



Our 33rd Year

Magnolia Messenger

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

Volume 33
Number 3
July - Sept.,
2011



After 30 Long Years
Larry is Back in the Pulpit!
(Encouraging Story on Page 12)

"Repetition... Repetition"

Editor Repeats, Repeats (Page 2)

"Examine Yourselves"

Doug Greenway -- (Page 5)

"Come Unto Me"

Al Franks -- (Page 7)

"The Fruit of Meekness"

Eddie Lewis -- (Page 10)

"How to Handle Criticism"

John Gardner -- (Page 11)

"When Eating Communion"

Ken Joines -- (Page 15)

"Half of the Seats Were Empty"

Paul Franks -- (Page 17)

"The Mess We's In"

Jim Howard -- (Page 19)

"Mistakes in the Assembly"

Eric Welch -- (Page 20)

"A Day in Court"

June Franks (Page 23)

**I
N
S
I
D
E**

also featuring

Christian Camp in Lithuania

"Great Success" (Page 5)

"Forty Years in Kosciusko"

Buses - MBC - MM

Musings of MM Editor (Page 9)

Sowing by Sewing

(Age 92) Sister's Story (Page 15)

Mississippi Mexico Missions

Day by Day Details (Page 14)

These Sent in Answers

470

Students Named (Page 21)

"The Question Box"

Study "Shortest Gospel" (Page 24)

**PLUS
MUCH MORE**

in this issue!



Cancer
Fighter

Ben's
Journey
on
Page 10

"Little Ben" Leads Song,
"This Little Light of Mine"

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

Non Profit Org.
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit # 142
Hattiesburg, MS
39401

Churches Conduct Senior Rallies

Booneville (2nd St)
(August 27)

Southaven (Goodman Oaks)
(October 29)
(Details on Page 8)



MM editor imagines that little Maci is thinking, "Pawpaw, thank all the folks for reading the 'Magnolia Messenger'. It's my favorite paper." (Picture of Maci Hinson was made a few months ago. She's growing up but I don't think she has changed her mind!)

Magnolia Messenger

Circulation: 24,000

"Into Every State in the USA"

We Thank God

for all who

Receive and Read the MM
and for

all financial supporters of our
mission efforts which includes
congregations and individuals.

We need all!

We are dependent upon God as
He works through faithful read-
ers and generous supporters.

The Franks Give Thanks

MM

Contact Information

Address

Magnolia Messenger

P. O. Box 1578

Kosciusko, MS 39090

E-mail: franksmm@aol.com

Telephone Numbers

Office (June Franks)

662-289-3559

(Al Franks)

601-668-3344

LADIES' RETREAT SET FOR SARDIS

The 16th Annual Ladies' Retreat at Sardis Lake Christian Camp is September 23-24, 2011. This year it is hosted by the ladies from Mountain Home, AR and Winona, MS. The theme is "Women of God in Jars of Clay."

MUSIC:

Vocal or Instrumental in Worship?

QUESTIONS:

(1) Who would have thought twenty years ago that instrumental music would become a controversial issue in churches of Christ? But it has. Comment please. (D.S.)

(2) In almost all of the articles, tracts, sermons, etc., I have seen, I cannot remember anyone who made a case for the context of Ephesians 5:15-20 and Colossians 3:15-17 as addressing public assembled worship. If those texts address daily Christian life primarily, and not corporate worship specifically, why do we use them to draw the line for an "unauthorized addition"? (J.P.)

(3) We add other things (song leader, hymn books, microphones, buildings, etc.), but call those "aids" rather than "additions." Could we really stand in judgment of someone that sees the instrument as an "aid," and not as an "addition"? (J.P.)

Cecil May's Response Begins on Page 3

Magnolia Messenger
South Huntington St
CHURCH OF CHRIST
P. O. Box 1578
Kosciusko, MS 39090

CHANGE SERVICE
REQUESTED

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

Readers' Response

(Comments & Suggestions Invited; Criticisms Considered)

Dear brother Al,

Thanks for your April-June issue and your splendid article on "Just a Christian" in "Christ's Church." Did you see an article in "Christian Chronicle" from an unexpected source: A Methodist minister/professor? ("C.C.":6-2011, page 35) It is good to see Eddie Lewis in print again (one of our Germantown ministers). It was good to talk with you at the House memorial services. Your write up about Fred and Joy is well done. Christian love and esteem, **Allen and Mary Jo Dixon**; Memphis, TN)

Found MM in Trash Can

Dear Brother and Sister Franks,

I want to thank you for your ministry. Just a few days ago I was feeling a little down and in need of some encouragement. I passed the trash can and I looked in, crazy thing but then I didn't know why. But there laying on top of all the trash was 4 pages of your magazine. I took it to my room and began to read about the tornadoes in MS and how this sweet church helped people to heal and survive, and tears rolled down my face and I thanked God that I wasn't in a flood but I had received a flood. Thank you! Please add my name to your mailing list. I need more to read. P.S. Pray for me. I'm a budding minister. Sincerely, **(Kenneth Calhoun)**, Gowanda Correctional Facility, Gowanda, New York)

... I am enjoying the "Magnolia Messenger" that you gave all of us and

would love to receive it...(Emma McLane, Vidor, TX)

Editors and Special Assistant,

Enclosed is the mailing label from the latest copy of the Magnolia Messenger that I have received. I wish to change my mailing address... I have enjoyed your news paper very much and though I have never been in your area it is interesting to know of the "work" being done there. May our God bless your efforts. Sincerely, **(Louis Jepsen)**, Salem, Oregon)

Dear friends in Christ,

My fellow inmate John Hazel told me to write you and ask if I could be placed on your mailing list. It would be a real blessing to receive your paper. Your brother in Christ, **(Ronald A. Helms)**, Lillington, N.C.

Dear Al,

Please accept this gift for this excellent publication and all you and June do for all of us. May your tribe increase to the furtherance of the Gospel. God bless you and yours. **(Ken Joines)**, Southaven, MS)

Thanks for all your hard work. Great to keep up with Southern congregations! **(Brenda Littleton)**, Oklahoma City, OK)

Please send the Magnolia Messenger to me... I love the magazine. I have been out of the church for a long time and I'm anxious to re-learn what I lost over the years. **(Bonnie Modlin)**, Edgewood, TX)

... Repetition Repetition ...

I'm Telling You Again What I Have Told You Before

- Editor -

When God says something, even if He says it only once, it is trustworthy, dependable and absolutely true. *God cannot lie* (Tit. 1:2). On His word you can stake your life (soul).

There are occasions in Scripture, when God chose to repeat what he had said previously. Obviously, the repetition gives emphasis to the truth taught. Readers/hearers should sense the urgency of the repeated message. Trust Him. Believe Him. Doubt not. His word is absolutely true. No question!

An example of *emphasis by repetition* is found in the writings of the apostle Paul, recorded in Galatians 5:21, who wrote these stirring words, "...they which do *such things* shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (KJV). Other translations of Scripture say the same. "...they who practise *such things* shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (ASV). "...that those who practice *such things* will not inherit the kingdom of God" (NKJV). "...those who do *such things* will not inherit the kingdom of God" (ESV). **What are "such things?"** We need to know; but first...

...Paul reminded Christians in Galatia that what he had told them *before*, was the same he was telling them *again*. He wanted them to understand the seriousness of sinful conduct. This is a vital need that continues to this day. *Sin is serious!*

The "*such things*" of which Paul wrote are the "**works of the flesh**", many of which are listed in verses 19-21 of chapter 5. Paul warned that those who practice the works of the flesh shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Paul had said it before. He says it again.

Please consider this absolute truth of God. **Everyone who practices the works of the flesh (refusing or failing to repent) shall not (will not) inherit the kingdom of God.** Be not misled. Be not deceived. The warning was needed then; it is needed now.

Scripture records a long list of fleshly works. Depending on which translation studied, inspired Scripture identifies 15 or 16 specific "works of the flesh." And, then to make sure all is covered, the apostle added -- "*and such like.*"

Ponder for a while the long list of sinful acts associated with "the flesh". Three or four sins relating to sexual immorality are named: "fornication, [adultery] uncleanness and lasciviousness." **Remember:** Those who practice such "*shall not inherit the kingdom of God.*" The inspired writer said it once; he said it twice!

The apostle then listed sins that involve one's intimate relationship with God, such as "idolatry" and "sorcery." Anything that takes one away from or stands between man and the "only true and Living God" is indeed serious. Those who practice such sins "*shall not inherit the kingdom of*



A. L. Franks

God." The inspired writer said it once; he said it twice. Believe it!

Then, mention is made of sins that affect our relationships with others. The old fleshly nature rears its ugly head and produces sinful behavior involving "*enmities, strife, jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions, parties and envyings.*" So serious! Those who practice such "*shall not inherit the kingdom of God.*" The inspired writer had said it before; he said it again. Heed the warning!

"Murders." Did he have to say it twice? Then there is "*drunkenness?*" Remember: "Shall **not** inherit..." Finally, the inspired penman, in his warning, included the all encompassing phrase, "*and such like.*"

I plead. I pray. May God help us to believe. The word of the Lord is true. True, even if stated (written) only once. How much more so when repeated!

I close with Scripture's admonitions: "Walk by the Spirit and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh" (Gal. 5:16). And, "If we live by the Spirit, by the Spirit let us also walk" (Gal. 5:25). Finally, be comforted in the realization that "they that are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts thereof" (5:24).

franksmm@aol.com
601-668-3344

We who publish the Magnolia Messenger truly do covet your prayers and your suggestions!

Do You Have Friends or Relatives

You would like to receive the Magnolia Messenger?
Send us their names and addresses.

**No charge.
No obligation.**

Magnolia Messenger
P. O. Box 1578
Kosciusko, MS 39090
Email: franksmm@aol.com
(No phone calls for addresses, please!)

Magnolia Messenger

Church of Christ - Kosciusko

Published every 2 to 3 months (as funds and time permit). Mailed **without charge** to all who ask to receive it and to others for whom it is requested.

Contributions from churches and individuals make possible the circulation of more than 23,000 copies of each issue of the "Magnolia Messenger". Your prayers and support are **requested, needed and appreciated!**

Supported By Contributions

A. L. Franks, Editor

Paul Franks, On Line Editor; www

Cecil May, Jr., Bible Questions Answered

June & Glenda Franks, Special Assistants

Telephone Numbers

Office/Home
662-289-3559
Cell
601-668-3344

Mailing Address

Magnolia Messenger
P. O. Box 1578
Kosciusko, MS 39090

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 and/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

Bible Questions Answered

MUSIC:

Vocal or Instrumental in Christian Worship?

QUESTIONS:

(1) *Who would have thought twenty years ago that instrumental music would become a controversial issue in churches of Christ? But it has. Comment please. (D.S.)*

(2) *In almost all of the articles, tracts, sermons, etc., I have seen, I cannot remember anyone who made a case for the context of Ephesians 5:15-20 and Colossians 3:15-17 as addressing public assembled worship. If those texts address daily Christian life primarily, and not corporate worship specifically, why do we use them to draw the line for an "unauthorized addition"?* (J.P.)

(3) *We add other things (song leader, hymn books, microphones, buildings, etc.), but call those "aids" rather than "additions." Could we really stand in judgment of someone that sees the instrument as an "aid," and not as an "addition"?* (J.P.)

RESPONSE

The reasons instrumental music was rejected as the nineteenth century rolled over into the twentieth are still cogent here in the twenty-first. In some congregations they have been retaught often enough to keep them before the members, who therefore have remained knowledgeable on the issue. In many other places they were never given emphasis or discussed, and they were therefore forgotten.

In this response we will review some of the biblical reasons for a cappella worship. They are still valid.

Mutually Exclusive

Those who want to include instrumental music as acceptable worship come from one of two directions: 1) anything we wish to offer as worship to God not expressly condemned is acceptable to him, or 2) God has indicated he is pleased with instrumental music in worship and therefore accepts it.

A technical way of expressing that is, "Some say what we do in worship to God does not have to be authorized; others say instrumental music is authorized by the New Testament." Interestingly, some seem to reason both ways, though they are actually mutually exclusive.

God Regulates Worship

Playing instruments of music was an act of Old Testament worship just as sacrifices and peace offerings were. God commanded them. At the tabernacle in the wilderness, the Lord told Moses two silver trumpets were to be made (Numbers 10:2), "And

the sons of Aaron, the priests, shall blow the trumpets. The trumpets shall be to you for a perpetual statute throughout your generations. . . . On the day of your gladness also, and at your appointed feasts and at the beginnings of your months, you shall blow the trumpets over your burnt offerings and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings" (10:8, 10).

Worship was regulated by God's commands. Instrumental music was specified, trumpets were the instruments to be used, and the priests were to blow them.

After the temple was built, instruments became even more an integral part of Jewish worship.

When Hezekiah became king, he sought to cleanse the temple and restore temple worship. "And he stationed the Levites in the house of the Lord with cymbals, harps, and lyres, according to the commandment of David and of Gad the king's seer and of Nathan the prophet, for the commandment was from the Lord through his prophets. The Levites stood with the instruments of David, and the priests with the trumpets. Then Hezekiah commanded that the burnt offering be offered on the altar. And when the burnt offering began, the song to the Lord began also, and the trumpets, accompanied by the instruments of David king of Israel" (2 Chronicles 29:25-27).

As at the tabernacle, temple worship was regulated by God, including using musical instruments, specifying which instru-

Response by Cecil May, Jr.



Cecil May, Jr., Dean
College of Biblical Studies
Faulkner University
5345 Atlanta Highway
Montgomery, AL 36109
334-386-7154
cmay@faulkner.edu

ments and who (Levites) should play them.

Psalms further notes that instrumental music was a required act of worship in the temple services, calling for enough different instruments to make up an orchestra, and also for burning incense, animal sacrifices and dancing. Read Psalm 150.

It is incorrect reasoning to justify one item of worship on the basis of Old Testament usage while not incorporating other Old Testament practices: incense, animal sacrifice, dancing.

It is often asked, "If God did not want instrumental music in New Testament worship, why didn't he forbid it." A more pertinent question in view of his plainly commanding it in Old Testament worship is, "Since God has clearly shown he knows how to command it, if he wants it in New Covenant worship, why didn't he say so?"

God And His Word

God has always expected things to be carried out just as he states it, no less and no more. Moses said, "You shall not add to the word that I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God that I command you" (Deuteronomy 4:2), and, "Everything that I command you, you shall be careful to do. You shall not add to it or take from it" (Deuteronomy 12:32).

Moses also says, "You shall be careful therefore to do as the Lord your God has commanded you. You shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left" (Deuteronomy 5:32, and stated

similarly many times throughout the Old Testament).

Inspired Wisdom says, "Every word of God proves true; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him. Do not add to his words, lest he rebuke you and you be found a liar" (Proverbs 30:5-6).

Jesus said to the Pharisees, quoting Isaiah 29:13, "This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men" (Matthew 15:8-9). He was talking to the Pharisees whose "commandments of men" sometimes contradicted Scripture, sometimes defined what was considered obscure in Scripture and sometimes were harmless longstanding customs, but were nevertheless wrong when they were enforced as equal to the law of God.

The apostle Paul says, "To give a human example, brothers: even with a man-made covenant, no one annuls it or adds to it once it has been ratified" (Galatians 3:15). In context, Paul is saying that even God cannot add to an agreement once it has been accepted by both sides.

Then there are the familiar words from Revelation, "I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book" (22:18-19).

We are warned from the beginning to the end of God's book against adding or subtracting or swerving in any direction from precisely what God has said.

None of us are sinless and God's grace toward his children is plenteous. That is our only hope of salvation. We all need to be continually conscious of that and grateful for it, but that does not give us license to treat God's word cavalierly, adding, subtracting and substituting according to our whims.

"Argument From Silence"

Some who attempt to use the argument from the silence of Scripture may misstate it, and some who believe there is no such biblical argument seem to misstate it in order to tear down a "straw man." Biblical silence about a matter alone does not prohibit, and no informed person thinks it does.

Church buildings, padded pews, automobiles and airplanes for travel, hymn books, power

point: all are things not mentioned in the Bible but accepted as scriptural and beneficial by almost all.

What does prohibit is specific direction from God about something, plus silence about parallel kinds of things. The classic example is Noah building the ark. Oak, pine, ash and mahogany are prohibited as building materials, not just because God was silent about them, but because gopher wood is specified. (No one today knows for sure what kind of wood gopher wood was, but certainly God and Noah knew.)

If God had told Noah, "Build the ark out of wood," his silence about the various kinds of wood would have been permissive. Since he commanded a particular kind of wood, his silence about other kinds of wood is, therefore, prohibitive.

In the temple, priests from Judah are prohibited because Levi is specified. The writer of Hebrews says a person from the tribe of Judah is prohibited by the law from serving as priest because "Moses said nothing" about Judah and the priesthood. In the background of that, however, is the fact that God had specified the tribe of Levi as the one from which priests should be chosen (Hebrews. 7:12-14).

Throughout the New Testament, "singing" is given apostolic approval, and consequently God's approval. Every reference to Christians worshipping and praising God musically specifies they were singing. In no instance were musical instruments mentioned as being present or used.

Sometimes reference is to individual Christians singing praises, as Paul and Silas in a Philippian prison (Acts 16:25). Sometimes it is speaking of Christians edifying one another in corporate assembly (1 Corinthians 14:15).

Among the passages frequently cited to make that point are Ephesians 5:19, "addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart," and Colossians 3:16, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God."

It is now being said by some that these passages refer to individual action and have no application to congregational activity. If that were true, it would still be true that every reference to musical praise and worship in the New Testament is to singing. There is strong evidence, however, that

Turn to **MUSIC** on Page 16

From Gatlinburg

A Needed Reminder

Last fall, while visiting the Great Smoky Mountains of Tennessee, my June and I enjoyed worshipping on a Wednesday evening with the church in Gatlinburg where **Rod Rutherford** serves as the capable preacher.

We enjoyed the services; we enjoyed spending time with brethren

who had come from several places to visit the mountains. I also benefited by picking up a copy of the weekly church bulletin. The newsletter included a reminder that continues to need frequent mention.

I understand, from my own experience, how easy it is -- when we enter the church building for worship, to forget to cut off or to silence what has be-

come, for many, a constant and useful companion -- our cell phones. Here is the reminder.

Cell

Phones:

These are wonderful conveniences, but they have no place in the worship of God. Please turn them off when you enter the building.

Please show respect for God and

your fellow Christians and do not text or play with phones during worship." (Gatlinburg bulletin)

Editor's Note: Now-a-days, a "phone" serves many purposes. It may even include an application which allows a worshipper to read the scriptures as the Word is taught and/or preached. To use a "phone" in this way would certainly be considered an "exception to the rule/suggestion!"



When Worshipping
"A time to keep them silent"

"We are Committed..."

...to following the pattern for the church in the New Testament. It is not by accident that we are called a church of Christ. We seek to be exactly what is implied by this name. Christ lived and died to bring into existence a body of people dedicated to Him and to the great precepts which he taught. We have no desire to add one thing to His teachings, to take away anything from them, or in any way to change these eternal truths." (Special selection by MM editor from a special church bulletin)

Have You Thought About...

...What may be inscribed on your tombstone?



Inscriptions Seen by MM Editor on Grave Markers in a Mississippi Cemetery

Questions: What does each of the above suggest? Who decided what? Which do you prefer? Which seems more appropriate? What do you want inscribed on your grave marker? Does it really matter?

Something That Does Really Matter!

"... Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." (Rev. 14:13)

(The following is taken from the South Huntington Street Church bulletin in Kosciusko, MS.)

More or Les:

"Our Church"

- Les Ferguson, Sr. -

Scripture is clear. The church is the body of Christ (Eph. 1 :22, 23; Col. 1: 18). Scripture is also clear that those who are saved are added to the church (Acts 2:47).

If you have *heard* the Word and have developed *faith* as a result of that hearing, and that faith has led you to *repent, confess Jesus as God's Son*, and to be buried with Christ in *baptism* for the remission of your sins, then you are saved and you have been added to the church, the body of Christ.

Makes no difference as to the color of your skin, or what you have or don't have. If you have obeyed the gospel you have been added to the body of Christ, the church. What a privilege it is to be in the body of Christ!

Recently I heard someone talk about the church in reference to it being open and friendly. I wrote down what that person said. Here it is: "When someone is introduced to our church, are they interested in a second date?" To me, that says do they see Christ in us, do they see us friendly, open and receptive to one and all?

No doubt, we want people to *like us, know us, trust us and join us*. And they will if they see Christ in us. Now understand, I am not saying that we do not manifest Christ to others. I am saying that all of us could do it a little better, including myself. Let's make it our intent, as the saying is, *to put our best foot forward* every time we assemble together. A great scripture to read in connection with this is I Cor. 14:24,25.

