

Bethel Baptist

September 2016

Thoughts from Pastor Gene

Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter – when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood? (Isaiah 58:6-7)

Drew McIntyre is a United Methodist Church pastor in Asheboro, North Carolina. I've read and pondered a quote by him throughout this year, "We set the bar so low that we trade the beautiful, radical, compelling faith of the apostles, saints and martyrs for a lukewarm shell of a thing with no power to transform our families, our churches, our communities, or us."

The prophet Isaiah had similar concerns about the people of his day around 2,700 years ago. The spiritual discipline of fasting had become a religious formality and God was displeased with their empty ritual. Instead of just going through the motions and hoping for the best, God wanted His people to be living out their faith through acts of justice, compassion, and generosity.

We will be launching a month of **Revival Sundays** in October with a week of fasting (October 2-8). As we enter the fall, we will be seeking God and trusting Him to renew and increase our spiritual passion. We know that Jesus is still the answer for the social unrest, racial injustice, economic uncertainty, moral decline, and political turmoil undermining our wonderful nation. With God's help, we can respond to the needs of others and make a difference in people's lives.

*"Don't tell me I have a friend in Jesus until you show me I have a friend in you."
(Ken Medema)*

Website Changes

We've added new features to our website! You can now listen to previous sermons by Pastor Gene as well as viewing selected videos from past services. Pastor Gene's messages can be found by clicking on "Sunday Messages," with the videos found under "Videos." Many thanks go to Minsun Park and Samantha Rodriguez for their work in bringing these positive changes to Bethel's ministry and outreach.

Find us at bethelbaptistchurch.net!

Pew Bibles

In August, we started a special project to purchase Bibles for each of the pews in our sanctuary. As of the beginning of September, enough money has been given to purchase two Bibles for each pew! Additional donations this month will be used to purchase as many extra Pew Bibles as possible. If you'd like to make a contribution, each Bible is \$9; just indicate "Pew Bibles" on your offering envelope. Thank you for your generosity!

BRAVE Women's Conference October 7 & 8

We have a special opportunity for our Bethel women in October. The BRAVE women's conference will be held right here in Austin! A flyer with information about the conference can be found in the foyer, or you can talk with Glenda Atkinson. Details may also be found at the BRAVE website (<http://www.bravewomen.org/>).

To register, sign-up on the participant list on the bulletin board. Cost is \$39, which is due by Sunday, September 18. Transportation from the church will be provided.

faith &
hope love

Youth Annual Bake Sale

Mark your calendar! It's that time again... our youth will be conducting their annual bake sale after the morning service on Sunday, **September 25!** The youth will be making cookies to sell, but if you'd like to help out by providing homemade cookies and treats, we know they would appreciate it! Please let Lyra Bemis know if you're interested in contributing something for the sale.

Proceeds from this delicious fundraiser will go toward the teenagers' ministry of faith:

- Street Missions
- Summer Retreat
- Community Volunteerism



Youth Fund Raiser

During the month of August, our youth helped relieve our thirst by selling ice cold water after church! They were raising money to purchase a well for a community in need, with the hope to raise the \$40 needed for the cost of one well.

Thanks to the purchases and contributions they received, they've raised almost \$200! They'll not only be able to purchase one, but will be able to provide funds for five wells! Each well will go to a community that is in need of a source of water. If you have any questions, please talk with any of our youth, or with Amy and Kelly Dodd.

Thank you so much for helping with this mission project!

L.I.F.T

Living Intentionally for Truth

In the middle of a busy week, it can be good to slow down and spend some time with God! Each Wednesday at 7 pm (except for the second Wednesday), we have our L.I.F.T Bible study, where we tackle tough topics, study books of the Bible, and share our thoughts, experiences, questions, and opinions with each other.

Our current topic is *While We're Waiting: Praise for the Thessalonians*. Have you ever taken an in depth look at what was going on with the church in Thessalonica? Have you ever wondered about the team of Paul, Barnabas, and Timothy? Did you ever want to know how any of this applies to your life? Join us and find out!



A.S.K. Prayer Service

Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened. (Matthew 7:7-8)

On the second Wednesday of each month, we join together for a special prayer service. With true humility and expectancy, we share Scripture and prayer requests. You can pray out loud or silently, as part of a small group or individually. Each month, we've found that God has touched hearts and provided hope in His own remarkable way. We hope you'll join us for our next prayer service on **September 14 at 7 pm**. We promise that you'll leave knowing that this was an evening to remember.