
FIRST WORD



**The Monthly Newsletter of
First Presbyterian Church of Lenoir, North Carolina**

No. 10 of 2019, A.D.

October, 2019

WORD FROM THE SCRIPTURE

Romans 8:35-39 The Message (MSG)

³¹⁻³⁹So, what do you think? With God on our side like this, how can we lose? If God didn't hesitate to put everything on the line for us, embracing our condition and exposing himself to the worst by sending his own Son, is there anything else he wouldn't gladly and freely do for us? And who would dare tangle with God by messing with one of God's chosen? Who would dare even to point a finger? The One who died for us—who was raised to life for us!—is in the presence of God at this very moment sticking up for us. Do you think anyone is going to be able to drive a wedge between us and Christ's love for us? There is no way! Not trouble, not hard times, not hatred, not hunger, not homelessness, not bullying threats, not backstabbing, not even the worst sins listed in Scripture:

They kill us in cold blood because they hate you.

We're sitting ducks; they pick us off one by one.

None of this fazes us because Jesus loves us. I'm absolutely convinced that nothing—nothing living or dead, angelic or demonic, today or tomorrow, high or low, thinkable or unthinkable—absolutely *nothing* can get between us and God's love because of the way that Jesus our Master has embraced us.

HANDBOOK TIPS

THE CHURCH REFORMED AND ALWAYS BEING REFORMED

A motto that came to be associated with Reformed churches during and after the Reformation is the Latin phrase *Ecclesia reformata, semper reformanda*. It means “The church reformed, always being reformed.” This motto does not sanction change in the church, just for the sake of change; nor does it seek preservation of the past only for the sake of preservation.

In Reformation times, Christians who used this phrase stressed that the church was to return to the model of the church found in Scripture without the “innovations” that had emerged through the centuries in the Roman Catholic Church. The church “reformed.”

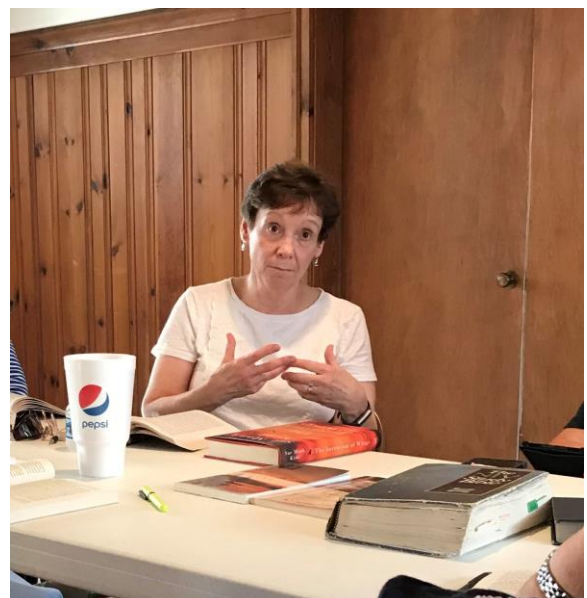
The church, however, is also to be open to the new changes that God wants to bring about for the church in the future. The church must always be ready to “be reformed.”

Often, there was another phrase added to this motto: “according to Scripture.” The church is to be “reformed” on the basis of Scripture; the church is to be open to the reform God wants, on the basis of Scripture.

So both liberals and conservatives in the church are challenged by this motto. We maintain continuity with our past, but are open to the future to which God calls us, as the church listens to Scripture and is led by the Holy Spirit.

The Presbyterian Handbook, 2006, Geneva Press, pgs. 87-88

Sunday Evening Book Study



PASTOR'S WORD

The installation service on Sunday was truly a momentous event in my life. I was overwhelmed with a sense of God's presence and blessing. What a joy to have Moffett Churn be there to preach such a powerful sermon which was a challenge to all of us.

I experienced joy not just on my behalf but especially for this congregation. You have "sojourned" in the wilderness but have remained faithful to this time when we all could celebrate God's amazing guidance and grace. I look forward to our continuing time together and believe there are endless ways we may serve Christ and witness to his mercy and love in this community and beyond.

At this "new beginning" let us renew our commitment to worship and the study of scripture so we will be equipped to address the issues of our times. You already excel in compassion and love for one another. When a need arises, everyone is eager to help. I am so blessed to be your pastor.

Thank you to everyone who helped make yesterday such a special occasion. I am grateful to those who participated in the service and all who provided the lovely reception.

Love and God's blessings,

Beth Ann



Soup Kitchen Meal

FPC Lenoir will provide a meal for the Soup Kitchen on Sunday, October 13, 2019. There is a sign-up sheet at the church.

Congregational Meeting

There will be called congregational meeting Sunday, October 6, 2019 to hear a proposal on using space in the Zion UCC building for church offices and to vote on the proposal.

Presbyterian Disaster Relief

If you would like to support Presbyterian Disaster Assistance's response to the victims of Hurricane Dorian, please make your check payable to PWNC and designate gifts to DR000194. Mail your donation to PWNC, Attn. Lisa Pressley, 14 Silver Creek Road, Morganton, NC 28655

When I see you through my eyes,
I think that we are different.

