

the MAGNOLIA Messenger

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WINTER 2021

Letter to our
SUPPORTERS

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IN LOVING
MEMORY
OF OUR

June

JUNE FRANKS BOOKER

May 27, 1940 - September 17, 2021

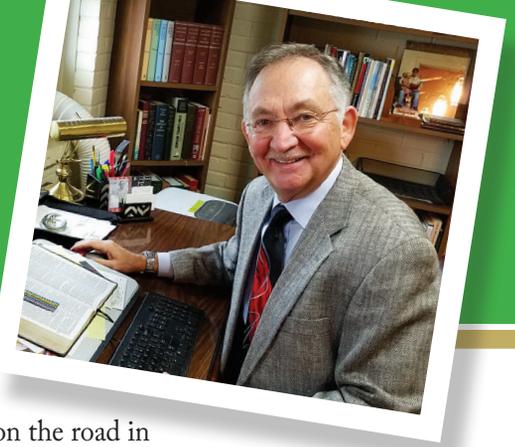


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Mississippi's "GOOD NEWS" magazine for churches of Christ.

"Let us consider one another to provoke unto **LOVE** and **GOOD** works." (Hebrews 10:24)

From Dennis



June Franks Booker

May 27, 1940- September 17, 2021

How do we tell the story of a life so well lived? How do we, in a few sentences, tell of all the good deeds she has done? How do we, in this brief column, speak adequately of the great love she had for her family and her God. Can I write about all the friendships she made, the hugs she gave, the miles she traveled, the churches she visited with her beloved husband Al? Can we grasp the many hours she spent reading her Bible, writing her articles for the Magnolia Messenger, and the untold hours she spent helping others? No, we cannot.

Hers is a story of young love, of two kids who met as teenagers, of a young bride and a boy preacher. Al and June would have sixty-three years of marriage, held together by a love of each other and a common love for the Lord and His church.

June loved her home, her yard, and her new carport where she proudly hung a chandelier she got from Jeff, her second love, that sadly ended much too soon.

Her love for her home I find a little interesting as she and

Al spent as much, if not more time, on the road in the RV, traveling on behalf of the Magnolia Messenger, and preaching the gospel.

Miss June loved the Magnolia Messenger. Even before Al had drawn his last breath, she asked me if I would become the editor of the paper. Even in her deep grief of the moment, she was still thinking about "Mississippi's Good News Paper."

As the Editor I relied upon her a lot these past two years. I called her our CEO, going to her often for advice and information. Her mind and memory were amazing! I would get an article, email, or call from people I didn't know, and I would call up the CEO and she would tell me who they were and where they went to church and when she last saw them. Sadly, she died before she saw the Fall issue. Many items and pictures in it were from her efforts.

Solomon said, "Charm is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised. And let her works praise her in the gates" (Proverbs 31: 30-31). We praise her life as we have now laid her body to rest and given her soul unto the Lord she served. We will miss her greatly, our Miss June.

-Dennis Doughty



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Supported By Contributions

Dennis Doughty, Editor
dennis1848@bellsouth.net

Cecil May, Jr., Bible Questions Answered

Glenda Franks, Special Assistant
glendafranks@yahoo.com

Glenn and Beth Beall, Assistants

Mark Bridges, Layout, Production and Website
mabridges1757@gmail.com

Magnolia Messenger

P. O. Box 1578 • Kosciusko, MS 39090

Editor's Note: The mention of a person or church in the Messenger does NOT necessarily mean that we either endorse or approve all the person or church may believe, teach and/or do. We do not (cannot) have full knowledge of every person or church mentioned in the 'MM'; furthermore, we do not believe that our role before God is to be that of a judge. We pray, however, that we will never lend encouragement to anyone or anything in conflict with, or not in harmony with that which is plainly taught in Scripture. Your comments invited and encouraged.

(Dennis Doughty, Editor)

E-Mail: dennis1848@bellsouth.net



SPECIAL TOPIC

Jesus the Christ

Send us articles about Jesus' birth, His teachings, His miracles, His Humanity, His Death, burial, and Resurrection.

Email your articles to dennis1848@bellsouth.net
Send written correspondence to
Dennis Doughty, Editor
3274 Broadway St. • Bartlett Tn 38133

MESSENGER Addresses: Changes and/or Additions:
glendafranks@yahoo.com

P. O. Box 1578 • Kosciusko, Mississippi 39090

There have been

CHANGES

attendance, participation, loyalty,
knowledge, disconnected, and trust!

by *Danny Dodd, Minister*
Levy Church of Christ
North Little Rock, Arkansas



Danny Dodd

Over the course of my 40 years in ministry much has changed. From the first time I attempted a sermon in 1978 in Belzoni, MS, until today, the cultural, social, and religious landscape looks quite different. Some of the change is alarming, but some is not. Some of the change actually presents wonderful opportunities to give powerful witness to our faith in Christ. Consider what I have noted over these 40 years:

Church attendance and participation is now not as valued. The old standard of “being there every time the doors are open” has faded mostly away. Other activities have become more prioritized. Church is now one of many options and generally speaking, Christians take a much more casual approach to church attendance and activities.

Loyalty to church brands has greatly diminished. Now, just because someone grew up in a certain church no longer means they will stay there. I was once told by a lady when inviting her to a gospel meeting, “I was born a Baptist and will die a Baptist.” That sentiment is not found nearly as much now—and that includes folks in churches of Christ.

Fewer people know the Bible stories. Overall,

we are a people becoming Bible illiterate. Many know little about Noah, Abraham, David, Peter, Paul, and even Jesus. And what is known is littered with misinformation and assumptions. This is found even in our churches, even among our children.

Typically, people are more personally disconnected and distrusting. We do not know our neighbors like we once did. Our trust levels towards our government, politicians, school systems, medical systems, news media, and even churches are very low. We seem more disillusioned, divided, and disheartened than 40 years ago.

All-in-all it does appear that much of the old foundations have crumbled away, and while that can be disturbing, it also can provide great opportunities to speak a word for Christ into the disillusionment; to introduce people to the life-giving stories of the Bible; to reach out to those who have either abandoned their faith or have felt abandoned by the faithful; and to breathe new life into our churches through committed discipleship.

I am reminded of the first century Christians, who from the fringes of society ultimately transformed that society.

Steadfast through persecution, pandemic, and pressure they lived, witnessed, and spoke the hope of Christ into their hopeless culture and overcame it all “by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony” (Revelation 12:11). If we could rediscover their passion; recommit to our faith; and rediscover the joy found in being a part of the body of Christ—we could begin to transform our world with Jesus. The opportunities are there for us—perhaps like no other point in these 40 years. Lord, give us eyes to see! **MM**

*If we could
rediscover their passion;
recommit to our faith; and
rediscover the joy found in
being a part of the
body of Christ*

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Hebrews 13:8

BIBLE

Questions & Answers

MM Readers' ASK: Cecil May RESPONDS

RESPONSE: Not having heard or seen what you are referring to, but knowing generally how those kinds of things are handled, I will attempt an answer.

The holy kiss greeting

“Greet one another with a holy kiss,” for example, it is said, and I agree, is not a general command as to how Christians should greet one another. In that society, and in that area of the world until now, people greet one another with a kiss—including men greeting men.

I received a telephone call from a young woman in a congregation a hundred miles or more from me complaining about a male member who insisted on greeting the women with a kiss, usually a kiss on the lips. I asked if he greeted all the woman that way, or just the younger pretty ones. She replied, generally just the young, pretty ones. I responded, “He may be greeting with a kiss, but it does not sound like it is a holy kiss. I believe the leadership ought to call his hand and put a stop to what he is doing. The emphasis is not to require a kiss as the common greeting, but to ensure whatever the greeting is, it is a holy greeting!”

One of the popular paraphrases, to make the admonition fit our practice, has, “Greet one another with a hearty handshake,” but “hearty” is hardly an adequate substitute for “holy.”

Women wearing veils

This section of Romans deals with matters neither right nor wrong within themselves, like “eating meat that has been offered to an idol” in the past. The idol is nothing and the meat is unchanged by having been offered to an idol. However, some weak Christians cannot separate eating meat that has been offered to an idol with worship of the idol. Love demands that we consider the consciences of these weak Christians.

QUESTION:

What do preachers and commentaries mean when they dismiss a commandment with, “That’s just a cultural thing.” Two frequent examples are “Greet one another with a holy kiss” (Romans 16:16), and women wearing a head covering when they pray or prophesy (1 Corinthians 11:3-16).

When we do something we think is wrong, it is wrong to us. (Romans 14:22). Similarly, if a woman believes she should wear a head covering when she worships and does not, it is sin to her. According to scripture, the wearing of a head covering at Corinth at that time was a

symbol of the woman’s submission to her husband (1st Corinthians 11:10). A missionary married a woman with beautiful hair. She heard a lesson from 1st Corinthians 11 and decided she needed to wear a head covering when she worshipped. Her husband did not want her to cover her beautiful hair, so she wore a head covering as a symbol she was under submission to her husband when her husband did not want her to cover her head. That little story illustrates that symbols change their meaning.

Most of the time when a purely cultural act is referenced in scripture, it helps to buttress a scriptural principal.

Then they sometimes go on using the same dismissive attitude toward the principal that is still true.

When a purely cultural thing is referenced in Scripture, it usually, at that time and place, helped support a principle that transcends culture. The holy kiss, for example, exemplified the need for a sincere and holy greeting. Women wearing a veil on their head when they prayed or prophesied signified male spiritual leadership, women’s submission to men in worship and Bible teaching. Male spiritual leadership is a continuous Biblical principal.

Scripture says, “I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over men, rather she is to remain quiet. For Adam was formed first, then Eve, and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. Yet she shall be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith and love and holiness, with self-control” (1 Timothy 1:8-13). The principal of male spiritual leadership is not a passing cultural symbol, but is rooted in creation and in the first sin.

When a purely cultural symbol is dismissed, be sure that we do not casually dismiss a continuing Biblical principal. **MM**



CECIL MAY, JR.
Dean Emeritus;
College of Biblical Studies;
Faulkner University.
cmay@faulkner.edu

How I wish the world would celebrate Christmas!

by Dennis Doughty

Christmas is a wonderful time of the year. What a joyous time for our kids, grandchildren, and for the kid that is in all of us. It is a happy time. In the midst of this joyous season we cannot deny that there is a spiritual side to Christmas, a “Reason for the Season.” If it must, let me share with you how I wish the world would celebrate Christ’s birth.

Washington and Lincoln

When I was a boy in school we had two holidays, one to celebrate Washington’s Birthday, the other to celebrate Lincoln’s. On those occasions we would study about these men and what they did for our country. We studied about their work and their role as president. But we never studied anything about their births. I know of no facts or stories concerning the circumstances of their births.

These holidays have since been combined into Presidents’ Day and we have added the celebration of Martin Luther King’s birthday. Now kids in school are taught about what he did for the civil rights movement, his famous speeches, and the events of his untimely death. The news clips on TV do not show scenes of where he was born or pictures of him in his crib, nor of stories of his aunts and uncles coming to his home to visit him as a baby.

Celebrate His Life!

I wish the world would celebrate the birth of Jesus the way it celebrates the birth of other men: by concentrating on His life, accomplishments, teachings, world influence, and death, rather than the manger scene, the three wise men, and the shepherds tending their flocks. It’s all about “the baby Jesus.” If the world has decided it must celebrate His birth a special way, let us at least encourage them to do it right!

The truth is that the scriptures give little emphasis to his birth. Matthew covers his birth and first two years in a mere 20 verses (Matthew 1:18-2:12). Luke likewise devotes only 20 verses to the Lord’s birth (Luke 2:1-20). The gospels of Mark and John make no mention of the event at all. Throughout the rest of the New Testament there is no direct mention of any of the events of Christ’s birth.

Rather, Jesus of Nazareth bursts upon the scene as a wise, charismatic, mature thirty year old (a middle age man in those days), and attracted large crowds by the hope he brought to their lives, by his life style, his teachings, and his miraculous powers. Let us celebrate this life!

I wish I could take the Christmas season and somehow change the emphasis from the manger to the cross; from the three wise men to the three days in the tomb; from the annual Christmas service about his birth, to the weekly remembrance of his death.

Yes, His virgin birth was special, miraculous, humble, and unique. However, in our celebration let us not lose focus on the man he became and how his life changed the world.

Regardless of what I feel, or what the scriptures teach, this man-made holiday is here to stay. I could choose to devote my energy to condemning and criticizing it. But I would probably be wise to use it; use it as a tool to speak of the greatest life ever lived; use it as a tool to echo the words from Pentecost; “Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ—this Jesus whom you crucified” (Acts 2:36). This is how I wish the world would celebrate Christmas. **MM**

Behold Him!