Les Ferguson, Sr
P.O. Box 1399
Kosciusko, MS 39090
lesfergusonsr@hotmail.com,

Ridgeland's Lake Harbour Church Re-Dedicates Facilities

According to announced plans July 24, 2011 was a very special day for the growing church in Ridgeland, MS. On that day, according to preacher **John Pigg**, the church officially moved into "an expanded and redesigned educational facility and fellowship hall, a newly added administration, nursery and meeting area and a refurbished auditorium." (more information, later)

Invitation Worthy of Imitation

Note: A few months ago, we received an invitation from our brethren of the **Aliceville, Alabama** church inviting us to attend their Gospel Meeting planned for the first week in June. Three preachers were scheduled for the special event -- **Jimmy Swindle, Phillip Hines** and **James Segars**.

The following, which accompanied their announcement, is an *invitation worthy of imitation* as friends and family are encouraged to visit churches of Christ.

Ready To Get Back To The Bible?

Come experience worship like you read about in the New Testament!

The church offers family-integrated worship, acapella congregational singing, Bible-based teaching, observance of the Lord's Supper every Sunday, and a time of prayer.

Your friends at the Aliceville Church of Christ extend our warmest welcome to you and your family. We encourage you to attend each of these services to hear the Gospel proclaimed. You will find a warm and compassionate group of Christians who simply desire to be disciples of Jesus Christ and are interested in your eternal welfare!

629 3rd Ave. N.W. Aliceville, AL

BAPTISM REPORTS... *Still good news!*

(E-mail: June 21, 2011)

"... And Gill was baptized this afternoon. We studied for about 4 1/2 hrs and Perry was blessed as Andy wanted his dad to baptize him. Adam Diaz baptized his wife Sarah tonight (10:00 PM). She was not sure about her baptism and wanted to make her calling and election sure.

Please keep these precious souls in our prayers. We will have more in the bulletin Sunday. (From Charlie Buckley, preacher at Bay St Louis, MS.)

An Unbeatable Combination The "Old Rugged Cross" & An "Old Ragged Bible"





Christian Camp in Lithuania was "Great Success."

Editor's Note: For the past several years our oldest son (Paul) has been blessed to lead in a Bible Camp for young people in an effort to teach the gospel in the former Soviet Union. The following is his recent report to the Enterprise Boulevard congregation in Lake Charles, Louisiana, where he serves as an evangelist.

We had two sessions. The first session was for the younger children. The second week was the teenage week. Our group that travelled from the states consisted of 16 people. Eight came from EBCC and eight from the Champions church of Christ, north of Houston. We had four baptisms during our session. The group we brought did an

outstanding job and worked very hard. **Ben Treme, Sarah Jones, Marci Touvell, Bre Jones, Drew Broussard, Daniel Decareaux** and **Glenda**, (my wife) and I had the opportunity to make this missionary journey.

Our young people did a fantastic job serving as counselors, Bible teachers, and song leaders and just being a great Christian role model for these young people. We were blessed and I believe the young people in Lithuania were blessed as well. Our group plans to share with you sometime in the future about their experiences on this journey. Thank you for your support and prayers.

(Paul Franks; apaulfranks@gmail.com)

Another Long Lasting Marriage



Ed and Nita Loftin -- **61 Years** -- Brookhaven, MS

Our congratulations to Ed and Nita Loftin who recently celebrated their 61st anniversary as husband and wife. They were married on July 21, 1950.

Ed and Nita are both faithful members of the Mount Zion Church of Christ near Brookhaven, MS. They are the parents of 2 boys and 2 girls, five grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

Brother Ed, who has served the Lord's church as an elder was asked to give advice to younger couples seeking a long lasting marriage. He responded, "Be ready to do a lot of giving and taking." To the same question, sister Nita answered, "Be faithful. Go to church. Love each other like you love the Lord." We deeply appreciate the great example of the Loftins!

MONTICELLO

In a recent visit in Brookhaven, Mississippi, we learned that **Howard Griffin** continues to serve as preacher for the Monticello congregation of about 25 which is located twenty miles east of Brookhaven. Due to a death in the family, brother Howard was away, in Florida, on the occasion of our pleasant visit in his home with his wife, **Wanda**, and her mom, **Sue Laird**. My June and I, along with **Ronnie Loftin**, preacher for the Mt. Zion church (near Brookhaven), enjoyed our visit and are pleased to pass along Wanda's invitation for all in the Monticello area to visit their Sunday services at 9:30 and 10:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

Do a Favor For Family and Friends

Send in names and addresses of family members and/or friends you would like to receive the Magnolia Messenger. We will be glad to add their names to our growing mailing list of nearly 24,000. **No charge.**

Address:

Magnolia Messenger
P. O. Box 1578
Kosciusko, Mississippi 39090
franksmm@aol.com

Examine Yourselves

Doug Greenway

In II Cor. 13:5 the apostle Paul writes, "Examine your own selves whether ye are in the faith; prove your own selves." Yet, often people recognize little to nothing bad within themselves.

Through the years I have become more and more aware that we are often honestly blind to our own faults and I KNOW THIS because now and then I see myself in some area – for the first time! THIS is why we have a Bible, spouse, close friends and children!

I. There are "overt" evil companions that we need to avoid. My dictionary defines "overt" as "open to view or knowledge; not concealed or secret".

In II Chron. 22, "Ahaziah... also walked in the ways of the house of Ahab; for his mother was his counselor in doing wickedly... as the house of Ahab had done, for they were his counselors to his undoing."

In 2 Corinthians 6:14 the apostle Paul declares: "Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers." So, IT IS A CHOICE we make as to WHO will be our overt companions and therefore what quality of life we'll have!

II. There are "covert (secret) companions" that also define us!

Test #1: The music we allow into our head. This is only a concern over whether our type of music *builds us up or tears us down!*

On one occasion Paul wrote, "...speaking one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord." (Eph. 5:19). Some have exclusively applied this passage to singing in public worship. Actually, in context, Paul is teaching that Christians ought to *fill their lives* with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs!

Test #2: The humor that we enjoy. We can learn something about ourselves by considering what we find funny. Many of the stories and jokes folk tell are off-color. If we wouldn't tell or listen to something that strikes us as funny IF JESUS WAS RIGHT THERE! This is an indication that a Christian needs to make some changes!

Test #3: The companions that we seek. Are our friends the kind of people that please the Lord? What is it about them that



attract us to them? Don't forget: "Evil companionships corrupt good morals." (I Cor. 15:33).

Test #4: The way we spend our free time. What kind of books do we read

and what kind of websites do we visit? In buying a movie ticket, we cast our vote that we like whatever it is that has been produced and shown. Have we chosen well?

Test #5: The way we spend our money. Many Christians are rather materialistic minded and yet do not realize it. Our expensive clothes and high living; our emphasis upon fine food and other physical luxuries give clues to our real interests in life.

Test #6: Living our lives in light of the scriptures. More important than any of the other tests mentioned is the habit of studying key passages of scripture and comparing our lives with these. Examples: The Sermon on the Mount Matt. 5, 6, and 7. The Christian Graces in II Pet. 1:5-12. Also, Phil. 3:12-14, etc. If we have a tendency to be over-confident about our spiritual achievements, we need to remember: "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." (I Cor. 10:12).

The question of the hour may really be: Are WE the sort of person it is GOOD to have as a companion? Go out *behind the barn and think about it!*

Doug Greenway preaches for the West Main Street Church of Christ in Tupelo, MS. His address: Doug Greenway; 2460 West Main Street; Tupelo, MS 38801; His email: doug_greenway@yahoo.com.

FROM SUMMERDALE, AL

The Magnolia Messenger recently received a nice letter from **Dave Howell** of the Summerdale Church of Christ. Brother Dave stated in his letter, "Bro. Lambert still going strong, we're getting between 300-400 responses per week from all over the country of people wanting to study the Bible, I get calls and emails every week from people asking Bible questions (of all kinds) and reports from preachers baptizing people who have contacted them." He also added, "Thank you for the good that you are doing, one of the best papers in the brotherhood. May you be blessed in being able to continue keeping on keeping on. Best Regards."

New Orleans Minister Publishes *History of Churches of Christ In New Orleans*

Eric Dishongh who serves as a minister for the Hickory Knoll Church of Christ in the Greater New Orleans area recently wrote: *Brother Franks... I hope you are doing well. I thought the readers of the Magnolia Messenger would like to know about this new book on the history of the Churches of Christ in New Orleans. Please see the announcement below. Thank you! In Christ...*

My book -- **From Campbell to Katrina: A History of the Churches of Christ in New Orleans** -- has been published by Heritage Press!

If you would like to order a book, please let me know! The cost is \$15.00 each + \$3.99 (S&H).

Make checks payable to Eric Dishongh. Send to P.O. Box 23067, New Orleans, LA 70183.

You can also order by credit card and find all the information on my website: www.ericdishongh.com.

From the back cover: **"This monumental book by Eric M. Dishongh chronicles the history of the Churches of Christ in New Orleans from the days of Alexander Campbell to Hurricane Katrina, highlighting the legacy of Clifton L. Ganus Sr., founder of A & G Cafeterias and Mrs. Drake Sandwiches."**

What Others Are Saying:

"It is very interesting and enlightening to see what God has done in this city and southern Louisiana since the day of the first visit of Alexander Campbell in 1839... Eric Dishongh has done a good job in researching and finding what he could and has shed much light on the work of the Lord's people in New Orleans."

I am grateful for his work and applaud his efforts. It is good reading for anyone who is interested in God's people who labor in a difficult climate." — **Clifton L. Ganus, Jr.**, Chancellor, Harding University

"Eric Dishongh's love for the church in his native New Orleans -- and his desire to see both unity and a commitment to Bible truth among his fellow Christians -- shine through in this revealing history. Dishongh's thought-provoking account seems particularly relevant as congregations in that region face the opportunities and challenges that arose in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina." — **Bobby Ross**, Managing Editor, *The Christian Chronicle*

"I consider this a monumental contribution to the study of the Restoration Movement. The history of the Lord's church in New Orleans is a microcosm of what [was] occurring in the brotherhood during the same period. Dishongh's thorough research combined with his readable writing make this a very interesting and enjoyable read." — **Ancil Jenkins**, Church Historian, *Friends of the Restoration Movement*

*"As a minister and life-long resident of the greater New Orleans area, Eric Dishongh is uniquely qualified to author this important new book **From Campbell to Katrina**. This book provides the reader with a valuable and accurate account of the times, people, and places that make up the fascinating story of the American restoration movement in one of the most diverse cultures in our country. Libraries everywhere will want to add this one-of-a-kind history book to their collection."* — **Dennis Jones**, President, Heritage Christian University

The Bible Says,

(19) Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. (Rom. 12)

Thank you for thinking of the Magnolia Messenger when you remember and/or honor Friends and Relatives (See Page 12)

Reader's Response

Encouragement to MM

"Be not weary in well doing."

"Keep up the good work."

"Do not lose heart."

"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

PLUS: Check Included

From **Daniel Guy** (Montgomery, AL)

BATESVILLE

There is to be a Parenting Seminar at the Batesville Church of Christ on October 29, 2011 with **Sam Jones** of Freed-Hardeman University.

Back to Old Union



Michael Bates

Batesville Preacher Served as Evangelist for Old Union Church

On Tuesday evening, July 12, 2011, my June and I, along with Garnett and Betty Harris, traveled to the Old Union church in Carroll County, Mississippi. We were very pleased to go back to Old Union where, in 2010, I preached in a meeting helping the church celebrate its 100th year in the same building. This year, however, the visiting preacher was Michael Bates -- long time preacher for the Eureka Street church in Batesville, Mississippi. (Interesting that **Batesville's** preacher is named "Bates.")

Mike presented an excellent study based on Galatians 3:28 where Paul wrote, "There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female; for ye all are one man in Christ Jesus."

Brother Bates called attention to the ever present problem of division among followers of Christ, saying that "distinctions are not to be... we are one in Christ." He stressed that when God looks upon his children he does not see a Jew or a Greek; he does not view one as "bond" [slave] and another as "free". Nor does he regard one sex above another -- "no male and female". The gifted preacher was careful to point out that while God desires all to be "one in Christ Jesus"; yet, the *different* roles that God has given men and women in the church are not negated.

The preacher's plea was for unity among all followers of Jesus Christ, *"that the world may believe"* as Jesus prayed to the Father (John 17). Using I Corinthians 12, brother Bates from Batesville noted that each member of the body is vital and is very important in the unified working of the body or church of Christ.

In our visit with the Old Union church, where 82 souls assembled on the first day of their annual meeting, we were greatly blessed with warm fellowship, wonderful singing and excellent preaching. My June and I are glad we could go back to Old Union where **Mike Schmitz** is doing a good job as the local preacher.(alf)

Report from Fulton, MS

Prison Ministry Seminar

Steve Shappley

On June 6-7, 2011 there was a prison ministry seminar conducted by brother **James Williams** in the classroom facilities of *21st Century Global Missions* in Fulton, MS. Brother Williams presently works with the Limestone Correctional Facility in North Alabama as a volunteer Chaplain, Marriage Counselor, and Chairperson over the Faith Based Honor Dorm Program. He has been working with the jails and prisons in Madison, Limestone, Colbert, and Tusculumbia counties in Alabama since 1993.

There were 17 people (both men and women) total in attendance at the seminar on Monday and Tuesday evening. The seminar was in reaction to a strong need in Itawamba County -- *there is no organized jail ministry among the churches of Christ in our county*. In attendance at the seminar was **Arthur David**, a missionary from Monrovia, Liberia, who has been visiting in the States.

Brother Williams began the seminar on Monday night by pointing out how important it is to reach out to those in the world with the gospel, including those who are in jails and prisons. He mentioned that God is always there to help pick someone up when they are down. But he noted that it is a different world in prison and we must put on our spiritual glasses when we go in.

Also, on Monday night, **David Smith**, from the Fulton Church of Christ, spoke to everyone. David got into trouble as a young man and went to city and county jails 13 times in 2 years. His situation got progressively worse... David described the horror of living in the state penitentiary in Kentucky, along with rapists and murderers. He tried to reduce his sentence in any way possible by mopping floors, cleaning toilets, etc.

His grand-mother brought him a Bible that he began reading any chance he could. When he came out of prison, he had nothing -- not even a place to lay his head. Eventually someone encouraged him to attend services at the Fulton church of Christ where he later obeyed the Gospel.

Brother James also went over the best way to get started in planning a prison ministry. To date, there have been **264** precious souls baptized at Limestone. Fourteen congregations are involved in this unique North Alabama prison ministry (there are 400+ volunteers in the work).

On Tuesday evening, we heard from **Mike Herman**, who is the jail administrator for Itawamba County. He mentioned three things that jail inmates usually lack: (1) Lack of spirituality; (2) Lack of education; and (3) Lack of a family unit. He said the main goal of dealing with

a prisoner is to help them break out of the social group with whom they associate the majority of the time. Christians can help in that regard. He also went over the policies of the Itawamba County Jail explaining how a group can get started in ministry. He was very helpful and practical in his presentation.

Brother Williams also went over the seriousness of doing jail ministry as he pointed out some of the *"do's and don'ts"* of this endeavor. The good result of this recent seminar is that a jail ministry is being planned. Both men and women have signed up to participate in the group effort.

We give God the glory for the developing interest in saving souls who happen to be in prison. At one point, we who are Christians were all prisoners (in sin) but have been set free by the gospel of Jesus Christ. *"For God hath shut up all unto disobedience, that he might have mercy upon all"* (Romans 11:32).

NOTE: *Thanks to brother Shappley for sending this report to the MM. He can be reaching by addressing: Steve Shappley; P.O. Box 277; Fulton, MS 38843. E-mail: global_miss@yahoo.com*

HAMMOND, LA

(Wednesday PM "Drop-in")

For the first time ever, my June and I were privileged to visit Wednesday night services with one of the churches of Christ in Hammond, LA. It was the church which meets on Westchurch Street where **Jim Mauldin** has served as preacher for the past three years.

On the night of our visit, they were having their evening meal together at the church building. When I called to ask about the service schedule, the preacher warmly invited my June and I to come early -- for supper. We did. Glad we did. Good food. Good fellowship!

The adult class studied *"How to Have Revival in the Church"* which was one of a series of lessons based on the letters sent to the seven churches of Asia (Revelations 2 and 3). The teacher/preacher asked each student to pick one characteristic in each of the seven churches that "you would like to add or remove from your personal life." Some very interesting discussion followed. It was a very good lesson guided by a capable teacher. Thought provoking and challenging.

We were pleased to meet several of the brothers and sisters who call the Westchurch church their home congregation. In addition to Jim and his wife, "Burney", the church is also served, according to the scriptural arrangement, by elders. They are **Owen Sweatt** and **John Bell**. If ever in the Hammond area, go by and make your own little "drop-in visit." (MM editor)

“Come Unto Me”

The Greatest Invitation

“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” -- Jesus (Matt. 11:28-30)

- Editor -

The president of the United States will probably never invite me (or you) to come for a visit at the White House. But someone far more important has issued a far greater invitation.

Jesus has extended an invitation -- the greatest of all invitations. He is the *greatest invitor*. He said, “Come unto me.” Jesus, the creator of the universe, the giver of life, the Almighty Son of God and Saviour of the world, has invited me (you), “Come unto me.”

Jesus has issued an invitation with the greatest of all coverages. He said, “Come unto me, all...” No one is left out of Jesus’ invitation. Everyone is included. The Jew and Greek, the wise and the unwise ((Rom. 1:14-16). It doesn’t matter. Whether rich or poor, male or female -- no distinction is made. Jesus commanded that His gospel of salvation be preached to “every creature” in “all the world” (Mark 16:15).

The greatest invitation which is extended to all people, is most appreciated by those who “*labor* and are *heavy laden*.” Our world is filled with such folks. Their lives are filled with labor and burdens -- weighing heavily upon them -- making life very difficult. Relief is needed! They need to hear the gospel including the greatest invitation.

The Lord’s invitation promises relief. Jesus said, “I will give you rest.” Through Jesus, our earthly pilgrimage with all of its trials and tribulations, can lead us to those “*seasons of refreshing*” spoken of in Acts 3:19.

We do not have to face the problems and difficulties of life all by ourselves. Help is readily available. So promises the greatest invitation. Jesus said, “Take my yoke upon you.” He is invit-

ing us to become attached to Him -- to be yoked together with Him. By so doing, the load becomes much lighter, far less burdensome. Scripture admonishes us to “cast our burdens upon Him.” He provides the needed strength. As Paul said, “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me” (Phil. 4:13). Jesus made a lasting promise to those who believe and obey Him. He said, “*I am with you always*, even unto the end of the world” (Matthew 28:20). **Never alone!**

The greatest invitation includes the request of Jesus who said, “*Learn of me*.” He has enabled us -- through the pages of the written word -- to really get to know Jesus. From the Scriptures, we learn how to follow His example. We benefit greatly when we obey his teachings.

Heavy Laden

Alcohol
Debts
Infidelity
Angry Words
Profanity
Pornography
Religious error
Overworked
Stress
Bad Reputation
Immoral
Fornication

Addiction -- Slavery

Earthly life for each devoted disciple takes on new meaning as Jesus, through the New Testament, provides real purpose for our existence. Each believer who seeks to do “His will” is motivated with a hope that is eternal and truly “out of this world.”

In His greatest invitation, Jesus describes Himself as “meek and lowly in heart.” What a man! “**Meek and lowly.**” Jesus manifested the kind of person he was when he voluntarily left the glories of Heaven and descended to this sinful earth. He did not seek to hold on to what he enjoyed in Heaven; rather, he “emptied himself;” He

became a *servant* among men and humbled himself so that he was willing to undergo the shameful death of crucifixion (Phil. 3:5-11). Yes, it is Jesus, the meek and lowly One, who invites all to come to Him.

Not once, but twice, the greatest invitation, offers the wonderful blessing of rest -- rest for “your souls.” This promised rest goes far deeper and has much greater benefits than physical rest. A soul *at rest* and *at peace* with God is a blessing that surpasses the ability of words to express or our minds to comprehend.

Finally, Jesus concluded His great invitation by saying, “*My yoke is easy and my burden is light.*” In contrast to Jesus, Satan’s yoke is hard and his burden is heavy. Satan makes slaves of men. In spite of all his alluring promises and his attractive devices, Satan brings bondage.

Take a look around you. Consider how Satan has bound millions who have yielded to his lying temptations. He makes addicts. Addicts are slaves. Think of those you know who have been slaves to immoral behaviour, to the use of alcohol and/or drugs, to the love of money and the insatiable thirst for power. Satan is in the slavery business. Be not deceived!

Jesus’ offers freedom. He offers liberty. He offers peace, rest and joy. Jesus Christ graciously provides eternal salvation through His beloved church and His simple plan of salvation from sin. Have you accepted His invitation? Will you respond to his invite? It is not too late. Jesus still says, “Come unto me... I will give you rest.”

