

Family & Friends..... November 18th, 2020

Thanksgiving is not just a day to eat turkey and all the trimmings that go with it, including pumpkin or pecan pie. It sure is delicious though! It was a day originally set aside to remember and give thanks to God for what He had done in protecting the first men and women who came to America, fleeing religious persecution. It was a type of harvest celebration, a day to give thanks for the crops the pilgrims were able to harvest. We should always be thankful to God as we journey through life. It is also a good idea to set aside special times of gratitude and giving thanks, remembering with our family and friends our many blessings, and thanking God for all He has done for us along the way. We can all recall the struggles we have been through in our youth, jobs, and later as adults getting married and raising our children. Our walk with God should show our transformation and progress as Christians in a joyful life with Him, and the real reward will be to spend eternity in the best home ever! Lord, we are thankful for all you have done in our lives, not just on Thanksgiving, but every day!

Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the father.
Colossians 3:17

Those on our prayer list: Our heartfelt sympathies to Keleigh Bradley in the loss of her husband, David. David is also the son-in-law to Ray & Deb Reiss. Please keep the family in your prayers. Charlene Ward is now on Home Hospice. Roy Fanning still needs our prayers. Coy England is now recovering at home. He and Charlotte want to thank us for prayers that helped his recovery. Clint White's surgery was cancelled because he tested positive for the Covid-19 and has been rescheduled for December 7th. Gene & Sally Geren both have Covid-19. Millie Boothe asked for prayers as she heals from her surgery. Curt LaPorte asked for prayers for his brother, Rich. Remember Mark Bagwell's mother, Dorothy, Isabella Ramos who suffered serious burns, Mitchell Whittington's brother, Kenneth, Amy Bowman's niece, Krista Magness, Mike Lacey's cousin, Kristen. Continue to remember and pray for Ron Beaty, Ava Sailors, Jennifer Oxford, for Chris Johnson's mother, George Bowman, Phillip King, Jim Branstetter, Joyce & Chuck Pippin. Remember prayers in support of our school teachers and children, our missionaries, military and police force, our country and president.

The items needed for Fair Haven Children's Home: cream soups, gravy mixes, pancake mix & syrup, cookie mix, and disinfectant wipes.

Items needed for our Food Pantry: For a Thanksgiving Meal, we still need and are short on, yams, marshmallows, and French style green beans. Pie crust mix, pie fillings, pretzels, sugar cookies, evaporated milk, frosting, sprinkles, chocolate chips, almond bark, mashed potatoes, flour, sugar, peanut butter, canned veggies, pasta sauce, and jelly. We can always use tuna and canned chicken.

For the Christian, thanksgiving is not just a day but a way of life.

Love you, stay safe! *Karen*

**Bella Vista
Church of Christ**

Highway 71 and County Road 40
 989 NW McNelly Road
 Bentonville, AR 72712

Return Service Requested

LORD'S DAY	
Early Worship	8:15
Bible Class	9:30 AM
Second Worship	10:30 AM
WEDNESDAY	
Ladies' Class	9:45 AM & 7 PM
Bible Class	Live Stream @ 7 PM

Phone: 479/273-2434

www.bellavistachurchofchrist.com

ELDERS

Tracy Bowman.....479-899-3089
 Don Butcher.....636-548-0458
 Dallas Dobbs479-271-8609

DEACONS

Mark Bagwell John Bowman Chris Johnson Bryan Busbee Joe Hott
 Robert Horton Perry Johnson Harold Phillips Terry Roberts Aaron Sloan Mitchell Whittington

MINISTERS

Randall Caselman.....479-855-4447
 Jeff Grisham.....479-531-9135
 Parker Willis.....615-587-3208
 Selwyn Nel Cape Town, South Africa
 Javier & Helmer Rosero..... Bogota, Colombia

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Bella Vista

Behold I'm Coming Soon

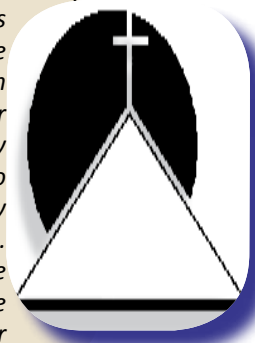
Because Jesus hasn't returned in two thousand years, we now take for granted that there will be a tomorrow just like or similar to today, that things will go on as normal. But Scripture reminds us that we should be: Always watching, always waiting, always ready for His coming! Jesus teaches us to be prepared, ready, regardless of the circumstances around us. Peter warned those of New Testament times to not forget that the Day-of-the-Lord could come at any time. His conclusion was: "Make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him... Be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of lawless men and fall from your secure position" (2 Peter 3.14 & 17).