*Behold Him in the Manger,
the earthly form of God’s love.
Listen as the host of angels
sing to the shepherds from above.*

*Behold Him on the mountainside
as he taught the multitudes.
Join him as He feeds them all
with only two fish for food.*

*Behold Him as he healed the sick;
the blind, the leper, the lame.
Walk with him into Jerusalem
as the crowds shout out his name.*

*Behold him in Gethsemane
as He prepares to die.
Watch Him before Pilate
as the mob cries, “Crucify!”*

*Behold him on the cross
in a darkened noonday sky.
Stand silent as the stone rolls back
and angels proclaim “He’s alive!”*

*Behold Him. Oh, behold Him!
His hands and feet nail-scarred,
Behold Him. Oh, behold Him!
Will you now follow his star?*

-Dennis Doughty



The Church is a Family!

4 Marks of a Healthy Church Family

by *Brandon Baggett*
Eastern Meadows church of Christ
Montgomery, AL

What does a Fortune 500 company and a local church have in common? Well, from a Biblical viewpoint, the answer is nothing. The church is not a business; it's not a corporation to drive forward with businesslike achievements. God's kingdom blueprint isn't about numbers, strategies, budgets, and spreadsheets. He doesn't measure His church by corporate metrics such as profits and losses. A healthy church isn't about filling slots, plugging people into tactical positions, or managing clever marketing. God's church leaders are neither bosses nor CEO's; they are the spiritual shepherds of His flock. Preachers in the Lord's church are not entertainers or entrepreneurs; they are heralds of the truth and ministers of God and His people. The church is not a business, and we will never experience God's glorious design for His church as long as we model it as such.

Instead of approaching the church like a business, a far more Biblical approach is to view the church as a family. The pages of the New Testament are littered with phrases and concepts to help us understand the relational nature of Christianity. When Paul wrote to the church in Rome, he recommended Phoebe as "our sister" (Romans 16:1 ESV). Peter commended Silvanus as "a faithful brother" (1 Peter 5:12 ESV). Add to these references the vast number of times Christians are collectively referred to as "brethren" (KJV) or "brothers" (i.e. brothers and sisters) (ESV). These were not special titles or meaningless phrases just tossed around by the apostles; the first century Christians were a family. We are the very "household of God" (1 Timothy 3:15 ESV). Jesus views those in His church as His very own family and is "not ashamed to call them brothers" (Hebrews 2:11 ESV).

When we think "church," we need to be thinking relationally. Rather than seeing the church as a building to decorate, an event

to attend, an organization in which to participate, or just another business to run, we desperately need to recapture and rediscover the community nature of God's church. The church is a family!

But what makes a healthy church family? How can we make our local churches feel more like a family and less like a business? How can we show our communities that the body of Christ really is a place where you can belong to something special and become something more? In truth,



Brandon Baggett and his wife and son

some of the very traits needed for a physical family to be healthy are the characteristics needed for a healthy local church. If you are hungering for a more relational religion and wanting to help foster a more personal and

loving church home, then keep reading and let's explore four marks of a healthy church family.

■ **First**, a healthy church family is a place of togetherness. If your family life at home is anything like mine, then you and your family probably spend a lot of time together. You eat meals together, you do chores around the house together, you play games together, you worship together, and you likely do all sorts of other activities with one another. That's what healthy families do—they spend time together. Likewise, a healthy local church is marked by togetherness. Some of the earliest comments made about the infant church in the book of Acts can be found in Acts chapter 2. From the very beginning, the early church was marked by sweet fellowship, real intimacy, and a spirit of friendship. Those first Christians "were together and had all things in common" (Acts 2:44 ESV). Not only that, but they were "attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes" (Acts 2:46 ESV). We often emphasize the need to be like



the early Christians (e.g. the name we wear, how we worship, etc.), and rightfully so, but what about replicating their relationships? You see, these relationships cannot be molded inside of a church building. We must do more than just worship around our brothers and sisters to be the family God calls us to be. Break out of your shell, get into the homes of your brothers and sisters, get them into your home, and spend time together outside of the church house. Do as much as you can together to forge the bonds of friendship and create that Acts 2 togetherness.

■ **Second**, a healthy church family is marked by affection. Love and affection are almost synonymous with a healthy home. After all, what's a home without the warmth of love and the safety of knowing others care? Similarly, love ought to be evident in our church homes. Jesus said, "By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35 ESV). Since we are brothers and sisters in the Lord, we are taught to "love one another with brotherly affection" (Romans 12:10 ESV). The apostle John reminded us that this love, though, has to transcend our spoken words (see 1 John 3:17-18). Loving our church family is more than speaking kindly to them in the foyer of the church building. Rather, it is selflessly loving them to the point that we are willing to become their very servant. We are there for them when they are sick. We are the first ones on the scene when there is a problem. Since we love them, we are willing to babysit their children, pick up their prescriptions, rake their leaves, fix their broken toilets, and give of our own goods to help them in times of need. That's the church! That's a family! A healthy church family, you see, is a place where we "through love serve one another" (Galatians 5:13 ESV).

■ **Third**, a healthy church family is marked by expectations. Within a physical family there is an expectation to grow up and mature. We can't remain an adolescent forever. Even from a young age, many children are given responsibilities within the home to foster their growth and development (e.g. feeding the dog or cat, taking out the trash, mowing the lawn). Likewise, the body of Christ is a place where we are expected to grow and develop. Peter exhorted his readers to "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18 ESV). Conversely, the writer of Hebrews lamented because many of his recipients failed to grow from spiritual adolescence to greater maturity (see Hebrews 5:11-14). A healthy church, much like a good family unit, aids us as we seek to grow up in Jesus. Wise shepherds understand their Biblical call to help teach, equip, train, and empower the flock for "the work of ministry" (Ephesians 4:12 ESV). Older men willingly mentor the younger men following in their footsteps,

and the older women lovingly disciple the younger women to help them be what God calls them to be. Who are you mentoring in your church family? Who are you helping to grow? Who are you equipping? The church, you see, is a place where I am expected to grow, but it is a place where I am empowered to grow because of the help of my Christian family.

■ **Fourth**, a healthy church family is marked by accountability. One of the beautiful things about a loving home is the fact that your family is there to rescue you when you go astray. Television shows like the popular program *Intervention* often highlight families coming to the aid of some loved one who has lost their way. They are honest with their family member, even though it hurts. They give them the love, support, and encouragement they need to get back on track. They help them to stay accountable. Comparably, the church is a place where we come running to the aid of our family members in need of an intervention. As the apostle Paul taught, "if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness" (Galatians 6:1 ESV). Inherent in this passage is the relational aspect of New Testament Christianity. Without a relationship, how could I know if a brother or sister has gotten caught up in sin? If my relationship with them is lacking, how could I possibly be successful in helping them to become spiritually realigned? You see, a healthy relationship with our brothers and sisters is paramount. In fact, rescue requires a relationship! And when we have the close Christian relationships we ought, we will tenderly hold our brethren accountable to the Lord's standards. We are a family of burden bearers and burden sharers.

If you are like me, then you are craving something much more than a business model for the church. You want a community. You want a family! Thankfully, that's God's plan for the church, and a family is just what we will experience as we implement the life-changing teachings of the Scriptures. God has masterfully crafted the church to be so much more than committees, programs, spreadsheets, and budgets. God gave us His Son to make us His family. But what will you do to make your church home a haven of love, a network of real friendships, an environment of growth, and a place of accountability? Don't settle for anything less than God's design for the church. Let's be the family God made us to be! **MM**

Brandon Baggett <wbb.preacher@gmail.com>
*(I appreciate this well-written article by this young gospel preacher.
 Too few of our young preachers are working on developing
 good writing skills. -dd)*





the Magnolia Messenger

P.O. Box 1578 • Kosciusko, MS 39090
glendafranks@yahoo.com • 662-792-2800



“Let us consider one another to provoke unto LOVE and GOOD works.”

November 29, 2021

Our Dear Brethren and Supporters,

I have served as editor of this brotherhood publication for two years now. It has been an eventful two years to say the least.

First was the death of Al Franks, then his son Paul, and now recently, Al's widow, Miss June. All three of these were an important part of this publication. But now all are gone.

With each passing we have been left with the question, “Can we carry on the work of The Magnolia Messenger?” Our answer has always been, “Yes, If the support remains.”

The paper that arrives in your mailbox each quarter is the most attractive and balanced publication in our brotherhood. We have enlisted some of the best writers among our fellowship. I hope you are proud of it, and that it is of benefit to you. Brother Al worked hard for forty-one years to make it a quality, first class, informative publication.

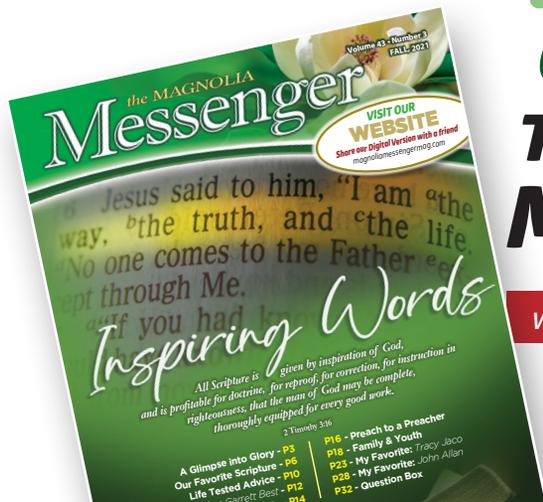
However, that has always come at a cost. The price of paper, amid this supply chain crisis, has risen, and the Post Office just raised our rates. This last issue cost over a thousand dollars more in postage.

Your support is needed now more than ever to keep the Magnolia Messenger doing what it does best, spreading the “Good News” of Christ and His church.

I pray that we have remained in your church or individual budget. A little extra now would encourage all of us as we dedicate our efforts in putting each issue together.

Thank you for your support, and we will continue to do our best in publishing this important Christian publication.

Dennis Doughty, Editor



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"WHEN DID GOD PAINT PICTURES?"

By Mike Benson—Oxford church of Christ

GOD IS THE MASTER ARTIST

(Gen. 1:1, 27; Job 37:15-16; Psm. 8:3-6; 19:1; 33:6; 95:4-5; 104:1-4, 24-25; Isa. 42:5; Rom. 1:20; Heb. 1:2).
Throughout His Word He often painted very graphic and evocative word pictures by means of metaphors.

"But what exactly are metaphors?" you ask. Perhaps the easiest and best way to explain them is to describe what they do. Metaphors 1) compare two things, and 2) establish a similarity and connectivity between them. They 3) communicate ideas through vivid, three-dimensional verbal descriptions to show us how "A" is in some sense is like "B."¹ Pour carefully over the following Bible metaphors and note what they tell us about the nature and grandeur of God's Word.

"What is the Bible...?"

IT IS THE UNDISTORTED MIRROR that lays bare and reflects the real spiritual status of man. Jas. 1:23

IT IS THE FAITHFUL JUDGE that will finally weigh the words, actions, and life of man. Psm. 51:4; Jn. 12:48

IT IS A MIGHTY HAMMER that shatters the stubborn will of man. Jer. 23:29

IT IS A WHITE-HOT FIRE that melts the hardest heart of man. Jer. 23:29; Mal. 3:2; Isa. 5:24

IT IS A SHARP, TWO-EDGED SWORD that pierces the guilty conscience of man. Heb. 4:12; Eph. 6:17

IT IS A BRILLIANT LAMP AND LIGHT that illuminates the path of man. Psm. 119:105, 130; Jn. 12:46; 1 Pet. 2:9

IT IS THE STRAIGHT PATH that directs the walk of man. Psm. 119:32; Jer. 6:16; Psm. 23:2; Prov. 2:13, 15; 4:11, 18; 22:5; Isa. 2:3, 59:9; Mic. 4:2

IT IS LIVING SEED that germinates in the heart-soil of a spiritual man and then yields much fruit. 1 Pet. 1:23; Lk. 8:11

IT IS THE STAPLE BREAD OF LIFE that feeds, sustains, and matures the eternal spirit of man. Mat. 4:4; Deut. 8:3; 32:2; Jn. 6:32-33, 63;

IT IS PURE, SWEET HONEY that satisfies the spiritual appetite of man. Psm. 119:103, 19:10

IT IS FRESH, HEALTHY MILK that promotes growth in the essence of man. 1 Pet. 2:2

IT IS HEARTY, DELICIOUS MEAT that feeds and nourishes the deepest appetite of man. Heb. 5:14

IT IS AN ELABORATE TOPOGRAPHICAL MAP that illustrates and details the eternal soul of man. Psm. 25:5, 143:8, 119:19, 119:33; Isa. 30:21

IT IS PRECIOUS, REFINED GOLD AND SILVER that holds and keeps inestimable value in the inner being of man. Psm. 12:6, 19:10; 119:14, 72, 127

IT IS PRICELESS TREASURE that enriches the inner spirit of man. Prov. 2:1; Job 28:18

IT IS AN IMPENETRABLE SHIELD that protects the true heart of man. Psm. 91:4

IT IS COMFORTING BALM that heals and soothes the broken heart of man. Jer. 8:22; Prov. 3:8

IT IS A FIRMLY EMBEDDED NAIL that cannot be easily removed from the thinking of man. Eccl. 12:11b

IT IS GENTLE RAIN that blesses and nourishes the heart-soil of man. Deut. 32:2

IT IS A PRODDING GOAD that pushes and nudges the moral behavior of man. Eccl. 12:11a

IT IS HIGH-POWERED DYNAMITE that breaks down the independence of man. Rom. 1:16

IT IS THE SOLID FOUNDATION that withstands the storms of man. Lk. 6:47-48, 21:33; Psm. 119:152; Isa. 40:8;

IT IS THE ALL-WISE COUNSELOR that unravels the worries of man. Psm. 16:7; 73:24; 119:24; Prov. 1:1-7; 8:14, 19:20; Psm. 2:6; Jas. 1:5

IT IS GREAT SPOIL AND PLUNDER that abundantly blesses the immaterial needs of man. Psm. 119:162

IT IS UNCOMPROMISING LAW that defines and authorizes activity of man. Deut. 32:45-47; Col. 3:17 **MM**

¹ Leland Ryken, "Metaphors in the Psalms," <http://www.turningpointsofthebible.com/wp-content/uploads/Metaphor-in-the-Psalms.pdf>

Painting of Boat by Richard Taylor of Vicksburg, MS

LIFE WITH GOD *is a* WIN-WIN *Life*

by Bill Lambert, EdD
Professor Emeritus, Harding University

God's faithful servants can't lose! We are a win-win people. In November 1975, a neighbor said to me, "In Eph. 5:20, the Bible says, 'Give thanks always for everything.' What do you think about that? Everything means both good and bad. How can you thank God when the doctor says you have cancer or when a loved one dies?" I hadn't thought much about it, but the text grabbed my attention.

