

**Family & Friends..... August 10, 2022**

I love sunflowers, and wrote these short stories several years ago. "Stand Tall Little Sunflower." You stand taller than the weeds with your many struggles; you made it to the top. I see two other sunflowers tried to follow in your footsteps, but they did not have the stamina to win the race. We can win the race through our trials and tribulations, but we must take up the full armor of God to stand firm against the temptation of the devil. Jesus endured the cross to save us from our sins. We can stand tall like the sunflower and win the race, if we keep the faith. The sunflower follows the sun; we follow the Son. "The Little Sunflower's Journey is Over." My husband told me my little sunflower was gone. I was so busy I forgot to look out the kitchen window this morning. I felt a tinge of sadness because it had given me so many days of joy. I knew its journey would be over soon, but I didn't want to let it go. I was blessed with a beautiful surprise. Nine Neurine lilies were growing right in front of where the sunflower had been. Will we be ready when God calls us home? Heaven will be much more beautiful than anything we can imagine. No more weeds and struggles. The journey will be over and we will be with our Lord. Watch for the beauty in God's creation. To God Be the Glory!

*Be strengthened by the Lord and by his vast strength. Put on the full armor of God so that you can stand against the schemes of the devil. (Ephesians 6:10-11)*

It is always a joy to announce our visitors: Otis & Carol Busbee (Marshall), Sandi Koneman (Garfield), Jon & Chlesea, DJ & Savannah Reeves and Greg Woodruff (Bentonville), Steve & Kris Benton, Carolyn Brown, Nathanael & Jessica Green, Joyce Parks, and Gary & Carol Wood (BV), and Solomon & Ben grandchildren of the Bowman's, Keegan Carr, and Jacob McCoy.

Those on our prayer list: Eric Gibson is home following his hospitalization with blood pressure issues. David & Renee Reeves daughter, Bethany, fell and broke her leg. Debbie Helms' mother, Loiselle Tyler, passed away Tuesday. Remember Bob and Pat Musson, Monica Klingman's sister, Penny, Becky Donceel, Charles and Glenda Jones, the Hunts' daughter, Anthom, our missionaries, our military and police force, our country and president, crime across our country, and recent flood victims.

Don't forget to check your Care Groups each month to see when your group will be meeting! Enjoy your groups and getting to know each other better in good fellowship! God is love!

Items needed for Fair Haven Children's Home: Spam, Pop Tarts, cereal, tuna, and black pepper. August Food Pantry: Canned vegetables, beans (dry or canned), rice peanut butter, oil (canola, avocado, or vegetable), jelly, and honey

A focus on the Lord is the beginning of joy. 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**

<b>LORD'S DAY</b>	8:15 AM
Early Worship	9:30 AM
Bible Class (Livestreamed)	10:30 AM
Worship (Livestreamed)	
<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	9:45 AM
Ladies' Class	7:00 PM
Bible Classes (Livestreamed)	

**Phone: 479/273-2434**

[www.bellavistachurchofchrist.com](http://www.bellavistachurchofchrist.com)

**ELDERS**

Tracy Bowman.....479-899-3089  
Don Butcher.....636-548-0458  
Dallas Dobbs.....479-640-49439  
Perry Johnson.....913-707-8379  
Ray Reiss.....903-908-0203

**DEACONS**

Mark Bagwell John Bowman Chris Johnson Bryan Busbee Joe Hott  
Randall Hunt Harold Phillips Terry Roberts Aaron Sloan Mitchell Whittington

**MINISTERS**

Jeff Grisham.....479-531-9135  
Parker Willis.....615-587-3208  
Cory Spruiell.....501-941-4525  
Javier & Helmer Rosero.....Bogota, Colombia

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**Bella Vista**

**LIVESTREAMING**

**Seeing Clearly**

*And they came to Bethsaida. And some people brought to him a blind man and begged him to touch him. And he took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the village, and when he had spit on his eyes and laid his hands on him, he asked him, "Do you see anything?" And he looked up and said, "I see people, but they look like trees, walking." Then Jesus laid his hands on his eyes again; and he opened his eyes, his sight was restored, and he saw everything clearly. And he sent him to his home, saying, "Do not even enter the village." (Mark 8:22-26)*

As we follow the life and ministry of Jesus, we see many extraordinary things that he does. He heals the lame, gives sight to the blind, cleanses lepers, casts out demons, feeds multitudes, calms the sea, and even raises the dead. Yet this particular incident recorded in Mark chapter 8 can be a bit puzzling. Does Jesus need two attempts to open the eyes of this blind man? Was Jesus just having an off day? Or, is there something else to which Jesus may be drawing our attention? Looking at the events immediately before and after this narrative may provide us with an idea of the point that is being made here.

Just prior to arriving in Bethsaida, Jesus had been engaged in another dispute with the Pharisees who were seeking more signs. Then the disciples misunderstood the warning of Jesus to "beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod." (Mark 8:15) Jesus, then, corrected their misunderstanding of the signs he had already done which pointed to his identity. Then they encounter the blind man. Immediately after that, Jesus asked his disciples about his identity. It is here that Peter answers, "You are the Christ." (Mark 8:29)

The healing of the blind man serves as an object lesson illustrating the trouble that the disciples are encountering as they try to



figure out the identity of Jesus. They see something. They see a healer, a teacher, a provider, and a man with a specific mission. They see someone about whom there is something very unique, but are having trouble clearly making out the image just as the blind man did after Jesus touched his eyes the first time. But then, they see Jesus clearly. They see him for who he really is.

