



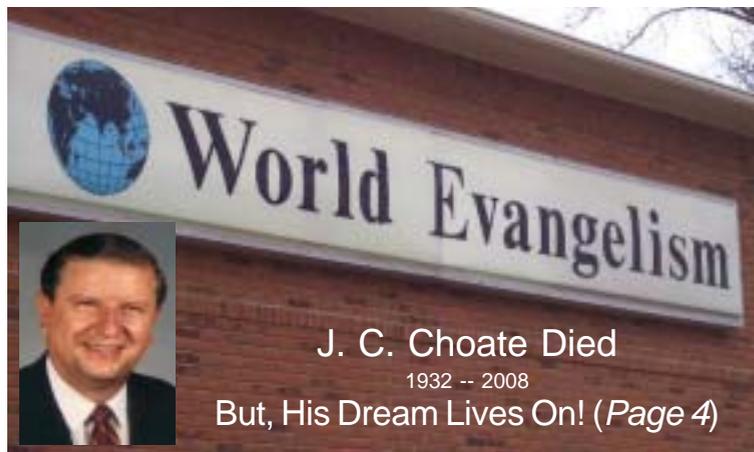
# Magnolia Messenger

MAGNOLIA MESSENGER  
P. O. Box 1578  
Kosciusko, MS 39090

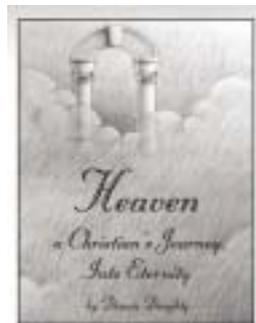
MAR/APRIL, 2008 -- VOLUME 30; NUMBER 2 -- Our 30th Year

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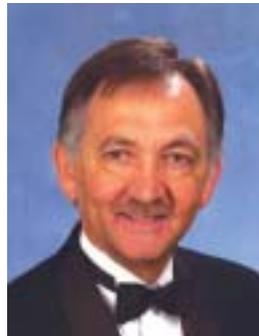
"Let us consider one another to provoke unto LOVE and GOOD WORKS." (Hebrews 10:24)



J. C. Choate Died  
1932 -- 2008  
But, His Dream Lives On! (Page 4)



Our Next  
MM RV Rally  
features  
the man  
&  
his book  
A Study of Heaven  
by  
Dennis Doughty  
(Details on Page 12)



## Why? & When?

Evolution  
Hell  
Saviour  
Church  
Baptism

Questions Asked on Page 2

## Question

Sometime ago I heard you say, "I want to urge you to become a Christian, not just because you may die, but because you may live." Would you elaborate on your reasons for saying that, please? (W. A.)

May Responds on Page 3

623

## Sent in Answers

Read & Study Pages 18 & 20



Marlin looks out over the Mexican City of Guanajuata which is now home to one of the four newly planted churches of Christ in the state of Guanajuata, Mexico. More church plantings are being planned.

Read about Mexican Missions on Pages 11 & 12

See Page 4

Preacher Recalls When Churches of Christ Were Known As  
**"Bible Toting, Bible Quoting" People**

"Mississippi's GOOD NEWS Newspaper" -- Serving Mississippi, Louisiana and Adjoining States

Publican Turned Preacher  
"Matthew" Maranto



Was  
I  
R  
S  
Agent  
See  
Page 8

She Lived

102 Years

(Story on page 15)

Travis Brown  
Writes About

"Excuses, Excuses"

Page 6

Garvis Semore

Asks

"Are We Finished?"

Page 6

John Gardner

Wonders

"Will the Eagle Fall?"

Page 7

## This Fall

October 9 - 18, 2008

- Lord Willing -

Cruise with Christians

to the Northeast

Fall Colors

Wonderful Opportunity

(See Page 15)

Wednesday Night

Is It Important To You?

1. If you think of Wednesday night as "Preparation Time" for Sunday, it will be important to you.
2. If you think of Wednesday night as a "Learning Experience", it will be important to you.
3. If you think of Wednesday night as a "Mid-Week Hour of Power", it will be important to you.
4. If you think of Wednesday night as a "Time of Christian Fellowship", it will be important to you.
5. If you think of Wednesday night as a "Bible Study Time", it will be important to you.

Wednesday night should be important to you. You are important to the life of the church on Wednesday night! (via The "Booneville Informer"; Booneville, MS, Jimmie Timbes, secretary)

## MBC to Graduate 9

(See page 9)

Marshall Eubanks, Jr.  
Shunkeith Evans  
Oscar Graves  
Karen Hines  
Benjamin Jackson  
James Johnson  
David Paden  
Donald Roberson  
Seth Sullivan

## Magnolia Bible College

27th Annual  
Benefit Dinner  
&  
Silent Auction

Featuring Terry Bowden



Saturday, April 19, 2008  
Kosciusko, Mississippi

Make Plans to Attend!  
Call: 800-748-8655

## In This Issue

TV Sermon

by

Mack Lyon

Is Membership in  
Christ's Church Necessary?

- Editor's Prayer -

Father, help each of us to understand the identity and importance of the church of Jesus Christ. In His name. Amen.

Please read prayerfully, beginning on page 13

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"Put them in mind... to be ready unto every GOOD work." (Titus 3:1)

## Readers' Response

(Comments & Suggestions Invited; Criticisms Considered)

My wife (Mildred) and I attend the Columbia Church of Christ. We met you and your wife (June) several years ago. We hope to see you all again somewhere along the way. What I'm really writing to say is, Mildred and I enjoy reading the MM and appreciate the fine work you are doing. Please keep it up. In Christian Love, (Alton & Mildred Oser, Grayson, LA)

I am a member of the Church of Christ in Spruce Pine, Alabama. I enjoy reading the Magnolia Messenger. A member of our congregation shares her copy of each publication with me. I am pleased as long as I can read her copy. I was very sorry to read about the paper not receiving enough donations to stay in publication. I am enclosing a check for ---. I hope that my donation can help support your cause. Keep up the good work. Your Brother in Christ, (Don A. Lawler, Bear Creek, AL)

I enjoyed your article in the MM very much. I sometimes have to remind myself about living in the past. I am grateful for the work you and Bro. Franks do through the MM... You reminded me in your article that we can teach our loved ones but we can't make them do right. Love you, Your sister in Christ, (Alice Dempsey, Bradford, AR)

Enclosed are my answers for the Question Box. We enjoy your paper very much and remember you with

Christian love as we think of you and your wife and the Magnolia Bible College and the church in Kosciusko. We were on a Sojourn there in the late 1990's don't remember the exact date but we worked on the boys dormitory. Here's a small contribution. Wish it could be more. In Him, (Walter & Iva Hill, Round Rock, TX)

I enjoy your MM so much and especially enjoy answering the Questions. Thanks! (Linda Anderson, Gainesboro, TN)

We continue to enjoy the Messenger. In Christian Love, (Richard & Connelle Peace, Paris, TX)

I missed getting the Messenger the last printing; so sorry you didn't have the funds to get it out. Hope this won't happen again... In Christian Love, (Nell Watson, Brandon, MS)

Enclosed find a small check to help. Keep up the good work you both do and thank you for the Magnolia Messenger. I enjoy the Question Box very much. In Christian Love, (Margaret Burnett, Charleston, MS)

We are members of the Lord's church in Crockett, MS. We really enjoy reading the Messenger. Please take this small donation with our love. Hope it helps. Our Christian Love and Admiration, (Ralph & Pat Morris, Sarah, MS)

I enjoy the Magnolia Messenger so much. There are so many lessons that I get from it. If people would turn off the television and pick up a MM their lives would be a little richer. I am a member of the Union Church of Christ in Ripley, Miss. The oldest church in Tippah County. I will send you a picture. A beautiful old church where the members (about 15) love the Lord. Thank you, (Linda Bozeman, Blue Mountain, MS)

We appreciate the Magnolia Messenger more than we have shown. It is always welcome reading from cover to cover. We also appreciate your work statewide in my home state of Mississippi. Although we have been in Tennessee for twenty years, and will probably die here, we do not forget the many friends we have in Mississippi, nor do I regret the eight years that I taught at Magnolia Bible College... God bless you both and the MM during the coming year. Your brother, (Don Taylor, Finger, TN)

## News Notes

### FULTON

The Pine Grove Church of Christ is sponsoring a Young Adult Retreat on April 18-20, 2008 at the Maywood Christian Camp facility near Hamilton, AL. For more information you may call the Pine Grove church at 662-862-2472.

### MEMPHIS

#### Six State Gospel Singing

The Southwind Church of Christ invites you to their 4th annual Six State Gospel Singing Friday, April 11, 2008, 7:00-10:00 PM. You are invited to join Christians from West Tennessee, Eastern Arkansas, Northern Mississippi, Northwest Alabama, Southeast Missouri and Southwest Kentucky for an evening of congregational singing.

### GREENWOOD

The Sycamore Church of Christ in Greenwood, Mississippi is planning a special Ladies Day Program for April 26, 2008.



It takes a lot more than a **building** to truly be the **church of Jesus Christ**. It doesn't take a building at all. All who are **saved** by the Lord make up the Lord's church. (See Acts 2:47; Eph. 5:23)

## Why? & When?

Evolution  
Hell  
Saviour  
Church  
Baptism



A. L. Franks  
EDITOR

To all who fear God and trust the Holy Scriptures, please consider a couple of serious questions. One is "Why?" The other is "When?" WHY believe something WHEN the Bible does not support such belief? May I illustrate with a few examples?

1. **Why** do some "Christians" accept a godless theory of evolution **when** the Bible plainly teaches that "God created the heavens and the earth" and, "that without Him was not anything made that was made" (Genesis 1,2; John 1:3). If the Biblical account is trustworthy (*not a lie*), evolution is, at best, only an unproven theory; and, when truly put to the test it is, in reality, **a lie!** So, the two questions-- "**Why and When?**" **Why** accept "evolution" **when** the Bible teaches "creation"?

2. **Why** do some "believers" refuse to accept the doctrine of eternal punishment in Hell **when** Jesus plainly and repeatedly taught that Hell is real for those who die unprepared (See Matthew 5:22,30; 10:28; 18:8,9. Read also Luke 16:19-31). The two questions remain-- "**Why and When?**" **Why** reject Hell **when** Jesus taught Hell's reality?

3. **Why** do some "followers of Jesus" believe that salvation from sin and the gift of eternal life may be found outside of Jesus Christ? Several modern day world religious systems reject the divinity of Jesus as the Son of God; yet, many who claim to be "Christians" join together in saying, "One religion is as good as another." **Why?** Especially, **when** the Bible plainly states that Jesus is **the** "Saviour"; that Jesus came to "seek and save the lost", and that only in His name is salvation to be found (Matt. 1:21; Luke 19:10; Acts 4:12). The two questions are still with us-- "**Why and When?**" **Why** hold to the belief that eternal salvation from sin can come through some other "name", or religion, **when** the Bible clearly teaches salvation is in "no other name"?

4. **Why** do some professed believers in God and the Bible hold to the idea that salvation can be obtained separate and apart from the church of Jesus Christ **when** the Bible clearly teaches that Jesus "purchased the church with his blood" and that He (Jesus) is the "saviour of the body [church]" (Study Acts 2:47; 20:28; Ephesians 5:23; 1:22,23). The questions, "**Why and When?**", are still with us. **Why** hold on to the mistaken idea that one can be saved outside of the Lord's body (His church) **when** the Bible clearly teaches that the saved are not only in the church, but that the church **is** the saved?

5. **Why** do some who claim they believe in God and the Bible say that baptism has absolutely nothing to do with salvation **when** the Lord Himself plainly said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved...." (Mark 16:16)? **Why** deny the essentiality of baptism **when** Saul of Tarsus was commanded to, "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16)? **Why** say that baptism has nothing to do with salvation, when the apostle Peter wrote, "...baptism doth also now save us...." (I Peter 3:21)? [Now, Peter did explain that salvation was not a result of the action of the water by "putting away the filth of the flesh", but that salvation was for those who **respond in faith to Jesus** -- in, as he wrote, "...the answer of a good conscience toward God".] So, the questions-- "**Why and When?**" are still with us. **Why** say that baptism does not save **when** the Bible says baptism does save?

Yes, I am still pondering, wondering. May you may also ask and keep on asking -- "**Why?**" and "**When?**" **Why** hesitate to accept the Word of God as the final authority? Continue to study the Holy Scriptures. And, as you learn the will of God, as revealed through Jesus Christ and His New Testament, respond to that teaching in genuine faith and humble obedience **Why** not today? If not today, **when?** (*Your questions and/or comments are invited. alf*)

## Magnolia Messenger

Church of Christ - Kosciusko

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Contributions from churches and individuals make possible the circulation of more than 25,000 copies of each issue of the "Magnolia Messenger". Your help is **requested, needed** and **appreciated!**

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**Editor's Note:** The mention of a person or church in the Messenger does NOT necessarily mean that we either endorse or approve all the person or church may believe, teach or do. We do not (can not) have full knowledge of every person or church mentioned in the 'MM'; furthermore, we do not believe that our role before God is to be that of a judge. We pray, however, that we will never lend encouragement to anyone or anything in conflict with, or not in harmony with that which is plainly taught In Scripture. Your comments invited and encouraged. (A. L. Franks, Editor)

E-Mail: [franksmm@aol.com](mailto:franksmm@aol.com)

# Bible Questions Answered

**QUESTION:** Sometime ago I heard you say, "I want to urge you to become a Christian, not just because you may die, but because you may live." Would you elaborate on your reasons for saying that, please. (W. A.)

## RESPONSE:

You have a long memory. It has been a long time since I said that in a sermon, but I would say it again. It is true!

### Because You May Die

The point is often made and is certainly true: life is uncertain. The Bible says, "What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes" (James 4:14). Even the proverbial "four score and ten years, or by reason of strength fourscore" (Psalm 90:10, KJV) fly by so quickly! And not everyone lives that long. Some are cut down suddenly and unexpectedly even in their teen or preteen years. Many who plan to "repent tomorrow" never see tomorrow.

Almost every preacher or personal worker knows someone who procrastinated too long and died outside of Christ. Their stories are often told to motivate others to become Christians "because they may die." It is a sound, scriptural appeal.

### Because You May Live

However, there is a deeper meaning to salvation. It is more than just something that happens in the afterlife. Jesus came to save us from Satan and hell, but he also came to give us abundant life, not just for later but also for now.

To hear his words and do them and to follow his example is to live a rich full life.

No less a Person than God in heaven tells us, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him" (Matthew 17:5). When we hear and do his will, great blessings follow, even in this life.

### A Serving Life

Jesus says, "For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it" (Matthew 16:25). The "found" life is a life of service to God and to others because of God.

All of us are seeking "life"--happiness, satisfaction, positive self-image, a good reputation.

Those things come, however, not by targeting them as life's aims but as a by-product of helping others.

Even the atheist Robert G. Ingersoll famously said, "The way to be happy is to make other people happy."

Some, who could never convince themselves they were worthwhile people by telling their reflections in the mirror how great they are, now really "feel good about themselves" because they have lost themselves in serving others.

Bitter complainers about the rotten deal life handed them have been transformed into satisfied and happy individuals by turning their focus from their own miserable existence to trying to lift the spirits of others by small acts of service. It works!

The life of service is a blessed life! It is good to become a Christian now, because you may live.

### A Loving, Forgiving Life

Some of the most unhappy people are those driven by bitterness over past slights, whether real or supposed.

Jesus on the cross, at the very moment of receiving the most excruciating pain human beings can inflict on one another, cried, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). He should be our model.

The perpetrators of the crucifixion did not receive God's forgiveness while still participating in their evil. Some may have been forgiven later, perhaps at the next Pentecost if they were among those who responded to Peter's preaching of the gospel. But when we follow Jesus' example and forgive those who have sinned against us, as he says we must if we wish to be forgiven (Matthew 6:12), we are not primarily doing them a favor--God alone can forgive in that sense. We are freeing ourselves of grudges and anger that can destroy both our physical and spiritual health. "Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and

## Response by Cecil May, Jr.



Cecil May, Jr., Dean  
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clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you" (Ephesians 4:31-32).

Dropping grudges and showing a forgiving spirit even to those who have wronged us is a refreshingly delightful way to live. It is good to become a Christian now, because you may live.

### A Virtuous, Guilt-free Life

A Christian girl turned down several requests for dates from a young man who was not a Christian. After she said "no" again, this time to attending a rock concert with him, in a kind of mock exasperation he asked her, "You don't dance, you don't drink, you don't attend rock concerts; what do you do for fun?" Her simple response was a classic. She said, "For fun I get up in the morning without feeling embarrassed, ashamed and guilty about what I did the night before."