Then, on Christmas day, our little boy, Mike, died in heart surgery. In light of Romans 8:28, I knew this happened only because God allowed it for good, and I must thank Him. I went to a quiet place, knelt down, wept, and said, "God, this is the hardest thing I have ever faced, but I thank you. I don't know what good, but I know you only allowed this for good." You might ask, "What good could come from the death of that little eleven-year-old boy?" I asked that too, but I truly believed it was for good.

Since that day, I have caught glimpses of good in this painful loss. First, seven years earlier, we took three-year-old Mike into our family. He had been neglected and emotionally damaged, and he had a serious heart condition. We took Mike to give him a good home, but God decided to give him a better home. Second, God must have thought, "Mike, I don't want you to go through the struggles ahead; I have something better for you." You see, if Mike had continued to live, he would have gone through much suffering physically and emotionally. God gave him an escape from this! Third, all who loved Mike would have had to suffer the agony of seeing him struggle. But, God spared us this. Now we find joy in our sweet memories of that precious little boy. Fourth, on Christmas Day, 1975, Mike went to paradise and into the arms of Jesus. He then began a life with no pain, no tears, and no more death. Mike won a great victory! (Luke 23:43; Rev. 21:3-4).

We live in a world of pandemics, national crises, hostile threats from rogue nations, social unrest, political division, distressing cultural shifts, and the deaths of those we love. Some even say, "Life is not fair." No, life is not fair because of the damage done by Satan's sinful and cruel nature and man's disobedience. Sin has left both man and our environment with a marred nature. In the beginning everything God made was good. But the devil messed it up! Because of this, we are disappointed and broken hearted, but we don't need to be afraid. God has built a protective wall around His faithful servants, so we'll be alright. We'll be alright because God surrounds and protects His faithful.



The Bible says, "As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the LORD surrounds his people, from this time forth and forevermore" (Psalms 125:2). It also says, "The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him and delivers them (Psa. 34:7). Christians are God-surrounded people. Before Satan's "fiery darts" can get to God's faithful, they must first get past God. God either allows or disallows temptation. The Bible says God will not allow us to be tempted beyond our ability (1 Cor. 10:13). So, no temptation, neither the evil lures of the flesh nor trouble and sorrow can get past God to us unless God allows it. Yes, the people of faith who love God and serve Him often have trouble and sorrow. But, God only allows Satan's schemes to reach us if they serve to bring about good for us--or for someone else (Rom. 8:28). No one can stand against God, so we are "more than conquerors" [Gk. "super winners"] (Rom. 8:31, 37). Even in death there is victory (1 Cor. 15:57; Phil. 1:21-23).

God's servant Job's experiences are proof that God surrounds His people. One day, in response to Satan's boasting, God called Satan's attention to His servant Job. Arrogantly, Satan responded, "Have you not put a hedge around him . . . on every side?" In those days, people used the thick thorny hedges as a wall of protection. So, Satan accused God of building a protective wall around Job. Satan added, "You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. But stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, and he will curse you to your face" (Job 1:9-11; 2:4-5). By this Satan implied Job was serving God for what he got out of Him, not because God is worthy.

God did not deny He had His servant surrounded with a protective wall. In fact, while proving Job did not serve Him only for what he was getting, God demonstrated His protective care that surrounds His servants. First, God allowed Satan to destroy Job's family and what he had. But, God barred him from laying a hand on Job (1:12). So, Satan could not touch Job—because God didn't allow it. Second, God allowed Satan to touch Job, but did not allow him to take his life. So, Satan "smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown" (2:7). God allowed Job to suffer at the hands of Satan. But, Satan could not go beyond what God allowed and take his life. God had Job surrounded. Satan could not go beyond what God allowed. Job clung to God; proving he served God not because of what he was getting out of Him, but because God is so great, wonderful, and worthy! The outcome for Job was that God blessed him with more than he had before this trouble came (Job 42:12-13).

***God is greater than any
problem you will ever have!
We can't lose, so life
with God really is a
win-win life.***

Also, God's protection of Elisha shines a bright light on how God surrounds and protects His faithful servants. The king of Syria hated Elisha because Elisha knew and warned Israel about Syria's planned attacks. So, the king set out to kill Elisha. He learned that Elisha was in Dothan, and he sent a great army with horses and chariots and surrounded the city. When Elisha's servant rose in the morning and saw the army surrounding them, he cried out, "Alas, my master! What shall we do?" Elisha said, "Do not be afraid, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them." The Lord opened the servant's eyes, and he saw the mountain was full of God's host with horses and

chariots of fire protectively surrounding them (2 Kings 6:8-23). The Bible also says that God's angels are continually being sent to serve the saved (Heb. 1:14). Just imagine what we would see--if we could only see God's angelic host that watches over us! But, by faith we can see.

So, for those who love Him, "God works all things together for good" (Rom. 8:28).

God turns Satan's evil attacks into good. For example, Satan masterminded the crucifixion of Jesus to demolish His plan to be our Savior. But, the crucifixion made Jesus our Savior. God allowed Jesus to experience insults, rejection, poverty, suffering, and death. God not only allowed Jesus to be crucified, He made the plan and worked things out for it to happen. This was God's plan even before the creation of the universe (1 Peter 1:20). This plan was hard on Jesus all of His life. But, God gave Him victory over it all. Through Christ's suffering, God also gives us victory over it all!

No wonder Paul said that we should always give thanks for everything (Eph. 5:20) or "give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (1 Thess. 5:18). Even in bad times, give thanks, and look expectantly for the good God is directing your way. As Peter admonishes, "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on him, because

he cares for you" (1 Peter 5:6-7). That "mighty hand" is the hand that created all things from nothing, cleansed lepers, fed the hungry, healed the sick, gave sight to the blind and hearing to the deaf, raised the dead, and saves the lost. God is greater than any problem you will ever have! We can't lose, so life with God really is a win-win life. **MM**



Bill Lambert

Website: DrBillLambert.com

CERTAINTY

THE BOOK OF

Acts

by *Hugh Fulford*

In his Gospel account, Luke wrote to Theophilus that he “might know the certainty of those things in which [he had] been instructed” (Luke 1:4). Over and over, throughout the Gospel record, Luke spoke of certain men, certain women, certain groups (Pharisees, Sadducees, et. al.), certain places, certain days, certain parables, certain events, and other certain things, etc. One would have to be spiritually blind to miss Luke’s emphasis.

When Luke came to his second volume, the Book of Acts (also addressed originally to Theophilus, but preserved by the grace and providence of God for all people thereafter), his emphasis on certainty continues. Travel with me through the exciting Book of Acts, the only divinely inspired account we have of the history of the early church and the record of what God wants His church to be and do in all ages until the end of time.

Luke tells about “a certain man lame from his mother’s womb” who was healed by the apostles Peter and John (3:2). He speaks of “a certain man named Ananias” who “brought a certain part (of a contribution) and laid it at the apostles’ feet” (5:1-2). He points out how “there arose certain of the synagogue of the Libertines” (along with others) “disputing with Stephen” (6:9). In Acts 8:9 “there was a certain man called Simon, who previously practiced sorcery” who went on to obey the gospel, but then later tried to buy the gift of the Holy Spirit with money (13-24). At verse 36 of Acts 8, Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch “came to a certain water” and the eunuch was baptized. (Interestingly, the “certain water” was not brought to the eunuch, but he and Philip came to it, and both went down into it and the eunuch was baptized.)



Hugh Fulford

In Damascus “there was a certain disciple...named Ananias” (9:10) (not to be confused with the Ananias of Acts 5). Following his conversion, Saul spent “certain days with the disciples that were at Damascus” (9:19). In the town of Lydda, Peter encountered “a certain man named Aeneas, who had been bedridden for eight years and was paralyzed” (32-33). At Joppa there was “a certain disciple named Tabitha” (36).

“There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius,” and he and his family went on to become the first Gentile converts to Christ (Acts 10:1ff). In the process of being convinced by God to preach to Gentiles, Peter saw “a certain vessel descending (from heaven, hf), as it were a great sheet, let down by four corners upon the earth” (11). “Certain brethren from Joppa” accompanied Peter to the household of Cornelius (23). Following his and his family’s baptism, Cornelius asked Peter and the accompanying brethren to stay with him and his family “certain days” (48). In recounting the story of Cornelius’ conversion to the church in Jerusalem, Peter told about the “certain vessel” that descended from heaven (11:5).

In 12:1, Herod vexed/harassed/afflicted “certain of the church.” In the church at Antioch “there were certain prophets and teachers” (13:1). On the island of Cyprus, in the city of Paphos, Paul, Barnabas, and John Mark encountered “a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew whose name was Bar-Jesus” (13:4-6). In Lystra, Paul and Barnabas found “a certain man without strength in his feet [who] was sitting, a cripple from his mother’s womb, who had never walked” (14:8). “Certain Jews” came from Antioch (of Pisidia) and Iconium and persuaded the people to stone Paul (14:19).

“Certain men came down from Judea” and taught the brethren in Antioch (of Syria) that “unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved” (15:1). Paul and Barnabas and “certain others of them” (from

the church in Antioch), went up to Jerusalem, to the apostles and elders, about this question” (2). “Certain of the sect of Pharisees who believed rose up, saying, ‘It is necessary to circumcise them (Gentile believers), and to command them to keep the law of Moses’ (5).

The apostles, elders, and brethren of the Jerusalem church sent a letter to the church at Antioch in which they said, “Since we have heard that certain went out from us have troubled you with words, unsettling your souls...to whom we gave no such commandment” (24).

In Lystra “a certain disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a certain Jewish woman who believed” (16:1). At Philippi Paul and his traveling companions encountered “a certain woman named Lydia,” to whom they taught the gospel and baptized her and her family (14-15). Later, they encountered “a certain slave girl possessed with a spirit of divination” (16). In Thessalonica, Jews who did not believe became envious of Paul and Silas and “took unto them certain vile men from the rabble” and “set the city in an uproar” (17:5, ASV). They “dragged Jason and certain brethren before the rulers of the city” (6). In Athens “certain philosophers of the Epicureans and the stoics” encountered Paul (18) who said that he brought “certain strange things to our ears” (20). In his sermon on Mars Hill, Paul quoted “certain even of your own poets” (28). “Certain men joined [Paul] and believed” (34).

In Corinth Paul “found a certain Jew named Aquila” (18:1-2), and “entered the house of a certain man named Justus” (7). “A certain Jew named Apollos...came to Ephesus” (24). Paul came to Ephesus “and found certain disciples” (19:1). “Certain of the strolling Jews, exorcists, took it upon themselves to call the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits” (13). In Ephesus there was “a certain man named Demetrius” (24). “Certain of the Asiarchs (officials of Asia, NKJV), who were [Paul’s] friends” pleaded with him not to “venture into the theater” (31). In Troas, as Paul preached, “a certain young man named Eutychus” went to sleep while sitting in an open window, “fell down from the third story and was taken up dead” (20:9). In Caesarea “a certain proph-

et named Agabus came down from Judea” (21:10). “Also certain of the disciples from Caesarea” accompanied Paul and his other companions on their way to Jerusalem (16).

