

THE PROVIDER

VOLUME XXXIII, NUMBER 16



Fairfield Church of Christ

1860 Hwy 100
Centerville, TN 37033-9400
931-729-5142

ELDERS:

Wayne Prince ext.14
Lafayette Spears ext.15
Gary Wright ext.24

DEACONS:

Gary Bailey ext.18
Schedule Events/FH
Mike Breece ext.19
Activities
Clay Chandler ext. 6
Benevolence
Darin Cochran ext.11
Worship
Ken Copley ext.17
Education
Steve Craft ext.20
Youth
Randal Halbrooks ext.13
Missions
Shanon Irwin ext.29
Security
O.D. Pratt ext.23
Seniors
Lloyd Rochelle ext.21
Maintenance
Jeff Stacks ext.22
Transportation
Vance Willis ext.26
Finance/IT

Pulpit Minister:

Mike Kelley ext. 2

Associate Minister:

Rodney Rochelle ext.25

Youth Minister:

Chris Wright ext. 3

Worship & Bible Study:

SUNDAY

Worship 9:00 AM
Bible Study 10:20 AM
Worship 6:00 PM

WEDNESDAY

Bible Study 7:00 PM

Family Line:

931-729-9846

Website:

fairfieldcofc.org



Mike's Minute

Covid Class

Believe it or not, the Covid-19 crisis will pass. Haven't heard that on the news? Me either. So, you heard it here first. Things will get back to normal. In the meantime, let's learn what we can from this crisis. As I mentioned in a recent article, Winston Churchill said, "Never let a good crisis go to waste." What enduring lessons can we learn from this? Well, let me mention a few words that have become buzz-words during these last few weeks... and some spiritual applications we can take from them.

Pandemic. Covid-19 is a pandemic. A pandemic is a disease that is prevalent over a whole country or the world. There is a much worse pandemic that you won't hear about on the evening news. It is the pandemic of *sin*. Romans 3:23: "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Romans 6:23: "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." Sin is rampant. The death rate for those who go untreated is 100%. There is one, and only one, cure for sin... faith in Jesus.

Social distancing. Social distancing is maintaining a physical distance between people and reducing the number of times people come into close contact with each other. The wise person keeps a physical distance from those who are deliberately foolish and sinful. "Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers" (Psalm 1:1). We must come into contact with sinners to share the gospel with them. However, let's be sure we are influencing them more than they are influencing us. Let's also be sure to put ourselves in the company of the wise and faithful on a consistent basis. Someone has well said, "There are some that are wise, and many who are otherwise." Let's be sure we spend plenty of time "hanging out" with the wise.

Safe at home. This is a governmental order that citizens limit travel outside the home only to essential activities and outdoor exercise. The Christian should be reminded that God intends everyone to be safe at home... physically, emotionally, and spiritually safe. It is the job of the husband/father to see that this is the case in his home. Those in my home should be loved, lifted, and led. "Anyone who does not provide for their relatives, and especially for their own household, has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever" (1 Timothy 5:8). Sobering words. I had better be sure that those in my household are served, supported, and "safe at home."

I hope these "pandemic principles" will stick with us long after this disease is gone and forgotten.

In Christian Love,

Mike



Preaching in Times of Distress

Further to Tommy South's suggestion about preaching during our current pandemic, we have some precedents. Several years ago I bought a used book in the UK entitled, *Sermons Delivered in Times of Persecution in Scotland*. It was published in 1880 to mark the 200th anniversary of a great conflict that took place in Scotland when the Protestant Reformers were being harassed and even killed by the Roman Catholic sympathizers, Charles I and Charles II. The volume runs to 674 pages, and it is interesting to read the kind of sermons the men preached. The sermons were included in the volume had been preached by men who had suffered persecution, and several of them were publicly hanged or killed with the sword. What kind of sermons did such men preach?

When I read through that volume I was impressed with the lack of sermons on self-pity ("What have we done to deserve this?"), neat tricks for survival ("Five steps to beat persecution.") or philosophical perspectives ("Why humans hurt one another."). Rather, they were mostly affirmations of the biblical truth that gave them hope or assurance that they were doing right in standing for principles they just could not surrender with integrity, even for the benefit of living a few more years.