If we can help in anyway, please feel to call 601-668-3344 or address franksmm@aol.com or P. O. Box 1578; Kosciusko, MS 39090. (Editor)

SARDIS ANNUAL LADIES’ RETREAT

The 16th Annual Ladies Retreat at Sardis Lake Christian Camp is **September 23-24, 2011**. This year it is hosted by the ladies from Mountain Home, AR and Winona, MS. The theme is “Women of God in Jars of Clay.”

Readers’ Response To Article on Bible Translations

Brother Cecil,

I read your article on Translations this morning while having my first cup of coffee. The coffee was great, the article was excellent. Wow! What a great job. I do so appreciate the study, research, and time spent in preparation for this article. It will become a valuable resource for me. Your article has gone a long way in making this one of the all time best issues of the Magnolia Messenger!! If it has not already been done, in some way your article needs to be reprinted and available to the students at Faulkner.

I still have my old ASV hardback Bible all us “preacher students” had to buy at Freed-Hardeman. When I went back to preaching a dozen years ago I moved up to the NIV as it had gained much popularity. Without any outside information or influence, it only took me about two or three years to become dissatisfied with it. At times it just seemed too “paraphrase” to me. I have been using the ESV ever since. I have begun using the ESV a little. It is just a personal thing- but I do not like the paragraph format it uses rather than the verse format of the NASV.

Keep up the good work. Again thanks for such an excellent article. (Dennis Doughty; Tunica, MS)

The article by Cecil May in the last issue of the MM was a masterpiece. Articles of that length do not usually invite my attention, but this one was right on target. His gentle, easy-to-understand but scholarly treatment of the sensitive issue of Bible translations is truly enlightening and every subscriber should go back and re-read it. (Ken Joines; Southaven, MS)

An Elder Writes:

...would like to say that I do enjoy the messages and articles that are found in the Magnolia Messenger. I have been receiving it for quite some time. The article about the “Translations” in the April - June, 2011, was outstanding.

I would like to also request that the address be changed because it is being sent to our building and I sometimes do not see it. (Jerry McKey; Irving, TX)

Dear brother Franks,

I want to tell you that I have the utmost respect for you and your publi-

cation. What has prompted me to write is the article on bible translations. Forgive me for being direct, but there was a whole issue that was not covered in this article. Therefore it was not fair and balanced. I was a person that embraced new translations wholeheartedly until I discovered what the real problem is with them -- they are based upon a corrupted Greek text taken from two codices. The codices are Codex Vaticanus and Codex Sinaiticus....” (Name withheld by editor)

EDITOR’S RESPONSE:

Thanks to our Louisiana reader for his kind comment about the MM. His response to Cecil May’s article on translations, published in the previous issue of the MM, came to us in a large envelope which included not only his letter but also several articles written by others on the subject of Bible translations. Our brother evidenced much interest in the subject and much time spent in study. He commented, “It has taken me 10 years or more to properly research this issue.”

May I add a couple of thoughts to my published statement about brother May’s article being “fair and balanced.” Neither brother May nor I claimed his rather lengthy article was “exhaustive.” It wasn’t. Not every aspect of the study was thoroughly covered. Space would not allow. Much more can be said and, no doubt, needs to be said. But, maybe, another time. Perhaps, another place.

Thanks to all who read/study the “Magnolia Messenger.” Thanks to our Louisiana reader for his response. Thank you, brother May, for your many years of diligent and prayerful study of God’s divine revelation. We join with many others who have also responded to your “fair and balanced”; yet, not “exhaustive” article -- thanking God for your scholarship and your love for TRUTH. We add, in closing, our special thanks to our Good Lord for His providence in the preservation and translation of the Inspired Scriptures, the Holy Bible. (alf)

MM Welcomes Comments

Sentence Sermons

NOTE: We found these “Sentence Sermons” in the Orchard Hills Church bulletin in Covington, Indiana where Paul Wilcoxson preaches. (Paul used to preach in DeQuincy, LA.)

- Often, silence does more harm to the truth than do lies.
- Too often, we interpret scripture to fit what we already believe rather than adjust what we believe to scripture.
- Atheism is not nearly the enemy of Christianity that indifferent Christians are.
- Christianity is more than a faith system; it is a way of life.
- Bibles that are falling apart usually belong to people who aren’t.

orchardh@sbcglobal.net

Orchard Hills Church of Christ; 1630 N. Ninth Street; Covington, IN 47932

Benefits from Bulletins

"Liberty Letter"

(Liberty Church; Dennis, MS)

EDITOR'S NOTE: Many church bulletins come across our desk every week. In addition to the bulletins which are printed and mailed, we are privileged to view additional bulletins "on line" via of the internet.

We are grateful for all such efforts of our brethren to communicate valuable information. Blessings come from reading church bulletins -- whether printed or on-line. For the most part, we find them to be interesting, informative and beneficial. In other words, there are "Benefits from Bulletins."

For example, we are pleased to share with MM readers information recently gleaned from the "Liberty Letter" published by the Liberty Church of Christ in Dennis, MS (July, 2011).

The "Liberty Letter" encourages daily Bible reading. A suggested reading schedule for the entire month of July is printed. Faith in the power of prayer is indicated by asking that prayers be offered on behalf of many named individuals -- including those in hospitals, nursing

homes and shut-ins at home. The importance of the *church family* is emphasized by calling attention to *birthdays* and *anniversaries* of several in the local congregation. The value of church attendance is demonstrated in citing figures for morning worship on Sundays (143 to 207). The importance of "giving as prospered" is given attention by the listing of weekly contributions (from \$3,661 to \$4,181). Important activities involving the church for the month are published, including a mission trip to Panama.

According to the bulletin, the Liberty congregation is served by four elders -- **Raymond Carr, Tommy Moody, Harold Oswald and Benford Pierce**. Preacher **Ron Deaton** is their long time evangelist and **Jimmy Moody** continues his service as "Youth Director".

In addition to news and announcements, the July issue of the "Liberty Letter" includes an excellent Bible teaching article which, we believe, you will find helpful. It is copied in the third column on this page of the MM.

Send your church bulletin to the Magnolia Messenger! Please.

How Does A Prodigal Come Home?

The story of the prodigal son is found in **Luke 15:11-32**. Every mother and father, who has watched a son or daughter be overcome by the world, reads this parable with a vested interest. Parents are torn up inside when they see their children self-destruct and lost; they are filled with joy beyond measure when their children are recovered.

The prodigal in the parable did not blame his sinful and "good as dead" condition on his upbringing. He didn't even blame his circumstances on his elder brother. He made no excuses for himself. He didn't justify himself and try to make what he had done seem okay.

He didn't say, "I can't help it." He didn't blame the world and say "life is just so difficult." He didn't blame God and say, "life is just not fair!"

What did he do? He "came to himself" (vs.17), got his sorry self together and said to his father, "I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son" (vs. 21).

Interestingly, the father in the parable does not track down his son. There is no mention of a mother sending money or food to help her reprobate and foolish son get by. He was an adult. It was his decision to make and they had to let him make it and live with the consequences.

However, when he repented and came home with a humble and contrite heart, his father was waiting and watching for him, ran to him, hugged him and kissed him much! The father made it easy to come home. There are some good moms and dads who are ready to do the same when their son or daughter returns to them. And to God.

"A foolish son is a grief to his father, and bitterness to her that bare him." (Proverbs 18:25).

(The writer is unknown to the MM. A very special thanks to the "Liberty Letter" for publishing the excellent article in their *beneficial church bulletin*.)

**MM Welcomes
Bible Teaching Articles
Magnolia Messenger
needs
YOUR PRAYERS**



Special Place -- Special People

Many people provide assistance in our missionary efforts involving the publication of the *Magnolia Messenger*. Among the many are **Garnett and Betty Harris** of Brandon, Mississippi.

On several occasions the Harris family gladly supplied us with a place to park our motor home when working in their area. Not too long ago, when turning into their driveway, June and I were pleased to see a familiar **welcoming** sign which stated, "Reserved for the Franks."

Their fellowship in our work for Him included not only a "pad" on which to park our RV, but also hookups for water and electrical service (30 or 50 amps). In addition, they are always ready to extend warm fellowship and an ample supply of cold drinks and hot food. We are grateful and much encouraged by Garnett and Betty, who are just two of the hundreds of people who make our special evangelistic efforts possible. We thank God for each and everyone! (alf)

**THANK YOU
for Receiving and Reading
the Magnolia Messenger**

Senior Adult Rally

Booneville Church of Christ

416 North 2nd Street, Booneville, MS 38829

Saturday, August 27, 2011

THEME: *Heaven Will Surely Be Worth It All*

SPEAKER

Bro. Sides is a veteran of over 1,000 Gospel Meetings. In his 50+ years of preaching, Levi has served several congregations in Alabama. He has also served as chaplain for the Alabama Senate and the United States Congress. Bro. Sides is currently one of the ministers of the Sixth Avenue Church of Christ in Jasper, AL.



Levi Sides

SONG LEADER: **Clyde Mize**

Schedule of Events

9:30 a.m. -- Registration

(in the Annex- coffee, juice, pastry)

10:00 a.m. -- Morning Program Begins

(Auditorium)

Lunch in the Annex

12:30 -- 1:30 p.m. -- Afternoon Program

"Golden Years" Senior Rally

Goodman Oaks Church of Christ

1700 Goodman Road; Southaven, MS

October 29, 2011

9:00 --- Registration (coffee, juice, pastries)

9:30 --- Singing Led by **Leon Sanderson**

10:00 --- Keynote Speech: "Temptations Seniors Face" (Part 1) --- by **Ken Joines**

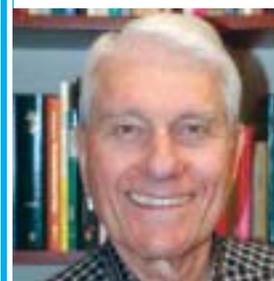
10:45 --- "While We Wait For The Lord", by **Derek McNamara**

11:30 --- Keynote Speech: "Temptations Seniors Face" (Part 2) --- by **Ken Joines**

12:00 Lunch provided

(Please RSVP by Sept. 13 with number coming)

662-349-3600



Leon Sanderson



Ken Joines



Derek McNamara

MM Editor Muses

Forty Years in Kosciusko

1971- 2011

"Forty years" has a scriptural ring. The long period of 40 years is mentioned several times in the Bible. Some examples are:

(a) The life of Moses included three 40 year periods for a total life time of 120 years. (**First 40:** brought up in Pharaoh's house, Acts 7:23. **Second 40:** Shepherding sheep in the wilderness, Acts 17:30. **Third 40:** Shepherding people [Israel] in the wilderness, Deut. 29:5).

(b) The Israelites wandered 40 years in the wilderness (Number 14:33) (c) God fed Israel with manna for 40 years (Exo. 16:35)

(d) Kings Saul, David and Solomon each reigned 40 years (Acts 13:21; 2 Sam. 5:4; I Kings 11:42)

2011. As I write these lines, this year is almost half gone. Seems that it just started. But, anyway, a few weeks ago it came to my attention that for some reason, 2011 was a special year. I began to think about what happened in July -- 40 years ago. That's when my family and I moved from Yazoo City to Kosciusko, Mississippi. Subtracting 1971 from 2011, leaves 40. That's forty years in Kosciusko. Pondering, meditating and/or musing about the past forty years, I thought about several things. And, because of the spiritual importance of at least three of these things I decided it would be okay to share my musings with you -- readers of the MM.

In early summer of 1971, two of the three elders of the South Huntington Street church in Kosciusko came to a gospel meeting in Yazoo City, Mississippi, where I had served as the preacher for six years. (**C. Bruce White** was preaching in the meeting.) The two Kosciusko elders -- **J. B. Hayes** and **Elihue Thompson** -- went home with us after services and invited my family and me to visit with them in view of the possibility of becoming the preacher for the South Huntington Street Church of Christ in Kosciusko.

Since we had already decided to relocate, the following Sunday morning, I drove over to Kosciusko to "take a look." I preached for the church. Almost immediately, I liked what I saw and heard. Early that afternoon, I met with all three of the elders to discuss the work. (The other elder, **Marlin Ivey** was present for this meeting.)

Within just a matter of hours, I found myself moving from "not really being interested", to a desire to "accept the challenge" of making the 60 mile move from the "edge of the Delta" in Yazoo City to the "hill country" of Kosciusko in Central Mississippi. After further discussion with the elders and with my wife and family, we decided to accept the invitation and take on the challenge. And, we are glad we did.

Forty years (1971-2011) in Kosciusko has brought blessings beyond measure. I am so very thankful. My family is grateful. The past forty years has been a time for spiritual growth. It has also been a time for growing older (from 32 to 72!). But, over all, it has been forty "good years" -- filled with many wonderful opportunities to serve. We are very, very grateful to the Good Lord and to our beloved brothers and sisters in Kosciusko.

BUS PROGRAM

In the mid-seventies an aggressive evangelistic bus program to reach the lost was launched

in Kosciusko. One of the elders of the church (Marlin Ivey) served very effectively as the first director of the program. At one time the church was using five large school/church buses, plus a big red "double-decker" bus imported from England. Attendance increased greatly. Baptistry waters were stirred frequently. During just one month, more than 100 individual Bible studies were conducted by members of the local church.

MAGNOLIA BIBLE COLLEGE

In 1976, plans were developed for the beginning of Magnolia Bible College. The school was opened in the fall of '76 with six students. The one purpose of the school, from the beginning to the end, was to train workers to effectively serve the Lord's church, especially in Mississippi, but also throughout the world. Thanks to the Lord and a multitude of His dedicated people, much good was accomplished during the 33 years the school was in operation (1976 until 2009). Only eternity can reveal the extent of and the true value of the influence of MBC on the work of the Lord. We understand, that at one time, between 1/4 to 1/3 of all pulpits among churches of Christ in Mississippi were filled by ministers associated with Magnolia Bible College. Literally, hundreds of students were blessed with quality training in preparation for effective ministry as preachers/teachers of the Word.

MAGNOLIA MESSENGER

In 1978, the publication of the "Magnolia Messenger" had its beginning in Kosciusko. The expressed purpose of the MM was/is to "provoke one another unto LOVE and GOOD WORKS" as commanded in Hebrews 10:24. The Messenger has grown from a circulation of 2,000 (mainly in Mississippi) to over 24,000 (going into every state of the nation). We give thanks to the Good Lord.

The continuing goal of the "Messenger" is to be a "good news" newspaper-- *instructing, informing and encouraging* Christians. The MM also serves as an effective tool for evangelism, presenting the gospel of Christ, including the church of Christ, in a scriptural; yet, positive and non-offensive manner. We continue to give thanks.

Forty years. It is truly amazing -- how fast they have gone by! The bus program was discontinued; the Bible College has closed its doors; however, we thank God for their continuing influence for good in the lives of countless souls. And, we especially give thanks for the continuing privilege of publishing "Mississippi's GOOD News Newspaper." And, thank you, our dear readers, for receiving, reading and supporting the Magnolia Messenger. May God richly bless all of our efforts to His glory! (A. L. Franks)

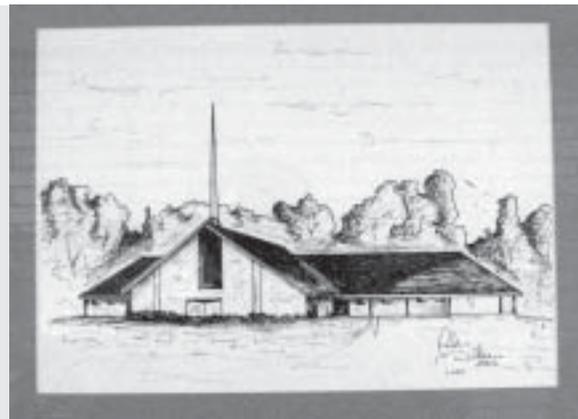
Make Plans to Attend
"LA/TX RV Rally"

November 2-6, 2011
Salmon Lake Park; Grapeland, Texas
Details on Page 18

Church Building
in
Yazoo City, MS

Drawing by
artist Mark
Walker

"Steeple"
&
"People"



The Church Steeple

There is a rhyme about the church steeple and the people. The Yazoo City Church of Christ endured the tornado of April 24, 2010. The steeple is no longer there, but the people are.

About sixteen months ago, a tornado struck Yazoo City, Mississippi, killing some and destroying much. Damage to the Yazoo City church building included the loss of their church steeple. When the building was repaired, the steeple was not replaced. Afterwards, Mark Walker of Clinton, Mississippi, whose family has roots in Yazoo City, did a hand drawing of the church building in which he replaced the steeple. He commented:

The Church Steeple

There is a rhyme about the church steeple and the people.

The Yazoo City Church of Christ endured the Tornado of April 24, 2010. The steeple is no longer there, but the people are.

Members of the Yazoo City congregation decided to "buy" Mark's drawing and hang it on the wall of their building with the understanding that all proceeds would go to help publish "The Magnolia Messenger." This has been done. We are encouraged! Thank you, Mark. Thank you, Yazoo City brethren.

(MM editor)

In Memory of My Mother

Naomi Maddox Reeves

by **Steve Reeves**, former preacher for the Goodman Oaks church in Southaven, MS.

(Proverbs 31:25-30)

My mother, **Naomi Maddox Reeves**, was born and raised in Limestone county, Alabama, along the Alabama/Tennessee state line. She was the youngest girl among nine children (5 boys and 4 girls) and grew up on a farm during the years of the Great Depression.

As a young woman she and one of her sisters attended a Gospel meeting. She heard the Gospel message preached and obeyed it by being baptized into Christ. She and my dad married in the early 1950's and moved to Memphis in 1955 where they bought their first new house for a whopping \$12,000. She worked as a bank teller and later as a sales clerk.

In 1957 while working in a department store called "Shainbergs" she was asked to stay late one evening to wait on a young up-and-coming singer named **Elvis Presley**. She later worked for thirty years at a large Sears and waited on Elvis numerous times. She loved being with people and continued to work until she was in her early seventies. After retirement she volunteered at a local hospital for several years.

Steve Reeves is to be with the **Holly Springs**, MS church for their **Homecoming** on 10/2/11.

She was a stickler for keeping her house and yard spotlessly clean. She insisted on dressing nicely and treating everyone with courtesy and respect. "Classy" and "Elegant" were words that were repeated often by those who knew her. I never heard her use any distasteful language or lose her temper. I do remember, however, her belief in discipline and recall several occasions when a switch in her hand quickly brought me back into line.

Early in the morning of July 29th as she waited for surgery to repair a broken hip (her second in a year), she was visited by the **most precious friend** she had ever known. "Why don't you come with me and rest," Jesus said. She put aside her earthly tent of almost 90 years and made the journey to her heavenly reward.

To the very end she lived by herself, drove herself where she wanted to go and was in complete control of her mind. Our family could not have asked for a more blessed ending to a Godly life.

Steve Reeves now preaches for the Lord's church in Arkansas. His address:

*Dardanelle Church of Christ
209 Union*

*Dardanelle, Arkansas 72834
gopreacher@hotmail.com*

The Fruit of Meekness

- Eddie Lewis -

Some years ago I saw what some call a "Sensitive Plant." You could breathe on it and it would drop its leaves. You could touch it with your finger and it would wither away.

Some feel the person that possesses the quality of meekness is like that Sensitive Plant. He is weak, has an inferiority complex, and has the spirit of compromise.

The Greek word for meekness is "prautes." Some of the ancient Greek writers help us understand the word. Aristotle wrote in his tract On Virtues and Vices, "To prautes belongs the ability to bear reproaches and slights with moderation, and not to embark on revenge quickly, and not to be easily provoked to anger, but to be free from bitterness and contentiousness, having tranquility and stability in the spirit."

Prautes is a word in which strength and gentleness are perfectly combined. The Psalmist

contrast the meek and the sinner, "The Lord lifts up the meek and brings down to the ground the sinner" (Ps. 147:6). He says further, "The Lord takes pleasure in His people, and will exalt the meek with salvation" (Ps. 149:4).

Paul asked the Corinthians if they wanted him to come with a punishing rod or with meekness and love (1 Cor. 4:21). The word is often used with love and gentleness. It is the quality of justice, but more, because when the law fails to be kind, gentleness corrects the law.

The Christian is to cloth himself with humility of mind and meekness (Col. 3:12). It is the spirit in which the Christian is to learn, "Receive with meekness the implanted word..." (Jam. 1:21). In the spirit of meekness we know our ignorance and therefore have an open mind to receive the truth.

It is the spirit in which discipline is to be exercised (Gal. 6:1). The Christian that is going in the wrong direction is to be corrected in the spirit of meekness. Correction can be done in a way to discourage a person, or it can be done in a way to bring them home. It can motivate them to do better.