In Jerusalem “certain of the Jews banded together...saying they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul” (23:12, KJV). Paul’s nephew knew “a certain thing” that Paul wanted him to tell the chief captain (17, KJV). Accompanying Ananias the high priest and the elders of the Jews to Caesarea to bring charges against Paul was “a certain orator named Tertullus” (24:1). Paul spoke of “certain Jews from Asia” (18). “After certain days” Felix...sent for Paul and heard him concerning the faith in Christ” (24). Later, “after certain days King Agrippa and Bernice came to Caesarea to greet Festus” (25:13). Festus told Agrippa about “a certain man (Paul) left a prisoner by Felix” (14). Festus explained to Agrippa that the charges against Paul had to do with “certain questions against him about their own religion and about one Jesus, who was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive” (19). Still later, Festus reported that he had “nothing certain” to write to the Caesar in Rome concerning Paul (26).

In time, Paul “and certain other prisoners” were turned over to the authorities for the purpose of sending them to Rome (27:1). During the perilous voyage to Rome the ship came near “a certain island which is called Clauda” (16, KJV). When the ship wrecked on the island of Malta in the Mediterranean, they discovered “a certain creek with a shore” (“a bay with a beach,” NKJV) on which they planned to run the ship (39).

Once again, in Acts Luke stresses “certainties,” matters of which we can be sure. Rather than trivial and mundane details, the texts we have examined show that the apostles of Christ in carrying out the great commission (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:46-47) dealt with real people in real time, were involved in real events and dealt with real situations, proclaimed real truths and taught real principles. We cannot be more certain of anything than we can of the reality of Christ and the church that He purchased with His blood (Acts 20:28). Indeed, “this thing was not done in a corner” (Acts 26:26)! **MM**

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Hugh Fulford (huford@comcast.net)

(I have been getting Hugh’s articles for years and have been pleased to be able to share a few of them with our readers (with permission). His articles always reflect a great deal of thought and study. I consider Hugh to be one of our best biblical scholars and writers. -dd)

The WAVERLY FLOOD

TENNESSEE

By Dennis Doughty

On the evening of August 20th, it began to rain in the middle Tennessee county of Humphreys. Within a few hours some 17 inches of rain dropped on and around the small town of Waverly. Just outside of town, along Trace Creek, debris piled up under a railroad trestle damming up water

which caused flooding for hundreds of yards back up its banks.

When the debris pile gave way early Saturday morning, it sent a wall of water down the already swollen creek, destroying homes, businesses, and schools for hundreds of yards on either side. Sadly, some 20 persons died in the raging flash flood.

Ten days later, on September first, I made a trip to Waverly to visit with the church and see how the recovery was going. After meeting with their preacher, Jeff Keele, I went with one of their members, Eric Merideth, a retired school teacher, who offered to take me around and show me the devastation. It's hard to envision an entire street of homes destroyed by the surge of water, some with walls or roofs collapsed, or washed off their foundations, vehicles washed away, and trees uprooted. The street had piles of trash lining the curb for blocks, trash which a few weeks before were decorated walls, antique furniture, beds, and family treasures. Now, it was all reduced to piles of rubble.

Back at the church building it was "Recovery Central." There were trailers with supplies, mobile kitchens, even shower fa-

Upper left, The home of Don and Judy Graves, members of the Waverly congregation, had to be totally gutted due to flood waters.

Lower left: The fellowship hall filled with donations and carefully organized.

Below; Those needing help were first interviewed.



One Church Group Helping Another

From Oliver Creek to Trace Creek

[In the midst of the recovery in Waverly, Tennessee, from the devastating flash flood along Trace Creek that killed 20 and destroyed hundreds of homes and businesses, a group from the Oliver Creek Congregation in Bartlett, Tennessee, spent a week helping in the recovery operation. This is their report. -dd]

By Linda Jane Vaden

Our team was amazing. Our eight team members from Oliver Creek Church of Christ consisted of Deborah Harris, Joe McDaniel, Dian McDaniel, Connie Braden, Raymond Powell, Betty Powell, Eva Gleim and myself, Linda Jane Vaden.



Looking back, my mind is busy remembering stories and people that I met through the Disaster Response Team. Brian and his dog, Chiggerweed; Michael, who had a horrendous story of hours and hours on a metal roof waiting to be rescued; a woman who stood for three hours in water up

to her neck waiting to be rescued; a couple who put their invalid mother on top of the stove to keep her above water.

My heart is full with love for God, my team mates from church, the Disaster Response team, other teams from all over the country, and all those affected by the flood.

Thanks to all of them. We worked hard, got dirty, coughed a lot from the demolition, ate a lot of good food prepared by the church ladies at Waverly congregation, slept hard, took cold showers in the shower trailer, fellowshipped, had devos, prayed together, sang together, and loved each other in Christian love. Kudos to the wonderful team. Thank you all. We all now have a bond that will never be broken, and we will never forget.

A big shoutout to members of the Waverly Church of Christ who kept us fed and provided places for us to sleep. Hugs from people we were helping as they thanked us with tears in their



eyes. Do not lose faith in humanity. There are many good people everywhere.

Joe McDaniels, an elder from Oliver Creek, led the group from the congregation in the work of the

day. "It is heartwarming to see people from far and wide working as a team to help those in desperate need of the basics we take for granted each day" -Eva Gleim.

These are some of the kitchen staff, made up of members of the Waverly congregation. They worked from 7am-7pm serving three delicious meals a day to the flood victims and volunteers. Frank and Susan Bradford were in charge of the Disaster Response team. **MM**



cilities. The Church of Christ Disaster Response team out of Ohio were there as well as many of the local members and volunteers from other congregations. The large fellowship building held clothing and food and other supplies for those in need. Also, daily meals were being served. In the church offices ladies worked the phones, men met in hallways planning needed tasks, and classrooms became storerooms for boxes and boxes of supplies.

It made me think that this was what it must have been like in the days after the church was established on Pentecost. "And all those who believed were together and had all things in common; and they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need" (Acts 2:44,45). In those early days there was a "daily serving of food" (Acts 6:1), men "of good reputation" were chosen and "put in charge of the task" (Acts 6:3), so that "there was not a needy person among them" (Acts 4:34).

This is what I saw taking place among the Christians in Waverly, Tennessee. Pray for, as well as be inspired by, the faith and work of these brethren. **MM**

"ON THE ROAD AGAIN" with the Editor

■ It has been a busy couple of months with a lot of travel, visiting, and spreading the "Good News" of the Magnolia Messenger.

I spent a couple of nights in the home of



my friend of 54 years, Steve Watson, and his wife, Jane. They continue to do their splendid work in sending relief to those in great need in Venezuela.

Here Steve shows me thirty-five boxes ready to be shipped out. They are filled with baby formula, medicine, dried beans, flour, clothing, and other needed items. I am immensely proud of the work my friend is doing and appreciate all of you who support these efforts. You can contact Steve at steverwatson8@gmail.com if you would like to help.



■ On the same trip I attended a luncheon with a group of our old college friends who live in and around Nashville. You can't make old friends, so it was good to stay in touch with them.

■ Steve Watson and myself on top row with Jimmy Anderson, David Abby, Dean Heady, and Vernon Bates on bottom row. Several hundred years of friendship represented in this photo.

■ On this trip I was also able to spend the afternoon with the church in Waverly, Tennessee, and view the disaster of the flash flood they experienced. See my article and reports on other pages in this issue.



■ I attended the Harding University Bible Lectureship October 27-29. We set up our display and got to talk and visit with several readers of the Messenger as well as sign up several new subscribers.



As a side note, my home congregation at Oliver Creek had 270 songbooks they wanted to give away. I took a couple of them with me and set them up on our display. In visiting with the display behind me, I noticed that they were needing song books. I am happy to say that the books are now on their way to a great Christian school in Nigeria, Africa. The Lord works in mysterious ways.

While in Searcy I was invited to have

lunch with the Bill Lambert, the well-known preacher, teacher, and writer who has written for the Messenger for many years. We enjoyed a wonderful lunch out in their beautiful back yard. What a blessing for me to have time with such greatness.



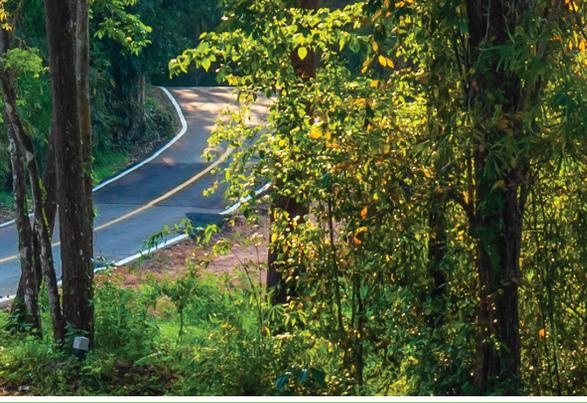
■ I was asked again to preach one Sunday at the Coffeaville congregation. This congregation has a great and long history of worshipping in this central Mississippi town. They have a good facility including a nice preacher's home. It would be ideal for a young



couple, or an older preacher, to come work for this church. Eddie Lewis preaches here often and has written about the work in his column. If you are interested, call brother John Allen at 662.473.8702.

■ I also preached one Sunday back at my beloved Tunica church. They are a small





The Digital Messenger



but dedicated group of Christians. They had remodeled the auditorium, doing most of the work themselves. They too are looking for a regular preacher to work with them on Sundays. If you are interested, give Dusty Dawson a call at 662.357.5307.



■ Last month I made a trip to Monroe, Georgia, to visit Walton Press, where the Magnolia Messenger is printed. Steven Franks flew me over in his nice plane to meet with those involved in the printing and mailing of our paper.

We had a good meeting with the president of the company and others that work on the Messenger. I was impressed with their facility. We have a great looking paper, and it is good to see that it is being printed with a large well-known printing company. **MM**

■ **CURRENT UPDATES** You will also find new information and news that has arrived between our publication dates.

■ **CONTACT US** On this page we have a way for you to support the Messenger by credit cards.

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Government KINGDOM
John 18:37 - Col. 1:13-14
Ownership CHRIST
II Timothy 2:10
760 B.C. 580 B.C.

CHRIST & THE CHURCH
CHRIST IS THE HEAD OF
KINGDOM • BODY
HOUSEHOLD

The ONE IMMERSION
Ephesians 4:4-6
BEFORE } IMMERSION } AFTER
Preaching } in Water } Salvation
Hearing } } Remission of Sins
Faith } } Holy Spirit
Repentance } } In Christ
Confession } } Blessings

CHRIST PLAN for our SALVATION

HEAR Mark 5:24 Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.	BELIEVE John 8:24 Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins.	REPENT Luke 13:3 I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish.
CONFESS Matthew 10:32 Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven.	BAPTIZED Mark 16:16 He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.	LIVE FAITHFUL Ephesians 5:8 For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light.

SALVATION
Acts 4:12
Added Acts
Purchased Acts
Reconciled Ephesian
Saved II Timothy
Redeemed Colossians 1:1

He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him—the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day.
John 12:48