Soon after the NIV arrived, I decided one evening to read the entire book of Ezekiel. I was especially impressed by the numerous appearances of the words "Sovereign LORD." (Later I found no less than 210 cases.). The RSV and ESV render the words "Lord GOD," but it occurred to me that Ezekiel was, among many other things, reminding exiled Israel that God is in control. He is over all. It appears to me that it is important to preach that truth in any time of national, or even local, crisis.

To the exiles in Babylon, Daniel sought to make the same point, though in a different way. The Jews were made to be observers when King Nebuchadnezzar was made to "eat grass like and ox . . . till you know that the Most High rules the kingdoms of men . . ." (Dan. 4:25). Interestingly, Isaiah's astounding vision of the Lord came "in the year King Uzziah died" (Isa. 6:1). We usually assume the vision came *after* the king's death and thus at the end of the administration of a successful leader of a peaceful and prosperous era. What to do?

What next? In times like that it is important to "see" God. I was about thirteen years old when FDR died, and I recall a neighbor's literally wringing her hands, saying, "I don't know what we'll do now." Her Christian worldview was obviously very meagre.

In painful, sorrowful times such as the present, there is no place for pop optimism, unrealistic dreaming and sermons of dread and despair. It is a time for "servants of the word" to give hearers perspective on the faith tenets that make us what we are as the people of God. That perspective involves more than faithful individual survival; it also involves service to others in the name of Christ.

Philip Slate
Cordova, TN
cpsmissions@gmail.com

What Lies Ahead

When this pandemic is over, there will be much that needs to be done. What lies ahead for each Christian? Each of us will need to get back into our worship services, and especially our fellowship activities. We will need to renew our faith and zeal, and again become the "the light of the world" which, to a great extent, has been "hidden under a basket" these past several weeks. (Mt. 5: 14,15).

What lies ahead for Elders? Our Shepherds will need to "pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock" (Ac. 20:28). There will be those sheep who have been enticed back into the world during this absence. Our spiritual leaders will need to "leave the ninety and nine" and "go after the one who is lost" (Lu. 15:4). It will not be a time for meetings but for shepherding.

What lies ahead for Preachers? When the virus is contained, and the "shelter in place" is lifted, we have a lot of catching up to do. When Paul got out of his first imprisonment, he hit the road running. So should we preachers. There will be hospitals to visit, people to go see, and a needed time to "preach the word" (2 Tm. 4:2). There will be members who need encouragement, and the need for us to get back in touch with our community again. Yes, a true challenge for the Lord's church lies ahead.

Dennis Doughty

BIRTHDAYS WE MISSED THIS MONTH:
Veronica Brown & Bridgett Tidwell had birthdays this past Tuesday. Happy Birthday!



Center Fielders News

“The Will of the Devil”



The Lord has a will and a purpose for our lives, but the devil also has a will for us. We seem to think that with our God-given freedom to choose between right and wrong, we can discern for ourselves what is good or evil. We forget that in reality, we do not set the terms; God does. We are constantly submitting ourselves as servants to one of two masters; God and righteousness, or Satan and unrighteousness.

We should want nothing to do with the will of the devil. First, he tries to hide the Gospel and blind the minds of unbelievers. The Gospel is God’s message of hope, and it shines into man’s heart with the knowledge of the glory of God in Jesus. Second, the devil brings temptation to disobedience. Remember this line the devil used in Genesis 3:1 “Did God really say?” This is still one of his favorite questions for raising doubts about the truth and causing some to think they are being restricted. Third, the devil opposes and resists righteousness. It is not his will that we should receive any blessing of the Lord or any help from His people.

Fourth, the devil snatches away the good seed of the Word through a lack of understanding. Fifth, he mixes evil seed in among the good seed. Sixth, he desires to ruin body, soul, and spirit. The devil has no interest in our well-being but rather is bent on our destruction. There is only one way to keep from doing his will. “Submit yourselves, then to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.” (James 4: 7).