The early church, the primitive first century church, kept themselves ready with a Maranatha mind-set. History tells us that they greeted one another on the streets and in their gatherings with "maranatha," an Aramaic word meaning "come o Lord" or "Lord come quickly." This frequent greeting helped keep them mindful of Jesus' promise. We see this word in First Corinthians 16.22 in our King James, and foot noted in most modern speech translations.

The early church used another word to speak of His return; parousia, a Greek word that speaks of the imminent, soon to be, for sure, event. Parousia says His coming is a guaranteed event. The primitive church watched, waited, anticipated, they wanted Jesus to come, expected Him to come soon, certainly in their lifetime. Where is our expectation?

The kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish and five were wise. The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any oil with them. The wise... However, took oil in jars along with their lamps. The bridegroom was a long time in coming. They all became drowsy and fell asleep. At midnight the cry rang out, Here's the bridegroom! Come out to meet him! Then all the virgins woke up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish ones said to the wise give us some of your oil. Our lamps are going out. No, they replied, there may not be enough for both us and you. Go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves. But while they were on their way to buy, the bridegroom arrived. The virgins who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet. And the door was shut. Later the others also came. Sir! Sir! They said. Open the door

WITNESSES



for us! But he replied I tell you the truth, I don't know you. Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour.

So the question becomes, are we ready; if not why? Perhaps the answer is found in this parable...

Some had a lack of foresight. The five foolish virgins didn't count the cost of discipleship. It's foolish to think that we can clothe ourselves with Christ in the new birth, then sit down to do nothing, just wait! Paul indicates we must: "keep the faith, fight the fight, run the race, finish the course." James tells us that "our faith must compel us to be doers of the word." Peter speaks of those things that make "our calling and election sure." Paul ends his letter to the Ephesian church by admonishing us to "put on the whole armor of God" as we maintain readiness.

Some were indifferent. For whatever reason, some didn't care enough to maintain their readiness. Chaplain Studder Kennedy wrote about our indifference...

Indifference is a Choice We Make

When Jesus came to Golgotha,
They hanged Him on a tree.
They drove giant nails through hand and feet,
And made a Calvary.
They crowned Him with a crown of thorns,
Red were his wounds and deep.
For those were crude and cruel days,
And human flesh was cheap.
When Jesus came to Bella Vista...
We simply passed Him by.
We never hurt a hair of Him,
We only let Him die.
For men and women had grown more tender,
And we would not give Him pain.
We only just passed down the street
And left Him in the rain.
Still Jesus cried, forgive them,
They know not what they do.
And still it rained the winter rain
And drenched Him through and through.
The crowds went home from Bella Vista...
And left the church without a soul to see,
And Jesus crouched against the church house wall
And cried... GIVE ME CALVARY.

It's called indifference! Are we guilty?

Some were Presumptuous. They Presumed they could borrow oil from others, not so. Judgment will be one-on-one: Not as a church, a family, a nation, but individually. This same chapter contains the Sheep & Goat judgment where Jesus indicates we're saved on our own actions and reactions.

In the White Throne judgment scene of Revelation 20, "I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books... Each person was judged according to what HE had done."

Some were religiously correct, but without heart. All guests were present for His coming; they had their lamps and oil, but their heart was not really in it. They were correct in form, but only going through the motions, with no heart, no spirit. It was Jesus who said: "God is to be worshiped in spirit and truth." True worship, genuine God pleasing worship, whether in the church building or in daily life, occurs when we are a hundred percent engaged! Where is our mind, heart, spirit? Jesus was frequently found chiding the Pharisees for their doctrinal soundness without proper motive. In our worship and service – Motive is Everything! Motive is Everything! God will have no rivals! We must seek first His Kingdom Righteousness; love Him with all our being.

