

Family & Friends..... June 23, 2021

We are fast approaching the month of July! On July 4th we celebrate the Birth of our Nation, which includes life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. The month of July is dedicated to Independence, freedom, and celebrations of our country and culture. Many of us will celebrate the day with picnics, BBQ's, fireworks, cookouts, outdoor sports, family & friends, and parades. The type of foods we enjoy are hot dogs, hamburgers, baked beans, BBQ, blueberries, strawberries, cherry pie, pickles, apple pie, cobblers, homemade ice cream & watermelon. July is the most popular month for vacations. Not taking a vacation this year? Then give yourself some TLC. Take a breather from your daily routine. Sleep in. Listen to the birds. Just slow down and take stock of what really matters to you. July usually lacks rain, is warm & sultry, and nature loses its greenery. This weather is often referred to as the 'Dog Days of Summer.' July is the warmest month in the Northern hemisphere. How about we have a National Appreciation month for air conditioning for July and August. July 2nd is the day to support our local businesses and products that are made in the USA. July 12th is National Simplicity Day. Celebrate the simple things in life. In 1969 Neil Armstrong put the first footprints on the moon during the month of July, and Louis Pasteur would test the first rabies vaccine in 1885 during the month of July. Thank you, Lord for our blessed Seasons! God is good! Happy Birthday America!

For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. Galatians 5:13

Those on our prayer list: Our heartfelt sympathies go to Margaret Beaty in the loss of her husband, Ron. Please keep Margaret, James, and the family in your prayers. Our heartfelt sympathies also go to Lee McCain in the loss of his brother, David. Keep Lee and family also in your prayers. Pray for Lou Hollo who has thyroid cancer, Covid, and pneumonia, waiting to be admitted to hospital. Jeff & Jennifer Oxford are at Mayo, hoping she will be able to get into a clinical study in July. We need to pray for Joe & Kay Hott's daughter, Heidi. Pray for Leon English who is on hospice. Continue to remember and pray for Hilda Jones, Pat Musson, Judith Carmical, Michelle King, Mike Lacey, Krista Magness, Virginia Whittington, Joyce Hurst, Glen Whitman, Zeryl Clark, Robert Horton, Kim Weiler and family, our missionaries, our military and police force, our country and president.

Remember Bridal Shower for Joshua Sloan and Maddie Ingle on Sunday 27th at 2:00 p.m. They are registered at Target, Bed Bath & Beyond and Amazon.

Curt LaPorte would like to remind everyone that if you have not had the opportunity to contribute to the money tree for Randall and Georgia, this is the final week to do so.

Items for Fair Haven Children's Home: Juice, vegetable soup, chili beans, tomato sauce, green beans, and corn bread mix. For our Food Pantry: Relish, mayo, ketchup, mustard, pork & beans, baked beans, oil, pickles, and brownie mixes.

Salvation is infinitely costly but absolutely free. 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	8:15 AM
Early Worship	9:30 AM
Bible Class (Livestreamed)	10:30 AM
Worship (Livestreamed)	
WEDNESDAY	9:45 AM
Ladies' Class	7:00 PM
Bible Classes (Livestreamed)	

Phone: 479/273-2434

www.bellavistachurchofchrist.com

ELDERS

Tracy Bowman.....479-899-3089
Don Butcher.....636-548-0458
Dallas Dobbs.....479-640-4943
Perry Johnson.....913-707-8379
Ray Reiss.....903-908-0203

DEACONS

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

MINISTERS

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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Everyday Miracles

Miracles are a fascinating topic. We read about miracles in Scripture and wonder what it must have been like to be present when these things occurred. Think about your favorite miracle narrative from the Bible. Try to place yourself in that scene. For example, what might it have been like to stand on the edge of the Red Sea, watch Moses raise his staff, feel the wind, and watch as the waters part, and a dry path appear? (Exodus 14)

Go to Mount Carmel. Watch the spectacle of the priests of Baal shout to their god, dance, chant, cut themselves, only to see their prepared sacrifices still in tact and on their altar. Then stand with Elijah as he repairs an altar, digs a trench around that altar, prepares the sacrifice, and then orders water to be poured all over the sacrifice. Listen as he calls on the God of Israel and fire comes from God and consumes everything, sacrifice, wood, stones, and water (1 Kings 18:16-39). What an experience!

