

News & Notes

Sunday, November 5, 2006

Remember in Prayer: Sandra Albertson; Michelle Allen; Paul Barrentine; Vikie Cobb; Diane Cox; Sally Etta Crawford; Marylyn Hubbard; Carolyn Jordan; Dot Ketchum; John and Deliah Mann; Helen Miller; Diane Mize; Shirley Ortiz; Lillie Mae Shelby; Chris Spence; Calvin Ursery; Charles Womack;

Sympathy is extended to the family of Oliver Crumpton.

Pantry item for the month of November is decaffeinated tea bags.

Sunday evening service will now begin at 5:00 PM until otherwise noted.

Ashland events: Today: Singing at Briarcrest Extended Care at 4:30 PM.

Area events: Today: Youth night at the Beech Hill congregation and a gospel meeting begins at the South Gloster Street congregation in Tupelo;

Sermon In Preview: Pressing Toward the Upward Call of God:

AM: The Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20)

PM: How Many Are Lost Because I Would Not Say Anything?

For the Record (October 29, 2006):

Attendance: 71 Contribution: \$1038.00 Budget: \$1352.00

The Ashland Church of Christ

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Sunday:

Bible Study 9:30 AM

Worship 10:30 AM

Worship 6:00 PM

Wednesday:

Bible Study 7:00 PM

Shepherds:

Barney King
Carrol Street



ASHLAND ANNOUNCER

"I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:14)

Pressing Toward the Upward Call of God **May We *HELP*You? — Evangelism**

Jeremy Northrop

It is again the first Sunday of the month. It seems like they are creeping up on us quicker and quicker! Be that as it may, our tradition here at Ashland is on the first Sunday of each month to focus on our theme for the year. This year our theme has been pressing toward the upward call of God taken from Philippians 3:14. The context of this passage is worth looking at again as we remind ourselves of that which Paul was speaking. Philippians 3:8-16 says,

Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to

those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you. Nevertheless, to the degree that we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind.

Throughout this year, we have walked through many steps in order to better press toward the upward call of God. We began by reaching in through introspection and making sure we wanted to conform our lives to God. Then, we began to reach up in worship and adoration of God learning that His word is the standard by which we should mold our lives. Then in September, we moved to study the idea of reaching out where we have studied fellowship, benevolence, and today we are brought to the study of evangelism.

Today, in our class, we will discuss some practical ways to practice evangelism. Then, in our sermon this morning we will discuss in some detail the great commission given by Jesus in Matthew 28:18-20. Finally, tonight, we will discuss evangelism as a work of the church and more specifically of each individual member of the church.

It is absolutely amazing what churches and people are doing today in the name of evangelism. There are churches which have duck hunters' and mechanics ministries and they have them in the name of evangelism. Such churches and people have failed to look at the biblical model for evangelism. In Matthew 28:18-20, the Bible says:

And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.' Amen.

The good news is that Jesus has given this as a command and the Holy Spirit has provided numerous examples in the New Testament after which the church today can pattern itself. It is

unreasonable and unbiblical for a congregation to look to other churches solely as a pattern to do any work. This is not to say that one a congregation cannot look at what other congregations are doing, see that it is both successful and more importantly biblical and then use it for a pattern. But if a congregation were to look at another solely as a pattern, then they are looking to the wrong standard. The first responsibility of the church in terms of evangelism is to practice evangelism. A congregation should not be derelict in this command.

Second, congregations, even Ashland, need to practice evangelism *of the lost*. It is not evangelism if it is not teaching the lost. The church grew throughout the book of Acts because people were out teaching the lost. We cannot expect to open up a building and think that people are going to flock to it. Though when visitors do come, we need to make sure they feel welcomed and have opportunities to hear the gospel. We do not need to expect them to get all they need from the sermon or classes that day. This means that each individual in the congregation needs to realize the responsibility that is upon them. Jesus did not give the great commission to only preachers or only elders or only any other group that might be mentioned. He gave it to Christians. Therefore, every Christian needs to be practicing evangelism.

One other note: evangelism involves teaching the gospel. While it is certainly alright to invite the community to non-spiritual functions hosted by the church and while it seems that the community will respond to such invitations more than to spiritual functions, one should not think that evangelism is being accomplished by such. We need to use every opportunity that we can to teach others the gospel — the good news — so that they can be saved. It is sad to see Christians more excited about some great financial opportunity or some other secular idea than they are about the gospel.

It is hard to believe that 2006 is just about behind us. December 3rd will be our last time to focus on the theme of pressing toward the upward call of God. During that occasion, we will bring the series to a close with some concluding lessons and hopefully we will each be better because we have spent time studying these lessons this year and will make application of them to our lives and habitual practice.