How Great Thou Art

1. O Lord my God!
when I in awesome wonder
consider all the worlds
thy hands have made,
I see the stars,
I hear the rolling thunder,
thy power throughout
the universe displayed.

Refrain:

Then sings my soul
my Savior God to thee;
How Great Thou art
How Great Thou art.
(repeat)

2. When through the woods
and forest glades I wander,
and hear the birds
sing sweetly in the trees;
when I look down
from lofty mountain grandeur
and hear the brook,
and feel the gentle breeze

Refrain:

4. When Christ shall come with shout of
acclamation and take me home,
what joy shall fill my heart.
Then I shall bow in humble adoration,
and there proclaim, my God,
how great thou art!

Refrain:

The Church in the Wildwood

1. There's a church in the valley
by the wildwood,
No lovelier spot in the dale;
No place is so dear to my childhood
As the little brown church in the vale .

Chorus:

Come to the church in the wildwood,
Oh, come to the church in the vale;
No spot is so dear to my childhood
As the little brown church in the vale.

2. Oh, come to the church in the wildwood,
To the trees where the wild flowers bloom;
Where the parting hymn will be chanted,
We will weep by the side of the tomb.

Chorus:

3. How sweet on a clear Sabbath morning,
To list to the clear ringing bell;
Its tones so sweetly are calling,
Oh, come to the church in the vale.

Chorus:

4. From the church in the valley by the
wildwood,
When the day fades away into night,
I would fain from this spot of my childhood
Wing my way to the mansions of light.

Chorus:

Celebrating Our Heritage

As you may know, from the brief history on the back of this bulletin, “the earliest record of Bethel Methodist Church is that in August of 1834 a camp meeting was held on the banks of Bethel Pond”. But do you know what one of these “old fashioned Methodist Camp Meetings” might have been like. In the Methodist “storybook”, *Endless Line of Splendor*, we are told that “the camp meeting was as American as Indian corn or sweet potatoes” and occupied a “large place...in the life of the frontier and in the religious life of the people...”.



While we might not think of Tallahassee as being on the frontier, in 1834 it had been just 10 years since the site for the new territorial capital was chosen near a picturesque cascade and the “old fields of Tallahassee”. Methodists were on the scene early with itinerant preachers John Slade (the “Father of Methodism in Florida”) and John Triggs reported to have given occasional sermons “before 1825” which were “probably the first ever preached in the city”. Actually, the new territorial capital was chronologically just midway between the frontier town of perhaps 6 homes in 1824 and the state capital that it would become in 1845. That same year, Bishop Joshua Soule, standing at Bethel’s pulpit in Trinity church, conducted the first meeting of the Florida Conference of the Methodist Church.

Still, in 1838 Tallahassee was “reputedly a wild frontier town”.

One of the hazards of life in this growing urban setting was the threat of disease. Outbreaks of yellow fever in 1831 and 1841 contributed to annual migrations away from the city during the unhealthiest months of August, October and November. Perhaps this desire to get out of the city during these months also contributed to the popularity of the open-air camp meeting in this area.

Though we have no details concerning the camp meeting at Bethel Pond, the history of Florida Methodism, *From Saddlebags to Satellites*, describes a typical camp meeting in this way: “They would, as a rule, meet for four days, starting on noon Friday and lasting till noon Tuesday. Prior to the meeting, land would be cleared for there were very few open fields in those years in Florida. Pine woods, with some of the trees thinned out, proved to be a favorite site for such meetings because there was less underbrush and palmettos to clear”. A nearby source of water for animals and people was also important. “These meetings were important as social gatherings and visiting as well as the spiritual enrichment they rendered....Some came by ox carts, others on horse or mule back, others walked...they all came because the camp meeting was the most exciting event going on....There were times that shouting could be heard for miles from the camp grounds.”

Yes, times have changed, but Heritage Sunday is a time when we can remember those who have gone before us, our spiritual mothers and fathers, as well as our own journey of faith which has brought us to this time and place...always remembering that: “The Best is Yet to Be!”



1940's



1960's



Today

The History of Bethel UMC

The earliest historical record of Bethel Methodist Church is that in August of 1834, a campmeeting was held on the banks of Bethel Pond. Church meetings were held in neighborhood homes following this. In good weather brush arbors provided meeting places for these early worshippers. Later, services were held in a small log schoolhouse about a mile north of the present church.

On March 17, 1847, Joseph and Thirza Hale deeded two acres of land to the Methodist Episcopal Church with the provision that Bethel Meeting House be built in the center of the two acres. A small frame church with wooden shutters was built where our Sunday School rooms are today.

In 1909 the congregation started building the present sanctuary. The church building was originally roofed with wooden shingles. The windows contain the original panes with the imperfections of early glass. The interior of the church was not completed until 1947. The narthex was added in 1970 and the steeple in 1972.

The furniture in the Church constitutes one of the most interesting parts of its history. The Pulpit was used by Bishop Joshua Soule on February 6, 1845 when he convened the first Florida Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in Trinity Methodist Church, Tallahassee, Florida. Trinity gave the pulpit to Bethel Church circa 1895. The chancel rail, communion table and two of the pulpit chairs were part of Trinity Church during the 1800's and were given to Bethel in 1946. The larger pulpit chair was a gift of John Sullivan, friend of our Church.

(history prepared for bulletin cover by Thelma Royce, church historian)



"Surely the Lord is in this place! This is none other than the house of God" Genesis 28:16