It is fun to be in a Christian marriage, a husband and wife confident in their love and fidelity to one another. It is fun to rear children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, knowing the children will never have to see their parents in a drunken quarrel or a drug-induced stupor. It is fun for a husband and

wife to serve the Lord together, knowing they are encouraging each other toward heaven.

A life of obedience to Christ is a happy, guilt-free, fear-free life. It is good to become a Christian now, because you may live.

### A Life Whose Joy Transcends Circumstances

Certainly bad things happen to good people. In the midst of troubling circumstances, a faithful Christian may wonder, "How happy is a Christian life after all?"

Paul the apostle suffered great tribulation and persecution, including beatings, shipwrecks, stoning and imprisonment. That no doubt led to his statement, "If in this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied" (1 Corinthians 15:19).

Yet he himself said, speaking of his imprisonment and recent poverty, "Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. I can do all things through him who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:11-13).

He is able therefore to follow his own admonition, "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will

guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:4-7).

The promises that relate to after death are not irrelevant. It is because of those sure and certain promises that we can have contentment in the midst of unpleasant circumstances. Paul said his contentment was based on the righteousness of God which is by faith in Jesus Christ (Philippians 3:9). It is because we can say, "My sins are forgiven, I am a child of God and I have the hope of heaven," that we can have a settled joy, a blessed happiness that is not undermined by any set of earthly circumstances.

A life lived by faith in the promises of God and therefore relatively untroubled by what happens to us or around us is a happy life. It is good to become a Christian now, because you may live.

### Conclusion

Certainly there is a cost to be counted in becoming a Christian, but it is the way of the transgressor that is declared to be hard (Proverbs 13:15).

The idea that a person who is converted near the end of life and still gains heaven has had "the best of both worlds" is a perversion of truth. There is no real or lasting "good life" in a life lived in rebellion to Christ.

For joy inexpressible (1 Peter 1:8) and peace that surpasses understanding (Philippians 4:7) live whatever years you may have left, whether many or few, in service to Christ. That is why I say, "Become a Christian or re-dedicate yourself to Christ now, because you may live."

It is the way to live! 

## News Notes

### TUPELO

#### Skyline Lectures

A lectureship is scheduled for April 18-20, 2008 at the Skyline Church of Christ near Tupelo. There will be different speakers for each session. The theme for the lectureship will be "The Truth About Error." **Troy McNutt** is the preacher for the Skyline congregation.

### DURANT

My cell phone rang as I was taking a picture of "Spring flowers" (see page 19). It was **Emmette Armstrong** of Durant, Mississippi. He said, "I wanted to share good news with you. We had 53 for services Sunday." He went on to compliment their preacher, **Arman Willy**, who, he said, was doing "a good job." Thanks, brother!

### NEW ALBANY

The Hwy 178 Church of Christ in New Albany is planning a Ladies' Day program on April 12, 2008. Registration will begin at 9:00 a.m. The theme will be "Christian Women Improving Their Attitude". The speaker will be **Carolyn Upkins** from Jackson, MS. Lunch will be served following the program.

### KOSCIUSKO

The Tipton Street church has lost a faithful sister. **Lillie Lewis** died February 2, 2008. She was the widow of **George Lewis**, who preached many years in Kosciusko and central Mississippi. Sister Lewis was a MM Bible winner, back several years ago. A precious woman. Our sympathy!



The Choates -- A Mission Team -- J. C. & Betty

## J. C. Choate Crosses Over 1932 - 2008

- Louis Rushmore -

Friday, February 1, 2008, our beloved brother J.C. Choate crossed the threshold between the here and the now, versus the there and the forever. Familiarity with the life and the lifelong labor of brother Choate provides insight respecting his eternal destiny. Consequently, his funeral and subsequent interment were reminiscent of a victory celebration, rather than merely a commemoration of grief by those he left behind.

Numerous preachers officiated J.C.'s funeral at 2:00 PM. on Tuesday, February 5, including Wayne Barrier, Gordon Hogan, Dennis Larson, Colin McKee and L.D. Willis, each of whom spoke a few words. Gene Gibson and Byron Nichols led congregational singing. Jeremy Barrier, Joey Barrier, Jerry Bates, Louis Rushmore, Will White and Charles Brymer served as pall bearers. Loy Mitchell concluded the memorial services at the graveside.

Over the last 45 years, J.C. Choate (along with others) built up one of the oldest contemporary and one of the most effective programs of foreign evangelism in the Lord's church, comprised of 36 radio and 8 TV programs abroad, 9 overseas Bible schools, an international Gospel magazine, an internet Gospel magazine and campaigns abroad. Further, massive distribution of literature blankets Asia and Africa.

J.C. planned ahead; the program of foreign evangelism he established is bigger than the man, as well as more durable. Last year, he invited two couples to become team members in Winona, MS to help perpetuate the program of world evangelism when illness would take him from

us; Jerry and Paula Bates, with Louis and Bonnie Rushmore, attend to the daily responsibilities in Winona respecting the various publications and worldwide correspondence, and they make two six-week (or so) teaching trips to various Asian countries.

For more information, or to schedule a media presentation, call 662.283.1192 or email

choate@worldevangelism.org. We solicit your prayers, moral support and financial help to perpetuate J.C. Choate's lifelong investment in world evangelism, which has a proven track record of bringing souls to Christ.

**Editor's note:** This article was written by Louis Rushmore who has recently become a vital part of the World Evangelism team which uses Winona, Mississippi as their "home base".

### VICKSBURG

**Mike Milligan**, the youth minister for the I-20 Church of Christ in Vicksburg reports in their church bulletin of recently going on a mission trip to Amite County where they knocked doors and helped with VBS and a Gospel Meeting.

### MM Reader Requests Song Books For Georgia Churches

Tom L. Hopkins, writes: *We are in need of song books. We have grown to about 125 members over the past 3 years. We use "Songs of the Church", edited by Alton Howard (1971-75 edition) Telephone: (H) 770-969-7361 (cell) 770-653-1265. Email: mercury-blue-1999@yahoo.com*

**Tom L. Hopkins**  
Braswell Church of Christ  
7000 Goodson Rd. Lot 70  
Union City, GA 30291

## World Evangelism School of Missions To Begin in Winona, MS

A new school to train workers for mission field assignments is scheduled to begin classes in August, 2008 in Winona, Mississippi. Each month for two years, teachers and students will meet for 2-3 days for intensive classroom instruction. Assignments and follow-up study will be completed between each monthly meeting.

Instructors will all be missionaries with years of successful mission work experience. Courses will be practical, applications oriented, and Bible centered. Studies will be designed to equip students with skills to conduct effective evangelism efforts in today's mission fields. Methods taught will be based on the experiences of successful workers.

The founders of this new school are J.C. and Betty Choate, and Wayne and Janet Barrier. The Choates have conducted successful Asian-mission efforts over the past 40 years and the Barriers have worked with them for over 25 years. The methods, processes, approaches, and experiences of these and other missionaries will be discussed, reviewed, and studied in the school.

Students are accepted into the program based on experience, education, and references. The program will *not* provide basic training to develop preaching and Bible teaching skills. Applicants should already be equipped in these areas.

Typical courses include: Introduction to Missions, Survey of World Religions, Mission Field Evangelism Methods, Evangelism Plan Development, Fund-Raising and Reporting, Biblical Motivation for Missions, Biblical Pattern for Missions, Mission Field Assessment and Selection, Logistics and Foreign Travel. Each year students will participate in two field trips (2-6 weeks each) to train with an experienced worker.

For more information, contact:

**World Evangelism**  
PO Box 72  
Winona, MS 38967

choate@worldevangelism.org  
662-283-1192

### VIVIAN, LA.

The Pine Street Church of Christ in Vivian, Louisiana is planning a Ladies Day on April 19, 2008 beginning at 9:30 AM.

### OLIVE BRANCH

The Olive Branch Church of Christ has a Gospel Meeting scheduled for April 13th - April 16th, 2008 with **Jeff Wilder** as the guest speaker. The preacher for the Olive Branch congregation is **Mike Hixson**.

## "Bible Toting, Bible Quoting"

- Les Ferguson -

It has been a long time since I heard the above phrase used. But I heard it recently at the Delta Enrichment Series conducted at the Indianola, Mississippi church building.

The speaker was lamenting the status of the church in the Delta. He reported on four churches that have ceased to exist. He also reported that one Delta town had one family left keeping the church doors open, another town had 15 members and another 20, and yet another 29.

He made reference to long ago when there was a country church meeting on the banks of the Quiver River in Sunflower County near Ruleville and Drew, Mississippi. This is the church my Mom grew up in. It is where my Father obeyed the gospel. It is a part of my history in being a member of the body of Christ. But it is long gone from the scene. And the church in the Delta continues to shrink.

Another Delta preacher said to me recently *"that the future of the church in the Delta lies with the African-American church."* And he may well be exactly right. Although I have been gone from the Delta area for many, many years, I still have a concern for the preaching of the gospel in the place where my roots are.

The above mentioned speaker lamented the fact that there was a time when the church of Christ was known as a *"Bible Toting, Bible Quoting"* people. But that is not a phrase that identifies us anymore. Reflecting on my own journey of faith from the Quiver River scene of yesterday to today, I could not help but think of the church where I now serve, the South Huntington church family in Kosciusko.

A couple of years ago, in one of our door-knocking campaigns in Kosciusko, a lady said to me: *"It sure is good to see the church of Christ back out in the streets again."* What she was referring to was the glory days of the bus ministry of this church. That is long gone. And the door-knocking that put a few of us in the streets when that lady made that comment is not something that we do on a regular basis.

Maybe you do not like the *"Bible Toting, Bible Quoting"* phrase. Maybe you feel like door-knocking is an outdated methodology. OK, I can understand that.

But what should identify us in our community? What method should we use to get us back out into the streets where the lost are? It seems to me that we have evolved into what one theologian calls a *"waiting church"* (John Stott, *"The Contemporary Christian"*). We are just waiting for people to come.

Should we be content with just being a *"waiting church"*? Is it enough just to say, *"come, all things are ready?"*

The people of Jesus' day did not respond. Although there have been many changes from His day until now, human nature is basically the same. People made excuses then and they yet make them today. Are we pleasing God by just keeping house, waiting for people to come? Don't you think we need to change from a *waiting church* to a *going church*?

**Go, Jesus said, into the streets and lanes, the highways and hedges of the city and bring in the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind (Cf. Lk. 14:15-24).** Are we doing that? Or are we a prepared people just waiting for those folks to come to us?

What should identify us in our community? A man by the name of Kenneth O. Gangel said this, *"The central question of any ministry asks, Why has God raised up this work in this place at this time and what does He want to do for and through us?"* (Bibliotheca Sacra 158; October-

December 2001). Why indeed, a good question!

Well, it is obvious by looking at my ministry that I do not have all the answers. But with all my heart I believe that we need to be out in the streets where the lost are. What identifies us in our communities? Is that what should identify us?

*Les Ferguson, Sr., preacher*  
Church of Christ  
820 South Huntington St.  
Kosciusko, MS  
lesfergusonsr@hotmail.com



Les Ferguson, Sr.

**Don't you think we need to change from a waiting church to a going church?**

**...But with all my heart I believe that we need to be out in the streets where the lost are.**



**Rejoice,  
and again I  
say, rejoice!**

**Ashley Bates**  
Baptized into Christ  
January 23, 2008

Gene Gibson  
Congratulates Ashley,  
A New Sister in Christ

Gene and Madolyn Gibson  
- directors -  
Christian Student Center  
MS Delta Community College  
Moorhead, MS 38761  
662-246-8284



**“Oh, Happy Day” at the  
Christian Student Center,  
MDCC in Moorhead, MS**

On January 23rd Ashley Bates from Lucedale, MS was baptized into Christ. What a powerful way to start off the new year!

Ashley is a freshman at Mississippi Delta Community College. She started coming in September to the Christian Student Center for Tuesday night devotionals and Wednesday night Bible studies.

It didn't take long for Ashley to see the truths taught in the Bible compared to the error she had seen taught by the world. Ashley came over one Wednesday afternoon with a beautifully sincere and honest heart, sat down at the table where we were eating, and said with a smile, "I have made a decision to be baptized". Within the hour she was baptized for the remission of her sins and began her new life in Christ.

Continuing with our usual Wednesday night routine, Ashley accompanied us to Indywood, an extended care facility in Indianola where we, along with members of the Indianola congregation, sing each Wednesday. From there, her newly found Christian life carried her back to the Christian Student Center for Bible study with about thirty other students.

Following her morning classes on Thursday, it was off to Winona, MS to attend a World Evangelism meeting. Ashley sat at the feet of twenty four seasoned missionaries for two days learning and growing in knowledge in the work of our Lord. The next week she was involved in helping Indianola prepare for the Delta Enrichment Day held at their church building. Ashley happily joined in with other students, both college and high school, and with some of the Indianola adults in preparation of the Indianola church building for the Delta Enrichment Program being held there the following Saturday.

We are very happy and thankful to God that opportunities were immediately available for Ashley to be busy -- joining in to work, study, and fellowship in Christian activities. She is so anxious to soak up knowledge and character from all with whom she comes into contact each day.

When a soul is born into God's family he/she is immediately looking to their brothers and sisters for guidance and the proper care for their spiritual growth. Oh, that WE ALL will be the Christian examples that she and each newborn into the family of God needs and deserves.

Ashley says she wants to go to everything that involves church activity. She is planning attendance at the next World Evangelism meeting followed by a college student retreat, then the Mission Retreat at Maywood in May. Please pray for Ashley's spiritual strength and growth as she faces trials beyond my and your comprehension. Please seek also in your prayers God's blessings upon other students with whom we continue to study. (Gene and Madolyn Gibson, Christian Student Center at MDCC)

**Now, You Take it from There!**



by  
**John Simpson**  
4073 Stillwood Dr  
Memphis, TN 38128-3056  
j38128sim@yahoo.com

**Early Christian Worship**  
(According to Justin Martyr)

*Justin Martyr (A. D. 100 – 167), of Christianity” addressed to the was born at Neapolis in ancient Emperor at Rome. He was one of the Shechem, about the time the apostle ablest men of his time and died a John died. He studied philosophy, and martyr at Rome. Showing the growth of Christianity, he said that in his day, in his youth saw a great deal of persecution to Christians. He became “there is no race of men where prayers are not offered up in the name of a convert and traveled in a philosophers robe, seeking to win others to Christ. He wrote a “Defense Jesus.”*

HERE IS JUSTIN MARTYR'S PICTURE OF EARLY CHRISTIAN WORSHIP:  
“On Sunday a meeting is held of all who live in the cities and villages, and a section is read from Memoirs of the Apostles and the writings of the Prophets, as long as time permits. When the reading is finished, the president, in a discourse, gives the admonition and exhortation to imitate these noble things. After this we all arise and offer a common prayer. At the close of the prayer, as we have before described, bread and wine and thanks for them according to his ability, and the congregation answers, ‘Amen’. Then the consecrated elements are distributed to each one and partaken of, and are carried by the deacons to the houses of the absent. The wealthy and the willing then give contributions according to their freewill; and this collection is deposited with the president, who therewith supplies orphans, widows, prisoners, and all who are in want.” —Apology I, pp. 65-67 (140 A. D.)

Singing is not mentioned, but following the New Testament order of worship as closely as Justin describes, it is unthinkable that they would not have followed instruction to sing from the Memoirs of the Apostles (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16).

**Now, you take it from there!**

**Vicksburg Church (Bypass) to Honor Willie Nettle**

[Letter from James Scott]

*Greetings brothers and sisters! You are cordially invited to join us in a birthday and appreciation dinner honoring Bro. Willie Nettle.*

*The dinner will be held on Saturday, April 26, 2008 at 1:00 PM. in the Bypass Church of Christ Annex Building. This will be a joyous occasion in which we, as brothers and sisters in Christ, can fellowship and show appreciation for Brother Nettle's dedication to the Lord's church.*

*In addition to the dinner, we are planning a cruise for Brother and Sister (Robin) Nettle. Any donations towards the cruise would be greatly appreciated.*

*If you have any questions or would like to RSVP, you may contact me at 601-638-2559. James Scott; Bypass Church of Christ; 787 Hwy 61 N. Bypass; Vicksburg, MS*

**Gatlinburg, TN Church Celebrates Fifty Years!**

**ESTABLISHED 1958:** *The church of Christ, which meets at the corner of Reagan Drive and Trinity Lane in Gatlinburg, Tennessee, will celebrate its fiftieth anniversary on May 4. A Gospel meeting with area preachers will be conducted May 2- 4 to commemorate the occasion.*

*The Gatlinburg church was established in 1958 by the late Creed Spurgeon, a dedicated minister who was a native of this area. His three children and one grandson continue as members today. The present building was erected in 1964.*

*If you are planning to go to the Smokies this year, why not come the first weekend in May and join us as we celebrate fifty years of service in the Smokies?*

Rod Rutherford: minister; P.O. Box 268; Powell, TN 37849  
Tel. 865-859-0717 rod.rutherford@comcast.net

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## “Excuses, Excuses.” Part 1

- Travis Brown -

In (Luke 14:7-14) Jesus spoke about the ideal banquet situation where goodness, helpfulness and sincere humility were present.