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Youth & Family

SENDING THE RIGHT MESSAGE TO

OUR CHILDREN



Greg Ledbetter

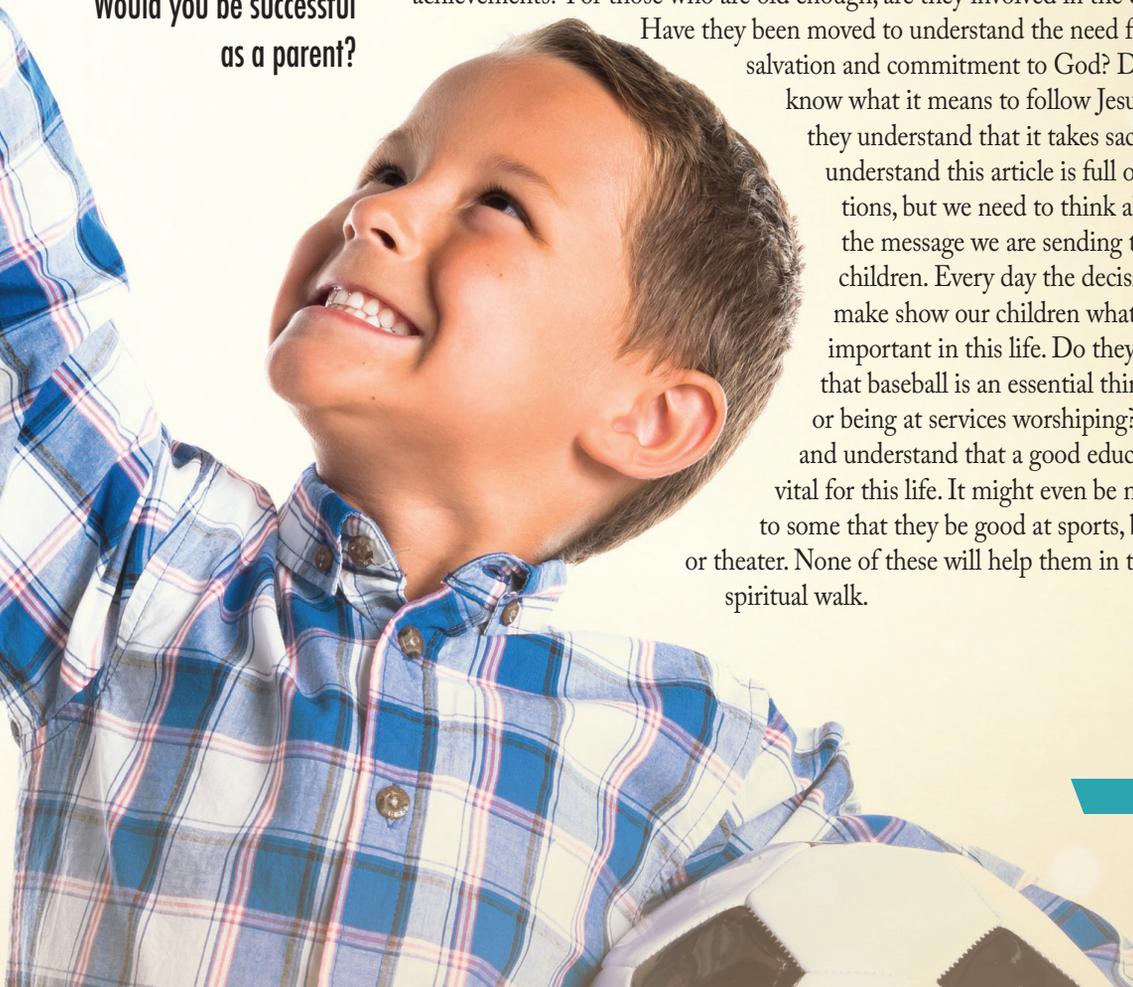
If our children do not learn to serve God, they will die unprepared to face eternity. Would you be successful as a parent?

What is the standard of a successful parent? What would make you feel confident you are successful as a parent? How will you reach your goals? These are questions that I often ask myself as a father of a daughter. These are questions I often ask the parents of the kids I work with within the youth group. What is the measure of a successful parent?

Will you feel successful if your children get good jobs or even become wealthy? What if they are popular and have many friends, is that what you want? What if they become the star athlete of their team? I think we would be happy if they just grew up to be good citizens, have good health, have good families, and live like most middle-class Americans. What do you want for your children?

What if they achieve all these things? What if they are the captain of their team, have great jobs, and have lots of money? What about their spiritual achievements? For those who are old enough, are they involved in the church?

Have they been moved to understand the need for salvation and commitment to God? Do they know what it means to follow Jesus? Do they understand that it takes sacrifice? I understand this article is full of questions, but we need to think about the message we are sending to our children. Every day the decisions we make show our children what is most important in this life. Do they see that baseball is an essential thing in life or being at services worshipping? I know and understand that a good education is vital for this life. It might even be necessary to some that they be good at sports, band, or theater. None of these will help them in their spiritual walk.



Youth Ministry in a post-Covid World

by *Jacob Compton, Youth Minister
Lake Harbor Church of Christ*

Matthew 16:26 says: "For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?" If our children do not learn to serve God, they will die unprepared to face eternity. Would you be successful as a parent?

In Genesis 18:19, God said that He would bless Abraham because He knew Abraham would "command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the Lord, to do righteousness and justice." Could God say this about the way you train your children? We need to be teaching our young men about service. We need to teach them about how to be elders and deacons in the church. We need to encourage them to be ministers. Parents, we set the example by showing them what's most important to God.

Parents have been given a great responsibility to teach and train their children in the Lord. We should prepare our children, not just for this life, but for eternity. When we learn the balance, then we can indeed be successful. Proverbs 22:6 says: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." **MM**

*"Train up a child in the way
he should go, and when he is old
he will not depart from it."*

Proverbs 22:6

What will youth ministry look like in a post-Covid world?

The simple answer is: Youth ministry will look very different. Since the pandemic, some churches have thrived, while others have shut their doors altogether. Youth ministers now face the enormous challenge of making up for lost time, not only in relationships, but in spiritual education.

At surface level, it may not seem like our pre-teens and teens are really that behind, when it comes to the social, spiritual, and, in some ways, physical maturation process, but if you think about when the Covid-19 pandemic began, those who are in 6th grade now, were just in 4th grade. Students have missed out on important social interactions at places such as school and church during some of the most crucial years of their lives. They have also missed out on spiritual education, which is just as important. These years are vital for teens to grow in terms of maturing with God and establishing a love for the church.

Out of fear for what is to come, the unfortunate truth is that many families have become idle. This has been a detriment to the spiritual maturation of our young people, and youth ministers now bear the responsibility of filling in the gaps from these last couple of years. While we wish this weren't the case, I'd like to view this as an opportunity for us to seek out the students who need us the most and to help fill in those gaps with the knowledge God has blessed us with. More than ever, the time for action is now. **MM**



*Jacob Compton,
Youth Minister
Lake Harbor
Church of Christ*

Ruth Dale Pate Passes

Ruth Dale Pate was born on February 14, 1942, and peacefully passed away on April 7, 2021, with family by her side in her last days. She was a very quiet, gentle, compassionate person with many close friends. Her last desire was to be with the Lord. She knew how to live, and she knew how to die.

She was baptized at Central Church of Christ in Memphis, TN, where she was baptized by brother William Hull. Her home congregation has been the East Main Church of Christ in Tupelo, Mississippi.

Her loving husband, Bruce (they married Aug 30, 1963), gave her his love and she greatly supported him in his preaching of congregations through the Southern United States. She was an eyecare lens specialist at Milan Optical, Walmart Eye Care Center, and Horn-er-Rausch Optical.

Dale Pate leaves behind her husband Bruce Pate, her son Bradley Pate, her daughter Patty Gail Pate Flippen, her grandson Jacob Flippen, her mother-in-law Pauline Gary of Shreveport, Louisiana, and Hattie Ashworth (a very dear cousin). **MM**



In Loving Memory of Wilburn DeLancey

By John Pigg

Brother Wilburn DeLancey was born June 13, 1928, in West Monroe, LA, and passed this earthly scene September 30 in Delhi, LA, having lived a long, useful life for 93 years. He and his departed wife, Velma, along with their two daughters, Sandra of Clinton, MS, and Susan of Delhi, LA, were longtime residents of Yazoo City, MS. Wilburn was a veteran of the US Navy and retired President of Southern Bag Corp in Yazoo City.

He was a dedicated member and outstanding spiritual leader of the 49W church of Christ. For many years brother Al Franks was the preacher for the congregation, and Wilburn and Velma continued their close friendship with Al and June until their death.



They were generous supporters of the Magnolia Messenger and regular participants in the Annual MM RV Rally in LA, and MS, where they made many lifelong friends. After Velma passed a few years ago, Wilburn moved to Delhi, LA, to be near his disabled daughter, Susan, and continued his active service to the Lord with the Delhi church of Christ.

Being dear friends for over 40 years, I was honored to conduct Wilburn's graveside funeral on Tuesday, October 6, when we celebrated his faithful life and victorious death based on Rev. 14:12-13. **MM**

(Years ago, during the RV rally auction, my wife kept bidding on this large crystal bowl she really wanted. Well, brother Wilburn kept raising her bid every time. So it finally got too high for her and he got the bowl.

He then walked over and gave it to my wife. Sweet man. He will be missed. -dd)

MARIETTA CHURCH OF CHRIST

On September 26, 2021, the Marietta Church of Christ had a note-burn-ing ceremony to celebrate paying off their fellowship building. The church was able to do this because of a wonderful gift given to them by Dexter and Ruby Ellen Williams Magers. They are the aunt and uncle of the song leader, Bill Williams. Dexter & Ruby wanted to leave a gift to their home church from their childhood.

Ronnie Livingston is the minister for the Marietta Church of Christ. He has been the minister there for 27 years.



NORTH ALABAMA Christian Children's Home

North Alabama Christian Children's home, located in Florence, Alabama, is searching for a faithful christian couple from the churches of Christ to come and work with us as house parents for one of our girls' homes. This work includes an awesome salary for both the husband and wife, even if the husband works off campus as well. Also, money is given towards health insurance, and a bonus is offered for those who stay and work with us for at least 3 years. You can learn more about NACCH by visiting our website nacch.com, and taking the virtual tour of our campus and homes. You can email me at donwill55@yahoo.com, or call me or Melinda Jackson, Social Worker, at 256-757-4212. Feel free to contact us about this exciting work and ministry! Don Williams, Executive Director, NACCH

**call Don Williams, Director • (256-366-3327)
or Melinda Jackson, Social Worker • (256-757-4212).**

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The Jenkins Institute Goes Full Time



by Dale Jenkins, Minister
Spring Meadows Church of Christ

We seem to be losing more preachers than we have in a long time. Part of our work at “The Jenkins Institute” is maintaining a list of congregations looking for a minister. We have seen a dramatic upturn in the number of churches looking over the last 24 months. The stresses, pressures, demands, conflict, and inequities seem to have gotten more difficult for ministers today to navigate.

We love God’s men who minister and know they need trusted go-to sources and resources to aid them as they strive to be faithful ambassadors of the Good News of Christ. The Jenkins Institute

began in 2010, and our mission statement is simple: Serving God’s Servants. Through counsel, books, posts, seminars, retreats, mentoring, and training we provide resources and support for God’s men in ministry. The Institute was named in honor of our dad, Jerry Jenkins, as we strive to build on the encouragement he provided to so many ministers.

Jeff (My brother and minister), and myself, both humbly plan to spend the rest of our lives in this ministry to strengthen and encourage our preaching and ministry brethren and their families. Beginning in 2022, we both will devote our full-time work to these efforts. We also provide church leadership seminars and conflict management for congregations.

Our next BETTER Conference is scheduled for Montgomery, Alabama, March 7-8. We have conducted 25 of these conferences in 8 states and 4 countries. These conferences are designed to aid ministers in the work of preaching the Word. To receive free materials and to keep up with the work of TJI, contact us at TheJenkinsInstitute@gmail.com or visit TheJenkinsInstitute.com. **MM**

(I have attended one of these “BETTER” programs and highly recommend it to every preacher. You need this! -dd)

The MAGNOLIA MESSENGERS / PREACHER SEARCH

COFFEEVILLE CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Jim Peters 662-675-8623

John Allen 662-473-8702

MONTICELLO CHURCH OF CHRIST

a A 150-yr old congregation in Monticello, Arkansas, is seeking a full-time minister. We have 100-120 members, 3 elders, 8 deacons, and a college minister, with a good mix of both younger and older members. Duties will include pulpit sermons, teaching and planning adult classes, visiting, community evangelic outreach, and working with other congregations in the area. Salary will be based on experience. Candidates that are married with children are preferred. A part-time secretary position for the minister’s wife will be available, if desired. Compensation includes a three-bedroom home on three acres of land right next to the church building. Submit letters of interest, resumes, references, and links to sermons to the search team at montcofcpcst@gmail.com.

Search Committee, c/o Monticello church of Christ, P.O. Box 485, Monticello, AR 71657

Marty Baker - Cell: 870-723-5192

Work Office: 870-367-8676

JACKSON GROVE CHURCH OF CHRIST

The Jackson Grove congregation in Enid, Mississippi, is in need of a preacher on Sundays. It is a small group of about 15 members, and is one of the oldest congregations in the state.

Buddy Kiihmi 662-647-5346.

WINNSBORO CHURCH OF CHRIST

We are currently in search of a replacement of a retired preacher of 35-plus yrs. We are a

stable congregation looking for someone to help us grow. If you are that man, please send your pertinent info to rgeorge703@yahoo.com.

Randy George 318-417-1358

WEST WALKER CHURCH OF CHRIST

We are in search of a Gospel preacher, willing to work, sound in doctrine and life. Please mail resume, background and CD to:

**West Walker Church of Christ
26036 Hwy 118 • Carbon Hill, AL 35549**

DEERFOOT CHURCH OF CHRIST

Looking for Outreach Minister in the Birmingham, AL, area. We are about 400 members. Outreach Minister to help with the strategic and tactical aspect of reaching our neighbors and working with several ministries within the church. This position will also include teaching and some pulpit duties.

Michael Dykes

hiring.outreach@deerfootcoc.com

THE CHRISTOPHER CHURCH OF CHRIST

Is seeking a minister for a congregation of about 33 members, located in Southern Illinois. Salary is \$36,000 per year.

Please send resume, references, and a sample sermon to jurbanmail@gmail.com

Or call George Marshall at (618) 218-1401.

S. WEST END BLVD. CHURCH OF CHRIST

The S. West End Blvd. Church of Christ in Cape Girardeau, Missouri, is seeking a full-time evangelist. The congregation has 75+ members, four deacons, and two elders.