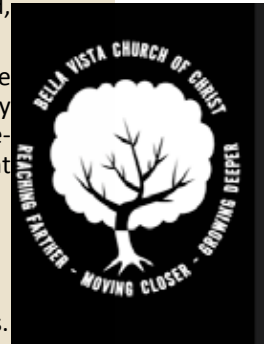
Imagine seeing Jesus touch a leper and cleanse him from this terrible disease. Imagine being in that crowd when a woman who has hemorrhaged for twelve years is healed, simply by touching his clothing (Mark 5:24-34). What would it have been like to be in the cemetery in Bethany and see a man wrapped in grave clothes walk out of his tomb when Jesus said, "Lazarus, come out!" (John 11:38-44)

We could go keep going. We could stand and watch as Peter heals a man who has been lame since birth (Acts 3:1-10). Or, we could be in that crowd waiting outside that little room in Joppa and see Peter emerge with Tabitha, the friend whose death we had been mourning (Acts 9:36-43). Imagine being in that worship service when Eutychus fell from the upstairs window and died, and watch as Paul raises him from the dead.

We think about these miracles. Hopefully, we are still in awe of the power of God. We may even say things like, "How could people not believe in God when these things happened right before their own eyes?"

For a long time the debate has continued about whether or not miracles still occur today. We are skeptical of those who claim to have experienced or witnessed modern-day miracles. Do they still happen?

MEMBERS



If you go to dictionary.com you will find this definition for miracle:

“an effect or extraordinary event in the physical world that surpasses all known human or natural powers and is ascribed to a supernatural cause; such an effect or event manifesting or considered as a work of God.”

With this definition in mind, I would like for us to think about three everyday miracles that I pray we never take for granted.

First there is the miracle that God loves us. The love of God demonstrated towards sinful, broken, and dysfunctional humanity (in other words, all of us) is nothing short of miraculous. In the beginning, God created humanity in his image. He created us so that we could have a relationship with him. He created us on purpose and for a purpose. But, we rejected that relationship and pursued something else instead of God. God, however, does not stop loving his creation even though we rejected him. He continues to pursue, to offer, to invite, even though every rejection breaks his heart. This is supernatural love. Paul sums this up for us in a very well known passage in Romans 5:6-10

“For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.”

Second, it is a miracle that God wants us to partner with him. The Sovereign God of the Universe, the One who spoke this world into existence, the One who continually operates the universe so that we can exist, the One who can make life out of death, the One who has all the power and ability to accomplish his purpose wants to partner with frail and broken humanity to achieve his desired result of reconciling the world to himself. God called Adam and Eve into his work with the command to keep and cultivate the Garden. God called Noah to build an ark. God called Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, and David. God called the nation of Israel. Jesus called the Twelve. As we study the individuals and nations that God called, we see that they were far from perfect. Yet, God wanted to work through them to accomplish his purpose. He still calls us, imperfect and weak as we are, to partner with him. Listen again to Paul from 2 Corinthians 4:8-10

“But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies.”

Thirdly, there is the miracle that God’s Holy Spirit lives in us. The book of Acts is full of the working of the Spirit. When he is talked about there are typically two ways the effects his appearance are described. One is what happens in Acts 2. The Holy Spirit fills the disciples and they begin to speak about the wonders of God in foreign languages (Acts 2:1-4).

In other words, something miraculous happens. The other way the effects of his appearance are described is much more subtle. Barnabas is a good example of this. As the church continues to grow and spread, Antioch became a real growth center, full of all kinds of people. In Acts 11:22-24 we read:

“The report of this came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. When he came and saw the grace of God, he was glad, and he exhorted them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast purpose, for he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord.”

The presence of the Holy Spirit is evident in the character of Barnabas. Here, he is described as good man full of faith. In Acts 4 he is shown as being generous, and in Acts 9, he is shown as the guy who stands up for Paul when all others are afraid. It is not necessarily a Red-Sea-parting, or a raising-from-the-dead moment. Sometimes these are the miracles for which we look. The fact that God lives in and works to transform us into the image of his Son, through the Spirit is no less miraculous. It is another of the everyday miracles we experience in Christ. May we continue to thank God, each and every day, for these everyday miracles.

-JEFF GRISHAM

“Mr. Irrelevant”

You probably have not heard of Grant Stuard. He’s a recent student at the University of Houston, 6-foot tall, and was one of the best football athletes in the history of Oak Ridge High in Conroe, Texas, where he flourished in track and football. He’s handled his athletic talents incredibly well, given that Grant Stuard literally means “gift manager.” But that’s his old name. Saturday he got a new one: Mr. Irrelevant.