Describing the kingdom of God as a “banquet” was a favorite expression of the Old Testament prophets (Is. 25:6-12; 65:13-16). Then in (verse 15) one of the dinner guests was moved to exclaim, “Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.”

In the next nine verses Jesus spoke to a group of people who loved the idea of the great Messianic banquet and the happiness it would bring. However, they did not have a clear understanding of what that would entail. As Jesus told his parable, he in effect said, “Yes, you all admire the ideal but you are not prepared to act upon it. You think it is grand but you are too occupied with yourselves to take it seriously.”<sup>1</sup>

His audience was very familiar with Jesus’ reference to a man making a “great supper.” [KJV] In Palestine, when a man made a feast, the day was announced long beforehand and the invitations were sent out and accepted; but the hour was not announced; and when the day came and all things were ready, servants were sent out to summon the already invited guests. To accept the invitation beforehand and then to refuse it when the day came was a grave insult.<sup>2</sup>

In spite of this, the invited “guests” began to excuse themselves from the feast one by one. They actually did not have a valid reason for their absence they just searched for excuses to try and justify themselves for not wanting to be there.

That practice is still alive and well today. When it comes to accepting Christ and becoming a Christian or living a dedicated life of service to God, excuses come from all directions. God has always had a way of dealing with excuses. They did not work when first offered back in the Garden of Eden from Adam and Eve and they will not work today.

Let us use the remainder of this article to consider some excuses which we hear today. After stating the excuses we will examine how God has already countered them through the lives of characters of old. We will notice what the book of Hebrews has to say about God’s evaluation of those who chose to surrender themselves to Him and live by faith. Regardless of what others around them may or may not

have chosen to do, these individuals were prepared to offer themselves, rather than excuses, to God. See if the following excuses sound familiar.



Travis Brown

### Excuse #1:

*“If I obey the Gospel and become a member of the church of Christ it will condemn my family.”*

Answer: Consider Abel in (Gen. 4:1-9). He and his older brother Cain brought sacrifices to God. Abel’s sacrifice was accepted by God and Cain’s was not. Abel could have argued that if he did what God instructed that would condemn his brother who had done it a different way. Notice (Heb. 11:4) “By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks.” NKJV

\*Note: Every Jew who accepted Christ at Pentecost [Acts 2] and became a Christian had to go against what their families had always done; they had to change religions. The apostle Paul is another example of one who changed religions. It will not be easy but we must remember Paul’s words in (Rom. 14:12) “So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.” We will not stand before God to give an account of our family members, but we will give an account of our own lives - and face our own destinies.

### Excuse #2:

*“Living a Christian life is too hard.”*

Answer: Consider Abraham in (Gen. 12). God asked him to leave his homeland and his relatives and everything familiar to head off to a land that God would show him. Abraham could have said that request was just too hard. God shouldn’t expect people to uproot themselves and step out like that. There will be a tremendous amount of work involved in that. However, what was his response? (Heb. 11:8-10) “By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would afterward receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.”

MM  
Made  
its way to  
Mexico

Story on  
Spanish  
Speaking  
Missions  
in  
Mexico

See  
Page 10

Rene, Preacher in Mexico



### Excuses (Continued)

\*Note: If that wasn’t enough, later God asked Abraham to take his son, Isaac, and offer him to God as a burnt offering (Gen. 22:2). What about it Abraham? Surely this command is too hard! (Heb. 11:17) “By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac ...” Of course, we know that once God saw Abraham’s unquestioning obedience He gave the ram as a substitute for Isaac. Once again God blesses those who do not offer excuses.

May we understand the importance of offering ourselves unto God rather than excuses. A loving, willing attitude of humble obedience is the very least we can do when we consider what our God has done for us. He could have offered excuses instead of His Son. May we live in such a manner that when we stand before our Great Judge that we have much more to offer Him than a long list of excuses.

We will continue our study of popular excuses and God’s remedy for them in the next issue.

<sup>1</sup> Butler, Paul T. “The Gospel of Luke.” The Bible Study Textbook Series. College Press Publishing Company. Joplin. 1981.

<sup>2</sup> Barclay, William. “The Gospel of Luke.” The Daily Study Bible Series. The Westminster Press. Philadelphia. 1975.

\* Thoughts for this article came from an article in the Gospel Minutes. June 29<sup>th</sup>. Bound Volume 1979.

Travis Brown

Director of Admissions  
Magnolia Bible College  
tbrown@magnolia.edu

### Part II -- Next Issue

### MM Requests Prayers

**Morton, Mississippi**  
**Gospel Meeting**  
**June 1 - 4, 2008**  
Sunday: 9:45; 10:45 AM  
**Cole Baird**  
Sunday & Monday: 6:00 PM  
**Steve Reeves**  
Tuesday: 6:00 PM  
**Travis Brown**  
Wednesday: 6:00 PM  
**Cole Baird**

## Are We Finished?

- Garvis Semore -

Jesus Himself issued the challenge, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15). We sit in our comfortable church buildings and speak of mission work. Invariably someone will make the observation, “Mission work begins at home.”

To be sure, mission work does begin at home. But could it be that we are

just using that as an excuse to soothe our consciences while we sit at home? Do we consider our task of going to every creature to be finished?

As a Mississippian, I have heard and studied the numbers. We’ve finally reached the point in our own state that only two counties no longer have a congregation of the Lord’s Church meeting in them (and one of those

two may soon have a congregation). We have gotten excited about reducing the number to just two. Are we finished

going to everyone in Mississippi?

Ron Clayton, a long-time missionary to India, once observed, “Eighty-four percent of the world’s population lives so far away from a local congregation of the Lord’s church that their chances of hearing the Gospel from a neighboring Christian are slim and none.”

Eighty-four percent! I had to read that comment three or four times to let it sink in. While we mumble, grumble, and complain about trivial, inane things (and I might add while we split, feud, and disfellowship over trivial, inane things), the world doesn’t know Jesus. While we “get mad and quit” the world is lost and is going into

eternity unprepared. While we decide to quit working for a time because our feelings got hurt we are being held accountable for not going and teaching.

Eighty-four percent! Are we really finished with our task? “And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15).

When you are tempted to “take our ease, eat, drink, and be merry,” get a good picture of that 84% in your mind. When we are considering ways to spend the Lord’s money, surely that 84% ought to trouble us just a bit.

Another statistic from a few years back may tell the tale. The Princeton Research Center asked Christians why they don’t read the Bible. Forty-seven percent said they didn’t have time, while 19% simply acknowledged they were

too lazy. Another 15% felt that the Bible was not relevant to their lives.

Perhaps we aren’t going next door - or to

the 84% of the world’s population who live a great distance from a local congregation of the Lord’s Church - because we think we’re too busy, we are too lazy, and we don’t think judgment is relevant.

Perhaps we need to wake up and redeem the time (Ephesians 5). Can we honestly say we are finished? (Garvis serves as president of MBC. He can be reached by addressing **P. O. Box 1109; Kosciusko, MS 39090**. Email: gsemore@magnolia.edu

### LAFAYETTE

**Jeremy Carter**, from Harding University, plans to work with the Riverside Church of Christ as youth intern beginning on May 28.

- Wichita, Kansas -

## Women Walking with God

April 25, 26, 2008

2008 Theme: ‘Families of Faith’

Northside Church of Christ  
4545 N. Meridian, Wichita, KS  
www.womenwalkingwithgod.org

Phone:

(316) 838-5200 (Northside church office)

Speakers

Lynn Jones and Elaine Denman

## Will the Eagle Fall?

**John Gardner**

*“Though you soar like the eagle, though your nest is set among the stars, from there I will bring you down, declares the Lord” (Obadiah 4, ESV).*

America is a great nation, and has been for almost 232 years. Although small and struggling, the fledgling country was great in its purpose, vision, and courage when it broke from England. Her principles of freedom and respect for the moral and ethical guidelines of Scripture sustained her as she advanced through the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Wealth and power abounded. She was as grand as the eagle chosen to represent her to the world. America soared into the new century with blue skies above her and strong winds beneath her.

But is America secure? Have we made our nest among the stars and come to believe no one can bring us down, not even God?

Edom was an arrogant nation when Obadiah wrote his short prophecy about her. Edom’s twin cities of Bozrah and Teman were citadels of stone perched atop cliffs, surrounded by deep ravines, and seemed to offer absolute security from enemy forces below. The Edomites were powerful in their own peculiar way as they carried out strategic raids on weakened enemies and sided with the victors in other nations’ battles (Obadiah 10 – 14).

But their success and privilege had made them proud. *“The pride of your heart has deceived you, you who live in the clefts of the rock, in your lofty dwelling, who say in your heart, ‘Who will bring me down to the ground?’”* (Obadiah 3).

God answers, *“Though you soar like the eagle, though your nest is set among the stars, from there I will bring you down...”* (Obadiah 4). The One who had controlled the rise and fall of mighty empires from the beginning of civilization would have no trouble toppling arrogant Edom. The wise men of Mount Esau and the mighty men of Teman could not hold back the hand of God (Obadiah 8, 9). Though soaring like an eagle, Edom was destined to fall.

The Scriptures speak clearly about the life and future of nations. *“Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord...”* (Psalm 33: 12). While spoken specifically of Israel of old, the truth remains that those nations which in large

**The Scriptures speak clearly about the life and future of nations. “Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord...” (Psalm 33: 12).**

*“Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people”* (Proverbs 14: 34). *“Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall”* (Proverbs 16: 18). What the wise man says in Proverbs 16: 5 of individuals applies equally to nations: *“Everyone who is arrogant in heart is an abomination to the Lord; be assured, he will not go unpunished.”*



John Gardner

Should America be concerned about her place and future in the world? Are we in danger of letting arrogance determine our national policies, so that many of our citizens and leaders thumb their noses at God and rely on wealth, military might, education, technology, and resources for success? Does our nation see itself as the wise, wealthy, and successful one that can tell the rest of the world how to live? Do we adore and reward with almost obscene wealth the most arrogant of our superstars who often become role models for our youth? I believe the answer to all of these questions and many more like them is yes.

As our nation goes forward in this crucial year of electing national, state, and local leaders, let us pray as never before that those who are the most humble in heart before the Almighty will be elected. May God raise up leaders among us like Lincoln who spent untold hours on his knees in prayer, seeking guidance to lead this nation in one of its darkest hours.

May we who follow Christ humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God in daily living (1 Peter 5: 6). We must teach all who will listen about the glory and power and majesty of our God who is above all to counter the growing arrogance of those who do not know Him. Let us lead all who will listen to humble faith in Jesus as Lord and Christ, urging upon them

repentance and baptism as He commands (Acts 2: 36 – 38). Where the gospel goes, goes the message of humility, gratitude, and obedience before God. Where humility goes, goes

the hope that God will continue to bless abundantly.

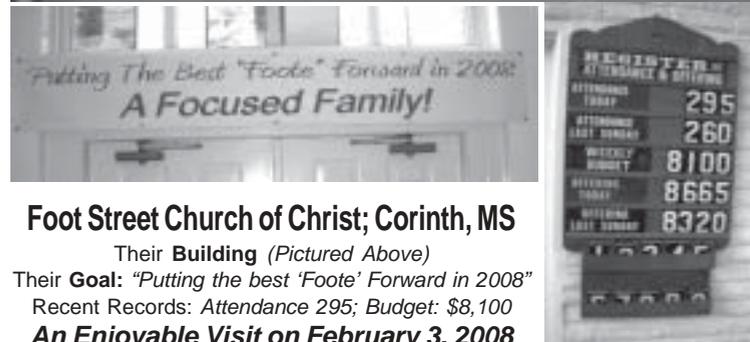
Will this nation whose symbol is the eagle fall from its heights? Let us pray that it does not. Let us work and pray to see that America is fit to serve under the mighty hand of God and to be used by Him for years to come.

*John Gardner is Academic Dean of MBC and can be reached by addressing P. O. Box 1109; Kosciusko, MS 39090. Email: jgardner@magnolia.edu*

*Thanks for your letters, phone calls and emails. We are greatly encouraged by the response of MM readers. (alf & mjf)*

### FULTON

The Fulton Church of Christ is hosting a Youth Rally Saturday, April 26, 2008. Classes will be taught by several students from Freed-Hardeman University. The keynote speaker is **Jerry Elder**, youth minister for the West Seventh Street Church of Christ in Columbia, TN. **Russ Crosswhite** is the local preacher for the Fulton congregation.



### Foot Street Church of Christ; Corinth, MS

Their **Building** (Pictured Above)

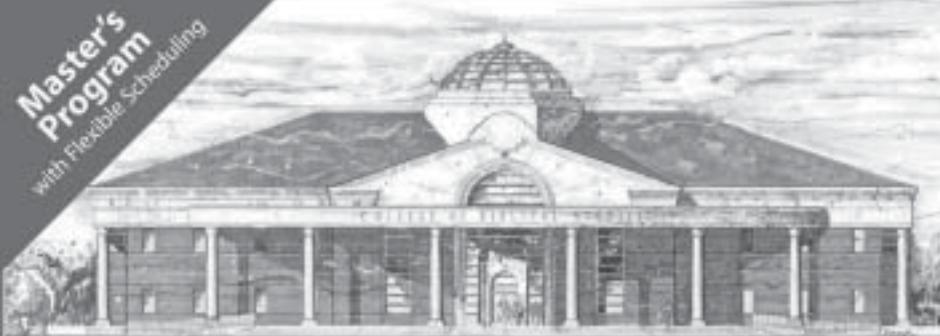
Their **Goal:** “Putting the best ‘Foote’ Forward in 2008”

Recent Records: Attendance 295; Budget: \$8,100

**An Enjoyable Visit on February 3, 2008**

The Foote Street congregation is served by five elders and 10 deacons. **Blake Nichols** is their capable preacher and **Terry Smith** is their long time associate minister.

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## Modern Day "Matthew" Alive and Well in the Mississippi Delta!

was  
IRS Agent

Submitted by  
**Terri Harden**

He had been a tax collector for 35 years. For 17 of those years he had been the Chief tax collector for the Internal Revenue Service within the Delta of Mississippi. The last 6 years had been spent directing his team of agents in attacking the largest and most abusive tax shelters across the nation. However, on August 31, 2007, he hung up his "calculator" and picked up his Bible to become the full time preacher for the Church of Christ in Rolling Fork, MS.

Norman J. Maranto had been asked on more than one occasion, "So after all these years, God called you into the ministry?" With a grin and a chuckle, he says, "No, really God sent me a letter!" Living in Greenwood at the time and serving as one of the Elders for the West President

Street Congregation, Norman had contacted **Eugene Springer**, the preacher for the Rolling Fork church, in an effort to properly direct a piece of misrouted correspondence. It was then that he was made aware of the preacher's intentions to move back to his home state of Kentucky. Norman was told that the congregation would be without a preacher in two weeks and the hopes of finding a replacement willing to move to the Delta to work with the small 18 member congregation was looking pretty dim. A follow up contact the next day by Norman with member **Chuck Henderson** ended with Chuck saying in closing, "Won't you come on down here and help us out!"

It wasn't too many years ago that the Rolling Fork church was a thriving congregation which boasted a membership of around 75 with 2 elders. The congregation was established in 1953 with the help of Brother **Paul Murphy** and has been served by a number of preachers over the years with familiar names as **Pope, Sargent, Eubanks, Terry, Goree, Franks, Mize, Nerren, Wallin, Glasgow, Wooldridge, Cox, Claypool, Lemmons, Thompson, Rikards** and **Springer**.

Moving out of a small building within a residential area in 1971, the congregation was eventually able to construct a very pretty and modern building and then, a little later, a preacher's home in a prime location right off Highway 61 in Rolling Fork. However, over the years, the lack of jobs and the struggling local economy had forced many of the members and young people to look elsewhere for employment. Thus the "graying" of the Rolling Fork church, as a lot of other small Delta churches, began to take its toll.



- Norman Maranto -  
Publican turned Preacher

While many of the members of the church in Rolling Fork really didn't know what they were going to do, one member, Sister **Billie Yelverton** told them all to have faith! God was going to send someone to them. Little did she know that within the providence of God, that for the past 40 years, He could have very well been grooming someone for that Rolling Fork preacher's job to become vacant in the summer of 2007.

In 1967, Norman, a resident of the small town of Anguilla just north of Rolling Fork, then a Roman Catholic, who had previously attended a Catholic seminary in Belleville, Illinois, happened to accompany a friend to assist in the taking of inventory at the local Massey Ferguson Tractor dealership in Rolling Fork. Also assisting in the inventory was a young lady, **Joyce Miller**, a member of the Rolling Fork Church of Christ.