It is the spirit in which opposition must be met. Paul told Timothy to instruct the ones that oppose him in meekness (2 Tim. 2:25). When we disagree with someone often we meet him or her with the spirit of battering them into changing their mind, but Paul says use meekness to change the person.

Prautes is the spirit of evangelism. Peter says we must always be ready to give an answer about our faith in Christ, but do it in the spirit of meekness. We can touch a person's heart with meekness. When we tell the Gospel in arrogance, or try to ram our belief down someone else's



Eddie Lewis

throat, we turn them away from the truth. Our evangelism must be winsome as well as strong.

Prautes is also the spirit that characterizes all of the Christian life. "Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom" (Jam. 3:13). The NIV says, "Show it by his good life and deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom." This is the spirit that really commends itself to God and man.

Moses was described as, "Very humble, more than any man who was on the face of the earth" (Num. 12:3). Consider three points about his life that show his meekness as an example for us:

1. **His response to his calling.** When God calls him through the burning bush, he asked, "Who am I that I should go unto Pharaoh?" God tells him that He will be with him. Moses continues to make excuses, but God overrules his objections and Moses goes.

The significance of this response lies in the way he responded 40 years before. He

saw the Egyptian beating the Hebrew and killed him in anger. In his exile God taught Moses that there are many ways to win the battle with out physical abuse. He learned to rely on God. Here is Moses standing before God and saying, "I am nothing, but at Your word I will go." That is meekness!

2. **His personal family problems.** Moses married an Ethiopian woman (Num. 12:1). Aaron and Miriam were upset. We don't know why they disapproved—racial or personal? Moses reaction was to continue to do the work of God. Miriam forced the issue and God struck her with leprosy. Moses prayed to God for his sister. After seven days she is healed. Moses holds no malice in his heart for her attacks on him and his wife. His attitude of meekness was his defense.

3. **His great disappointment.** At Meribah Moses displeased God and his punishment was to not be allowed to enter the Promised Land. This must have been a great disappointment to Moses. He had longed to go there, but Moses did not sin with his lips and falsely accuse God.

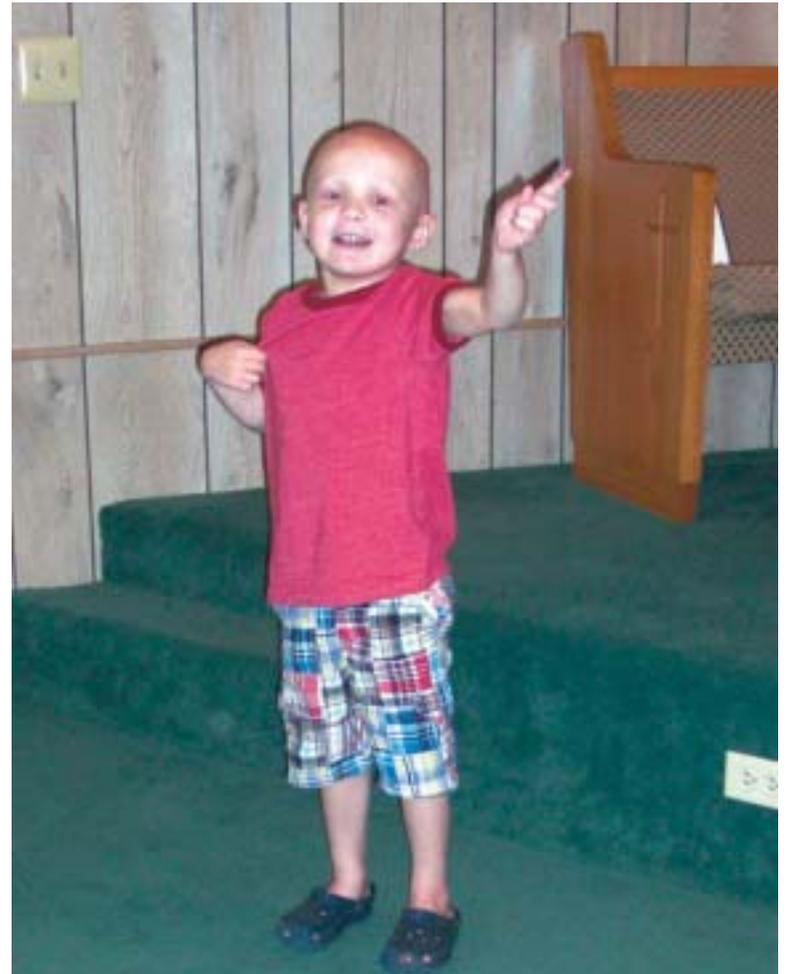
He had absolute trust and reliance on the great wisdom and mercy of God. He accepted God's ruling and gave the leadership to Joshua and went up into the mountain. That is meekness!

Meekness must be part of our life. It is a fruit that must be produced in us. It shows that God's spirit dwells in us. We will be content and able to face whatever life may bring to us.

By Eddie Lewis, associate minister, Germantown Church of Christ, Germantown, TN.

Meekness must be part of our life. It is a fruit that must be produced in us. It shows that God's spirit dwells in us. We will be content and able to face whatever life may bring to us.

We can touch a person's heart with meekness. When we tell the Gospel in arrogance, or try to ram our belief down someone else's throat, we turn them away from the truth. Our evangelism must be winsome as well as strong.



Benjamin Wright (Cancer Fighter), French Camp, Mississippi, Leads Congregation in Singing "This Little Light of Mine"

A Difficult Journey with a Remarkable Recovery

The journey began when little Benjamin Wright, four year old son of Nathan and Holly Wright from French Camp, Mississippi became ill in January of this year. His parents took him to the doctor, searching for answers to his health problems. He was first diagnosed with influenza and then, after having severe pain, the doctors thought that he could have appendicitis.

Little Ben was then transferred to another hospital. The family was told, after doing surgery on little Ben, some very sad news. The surgeons had discovered a cancerous mass in his stomach. The doctors were able to remove only half of the mass and the part that was removed was described as the size of a soccer ball.

Little Ben's condition was diagnosed as Burkitts Lymphoma. Even though the disease is very aggressive, the treatment of the disease is considered very effective. Little Ben's journey continued as he had to stay in the hospital for a very lengthy time. During which time, he was treated with chemotherapy.

On March 28, 2011, sometime after little Ben became ill, a special prayer service was held on his behalf. Al and I were blessed to be a part of that prayer service, along with scores of others, on a very cold early Spring night at the football field in French Camp, Mississippi.

The prayer service definitely made an impression on me. Even though little Ben was very ill at the time, his parents requested that **others** with special needs be included in the prayer service as well. They realized that they were not the only ones going through life threatening health problems with their children.

All who knew of little Ben's condition were so very touched by his illness. During this long journey many prayers went up to Almighty God on little Ben's behalf. And, thanks to our Gracious God, prayers have definitely been answered.

We are very thankful to report that little Ben and his parents were not alone on this very difficult journey. Fellow Christians and dear friends traveled this journey with them. Most importantly, God was present throughout the whole journey.

Holly, Ben's mom, told the MM that, just a few weeks ago, little Ben had received a good report from the doctors. She said that her precious little Ben is doing amazingly well. *No cancer cells found in his body.* He has received his last chemo treatment and, at the present time, is taking no medication.

Plans are to continue to monitor his health and watch very closely. The prognosis looks good and his parents remain op-

See **LITTLE BEN** on Page 16

How To Handle Criticism Without Becoming Critical

- John Gardner -

We live in a hyper-critical age. As a standup comic of the past used to say when someone challenged his goofy ideas, "Everyone's a critic!" Only now there is very little humor in the statement because there seem to be so many mean-spirited people who are critical of almost everything and everyone.

No one likes to be criticized, especially if the criticism is unfounded and unfair. Even when the criticism is justified, it is hard to welcome and receive it. Someone has said with tongue-in-cheek, "Honest criticism is hard to take, particularly from a relative, a friend, an acquaintance, or a stranger." However, criticisms can be helpful if handled properly.

How does one deal with criticism from others without becoming a critical, carping, or crabby person? Here are *five suggestions*. For convenience, each begins with an "E."

1. Expect to be criticized.

Jesus was criticized, always unjustly. The Scriptures use terms like "complain" or "murmur" (John 6: 41, 43 NKJV) to describe the criticism Jesus received. At other times the word "accuse" is used to describe more formal criticisms levied against Him (Luke 23: 2). If the perfect Son of God was criticized, can we expect to escape it even when we are innocent (Matthew 10: 24, 25)?

Sometimes we are not innocent; the criticism is justified. Peter deserved Paul's rebuke for his hypocrisy about not eating with Gentiles (Galatians 2: 11, 12). We will make mistakes, "fumble the ball," and even sin. When that happens we deserve criticism, hopefully from someone who knows us, cares about us, and can deliver it in an appropriate manner.

Being criticized is a part of life with others. For whatever reasons, some are criticized more than others. The more visible one is the more one can expect criticism.

2. Evaluate the quality of the criticism.

Who is criticizing? What does the critic really know about the matter? Former English Prime Minister Harold MacMillan once observed, "I have never found, in a long experience of politics, that criticism is ever inhibited by ignorance." Not all criticisms are of equal value.

How does the critic measure up against perhaps more important, better informed critics? Does his or her criticism match what others say? An ancient Hungarian proverb states:

If one person calls you a horse, laugh at him; if a second person calls you a horse, think about it. If a third person calls you a horse, maybe you should go buy a saddle.

Remember, a bitter, vindictive critic can still tell us truth if the basis of his or her criticism is sound. We do not have to like the critic to learn from the criticism.

3. Engage the criticism

By dealing with it appropriately.

If possible, personally contact your critic. That may help clarify what the criticism entails and clear up a lot of uncertain details it may contain.



Honestly seek to determine if the criticism may prove useful. Do not hastily reject it outright. Does it contain something useful to incorporate for use on future occasions? Former acclaimed news journalist David Brinkley once said, "A successful person is one who can lay a firm foundation with the bricks others throw at him."

If the criticism is unfounded, ignore it or respond to it in a kind, appropriate way. Sometimes the best response to an unjustified

criticism is no response.

4. Escape the temptations of the criticism.

When someone hurls a scathing criticism our way, we may be tempted to let dormant pride or arrogance come to life, causing us and others great harm. "Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall" (Proverbs 16: 18). "Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him" (Proverbs 26: 12). The proud are never prepared to deal with criticism constructively.

When criticized, we may be tempted to retaliate. When stung, we may want to sting back. But what we need to do is to turn all retribution over to the Lord (Romans 12: 19 - 21).

Praying and staying focused on serving the Lord in a Spirit-filled life (Galatians 5: 22, 23; James 3: 17, 18) can go a long way toward helping us overcome the temptations of criticism.

5. Educate others about criticism.

Be an example of how to receive and handle criticism when it comes. Also, demonstrate to others how to criticize in the best way possible. One sage advises, "Criticism, like rain, should be gentle enough to nourish a man's growth without destroying his roots." Second Timothy 2: 24 & 25 is a sure guide here. "And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition..."

Teach others how they can handle criticism that comes their way in a positive manner. Counsel those being severely criticized so that they do not lose heart. In doing so, we may save a soul from a withering attack that can lead to utter ruin.

John Gardner; P. O. Box 1465; Brandon, MS 39043
gardnerjohn43@gmail.com

What's Behind the Sign?



As we approached the country house we saw the sign (to the left) with the letter "P". Having never visited the family who lived in Lincoln County, MS, we wondered "What will we find in the house behind the sign?"

Answer: We found a delightful "shut-in" Christian couple, **Bonnie and Marlon Pepper** -- long time members of the Mt. Zion church. We found encouragement and warm fellowship. Thanks, **Ronnie**, for taking us by the Peppers and behind their sign. (alf)

Now You
Take It From There....

- by -

John Simpson

4073 Stillwood Dr

Memphis, TN 38128-3056

j38128sim@yahoo.com



Why So Brief?

Some have inquired why the brevity of my articles ending in – **Now, you take it from there!** First, a limited amount of space is allotted to this writer. But the real answer lies within the art of communication as taught by Jesus. He illustrated that a vast volume of factual information at one time on a subject, is not as important as a capsule of vital truth that one may mentally retain and practically apply to a situation.

A proven fact is that a mountain of information shot by scatter-load technique, is not exactly the most effective way to communicate. Now, shooting at birds in flight is a different matter; the more lead you throw, the greater you may cripple or kill. However, our message of Good News is not to cripple and kill but to produce healing by the Great Physician.

Someone has said: "For a message to be immortal, it does not have to be eternal". Being brief, but thorough, is a rare jewel in speaking and journalism. Jesus spoke 65 words when teaching His followers how to pray (Mt. 6:9-13). His recorded message to the multitudes, commonly referred to as "The Sermon on the Mount" (Mt. 5, 6 & 7), can be easily read by an average reader in 6 minutes. The late brother N. B. Hardeman of Freed-Hardeman College taught his preacher students: "If you do not strike oil in 25 minutes, quit boring". He emphasized the hazard of talking folk out of responding by rehashing the entire sermon for a conclusion.

Jesus, the master teacher, showed us how. He began with an idea, accented the idea, illustrated the idea, made the application, called for response and then stepped back into the shadows while His hearers wrestled with the force of His message. Read His story of "The Good Samaritan" (Lk. 10:25-37). And incidentally, this short discourse can be read in less than one minute.

Finally, homework is important! This takes a bit longer, after one has heard or read the brief message. Homework is the art of drawing your own conclusions and formulating your own decisions from the truth received, without someone doing your thinking for you. Thus, the brevity and admonition:

Now, you take it from there!



Somewhere in Mississippi

It Is Never Too Late! Restored, After Nearly 30 Years

About 65 years ago, in Muskogee, Oklahoma, twin boys were born into a family named Echols. Their boys were named Jerry and Larry. Jerry, who still lives in Oklahoma, I have never met; however, I have been blessed to become acquainted with Larry, who now lives in Mississippi.

Largely through the influence of his godly mother, Larry and his other siblings became Christians early in life. Later, after Larry married Janie, they decided to take needed steps to prepare for more effective service in the Lord's kingdom. Through the influence of a brother-in-law, **Dub DeLoach**, they decided to enroll in White's Ferry Road School of Preaching in West Monroe, Louisiana. In 1974, after graduation, Larry and Janie moved to Canada to do mission work, along with two other classmates and their wives -- **Ronnie Cosby** and **Ronnie Greenhagen**.

In 1976, Larry and Janie accepted a challenge in Mississippi to work with the church in Winona, Mississippi (Highway 82). After about three years of service as preacher in Winona, Larry yielded to certain temptations which resulted in serious sinful behavior. His faulty decisions led to the termination of his marriage and his departure from the Lord's church. The year was 1979.

For the next 29 years, Larry considered himself an "unfaithful Christian." He remained out of fellowship with other loyal children of God. During these long years, Larry often thought about his relationship with God. He said, "I felt so much guilt. I'm thankful, however, that my conscience was not seared." He added, "I'm thankful that the Lord did not give up on me and that he spared my life."

During most of the years Larry was away from the Lord and his church, he lived and worked in Yazoo City, Mississippi. He married again and found work as a dispatcher with the city police department. Here, he served faithfully, was respected by city officials and was eventually promoted to the "Chief of Police." He commented, "During all those years as a policeman, I was in some dangerous places. I could have been killed. The Lord stood with me. The people stood by me."

Although Larry seldom, if ever, attended services of the Yazoo City church, some of the local members learned of his past relationship with the Lord's

church and did, on various occasions, encourage him to "come back to the Lord."

A few years ago, Larry's second marriage suddenly ended in the unexpected death of his wife. After the elapse of some time, Larry and his first wife, Janie, renewed their relationship and in the course of time, they remarried each other -- seeking to re-establish a union which had been dissolved many years before.

Various members of the Yazoo City church continued to encourage Larry to "come back to the Lord." Specifically, he mentioned the name of **Charles Fulgham** who made repeated efforts to get Larry to renew his dedication to Jesus Christ. He also mentioned the name of a long time preacher in Yazoo, **John Dial**, who made special efforts to influence him to come back to the church. Larry spoke of a time when his secretary informed him that brother Dial was in the office desiring to see him. Larry told his secretary to tell the preacher that he was *not in*. Then, he slipped out the back door!

But the preacher, who was also a medical doctor, did not give up. He returned and, on the next visit, was able to talk with Larry. Near the end of 2007, brother Dial wrote a letter to Larry appealing that he come back to the Lord and his church. Larry commented, "It was one of the kindest, sweetest letters I've ever received."

In the Spring of 2008, the Yazoo City church conducted a campaign featuring evangelist **Willie Tollison**. Brother Tollison, who had known Larry in times past, asked Charles Fulgham to call and invite him to the meeting. Charles did call. In response, on Friday night of the meeting, Larry and his wife, Janie, did attend. They came back the next night and were both restored to the Lord through repentance, confession of sins and prayer. The date of their new beginning in Christ was April 26, 2008.

Larry commented, "We haven't missed since, except for sickness...." He added, "I always wanted to come back. Guilt was killing me. I would not be here if it were not for that phone call."



Larry and Janie Echols in Yazoo City, MS

It has now been over three years since Larry and Janie Echols were restored. Significant changes have taken place. When, about a year ago, John Dial decided to retire from preaching full-time, the Yazoo City church invited Larry to fill the pulpit. He accepted the challenge.

For more than a year now, Larry Echols has preached regularly for the Yazoo City church. And, based on the testimony of several members, he has done so very effectively. Concerning his privilege to be back in the pulpit, Larry stated, "I've really enjoyed it. I can't say how much I've appreciated the opportunity to preach again...." He added, "This is a great church with wonderful, encouraging people. I look forward to every Sunday."

Presently, the Yazoo City church brings together about 60 folks on "a good Sunday." One precious soul was baptized about a month ago. Larry said, "We had two new visitors from the community this past Sunday; they came back Sunday night! **Cecil Saxton** and I plan to have a home Bible study with them shortly."

Larry Echols is very thankful for the *second* chance he has been given to use his talents as a gospel preacher. Both Larry and Janie realize they are greatly blessed to once again be working together as a team -- serving the family of God in Yazoo City.

Brother Larry repeatedly expressed appreciation that the Lord and the Lord's people did not give up on him. He has a message to others who may have fallen away and are no longer faithful. "**It is never too late...** not as long as there is life in the body... *I am living proof of that!*"

Larry and Janie Echols can be reached C/o Church of Christ; 1230 E Broadway St; Yazoo City, MS 39194 echolsjanie@yahoo.com



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!

In Memory Of

MRS. GARVIS WHEELER
Yazoo City Church of Christ
(Yazoo City, MS.)

(Sardis, MS)

BILLY GAITHER
Claude & Alberta Houston
(Southaven, MS)

JOHN W. CORMIER
Paula Cormier
(Ft. Worth, TX)

ROGER GAINES
Mrs. Betty Jane Kellum
(Tupelo, MS)

WYVERNE FLATT
Pierce & Nell Flatt
(Pike Road, AL)

GEORGE & LILLIE LEWIS
Nelson Lewis
(Baltimore, MD)
Prince Lewis
(Kosciusko, MS)

JEFF BEARDEN
Marti & Dave Rochna
(Hot Springs Village, AR)

ELOISE DUNN
"Domino Group"
Christian Chapel Church of
Christ
(Amory, MS)

**KATHERINE NETTERVILLE
WELCH**
Mary Howell
(Woodville, MS)
Charles & Juanita Fulgham
(Yazoo City, MS)

STEPHEN ALDRIDGE
Garnett & Betty Harris
(Brandon, MS)

**CHARLES DICKEY
MILLIE MILLER
HELEN MITCHELL**
Nell Golden
(Columbus, MS)

**NEDA KNIGHT
MICHAEL KNIGHT
KEVIN RICHARDS**
Bill & Winnie Richards
(Louisville, MS)

JIMMY BRADSHAW
James & Deanie Bradshaw
(Indianola, MS)

SUMIKO (CANDY) NELSON
Lone Oak Church of Christ
(Steens, MS)

In Honor Of

**IDA MAE CONLEY
95TH BIRTHDAY**

GINGER LAUDERDALE
Charlie & Sue Slaughter
Bettye Kelly

Suggestion: Pick out someone you really appreciate and honor him/her in the next issue of the MM. How about it?

THANK YOU
for remembering the Magnolia Messenger
as you remember and/or honor those you love and appreciate.

Please Send Your Gifts To:
Magnolia Messenger
P. O. Box 1578
Kosciusko, MS 39090



Somewhere in Mississippi

Booneville's "Golden Circle" Makes Missouri Town Their Mission

report by
June Thompson

Last week a bus and a van from the church of Christ in Booneville, Mississippi rolled into Campbell, Missouri. The folks on board appeared much like any other group, but they were far from the norm.

All 16 occupants were very eager to work. All were over 55 years old, except a little girl named Savannah and Joyce, a woman who videos a lot of their trips. The Booneville bunch call themselves, "The Golden Circle". Their love, and what they will attempt to do, has no end -- just like a circle. Although they are in their "golden years," in their hearts, it is only the beginning.

