

# THE PROVIDER

VOLUME XXXIII, NUMBER 23



## 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](http://fairfieldcofc.org)



## Mike's Minute

**A Great Loss.** Our community recently lost two "giants." I was saddened to learn of the deaths of Roy Shannon and Seth Armstrong. Roy was a long-time elder at the Brushy Church of Christ. He and his wife raised two wonderful children, Rebecca and David. David was, for years, the very effective pulpit minister for the Mount Juliet congregation. He is now president of Freed-Hardeman University. Only God knows all the good that the Shannon family has done for our community and world. For years, the Brushy congregation has invited me to be a part of their annual Vacation Bible School. I always looked forward to seeing Roy and being taught and blessed by his presence. Seth Armstrong was a farmer, teacher, and stalwart member of the Coble community. He taught math at Hickman County High School for 47 years. He was known for his brilliance, his patience, and his meek and quiet nature. He taught students who went on to be world-class doctors, surgeons, and engineers. One of his students went on to be heavily involved in developing the Patriot Missile, which has been used for years to defend freedom in our nation and around the world. May God raise up more men like these, who through faith and hard work will leave the world better than they found it!

**A Calm Community.** Todd Parsley, the pulpit minister for the Centerville congregation, began his Sunday morning sermon by giving thanks that we live in such a peaceful community. He is right! There are so many good, wise, peace-loving people in our town. I am very grateful to live here. There is so much hatred, violence, and chaos in our nation. What can we do? We can model Jesus to the world. We can pray for peace. We can work for peace in our little corner of the world. We can actively love the person in front of us. We can remember that we are Christians first and Americans second. Finally, we can turn off the news and pick up the Good News.

**Opening Day.** As a lifelong baseball fan, I have always looked forward to "opening day." This is the baseball fan's way of referring to the first day of the baseball season. Now, opening day has a new meaning. This Sunday, June 7, is "opening day" at the Fairfield congregation. Remember that, at first, we will have no Bible classes or Sunday or Wednesday night meetings. This is designed to limit our exposure to one another as the virus continues to decline. We will continue to live stream our Sunday morning worship and Rodney's Wednesday night class. If you are uncomfortable being in a crowd at this time or are in the at-risk population, we encourage you to wait a few more weeks before you return. This is not an ideal situation, but it is definitely a step in the right direction. I'm looking forward to seeing you on Sunday! I plan to have a Bible in my hand and a new appreciation for corporate worship in my heart.

*In Christian Love,*

**Mike**



## That First Sunday

This is going to be a little late for some of you, but for many ministers, there is a First Sunday coming. We've been ...what.... Isolated? Quarantined? Locked Down? Or just not meeting at the church building? That's all about to change as American Christians head back to church. It's been a difficult few months. But now we face the moment when parishioners begin to congregate on the first Sunday back.

There is so much running through my own mind as we face our first Sunday back. It should have an atmosphere of joy, celebration, and praise! But that's not what I'm feeling. I've spent too much time trying to parse out what social distancing means for our church and trying to communicate it without sounding like we're going to be running a prison camp. I think it can be all the things it should be, but I doubt it will be.

Social Distancing is a term we've become so acquainted with over the past few months. I think pretty much if you look at the definition it is the antonym for the word *church*. To be socially distant is to be the opposite of everything I expect and need when I assemble with God's family.

Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near. (Hebrews 10:24-25, NLT)

Yes, I'm going to have to think of ways to accomplish those things when we gather and sit with pews and space between us. Many have bemoaned the loss of hugs. One friend wrote a post called *Why Get Out of Bed?* – if you can't hug, love on one another, sing out your praises and catch up with each other? He answered his own question by encouraging readers to focus on the things that are good (Philippians 4:8-9), and who can argue with that? Still, it's hard to see a smile behind a facemask and it's hard to hug from 6 feet away.

The First Sunday assembled together should be a special occasion – as special as you can make it. So, looking beyond the seating assignments, lack of handshakes and hugs, and (God help us) no coffee kiosks, what can we do to make that first Sunday a meaningful day? What can ministers do to help the gathered church embrace the moment?

### **Give Thanks.**

There is so much for which to be thankful. I do not expect the assembly to feel like a usual assembly – and that's good and bad. So, I will need to be focused on the things for which I can thank our Father. We are here together. We are in the shelter of a place that is sacred to us. We are renewing our solidarity to keep our faith. We are able to be joined by those who shouldn't assemble via technology about which Apostle Paul could have only dreamed.

And whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through him to God the Father. (Colossians 3:17, NLT)

God is present with us, as we have always affirmed about the assembly. Once seated, take a deep breath, let the fears and procedures fall into the background, and give thanks.

### **Commune Together.**

It would be hard to gather and not observe the Lord's Supper. So we will make it available to pick up on the way in – we won't be passing trays as we traditionally have done. In a moment of prayerful devotion, we will remember that it was the body and blood of Jesus that unites us together as a family of believers. The body of Christ sacrificed on the cross, yes, but also the body of Christ gathered together in his name. The blood of Jesus that flowed at Calvary, yes, but the blood of Jesus that continually cleanses us of our sins and allows us to approach Him in righteousness.

For God in all his fullness was pleased to live in Christ, and through him God reconciled everything to himself. He made peace with everything in heaven and on earth by means of Christ's blood on the cross. (Colossians 1:19-20, NLT)

*(continued on page 4)*



## Center Fielders News

“Rumble Strips”



The lack of attention has been addressed by placing rumble strips along the edges of the highway. These let a driver know immediately when he or she drifts out of the driving lane. The rumble gets one’s attention and alerts that person to steer back to the center of the lane. Rumble strips were first placed only along the right edge of the highway to warn drivers they were headed off the road, and possibly into a ditch or worse. Now the rumble strips are in the center of the highway also to warn a driver of oncoming vehicles and help prevent a head on collision with another vehicle.

