

News & Notes

Sunday, June 7, 2009

Remember in Prayer: Arland Anderson; Robbie Alberson; Robert Bennett; Patricia Campbell; Freeman Duncan; Shannon Hastings; Cannan Hawkins; Wayne Hawkins; Dot Ketchum; Robert King; John and Deliah Mann; Diane Mize; Betty Moore; Ann Ray; Brandon Ray; Shad Street; Calvin Ursery; Norma Vaughter; Alvie Williford;

Pantry item for the month of June is Purex liquid laundry pasta.

For additional information, please check the **bulletin boards**.

All sermons are available on **audio CD**. For more information, please see Jeff Roberson.

Ashland Events: Today: Periodic singing at Briarcrest Extended Care at 4:00 PM; Beginning tonight at 6:00 PM: Vacation Bible School;

Area Events: Beginning today: Gospel meeting at the South Matubba congregation in Aberdeen; July 19-22: Vacation Bible School at the Chapman congregation;

Sermon in Preview:

AM: Apostle Profile: James, the less
PM: Vacation Bible School

For the Record (May 31, 2009):

Attendance: 68 Contribution: \$1156.00 Budget: \$1459.00

The Ashland Church of Christ

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Sunday:

Bible Study 9:30 AM
Worship 10:30 AM
Worship 5:00 PM

Wednesday:

Bible Study 7:00 PM

Shepherds:

Barney King
Jeff Roberson
Carrol Street

ASHLAND ANNOUNCER

"Note Those Who So Walk"

Philippians 3:17

2Thessalonians 3:14

Reasons to Appreciate Vacation Bible School

Jeremy Northrop

The tradition here at the Ashland Church of Christ for some time now has been to have the Vacation Bible School (VBS) begin the first Sunday evening in June and carry through each evening through Wednesday of the same week. Thus, tonight is the night. Plans have been made. Classrooms have been prepared. All things are rapidly coming together to have a great week. While VBS is simply a tradition, and there are some that would rather do away with it, there are several good reasons to continue this tradition and there are several things which need to be kept in focus as we engage in this work throughout this week.

One reason to continue having VBS is the Bible learning opportunities which exist because of the Bible school. While it is true that a good flock will submit to her shepherds (Hebrews 13:17) and that all godly people will take advantage of the various opportunities afforded by their direction, there is a deeper, more meaningful reason to attend. Godly people want to grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord (2Peter 3:18). Thus, we do not attend out of compulsion, either from the elders or from inspired writ (Hebrews 10:25), but rather we attend because we want to grow in the knowledge of God and VBS is a good opportunity to be able to increase in the knowledge of God (Romans 11:33).

Another reason we want to continue having VBS and be sure to attend VBS this week is the fellowship opportunities which are

available. John spoke of having fellowship with one another (1John 1:7). Paul spoke fondly of having fellowship with the church in Philippi (Philippians 1:5). The apostles and disciples in Acts 2 had fellowship with one another (Acts 2:42). One way in which we have fellowship with one another is through being together. By studying together, worshipping together, and spending time in other ways together, we can have fellowship. Throughout this week, we have an opportunity to have fellowship, an opportunity to be together. This is a good reason to continue this tradition of VBS.

Interestingly, VBS is a good time to have fellowship with those in Christ who are not members of the Ashland congregation. For example, brother Adam Miller of the Potts Camp congregation will be here to teach the adult Bible class (interestingly little side note here — VBS is for adults too!). Other congregations in the area have been made aware of the plans we have for VBS and, if it is like years in the past, there will be many visitors from these congregations. We surely do not want to miss out on the fellowship opportunities which are available to us this week.

There are also opportunities this week for evangelism and service. Certainly, we want to invite as many people as we can to come and be a part of VBS. This will then be a means of evangelism for all. Many have been selected to teach. Others have volunteered to assist the teachers. Still others have been chosen to help in other ways. These various capacities are forms of service. Minds (young and old) will be impacted by the things which take place here throughout this week. For those of you who may not know, the van will be making rounds throughout the neighborhood picking up anyone who does not have transportation. If you know of anyone like this, let Jeff Roberson or Sam Ford know so that we can make sure they have a ride to be able to attend. Do not miss out on all the opportunities which are available this week.

These are all good reasons to continue to host VBS as we have done. However, while we are on this topic, we want to make sure that we spend some time considering some things VBS ought never to become. When considering tradition and change, there

are some foundational matters which need to be examined. Let's consider a few of them in light of VBS.

First, VBS ought never become a venue for entertaining young people and kids. Often times, on the breaks, our young people and young people from the community will play games, eat food, and spend time getting to know one another. It might be easy for the congregation to make more games and opportunities like this available just so more people will come. We must keep our minds focused on the fact that entertainment is not the purpose or work of the church. The work of the church is evangelism, edification, benevolence, and worship (Ephesians 4:12; John 4:24). Anytime these things are abandoned, then the work of the church, according to the New Testament, discontinues.

Next, VBS should never become a burden or something that we begrudge. This might be the danger of doing something similar every year or periodically. The activity has the potential to become mundane or burdensome. The key to not allowing an activity to become mundane is to remember the purpose or focus. Every year, new minds are being affected by good Bible teaching. Every year, we have new opportunities to learn more about God, fellowship more with one another, and serve God in new ways and different capacities. This focus will prevent VBS from becoming mundane or burdensome. Jesus explained that if we will keep our eyes on what is right, then we will not have to worry about the things which beset us (see Hebrews 12:1).

Then, VBS should never hinder us from spiritual growth. If we find ourselves caught up in the activities and preparation of VBS to the point that we miss out on the opportunities for spiritual growth, then we need to stop and consider our ways. Martha was too concerned with taking care of guests while Mary was more concerned with spiritual matters (Luke 10:38-42). Today, we need to keep our focus spiritual.

We are going to have a great week! We have some great spiritual opportunities that await us. Let us all take advantage of them. Let us set our sights to learn more about God. Let us spend time in fellowship. Let us seek to evangelize and serve. And let us make sure that we always keep things spiritual in focus knowing this is the plan for the church.