Qualifications: Bible degree or equivalent from a Church of Christ related preaching school,

college or university. A candidate should be doctrinally sound, experienced in evangelism and have good communication and people skills. Marital status preference is married.

Applicants should submit a resume, links to recent videos, references and philosophy of ministry and doctrine to:

profwemeyer@yahoo.com or mail to William E. Meyer, 2221 Brookwood, Cape Girardeau, MO 63701."

SEEKING ASSOCIATE MINISTER

WESTERN HILLS CHURCH OF CHRIST

Western Hills seeks an experienced associate minister to work with an established church of Christ serving the Lord faithfully on the western edge of Fort Worth, TX. The associate minister’s primary responsibility is to facilitate the development, coordination, and execution of the involvement and evangelism ministries for the Western Hills family. Additional responsibilities will include teaching adult Bible classes, assisting with worship assembly planning, assisting the pulpit minister with visitations, and helping to develop a program to enfold new members (new converts and new membership) into the work of the Lord at Western Hills. We are seeking a man with strong Biblical knowledge, an excellent communicator, and one who relates well to people of all ages and backgrounds.

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Fort Worth, TX 76116

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A LEGACY OF FAITH AND LOVE:

A TRIBUTE TO JUNE,

My other Mother

by Glenda Franks

I first met June the summer of my 13th birthday when I started riding the Joy Bus at the South Huntington Street Church of Christ in Kosciusko, MS. Al was the preacher there at the time. Even as a young teenager I admired June. She always had such a beauty and grace about her. Two years later, just after my 15th birthday, Paul and I started dating. Paul was the oldest of Al and June's three sons. This is when I really came to know Paul's family and fell in love with them. Paul and I married two years later on September 9, 1977. June became another mother to me. We had a wonderful relationship. I have always heard people say how mother-in-laws can be hard to deal with, but that was not the case with June. She treated me like a daughter. I loved her, and she loved me.

Throughout the years of being a part of the Franks family, I could definitely tell how much June loved her family. She enjoyed the holidays when we all would



get together. She always had her house beautifully decorated, and she prepared wonderful food for us all to enjoy. She made you feel loved and special.

June was a devoted wife, and she loved her husband, Al, very much. They were married for 63 years before he passed away on October 16, 2019. They were a wonderful example of a godly marriage. She was beautiful inside and out. She was a true Proverbs 31 lady. It was evident in her life how much she loved the Lord and loved others. She was a great example of a true Christian woman. She was always calling and checking on people, cooking for others, and hosting people in her home.

She showed genuine care and concern for others.

She loved the church.

She was a member at the South Huntington Street Church of Christ for 51 years.

She also loved the Magnolia Messenger, which she and Brother

Al started in 1978. They worked very hard making it a

great "good news" newspaper.

On October 16, 2019, the day our precious Brother Al unexpectedly passed away, our relationship took on a whole new meaning. Our world was shattered, especially June's. After Al's death, June came to live with me and Paul. A couple of months before Al's passing, Paul was diagnosed with ALS, so June wanted to spend as much time with him as she could. Paul would go to bed very early each night, and June and I would stay up and talk for hours. We also read the Bible and prayed together each night. We were support for each other during a very difficult time. Three months after Al passed away, Paul passed away. June continued living with me a few more months. After the encouragement of her other two sons, Philip and Stephen, she moved back home. We continued to eat together and travel together. We became like Naomi and Ruth. June would always say it was the other way around, that she was following me instead of me following her. We had developed a very deep bond and love for each other.



Glenda Franks

June was blessed to find another fine Christian man to love after the passing of her beloved husband, Al Franks. She married Jeff Booker on December 27, 2020. They were so happy they found each other. They were blessed with nine months of marriage.

Tragedy struck our family again on February 26, 2021. June lost her second son, Philip. Even after losing her husband and two of her three sons within a 23 month period, her faith did not waver. It makes me think of the scripture in James 1:12 "Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test

he will receive the crown of life which God has promised to those who love him." Stephen, the youngest of Al and June's children, is the only remaining son. He is such a wonderful son and took great care of his mother, especially after the passing of his dad.

She always had her house beautifully decorated, and she prepared wonderful food for us all to enjoy. She made you feel loved and special.

On August 9, 2021, June had a stroke. She was in rehab for a few weeks and was improving day by day, but on September 16, 2021, she suffered another massive stroke. She passed away September 17, 2021, at 11:22 P.M. That night I not only lost my mother-in-law, co-worker, and sister-in-Christ, but I lost my best friend. There are no words to describe how much I loved this woman. I am so thankful and blessed to have been a part of her life. All I have left now are the precious memories of the special bond we shared. June will be forever in my heart until we meet again. My prayer and goal is to be united with her again one day in Heaven. She left a great legacy of faith and love. **MM**



MY BEAUTIFUL Grandmother

by Megan Shepherd

"Who can find a virtuous woman? For her price is far above rubies." Proverbs 31:10

My Mawmaw was a virtuous woman. She was a wonderful example to her three sons, three daughters-in-law, eight grandchildren, and 16 great-grandchildren. It was such a blessing to grow up with June Franks as my grandmother.

There was no question that she loved God and followed His commands. Mawmaw was a praying woman. I always felt like when I asked my grandparents (Al & June Franks) to pray for something, God would hear their prayer first. Throughout my childhood, my Mawmaw was my role model. She was married to a wonderful man, she was as beautiful as she was sweet, and she loved God and others.

Mawmaw was the sweetest, most thoughtful, and loving person. She was what grandmother dreams are made of. She adored her family. She also loved others. She was such an encourager to everyone in her life. I will forever miss her beautiful presence in my life, her constant support, and her unwavering love. I'm so thankful for the hope of Heaven to be reunited again. **MM**

Visiting among Churches in north Mississippi



we overcome? Tim said we are to rely on God and help from faithful friends. It was a good lesson. We enjoyed seeing so many good friends in Cleveland.

■ **August 22 and September 26:** I preached at the Tunica church of Christ. The congregation is a wonderful group of Christians. They have around 30 in attendance and no elders. They are searching for someone to come and work with them part-time. I'm happy to help them during the interim. They have a good mix of ages and are very encouraging. Madolyn and I enjoyed our

By *Eddie Lewis, Missionary to North Mississippi, 9423 Laurel Hill, Olive Branch, MS 38654. E-mail: lewis7946@gmail.com*

August through October 2021

By **Eddie Lewis**

I appreciate so much the opportunity to inform you about my mission work among the churches in North Mississippi. I appreciate the Germantown church of Christ sponsoring me in this ministry. This report covers thirteen Sundays during the months of August through October 2021. I served six of these Sundays as an interim preacher for the Coffeeville church of Christ. I have been preaching a series of lessons from the book of Ephesians. I have considered chapters three through five "The Mystery of the Church" and "Walking in the Light." They continue to search for a full-time minister. I served two Sundays as an interim preacher for the Tunica church of Christ. I also visited with five other churches.

■ **Sunday night August 15:** We visited with the Cleveland church of Christ. Tim McCarter is the minister there. They have two elders and about 40 in attendance. They have an active ministry with the students at Delta State University. They serve meals to the students and Bro. Tim teaches a weekly Bible study. In his lesson Sunday night, he asked the question "Why People Forsake You?" based on 2 Timothy 1:15-18. Paul had brethren to forsake him in his ministry. Jesus had disciples to forsake him (Matthew 26:55). How do



Tim and Debbie McCarter

visit with the good folks there. The first Sunday I preached on "Decoding the Mystery," based on Ephesians 3:1-13. Paul reveals to the brethren the great mystery of how God planned to redeem sinful man and bring all men together in one body, the church. The second Sunday I spoke on "Imitating Our Father" based on Ephesians 5:1-17. As God's children, Paul is



Dusty Dawson and Dan Ellis

visit with the good folks there. The first Sunday I preached on "Decoding the Mystery," based on Ephesians 3:1-13. Paul reveals to the brethren the great mystery of how God planned to redeem sinful man and bring all men together in one body, the church. The second Sunday I spoke on "Imitating Our Father" based on Ephesians 5:1-17. As God's children, Paul is

"Germantown church Honors its Missionaries"

It was an encouragement. Madolyn and I attended Mission Sunday at the Germantown church of Christ. The Germantown congregation has sponsored my work among the churches in North Mississippi for the last 8 years. I appreciate the great love and support they have shown me over this time. We enjoyed the Saturday night cookout at the building. The fellowship was great. It was an encouragement to me to be part of the discussion panel. A lot of good information and insight was given about all the mission works. Sunday services were a great time of worship and praise.

We were encouraged to hear about the work that the Williamses are doing in Canada and the Malugasas in Ukraine. We pray that the future mission to Greece will be a great success.



encouraging us to be imitators of our Father. He tells us to walk in love because God is love. He tells us to walk as children of light because God is light. He tells us to walk in wisdom because God is truth. It is a good lesson.

■ **Sunday night September 5:** Madolyn and I visited with the West President church of Christ in Greenwood, MS. Luke Quinn is the minister there. The church is served by four elders and has around 100 in attendance. We always enjoy visiting with the church there. Luke presented a lesson on "Walking In Unity" based on Ephesians 4:1-16. He had an interesting lesson. He talked about the spiritual graces needed for unity and the seven foundation truths.

■ **September 12:** I was invited to preach at the Cleveland church of Christ. Tim McCarter is the long-time minister there. He and Debbie were away on a vacation trip. They have two elders and around 45 in attendance. They have an active student center work at Delta State University. They also are active supporters of the Christian Student Center at Mississippi Delta Community College. We enjoyed visiting with many old friends. I presented a series of lessons from Paul's letter to the Ephesians. We looked at chapters three and four. In Bible class I talked about "The Great Mystery of the Church." In the a.m. sermon I preached on "Rooted in Love." Paul offers a prayer for the brethren in Ephesus. He prays that they will gain spiritual strength and a greater understanding of God's love for them. In the p.m. service I preached on "Walking in Unity." Paul talks about the basis of unity in the church. He mentions the spiritual attitudes needed for unity and the seven foundation doctrines of our faith.

■ **September 14:** Madolyn and I visited the Fall Gospel Meeting at the West President church of Christ in Greenwood, MS. Bob Swain from Oneonta, AL, was the guest speaker. Bob is a familiar face in the Mississippi delta. Bob and Ashley served as Youth Minister for the South Main church in Greenville,

MS. He worked with John Pigg and me in the 1990's before he went into the preaching ministry. He and Kenny Jackson continued to direct the third session at Sardis Lake Christian Camp. It was wonderful to see Bob again and hear him preach. Their theme was on unity



Bob Swain and Luke Quinn

and Bob did a great job of centering in on how the church can help during times of trial. They had six baptisms during the meeting. We rejoice with the congregation over the addition of these precious souls.

■ **Sunday night September 19:** we visited with the Indianola church of Christ. Gene Hill is the minister there. They have no elders and about 20 that attend. This congregation was Madolyn's home congregation for 26 years. They are active supporters of the Christian Student Center at Mississippi Delta Community College. We always enjoy visiting with the folks there and love them very much. Gene presented a lesson on "The Gospel Call" based on 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14. He said the Gospel was placed in earthen vessels for distribution; they were to find and



*Kirk Brothers and Willie Nettles
Delta Enrichment Series*

teach faithful men; the Gospel excludes all other law systems; and God speaks to us today through the Gospel. It was a good lesson.

■ **Saturday September 23:** We attended the Delta Enrichment Series

at the Cleveland church of Christ. Dr. Kirk Brothers, the president of Heritage Christian University, and Dr. Willie Nettles of the By-Pass church in Vicksburg, MS, were the speakers. The theme this year was Unity. They talked about Unity in Interpretation, Unity in Leadership, Unity in Coming Together, and Unity in Fellowship. Both speakers did an excellent job of challenging us to work at maintaining unity within the body of Christ. We have unity when we enter the body of Christ. We are all one in Christ. Our task is to maintain what God has given us. Both speakers looked at Ephesians 4. Bro. Nettle said we have a spiritual check-up for unity. We must check our attitude, check our facts, and check our gifts. Bro. Kirk emphasized the importance of the words fellowship and sharing. Both were powerful lessons. I thank these two men for their wonderful insight into God's word and the great challenge they gave us to live and love like Christ.

■ **October 2:** Madolyn and I attended Homecoming at the Indianola church of Christ. The guest speaker for the event was Adam Miller, a former minister for the congregation. Adam currently



Melissa and Adam Miller



Ladies Serving-Indianola Homecoming

preaches for the church in Plain Dealing, LA. Around 60 people gathered for the event. Former members as well as visitors from the community came to celebrate. It was wonderful getting to

Continued on page 26

Continued from page 25

visit with old friends and hearing Adam speak. Gene Hill, the current minister, hosted the event. The ladies in the congregation put together a wonderful fellowship meal. Adam presented three lessons from Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians. He talked about Encouraging One Another, Reaching Out To Others, and Remaining Faithful. It was a wonderful event and very encouraging to the congregation. We enjoyed being there.