Perhaps the saddest words in our narrative are found in Matthew 25.10, "And the door was shut." Perhaps the saddest words of all time will be "Depart from Me, I never knew you." Can we imagine, can we hear the Creator, Sovereign God of the universe saying these words to you or your preacher?... What a chilling sobering thought!

—RANDALL CASELMAN

SUNDAY SERVANTS: 11/18/20

EARLY SERVICE (8:15 AM)

Song Leader..... Sammy McCain Prayer & Scripture Jim Branstetter
Communion Scripture & Prayer Joe Hott Greeters/Handouts..... Keith Hubanks & David Saunders

SECOND SERVICE (10:30 AM)

Song Leader..... Mark Bagwell Prayer & Scripture Mike Spencer
Communion Scripture & Prayer Tom Verkler Greeters/Handouts..... Bob Spaw & Don Cope

Coordinators (November)

Worship Coordinator..... Mike Lunsford Streaming Coordinator Aaron Bagwell
Audio Coordinator..... Homer Makinson Video Coordinator Elijah Johnson

WHEN COVID LEAVES

Without doubt, Covid19 has presented us with challenges never before seen in modern times. This is truly a pandemic—a worldwide threat. No one has escaped entirely. But in our nation, the mixture of politics has brought infighting that became truly volatile. We can be justifiably concerned with what America will look like a year from now.

But the part that troubles me most has to do with church assemblies, or the lack thereof. I'm thankful for the technology that provides even stop-gap solutions. Yet, there's a real danger here and I believe Satan has slithered his way in and is using this to cause damage to the Cause of Christ. He loves to fish in troubled waters.

God, in his infinite wisdom, knew that humans depend on close-knit fel-

lowship, so he planned for us to meet together in congregational settings. This allows for a depth of comradeship that no amount of live-streaming can bring to the table. Simply put, there is just no substitute for regular, planned and uplifting assemblies where Christians can blend their voices in sacred song, hear prayers for one another and just intermingle with those who have the same hopes. But Satan has planted fear in the hearts of so many. I'm seeing countless people who are deathly afraid of going to a church assembly, but not afraid to go to Wal-Mart, funerals, or parties, This, my dear people, is down where the rubber meets the road. Don't get me wrong, I try to practice safety methods. I try to not expose myself to the virus unnecessarily. But there are plenty of ways to keep a safe distance while in worship—MUCH more so than at the supermarket!. (Listen, isn't it time we rethink what we're saying to ourselves and others about our faith? When we go to work, play golf, eat out, meet with family and friends, but we excuse ourselves from Worship & Service in God's Kingdom? Our auditorium holds four hundred; making it easy for social distending. I'm reminded of the early Christians who would not deny or compromise worship or service to Jesus under any circumstance. God help us to be more like them) RWC



When looking down the road when we get back to "normal", it is not the strong, hard-core Christian that I fear for; rather it is the peripheral church member who, after being absent for several months, will become satisfied with just staying at home. Having said that, when the restrictions are lifted, we'll have serious work to do down in the trenches—work that we should have done more of all along. We must be making plans to reach out to such people and see that they are not permanently disconnected from us. This will call for a level of shepherding that most churches are not too good at.

The bright side of this? This disruption may furnish us with a reason to hit the reset button and take a serious look at fresh ways of managing these local bodies of saints. For too long we have measured strength much the same as a business might: the number of heads that show up and the amount of money they leave.

Unless I've completely misread the New Testament, the Sunday assembly was not used as an evangelistic tool, but more like a "pit stop" for each one to re-fuel so we can go out and be equipped to touch the hearts of people with the sweet message of hope.

I challenge all of us to be thinking of appropriate ways to capture the attention of a nation that feels its very foundation shaking beneath them, and help them plant their feet on solid ground.

—Ken Jones

Olive Branch MS

Submitted by Lee McCain