Cupid struck with his arrow and a relationship developed despite the fact that neither of their families was keen on their children dating. This was Norman's first introduction to the Church of Christ. To say the least, it was the beginning of a very rocky road, religiously, for both of them. Was it the providence of God that sent Norman to assist in that inventory and to meet Joyce? You be the judge as we move along.

In 1969, Norman enrolled in Belhaven College on a four year baseball scholarship. However, during his freshman year, he almost died from infection after a seemingly routine appendectomy and had to withdraw from college. Norman recounts being able to hear the doctors and family members speaking but was unable to move or respond. However, he had heard very clearly the words, "We don't know whether he will make it through the night."

now  
Gospel Preacher

He states he knew it was serious but didn't know it was that serious. While the next days and weeks were critical, he was able to recover with the help of a talented surgeon in Vicksburg, **Dr. George Martin**, who happened to be from Norman's hometown of Anguilla. Norman returned to Belhaven the next year to complete a 4 year course of study in 3 years and graduate with his class in May of 1973. Had God preserved the physical life of a person for a certain purpose sometime later?

Norman and Joyce had overcome many obstacles within their relationship and had been married on July 16, 1971. However, tough times were ahead and things became even more turbulent for the newlyweds as Norman continued in the Catholic faith, even becoming an officer within the Knights of Columbus, a Catholic men's organization.

Upon graduation from Belhaven, armed with an accounting degree, Norman became an agent with the Internal Revenue Service and was assigned to their field office in Greenwood, MS. He could have been assigned to any office within the state, but he wasn't. It was Greenwood and everything, it seemed, was in place there that would assist in the transformation of his life. Was this the providence of God at work with this particular work assignment?

It was there that on many occasions, Norman would attend an early Catholic Sunday morning mass and then attend services at the West President Street Church of Christ with Joyce. At that time there was one community activity within

Much to his surprise, his mother provided no objection. Her primary comment was, "Well, if I am not going to have a priest in the family, maybe I can have a preacher."

Greenwood, a church softball league that proved to be Norman's passion. Having played college ball, Norman went on to play an important role for the Catholic team.

This went on for awhile until **Tom Ainsworth**, a member of the church in Greenwood, asked Norman to play on the softball team comprised of members of the church rather than on the Catholic team. It was not without an internal struggle for Norman, but he eventually accepted the offer and became acquainted with men such as **Barrett, G. Kimble, C. Kimble, Acy, Mote, Mims** and **Hunt**.

Norman was to comment later that not only were these guys excellent athletes but they were faithful Christians who served as great examples to him while he was battling religious struggles within himself. Two ladies attending the West President Street Church, who also happened to be

strong supporters of the softball team, were **Mildred Winstead** and **Bea Hunt**. Mildred and Bea proved to be a very valuable part of the encouragement and support that Norman would need in his ultimate conversion sometime later.

Norman began attending the West President Street Church of Christ with Joyce more frequently and other friendships developed which began breaking down the religious barriers. A major event for Norman during this time was the birth of their daughter, **Tabitha. Bob and Sonna Mims** and their family had previously reached out personally to the Maranto family and a close friendship developed that assisted in opening the door for what eventually would lead to Norman's baptism on August 25, 1976.

Norman shares that it was family that had delayed him from obeying the gospel earlier. He dearly loved his mother and was determined to do nothing that would hurt her. He felt that his leaving the Catholic Church would be devastating, therefore had put off rendering obedience to Jesus. However, during a gospel meeting in Greenwood with Brother **Fenter Northern**, Bible verses from Matthew 10:34-38 were quoted and discussed that Norman says "hit him right between the eyes."

Norman was convinced that he had to pick up his own cross and carry it for Jesus despite possible family repercussions. He did and says he hasn't looked back. Much to his surprise, his mother provided no objection. Her primary comment was, "Well, if I am not going to have a priest in the family, maybe I can have a preacher." Do you believe in the providence of God yet?

Norman believes that having been baptized in Greenwood with a very supportive group of young adults was of great assistance to his conversion and his being launched upon his task of Bible study. He credits Brother **Doug Segars** in playing a pivotal role in his early religious development. It was Doug who challenged and provided leadership in gently prodding and guiding Norman (as well as several other men at the time) to develop and deliver sermons. It was the beginning to a process that was preparing a new Christian for service.

Was it the providence of God at work here in Greenwood that brought all of this together?

At that time in 1976, who knew what would be occurring at the Rolling Fork church in the summer of 2007, some 30 years later, that would benefit from Doug's tutelage? Two things of interest here is the fact that it was Doug's uncle, Bro. **Paul Murphy** who had played an

important role in the establishment of the church in Rolling Fork. Too, it is also interesting that Doug's father, Brother **Leo Segars** from the Amory Church of Christ in Amory, MS had also guided several young men in their religious development years earlier within that congregation. That group is now affectionately known as "The Leo boys." Norman says that he doesn't mind at all being called one of "Doug's boys." Brother **Robert Rawson**, the preacher for the Ruleville church at the time, also provided the first preaching opportunity for Norman outside of his home congregation of Greenwood.

Norman gives thanks for his baptism to his wife Joyce, who remained committed to him with her Christian example despite the hardships over the years. He understands and acknowledges the dangers and hardships of a Christian marrying a non Christian and believes extreme care should be taken in the dating process. Experience shows that it does make for a rough road. However, he will be eternally grateful to Joyce for loving him enough to stick by his side during some very difficult times. He also acknowledges the role of the Christian men in Greenwood who played on the softball team, the West President Church family and Bob and Sonna Mims for their personal friendship. Was it the providence of God at work here in Greenwood that brought all of this together?

As Norman progressed within the ranks of the IRS, moves to Gulfport and the Orange Grove Congregation, to Clinton and the Clinton congregation and to Jackson and the Belvedere congregation would be meaningful stops for his Christian family. **Derrick**, a son, was born while they were in Gulfport.

At each stop and in each place there were many special and dear people who contributed to Norman's religious preparation. Names such as **Risner, Deas, Rhodes, Wallace,**

Read Publican on Page 16



Where the Church Meets in Rolling Fork, Mississippi

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www.magnolia.edu

**MBC News**

P. O. Box 1109  
Kosciusko, MS 39090

## MBC's Graduating Class of 2008

Nine Magnolia Bible College students will receive degrees in commencement exercises on Saturday, May 17<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. at the South Huntington Street church of Christ in Kosciusko, MS.

Marshall Eubanks, Jr., Shunkeith Evans, Oscar Graves, Karen Hines, Benjamin Jackson, James Johnson, David Paden and Donald Roberson will receive the Bachelor of Arts degree in Bible. Seth Sullivan will receive the Bachelor of Theology in Bible.

**Marshall Eubanks, Jr.** is from Amory, MS. He is the 2008 HEADWAE student honoree. The HEADWAE (Higher Education Appreciation Day-Working for Academic Excellence) program is sponsored by the Mississippi Legislature, supported by our corporate community, and coordinated by the Mississippi Association of Colleges. Marshall serves as the full time minister at the Christian Chapel church of Christ in Hatley, MS. He has been named to Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges and to the Dean's and President's List.

Marshall is presently pursuing a master's degree at Freed-Hardeman University. He will graduate Magna Cum Laude.

**Shunkeith Evans** is from Jackson, MS. Shunkeith is the full time minister for the Tylertown church of Christ. After graduation, Shunkeith plans to pursue a master's degree at Freed-Hardeman University.

**Oscar Graves** is from Kilmichael, MS. Oscar is an active member of the Huntsville church of Christ. He has been a substitute Bible teacher and minister at the Huntsville, Oak Ridge and Duffee churches of Christ. He has been named Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges, the Dean's and President's Lists as well as the National Scholars Honor Society. His plans are to seek advanced degrees in the biblical languages. He will graduate Cum Laude.

**Karen Hines** is from Lubbock, TX and the wife of MBC's professor Dr. Roger Hines. Karen has been named to the President's and Dean's Lists. She teaches a Bible class at the Liberty Street church of Christ

in Canton where her husband is a full time minister. Karen plans to continue her studies in the field of education.

**Benjamin Jackson** is from Glenwood, Iowa. Ben has been named to the President's and Dean's Lists at MBC. Ben is a carpenter as well as being very active in the jail ministry in Kosciusko and Carthage, MS. He plans to go into to full time ministry with emphasis in prison ministry. Ben will graduate Cum Laude.

**James Johnson** is from Camden, MS. James has been employed full time at Comcast and works in evangelism with the Fulton Street church of Christ in Canton. He plans to further his studies in Bible.

**David Paden** is from Fulton, MS. David attended Itawamba Community College and is a 1996 graduate of the Memphis School of Preaching. He has served as the full time minister for the Tilden church of Christ while attending MBC. David has been named to Who's Who Among Student in American Universities and Colleges and to the MBC Dean's Lists. He is presently pursuing a Master of Arts in the New Testament at Freed-Hardeman University. David will graduate Magna Cum Laude.

**Donald Roberson** is from Ashland, MS. Don has been named Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges as well as to the President's and Dean's Lists. Don is a roofing contractor and serves as the full time minister at the Coffeerville church of Christ. He plans to expand his preaching into the mission field. Don will graduate Magna Cum Laude.

**Seth Sullivan** is from Magee, MS. Seth is a 2004 honor graduate of the University of Southern Mississippi with a B.A. in history education and classics. He has taught social studies at Madison Central High School and presently serves as youth and education minister for the Lake Harbour Drive church of Christ in Ridgeland. Seth will graduate Magna Cum Laude. (Thanks to Mamie Tays for preparing this report.)

## Magnolia Bible College

### Memorials & Living Tributes

The following donors recently made contributions to Magnolia Bible College in memory of, or in honor of, loved ones and/or friends. The names in **bold type** are memorialized or honored. The names following in lighter type are the donors. **Note: MBC and MM memorials are handled separately.** (See also page 11)

### Memorials

**Sybil Leach**  
Paul and Jean Dickerson

**Helois P. Lowery**  
W.E. and Judy Walker

**Tim Wright**  
Mr. and Mrs. L.C. Wright

**Sue Evans**  
Mr. and Mrs. Marlin Ivey

**Bessell Lenon**  
Mr. and Mrs. Marlin Ivey  
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**Ruby Chapman**  
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Linda F. Wildman  
R.C. and Iris Gattis

**M.C. Cobb**  
Mrs. M.C. Cobb

Please Send  
MBC Memorials  
And/or Tributes To:

Magnolia  
Bible College  
P.O. Box 1109  
Kosciusko, MS 39090

### Opening at MBC Chief Administrative Officer

Magnolia Bible College has an immediate opening for the position of Chief Administrative Officer (CAO). The Chief Administrative Officer will report directly to the President and is responsible for supervising the business office. Additionally the Chief Administrative Officer will be expected to manage the daily operations of the office staff. Other duties and responsibilities may be assigned by the President.

#### Minimum qualifications:

**Faithful member** of the churches of Christ  
**Bachelor's degree** from an accredited institution (preferably in the business field)  
**Public speaking** ability  
Excellent **organizational skills**

#### Preferred qualifications:

Master's degree  
Ministry experience

The position of Chief Administrative Officer will remain open until the position is filled. Compensation will be based upon experience and qualifications. Benefits include vacation pay, sick pay, group insurance, and a 403b retirement plan. Interested applicants should forward a resume and letter of interest to: Dr. Garvis Semore, President, Magnolia Bible College, P.O. Box 1109, Kosciusko, MS 39090. Documents may also be sent via email to: gsemore@magnolia.edu.

## MBC Annual Training Campaign

### CHURCH OF CHRIST

Macon, Mississippi  
March 29 - April 2, 2008

#### Door Knocking

Students and Staff of MBC  
and other volunteer Christians

Directed by

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Therman Hodge, Preacher at Macon

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**Garvis Semore**  
Sunday at 10:00, 11:00 & 2:00

#### Marshall Eubanks

Monday at 7:00

#### Norman Spann

Tuesday at 7:00

#### Benjamin Jackson

Wednesday at 7:00

My name is...



David Paden



...and everyone on campus knows it!

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Beautiful Fruit: Typical Scene at a Mexico Market



Marlin Ivey (left) and Nelma Ivey (on right). In the center is "Paco" [Francisco], who, along with his wife [Sharon], were the first converts in Dolores.

## Martha Writes About Mexico Missions

- Martha Lawrence -

We arrived in San Miguel early on a Friday morning, around 2:30 A.M. As we were traveling at night down the cobblestone streets, we wondered how in the world Marlin and Nelma found this place. However, by the end of the day, we could understand why they continue to return.

The first morning we looked up to see the sun, and it appeared to be in the same place it would be in Kosciusko at the same time -- reminding us that there should not be a doubt in anyone's mind as to who created this world.

The main reason we wanted to go to Mexico was to gain first hand knowledge of the work of the four churches that have recently been established in Mexico. In each of the cities of San Miguel, Comonfort, Guanajuato, and Dolores Hidalgo, the population ranges from 50,000 to around 500,000. Imagine this many people in this area without the Lord's church, five years ago. We enjoyed visiting and getting to know each preacher and wife over a meal of delicious food.

We attended Sunday morning services at San Miguel with the building being packed - standing room only! We were so encouraged by the number of young adults attending, around 63 and 32 children in Bible class. Their love for the Lord and for each other was very evident.



Intently Interested

This mission work is being accomplished through the South Huntington Church in Kosciusko. Many other Mexico cities are "ripe" for the gospel. Help is greatly needed to reach out to hundreds of thousands of precious souls with

See MARTHA, pg. 11

## Mexican Missions Are Bearing Fruit

It all started with a vacation trip to the state of Guanajuato in central Mexico, home to almost 5,000,000 precious souls. J. Marlin Ivey and his wife, Nelma, from Kosciusko, Mississippi, decided to visit a city they had been reading about -- **San Miguel**, identified as a colonial city with nearly "perfect weather" and widely acclaimed for its beauty, art and culture.

Their first visit (early 2001) soon called for another which led to the purchase of a house in San Miguel. Everything there was just wonderful -- weather, the food, the people. But, something was missing. The Iveys found no church of Christ in a city of more than 75,000.

At first, brother and sister Ivey conducted services each Lord's day in their home; however, they soon determined, with the help of the Lord, to establish a church of Christ in San Miguel. Getting in touch with the Sunset School of Preaching in Lubbock, Texas, they learned about the work of Toluca Bible Institute which was involved in the preparation of Spanish speaking missionaries. By the middle of July, in 2001, the decision had been made to secure the services of one of school's "top graduates" -- a preacher named Fernando, along with his dedicated wife, Tony.

In January of 2002, a store building was rented and serious efforts were undertaken to plant a church in San Miguel. God blessed the sowing of the **seed of the kingdom** as more and more precious souls were led to the Lord. The numbers continued to grow so that a very nice property was purchased and converted into a church building. Now, after only six years, on a recent Sunday (February 24, 2008), my June and I were blessed to personally witness the attendance of the San Miguel church reach a high of 96. It was truly an exciting experience.

Additional mission work has been accomplished over the past few years. You are urged to read the reports written by Martha Lawrence and June Franks as they recall memories of their visit to the mission fields of Mexico.

The efforts of the Iveys and the Kosciusko church is only a beginning. Much more can be done in the state of Guanajuato and throughout all of Mexico. After reading this special report, if you would like more information on how you, as an individual or a congregation, can become involved, please contact the Kosciusko church at **820 South Huntington Street; Kosciusko, MS 39090**. Or call the church office at **662-289-3791**. Please feel free to call me, A. L. Franks, at 601-668-3344 (email: franksmm@aol.com). (alf)

## Spanish Email

See Last Three Lines

Hola hermanos: Espero que esten bien de salud y llenos de la gracia de Dios. Hasta ahora te puedo escribir porque no tenia tu E-mail completo; pero gracias a Dios ya podre mandarte fotos e informacion de lo que pasa en la iglesia ne Gto.

Estas son las fotos del servicio 9 de Marzo. fuimos 26 personas y despues tuvimos nuestro convivio (algunas personas todavia no vienen seguido a la iglesia) Hay una foto de una chica que se llama conchita y ella quiere bautizarse (estamos estudiando y ya se dio cuenta de lo que Dios quiere para ella) Por favor oren por ella y por mi)

Thanks so Much for all your Help.

God Bless,

Raciel, Ilse nad Annie



Fruit, even more beautiful! New Convert. Just baptized!



Homes/Businesses Become Homes for Churches of Christ

## Memories Made in Mexico

- June Franks -

On Thursday, February 21, 2008, Al and I along with Marlin and Nelma Ivey, Dewey and Martha Lawrence departed the Jackson-Evers International airport for the state of Guanajuato in Mexico.