■ **Sunday night October 3:** Madolyn and I visited with the Ackerman church of Christ. Paul Mowrer is the new minister there. He, his wife Kathy, and his mother, were celebrating their first Sunday with the congregation. Paul is a graduate of Harding University and worked several years for the White Rock church in Dallas, TX. He has also worked with the church in Monticello, AR. Paul came to Ackerman from



Paul and Kathy Mowrer

Monticello. The church in Ackerman has three elders and around 100 in attendance. Paul's lesson was from the letter of Paul to the Philippians. He talked about the Pattern, the Prize, and the Power. It was a very encouraging message.

■ **October 17:** I was invited to preach at the Red Hill church of Christ in Duck Hill, MS. Cole Surrell is the bi-vocational minister there. He is the principal for the elementary school in Grenada, MS. The church has no elders and about 45 in attendance. They have a good mix of ages and several young families. After services we got to eat lunch with the Gordan family. Wonderful family. I appreciate so much the invitation to speak.



Becky and Cole Surrell

Cole taught the Bible Class. They are using the Gospel Advocate Foundation Adult Bible Study. The lesson was entitled "Wages of Unrighteousness" based on 2 Peter 2:12-22. Cole emphasized the sad description of the sinner in the text.

teaches us about the consequences of sin and the importance of us continuing to grow spiritually.

In the worship I presented a lesson from Ephesians 3, "Decoding the Mystery." Paul tells us about God's plan to bring all men together in one body and the redemption of all men to Himself. Madolyn and I enjoyed our visit with the folks there.

Update on CSC at MDCC:

Madolyn and I continued our work with the Christian Student Center at Mississippi Delta Community College. During the months of September and October, 25-30 students have been coming each week to the Wednesday night Bible study. We have studied about who Jesus is, the parable of the Sower, and what is the "world" that chokes out the word and many other subjects. We have had good participation from the students. Each week Madolyn fixes some special treats for them. The last week in September was Homecoming week for Mississippi Delta Community College. The student government planned several activities for the students. We got to be judges for the "Cook Off." Eight teams participated and cooked pork chops. Madolyn and I really enjoyed tasting each entry. It was a tough



choice, but we made the selection. We met the wining team that night at the football game. It was a great opportunity to meet with lots of students. We have two students that have agreed to a personal Bible study. We are hopeful that good results will come from that study. Please be praying for these students. You can see these classes on our Facebook page: CSC @ MDCC. **MM**

Flickers of Light

FROM THE BIBLE

by Bill Lambert

Do you remember? *In the days when the "Joy Busses" were in motion all around the country, JOY stood for "Jesus first, Others second, Yourself third." It seems most of the "Joy Buses" are now resting in the junk yards around the country. I know we live in a different culture now. But, do you think maybe if we renewed this slogan in our hearts, the churches would begin to grow again and there would be a renewed JOY and enthusiasm in our hearts and lives!*
(Read Matt. 1 Mt. 23:11; Mk. 9:35; 10:43; Jn. 12:26)



READERS' RESPONSE

*Reasons Why We Continue
Publishing the Magnolia Messenger*

■ You continue to produce a very good and sound magazine for all to read and enjoy...

(Jackson Grove Church of Christ, Enid, MS)

■ Thank you all for this magazine and the hard work it takes.

(Barbara Baker, Hohenwald, TN)

■ Thank you for your continuing good work on the MM!

(The Humphrey Family, Prineville, OR)

■ I really enjoy this magazine. Keep up the good work!

(Barbara Epperson, Attalla, AL)

■ Messenger. I pray for all of you and the great work you do. I agree with so many – “The issue on Heaven was great”

(Ruby Nell Parham, Amory, MS)

■ I very much enjoy receiving the Magnolia Messenger. The Summer issue was very informative and enlightening.

(Don Stingle, Clearwater, FL)

■ Enjoy your excellent magazine and the sound articles.

(Wand Bell, Ponca, OK)

■ Thank you so much for continuing to provide the MM. I have really enjoyed the Fall 2021 issue.

(Willie & Eddie Thames, Philadelphia, MS)

■ I appreciate your dedication to the truth and thank you for your excellent gospel teaching.

(Rose Harrison, Newton, MS)

■ Thank you so much for sending the Magnolia Messenger to me. It is one of the most helpful Christian publications I receive and I look forward to each issue...

(Eileen Carter, Dadeville, MO)

■ We enjoy getting the “Messenger”. Thank you for your good work.

(Glen Burse, Jackson, TN)

NOTICE TO READERS

Send all mail, address changes, and new subscriptions to:

MAGNOLIA MESSENGER

P. O. Box 1578

Kosciusko, Mississippi 39090

Glenda Franks

662-792-2800

glendafranks@yahoo.com

You know the three main tenses when it comes to time:



First, Paul wrote about something that had already occurred. Specifically, he said the grace of God “has appeared, bringing salvation for all people.” What a blessing that Jesus Christ has come to earth, lived the perfect life, sacrificed that life, and overcome death. What joy that we can make the proper response to the Gospel (Mark 16:15-16) and have our sins washed away (Acts 22:16).

Second, Paul said there was an effect of this on the Christian’s present behavior: “training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age” (Titus 2:12).

Third, Paul noted Christians are looking for something to come: “waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ” (Titus 2:13).

Thus, verse 14 makes perfect sense. Considering what Christ has accomplished, and what his followers look forward to, while we live in the present we should be “zealous for good works.”

Give it some thought,

John Allan



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Precious Memories



IN HONOR

**ROSILAND EDWARDS
JO MEADOWS**

David Smith
(Memphis, TN)

**JUNE FRANKS BOOKER
GLENDA FRANKS**

Danny & Evelyn Guy
(Wetumpka, AL)

SAMUEL & DIANE JONES

Frederick Alan Jones
(Jackson, TN)

**JAY ALEXANDER
JAMES PATTERSON**

Barbara Persinger
(DeRidder, LA)

IN MEMORY

BOB MCCAFFERTY

Reicy, Marty and
Suzanne Sanders
(Brandon, MS)

Bessie Brown
(West, MS)

TALMADGE ANDERSON

Margaret Rogers
(Taylorsville, MS)

DWIGHT HAZLIP

**RANDY HAZLIP
KYLE HAZLIP**

Nelma Hazlip
(Natchez, MS)

DALTON DOYLE

Barbara Persinger
(Deridder, LA)

DOYCE ROSS

Larry & Diane Dunaway
(Columbia, MS)

Columbia Church of Christ
(Columbia, MS)

BURGESS JACKSON

Gay Jackson
(Louisville, MS)

ROY BYRD

Louisville Church of Christ
(Louisville, MS)

Gay Jackson

(Louisville, MS)

GARNETT HARRIS
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Sandra Oliver
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Betty Harris
(Brandon, MS)

Mary Henley
(Brandon, MS)

Mrs. Walter Brock, Jr.
(Brandon, MS)

WILBURN DELANCY
Mary Henley

(Brandon, MS)

JEANETTE NICHOLS
Ken Nichols

(Shreveport, LA)

JOHNNY BERRYHILL
David & Linda Haddock

(Clinton, MS)

MARTHA LAWRENCE
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(Anonymous)

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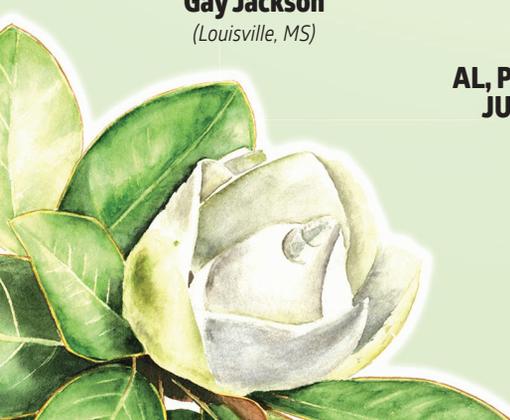
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Does Door Knocking Still Work?

by Matt Wallin

“Door knocking doesn't work anymore.”
 “Inviting friends to church doesn't work.”
 “House to House doesn't work.” “Gospel television and radio shows don't work.”
 “Gospel meetings don't work.” “Nobody wants the truth anymore.”

To hear some people tell it, nothing works, and nobody wants the gospel anymore. Thankfully, none of those things are true. People are still searching for the truth, and each day is a new opportunity to share it with someone. October 2, 2021, was a great day to share the gospel.

October 2 marked the 2nd Annual Brotherhood-Wide Door Knocking Day.

This year, on October 2, teams of soul-winners went into their communities to see if door knocking still works, and to see if anyone wanted the gospel. The results were overwhelming!



2ND ANNUAL BROTHERHOOD-WIDE DOOR KNOCKING DAY

- 418 churches signed up
- 120 churches reported...so far (*Covid and bad weather all over the country delayed several congregations. Reports from rescheduled efforts are still coming in.*)
- 1,652 members knocked
- 22,369 doors knocked
- 12 baptisms and 1 restoration...so far

■ Reasons Door Knocking Works

Door knocking obviously isn't the greatest evangelistic tool we have. Nothing will ever replace personal Bible studies across a kitchen table with people whom we have already earned a study. However, door knocking is a great tool for at least three reasons.

People Do Want the Gospel: People in Bible times wanted the gospel. Drunks, homosexuals, and the man cheating on his wife were converted (1 Cor. 6:9-11). A man

that killed Christians and tried to tear the church apart became a Christian (Acts 8). Hated government employees that stole from people gave their lives to Jesus (Matthew 9:9, Luke 19:1-10).

People still want the truth today. According to a 2018 study from the Barna Group, two-thirds of Americans (66%) express at least some curiosity about what the Bible says, including one in three (29%) who express a strong desire.

At House to House we are averaging an all-time high of almost two conversions a day reported back from our work this year. Gospel Broadcasting Network (GBN) and the Authentic Christian Podcast are averaging almost a conversion a week. Other brotherhood works are reporting similar numbers. People are looking for the truth!

Door Knocking Finds People We Couldn't Reach Any Other Way: Door knocking can take us to every door in our community. It can help us come face to face with people we would otherwise never interact with and would not be able to reach.

I have been impressed with the number of stories that have been shared by Christians who went door knocking. They find many people with an open bible on their coffee table looking for answers.

■ Sharing the Gospel Changes Us

The Gospel saves. The fact that God uses flawed people like us to teach others is a testament to the power of God (2 Cor. 4:7). It also comes with an obligation for every Christian. The church has to look for the lost as we go (Matthew 28:19). Evangelism isn't just something that can be done in a day (like Door Knocking Day), a program (like House to House Heart to Heart), or an event (seminars or mission trips.) Those things are valuable tools if we use them correctly, but they make poor substitutes for the “as you go” model that Jesus commanded. Evangelism works best when it's a lifestyle. Sometimes we need a moment in time to start a new lifestyle.

One of the best things that door knocking accomplishes is what it does to

us as we go.

As we come face to face with the lost in our community it deepens our love for them, and deepens our desire to see them come to the knowledge of the truth. Seeing the lost, house to house and eye to eye, reminds us of our responsibility and the sense of urgency. When we knock on the door of the lost, we hope to change their hearts. Very often the heart that we change the most is our own.

Picking a specific date to look for the lost in our community can be a beautiful beginning to a life committed to carrying out the great commission, looking for the lost as we go (Matthew 10:7), wherever we go (Acts 8:4).

Dozens of congregations have already been inspired to turn a brotherhood-wide day of door knocking into a monthly event in their congregation. They are working to turn a day of evangelism into a lifestyle of evangelism. They meet together to reach the unreachable, and they provoke one another to love and good works.

You don't need our permission to door knock, or to do anything else. But if you need our encouragement, we are here to offer it. You can get tips from some of the most experienced and successful door knockers in the brotherhood and even print free resources to share with your neighbors at <https://nextdoor.housetohouse.com/>

October 2, 2021, gave us 12 new Christians. 12 precious souls. A knock can change everything. **MM**

Matt Wallin

House to House/Heart to Heart
 East Ridge church of Christ
 PO Box 91139
 East Ridge, TN 37412
 Phone: 1-877-338-3397

by Dennis Doughty

"INSCRIPTIONS"

True Climate Change

On the fourth day God created the sun and moon, "To separate the day from the night and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years" (Ge. 1:14). That was true climate change. In the days of Noah "The floodgates of the sky were opened...and the mountains were covered" (Ge.11:20). This too was real climate change.

As Joshua was winning the battle against Gibeon, "The sun stood still, and the moon stopped" for a whole day (Jos. 10:13-15). More climate change. During a "fierce gale of wind" on Galilee, the person in the boat "rebuked the wind and the surging waves, and they stopped and became calm" (Lu. 8:24). That's man-made climate change!