Since 1976, this nickname has been given to the final player selected in the NFL Draft. That year the Draft was 17 rounds, so the last pick was the 487th player taken. Then the Draft went down to twelve rounds, then eight, and now seven. During Saturday’s Draft in Cleveland, Stuard was taken with the 259th pick. The weekend started with can’t-miss QB Trevor Lawrence going first. Later, after 258 players heard their names blasted from speakers dotting Lake Erie’s shores, it was finally Stuard’s turn to hear his. He waited his entire life to hear it. But he would’ve preferred to hear one more after his own, but he didn’t, so he had to settle for being Mr. Irrelevant. Beggars can’t be choosers.

When he graduated as a Big Man on Campus from Oak Ridge High he was rated as the 2,782nd best football prospect in the country. During his time at the University of Houston he skyrocketed to become the 259th best. If you get drafted with the 258th pick they call you a seventh rounder. If you don’t get drafted at all they call you an undrafted free agent. But if you go at 259, it’s Mr. Irrelevant. So much for hard work.

Here’s the thing: he’ll probably do really well. Last year’s Mr. Irrelevant Tae Crowder played in 11 games for the New York Giants, collecting 57 tackles, a sack, three tackles for loss, and a touchdown. Tom Brady (199th pick in the 2000 Draft) grabbed headlines for his role in last year’s Super Bowl victory--cementing him as the greatest quarterback ever. However, seven of Tampa Bay’s points were scored by another Mr. Irrelevant, kicker Ryan Stuccop, whose four extra points and 52-yard field goal aided the effort.

Paul mentions 29 people in Romans 16. Some are familiar: a deacon named Phoebe and an Apostolic couple, Andronicus and Junia. Others, not so much. I doubt you’ve heard many sermons on Phlegon or Stachys or Apelles. Call them lesser-known, sure. Call them minor players, fine. But don’t call them irrelevant. Irrelevant people rarely make the history books. And they never make the sacred ones. That’s because in sacred books, like the Bible, there are no irrelevant people. God uses tentmakers, silversmiths, farmers, bakers, nurses, sailors, and fishermen. He even does pretty great things with a carpenter. In God’s story, everyone plays a role, and you never know when it’s your turn.

These 29 believers played key roles in early churches. They gave, encouraged, served, and prayed. They got up, went to work, and made time for what is important just like the rest of us try to do. These are the people who paint classrooms and bring donuts and set up tables for receptions and cut grass. It’s easy to rush past their names and compare them to the Peters, Pauls, and Lydias of the New Testament. That’s natural. Of course, without people who give, who pray, and who build community, there would be no Peters, Pauls, or Lydias. The early Christian movement relied just as much on its hosts as it did its homilies. Yes, churches benefit from a committed preacher; every church needs committed people, too. There’s no such thing as a church without, well, a church.

Churches are in a weird time for recruiting volunteers. We’ve all fallen out of the habit. Fifty-two weeks in quarantine can do that. But we have an opportunity to recommit ourselves to the habits and disciplines that add vitality to our communities. Every small act matters and every minor contribution makes a difference. We have such an opportunity right now to step up. And it’s going to take each of us.

During our Sunday Funday I saw people setting up tables and putting out chairs. Another person rolled out a coffee cart. Others joined people who were sitting alone to start conversations. Most of these people’s pictures aren’t on the church website. In fact, without them, churches wouldn’t even have websites.... or fellowship meals.... children’s Bible classes, or much else. For every Brady who lifts a trophy there is a Mr. Irrelevant knocking in the extra points. In the kingdom of God, all work done in Jesus’s name is relevant.

*Bob Turner, Senior Minister
Church of Christ at White Station
Memphis, Tennessee
(edited to fit)*

SUNDAY SERVANTS: 6/27/21

Early Service (8:15 AM)

Welcome & Prayer.....	Joe Hott	Song Leader.....	Lee McCain
Greeters.....	Gary McCool & Ken Rosenbaum	Prayer & Scripture.....	Bill Alumbaugh
Communion Scripture & Prayers.....	Harold Phillips		

Second Service (10:30 AM)

Welcome & Prayer.....	Don Butcher	Song Leader.....	Marquis Elliott
Greeters.....	John Bowman & Don Cope	Prayer & Scripture.....	Tom Verkler
Communion Scripture & Prayers.....	Stephen Hunt		

June Worship Coordinators

Worship Coordinator.....	Mark Tucker	Streaming Coordinator.....	Aaron Sloan
Audio Coordinator.....	Homer Makinson	Video Coordinator.....	Matt Grisham