The Kosciusko church and several interested individuals are heavily involved in mission work in this part of Mexico. Brethren Ivey and Lawrence are two of the four elders who serve the Kosciusko church.

The purpose of our trip was to visit the different mission churches and to see first hand how the work was progressing.

Wonderful memories were certainly made as we visited each of the cities where a congregation has been established. At the present time, four churches have been planted in the state of Guanajuato.

The highlight of our trip and, without any doubt, the most memorable, was being able to visit the churches in the different cities and to meet the preachers and their families. (Next Page)



Singing on Sunday at San Miguel -- 96 Present for Worship

## More About Mexican Missions

### Memories

(Continued from previous page)

On Sunday morning we worshipped with the church in San Miguel. Words simply cannot describe the feelings we experienced that Lord's day morning.

Our emotions ran high as we saw first hand the growth of the church and the sincerity with which the people worshipped. There were 96 people present for morning services. Six years ago there was no church of Christ in San Miguel, a city of about 80,000. **Fernando** and his wife, **Tony**, work with the church in San Miguel.



**Fernando, Preacher**

The church services were in Spanish; therefore, not being able to speak Spanish, we didn't understand very much. However, the singing and, especially the observance of the Lord's Supper, was very meaningful and memorable. One could not help but be touched and, with tears in our eyes and cold chill bumps on our body, we, along with our church family in San Miguel, partook of the Lord's Supper.

Just seeing the beautiful children was an experience we shall never forget. Churches have also been established in the cities of Dolores Hidalgo, Guanajuato and Comonfort. We were blessed with the opportunity to visit these cities also and to meet the preachers and their families.

**Martin** is filling the pulpit in Dolores while the regular preacher, **Jorge**, recovers from heart surgery. Martin plans to be married in December.

**Raciel** and **Ilse** work with the church in Guanajuato, a city of half a million. We truly enjoyed the day we spent with them and looking over the beautiful city.

On Sunday night we visited the church in Comonfort. It was also a very meaningful service as we listened to **Rene** preach and to

meet his wife, **Cleo** and family. Good memories were also made as we viewed the country and experienced the culture of that part of the world

We were privileged to visit other cities in view of the possibility of churches being planted in those cities in the near future.

A special thanks to the Iveys for inviting us to make this trip. We were blessed to spend a week in their home in San Miguel.

Marlin and Nelma were very gracious hosts and for this we are so appreciative.

We also enjoyed the time we were able to spend with Dewey and Martha Lawrence. They, also, helped to make our trip a very enjoyable and memorable one.

In addition to our visits with the churches, the preachers and their families in the different cities, we

were able to do some shopping, which was, as you might guess, a very memorable event within itself.

We were able to dine in several of the local restaurants and to enjoy and try different foods associated with their culture and the Mexican cuisine.

God has richly blessed the mission efforts in Mexico. We thank God for those who have worked hard and sacrificed to see these works move forward. **Additional financial support is greatly needed to further the cause of our Lord in Mexico.** When we consider the vast numbers of people in these cities and the response of those who have already obeyed the Gospel, it has proven to be a very worthwhile cause.

Please help in this work, if at all possible, and above all, pray God's blessings will continue to be with each one involved in spreading the Gospel in Mexico.

Thank God for our church family in Mexico. Al and I are grateful for the wonderful memories we made while on a visit to Mexico.

God willing, it is our hope and prayer that some day we may be able to return and, in some way, participate even more in Missions in Mexico. (Report by June Franks)



**Tony, Fernando's Wife**

Marlin and Nelma were very gracious hosts and for this we are so appreciative.

We also enjoyed the time we were able to spend with Dewey and Martha Lawrence. They, also, helped to make our trip a very enjoyable and memorable one.

In addition to our visits with the churches, the preachers and their families in the different cities, we



**Martin** is filling in at Dolores while their preacher recovers from heart surgery

**Luis** Navarrete served as an Intern at San Miguel



Mississippi Folks Enjoying Mexican Food June, Nelma, Marlin, Dewey, and Martha. Al was taking picture.



Ilse and Raciel Work in the City of Guanajuato

Mexican Missions reaches out to all, including the precious children



(From Left, back) Dewey Lawrence and Marlin Ivey Cleo and Rene Serve in Comonfort

### MARTHA (Continued from page 10)

the gospel of Christ. For \$25,000, or less, per year, a new congregation can be planted and a full time missionary be supported. This is a wonderful opportunity to become involved in World Evangelism. For more information, please contact the

Kosciusko Church of Christ at 820 South Huntington Street; Kosciusko, MS 39090. Call 662-289-3791 and speak to Miriam Dendy and/or Les Ferguson. (Martha, who wrote this report is the wife of Dewey Lawrence, one of the elders of the Kosciusko church.)



## MAGNOLIA MESSENGER

### Memorials & Tributes

The person whose name is in **CAPS** is memorialized or honored by the person(s) whose name is in lower case letters. Thank you. God bless! Please note that memorials and/or tributes given to Magnolia Bible College are handled separately. See page 9. (ALF, editor)

### In Memory Of

**BILLY & SUE COLE**  
**C. E. "BO" WILLIAMS**  
Barry Cole  
(Mathiston, MS)

**PAULINE FRANKS**  
Bob & Charlotte White  
(Harrison, TN)

**MARY KIDD**  
Linda (Duncan) Matheny  
(Somerville, TN)

**JIMMIE DEAN CONNER**  
Tony & Ginny Luther  
(Columbia, MS)

**BESSELL LENON**  
Reicy Sanders & Family  
(Brandon, MS)  
Rainy Stevens & Family  
(Kosciusko, MS)  
Jeff Dendy & Family

**BILL BRUMLEY**  
Hazel Cook  
(Columbus, MS)

**LEON WEBSTER**  
**FRANK DUKE**  
Randy & Millie Duke  
(Middleton, TN)

**J. C. CHOATE**  
**BILLY G. DAY**  
**GLADYS & "MUTT" KEMP**  
Betty & Leon Parker  
(Midnight, MS)

**HELEN DURHAM**  
Charles Aldridge  
(Magnolia, MS)

### In Honor Of

**JAN COREY**  
**TONY CARTER**  
Euna Carter  
(Bossier City, LA)

**GALA WEBSTER**  
**LUCY DUKE**  
Randy & Millie Duke  
(Middleton, TN)

**CECIL & WINNIE MAY**  
Linda (Duncan) Matheny  
(Somerville, TN)

Thanks for also remembering and honoring the Magnolia Messenger as you think about your loved ones and friends.  
(alf & mjf)

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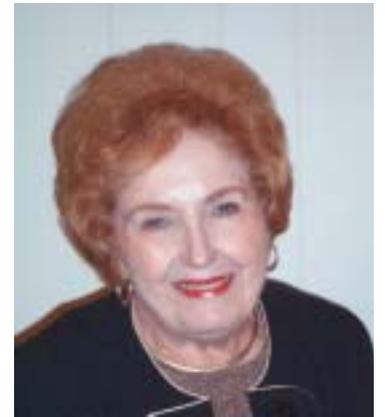
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## Kosciusko (Huntington St.) Church

**Established, 1934**

**Only One Left**  
**FRANCES MAE (BRYANT)**  
**THOMPSON**



Frances Thompson

So far as can be determined, the Kosciusko church of Christ had its beginning in 1934, when the **W. A. Bryant** family moved from Tennessee to central Mississippi. Finding no church, they started having worship services in their home each Lord's day. Before long; however, they were told about a congregation in the Nile community, a few miles south of Kosciusko, where they worshipped for a few months.

Learning about other members in the area (Rigby, Davis and Wallace), they decided to conduct a Gospel Meeting. Writing to the Gospel Advocate Publishing Company in Nashville, arrangements were made for A. J. Rollings to come and preach. During the two week meeting which was held in the County Court House, four were baptized and one restored (Davis and Champion). Locating other members (Nash, Meeks and Vickers), the little church met for a short time in the band hall. When colder weather arrived, the Davis family invited everyone to meet regularly for worship services in their home.

In 1935 the small church bought a building in need of repairs on Madison Street in Kosciusko for \$602.00. During the next two years, meetings were conducted by ministers C. B. Dendy, A. J. Rollings, and A. K. Gardner. Conversions included such names as Wall, Bell, Whorton, Newell, Mangrum and Rigby. In November, 1937, Paul Murphy moved to Kosciusko to work regularly with the church.

In December, 1937, the church selected their first elders and deacons. The elders were W. A. Bryant, George Wallace and T. A. Davis.

After a few years, the growing

church sold their small building for \$2,400.00 and purchased a lot at 411 Jackson Street where they constructed a block building. In January, 1949, they began meeting in it. Paul D. Murphy preached the "dedication sermon". Carlos Gunter became the new preacher and continued to serve until he resigned in 1954.

Preachers who served the church before 1956 included George Long, Howard Woolridge, Bill Rogers and J. R. Collins. Others who conducted meetings in those earlier days included Chester Estes, Robert Hawkins, Pervie Nichols, Will Slater, George Benson and Ross Dye.

Through the years, since 1956, many people have served the Lord as members of the Kosciusko church. A lot of changes have taken place, including the construction of new facilities on South Huntington Street (1969), the beginning of Magnolia Bible College (1976) and the "Magnolia Messenger" (1978). However, of those who were involved in the very beginning of the church, only one remains. She is Frances Mae (Bryant) Thompson who, by the way, just celebrated

**See Kosciusko on Page 16**



### Lake Charles, LA Church Honors Senior Saints

Guest Speaker for the Special Day in Lake Charles,

**M. B. Franks**

(front row; left to right) Vivian & Bill Slocum, Tola Morgan, Gerry Lambert, Evelyn Sigmund, Maggie Bohannon, Alice Cooper, Gloria Watson, Dell Griffin. (middle; left to right) Marilyn Estes, Grady Ward, Wanda Ward, Billie Cates, Vivian Duhig, Dot Carlile, Erlene Elkins, Baraba Gayle, Jean Smith, Otha Lee Hewitt, Henry LeBert, Jack Griffin. (back row; left to right) Louis Estes, Herman Cates, Joe Carlile, Vester Cooper, Edrice Thomas. (Pictures and spelling by Paul Franks, LC preacher)

(M. B. Franks to celebrate his 90th birthday in October, 2008, God willing.)



**R. J. Redd**  
recently celebrated his  
**90th Birthday!**  
"Happy Birthday",  
brother Redd.



Elder Redd  
And His Breakfast Biscuits

Last summer, we were blessed to conduct a meeting for the Johnson Grove church, near Brookhaven, MS. We are thankful especially for the kindness of one of the church elders, R. J. Redd, who truly went out of his way to make us feel "at home", parked in our motorhome on the church grounds.

We will never forget the delicious breakfasts he prepared for us and area preachers each morning. Brother R. J. is just one of many reasons we will long treasure the memories of our wonderful association with a very special country church, with her beautiful building and beautiful people. **Otis Bowman** enjoys the privilege of preaching full-time for the church. He will surely agree that the Johnson Grove church has a worthy representative in the 90 year old person of R. J. Redd. (editor)

**Roses in December**  
Why God Gave Us Memory  
How has God preserved memories for His children? Grab an up-close view of feasts, altars, stones, rods, and even food—all used by Jehovah to stamp His imprint on His offspring. Why should we be surprised when we echo God's sentiment. Remember Me?  
Take a fascinating walk down God's memory lane with Jane McWhorter.  
—Publishing Designs

**\$11.95**  
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A Book about Prayer  
How can prayer change your life? Bible men and women found strength in difficult times through gut-wrenching prayer. Becky reminds Christian women: "We are God's little girls." A book to inspire and motivate you to meet God at the Begging Place.  
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A Grandmother's Journey through Grief  
Lessons learned from a 3-year-old life snatched by lymphoma: how to cope, what to say, who to call, where to go, how to grieve. The reflections are touching, but uplifting. A grown-up, practical approach that begins with death, but ends with life and hope.  
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## Is Membership in Christ's Church Necessary?

Acts 2:41-47

Number 4; Series of 4

### Editor's Prayer:

"Father, help all who read to understand the identity and importance of the church of Jesus Christ. In His name. Amen."

**Note:** By special permission, we are pleased to publish an *edited version* [by ALF] of the fourth in a series of four sermons preached on nationwide television in 2006 by brother Mack Lyon of Edmond, Oklahoma. These studies were in response to a program which had been aired earlier on CNN-TV. All four lessons are available in booklet form by addressing:

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800-321-8633  
searchtv@aol.com

- Mack Lyon -

...No person or group or publication or university or *anyone else* can speak authoritatively for all churches of Christ. We are a closely-knit group of independent churches seeking to be like churches that you read about in your New Testament. But who are we today?

Some time ago, on the Nancy Grace segment of the CNN evening news program, a very unfortunate and inaccurate statement was made about churches of Christ. It was said that we are a young "cult like sect," having begun about 150 years ago by Alexander Campbell.

Since this program ("Search") is the most widely received such ministry of churches of Christ in America today, it was suggested by many that we explain who we really are and what we really do believe. And that is what we are doing...

We are reading from the second chapter of the book of Acts of the Apostles. And we are going to begin reading at verse 41. "Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles.

"Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need. So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved." I read through verse 47, the end of the chapter.



Mack Lyon

Let us go to God in prayer now. Almighty God, our heavenly Father, it is with grateful hearts that we come to You as we begin our study today, the study of your church. How grateful we are for it. Oh, that we may have a better understanding of what it is and our relationship with You and with other saved people who are in it. Grant it Lord, we pray in the name of our loving Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

In earlier lessons in this series we have studied about churches of Christ and whose church the saved really are. In the others then following, we considered the questions, who really did begin the church of Christ and when? And then, in our last study, we considered the Bible prophecies of a departure from the faith of the gospel, and we studied very briefly how it actually developed. To give it in detail would require a whole year of such programs as these.

**Let us go to God in prayer now. Almighty God, our heavenly Father, it is with grateful hearts that we come to You as we begin our study today, the study of your church. How grateful we are for it. Oh, that we may have a better understanding of what it is and our relationship with You and with other saved people who are in it. Grant it Lord, we pray in the name of our loving Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.**

We talked about the apostate church, the great reformation movement that swept Europe and the beginning of the denominations and all of that. And today, we will be considering an urgent need for returning to the original concept of the church as it is taught in the New Testament.

What we read in the New Testament is true Christianity, friend. In view of the departure described in First Timothy 4:1 and 2, not much of what is being marketed as Christianity today really is Christianity. I find no pleasure in saying that, but if you are a student of the Bible, you know it is true, too; don't you? You see no resemblance; do you?

We hold in admiration those men who devoted their lives to an effort to "reform" the apostate church with the intent of bringing it into conformity

with the New Testament teaching about the Lord's church. Some of them were so dedicated to the idea that they died for it! Yes! I mean just that! I mean some of them were literally killed, put to death, for teaching and preaching what they believed. And that is hard for people today to understand—and to believe.

You see, what supposes or assumes itself to be "Christianity" in our current environment, is strongly influenced by the worldly philosophy of "relativity of truth." It is considered pure dogmatism in most churches nowadays to speak of "absolute truth" about anything, even about what the Bible says.

But, in spite of their good intentions, they failed, these men, the reformists, failed in at least two respects. First, their "reformation" fell short in that they accepted without protest some of the major departures from New Testament teaching.

Three quick examples will be sufficient here: first, there is infant baptism; secondly, baptism by sprinkling; thirdly, mechanical instruments of music in the worship of God.

Secondly, in protesting major doctrines of the apostate church, they formed creeds of their own. For example: Martin Luther opposed "salvation by meritorious works" as practiced by the apostate church and established as doctrine, "salvation by faith alone." That distinguished his followers from everyone else who professed to be Christians. Does that make Luther and all Lutherans cult-like? No, no, not at all; a denomination, yes; but not a cult.

John Calvin conceived a system of unconditional election, particular redemption, total depravity, irresistible grace and the final perseverance of the saints. He believed all that and taught it so strongly that those who followed him, were (*well, still are*) known as "Calvinists." Did that make all of them a "cult?" Be careful now how you answer that question...

Those things you see, and others like them, gave birth to divisions or denominations, with their separate creeds, confessions of faith, and so on—and they fathered the "old line denominations" or divisions in their efforts.

By "old line denominations," I am saying the old ones—in contrast to the new ones that are springing up daily. You see, when the idea of denominationalism gained approval of the religious community, it became popular to be the founder of a new one. It became the smart thing to say, "We may disagree on how to be saved. If you feel like you are saved, we will accept you regardless of what God says in his word."