This little healing narrative that sometimes gets lost in the shadow of many of the other miracles of Jesus serves a reminder and as a challenge for us as his followers. It illustrates that we can spend time with Jesus and either fail to see clearly, or perhaps even to forget exactly who he is. Keeping our focus on him means remembering who exactly it is that we follow.

He is God in the flesh. We find this in several places in the New Testament. The author of Hebrews states this in Hebrews 1:3. "He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high." Paul writes to the church in Colossae, "He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation." (Colossians 1:15) We also hear this same thing from the lips of Jesus himself. When asked by Phillip to show them the Father, Jesus replied, "Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Phillip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father." (John 14:9)

He is the one who exhibits God's great love for us. "In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." (1 John 4:9-10)

He is the one who has called us to follow him and to conform our lives to him. "And calling the crowd to him with his disciples, he said to them, 'If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it.'" (Mark 8:34-35)

He is the one who will come again and set things right for the final time. Over and over in Scripture, we have the promise of his return. We hear him speak about the coming judgment and the reward for the faithful and punishment of the wicked.

Understanding his identity and keeping it firmly in our view is what enables us to live the life to which he has called each and every one of us. In all situations, in every circumstance and interaction with others, may we keep Jesus in clear focus and move in his direction.

-JEFF GRISHAM

## People of Courage, Arise!

It was a daunting task from the beginning. It seemed destined for failure. When God called Ezekiel to prophesy to his fellow Israelites in exile, even He warned that it would be difficult and likely unsuccessful. God said, "The people to whom I am sending you are obstinate and stubborn ... and whether they listen or fail to listen – for they are a rebellious house – they will know that a prophet has been among them" (Ezekiel 2:4-5). He went on to prepare Ezekiel that it might feel like he was living among thorns and briars and scorpions, but "Do not be afraid of what they say or terrified by them, though they are a rebellious house. You must speak my words to them, whether they listen, or fail to listen (2:6).

God gave Ezekiel the words to speak. They were sweet, like honey, in his mouth (3:3). God sent him to his own people, people who could easily understand his message, not to people of obscure or difficult languages (3:5-6). Yet, even though they could easily understand the words, they would not listen to Ezekiel because they were unwilling to listen to God (3:7). When he finally got to the exiles at Tel Abib, all he could do was sit among them for an entire week – overwhelmed (3:15)!

I think we understand how Ezekiel felt, don't we? We hear stories about how the church is growing in places where we can't even speak their language; yet, right here at home the response is not much different than preaching to a brick wall! The message we have is the sweetest message ever told; yet because people are rebellious and obstinate, they no longer want to hear from us about God's grace because they no longer want to listen to God. It's frustrating. It's overwhelming. And so our tendency is to just sit around and keep our gospel to ourselves.

But that's not what God has called us to do. He has called us to take the gospel to the entire world whether they want to hear it or not (Matthew 28:19-20). We are to tell the gospel to people who may even respond with violent words or actions. Why? The answer is also found in Ezekiel's story. God told Ezekiel his responsibility was not to be successful, but to be faithful. As a watchman, he had to warn the people of God's coming judgment. He was not held accountable to the way the people responded to his warning, but he was accountable if he failed to warn the people (see 3:16-21).

To do this takes courage, lots and lots of courage. None of us want to teach people who are unwilling to listen. We'd much rather teach the willing, those with a heart for God. But God wants even the obstinate and unwilling to be given the

opportunity to hear the gospel. Let's be people of courage who are willing to rise up and teach all people the message of God!

-JOE CHESSER

Fruitland Church of Christ, Jackson, MO

## Rearview Mirrors

*You ought to say, "If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that." (James 4:15)*

Looking in the rearview mirror always give a different perspective on what you've been through. Looking back, you can see how God has worked in our life; guiding, teaching, and loving you through various circumstances and stages of life.

So looking back you may be able to understand why you have had to go through certain trials and that may even make the trials acceptable. But life must be lived forward, as the quote says. So, going forward, are there things you learned from the past that will help you trust God more in the present and the future? If nothing is learned from the experiences of life, then how do you move forward?

Look back. See how God guided you and loved you and then draw on those experiences for the future. That will grow your trust in Him and move you forward in your relationship with him.

Life can only be understood backwards, but it must be lived forward.

May God's blessings sweetly rest upon you and your family, the elders, deacons, preachers and all the saints.

PHILLIP KING,

Ennerdale Church of Christ

### SUNDAY SERVANTS: 8/14/22

#### First Service

Welcome, Prayer & Scripture .....	Aaron Sloan	Song Leader .....	Anthony Christiano
Greeters .....	David Saunders, Terry Roberts	Communion Scripture & Prayer .....	Randall Hunt
Closing Prayer.....		Dallas Dobbs	
Nursery Workers .....		Mary Bell Banks, Angie Christiano	

#### Second Service

Welcome, Prayer & Scripture .....	Jack Johnson	Song Leader .....	Chris McSweeney
Greeters .....	John Bowman, Mike Johnson	Communion Scripture & Prayer .....	Stephen Hunt
Closing Prayer.....		Tracy Bowman	
Nursery Workers .....		Robin Kinder, Wanda James	
Van Driver .....		Bryan Busbee	

#### August Worship Coordinators

Worship Coordinator .....	Harold Phillips	Streaming Coordinator .....	Kyle Dillard
Audio Coordinator .....	Homer Makinson	Video Coordinator .....	Marquis Elliott