Brother Jim Estes one of the 16 people, was the "preacher" of the group. They are people who not only think of preparing for school, graduation, getting married and retirement; they also are preparing for the next life. How cool is that?

Some people just have the knack to teach and present lessons that are so positive and clear that it is hard to miss the point. Many people attended the "old time Gospel Meeting" last week here in Campbell. It was just that.

The preacher brought some illustrations, scripture texts and diagrams printed on very large pieces of cloth. They had been handed down to him from his father-in-law, who was a well known Mississippi minister -- Brother **J. A. Thornton**. Seeing them stretched out, hanging on the display, they appeared to look like huge sheets of paper. In years past, they used to call them "Rag Meetings".

The people who came to share these lessons often use

"Power Point" in their church buildings today. They did so here, along with the age old cloth method. It was interesting to see these very old ways come to life again here in 2011. Of course, the Bible itself was the core of all lessons.

It was a lot of fun having so many people come to our town and bring such enthusiasm with them, as they proclaimed the word of God. It made learning very enjoyable; plus three souls were saved as a result! What more could one ask?

Terry Tate, of our town, had been studying with the men for a while. One of the newly saved men was a quadriplegic. But, he did not allow his wheelchair to hold him down, as he was baptized into Christ. He later commented, "I had the best night's sleep I've had in years."

The people were very well organized and also kept smiling all the while. Despite the heat, they went door to door, inviting people to the Revival and Bible School they had planned and were in Campbell to conduct. It is nice to have a good time together and not worry about the problems of this world for a few days. It is even nicer when we see people who never give up!

Savannah, the little girl who was with them, was so full of love. She was born in China where women are allowed only one child. Her mother had to give her up. She was found on the side of the road, weighing only two pounds. She had a note pinned on her, stating her birth date. One of the group, Marilyn Martin, went to China herself and adopted Savannah. She is now in the 2nd grade and full of love for God.

Brother Lloyd Beard worked continuously with people in Bible studies which were set up for him before he arrived. This is his passion in life. He taught the Gospel to and baptized 48 people last year. So far, this year, he has baptized 10 or 12.

These Booneville Christians travel each year to mission sites. They ask for no money -- doing Bible studies,



"Golden Circle" from Booneville Church of Christ on Mission Trip to Campbell, Missouri

Vacation Bible School and Revivals. Their work has taken the senior citizens from Texas to Pennsylvania and to Guyana, South America. One lady named, Jane, who has two artificial knees and is in her seventies, has made 2 trips to Guyana and taught ladies in that country as well.

Jane also works in their local jail ministry and is well known, to never turn down a Bible study.

We are thankful for our freedom of worship and all we are allowed to do in our country. This is just one of the freedoms, but the most important one. It makes us realize how much we owe our

young men and women who are keeping us safe and free. It is a time to be THANKFUL. God bless America and all its citizens!

Written by and submitted to the MM by **June Thompson; 33936 State Hwy 53; Campbell, MO 63933.** june-larry@sbcglobal.net

Katherine Welch Departed From Us on August 3, 2011 at Age 89

(Sunnybrook)

We were very saddened to learn of the passing of Katherine Netterville Welch, wife of Alonzo Welch (Sunnybrook), after a facebook friend posted news about her death on her wall.

Al and I have been blessed to have known sister Katherine for many years. We have always admired her -- especially her devotion and dedication to the caring of children at Sunnybrook Children's Home in Ridgeland, Mississippi.

Largely because of the interest of Alonzo and Katherine Welch in caring for children, a "home for the homeless" was begun in Jackson -- nearly fifty years ago. This was the beginning of **Sunnybrook Children's Home**. Sister Katherine served in many ways, including being dietitian for Sunnybrook, filling that capacity until her health failed several years ago.

On many occasions Al and I would visit Sunnybrook. Sister Welch would graciously greet us and would always extend a kind spirit of hospitality. We have been blessed to eat several meals prepared by Sister Welch on campus in what was called the "storage/pantry room" at Sunnybrook. We have some good memories of eating and visiting with the Welches on those special occasions.

Sister Katherine Welch passed away peacefully at her

home on Wednesday August 3, 2011, at the age of 89.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Charles Thomas and Jennie McCraine Netterville of Wilkinson County, Mississippi and by her brothers, Rush, Charles, Robert, Dick, William and Fred.

She is survived by her husband of 69 years, Alonzo D. Welch, one sister Mary Howell



Katherine Welch in her Younger Years

of Woodville, Mississippi and three daughters, Rosalind Seabrook and Mary Cooper of Madison, Mississippi and Kanet Thomas of Westlake Village, California, by her sons-in-law Doug Cooper of Madison and James Thomas of Westlake Village, California and by her seven

grandchildren and thirteen great-grandchildren.

Sister Katherine was born on December 6, 1921, in Wilkinson County, Mississippi. She attended Lipscomb University in Nashville, received her B.A. degree from Mississippi College. She taught in the Memphis and Jackson public schools. She was a member of the Madison Church of Christ in Madison, Mississippi.

Those who knew her best spoke of her wit, her wisdom, and her warmth. She will be remembered for her role as family matriarch which she fulfilled in grand style. She was affectionately spoken of as "Sweet Mama."

Open visitation for sister Welch was on Friday, August 5, at Wright and Ferguson Funeral Home in Ridgeland, Mississippi. A private family service was held on Saturday with interment at the Natchez City Cemetery.

Al and I had the privilege to attend the visitation for sister Welch. We, through the MM, express our deepest sympathy to her physical family, her church family and her Sunnybrook family. Only eternity will tell the good accomplished by Katherine Netterville Welch while she lived her 89 years upon this earth.

(Some information for this report was gleaned from the *Clarion Ledger, Jackson, Mississippi*) - Report by June Franks



Lloyd Beard Baptizes Another Precious Soul into Christ

Mexico Missions

(a report)

- Les Ferguson, Sr. -

Wednesday

John Pigg (preacher for the Lake Harbour church in Ridgeland, Mississippi) and I left on Wednesday, May 25, 2011 for the State of Guanajuato in central Mexico. We traveled by plane and arrived without difficulty.

I had made arrangements for **Raciel Ramirez** (preacher for the church in the city of Guanajuato) to meet us at the airport. While Raciel speaks some English, his wife, **lise**, is fluent. She is a blessing to our work. Raciel and lise have two children, **Annie** and **Samuel**. They are all involved in the work of the Guanajuato Church of Christ. Guanajuato City is the capital of the State of Guanajuato. It is a city of 500,000 people. So there is much work to yet be done in this city.

Raciel and Isie are very hospitable and, thus, they provide lodging for us every time we come into the country. We arrived just in time to take our luggage to their house and then leave for the Wednesday night Bible study. Raciel had requested a lesson on encouragement and that is what John did as he taught this class.

This church has recently made a move to a new location within the city. It is our feeling that this move was one that they needed to make. We were impressed with their growth and what they are accomplishing. Raciel informed us that he had started a *branch school of preaching* like what we have in San Miguel. At the present time he has **six** individuals who have signed up for classes.

Thursday

Thursday, May 26, we traveled from Guanajuato to San Miguel via a bus. Most of the time you can catch an express bus and make it to San Miguel in a little over an hour. On this occasion, we had to catch a bus that made lots of stops -- even for people who would flag the bus down on the side of the road. It was interesting and it took a little longer, but we made it without difficulties. Well, as Raciel was taking us to the bus station, he had a flat tire. That was interesting also.

Friday

Friday, May 27, was the day we had set aside to go to the grocery store and buy food and supplies for our Saturday meeting with all the preachers and wives. That was accomplished without any problems.

Saturday

Saturday, May 28, the preachers and their wives and, in some instances -- their children, started arriving around 9:30 a.m. By 10:30,

all of them had arrived and we started our meeting. **Eloy Vasquez**, one of the members of the San Miguel church, was present to interpret for us. We have used Eloy for the past several years. In addition to speaking English and serving as our interpreter, he also has a transportation service. We use him to provide transportation for us once we get to San Miguel. He is a blessing to the church in San Miguel and to our Mexico Missions.

I had some things to say, from an encouragement standpoint, and then turned it over to John to say some things that preachers and their wives need to hear. While he did that, I finished the preparation for lunch. We provided coffee, cokes, hotdogs with all the "fixins", chips, dip, watermelon and cake for desert. It was enjoyable. These meetings are so very good. It gives those brethren an opportunity to spend a little time together. It is a joy to see them talking and laughing and hugging each other. We also use this time to solidify our travel schedule for the remainder of the trip.

During this meeting, we were informed that the men of the San Miguel church were having a monthly get-together at the church building at 5:00 p.m. We were invited. As the men gathered for this meeting, they came with chicken and vegetables already cooked to eat for supper. Following supper, one brother presented a lesson. On this occasion the young man who presented it did so for the very first time. It was evident that he had spent some time in preparation. He had a good lesson on "Men's Responsibility." We were impressed -- a very enjoyable way to end this day.

Sunday

Sunday, May 29, we worshipped with the San Miguel church. I taught the Bible class on "Loyalty to Christ and Not to Man." This was requested by Fernando, the preacher. John preached at the worship hour. His assigned subject was "Respect for God and His Church." All of that went well as we enjoyed worshipping with our brothers and sisters.

San Miguel is the first of our church plants and it is doing well. **Fernando Arroyo**, his wife, **Toni**, and their two children, are working well together in helping this church to grow.

Several years back, Fernando started a school of preaching using the church building. This school is a branch school of the Sunset School of Preaching in Toluca, Mexico. He has done well with it, and some of our preachers are graduates of this school.

This is a growing church and Fernando needed some additional help. So a couple of years ago, **Aurelio Valdes** and his family moved from Toluca to San Miguel to assist Fernando in the work. He is a graduate of the school in Toluca. He has received further training in

working with Fernando to the extent that he is now ready to plant a church and work on helping it to grow.

Sunday night we traveled over to Celaya to worship with the church. They had a good crowd for a Sunday night. The service started at 7:00 and lasted until 9:00 p.m. **Uriel Reyes** is the preacher. He is doing a good job. He is supported by his wife, **Patti**, and their three children, two daughters and a son. Uriel had requested that I preach on Eph. 4:11-16. The lesson was titled "The Growth of Unity." Following the service, the ladies prepared a meal for us and the church. It was a very enjoyable period of time. Uriel has also started a training school. At this point, he is training **six** men to be gospel preachers.

Monday

We began Monday, May 30, with a breakfast meeting in San Miguel with Fernando and Toni, Aurelio and Nellie, and Eloy. The food was good, the fellowship was great, and our meeting was very productive. One purpose for such a meeting was to get all the bank information from Aurelio as to the impending move to Juventino Rosas. Also, beginning July 1, **Jorge Ramos**, and his wife, will begin work with the San Miguel church replacing Aurelio. We have not met him yet, but Fernando recommends him highly.

As Aurelio prepares for his transition out of San Miguel, he will be able to spend some time with Jorge in getting him prepared to take over his responsibilities. This meeting also allowed me the opportunity to plan some banking business that I needed to do. So, it was a good meeting that took just about all the morning.

Tuesday

Tuesday, May 32, Eloy picked us up along with Fernando and Aurelio and we traveled over to Juventino Rosas. This city of 65-75,000 people is about a 45 minute ride from San Miguel. John and I were impressed with the city. We spent some time looking around and went to the Jardin (park in the center of the city) and had some special prayers for what is about to happen in this city. We prayed for Aurelio and Nellie and their three children, as they prepare for this transition in their lives.

I believe Aurelio is prepared to plant the church and to teach and preach and help it grow. Nellie is also excited about the possibilities in this new work. We developed an interest in this city after Rene (preacher at Comonfort) stated that he had done some work here. We told him of our interest after reading some of his comments in his reports. He encouraged us to follow up and that is where we are today. We are so very grateful for interest and support from other churches here in the States who help make this kind of endeavor possible.

Wednesday

Wednesday, June 1, we

traveled over to San Luis de la Paz for a visit with **Martin Perez** (preacher) and his wife, **Ruth**. This church recently made a move from their original location to a new part of the city. It is an area where new development is taking place. They were able to save a lot of money in rent by making this move at this time. Their desire, ultimately, is to save enough money to buy the property and build their own building.

John preached to those who could assemble on this Wednesday night. His lesson was "Living in Difficult Times." He did a good job and it was well received. After the service, the ladies had prepared a meal for us, very enjoyable.

Martin and Ruth have purchased a lot in this area and have begun some foundation work on what they hope will be their house in due time. They are a great young couple and are doing a good job. Martin has had problems with his vehicle and has been hindered by that. Due to the generosity of the **7th Street church in Columbus**, he was able to get it repaired and back in use by the time we arrived.

While there, I received a phone call from a Hispanic teenager who lives in Kosciusko. This young lady and her family are all from San Luis de la Paz and they were all in the city visiting. She knew that we were going to be in San Luis and so she called my daughter back in Kosciusko and got my cell number and we made connection. I put Martin on the phone and he gave them directions to the church building. We had a good visit. This family will be a contact for Martin and a contact for us in Kosciusko. In many ways it is a small world.

Thursday

Thursday, June 2, we traveled over to Dolores and met with two families who are trying to keep the church alive in that city. Martin from San Luis has been preaching for them on Sunday evenings. Recently he and they made a change in that arrangement. They agreed to hold Sunday services and provide the teaching/preaching. Martin had begun to come on Thursdays at 6:00 and to teach a class. That has been working well for this group.

The last time I was in Dolores, I preached. So I wanted them to hear John. He taught the class with a lot of emphasis on the fact that they were the church and thus they have the responsibility to try to reach the lost. We do not know just yet what our role will be, if anything, with this group. We do have some thoughts about it and will be discussing those prior to my next trip back to Mexico. I would ask that you pray for this group and their efforts to not let the church die out in Dolores.

Saturday

Saturday, June 4, was also an "off day." The only exception was that we agreed to eat at a restaurant where one of the church members at Dolores works. It is located in

San Miguel. We invited Eloy and his wife to eat with us. It was enjoyable and we had an opportunity to encourage Cleto (the church member from Dolores) to consider some training he could do online to begin to prepare himself to preach. He speaks good English also.

Sunday

Sunday, June 5, we traveled to Comonfort and worshipped with the church. I taught the Bible class on the example of Jesus "Going About Doing Good" from Acts 10:38. John preached on "Loving the Church like Christ Loved the Church." They had a full house with lots of young people. Both lessons well received.

Rene Ramirez is doing a great job as the preacher for this growing church. He is assisted by his wife, **Cleo**, and their four children. He has developed at least four men who assist him in the services. They lead prayer, read scriptures, lead singing, and preach from time to time. Rene also used the young men who have recently obeyed the gospel. He had two that were used the Sunday morning we were present. They have outgrown their rented facility and they need to find a larger place.

After we had lunch, prepared by some of the ladies, he wanted to take us to see a vacant lot he was interested in trying to buy. It was in a good location but it just was not large enough for the vision he has for the church. We talked about that and encouraged him to continue to search for property that would be large enough for future growth. He understood and appreciated it. This time with Rene and the Comonfort church family was very worthwhile. We appreciate the work they are doing.

Monday

Monday, June 6, we had another breakfast meeting with Fernando and Toni which was very good. We continued this meeting at the house with Aurelio joining us. We talked about different strategies that could possibly be used to help the church in the State of Guanajuato grow. All meetings of this kind are good. They take a little longer to complete due to the language restrictions.

Tuesday

Tuesday, June 7, we traveled to Irapuato and met with the church. **Rodolfo Valenzuela** is the preacher. Rodolfo, his wife, **Erica**, and their three children are working hard to spread the gospel in this city of 450,000 people. In fact, he baptized two ladies on Monday before we came on Tuesday. And they were present for our class. We were encouraged by that.

He had asked me to teach a class on "Using Your Gifts" and that is what I did from Romans 12:1-8. Where the church is now meeting is the second location for this work which started just over two years ago. We feel this location is really good for future growth of

When Eating Communion

- Ken Joines -

Like most little children I was at first probably amused and intrigued by the Lord's Supper. What was this little piece of bread they were eating? And why such a small cup of juice? And why did they pass it right by me without offering



Ken Joines

me any of it? Then later as an adolescent I could grasp a little more of what the preacher was trying to explain in his sermon about Communion. Then when I was saved from my sin and began participating in this Sacred Feast I began to learn more of what we were doing. I'm still learning.

It was more than six decades ago that I first participated in Communion at our little country church there in rural Kentucky. I don't keep count of things like this, but I believe I am safe in saying that I have missed this weekly date with my Savior and His people fewer than a dozen times because I believe it is important for me to do this.

My Savior walked away from his own tomb on the first day of the week (Luke 24) and ever since then Christians around the world have gathered every Sunday in His memory. And when they gather together I want to be with them. After all, He did say, "Do this in memory of me." (1 Cor. 11:24)

But it requires constant and conscious effort. This is not a reference to the effort we make just to be there, but to the effort required to concentrate on why we are there after we get there. After all, there are distractions. It may be a crying child, a thunderstorm, a passing siren or any number of things that take our mind away from the task at hand. When you are earnestly trying to concentrate on His death, burial and resurrection, how do you handle distractions? May I offer a few suggestions that have been helpful to me, in the hope that they can also be of help to you.

If the bread, for some reason, has an unpleasant taste—different people make the bread for communion—then try to think how unpleasant it was for Jesus to suffer for your sin. If the bread has an especially good taste, then think how sweet it is to be the recipient of His grace. If the grape juice happens to be sour to the taste, think of the vinegar he tasted there on the cross (Matt. 27:48). If the weather threatens amid the flash of lightning and crash of thunder, then

remember how at His death the earth quaked and the rocks were split and graves opened (Matt. 27:51-52). If a child cries out, think of the tears we ought to shed because of our own sins. The noise of a passing siren could remind us of our need to rush headlong to

His cross and receive him in submission.

If someone accidentally drops a communion tray and spills its contents—not unheard of—try to let that remind us of the many times we have slipped and fallen. If someone near you is talking or otherwise acting irreverently, be reminded of how He has always been ignored or despised by the thoughtless and uncaring. Don't allow distractions to take your mind away from what you are doing. Whatever the distraction, do your best to turn it into a positive reinforcement to truly do this in His memory.

Observing the Supper in His memory requires simply that I focus my mind on that awful scene and appreciate the fact that He took my place. I am on my way to Heaven not because I understand all the difficult passages from Scripture, nor because I am 100% right about every little thing. I'm not going because I have all the sin rooted out of my life. I'm not going because I am perfect. *I'm going to Heaven because He took my place.*

Period. And that is exactly what I need to remember next Sunday. I am amused and sometimes even dismayed when I think of all the external means we try to use to "help us remember". Maybe if we just dim the lights that will help. Or perhaps we could "sing a song to help us remember". Similarly—and I think I speak for most of us—when the bodies of my parents were placed in that coffin and I sat there with my family on that second row, no one had to dim the lights or even sing a song to help me remember what Mom and Dad meant to me. I only had to think back! And simply remember the many sacrifices they made for me and how they loved me at those times when I wasn't very loveable. When I was a "good boy" they loved me. And when I was rebellious they still loved me. And Jesus loves me. Don't ever forget.

Lee Carter Maynard writes, "Whenever I eat the bread my head is bowed. In looking downward I am remembering the death and



Article by **John Allen**
Design by **Mark Bridges**

Bess Torrence is a member of the Clinton Church of Christ and a resident of Clinton. Not too long ago, Bess set a wonderful example of putting individual talent to use in the kingdom. She decided to sow the seed of the kingdom by sewing -- and sew she did!

Bess made **50** dresses which were donated to children in Haiti. Each dress was colorful, beautiful and a remarkable display of skill and careful work.

The idea for the project came to her mind after a visit to Clinton by **Tom Wacaster**. Tom talked to the congregation about his mission works and showed pictures from his campaigns. Bess decided to give of her time and talents to make dresses for the girls; *she wanted the girls to have something nice to wear to worship services.*

As you can imagine, completing fifty dresses meant many hours of work to design and sew each one. This was no small project and it could not be

completed overnight. Bess kept herself motivated with thoughts of the children graciously receiving the dresses.

"I could just see the smiles on their faces," she said. Smiles are contagious, and the thought of smiling children brings a smile to her face, too.

Before they were shipped to their destination, a sampling of the dresses were seen in the foyer at the Clinton meeting house. The attention they received were proof that these were beautiful, quality works. We have no doubt that their recipients were excited and delighted to have a garment that is stylish and durable.