Read **NECESSARY** on page 14



### Where the Church of Christ Meets in Mendenhall, Mississippi

On March 13, in a conversation with **Ruby Dilmore**, we learned that the Mendenhall church where she and her husband, **Elvis**, are members, presently brings together about 15-20 each Lord's day and that they continue to benefit from the preaching of **Ronnie Greenhagen**. Brother Ronnie and his wife, Edith, live in the Jackson area and have, for the past four years, been coming to Mendenhall to preach each Sunday. When my June and I stopped by recently and made the above picture, it brought back memories when, about 30 years ago, our son, Paul, began preaching for the church while he was a student at MBC. We also were greatly encouraged by sister Gilmore's kind remarks about the MM. Thanks, Ruby!



**Sunnybrook**  
Children's Home

### (1) Position Announcement: Social Worker II

#### Employment Status: Full-time

**Brief Description:** Sunnybrook Children's Home is currently seeking a professional member of the church of Christ to serve the Lord through His children in our residential group home setting. The successful candidate will be eager to contribute to an atmosphere that stresses teamwork and working as a Christian for the welfare of the children. We stress spirituality, education, social skills and responsibility in a family-style environment. Our residential campus provides homes for school age boys and girls. Sunnybrook Children's Home is affiliated with the Churches of Christ.

#### Minimum Qualifications:

Must be a licensed MSW. LCSW certification would be helpful. If coming from out of state, must be willing and able to pass the Mississippi state licensing exam within the first six month(s) of employment.

#### Benefits Package:

Includes salary, insurance, 401K, vacation. Salary is commensurate to experience.

For more information contact

**Joe D. Hodges,**

Executive Director at 601.856.6555.

Resumes may be sent to

P.O. Box 4871, Jackson, MS 39296-4871

or e-mailed to [jhodges@sunnybrookchildrenshome.org](mailto:jhodges@sunnybrookchildrenshome.org)

### (2) Position Announcement:

#### Houseparent, Husband and Wife Team

#### Employment Status: Full-time

**Brief Description:** Sunnybrook Children's Home is currently seeking a Christian husband and wife team to share their love, care and Lord with His children in our residential group home setting in Ridgeland, MS. A successful candidate will be eager to contribute to an atmosphere that stresses teamwork and working as a Christian for the welfare of the children. We promote spirituality, education, social skills and responsibility in a family-style environment. Our residential campus provides homes for school age boys and girls in cottages that house up to ten children. In addition, Sunnybrook serves families and children through Foster Care and Adoption Services. Sunnybrook Children's Home is affiliated with the churches of Christ.

**Minimum Qualifications:** Sunnybrook is seeking husband and wife teams who are faithful Christians. Both must be at least 23 years old, have a high school diploma or GED, be U.S. citizens, and possess a valid driver's license.

**Benefits Package:** House parents work three weeks on duty, followed by one week off. Benefits package includes salary, insurance, housing, food while on duty, utilities, 401K, vacation, and wellness program.

**Contact:** For more information, visit our website at [www.sunnynch.net](http://www.sunnynch.net) or call (601) 856-6555.

**Sunnybrook Children's Home**

P.O. Box 4871; Jackson, MS 39296-4871

(601) 856-6555

## Churches Seeking Preachers

**Notice:** We are pleased to run ads for congregations seeking to find preachers to work with them. Please call or mail your request to: 662-289-3559 or 601-668-3344; "Magnolia Messenger"; P.O. Box 1578; Kosciusko, MS 39090. You may e-mail us by addressing: [franksmm@aol.com](mailto:franksmm@aol.com). We will plan to run each add **not more than two times** unless a specific request for extension is received from the congregation looking for a preacher. **Thank you for asking!**

**There is no charge for this service.**

### New Orleans, LA

(De Gaulle Dr)

The De Gaulle Drive church of Christ is seeking a gospel preacher to work with a congregation of 80-100 members. We are seeking a spiritually minded man who has the ability to interact with all ages, along with preaching and teaching duties.

Personal work and visitation are a must. The effect of Hurricane Katrina has decimated our community; there is much work to be done. Our congregation is very mission minded, supporting many works in many areas of the world. We also support television and radio ministries and the training of Gospel preachers.

At the present time, the congregation is served by three elders. Although our address is in New Orleans, we are located on the west bank of the Mississippi River and are a suburban community.

Compensation is negotiable in accordance with experience and ability. Other benefits such as paid vacation, Gospel Meetings and lectureships to be discussed.

Please send resumes to:

The Elders

DeGaulle Dr Church of Christ  
4700 General De Gaulle Drive  
New Orleans, LA 70131

or call

Wes Arabia - 504-858-2881

Bill Burchett - 504-392-4110

Howard Goodale - 504-319-3572

### Vicksburg

(I-20)

The Vicksburg church of Christ in Vicksburg, Mississippi is seeking a full-time minister to help edify the congregation and spread the gospel in our community. We are a congregation of approximately 190 members shepherded by four elders and served by four deacons and a youth minister.

We are seeking a scripturally sound minister who can work and communicate with both young and older people. House is provided. Please send resumes to the Vicksburg church of Christ, 3333 N Frontage Rd, Vicksburg, MS 39180 or email "vickcofc@cablelynx.com". Call 601-636-4801 for additional information.

### Enumclaw, WA

(Kibler Ave)

The Kibler Ave church of Christ in Enumclaw, WA is looking for a full or part time preacher. We are a congregation of 60-70 members located approximately 30 miles from Seattle at the basin of Mt. Rainier in a growing city of 11,000. We have two elders and are praying for a doctrinally sound man who has a heart for working with a loving family in sharing the joy and responsibility of serving the Lord. If interested, please call or write: **Holland Kellar** (206) 841-4183 or **Steve Hewitt** (253) 876-0100; [hljkkellar@comcast.net](mailto:hljkkellar@comcast.net); P.O. Box 163, Enumclaw, WA 98022.

### OCEAN SPRINGS, MS

The Ocean Springs Church of Christ, located on the Gulf Coast of Mississippi, is in search of a Pulpit Minister. We are a growing congregation with many young families with children and an active Youth Ministry program. We are a diverse group of many traditions and socio-economic backgrounds, but we unite under the banner of the Lordship of Jesus. We are planning to begin work with a new minister in August of 2008. Please address all resumes and correspondence to: The Elders, 1116 Washington Ave., Ocean Springs, MS, 39564, or email to [secretary\\_oscofc@yahoo.com](mailto:secretary_oscofc@yahoo.com). Our telephone number is 228-875-7811. (email underscore between y and o)

### Zachary, La.

Church of Christ; P.O. Box 97; Zachary, La. 70791  
Congregation of 90 - 95, located in the growing City of Zachary, LA, is seeking a Full Time Minister to work with us.

Attractive benefit package with home.

Contact **Terry Wall** at (225) 654-9724 e-mail address [livinwell50@yahoo.com](mailto:livinwell50@yahoo.com) or **Josh McCartney** at (225) 654-2245 e-mail address [joshuamccartney@cox.net](mailto:joshuamccartney@cox.net).

### Alexandria, LA

(Jackson St)

The elders at Jackson Street church of Christ in Alexandria, Louisiana are seeking an evangelist who is strong in the faith, knowledgeable of the word, communicates effectively, experienced in working with a multi-cultural congregation, various social-economical backgrounds, and a wide range of age groups.

The city is centrally located within the state and its population is approximately 50,000. Additional information can be found on the web at <http://www.cityofalexandrialala.com/home.asp>. The congregation is about 115 members with an average attendance of about 95.

Evangelists who are interested in the position should submit a resume' (references required, a minimum of 4) and an audio cassette tape, DVD, or video (individual preference). Information should be submitted to: **Jackson Street church of Christ, Attn: Evangelist Search, 1856 Jackson Street, Alexandria, LA 71301. Phone: 318-442-3785, Fax: 318-442-3047 E-mail: [jscoc@bellsouth.net](mailto:jscoc@bellsouth.net)**

**"Preach the Word!"**

### Minister Needed

- Eupora, MS -

The Eupora (MS) Church of Christ has an immediate opening for a minister. The congregation of 70 - 90 members is seeking a man to preach and teach the Word of God, lead in visitation and out-reach activities, and help with congregational communications. Experience preferred, but not required. Three bedroom house and vacation package provided. Send resume to Eupora Church of Christ, 2194 West Roane, Eupora, MS 39744. Contact Mart Salley (662-552-6278) or Paul Hunt (662-552-0206) for further information.

### El Dorado, AR Minister Needed

The Hillsboro Street Church of Christ in El Dorado, Arkansas is searching for a preaching minister. This 140-member church is served by four elders and nine deacons. The church has a part-time youth minister and a secretary.

Applicants are requested to send a resume accompanied by two audio or video lessons to: **Search Committee; Hillsboro Street Church of Christ; 1322 West Hillsboro Street; El Dorado, AR 71730.** Additional information may be gained from our web site [www.hillsborococ.org](http://www.hillsborococ.org) or by calling the church office (870) 863-4714. Email can be addressed to [joe.leal@yahoo.com](mailto:joe.leal@yahoo.com)

### NECESSARY

(Continued from page 13)

In the latter part of the 18th and early 19th centuries there were groups of people, found among the reformers, among the founders and the reformers of Europe, who recognized those failures and who rejected the idea of "reformation." They sought a "restoration" of the kind of Christianity they read about in their New Testaments.

In other words, they were saying, "Back to the Bible. Let's get back to the Bible." By that time the printing press had been invented, and ordinary people had access to the Bible. Well, they sought not to be a denomination of their choice, but to be "just Christians" with no separating labels— simply members of the church Jesus Christ said He would build.

Groups of them (congregations) were founded in Morrison's Court, Glasgow, Scotland in 1778; Leith Walk, Edinburgh, Scotland in 1798; in North Wales in 1779; Tubemore, Ireland in 1807; Manchester, England in 1810, and other places.

It should not be surprising to any of us, then, that with the discovery and

the development of the "New World," America, some of these people came to these shores and established churches here. James O'Kelley, a Methodist minister who favored congregational government and the Bible as the only rule of faith and practice, established a church of Christ in Mankintown, North Carolina in 1793.

Dr. Abner Jones, a physician from Hartland, Vermont, a Baptist who became dissatisfied with human names and creeds, established a church of 25 members at Lyndon, Vermont; one at Bradford and another at Piermont, New Hampshire in 1803.

Barton W. Stone, a Presbyterian preacher, but with reservations as far as the Westminster Confession of faith was concerned, worked largely in Kentucky.

Thomas Campbell and his son Alexander Campbell were former ministers in the Seceder Presbyterian church; they came to America (well, I am not saying both of them came in 1807, but along about that time). Thomas came first and Alexander followed later and they settled in Washington County Pennsylvania. Later they became Baptists. Through more Bible study, they became conscious of the necessity of baptism "for the remission of sins," as they were reading it in Acts chapter 2, verse 38, and in November 1843, they were forced to leave the Baptist church to preach New Testament Christianity.

Walter Scott, a Presbyterian, came to America in 1818; they realized the error of human standards in religion and infant baptism, and they renounced

them in order to be "just a Christian."

Now, this is but a brief mention of only a few of the people and their work in churches of Christ— many of them before the work of Thomas Campbell or Alexander Campbell. But, it is enough for any thinking person, and any student, to see that Alexander Campbell did not begin the church of Christ. How— or how much he was influenced by those who went before him, we may never know.

The point is: there were churches of Christ in existence in Europe and America, and only God knows where else, before the days and the work of Alexander Campbell. Multitudes— thousands of people were taught and inspired to be non-denominational Christians.

This "Restoration" idea of the 19th century has been acclaimed even by secular historians of America in history as "The Second Great Revival Period in American history." The idea

**Thank God, He hasn't given me the heavy responsibility of saying who is going to heaven and who is not. But, He has told me in His word, how to be saved, and if I preach, I am bound by His word and my conscience to tell you exactly what He says in His word about being saved. And, it is entirely between you and Him whether you do it or not.**

of being Christians and churches just like the ones we read about in the New Testament spread like some of the wild fires experienced in Oklahoma and Texas.

Alexander Campbell's work is appreciated by people who understand what it was and what he did. But he did not originate or found the church of Christ. Jesus Christ said, "I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18). In substance, He was saying, "Men may slay me, but they will not prevent me from building my church."

Yes, they did kill Him, but they didn't prevent His building His church. He built it upon the solid rock foundation expressed by the apostle Peter, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:17). The Bible says in I Corinthians 3:11, "No other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

I hear preachers saying, "I preach Christianity, not churchanity." Shame on them! It is impossible to teach the full story of Jesus Christ, and not teach about Him as the "tried Stone," the foundation stone, the builder of His church (Isaiah 28:16). Soooo, for all... wherever you may be or whoever you may be, who comes up with the question, "Do members of churches of Christ believe you have to be a member of their church to go to heaven?"

Let me say this. Whoever you are, please hear me; hear me out now, will you, please? Saved people— I am talking about people the Lord saved, He added to His church. I mean people who really are going to heaven in the life to come, aren't given the choice of being—or not being—members of His

Read NECESSARY on page 16

## Natchez Church Benefits From "The Roots"

On Sunday morning, March 16, 2008, my June and I were blessed to visit our brethren of the Covington Road church in Natchez, Mississippi. We were encouraged to be in the company of brothers and sisters who continue to show their love for the Lord and for one another. It was a privilege for us to join with them in worshipping our Gracious God in "spirit and truth."

We were also delighted to be in the presence of delightful couple, Dick and JoAna Root, and to hear his powerful sermon on "Hearing." His practical lesson, based on Matthew 13, was well presented. and very practical.

The Roots live in McComb, MS where they have served effectively in the Lord's church for more than two decades. He served several years as the full-time preacher for the McComb church. Presently, he preaches each Lord's day (including twice monthly at Natchez), and also works as a funeral director and hospital chaplain. For the past few months, Dick and JoAna have been a great help to the struggling church in Natchez. Brother Root has been and is now, (as many say) "Just what the Natchez church needed." May God richly bless our brethren in Natchez as they continue to benefit from the part-time service of the Roots. (editor)



**Dick and JoAna Root Assist Covington Road Church**

**Dick Root:** Funeral Director; Hospital Chaplain; Counsellor  
**ALSO: A Very Talented and Dedicated Gospel Preacher**

## Room for free Divider

The Huntsville church, near French Camp, Mississippi, has a fourteen foot collapsible room divider that they would be willing to give to a church that has a such a need. Please contact **Jim Wright** of the Huntsville congregation for more information. Telephone 662-258-2344 or **Howard Jennings** at 662-262-7259.

## PONTOTOC People & Prayer

Appreciate all the church bulletins received here at the MM office. One such bulletin crossing my desk this morning was "The Pontotoc Proclaimer". Couldn't help but notice the importance given to people on page one -- especially those requesting prayer. Sixty-five (65) names are listed under "Prayer Requests." Another 17 are named as either "Shut-ins" or others to be remembered in prayer. A lot of names for a church that brings together about 100 each Lord's day. We are grateful for the emphasizes given to **people** and to **prayer**. Prayer is *powerful* and people are *precious*. And, so is the preacher for the Church **Street** Church whose name just happens to be *Street* -- **Jay Street**.

## Blessings From God

As the sun rises each new day,  
I always find time to pray.

Blessings flowing from God above,  
As He unfolds His amazing Love.

I never have to walk alone,  
I never fear the unknown.

He is always near,  
And always willing to hear.

The years are passing in haste,  
There is no time to waste.

Hoping for things unseen to come,  
Giving all praises to "The Holy One".

**Eileen Ferreebe**

1161 Nebo Road

Gloster, MS. 39638

(Member of Perrytown Church of Christ)

## Ava J. Burns Member at Huntsville Died at Age 102



**EDITOR'S NOTE:** This report was available to us when we published our Jan/Feb, 08 issue of the MM; however, it was regrettably overlooked as we prepared the last issue. Sorry for the delay. (alf)

Ava J. Burns died September 28, 2007, at the age of 102 at Winona Manor, Winona, Mississippi. She was born in Choctaw County, Mississippi, and grew up in the Huntsville Community in central Mississippi. She was a life long member of Huntsville Church of Christ, where she taught Sunday School for many years.

Ava was the sixth of eight children born to William Henry Harrison Jeffcoat and Alice Faye Walker Jeffcoat, and was the last surviving member of her birth family. Before marriage, Ava was employed with the Works Progress Administration and was a lunch room worker at Huntsville School and Nations School.

Mrs. Ava Burns was the wife of the late William Grady Burns, a dairy farmer in the Nations Community. In

addition to her husband, she was predeceased by her youngest son, Grady Warren Burns; and by her great-grand-daughter, Rebecca Denise Ball. She is survived by her son and daughter-in-law, Thomas and Katie B. Burns of Kilmichael, Mississippi, daughter-in-law, Sue B. Burns of Jackson, Mississippi; granddaughters, Tina B. Murrell (husband Steve) of Gonzales, Louisiana; Karen B. Ball (husband Matthew) of Laceys Spring, Alabama; and Suzanne B. Stubbs (husband Timothy) of Brandon, Mississippi; three great-grandsons, Eric Murrell, Kevin Murrell and Stanton Murrell. She is also survived by many nieces and nephews.