Obey God and watch Him work,

Rodney

BAPTIZED

Brian Halbrooks and his sister **Sonya Halbrooks Williams** were baptized last Sunday and this past Wednesday **Brooke Graham Patton** and **Landon Graham**, son and daughter of **Stephen & Deana Graham** were baptized. Congratulations!

FOR THE RECORD

WEEK OF April 12, 2020
 CONTRIBUTION: \$5004
 2020 WEEKLY BUDGET \$4167

Members: Hezekiah Springer, Paul & Noble Victory, Rickey Weems, Angie Stacks, Wilma Green, Bobbie Graf, Terry James, Melissa Worley, June Prince, Faye Rochelle, Marlin Lawson, Dorothy Noonan & Noah, Naomi Bailey, Raymond Stoltz, Hester Moss, James Hassell, Diane Breece, C.W. & Elizabeth Tarkington, Harold Choate, James & Glenda Coates, & Jo Ann Totty.

Friends & Family: Charlie Shelton, Harley Parker (granddaughter of Raymond & Brenda Stoltz), B.J. Springer (has been moved to Select Specialty Hospital in Nashville for rehab), McKinley Moore, Ruby Church, Wayne Winters, Emersyn Lannom, Carolyn Nash, Margaret Anglin, Sandy McFarlin, Glenna Hill, Linda Jones, Randy Hall, Rick Lee, Nancy Coursey, Kim Jenkins, Rachael Bellis, June Bell, Connie Garrett, Len Womack, Jerry Milam, Elizabeth Dunn, Mark Fagan, Jimmy Cline, Kathy Swinford Coleman, Wilburn McGahey, Russell Hargrove, Ron Gossett, Teresa Noonan, Grayson Gunter, Mickie Cagle James, David Talley, Willie B. Coates, Greg McCord, Peggy Plunkett Johnson, Linda Goad, Adam Lawson, Mark Wright, Donna Popp, Tommy Cagle, John Beard, Jimmy George, Jackson Bates, & William Dale Nash.

Life Care: Billie Joe Qualls, Anne Neeley, Ray Dudley, Mary England, & Georgia Belle Smith.

St. Thomas Hickman Nursing Home: Bill & Helen Shanes, Jo Hudgins (hospice), & Sybil Jenkins.

Magnolia Place, Waverly: Sarah Brown

NHC Dickson: Dollie Wheeler

Olive Branch Senior Living: Martha Page



It is always good to remember the Happy Days and years spent in your presence. Time changes one day at the time. I will be at Olive Branch two years in May. People come and go, new faces and friends to meet. We are well cared for. I have two new great grand babies (makes 24 I think). Mikala has a baby boy named Ollie C. Kenny gave me a smart phone so I can see pictures. I have one taken at Homestead on my 90th birthday. Tommy is in that picture. Love and best wishes to everyone.

Martha Page

Thank you for providing worship online last week. Gail & I benefitted from your efforts

Jerrie Barber

FROM THE ELDERS

"... The joy of the Lord is your strength" Nehemiah 8:10

Joy comes from seeing the complete fulfillment of the specific purpose for which I was created and born again, not from successfully doing something of my own choosing. The joy our Lord experienced came from doing what the Father sent Him to do. And He says to us, "As the Father has sent Me, I also send you (John 20:21) Have you received a ministry from the Lord? If so, you must be faithful to it—to consider your life valuable only for the purpose of fulfilling that ministry. Knowing that you have done what Jesus sent you to do, think how satisfying it will be to hear Him say to you, "Well done, good and faithful servant" Matthew 25:21

Hope everyone is doing well and that we can all get together soon.

The Elders

Lafayette, Wayne & Gary

Mike Kelley will be speaking at 9:00 am via live streaming on Facebook.
Rodney Rochelle will conduct a Bible class on Wednesday at 7:00 pm.

COMMUNION PACKS WILL BE AVAILABLE ON FRIDAY BETWEEN THE HOURS OF 12 – 2:30 PM AND 4 – 5:30 PM. AT THE FELLOWSHIP HALL & CONTRIBUTIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED AS WELL AS THE PAPER COPY OF THE BULLETIN.



Sandy Bagwell, sister of **Chris Kimbro** passed away on Tuesday of this week. There will be a celebration of life later on.