There are some folks who have the idea that there is nothing they can do to aid the cause of Christ. Bess and her dresses challenge such notions. We might not all be skillful at teaching classes or contributing in some large way, but we all have been endowed by God Almighty with some talents. We might not be as young, strong or nimble as we once were, but we can still find ways to use our talents to His glory.

johnalism1@yahoo.com

Bess Torrence
Age: 92
Still Sowing by Sewing

Increase Your Bible Knowledge. Study "The Question Box"
(Page 24)

Watch **DIRECTV**
"Getting To Know Your Bible"

Monday - Friday
DIRECTV Channel 377
9:30 p.m. CT
3:30 a.m. CT

Billy Lambert
Speaker



burial. When I drink the cup, I lift my head; my eyes look up to remember that He arose and ascended and will come back again and He has told me to be looking for him." Theologian R.C. Sproule wrote, "Moses could mediate on the law. Mohammed could brandish the sword. Buddha could give personal counsel. Confucius could offer wise sayings. But none of these men was qualified to offer himself an atonement for the sins of the world. Jesus alone was qualified."

Qualified. And willing. Don't ever forget it. Why did my Savior come to earth? Why did he choose the lowly birth? Why did He drink the bitter cup? Why on the cross be lifted up? Because He loved me so. Remember this! (by **Ken Joines**)
7154 Golden Oaks E
Southaven, MS 38671
Kjoines35@hotmail.com

MUSIC

(Continued from page 3)

the individual versus congregational distinction does not apply to these passages.

The epistles of Paul, except for the ones addressed to individuals like Timothy, Titus and Philemon, were written to churches and were intended to be read to the churches.

The five earliest epistles mention the church or churches in the salutation. Galatians is written "To the churches of Galatia" (Galatians 1:1), which are the congregations in Antioch of Pisidia, Derbe, Lystra and Iconium which Paul and Barnabas established on their first missionary journey. Both 1 and 2 Thessalonians are addressed "To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:1), and both 1 and 2 Corinthians are written to "The church of God that is at Corinth" (1 Corinthians 1:1; 2 Corinthians 1:1).

The next three of Paul's epistles, Philippians, Colossians and Ephesians, were written from Rome during the imprisonment. Luke mentions at the close of Acts (Acts 28:31-32). Philippians is addressed "To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi with the overseers and deacons" (Philippians 1:1). Including the congregational officers in the address clearly implies Paul has the congregation at Philippi in view.

The letter to Colossae is addressed "To the saints and faithful brothers at Colossae" (Colossians 1:2) and the Ephesian epistle is addressed "To the saints who are in Ephesus and are faithful" (Ephesians 1:1). However, Colossians makes it clear that Paul expects these epistles, when they are received, to be read aloud to the churches. "And when this letter has been read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans; and see that you also read the letter from Laodicea" (Colossians 4:16).

Obviously no single person alone in a kitchen can "teach and admonish one another." Some plurality of persons is assumed. Evidence strongly indicates primary reference is to the congregation gathered for edification and worship, where it is expected they would hear these epistles read.

Just an Aid To Singing?

Song leaders, hymn books and microphones are, as indicated, "aids" to singing. When everyone has a hymn book, or sees the words and music projected onto

a screen, when a song leader announces a number and starts the song using a microphone so he can be heard over a fairly large auditorium, even when he uses a tuning fork to get the musical key, what the congregation is doing is still singing. Those things aid the singing.

The Old Testament itself classifies playing musical instruments, including trumpets, cymbals, harps, strings and pipes, as an avenue of worship, along with dance, animal sacrifices and burning of incense. See Psalm 150 for example. Playing instruments is not just an aid to another act.

Shall We Be the Judge?

Question: "Could we really stand in judgment of someone that sees the instrument as an "aid," and not as an "addition"?"

Standing in judgment of people is not our calling. "There is only one lawgiver and judge, he who is able to save and to destroy. But who are you to judge your neighbor?" (James 4:12). Judgment of people is left to God who knows hearts and motives.

It is left to us, however, to judge acts. I am to condemn murder as an unlawful act, a sin. I am to abstain from it and to encourage others to do the same. But God alone knows who is to be finally judged a murderer and who is not.

The instrumental music question revolves around one issue: is it a way to worship God that God accepts and approves?

Questions such as "Who is going to heaven and who is going to hell?", "How many sins can a Christian commit and still be walking in the light?" and "How many unauthorized things can a Christian do in worship and still be saved?" are extraneous to the issue and are usually asked to prejudice the question.

Let us study Scripture, God's word, reverently together, helping one another to become ever more pleasing to God as we each conform more and more to his will. When we do that, God will take care of the other questions adequately.

Permitted, Unless Expressly Prohibited?

If one adopts the view that anything religious is acceptable to God as long as it is offered sincerely and is not specifically prohibited, the door is opened for many other practices that the one urging that position to justify instrumental music may not want at all.

When Thomas Campbell urged in his famous "Declaration and Address" that nothing be enjoined

as a condition of communion that is not expressly stated in Scripture, Alexander Campbell objected, if that principle be followed, infant baptism will have to be given up. Thomas did not think so at that point, but said, "Of course, if infant baptism be not found in Scripture, we can have nothing to do with it" (Richardson, *Memoirs of Alexander Campbell*, Vol. 1, pp. 236-238). After further study, both of the Campbells, as well as others, began to teach that biblical baptism was immersion in water of believing adults, and they themselves were immersed.

Infant baptism, like instrumental music, is not expressly forbidden in Scripture and is widely practiced in churches of many denominations. What basis of objection to infant sprinkling is left to one who accepts instrumental music on the grounds that it is not specifically forbidden?

The episcopal model of church government, with its authoritative hierarchical bishopric, along with "dancing before the Lord," burning of incense and prayers to departed saints are among other practices that not only can come in under that same rubric, but have done so and are presently practiced on the basis of that rationale.

Unauthorized, Unholy Fire

The parallel between instrumental music in worship and Nadab and Abihu's unauthorized fire has been often suggested. Lately some advocates of instrumental music have referred to use of the incident as "old hat" and "hackneyed."

The analogy has indeed been made often and over many decades, but noting that fact does not respond to the point made. Things like that in the Old Testament "happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has

come" (1 Corinthians 10:11).

"Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it and laid incense on it and offered unauthorized fire before the Lord, which he had not commanded them. And fire came out from before the Lord and consumed them, and they died before the Lord. Then Moses said to Aaron, 'This is what the Lord has said, 'Among those who are near me I will be sanctified, and before all the people I will be glorified.' And Aaron held his peace" (Leviticus 10:1-3).

Where the ESV, cited above, and the NIV use the term "unau-

thorized fire," KJV uses "strange fire" and NKJV uses "profane fire." God says in response to Nadab and Abihu's offering, "I will be sanctified," meaning he was determined to be recognized as holy. Over and again he is said to be a "holy, holy, holy" God. This incident shows that a holy God is to be worshipped with holy things. Unholy things are profane, unauthorized things, including strange fire in Old Testament worship and instrumental music in the New..

It matters how we worship God.

CM, Jr

Comments Welcomed!

LITTLE BEN

(Cont. from page 10)

timistic. We join with them in praising God for the good results of this remarkable journey!

Nathan, Ben's father, preaches for the Huntsville Church of Christ near French Camp, Mississippi, and is a coach at French Camp Academy.

We were told the night of the prayer vigil, held at the football field (back in March), that little Ben's favorite song was "This Little Light of Mine." Months later on July 7, we were blessed to be present for a church service at the Huntsville church where little Ben's great-grandfather, **Dan Beardain**, was preaching in a Gospel Meeting. At the close of the service on that Monday night, little Ben went before the congregation and led everyone in singing his favorite song -- "This Little Light of Mine."

It was very touching to witness a precious four year old boy -- little Benjamin Wright, who had been so ill for so long, go to the front of the auditorium, announce the number of his song and, then with a strong voice lead his song about light, exclaiming, "I'm going to let it shine."

We are well aware that the end of the journey has not been reached; but thank the Good Lord, little Ben has come a long way. God is in control. The human prognosis does look good, and by faith in the Divine, it looks even better! And, as little Ben continues his journey, our thoughts and prayers are with him and his family. May God continue to bless! (Report by **June Franks**)

MOORHEAD

Madolyn and Gene Gibson work with the Christian Student Center at Mississippi Delta Community College in Moorhead, Mississippi. They recently reported having **60 plus visitors** on their first Wednesday Bible Study of the semester.

MEXICO

(Cont. from page 14)

this church. We enjoyed our visit and the opportunity to encourage this church. They prepared sandwiches for everybody after the class. Another good encouraging visit to Christians who are trying to reach the lost in their city.

Wednesday

Wednesday, June 8, was packing-to-return-home day. We did go to the Bible class in San Miguel. John taught the class on "Doing What You Promise." They had a good group present for the study. John did a good job and his lesson was well received. After the class, they had prepared two birthday cakes in our honor. Again, it was very enjoyable.

This was a very good trip. We were encouraged by what we saw and experienced. But we were also impressed again about the need to continue what is being done and to increase it if possible. There are still many cities in Guanajuato that do not have a church. Then these cities, where we have been able to plant churches are large enough, that they could have additional church plants without it hurting the work that is currently being done.

I humbly ask that as you read this report, please consider increasing your involvement. If you know of individuals or churches that could help us in this work, please let me know. If you have good used laptop computers that you would be willing to donate, or if you would be willing to purchase a new one, please let me know. Right now, I need one for Rodolfo Valenzuela in Irapuato.

We certainly want you to pray for this ministry. This is a young work, beginning only 10 years ago. Our gracious God has blessed it and we believe that He will continue to bless it. Your partnership is vital to us. Comments or questions are welcomed.

Report by **Les Ferguson, Sr.**; P. O. Box 1399; Kosciusko, MS 39090; lesfergusonsr@hotmail.com; telephone: 662-289-3791

BRANSON, Missouri Vacation in the Beautiful Ozark Mountains

2 Condominiums Available

Each: 2 BRs & 2 Baths
Each: Full kitchen & Den
Each: Sleeps Six

(1 mile west of Silver Dollar City)

Minimum: 2 nights -- \$250.00
Per week (7 nights) -- 600.00

Owned and Operated
By the Fulgham Family, Christians
in Yazoo City, Mississippi
Information or Reservation
662-746-5865

... And Yet, Half of the Seats Were Empty!

NOTE: Our oldest son, Paul, under the heading of "Frankly Speaking," wrote the following article which was first published in the bulletin of the church for which he preaches in Lake Charles, LA. It is worthy of wider circulation. (editor)

- Paul Franks -

Thanks to some free tickets from Carolyn Trahan, I was able to go with my son, Vincent and others to the Swashbucklers game last Saturday at the Civic Center in Lake Charles. I was told that many of the people there were given tickets to attend by different companies that promote this event.

The Civic Center is a cool and comfortable place. People came to this event wearing all styles of clothing. You could eat and drink anything you wanted to

during the game. A band played for our entertainment. Clowns were giving balloons to the children. Cheerleaders were trying to get you more interested in shouting for the team players.

Music was played to keep the tempo up. The announcer, who had a great voice, tried to make every play during the game seem exciting. People were dressed in pirate costumes and when there was a score, they would blast their guns and you could smell gun powder in the air. You could talk and holler whenever you felt the urge.

There were chances to catch free footballs that were thrown into the crowd. You were given an opportunity to wager your money to split the pot. A remote controlled blimp flew around inside the building. There was a fight between some of the players before the end of the first half which was interesting to watch.

During the half time show, we were introduced to a National Champion Motorcycle rider who rode onto the field on his bike. There were people walking around throwing beads into the crowd. There were competition



Paul Franks

teams who performed for us. All of the new cars from Billy Navarre [a car dealer in Lake Charles] were driven around for us to see. They offered chances to win prizes by throwing paper planes into the windows of one of the cars. Another

feature about the night was that you could get up and leave anytime you felt like it and not feel guilty. It was all entertaining, but after two hours we left at the beginning of the second half.

What is the point of all of this? With all of the entertainment last Saturday night at the Civic Center, **half of the seats were empty.**

You can go to heaven without going to football games, etc., but you cannot go to heaven without going and being a part of the church. Your attitude about church will help you make the decision to go to church and if you are going to be entertained, you have the wrong attitude and you will be disappointed.

The devil is trying hard to keep you from going to church. Why? He knows that when a family is active and involved in church, it is harder to get them to follow his ways. I ask that you have the attitude that being involved in church is the most important thing for you to do each week. (Other than daily devotionals with God.) Don't let distractions or excuses keep you from attending. Go with the proper spirit and attitude of

service, get involved and have a worshipful, reverent and humble attitude toward God.

Because of God's great love for us, He sent His only Son to die in our place so we wouldn't have to bear the consequences of our sins. The weekly remembrance of what Jesus did for us through the taking of the Lord's Supper and the edification we receive as we participate in worship and fellowship with our brothers and sisters in Christ helps to strengthen our resolve not to sin and to live as Christ has directed us to live. The reason we have these directions is so that we can escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. (2 Peter 1:4) Jesus wants us to participate in an abundant life.

Paul can be reached by addressing: Paul Franks; C/o Enterprise Blvd church of Christ; 2801 Enterprise Boulevard; Lake Charles, LA 70601. His email: apaulfranks@gmail.com

Readers' Response

...I enjoy the "MM" so much and share it with my neighbor. Thank you and Blessings! (Gwen Humphrey, Georgiana, AL)

Thank you for the Messenger! It's a great work! (Anthony & Carolyn Williams, Jacksonville, FL)

Al and June,

Thanks for encouraging us to look into God's word more. Love ya. (Sandra Martin, Lake Charles, LA)



New Preacher at Goodman Oaks, Derek McNamara and his wife, Irene

Goodman Oaks in Southaven Welcomes New Preacher

Report by Ken Joines

The Goodman Oaks congregation in Southaven, MS welcomed their new preacher on Sunday August 7. Derek McNamara was born in Limerick, Ireland where he grew up in the Catholic church. He was converted in 1982.

He received the Bachelor of Divinity degree from South Africa Bible College in 1988. It was while in school there that he met Irene (pronounced "Ireen-ie") a native South African born in Pretoria. They were married in 1989 and have two grown children, Luke and Charis. Irene is now employed in the DeSoto public schools as a teacher of Language Arts. She is tri-lingual with her primary language Afrikaans, second language English and third language German.

Derek came to the States and attended the Whites Ferry Road School of Biblical Studies at West Monroe, Louisiana, preaching for the following 12 years at Verda, La. He then preached in Brandon, England and Kaiserslautern,

Germany. In 1999 he graduated from Lubbock Christian University, receiving the MA/MS degrees while preaching at the Meadows congregation.

After this he preached for two years at Natchez, MS. He taught Greek and New Testament at Lubbock Christian College while preaching at Brownfield, TX. He later earned the PhD degree in New Testament from South Africa Bible College.

Thanks, Ken, for sending this report to the MM. We solicit other such reports from sister congregations. (editor)

To Whom It May Concern,

Would it be possible to get two copies of your April-June, 2011 publication sent to me. It would be greatly appreciated. If there is a cost to make this possible just let me know. Thank you in advance for your help with this request. I am a member of the Woodbury Church of Christ where Cecil May's brother was once serving as an elder. With His Love and In His Service, (Mrs. David Cannon, St. Paul Park, MN) -- no charge!

Berean Children's Home Has Moved from Louisiana to Mississippi



Wendell Davis (president) and Ronnie Loftin (one of 15 board members) standing in front of sign pointing to the new facilities of the Berean Children's Home near Brookhaven, Mississippi. Official opening should be very soon.

Important Information Berean Children's Home

"The Berean Children's Home, Inc. was established June 1, 1979, near Albany, Louisiana. Since that time we have provided a Christian home for hundreds of children. Several years ago the board of directors made the decision to move the home to Lincoln County, MS (near Brookhaven.)

"Our mission at Berean Children's Home, Inc. is to provide a loving, caring home for less fortunate children with proper guidance and encouragement to challenge each child to achieve excellence and to mature spiritually, intellectually, emotionally, socially and physically."

Director: Danny Boyd
601-754-5910

President: Wendell Davis
601-757-8766

Website: bereanhome.org

First Century Converts to Christ Were All Baptized

Examples in the Book of Acts

Jews on Pentecost

"...they that gladly received his word were **baptized**... about three thousand souls were added to them." (Acts 2:41)

Corinthians

"Many of the Corinthians hearing, believed and were **baptized**." (Acts 18:8)

Samaritans

"But when they believed Philip preaching... they were **baptized**, both men and women." (Acts 8:13)

Simon

"Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was **baptized**..." (Acts 8:13)

Ethiopian Eunuch

"...And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he **baptized** him." (Acts 8: 38)

Saul

He "arose and was **baptized**." (Acts 9:18)

Cornelius

"And he commanded them to be **baptized**..." (Acts 10:48)

Lydia

"...she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was **baptized**..." (Acts 16:14,15)

Jailor

"And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes: and was **baptized**..." (Acts 16:33)

Ephesians

"When they heard this, they were **baptized** in the name of the Lord Jesus." (Acts 19:5)

First Century Converts to Christ Were All Baptized!

Wonder Why? Could it be?

1. Because Jesus, the Son of God and Saviour of man, clearly said, "He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned." (Mark 16:16)

2. Because an inspired apostle commanded thousands of Jewish believers to, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins..." (Acts 2:38)

3. Because a teacher of God asked and then commanded a fasting, pray-

ing, penitent believer, "And now, why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins..." (Acts 22:16)

4. Because a man of God wrote, "There is also an antitype which now saves us -- baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God) through the resurrection of Jesus Christ." (1 Peter 3:21)

Note: Quotations from KJV & NKJV.

Have YOU Been Baptized?

"To be saved"? (Mark 16:16)

"For the remission of sins"? (Acts 2:38)

"To wash away sins"? (Acts 22:16)

"And now, why are you waiting?"

Arise and be baptized and wash away your sins." (Acts 22:16)

Readers' Response

Dear Al and June,

Thank you for sending me the Magnolia Messenger! I really enjoy the articles as they are inspiring and encouraging. I miss going with my Dewey to singings, lectures, gospel meetings and other occasions that we enjoyed fellowshiping with. What a good life it was! God has been good to me.

I have a young friend who is in prison that I'd like you to put on your mailing list if you will. He is a Christian who has fallen away. The prison has church services which he attends, and I know he'd benefit from reading the MM and enjoy its' good contents...Thank you very much for all you do in His service. God bless. In Christian love, (Dot Medlin, Columbus, MS)

I gave my latest copy of the MM to a new friend and she enjoyed it so much. She would like to receive a copy for herself...Since I am originally from Ackerman (Choctaw County), I often see articles and names that are familiar. Keep up your good work. Thanks so much. Sincerely, (Wannie McCarley, Scotts Hill, TN)

Thanks For Reading the MM

Answer "The Question Box"
(Turn to page 24)

RV May Have Made Its Last Trip to MM RV Rally



The above pictured motorhome, belonging to Charles and Jaunita Fulgham of Yazoo City, MS, **may** have made its "last trip" to a MM RV Rally. The Fulghams announced plans to sell their older home after it had faithfully served them for many years -- including making almost every one of 13 annual Missis-

Ocean Springs, Mississippi Seeking "Youth and Family Minister"

*Our Family
Wants To Meet Your Family!*

The Ocean Springs Church of Christ, located on the Gulf Coast of Mississippi, is in search of a Youth and Family Minister and his wife. We are a growing congregation of about 120-150 with a very active Youth Ministry program. Our Youth group averages 35-40 teens ages 14-20.

We are a diverse group of many traditions and socio-economic backgrounds all united under the banner of the Lordship of Jesus Christ. We are planning to work with our new Youth Minister by the Early Winter of 2011. Are you the right man and wife to lead this active and eager group of young Christians?

If you feel the Spirit has led you to us, please contact us. Please address all resumes and correspondence to:

The Elders,
1116 Washington Ave.,
Ocean Springs, MS, 39564.
Our web page is www.oceanspringschurchofchrist.com.
Our telephone number is 228-875-7811.

**Mississippi
MMRV Rally
Still Scheduled
Spring, 2012
Look for Details
Next Issue
MM**

How Shall We Address God?

- Jim Howard -

The title of this article may seem strange to some. Perhaps we should apply Luther's dictum "Let God be God" to the divine nomenclature and let it go at that. But determining the divine name is anything but simple in Scripture. While our Heavenly Father is called by several different terms in the Old Testament (e.g. *Elohim*, a term used frequently and meaning "God," or *El Shaddai*, meaning "God Almighty"), his personal name is best represented by the English letters *JHVH*.

The problem arises, however, when we try to pronounce these four consonants without vowels. In ancient Jewish worship and life the sacred name was never pronounced. Nor were vowels copied in their Old Testament manuscripts. When the Massorettes, about the 6th century A.D. or later, began the task of making the Old Testament pronounceable by adding vowels, they didn't know what to do with God's personal name. What vowels should be added?