Only God can "change" the weather. Contrary to some opinions, today's weather "ups and downs" are normal. Truthfully, there has not been a record number of Cyclones in the Pacific since 2005, or Hurricanes in the Atlantic since 1994. More people are affected by weather due to increased population, but that does not mean that the weather is changing. For sure, true climate change is coming with "the coming of the day of God, of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning and the elements will melt with intense heat!" (2Pe.3:12). This will be real global warming!

The Psalm of the Cross

The twenty-second Psalm has rightly been called The Psalm of the Cross. That it was a prophetic writing about the crucifixion of Christ is confirmed by Jesus himself as he quoted the first verse of the Psalm from the cross, he cried out "My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?"

If you ever wondered what Jesus' thoughts were as he hung suspended on Golgotha's hill and looked out at the crowd, you need wonder no more: "All who see me sneer at me," "My heart is like wax," "My strength is dried up," "my tongue cleaves to my jaws," "they pierced my hands and feet," "I can count all my bones," "They stare at me," "for my clothing they cast lots" (Verses 6-18).

Spurgeon wrote of this Psalm, "We should read it reverently, putting off our shoes from off our feet, for if there be holy ground anywhere in Scripture it is in this Psalm." In the closing section we read, "All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations will worship before you" (vs. 27). We gather each Lord's day, among all nations of the world, to remember our crucified Savior, his pain, his blood, his sacrifice, as we assemble to break the bread and drink the cup in holy worship.

-Dennis Doughty

I started writing this weekly column for our class newsletter. Now sixteen years later, it has grown to over seven hundred readers each week. These short articles are designed for bulletin use, and are also a good source for devotional and sermon material. If you would like to start getting it each week, send me an email at dennis1848@bellsouth.net -dd



November Preacher's Meeting

Clinton, MS

by John Pigg

Most every month on the first Monday at 11:30 AM at the Clinton church of Christ building, all the Jackson, MS, area preachers, church leaders, and their wives are invited in 2022 to enjoy a sack-fellowship meal and afterwards participate in two separate inspirational meetings. Gathered at our November meeting and pictured from left to right are Derrick Broome, youth minister for the Siwell Road church; Ben McRee, preacher of the Clinton church and wife Kelly; Glen Newell, an elder at Clinton and wife, Lisa; Willie Nettle, an elder and preacher for the Bypass church in Vicksburg; Gary Hampton, preacher for the Siwell church in Jackson and wife Teresa; Robert Shelton, elder for the Clinton church and wife Ann; Keith Wilson, preacher for the Crystal Springs church; and taking the picture is John Pigg, Director of Mission GTO MX and former preacher for the Lake Harbour Drive church in Ridgeland. There will be no meeting in December. **MM**

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Christian home for girls in Cookeville, TN.

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Applications are available at our website:

<http://www.happyhaven.org/documents/EmploymentApplication.pdf>

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Office: 931-526-2052 Fax: 931-372-8837

Email: happyhaven@frontiernet.net

Houston Bynum, Administrator

These Sent In Answers to QB, Last Issue

- | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Shelia Williams | 34. Sue Fisher | 66. Garry Gooch | 103. Fannie Johnson | 139. Ruby Nell Parham | 176. Mary Grigsby | Clemmer |
| 2. Bonnie Dixon | 35. Sylvester & Linda Burton | 67. Barry Cole | 104. Nancy McGee | 140. Sarah Greene | 177. Marvin England | 220. Jane Barnett |
| 3. S. Berryhill White | 36. Stan Neuenschwander | 68. Braden Hammons | 105. Linda Kay Cook | 141. Roger King | 178. Peggy Hartman | 221. Judy Gurley |
| 4. Johnnie Perry | 37. Betty Bryant | 69. Silas Nygard | 106. Leah Bishop | 142. Claranett Hathorn | 179. Maggie Terry | 222. Mitchell Gurley |
| 5. Ruby King | 38. Mary Dyer | 70. Millie Mosely | 107. Julius Lee Wales | 143. Glenda Wilson | 180. Imogene Grayson | 223. Nettie Dees |
| 6. Jesse Brent | 39. Patricia Glover | 71. Ann Cockroft | 108. Gail Saxon | 144. Rayma Cook | 181. Grace Childers | 224. Sue Mason |
| 7. Judy & Jim Hill | 40. Exie Motes | 72. Clara Allen | 109. Eddie Vermillion | 145. Shirley Carroll | 182. Gwendolyn Bryant | 225. Charlotte Rouchle |
| 8. Ma'Nia & Bralan Womack | 41. Sarah Dantzler | 73. Jessie Allen | 110. James Vermillion | 146. Dorothy Mallet | 183. Herbert Green | 226. Terry Miltner |
| 9. Jeremiah Woodard, Jr. | 42. Sharon Dantzler | 74. Roscoe Slate | 111. Vickie Comer | 147. Carolyn Miller | 184. Bertha King | 227. Rhenda Miltner |
| 10. Benrus & Nicole Womack | 43. Carrie McGrone | 75. Earlean Williams | 112. Roxann Stewart | 148. Sherian Martin | 185. Vernon Curry | 228. Michael Barnes |
| 11. Jeremiah & Shelia Woodard | 44. Lee Ehret | 76. Jane Kuykendall | 113. Emily Overton | 149. Charlotte Ritter | 186. Sherron Dixon | 229. Veatis Reed |
| 12. Barbara Shanklin | 45. Bert Tingle | 77. Bernita Booker | 114. Mary McDonald | 150. Betty Spears | 187. David Windsor | 230. Eileen Carter |
| 13. Brenda Green | 46. Nancy Floyd | 78. Luccile & Eddie Clark | 115. Brad & Bethany Stephens | 151. Carolyn Stanford | 188. Jason, & Shane French | 231. Natalie Stewart |
| 14. Janie Green | 47. William Pyron | 79. Greg Ward | 116. Barbara Loden | 152. Jennifer Seal | 189. Martha Lewis | 232. Steve Nelson |
| 15. Don Lee | 48. Joyce King | 80. Rachel Pruitt | 117. Kittie Edwards | 153. Lisa McIntyre | 190. Christine Holliday | 233. Regan Hall |
| 16. Wilda Pounds | 49. Dorothy Banks | 81. Cathey Roberson | 118. Beulah Rupert | 154. Daniel Carter | 191. Nancy Akers | 234. Sandra Grisham |
| 17. Lisa McIntyre | 50. Laura Brannon | 82. William Langford | 119. Alice Dempsey | 155. Ora Gladney | 192. Vera Winfrey | 235. Lynn Grisham |
| 18. Gregory Mac Hawkins | 51. Mr. & Mrs. Arthur Burnett | 83. Mary Mann | 120. Carolyn ware | 156. Joe Arnold | 193. Dorothy Brunson | 236. James Thornton |
| 19. Melinda Ann Hawkins | 52. Vera Spencer | 84. Faye Stanford | 121. Bobbie Loggins | 157. Brenda Redd | 194. Barbara Baker | 237. Charlotte Langley |
| 20. Stacey Mac Hawkins | 53. Jerry Neighbors, Jr. | 85. Danny Stacks | 122. Betty Standard | 158. RL Clark, Sr. | 195. Bronwen Pollard | 238. Diane Dunaway |
| 21. William Free | 54. Scotty Balentine | 86. Lois Nielson | 123. Ray Parham | 159. Silas Nygard | 196. Kim Harris | 239. Clyde Ray Bradford |
| 22. Jean Lewis | 55. Dorothy Winslett | 87. Dee Kepler | 124. Nadine Patton | 160. Millie Moseley | 197. Roy Gambrell | 240. Artis Hinton |
| 23. Blaise Fernandez | 56. Rick Bishop | 88. Donna Gulley | 125. Althea House | 161. Barry Cole | 198. Troy Thompson | 241. Kay Bramlett |
| 24. Pat Shadle | 57. Maggie Edmonds | 89. Pat Moore | 126. Arvel & Betty Miles | 162. Ed Lyon | 199. Darryl James Sterling | 242. Velma Isom |
| 25. Steven Tutor | 58. Lillie Williams | 90. Mattie Ann Owens | 127. Linda Cook | 163. Frances Baker | 200. Ima Jean Fogus | 243. Johnnie Perry |
| 26. Phyllis Spiers | 59. Danny & Glenda Wooldridge | 91. Barbara Epperson | 128. Charles Beal | 164. Sharon Huckaba | 201. Kathy Perry | 244. Toni Burnett |
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| 29. Florine Riley | 62. Admiral & Ruth Tidwell | 94. Gloria Wilborn | 131. Mable Hodges | 167. Kelly Key | 204. Dillie Pearl Horton | 247. Judy Von Dollen |
| 30. Billy Willingham | 63. Jerry Fleming | 95. Mary Ann Wallace | 132. Sarah Hill | 168. Janice Galloway | 205. Doralynn Felton | 248. Bonnie Dixon |
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| 32. Alice Humphries | 65. Betty Skinner | 97. Wanda Cochran | 134. Sylvia Birt | 170. Lucille Jackson | 207. Cindy Heathcock | 250. Shirley Bostrick |
| 33. Kimberly Easterling | | 98. Perkins Cochran | 135. Irene Wright | 171. Carolyn Garrett | 208. Sherry Townsend | 251. Brady Walton |
| | | 99. Rosie Mae Felton | 136. Amy Hutson | 172. Wanda Orman | 209. Carolyn Harvill | 252. Wes & Rhoda Jeans |
| | | 100. Everly Netterville | 137. Peggy Wroten | 173. Dr. Rhea Forum | 210. Billye Wiygul | 253. Earl Franks |
| | | 101. Eva Almon | 138. Barbara White | 174. Sandy Dean | 211. Michael Euer | 254. Dorothy Franks |
| | | 102. Betty Blair | | 175. Eric Fuller | 212. Belinda Escoubas | 255. Johnnye Blackmon |
| | | | | | 213. Annie Mae Pipkin | 256. Keitha Hare |
| | | | | | 214. Marie Lively | 257. Johnnie Franks |
| | | | | | 215. James Bricker | 258. Malcolm Hare, Jr. |
| | | | | | 216. Michael Harvill | 259. Dorothy Grantham |
| | | | | | 217. Betty York | 260. Stephanie Slaydon |
| | | | | | 218. Doris Fletcher | 261. Mary Jacobs |
| | | | | | 219. Sidney & Jea | 262. Mark Hayden |



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Director: Andrew Redd 601-754-4138

Berean Children's Home
1180 Berea Tr SE
Bogue Chitto MS 39629

Email: bereanchildrenshome@cableone.net
Website: bereanhome.org
Facebook: Berean Children's Home
Twitter: @bereanhome

Office Phone: 601-823-5776
Office Hours: Monday - Friday
8:30 am-4:30 pm
Fax: 601-823-5997



"A FAMILY with a HEART"

Our mission at Berean Children's Home is to provide children with a loving home and to assist each child to mature spiritually, intellectually, emotionally, socially and physically.

We are looking for a set of House Parents for our Home and if anyone is interested please contact me at my cell number or personal email.



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Question Box December 2021

In Memory of June Franks Booker

Our Question Box will be taken from **Proverbs 31:10-31**.

(NKJV)

10. Who can find a _____? For her worth is far above _____.
11. The heart of her husband safely _____ her; so he will have no lack of gain.
12. She does him _____ and not evil all the days of her _____.
13. She seeks wool and flax, and _____ works with her hands.
14. She is like the merchant ships, she brings her food from afar.
15. She also _____ while it is yet night and provides food for her _____, and a portion for her _____.
16. She considers a field and buys it; from her profits she _____ a vineyard.
17. She girds herself with _____, and strengthens her arms.
18. She _____ that her merchandise is good, and her _____ does not go out by night.
19. She stretches out her _____ to the distaff, and her _____ holds the spindle.
20. She _____ her hand to the _____, yes, she _____ out her hands to the _____.
21. She is not afraid of snow for her household, for all her household is clothed with _____.
22. She makes tapestry for herself; her _____ing is fine _____ and purple.
23. Her _____ is known in the gates, when he sits among the _____ of the land.
24. She makes linen _____ and sells them, and supplies _____ for the merchants.
25. Strength and _____ are her clothing; she shall _____ in time to come.
26. She opens her mouth with _____, and on her tongue is the law of _____.
27. She _____ over the ways of her household, and does not eat the bread of idleness.
28. Her children rise up and call her _____, her husband also, and he praises her.
29. "Many daughters have done well, but you _____ them all."
30. Charm is deceitful and _____ is passing, but a woman who _____ the LORD, she shall be praised.
31. Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her own _____ her in the gates.

Prepared by Glenn & Beth Beall, foyfogyirish@gmail.com

Please Send Your Answers To Us

(Print your name... Please. Thank you!)

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____
 Zip: _____ Phone: _____

NOTICE: Each person who sends in answers will be recognized in the next issue of the "MM" (see page 31). ALSO, by random drawing, the name of ONE student will be selected to receive a beautiful New Study Bible.

"The Question Box"
P. O. Box 1578 • Kosciusko, MS 39090