Her funeral was conducted by Oliver Funeral Home of Winona, Mississippi on Monday, October 1, 2007, at the Huntsville Church of Christ in Montgomery County and was laid to rest in the Huntsville Cemetery, which was started by her parents as a family cemetery. She was buried beside her husband. Minister Mark Dillman of the Winona Church of Christ officiated the services.

## A "Drop In Visit" At Pineville, LA

My June and I were blessed to drop by on Sunday afternoon, March 16, 2008, for a visit with the friendly Pineville Church of Christ in central Louisiana.

We arrived about 45 minutes before the scheduled service time of 5:00 P.M. and noticed several cars on the parking lot. Later we learned that the elders had come together for a special meeting that Sunday afternoon.

At fifteen minutes before services we entered the beautiful church building and were immediately greeted by some very friendly folks. We were encouraged greatly by those saying they knew who we were and they received the MM.

In the church bulletin, we noticed a welcome statement to visitors. It said, "We are so thankful to have you with us today. We are finding that many people want to be a part of a church that is sound in Biblical teaching. As our guest today we want you to know that we are truly excited to have you in our midst. As a body of believers we strive to be obedient to Jesus and His word. If this is

the first time you have ever visited us, we hope that you will find in us a place where you feel welcome and loved!"

We were privileged to meet three of the four church elders (one was not present due to illness). One was so kind as to ask if I would like to meet with the elders after services. I responded, "Maybe some other time."

The church which brings together about 70 or 80 souls is presently benefiting from the work and preaching of **Josh Lifford**, has been with them about three months. His sermon for the evening was based upon I John 2:1-17 and was entitled, "To Love or Not To Love -- That is the Question." An elder had already informed me that "Josh always brings good, solid lessons." The sermon we heard was no exception. It was well presented -- spoken in sincerity and love.

Yes. Another pleasant visit. This time at Pineville, near Alexandria, in my home state of Louisiana. We were blessed and we are thankful. God is good!

(alf-editor of MM)



Preacher Josh Lifford

## Cruise WITH Christians



## Atlantic, Canada & Quebec Cruise (Including Nova Scotia) October 9-18, 2008

Nine (9) Nights (Starts on Thursday; Ends on Saturday)

- **Royal Caribbean** - "Explorer of the Seas"

**Departure Port:** Cape Liberty Cruise Port, New Jersey (Across the river from New York City)

**Ports of Call:** Cape Liberty Cruise Port, New Jersey; Sydney, Nova Scotia; Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island; Saguenay River, Quebec; Quebec City, Quebec; Halifax, Nova Scotia; Cape Liberty Cruise Port, New Jersey

**Cost:** The total cost for the cruise for one person including all taxes, port charges and **fuel surcharges** is **\$961.27**. *Inside cabin, double occupancy* This will cover shipboard accommodations, ocean transportation, all food and entertainment on the ship. (Ocean view, Balcony, Deluxe & Suite cabins are also available at extra charges.)

The only other expenses that you will have will be getting to/from the departure port. (Airfare should cost around \$300 to \$400 per person). Your gratuities will cost around \$100 per person.

You will need to send a **deposit of \$500 by April 9, 2008** to reserve a cabin. Your deposit is *refundable* up to the **final payment** date which is **July 24**. If you are reading this after April 9th, please call Paul. **It may not be too late!**

We want **YOU** to go with us!

**Planned Tour Hosts: Al & June Franks and Paul & Glenda Franks** are to be your hosts on this spectacular journey. You can contact **Paul at 337-515-7314**. Our plans are to have dinner together each night and to conduct worship services on the Lord's Day in a private meeting room. There will be other opportunities to do things together. You are invited and are welcome to go.

**Contact:** Don West of **West Travel Service** in Jackson, Mississippi is handling this trip for us again. Contact: **westtv1@bellsouth.net**; Phone: **601-957-1660**; **West Travel Service, 800 Colonial Circle, Jackson, MS 39211-3314** or **paulfranks@bellsouth.net**

## NECESSARY

*(Continued from page 14)*

church." That is what the church is, friend— saved people!

... The Lord adds to the church daily those who are being saved. And we read it awhile ago from Acts 2:47. He—and He alone— does the saving (Acts 4:12); therefore He knows who is saved. And no vote of a denomination, no conference or convention, has anything to do with it...

Occasionally I hear or read of people talking or writing about being members of "one of the Stone-Campbell churches." My friend, I am not. When Jesus saved me, I

mean, that day— He inscribed my name in His "book of life" in heaven (Philippians 4:3). It was Jesus Christ Himself who added me to His church (Acts 2:47).

And, you know what? It was at least a whole decade, ten years or more, later that I first heard the name of Alexander Campbell. Yes, it was! And I believe Jesus has done for every saved person since the day of Pentecost following the resurrection of Jesus Christ, just what He did for me! And that is enough for me!

Thank God, I don't have to answer your question about who is going to be saved in heaven and who is not, because I believe the Lord knows every person He has ever saved—and He has added them all to His church. To put it another way, I am saved by His blood! I am a member of His church! And I am not ashamed of either of them.

## CONCLUSION

Thank God, He hasn't given me the heavy responsibility of saying who is going to heaven and who is not. But, He has told me in His word, how to be saved, and if I preach, I am bound by His word and my conscience to tell you exactly what He says in His word about being saved. And, it is entirely between you and Him whether you do it or not.

Jesus is presented to us in both Old Testament prophecy and New Testament reality as the Savior of the world (Acts 4:42). Jesus Himself, after He had proved Himself to be the Son of God by His resurrection from the dead, said "All authority is given to me in heaven and on earth... Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved." That is from Matthew's and Mark's recording of the same incident in Matthew 28:18 and Mark 16:15-16.

Luke's account of that event is a bit different. He quoted Jesus as saying, "...that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24:46). And when the apostle Peter preached the very first sermon

under that commission, he told the people who believed his message to "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit... Then those who gladly received his word were baptized, and that day about three thousand souls were added to them... And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved" (Acts 2:38, 41, 47).

And that is what I am telling you, my friend. I hope you will be among those who gladly receive the gospel message of salvation in Christ, and permit Him to add you to His church. Will you? Oh, I hope you will. I must tell you, and the decision— whether you do it, or not do it, is between you and the Lord. Many people who confess Jesus as Lord have refused to do so, and believe they are going to heaven.

But, just remember, it was Jesus who said, "Why do you call Me Lord, Lord, and not do the things which I say" (Luke 6:46). Well, it has been a pleasure to have you with us today. We are in Search of the Lord's Way. I pray we have had His message for you today....**See address at the beginning of this article on page 13**

## Nobody's Friend

Howard Pyle

You may think I'm very weak,  
That what I say, you can repeat.  
Never mind from whence it came,  
It sounded truthful just the same,

A friend I know must hear it too,  
Coming from me, it must be true.  
I have a name -- a common face,  
So you may find me any place,

To track me down is useless,  
No matter how hard you try;  
The more I am repeated,  
The less, I seem to lie,

Don't judge me by how I look,  
I may even say "Its in the Book",  
I can break a marriage or ruin a life,  
And have no regrets for causing strife.

I can be dangerous, as you see,  
Yes, I do have a name,  
You may call me, "Gossip".

## BOONEVILLE

Several from the Booneville Church of Christ went on an evangelistic mission trip to Lumberton, Mississippi. They reported in a recent church bulletin that two were baptized and that 30 home Bible studies had been set up.

## Publican

*(Continued from page 8)*

**Moss, Daniel, Holcomb, Fike, Allen, Tomlinson, Corkern, Barkley and Largent** are all mentioned as positive influences within his life.

Choices had to be made when Norman had exhausted his IRS career opportunities within Mississippi. Subtle pressure was applied by IRS Management for Norman to move to Atlanta and continue to compete for promotions. However, Norman would resolve to take the IRS manager's job in Greenville, MS and settle down rather than compete for further promotions in other places.

He opted, though, to live in Greenwood and make the 110 mile daily commute. He did this basically for 23 years. A decision he says that he never regretted due to the love, friendship and experiences found within the family of the West President Street Church family. Names such as **Northern, Pigg, Callens, Reaves, Cleveland, Tierce, Daves, Taylor, Floyd, Franklin, Bruner, Draper and Bayes** continued during this time to ready Norman for a task that was coming up within his life, but had not yet been made known.

Having settled in his mind that his upward mobility within the IRS was over, Norman set about doing the best job he could in the place he wanted to do it. However, several years later, a career opportunity became available which had never been possible in the past within the whole state of Mississippi, much less within the Delta area. Norman competed for this job vacancy and was selected for this higher and more responsible managerial position. This promotion offset much of the financial loss that had occurred by him not making the earlier move to Atlanta. A caveat to that story is that after Norman's retirement, this position was abolished and never again will be returned to Mississippi. Are you beginning to believe in the providence of God?

Understanding the nature and the internal policies and practices of the IRS, Norman truly believes that his continued advancement within the IRS in Mississippi, rather than having to move out of state, was the providence of God at work within his life. If the job opportunities in Atlanta and elsewhere had been pursued, who knows where life would have taken them. Norman believes he was in the right place, at the right time, for the Rolling Fork preacher's vacancy.

Having preached on several occasions, Norman had discussed with Joyce and they had prayed together, over the years, that upon their retirement, the finding of a small congregation somewhere in which they could assist in the work. Who in the world would have thought it would be right back in their home town of Rolling Fork, the very first place where Norman had been introduced to the church of Christ 40 years earlier?

So, three days after receiving some encouragement from Chuck Henderson to come and help, Norman became the preacher for the Church of Christ in Rolling Fork. The next Sunday, Eugene Springer preached his last sermon in Rolling Fork and, then, the next Sunday Norman preached his first sermon as the new preacher. Thus, a preacher was hired before the other preacher left and a seamless transition occurred. The Rolling Fork congregation also believes in the providence of God and

**Having preached on several occasions, Norman had discussed with Joyce and they had prayed together, over the years, that upon their retirement, the finding of a small congregation somewhere in which they could assist in the work.**

quickly gives thanks to Him for allowing this to come together as it has.

Norman had served as a Deacon for the Belvedere Congregation and West President congregation for over 12 years and then as Elder for the West President congregation for over 10 years. Norman says his individual study, having served as a Bible School teacher for every age group and having served as a Missions Director, Education Director, Deacon, Elder and now, struggling author, have all greatly assisted him in becoming ready to preach the gospel. Norman has an extensive library which houses several antique Bibles. He also, over the years, has accumulated 4 filing cabinets full of religious articles filed alphabetically by subject.

Norman and Joyce sold their home in Greenwood (quite quickly, by the way, in a slow real estate market) and have now moved into the preacher's house in Rolling Fork. Joyce is the one now making a daily 176 mile commute back to Greenwood to work as a secretary for Bankston Elementary School until she retires next year. Norman, on the other hand, now walks 20 steps across the parking lot to his office within the church building. Both say Rolling Fork is home and that they believe that this is where their area of service will be for as long as the family in Rolling Fork will have them.

Average weekly attendance over the last 2 months has been 24 with contribution averaging over \$1,100. Norman has been especially happy to have had several members of his family who live in the area to have attended and visited since he has been there. A weekly newspaper ad provides a gospel message to the community, a monthly "game night" provides fellowship, a monthly Ladies' night out provides the ladies with their special time, a card ministry provides encouragement to all and a renewed sense of urgency to spread the gospel seems to be enjoyed within the members.

Practically the whole congregation joined the I-20 Congregation in Vicksburg for their New Year's Eve fellowship and singing. Updates are being made to the building and a ladies' day is in the planning stages. Letters have been sent and visits are being

made to those members who need to rededicate their lives to the Lord. Norman states that he also wants to chaperone the older members for day trips to areas of local interest. The church has a beautiful and informative web site that assists in getting information out to others. The atmosphere is filled with excitement as a determined effort is being made to reach out to family and friends.

As has been mentioned, Norman and Joyce have 2 children; Tabitha and Derrick. Tabitha lives in Seattle, WA with her husband Dr. Chad Farley from Merritt Island, Florida. They have two children; Stewart and Kirsten. Derrick is the Associate Minister for the Amory

Church of Christ in Amory, MS. He and his wife, the former Leslie Walker of Senatobia, have two children, Walker and Braden. Norman and Joyce say they are very fortunate in that both of their children married Christians and that they are very proud of each member of those within their family.

A task that Norman says is very high on his agenda, now that he is getting settled into the work in Rolling Fork, is the completion of his book *My Quest for the Way* which was put on the back burner after he accepted the preaching job in Rolling Fork.

Norman concludes by saying "I am very grateful to the Rolling Fork church for this opportunity to preach and I am mighty proud to be following in the footsteps of my son, Derrick, as a gospel preacher." The Rolling Fork congregation believes that they are truly blessed to have "the old publican turned preacher" working with them.

For additional information regarding the Rolling Fork Church of Christ, you are invited to visit their website at [www.rollingforkchurchofchrist.com](http://www.rollingforkchurchofchrist.com) or you may send an e-mail to Norman and Joyce at [Nmaranto@bellsouth.net](mailto:Nmaranto@bellsouth.net).

*(This article submitted by Terri Harden, a member of the Rolling Fork church.)*

## Gospel Meeting

*with evangelist*

## Waymon Swain

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## Kosciusko

*(Cont. from page 12)*

her 80th birthday on March 30th. We are thankful she is still here. And, we give thanks for all those who had a part in the beginning of the Kosciusko church of Christ.

*(Information on which this report is based was supplied by Frances Thompson. Thanks, sister Frances. Alf/editor)*

## From the Pen of Phillip the Prisoner

Over the past several years we have received many letters from Phillip Carter, a Christian prisoner at Parchman, Mississippi. Several of his letters we have been privileged to publish in the MM.

Recently, three letters from the pen of Phillip have come to our attention. One was written on January 5, 2008. With understandable excitement and apprehension, the long time inmate at Parchman wrote about his upcoming release from prison.

He said, "I will be released from prison here on July 22, 2008. I have been fantasizing about this moment and the emotion that will come with it for months now."

Phillip continued, "Although, the past is irrevocable, there can be a new day before us, filled with new chances, now opportunities and new expectations. God will not undo the past, but when we repent He can and will forgive us and set us on a new path."

The prisoner asked in his letter, "I invite you to join me in prayer that God will give me a place to begin again -- to love, to serve, to touch others profoundly and eternally for His sake. My passion remains to

demonstrate the greatness of our Heavenly Father's forgiving love to us with my actions and life...."

We are excited about Phillip's anticipated release and return to freedom. I ask that you join with us in asking God's blessings to be with him as he makes the transition. His address:

Phillip M. Carter, #04491  
MSP, Unit 28 (B-zone; Bed 64)  
Parchman, MS 38738

### LA Prison Work Flourishes

Recently, while eating lunch in a Natchez restaurant, we were blessed to visit briefly with **Coleman Allmond**, preacher for the 61 South congregation. He spoke excitedly as he told about the continued progress of the prison ministry in Louisiana (Angola). I understood brother Allmond to say that, over the past several years, **nearly 1,000** inmates had been baptized into Christ.

Sounds exciting. We plan to have an expanded report on the prison work in Louisiana involving evangelist **Richard L. Felix** who is recognized as a representative of churches of Christ at the Louisiana State Penitentiary.

**Thank You**  
Receiving & Reading  
Magnolia Messenger

### Another Saint Departs - Eupora -

Even during the three years she spent in the nursing home, she continued to make quilts for others...