The result is that we still don't know how to pronounce the divine name. One popular theory going back to Galatinus about 1520 is that the vowels *e*, *o* and *a* should be used (taken from *edonah*, the Hebrew word for Lord) resulting in *Jehovah*. The American Standard Version

adopted this reading.

An older theory dating back to Theodoret and Epiphanius in the fifth century proposed that the pronunciation should be *Jahweh* (based on the vowels *a* and *e* -- perhaps from the term *shame*, the Hebrew word for "name" and itself a designation for God (in Hebrew *Yand J* are interchangeable as are *V* and *W*). Some modern translations have accepted this reading. Many

versions have simply translated *JHVH* as "the Lord."

Is the term we use in addressing God important? I really don't think

so; however, there is a lesson to be learned from all this. If God's people for centuries so carefully guarded the sacredness of his personal name that we still don't know how to pronounce that name today, how careful should we be to preserve the sacredness of whatever personal term we use to address our Heavenly Father?

Likewise there should be no place in the Christian's vocabulary for such toned-down alterations of the divine name as "gosh," "golly," or "lordy." The God whom we worship is too high and holy for His name to be profaned on sinful lips.

Jim Howard preaches for the Madison Church of Christ; P.O. Box 1845; Madison, MS 39130

LA/TX RV Rally

November 2 - 6, 2011

(Wednesday through Sunday)

Salmon Lake Park; Grapeland, Texas

Life's Journey: Down the Road

Glen Westmoreland (Wednesday Night)

Down the Road of Joy and Happiness

Joel Dimmette (Thursday morning and night)

Down the Road of Discovery Part 1 and Part 2

Dan Manuel (Friday Night)

Down the Road of National Unrest

Note: We will also have the **Patriotic Program** and **fish fry** on Friday night.

Note: We will enjoy the game "Price is Right" along with other activities and entertainment during the week.

RV sites are already reserved for everyone. If you would like to rent a cabin, please call Salmon Lake Park @ 936-687-2594 for reservations. If you have any questions, comments please call:

(Ray & Donna Franks) H-337-786-3095, C-337-515-0866,

rdfranks@netcommander.com,

P O Drawer 218, DeQuincy, La. 70633.

Columbus Church Raises \$150,000 for Missions

In November, 2010, the Missions Committee at the 7th Street Church of Christ in Columbus, Mississippi, planned a **Missions Giving Day** for a Sunday in March, 2011. They challenged the congregation of just over 300 to raise \$100,000 to be used for foreign missions.

In the months and weeks prior to that day, Missions Committee Chairman **Greg Mock** challenged the congregation to plan and pray about their individual giving. As a result, **over \$150,000** was given that day and during the few months that followed. That amount far exceeds the missions budget in previous years.

The church family at 7th Street supports missions efforts in Honduras, Mexico, Rwanda and the South Pacific. In addition, 27 members participated in a mission trip to Honduras in June.

The members are also involved in the local community through such church works as CSI Columbus, which stands for *Christians Serving in Columbus* where members take a few days in the summer to paint houses, prepare meals, clean yards, etc.

Biily Ferguson is the minister at 7th Street and **Paul Bennett** is the Youth Minister.

The elders are **Don Cole, Les Chaffin** and **Wade Ward**. The church's motto is "*Love God, Love Each Other, Serve the World*". (News item via *Kenny Bush*, a member at 7th Street. Thanks, *Kenny*.)

MM Welcomes News Reports

Mail to: Magnolia Messenger
P. O. Box 1578
Kosciusko, Mississippi 39090
E-mail: franksmm@aol.com

THANK YOU for Receiving and Reading the *Magnolia Messenger*



Somewhere in Mississippi

Bible Teaching Articles are Welcomed by the MM.

Homecoming Event

"HOLLANDALE CHURCH OF CHRIST"

SEPTEMBER 5 - 6, 2011

Homecomers Meetings/Reunions

Begin at 2 pm each day till preaching time at 7:00 pm

Public Invited/ No Collections Taken

Evening Services: Monday & Tuesday: 7:00 pm till 8:10 pm
Congregational Singing and Preaching / Song Sheets Provided

**SPECIAL MEETINGS and SERVICES at
LEROY PERCY STATE PARK**

Lodge Building Highway 12, West of Hollandale, MS

Bring your histories/pictures of the church at Hollandale

BRUCE PATE, former preacher during the years of 1967 till 1975 (on two occasions) will be present and preach historic sermons and, along with delta preacher friend (of Ruleville for 10 years 1966-71 and 1973-1978), **ROBERT RAWSON** will preach and discuss.

"The Mess We's In"

- **Jim Howard** -

Someone was asked by a friend the definition of *Status Quo*. After thinking a moment, he replied, "*The mess we's in.*" Not a bad definition!

All of us who have been in the churches of Christ very long recognize that we look very different than we did fifty years ago. The issues in the church today are not the issues of fifty years ago. To those outside as well as to ourselves, in many ways we bear little resemblance to the church of yesteryear. And all the changes are not for the better.

I heartily share the sentiment of the title of a sermon by longtime Houston preacher Tom Foster: "I Love the Church of Christ." Because of a deep concern for the future of churches of Christ, let me share, from my vantage point, some reasons for "The Mess We's In:"

(1) Biblical Illiteracy

At one time we were people of the Book. We stressed memorization of Scripture. Our first question was, What does the Bible say? We knew our way around the sixty-six books. Today, sadly, even many of our leaders have a minimal knowledge of Bible facts, much less Bible concepts.

If you think I am exag-gerating the situation, I challenge you as an elder or preacher to give your adult Bible class a 20-question exam of the most basic facts (E.g. name five Apostles and give the names of the first five books of the Bible; in what book are found the words, "For God so loved the world"; cite one scripture that tells someone how to become a Christian; and a host of other simple questions). You may be shocked at the results.

(2) The Failure to Understand our Unique Restoration Plea.

The greatest "necessary inference" of all is that if the church, over the ages, has fallen away, it must be restored. Why should we be shocked by the infatuation of so many congregations with instrumental music when their members have not heard a sermon on that subject in



Jim Howard

thirty years?

A restoration consciousness is not caught by osmosis but by teaching. It is not automatic. If the Apostles and other authors of the New Testament living in such close proximity to Jesus couldn't get the shape of the church right, what hope is there that man's ingenuity in the 21st century is going to get it right?

(3) Worldliness in the Church.

I'm not just talking about dancing, drinking and partying. I'm talking about our buying into the world's values as relating to success, competition, status and prominence. We are called to be

a people shaped by the cross. After twenty centuries we still have not learned to die to self, to

take up our cross and follow the Savior into the same places where he spent His life and did His ministry.

(4) A Failure of Leadership.

The congregation in which I grew up was a great church with a great eldership. I'm sure there were many other congregations which could be described in the same way. But our shepherds were very busy men. Far too often, they were so busy that they never got around to mentoring younger men so that they would be prepared to be great elders also. It is obvious to me that many elders in the churches of today are not the spiritual giants that their predecessors were.

(5) The Discovery of a Counterfeit Grace.

Yes, many of us can remember when grace was discovered, at least when we began to talk about this great

reality. Yet, for many, the grace discovered was not the dangerous, high-risk, deadly, costly, self-giving grace of the cross. Rather it was the cheap grace so well described by Dietrich Bonhoeffer (*The Cost of Discipleship*) as grace without cost, grace without commitment, grace without discipline, and grace without the cross.

(6) The Rise of Post Modernism.

Though many of us have not studied this new philosophy in depth, we are in a dangerous position if we fail to see its destructive influence in television, movies, print media, music, drama, and generally deeply enmeshed in American and world culture. There is no universal truth. What is truth for me may not be truth for you.

In churches of Christ we have always believed in a reasonable faith. Half a century ago our Baptist, Methodist, and Presbyterian neighbors did not share our theology. But we could reason with them from Scripture because they believed in an inspired Bible containing universal truth. Such is no longer the general mindset.

Let me make it crystal clear that this article in not intended to be an inclusive analysis of twenty-first century churches of Christ. Many commendable realities characterize the church of our day. We have worldwide evangelism tools (E.g. World Bible School, Eastern European Missions, World Christian Broadcasting) that the last generation only dreamed of. Our preachers and missionaries are better trained than ever before. Faithfulness, love, and commitment characterize myriads of congregations.

I do think it crucial, however, for us to be aware that our present-day problems are enormous and endanger the basic principles that have made the American Restoration Movement a significant force for accomplishing God's will. I pray for a great moral, spiritual and Biblical renewal. And I pray that as a fellowship we will more completely be transformed into the likeness of our Lord Jesus Christ.

(Jim Howard preaches for the Madison Church of Christ; P.O. Box 1845; Madison, MS 39130.) ☐



Sign at Huntsville Church near French Camp in Central Mississippi

Still Powerful!

"Gospel Meetings" with "Gospel Preaching"

- Editor -

The practice of churches of Christ conducting "Gospel Meetings" was very common in the later half of the past century. When I was growing up in southwest Louisiana, it was not uncommon for the Lord's church in most every community to have two or three such meetings each year. The Gospel Meetings or Revivals would usually last a week or ten days -- maybe even two weeks! Many souls were obedient to the *gospel* during such *meetings*. I am thankful to say that it was during a gospel meeting that I responded in faith to the gospel of Christ and was baptized into the church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Within the past two or three decades, many local congregations have just about "given up" on "gospel meetings" -- thinking they are no longer effective and are "out of date." Several reasons may be cited. (a) "Our present generation is just 'too busy'." (b) *We can't get our own members to attend.* (c) "Area congregations won't support sister churches in meetings." (d) "You can't get visitors to come from the community."

Let's think about these often cited "reasons" for no longer holding gospel meetings. (a) "Too busy." Too busy doing what? Most folks find time to do things they want to do. Should we not learn to put the Lord and His *kingdom* FIRST, as Jesus commanded in Matthew 6:33? (b) "Our members won't attend." Why not? Let each Christian be reminded of the *necessity* of loving the Lord with all his/her heart. Let's show that we love the Lord far more than we love the world. (c) "Sister congregations won't visit." Wonder why? Could we do more to encourage sister churches to support our gospel meetings? Are we communicating effectively with each other as churches of Christ. Are we visiting other area congregations in their meetings? (d) "Community visitors won't come." How about giving our neighbors a reason for coming -- a distinctive message effectively presented with great love. Set a good example. Invite. *Invite*. **Invite**. Bring them in. Don't give up. Souls are at stake. As Christians, we are involved in the most important work in the world!

I am very thankful that Gospel Meetings are still being held and that much good is still being accomplished. This is especially true when the meetings emphasize the "Gospel" -- the good news of salvation from sin through Jesus Christ and His body, His church!

I would encourage brethren everywhere to consider "holding gospel meetings" on a regular basis. Find an effective preacher of the gospel, bring him in and *turn him loose* -- let him "preach the Word." Have several services in succession, build enthusiasm among local members, challenge everyone to invite and bring visitors. I earnestly believe than an "old-fashioned" Gospel Meeting with timely "Gospel Preaching" can still do much good in any community.

What do you think? How can we improve in our efforts to conduct Gospel Meetings seeking to save and strengthen souls? (A. L. Franks; 601-668-3344; franksmm@aol.com.)

The Magnolia Messenger
is Supported by
Volunteer
Contributions from
Churches and Christians.
Thank You!

At Age 81

Dan is Still "The Preaching Man"

My June and I were again richly blessed by attending Monday night services of a Gospel Meeting conducted by the Huntsville church, near French Camp in central Mississippi. Here we were privileged to hear Dan Beardain effectively preach the Word in the same pulpit he filled for some 30 or 40 years before his "retirement," back several years ago.

Nathan Wright, the present capable preacher at Huntsville (also a grandson-in-law to Dan Beardain), welcomed everyone to the series of studies from the book of James with the theme: "Bible Things and Bible Ways."

Brother Dan began his sermon by quoting the entire third chapter of James without missing a beat. He emphasized the great responsibilities of Bible teachers, calling attention to the inspired words, "Be not many of you teachers, my brethren, knowing that we shall receive heavier judgement." Brother Dan cautioned would-be-teachers/preachers, "Don't get in the teaching business until you learn what and how to teach."

The experienced preacher further stressed the importance of controlling the tongue. He called attention to things God is said to "hate"; things which are an "abomination" in His sight, according to Proverbs 6:16-19. He noted that three of the things that God is said to hate involves the misuse of the tongue.

Brother Beardain emphasized the value of the "wisdom from above" which is said to be, "pure, peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without variance and without hypocrisy." In contrast, he cautioned against following the "wisdom from beneath" which is "earthly, sensual and devilish" and results in "jealousy, faction, confusion and every vile deed."

Listening to Dan Beardain reminded us again of the great value of God's written word -- guiding us in life below as we prepare for that life above. We were also convinced that, even at age 81, Dan is still "the preaching man." (alf, editor)



Dan Beardain, at age 81

Mistakes in the Assembly

NOTE: A few weeks ago we heard Eric Welch preach in a meeting at Durant. We were reminded of the God-given abilities of Eric who, according to elder **Clyde Redmon**, has done a good job over the past three years as preacher for the I-20 congregation in Vicksburg.

I do not have notes on his Durant sermon, but I would like to share with you one of his short, but scriptural and meaningful articles which was published in the weekly bulletin (4/20/11) of the Vicksburg church. (alf)

- Eric Welch -

Wrong song stanza. A pitch too high or too low. A mis-spoken word. Bread and fruit of the vine switched. Mistakes in the assembly are constant reminders that we are human, but how we respond to them must show that we are a spiritual family.

Let us give our brothers who lead in worship some slack. Those who make the mistake will often correct themselves or apologize if the mistake cannot be undone. Remember, the mistake is also embarrassing to the brother who made it, especially if he is nervous in front of people. A good word of assurance, especially by a shepherd in public, goes a long way to encourage him.

Perhaps the most difficult mistakes are mis-spoken words. Sometimes the speaker catches



Eric Welch

them, but many times he does not. When I mis-spoke recently during Wednesday Bible class, I immediately realized that it did not come out right. I corrected it and then emphasized that I would not knowingly contradict myself.

Recently, when the fruit of

the vine was inadvertently served first, I was surprised at first, but I quickly realized that nothing changed theologically. It did not keep me from thinking of the cleansing blood of Jesus. I was also reminded of Luke 22:17-19, in which Jesus serves the cup *before* and *after* the bread. Indeed, we want to do things decently and in order because we want to please God and because we love Him. Yet we must also realize that He loved us first (1 John 4:10) and lavished His grace upon us. We cannot earn God's pleasure.

Why do we study the Bible and worship in our assemblies? Are we there to **laud** the Lord from the songs, prayers and offering? Are we there to **learn** from the message taken from the Bible? Or are we there to **leap** upon a brother who makes the slightest mistake? I hope that we will do the former and be gracious to him because God has been to us. *Eric Welch; Vicksburg Church of Christ; 3333 North Frontage Rd; Vicksburg, MS 39180; vickcofc@cablelynx.com*

More Baptisms Reported

Clinton MS Church bulletin:

Kelsey Hammons was baptized wednesday night. Please welcome Kelsey into our Christian family. We have had three baptisms in the month of June... The other two new Christians are Lisa Levine and McKayla Hollingsworth. (John Allan, preacher at Clinton)

FULTON

The Fulton Bible Institute will begin at the Fulton Church of Christ in Fulton, Mississippi on Tuesday night, August 23, 2011 from 7:00-8:30 p.m. The study will be "The Life of Christ."

VICKSBURG

A Gospel Meeting is planned for September 11-14, 2011 at the Vicksburg Church of Christ with **Keith Parker** of Hendersonville, Tennessee as guest speaker.

Subject of Salvation

Words in **RED** spoken by Jesus Christ

BELIEVE: "...for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins."

(John 8:24b) **REPENT:** "...except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

(Luke 13:3,5) **BE BAPTIZED:** "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark 16:16)

MUST DO GOD'S WILL: "Not everyone that saith unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 7:21)

KEEP COMMANDMENTS: "If you love me, keep my commandments." (John 14:15)

(See Question Box)

These Sent In Answers

(Turn to Page 24)