God has placed rumble strips along our path of life to keep us safe spiritually. They include the Word, the Spirit, our conscience, and fellow believers. We might say that the right-side rumble strips warn us dangers to ourselves, such as impure thoughts, harmful habits, immoral lifestyles, and foolish compromises. Left-side rumble strips warn us danger to others (and ourselves too). Among those are slander, dishonesty, and filthy words out of our mouths.

If we ignore the writings of Christ’s apostles and don’t take them seriously, we place a question mark where God has placed a period!! The Bible gives clear instructions about how to get on and stay on the highway to Heaven. Let’s pay attention to where God’s rumble strips are and then we will have direction and guidance for our journey here on earth.

*Obey God and watch Him work,*

**Rodney**

### FOR THE RECORD

WEEK OF May 31, 2020  
 CONTRIBUTION: \$5973  
 2020 WEEKLY BUDGET \$4167



**Members:** Hezekiah Springer, Paul & Noble Victory, Rickey Weems, Angie Stacks, Wilma Green, Bobbie Graf, 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:** Helen Shanes (is now home with her daughter), Jimmy Jenkins, Alan Dickens, Trace Warren, Amanda Myles & Holly Dickens, Charlie Shelton, Harley Parker, B.J. Springer, Ruby Church, Wayne Winters, Carolyn Nash, Sandy McFarlin, Linda Jones, Nancy Coursey, Rachael Bellis, 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:** Anne Neeley, Ray Dudley, Mary England, & Georgia Belle Smith.

**St. Thomas Hickman Nursing Home:** Naomi Bailey, Jo Hudgins (hospice), & Sybil Jenkins.

**Magnolia Place, Waverly:** Sarah Brown

**NHC Dickson:** Dollie Wheeler

**Olive Branch Senior Living, Dickson:** Martha Page

We will continue to live stream on Facebook on Sunday mornings. Mike Kelley will be speaking at 9:00 am.

Rodney Rochelle will continue to be streaming live on Facebook Wednesday evenings teaching a Bible class at 7:00 pm.

**COMMUNION PACKS WILL BE AVAILABLE ON FRIDAY BETWEEN THE HOURS OF 3:00-5:00 PM AT THE FELLOWSHIP HALL & CONTRIBUTIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED AS WELL AS THE PAPER COPY OF THE BULLETIN FOR THOSE WHO WON’T BE ATTENDING ON SUNDAY MORNING.**

## MEN TO SERVE JUNE 7

**Song Leader:** Darin Cochran  
**Scripture Reading:** Gary Basford  
**Scripture:** Psalms 119:103-105  
**Opening Prayer:** Willie Powers  
**Preside Lord's Supper:** Buddy Chandler  
**Alternates:** Lee DeWire, Stephen Graham  
**Basement:** Ken Copley, Josh Copley  
**Announcements:** Rodney Rochelle  
**Closing Prayer:** Mathew Wright



Thank you for the beautiful flower arrangement...

Sincerely,  
**Shanes family**

Thank you for the support provided to Phillip Askins over the course of his sickness. We'd like to especially thank Mr. Wright, Mr. Prince and Mr. Kelley for all of the visits down to the creek. Dad always looked forward to the visits...

God Bless you all,  
**Askins family**

# Welcome

**BACK CHURCH FAMILY!**

Let's welcome June  
 with an open heart, with  
 the belief that God is  
 with us and things will  
 get better.



## That First Sunday (cont.)

I know that not every faith tradition communes weekly, and many have sought to avoid it because of contamination possibilities. Still, with great care, I encourage communion together. It is in this moment that the divine meal, hosted by our brother and Savior Jesus, unites our hearts in His love.

### Promote Harmony.

Our own thoughts and perceptions about the response to Coronavirus is a source of division among Christian people. It is incumbent upon each of us to do what leads to peace. That might mean that I just keep quiet about my convictions. It might mean we temper our conversations across six feet to the Gospel and God's grace. It might mean letting a comment pass by without our own rebuttal. It might mean saying to my own heart to set aside every attitude and thought except love for God and others.

Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony. And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body you are called to live in peace. And always be thankful. (Colossians 3:14-15, NLT)

Promoting harmony is a fruit of dying to self, discipleship. It is not my life's goal to have you agree with me. It is my life's goal to love you.

We have contemplated, prayed, communed, smiled, and embraced this moment together. It isn't all that we wanted it to be, but it probably never has been everything we would like it to be. And when the service is over and we file out to our automobiles and travel home, let us utter a prayer to God. Ask Him to heal our land, soothe our brokenness, and enhance our trust in His workings. Even when it wasn't what we wanted it to be, I wonder if God will be disappointed or pleased? If He is pleased, should we be displeased?

No, I'm not being pollyanna about it all. I still have my own feelings about things. And I still long for the day when we might be able to get together to worship without thinking about a virus. But on that First Sunday I'll be asking God through thanksgiving, communion, and harmonious time together to help build me into a better minister and Christian...and friend. To me, those are the more important things beyond the rules and regulations of social distancing. They simply matter more and are more powerful than anything else we are dealing with, on that First Sunday.

John Dobbs  
 Forsythe church of Christ  
 Monroe, LA