

# Bethel United Methodist Church

Fifth Sunday after Easter

**Heritage Sunday**

**Memorial Sunday**

May 25, 2025

Pastor: Ralph Wrightstone

Music Director: Travis Oaks

## Lectionary Scriptures

**This Week:** Acts 16:9-15; Psalm 67; Rev 21:10-27,22:1-5; John 14:23-29

**Next Week:** Acts 16:16-34; Psalm 97; Rev 22:12-14,16-17,20-21; John 17:20-26

## Welcome & Announcements, Birthdays, Anniversaries

**\*Hymn:** *"Standing on the Promises"* UMH 374

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

**\*Affirmation of Faith** (Apostle's Creed), Gloria Patria

## *A time for Sharing Stories and Memories*

**Scripture Reading:** Psalm 67

**Youth Message:** *"A Security Blanket"*

**Offerings of Praise, Thanksgiving and \*Doxology**

**Joys, Concerns, Pastoral Prayer & Lord's Prayer**

**Special:** *"How Great Thou Art"*

**Message:** *"Remember"*

Scripture: John 14:15-21

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

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

*\*Please stand if able*

### **Call to Worship**

**Leader:** Jesus promised his disciples that when he left them, they would receive the Holy Spirit who would stay with them forever. When the Day of Pentecost had come, they were all gathered together in one place, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. Come, let us worship God: the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

### **Prayer Of Gathering:**

**Lord of all creation, we remember with thanksgiving that you sent your Holy Spirit to give power to the disciples who were waiting in Jerusalem for this promised gift. Today, we are a band of your Modern disciples, gathered here to worship you at the BETHEL POND where you sent your Holy Spirit upon the founders of Bethel Methodist Church with the power of the gospel that renewed their hearts. With that power, it enables us to remember, 191 years later, that your Church at Bethel Methodist is to spread the Good News of salvation, so that people throughout the world may hear it in their own language and welcome it into their own lives. Amen.**

### **Calendar of Events**

**Today:** *Heritage Sunday at Bethel Pond, dinner after*

**Next Week:** *Sixth Sunday after Easter, first Sunday of June, Communion*

**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, those in Military Service, Police, Fire, EMS first responders, Healthcare professionals and home caregivers, those still recovering from the tornadoes; Teachers, Students; FSU Family; Pastor Ralph & Judy Wrightstone; Kathie & Al Adams; Lexie Allen; Judy Goreau; Ryan Goreau and family; Savannah Lantz; Annabelle Pafford, **Family of David Plate** ; Tina Rucker; Paul Sawyer; Don & Pat Singletary; Austin Smith; Lawson Wooley; Lon & Lucy Wright; Howard and 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](mailto:bumctlh@gmail.com)

Pastor phone: (850) 591-9785; email: [wrightstone@embarqmail.com](mailto: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.

## 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

## 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.

## Standing on the Promises

1. Standing on the promises  
of Christ my King,  
through eternal ages let his praises ring;  
glory in the highest I will shout and sing,  
standing on the promises of God.

### Refrain:

*Standing, standing  
standing on the promises  
of God my Savior;  
standing, standing,  
I'm standing on the promises of God*

2. Standing on the promises that cannot  
fail, when the howling storms of doubt  
and fear assail,  
by the living Word of God I shall prevail,  
standing on the promises of God.

### Refrain:

3. Standing on the promises  
of Christ the Lord,  
bound to him eternally  
by love's strong cord,  
overcoming daily  
with the Spirit's sword,  
standing on the promises of God.

### Refrain

4. Standing on the promises I cannot fall,  
listening every moment  
to the Spirit's call,  
resting in my Savior as my all in all,  
standing on the promises of God.

### Refrain

## 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

## 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:

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.”

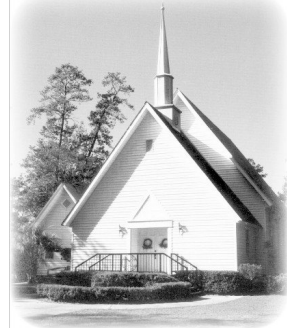
*Yes, times have changed, but Heritage Sunday is a time when we can remember those who have gone before us, our spiritual mothers and fathers, as well as our own journey of faith which has brought us to this time and place...always remembering that: “The Best is Yet to Be!”*



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