**Lou Della Gladney** passed from this life at the age of 91 on February 1, 2008. She was a faithful member of the Eupora, Mississippi Church of Christ. Even during the three years she spent in the nursing home, she continued to make quilts for others and to encourage other residents, as well as the workers and nurses.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Paul Gladney, Sr. She is survived by four children: Paul, Tommy and his wife Donna, Carol Anne Reel and her husband Don, and Debbie Dollahite and her husband Buddy. She had five grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. (Above was sent to the MM by a loving daughter, Carol Reel. Thanks and may God bless you and your family. Carol Reel's address is: 324 Walnut Street; Tiptonville, TN 38079)

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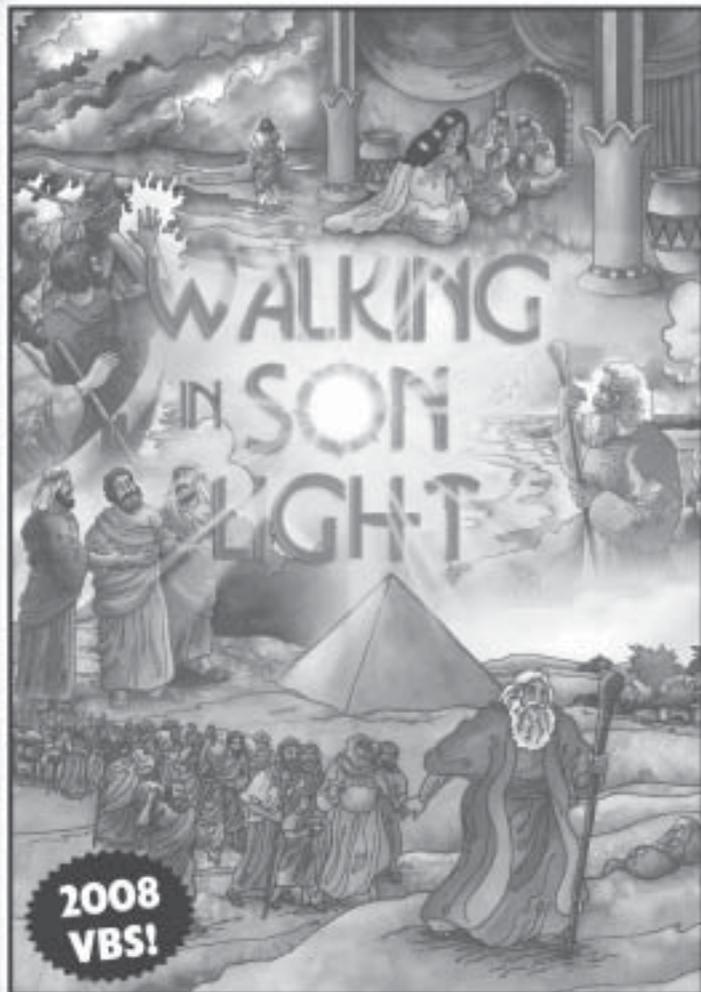
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## What Can I Do?

### Simple Steps to Help Your Home Congregation

1. Participate in its assemblies at every possible opportunity.
2. Live an upright, caring, and holy life in the community.
3. Teach God's word, directly if you can, or at least indirectly by upholding the hands of those who do teach.
4. Take a genuine interest in the works the church undertakes -- here and abroad.
5. Study to keep yourself in tune with God and informed concerning sound doctrine.
6. Show genuine concern for fellow members and be cooperative in spirit.
7. Support to local effort financially and physically as much as possible.
8. Have the well-being and effectiveness of the congregation as a constant concern.
9. Pray regularly for the church and its efforts.

(From the pen of **Ardron Hinton**;  
P. O. Box 276; Roosevelt, OK 73564)



**2008  
VBS!**

## WALKING IN SON LIGHT

This summer, walk in Son Light with Abraham, Moses, Esther, Peter, and Paul. God gave them very special missions, and each walked by faith toward a prize that blessed many. By their walks, they became champions and great examples for us, as we follow them into the glorious light of God's Son, Jesus Christ. Coming January, 2008.

### 5 Great Walks

**Abraham: Put God First** (Genesis 12:1-3, 18:1-19)

**Moses: Take His Word to Heart** (Exodus 3:1-22, 4:1-17)

**Esther: Save Your Friends** (Esther 4:10-17, Esther 5:1-3)

**Peter: Keep the Son in Your Eyes** (Matthew 14:25-33)

**Paul: Be Chosen Vessels** (Acts 9:3-18)

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541. Danny Stacks
542. Vera Winfrey
543. Mary Adams Warren
544. Jeannie Jewell
545. Alice Humphries
546. Kevin Clements
547. Gina Sellier
548. Nelda Newkirk
549. Terry Newkirk
550. Mrs. Walter Hill, Jr.
551. George W. Greathouse
552. Vickie Comer
553. Grace Whitley
554. Dorothy Whitten
555. Daphne Stephens
556. Carson Cooley
557. Wayne Crum
558. Betty Clark
559. Doralynn Felton
560. Jasmine Sly
561. James Williams
562. Corissa Quarles
563. Aalijah Quarles
564. Tamara Sly
565. Ruby S. Miller
566. Wanda L. Griffin
567. Levi Redd
568. Doris Carroll
569. Harvey Bain
570. Lisa Dearman
571. Bronwen Pollard
572. Paul Gaunt
573. Billie J. McCurdy
574. LaVonnie J. Catron
575. Joyce Sullivan
576. Imogene Kirk
577. Sheri Glazier
578. Lenola Balentine
579. Pansy D. Milan
580. Doris Laird
581. Akyra D. McNairy
582. Dennis McNairy
583. Paige Wiggs
584. Sommer Burnett
585. Diamond Mancrief
586. Courtney Woods
587. Daniel Mastin
588. Linda Crochet
589. Helen Franks
590. Keitha Hare
591. Missy Blackmon
592. Johnnye Blackmon
593. Earl Franks
594. Lucy Franks
595. Vernie Cornes
596. Wes & Rhoda Jeans
597. Stephanie Slaydon
598. Dorothy Franks
599. Louise Holcomb
600. Vernon Curry
601. Phillip Smith
602. Patricia D. McClure
603. Cade Walsh
604. Jossie Hearn
605. Ms. Emma Jean Stowe
606. Rachal Hughes
607. Ina Sadler
608. Peggy Jackson
609. Becky Thompson
610. Mathew & Joyce Hooker
611. Nannette Wicks
612. Bea Basford
613. Clarence E. Lanford
614. Bonnie Howell
615. Beulah Rupert
616. Aslaeen Dean
617. Idna Eddington
618. M/M Veries C. Metz
619. Martha Lundy
620. Hattie Johnson
621. Freida Sanders
622. Robin L. Thompson
623. YOUR NAME, NEXT TIME!

All answers received before March 28, 2008, have been included. Thanks to each person who reads the MM and answers "The Question Box". (see page 20)

**The MM  
Requests  
Your Prayers  
and  
Your Suggestions**

# ... From A Woman's Viewpoint ...

## REMEMBERING Bessell and "Gigi"

Bessell (Peeler) Lenon and Virginia "Gigi" (Davis) Stanley were, for many, many years, members of the church of Christ in Kosciusko, Mississippi. Both of their families, the Peelers and the Davises were very active in the early days of the Kosciusko church.

We first met sister Bessell and "Gigi" when we moved from Yazoo City, Mississippi to Kosciusko in July, 1971. They both made a lasting impression on our lives for good.

Sister Bessell taught Sunday School at the Kosciusko church for a long time. Even to this day, her Bible class students still speak of her as a caring and capable teacher. She was well known in Kosciusko as a wonderful Bible School teacher.

Sister Bessell was also known for her dedication in sending cards. She could write the sweetest notes and would send cards to any one who had a special need or, sometimes, just to offer to a word of encouragement.

Those who worked with sister Bessell said that she was tops in her secretarial work for the Jackson Production Association. She retired as the senior loan clerk.

At the time of her death, sister



Bessell Lenon and Virginia "Gigi" Stanley

Bessell was living in a nursing home in Jackson where she passed from this life on February 6, 2008 at the age of 89. She leaves behind wonderful memories in the hearts of those who knew her best.

Virginia Stanley was known as "Gigi" to everyone. Gigi was the first person to introduce me to a special way of using the word "happy." She spoke of giving a small gift to another person as "giving a happy." Gigi was always doing something

for someone and was known as a frequent giver of "happys".

"Gigi" was also well known for her hospitality. She would gladly invite you into her home for a meal. We have eaten many meals with Gigi and her family. She was truly a great cook. I will always remember the homemade tamales she would serve to us and the trouble it took to make them.

You never visited in her home that she didn't offer you something to eat. It seemed she was always prepared with something good to eat. Maybe more of us need to follow Gigi's example in showing hospitality. Not just "maybe"; we really ought to imitate her hospitality!

"Gigi" was also thoughtful in sending cards. She continued to do this as long as she was able. Gigi was a woman who believed you should attend all services of the church and this

Gwendolyn Wilson of Laurel, Mississippi recently wrote to us. She said, "Thank you for the inspiring and educational newspaper. Here is a sheet that has words that I find impressive. I hope you have room in a future paper to share with the readers."

### Five Things God Has Never Seen

1. A **prayer** He couldn't answer.
2. A **life** He couldn't change.
3. A **way** He couldn't make.
4. A **need** He couldn't supply.
5. A **problem** He couldn't solve.

she did even when she didn't appear to be able to do so. Her daughter and son-in-law, **Mary and Bob McCafferty**, were faithful to assist her, enabling her to attend church services.

For many years Gigi worked at City Drug Store in downtown Kosciusko. She would always greet you with a smile and offer her capable assistance when you entered the shop.

Gigi passed from this life on May 19, 2007 at the age of 86.

Both sisters Bessell and Gigi blessed our lives in many ways, and the lives of countless others. We are very thankful we had the opportunity of knowing them. I can say, along with our other brothers and sisters in the South Huntington Street church family, that we really do miss them very much. (June Franks)

### Thank you for reading the MM!

#### BRANSON, Missouri Vacation in the Beautiful Ozark Mountains

**2 Condominiums Available**  
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Each: Full kitchen & Den  
Each: Sleeps Six

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Per week (7 nights) -- 600.00

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in Yazoo City, Mississippi

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662-746-5865

### Ladies' Day

**North Brandon  
Church of Christ**  
1029 Highway 471, North  
Brandon, Mississippi  
601-825-6497

Saturday, May 3, 2008

Speaker:

**Jane McWhorter**

(Fayette, AL)

Topic

"Dealing with Difficult Emotions"

9:00 A.M. - Registration Begins  
Lunch at 11:45

**All Ladies Invited**

(ad sent to MM by Melba Penna)



June Franks

## Recent Bible Winner



Lisa Dearman

Lisa is a member of the Morton church of Christ where **Cole Baird** serves as preacher. Several years ago, Lisa's son, Jesse, was our Bible winner. Guess it sorta "runs in the family." **Congratulations!**

## Poems By Barbara

Barbara Cagle Ray  
BCagleRay@Aol.Com



### Welcome, Spring!

God washed the world during the night  
And made it fresh and clean again.  
The rain gushed forth torrential tunes  
And brought the winter to an end.

Hear the sound of singing streams;  
Wisteria is clinging to the vine.  
It hangs in veils of pearly blooms  
To usher in a new springtime.

See the hawthorns white with spring,  
The robin as it hops along.  
Each tree is filled with leaves of green  
And eggshells with potential song!

Hear the soft breeze as it whispers  
Of the perfumed beauty it shall bring.  
See neighbors peeping out their doors  
To sweetly smile and welcome spring!



A Beautiful Combination  
Spring Flowers & Place of Assembly for Christians

### Weep With Those Who Weep

Romans 12:15

A young girl was late coming home from school,  
And her mother was frantic when she arrived.  
She hugged her close, saw that she was unharmed,  
Then scolded, "Why were you not home by five?"

"I was at John's house", the young girl replied.  
His little doggie, Spot, was run over by a van."  
"Oh, how awful," the mother replied in haste—  
"Let me get my keys, we'll help if we can."

"It's too late now, Mama, little Spot died."  
The young girl cried and held her mother tight.  
"John saw it happen as he got off the bus,  
I stayed to make sure that he was all right."

"Was John's mother at home when he arrived?"  
"Yes, Mama," was the trembling child's reply.  
"Then why did you feel you had to stay so long?"  
"Mama, I stayed just to help him cry."

**NOTE: You may find it helpful to use the King James Version.**

## The Question Box

*Is your name found on page 18? Thank you for answering the "QB"*

### Cases of Conversion -- Acts --

Vital questions are asked in the book of Acts. Consider these three. (a) "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37). (b) "What shall I do, Lord?" (22:10). (c) "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" (16:30).

These great questions are also answered by faithful men of God who responded with divinely-given answers. A study of several of the "cases of conversion", recorded in the book of Acts, is our subject for this month's "QB".

Please take a few minutes and prayerfully review the writings of the inspired physician, Luke, as he re-

counted some of the conversion accounts in the first century church of Jesus Christ. By learning what early believers did to be saved, you learn what present day believers need to do to be saved.

Upon completion of this quiz, send your answers to us. Not only will your name will be published in the next issue of the MM (see page 18), you will be encouraging others to study the scriptures. In addition, you just *may* be our next Bible winner (see page 19). Thank you for studying God's word and for answering "The Question Box". (alf, editor)

#### PART I: Which chapter in Acts details each conversion?

(Match the convert(s) in column one with the chapter in column two.)

- |                |                    |
|----------------|--------------------|
| 1. Saul        | ___ Chapter 2      |
| 2. Jailor      | ___ Chapter 8      |
| 3. 3,000       | ___ Chapter 8      |
| 4. Eunuch      | ___ Chapters 9, 22 |
| 5. Samaritans  | ___ Chapters 10,11 |
| 6. Corinthians | ___ Chapter 16     |
| 7. Lydia       | ___ Chapter 16     |
| 8. Cornelius   | ___ Chapter 18     |

#### PART II: About whom was it said?

(Fill in each blank with one of the "cases of conversion".)

**See list of conversions and chapters in Part I**

1. "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized." \_\_\_\_\_
2. "... many of the \_\_\_\_\_ hearing believed, and were baptized."
3. "... he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized." \_\_\_\_\_
4. "... and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the \_\_\_\_\_; and he baptized him."
5. "But when they believed... they [ \_\_\_\_\_ ] were baptized, both men and women."
6. "And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord ...." \_\_\_\_\_
7. "...the same hour of the night... and was baptized, he and all his, straightway." \_\_\_\_\_
8. "...she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she [ \_\_\_\_\_ ] was baptized...."

#### PART III: Which case of conversion clearly shows that...

(Chose from these three answers: **Eunuch, 3,000, Jailor**)

- ... 1. Baptism is for believers? ("If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest.") \_\_\_\_\_
- ... 2. Baptism is for **penitent** believers? ("...Repent and be baptized everyone of you...") \_\_\_\_\_
- ... 3. Baptism is a burial in water. ("... they went down both into the water... and he baptized him... they were come up out of the water...") \_\_\_\_\_
- ... 4. Baptism is not to be delayed. ("And he took them the same hour of the night... and was baptized.") \_\_\_\_\_

#### Conclusion

Please, right now, take a few moments and **privately** answer three important questions. (Just answer to yourself. Answers Not to be sent to the MM.)

1. Does the Bible teach baptism is necessary for salvation? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Does scriptural baptism involve or require immersion? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Have you been baptized in accord with New Testament teachings? \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTE:** If you would like to study further and/or discuss these matters, please feel free to contact me. A. L. Franks; P. O. Box 1578; Kosciusko, MS 39090; franksmm@aol.com; 601-668-3344. Thank you. God bless.

#### Thank you for answering "The Question Box"

#### Please Send Your Answers to Us.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Notice:** Each person who sends in answers will be recognized in the next issue of the "MM" (see page 18). Also the name of one student will be selected, at random, to be awarded a beautiful New Study Bible. **You may be the one.** Please send your answers to:

**The Question Box  
 P. O. Box 1578  
 Kosciusko, MS 39090**

### Are You Prepared To Die LIVE? (Turn to Page 3)

## Asking For Alms

She could not speak my language and I couldn't speak hers; however, I understood clearly her message. Like the lame man in Acts 3, she was asking for alms (money).



**Begging in Mexico**

Deserving or not (only God knows), I chose to share a few pesos with the Mexican woman.

As I shared my money, I wanted very

much to share the Gospel with her. But, the language barrier was very real as we met on the

street in central Mexico.

As we separated I was so very thankful to know that efforts are being made to reach out with the gospel of Christ in the Spanish language, not only to those who are physically destitute but who are also spiritually destitute. You may benefit by reading the re-

port on Mexican Missions in this issue of the MM on pages 10 and 11. (editor)

### Plan to Attend Our Next Mississippi MM RV Rally

(You don't have to have an RV. See Page 12)

#### New Bible Winner

**424. Joe Carlile**

Lake Charles, LA

**Congratulations!**

#### Encouragement from Bogue Chitto

*It was so nice having you at our gospel meeting at Johnson Grove back in August... We would like to pledge monthly support to assist your efforts... Please let us know if there is any other way we can help. (Jeff & Melissa Gatlin) THANKS!*

## ATTENTION

### Mission Oriented Churches and Individuals

A faithful infant congregation is struggling in the heart of the Ukraine. In the capital city of Kiev, this small congregation began under the mission efforts of the Bartlett Woods Church in Memphis, TN, and other assisting congregations. Their first native minister, Sergey Rassalov, with a wife and two children, is a graduate of our Ukraine Bible Institute and demonstrates effective leadership. However, economic inflation is rampant and this church is in dire need of financial support.

Any funding assistance will be greatly appreciated. Funds for this special mission may be sent to:

**Bartlett Woods Church of Christ  
 Karkievska Missions  
 7800 Old Brownsville Road  
 Arlington, TN 38002**

Financial accounting records will be afforded to all individuals and congregations who contribute to this special mission effort. Please pray for the future of this great effort.

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