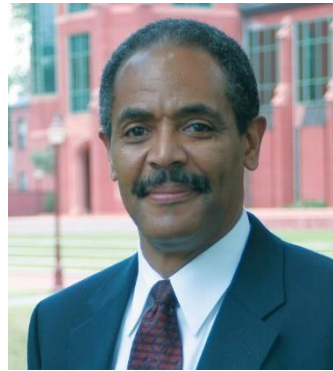


When I see you through my heart,
I know we are the same.

~Doe Zantamata

Dr. Brian Blount to Speak October 12, 13!
**“The History of Racism in the Reformed
Tradition”**

Saturday, 3:00, Zion UCC sanctuary



Brian K. Blount

President and Professor of New Testament

College of William and Mary, B.A.

Princeton Theological Seminary, M.Div. Emory University, Ph.D.

Brian K. Blount is President and Professor of New Testament at Union Presbyterian Seminary, Richmond, VA and Charlotte, NC. He was called to this position in 2007, after serving for 15 years as the Richard J. Dearborn Professor of New Testament Interpretation at Princeton Theological Seminary.

An M.Div. graduate of Princeton Seminary in 1981, he obtained his B.A. from the College of William and Mary in 1978. After graduating from Princeton Seminary, he went on to become the pastor of the Carver Memorial Presbyterian Church in Newport News, Virginia from 1982-1988. William and Mary's first African-American to receive membership in the Alpha Chapter of the Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society received his Ph.D. in New Testament Studies from Emory University in 1992. He returned to teach at Princeton Seminary the same year. He served as the president of the Society of Biblical Literature from 2017-2018. He currently serves as the president of the Association of Theological Schools.

Professor Blount's primary work has been in the Gospel of Mark, the Book of Revelation and in the area of cultural studies and hermeneutics. He is the sole author of six books:

Cultural Interpretation: Reorienting New Testament Criticism (Fortress, 1995)

Go Preach! Mark's Kingdom Message and the Black Church Today (Orbis, 1998)

Then The Whisper Put on Flesh: New Testament Ethics in an African American Context (Abingdon 2001) *Can I Get A Witness? Reading Revelation Through an African American Lens* (Westminster John Knox Press, 2005)

Revelation. A Commentary in the New Testament Library Series (Westminster John Knox Press, 2009) *Invasion of the Dead. Preaching Resurrection* (Westminster John Knox Press, 2014)

In 2010, his Revelation commentary was voted the 2009 top reference work by the Academy of Parish Clergy. He has also edited a volume of essays on worship with Leonora Tubbs Tisdale entitled *Making Room at the Table: An Invitation to Multicultural Worship* (WJK, 2000). He is also the coauthor of a book with Old Testament scholar Walter Brueggemann and theologian William C. Placher entitled *Struggling With Scripture* (WJK, 2001). He has also co-authored the book *Preaching The Gospel of Mark in Two Voices* (WJK, 2002) with Gary W. Charles, the pastor of Cove Presbyterian Church in Cove, VA. He is an editor of *The Discipleship Study Bible*, also by Westminster John Knox (2008). As a part of his work for the Bible, he has also written the introduction and notes for Mark and Matthew. He is an associate editor of the *New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* for Abingdon Press. He is the General Editor for *True To Our Native Land: An African American New Testament Commentary* by Fortress Press. He is also an editor for the forthcoming revised *Interpretation* commentary series by Westminster John Knox Press.

He lectures widely. He was the 2011 Beecher Lecturer at the Yale Divinity School, Yale University. The author of numerous articles, he also preaches and directs adult education classes in local congregations. He is married, and he and his wife, Sharon, have two children, Joshua and Kaylin.

CALENDAR EVENTS

6 – World Communion Sunday
12,13 – Dr. Brian Blount speaks
13 – Soup Kitchen meal
21 – Session meets
27 – 5-CENTS-A-MEAL collection.



WORD IN SONG

Why Me Lord

Why me Lord, what have I ever done
To deserve even one
Of the pleasures I've known.
Tell me Lord, what did I ever do
That was worth loving you
Or the kindness you've shown.

Lord help me Jesus, I've wasted it so.
Help me Jesus I know what I am.
Now that I know that I've needed you so,
Help me Jesus, my soul's in your hand.

Tell me Lord, if you think there's a way
I can try to repay
All I've taken from you.
Maybe Lord, I can show someone else
What I've been through myself
On my way back to you.

Lord help me Jesus, I've wasted it so.
Help me Jesus I know what I am.
Now that I know that I've needed you so,
Help me Jesus, my soul's in your hand.

Words and music by Kris Kristofferson, 1972



(2) Carol Ann Bingham
(6) Jane Harrison
(22) Sonny Hines
(28) Sally Jefferson



Our Prayer List

Jim Cerswell (Lynda Reneger's brother)
Vera Clark (Brian Clark's mother)
Fred and Beth Flora
Sherrill German (Monteen's husband)
Kelly Heafner (CJ Hartsell's niece)
Will Neely (son of Bill and Wanda Neely)
Anna Lee Potter
Bob and Susan Powers
Family of Meredith Powers West (Bob & Susan Powers' daughter)
Leo Schmidt (Carol Ann's grandson)
Judy Scroggs
Ann and Steve Sime
Nancy Stevens
Douglas Tilley (Dianne's brother)
Anthony Uva
Anne White (Lynda Renegar's sister)
Joanne Triplette

Call Joanne if you have other prayer requests (828-757-8364).