1. Susie Johnson
2. Eula Roundtree
3. Vera Spencer
4. Penny Clanton
5. Lawrence Horn
6. Alma Maddox
7. Judy Hill
8. Jim Hill
9. Marilyn Howell
10. Willa Fox
11. Wm. & Atlean Snow
12. Susan Daley
13. Faye Stanford
14. Carol Bonner
15. Bernita Booker
16. Sherron Dixon
17. Katie Houston
18. Doyce Britt
19. Patrilla Maddox
20. Marie Green
21. Wilda Pounds
22. Shelia Hall
23. Emily Hall
24. Elledith Harris
25. Pat Moore
26. Lenola Balentine
27. Linda Hogue
28. Jimmy & Clara Davis
29. Brenda Vick
30. Cheri G. Moore
31. Lana Todd
32. Martha West
33. Dahlia McAfee
34. Pam Bateman
35. Marie Lively
36. Mrs. B. H. Darby
37. Barbara A. Beard
38. Buddy Parsons
39. Natalie Grisham
40. Grover E. Carter
41. Bobby Lively
42. Ann Kimble
43. Pearl Hitt
44. Kay Shiers
45. Wilma Branch
46. Dot Winslett
47. Sandra Martin
48. Travis Hamilton
49. Ruby Wright
50. Imogene Grayson
51. Martha Carolyn Stevens
52. Carolyn Garrett
53. Peggy Wroten
54. Iva Hill
55. Melba Ogg
56. Myra D. Reaves
57. Betty & Lyman York
58. Ken Harris
59. Linda F. Anderson
60. Evelyn Faulkenberry
61. Tommy J. Muirhead
62. Mary Howell
63. Mary L. Smith
64. Barbara White
65. Bobbie Loggins
66. Billy J. Smith
67. Madonna Michael
68. Mary M. McDonald
69. Coy Daily
70. Nadine Patton
71. Beulah Rupert
72. Sue Glenn
73. Merlene Scott
74. Ella Darnell
75. Julius Lee Morris
76. Paul & Elsie Bryson
77. Barbara Beard
78. Carole Shelby
79. Frederick A. Jones
80. Ray Parham
81. Lexie Ivy
82. Mary J. Adams
83. Linda B. Keirn
84. Billy Willingham
85. Donna Gulley
86. Carolyn Harvill
87. Mrs. V. E. Buffington
88. Ed Istre
89. Betty Van Buren
90. Doris Darnell
91. Era Hinson
92. Thomas Forrest, Sr.
93. Linda Crochet
94. Ima Jean Fogus
95. Yvonne Swilley
96. Mrs. W. C. Wells
97. Betty A. Skinner
98. John L. Gates, Jr.
99. Charles Coffey
100. Stephen Delashmit
101. M/M Arthur Burnett
102. Scott Gallaher
103. Mildred Herrington
104. Dick Green
105. Roger King
106. Dorthy Ford
107. Inez & Laura Brannon
108. Cindy Vest
109. Irene Wright
110. Everett Boyd
111. Bobby Brown
112. Johnny & Princess Watson
113. Hazel Perkins
114. Rosie Mae Felton
115. Charlane Stanfield
116. Martha J. Freeman
117. Stacey & Melinda Hawkins
118. William Glover
119. Veva Dykes
120. Mr. Michael Coleman
121. Jolene Dale
122. Carolyn Perry
123. Bonnie Skates
124. Rita Wilson
125. Annie Mae Pipkin
126. Dorothy Brunson
127. Adella Gilbert
128. Betty Clark
129. Cecilia Field
130. Debra Michael
131. Eugene Norwood
132. Peggy S. Walker
133. Minnie Gwyne
134. Phillip Bradley
135. Danny Stacks
136. Kathie A. Stacks
137. Betty Brown
138. Kerry Deaton
139. Helen Ward
140. Pat Morris
141. Amy Hutson
142. Dorsa Sparks
143. Brad Cochran
144. Wanda Yancey
145. Linda T. Shirley
146. Glenda Jefcoat
147. Sidney Robinson
148. Shellie Hancock
149. Brenda Harvill
150. Frances Harrell
151. Janie Green
152. Mattie Ann Owens
153. James R. Brooks
154. Peggy Hartman
155. Ms. Helen Newsom
156. Betty Shackelford
157. Ella F. Gentry
158. Sarah R. Day
159. Olye Rush
160. Leslie Franks
161. Wes & Rhoda Jeans
162. Nicholas Slaydon
163. Jessica Slaydon
164. Stephanie Slaydon
165. Dorothy Franks
166. Earl Franks
167. Lucy Franks
168. James Hudley
169. Addie Brown
170. Jerry Jones
171. Ollie Wooten
172. Mary L. Williams
173. Mary R. Dennis
174. Mary Alice Jones
175. Sally Jones
176. Cathey E. Brooks
177. Vera Winfrey
178. Deborah Brannon
179. Shirley Tarver
180. Doris Carroll
181. Lois Ginn
182. Gladys Bryant
183. Bernice Townsel
184. Myrtle Rogers
185. Laudice D. Scrimshire
186. Genie Henning
187. Jennifer Gray
188. Dorothy W. Hagger
189. Martha Williams
190. June Faulkner
191. Lauren Harris
192. Cathey Roberson
193. Glen Brady
194. Marvin England
195. Charlotte Vandiver
196. Foy C. Smith
197. Frances Griffin
198. Exie Motes
199. Ms. Ruth Christian
200. Sue Mason
201. Michelle Simpson
202. Margaret A. Bailey
203. John Hazel
204. Shirley Bostick
205. Evelyn Page
206. Garry Gooch
207. Admiral & Ruth Tidwell
208. Mrs. Sharon Freeman
209. Bonnie Dixon
210. Linda Cook
211. Ellene Vaughan
212. Lorene Lindsey
213. Bonnie B. Glass
214. Margaret Googe
215. Dee Kepler
216. Lucy Ross
217. William Pyron
218. Marcella A. Moore
219. Mrs. Brenda Burlison
220. Linda McKinney
221. Ms. Dorothy Laws
222. Melvin & Kay Linton
223. Sherry Townsend
224. Estelle Glover
225. Angela Jackson
226. Anita Lee
227. Mrs. Bertie Wilson
228. Ruby McCrory
229. Mrs. Pinky Hawes
230. M/M Ken Sullins
231. Ralph & Doris Gillespie
232. Ann Holeman
233. Mrs. Cecil Smith
234. June Brents
235. Sidney Clemmer
236. Margaret Parker
237. Jim Vermillion
238. Mrs. Eddie Vermillion
239. Eunice M. Kirkwood
240. Rick Bishop
241. Pierce Flatt
242. Mrs. Doris Jean Fletcher
243. Lisa Dettor
244. Juanita Bryant
245. Imogene Kirk
246. Verna Spake
247. Carole Childers
248. Bonnie Poore
249. Ginny Luther
250. Don Lee
251. Marie Sykes
252. Sherry Gordon
253. Dora Lynn Felton
254. Helen Gordon
255. Tiffany Mobley
256. Gwendolyn Bryant
257. Bill Moore
258. Taisheivya Smith
259. Wendy Williams
260. Wanda Eaves
261. Robbie Cole
262. JoAnn Mills
263. Keli Perkins
264. Mary Lou Mirante
265. Annette Vinson
266. Martha Perkins
267. Betty Husband
268. M/M Jerry Lewis
269. Elvis & Ruby Dilmore
270. Shawne Jackson
271. Milton Simpson
272. Frances Newman
273. Bonnie Howell
274. Gail Gurganus
275. Hattie Hooper
276. Lisa Dearman
277. **Brenda Dierkes**
278. Claude & Alberta Houston
279. Bodean Collum
280. Christine Holliday
281. Ms. Lucille Jackson
282. Fred & Nadine Wesson
283. Ms. Gail McMillen
284. Caleb Wilson
285. Mrs. Shelia A. Williams
286. Richard Ellis
287. Mrs. Katie Barmer
288. Sandy Dean
289. Millie & Floyd Goode
290. Harlen & Ruth Headley
291. Mariah Wallace
292. Kathey James
293. Mary Dell Wise
294. Dee Collier
295. Bronwen Pollard
296. Tommy & Peggy Shull
297. Billie Nolas
298. Diane Dunaway
299. Rosa Lee Johnson
300. Manuel & Al Cotton
301. Alice Dempsey
302. Ms. Mary Brannon
303. Joyce A. King
304. Elizabeth Hines
305. Carolyn Kendrick
306. Nelle Grissom
307. Marty Danilchuk
308. Elizabeth Dickerson
309. Bea Stelmach
310. Betty Standard
311. Eula Roundtree
312. Sandra Welch
313. Irma Lucas
314. Bowden & Melba Grisham
315. Vera Ashmore
316. Mildred Carroll
317. Claude Edwards
318. Dorothy Colwell
319. Shirley Phillips
320. Anna Pruitt
321. Windy Blackmon
322. Jim Nowell
323. Ann McDonald
324. Jo Masters
325. Linda Matheny
326. Maggie R. Edmonds
327. Josie L. Isaacs
328. Juanita LeBouef
329. Betty Stewart
330. Mary T. Feist
331. Mrs. Dean Howe
332. Phillip Carter
333. Shirley Styers
334. Dwight E. Hester
335. Jeff & Debbie Shull
336. Joe B. Holmes
337. Olen Roden
338. Nellie Dickinson
339. Ms. Eileen Williford
340. Eva Almon
341. Rosie Lee Odoms
342. Trey Williams
343. Lacey Mastin
344. Jayleh Sullivan
345. Jackie Sullivan
346. Kyla Elena Hunter
347. Elizabeth Sullivan
348. Elisha Mastin
349. Aybreyah Moore
350. Diamond Johnson
351. Rasband Ewing
352. Shamyia Smith
353. Jaidlyn Moore
354. Trey Williams
355. James Hoy
356. Fran Williford
357. Wilford Edwards
358. Margaret Ratliff
359. Dannie Davis
360. Clifford Crowder
361. Ruby Pounds
362. Bettie Brown
363. Barbara Joe Brewer
364. Mae Gatewook
365. Bernice Mills
366. Mary Salinas
367. George Tindall
368. Betty Chattman
369. Eleanor Townsend
370. Kathy Perry
371. Mary Faulconer
372. Edmon & Kathy Wheeler
373. Althea House
374. Mary A. Jacobs
375. Elgene Sanders
376. Joyce Key
377. Kaye Wise
378. Patsy McClung
379. Hazel Cook
380. Evelyn M. Doss
381. Jean Forrester
382. Daisy Tierce
383. Eileen Ferrebee
384. Charlene Williams
385. Catherine A. Allen
386. Trey Henry
387. Jasha Hollis
388. Morgan Henry
389. Phillip Chapman
390. Reid Thompson
391. Frieda Thompson
392. Patsy Muniz
393. Barbara Yates
394. Juanita Akin
395. Thelma Pendergrass
396. Stacy & Melinda Hawkins
397. Edith Winters
398. Thelma Talbert
399. Minnie Young
400. Gloria J. Young
401. Ronald A. Helms
402. Shirley Dewett
403. Barbara Loden
404. James Breckenridge
405. Leta F. Anderson
406. Brenda Pierce
407. Mark Williams
408. Booneville, Ms. No Name
409. Dianna Alcede
410. Joey Alcede
411. Debbie Anderson
412. Jimmy Anderson
413. Kyle Anderson
414. Kathie Bordelon
415. Otis Boudreaux
416. Paulette Boudreaux
417. Sarah Brummett
418. Dortha Carlile
419. Karen Cash
420. Janice Sue Crowell
421. Kasey Crowell
422. Alice Cooper
423. Vester Cooper
424. Debbie Doucet
425. Suzan Dubrock
426. Butch Elkins
427. Judith Elkins
428. Louis Estes
429. Marilyn Estes
430. Vicky Estes
431. Ena Franks
432. Glen Franks
433. Glenda Franks
434. Paul Franks
435. Agnes Gandy
436. Randall Gandy
437. Margaret Griffin
438. Steve Griffin
439. Patricia Hanney
440. Linda Jones
441. Sandra Martin
442. Rose Mier
443. Linda Reed
444. Debra Sigmund
445. Evelyn Sigmund
446. John Sigmund
447. Andi Sims
448. Jwill Sims
449. Denise Stout
450. Edrice Thomas
451. Leora White
452. Bud Wranosky
453. Linda Wranosky
454. Aubrey & Dean Bass
455. Louisa W. Ganier
456. Patricia Posey
457. Hattie Johnson
458. Sibyl Goodman
459. Daphne Stephens
460. Connie Fountain
461. Billie Boyd
462. Natalie Stewart
463. Della M. Rhodes
464. Lou Smith
465. Trillie Strickland
466. Velma DeLancey
467. Cleta Burnett
468. Lessie Tanson
469. Karen Bells
470. McArthur Mullins, Jr.
471. Tommy Tidwell
472. Billie Jane Davis
473. **YOUR NAME --**
Next time? How about it?

NOTE: All answers received by us as of August 19, 2011 have been recognized in this issue of the MM. Answers received later will be noted in our next issue to be published on/about November 15, God willing. **Thank you for answering "The Question Box."**

I'm not just talking about dancing, drinking and partying. I'm talking about our buying into the world's values as relating to success, competition, status and prominence.

Read:

"The Mess We's In"
(Page 19)

Hoyet Evin Hathcock
Another Preacher Has Departed

1926-2011

Hoyet Hathcock, a long time preacher of the gospel (since the early 50's) finished his earthly journey on June 12, 2011, and has now departed, hopefully, to be with the Good Lord forever.

After nearly 85 years of earthly sojourn, brother Hoyet left behind many precious family members including his wife, **Sibyl**, to whom he had been married nearly 64 years (since July of 1947).



Hoyet Hathcock

(A picture of a photograph placed at head of brother Hoyet's casket at his funeral service)

was shown in that they were invited to return for a second time to serve several congregations.

Among the many comments made about brother Hoyet, the following were noted. "He was faithful in whatever he was doing. He sought to be the best he could be and always follow God's will. He loved singing and enjoyed gospel music. Hoyet enjoyed working outside and traveling with his wife."

Hoyet is also survived by three children and their families -- a daughter, **Teresa Smith** of Tuscaloosa, AL and two sons, **Philip** of Amory, MS and **John** of Jacksonville, FL.

Hoyet was, much of his working life, a "vocational preacher." In addition to preaching he enjoyed teaching school. His first sermon was preached in 1952 at the Christian Chapel church, near Amory, Mississippi. Then, beginning in 1956 (for more than 50 years) brother Hathcock served as preacher for several Alabama and Mississippi churches of Christ. Alabama churches included Detroit, Mobile, and Berry. Mississippi churches included West Chapel, Leland, Caledonia, Lone Oak, Kosciusko (late sixties), Lawson Chapel and Smithville. The respect that brethren had for the Hathcock family

Funeral services for Hoyet Hathcock were conducted on Wednesday, June 15, 2011, at the Amory church building where one of his sons, Philip, serves as preacher. Robert Rawson, one of the several hundred who went to Amory for visitation and/or to attend the "Celebration of Life" service, stated, "It was quite a nice service and tribute mixed. Leslie Grant led singing of four songs. Philip, himself, led one song and Joe Williams led the opening prayer... the service was blessed by James Segars' eulogy."

EDITOR'S NOTE: This report was prepared from information supplied by the Hathcock family to E. E. Pickle Funeral Home in Amory, Mississippi. A request was included that memorials be given to Smithville Church of Christ; PO Box 56; Smithville, MS 38870-0056 or Amory Church of Christ/ Education Fund; PO Box 371; Amory, MS 38821.

"Loving Hearts -- Helpful Hands"

Join us for Ladies' Day

September 24, 2011

9:00 a.m. -- 12:00 p.m.

**Amory,
 Mississippi
 Church of Christ**

(North Blvd at Concord)

Speaker

Jane Washington

Lunch will be provided!

"And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works." (Hebrews 10:24)

Annual Ladies' Day

Ridgeland, Mississippi

Lake Harbour Drive

Church of Christ

Saturday, October 1, 2011

8:30 am-1:00 pm

Guest Speaker::**Becky Fowler Blackmon**

(Author of "The Begging Place")

Theme: "My Place In His Kingdom"

Topics: "Come And Meet Esther" "What In The World Do I Have In Common With A Persian Queen?"

Morning refreshments and lunch provided

RSVP: **Tonya Houston:** 601-750-4975

or **Beth Pigg:** 601-856-8754

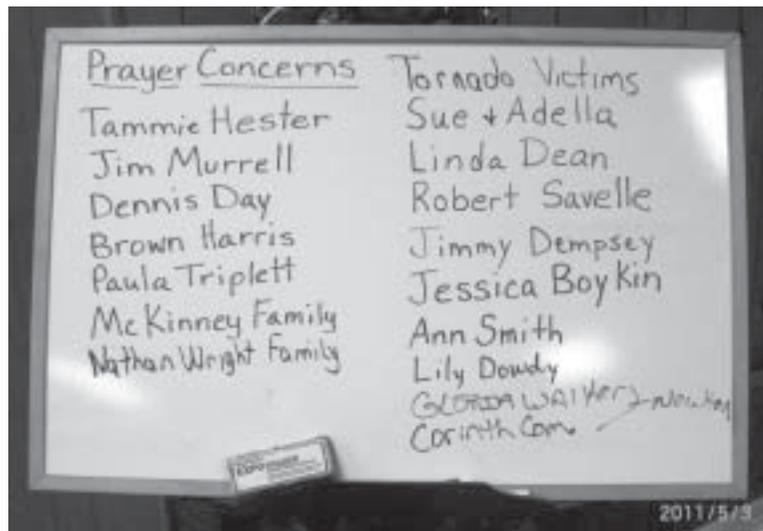


Theola Burton
 Active at Age 90

On June 1, 2011, Theola Burton of Winona, Mississippi turned 90 years of age. Not only is she faithful to attend services of the Winona congregation, it is not unusual to see her visiting other congregations during Gospel Meetings and/or special events. The above picture was made in July of this year at a weeknight service of the Old Union church in Carrollton County, MS.

Sister Burton is well known locally for her personal efforts to serve the Lord and is more widely known because she is the mother of Betty Choate, wife of the late J. C. Choate. (The Choates were very active in foreign missions for many years. Betty remains involved!)

Theola Burton is known for her encouragement to others and her faithfulness to the Lord. Her example of activity at 90 is truly an inspiration to many. May God richly bless.



PRAYER LISTS help identify God's children who truly believe in the care of their Loving Heavenly Father. God's people take seriously the admonition to "pray without ceasing" and believe strongly in the inspired promise, "The supplication of a righteous man availeth much in its working." (James 5:16 ASV)

Recent Bible Winner

Vera Winfrey

Denver, Colorado

She sent in answers to "The Question Box"

See Page 24

Her name was drawn!

Congratulations!



Vera Winfred

Have You Answered "The Question Box", Lately?

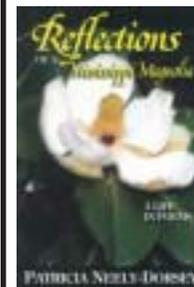
Salvation

*As a child, I was so curious,
 About religious things;
 I'd buy so many Bible books,
 And to each word I'd cling.*

*I wanted quite desperately,
 To know what path to take;
 Somehow, I wanted explained to me,
 How a right decision I could make.*

*I learned the keys were quite simple,
 Once they were taught to me;
 Hear, Believe, Repent, Confess, Be Baptized;
 It was quite clear to see.*

*So, into Christ's church I was baptized,
 Obeying -- without a doubt;
 Then, finally, I knew at last,
 What salvation was all about.*



Submitted to the MM by Patricia Neely-Dorsey; a member of the North Green Street Church of Christ in Tupelo, MS. It is included in her book, *Reflections of a Mississippi - Magnolia - A Life in Poems*. Her e-mail address: magnoliagirl21@yahoo.com



Patricia Neely-Dorsey

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

- Lessons Learned - A Day in Court

- June Franks -

I spent a day in court on August 1, 2011. It was certainly not an enjoyable day but, thankfully, I was not there to go before the Judge personally. I was just a spectator in the audience.

It was, however, a very interesting day. A day in which I could see and hear the court proceedings and see first hand how the Judicial system works. The day spent in court afforded me a opportunity to reflect and to be reminded of some very important lessons.

We were at the court house to attend a pre-sentencing hearing on behalf of a young man who was to be sentenced for crimes he had committed and to which he had plead "guilty."

Some who were present for the day in court had been asked to appear before the judge as "witnesses" on behalf of the guilty. Their united purpose was to appeal to the court asking that the young man be allowed to remain in the "treatment center" where he had been for the past eight months. They came to state reasons they believed that both "justice" and the guilty would be best served if he be allowed to remain in an environment that had proven to be of great benefit to him.

As the day in court progressed, one could not help but to feel sad. Several of those going before the Judge were in handcuffs and were wearing clothes issued by the jail system. It was evident that they had made some very poor choices in their lives. And, because of the bad choices they had made, they were having to suffer the consequences.

It appeared to me that one young man who was brought before the Judge for sentencing had just happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. As a result, he was facing the possibility of life in prison, even though he claimed that he was not guilty.

My day in court reminded me of certain Bible teachings. The Bible says, "Be not deceived: Evil companions corrupt good morals." (I Corinthians 15:33) **It does matter with whom we associate.** The Bible plainly says, "Be



June Franks

not deceived." Because of his association with the wrong kind of people, this young man could possibly be sent to prison for life.

We were also reminded of the fact that **your sins will find you out.** The Bible says, "...ye have sinned against the Lord: and be sure your sin will find you out." (Numbers 32:23) The Bible also says, "For the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings." (Proverbs 5:21)

Those who were going before the Judge that day could not escape the evidence against them. The Judge had in his possession extensive records detailing evidence of crimes committed, which went back for several years. The records were there. Even some of those who were appearing before the Judge may have forgotten some of the things they had done.

This lesson we must not forget. We need to be reminded that the things we have done in the past have a way of catching up with us.

On that day in court, I was reminded once again of just **how bad sin is.** By looking around, you could see the tears and feel the hurt that many had and were experiencing. It made me realize anew that what we do affects other people, especially our loved ones.

I was also reminded of just **how important it is to do right.** Many have been heard to say, "Well, it is my business what I do... I'm not hurting anyone else." But, if you had been in the court room on that day, you could have seen **innocent ones** (family and friends) who were deeply hurt because of the unwise and illegal acts of others.

The most important lesson I was reminded of on the day I spent

in court was the fact that one day **we are to all appear before THE Judge!**

The Bible says, "For we must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." (II Corinthians 5:10)

On that day in court, the Judge held the fate (future) of those who appeared before him. It is a very sobering thought to realize that each of us must appear before God in the day of Judgement. God is to judge us according to our deeds -- whether we have done good or bad. No one will be exempt from appearing before this Judge. The Bible says "All" will appear before God!

Let us be reminded of this old saying, "*Sin will take you further than you want to go, keep you longer than you want to stay and cost you more than you want to pay.*" (Author unknown to me)

Just as I was reminded of lessons learned the day I spent in court, in summary, let us all be reminded of these very important lessons:

1. The choices we may make in life are of utmost importance!
2. It does matter with whom we associate!
3. Our sins will find us out!
4. What we do affects others!
5. Most importantly: We are to all stand before God (Christ), the Judge, in the day of Judgement!

	Mrs. A. L. Franks	
	P. O. Box 1578	
	Kosciusko, MS 39090	
	franksmm@aol.com	

Ruleville, Mississippi The Sisters of Delmar Proudly Present the 13 Annual Ladies' Day Program

Theme: K.I.S.S.

"Keep It Simple Sisters"

(Scripture: 2 Cor. 11:3)

Saturday,

September 17, 2011

8:00-8:50

Registration/Breakfast/Wellness
Screening

9:00 - 12:15 -- Program

12:15 -- Lunch

For additional information,

call **Deborah Moore,**

Executive Chairperson

662-721-5641

POEMS

By
Barbara

Barbara Cagle Ray

BCagleRay@Aol.Com



A Living Monument

"He left a son who bore his name."

A man built a mansion, it fell into the dust.
He authored a book, no one knew its name.
A sculpture he fashioned, it turned into rust,
But he still sought recognition and fame.

As he labored to raise his living monument,
He began to feel discouraged and all alone.
Then he chose to adopt a young abandoned boy,
Who'd been sent to the county orphan's home.

He taught the boy how to trust once again,
And raised him in Christian faith and Light.
The boy grew to manhood and taught God's word;
People were drawn to him, like stars to night.

His father began to grow old and frail,
Still feeling that he'd not achieved his fame.
Peacefully one night, he slowly slipped away,
But he left a son who bore his name.

His son became a respected man of God;
People recognized his name everywhere he went.
Without realizing what he'd finally achieved,
The father had raised his living monument.

Accepting Flaws

"If you accept the rose, you accept the thorns."

Lush hidden treasures, delicate as lace,
Open with the fragrance of sweet perfume.
Tender velvet roses, so perfectly designed,
Emerge from bursting buds to glorious bloom.

They sparkle like gems, kissed by dew,
As they open wide their scarlet arms.
Cascading over an arbor or in a vase,
They curl tenderly, like a mother's arms.

Mother Nature buzzes with hearty applause,
As roses unfurl, so radiantly adorned.
How can anything be so perfectly made,
And still be plagued with prickly thorns?

They seem to add depth to its beauty;
The unique quality of the rose is revealed.
Without the thorns, wouldn't the rose,
Be just another flower in the field?

The rose teaches a valuable lesson:
It has flaws, though beautifully formed.
You can't love it without its imperfections—
If you accept the rose, you accept the thorns.

Use KJV
for wording & spelling

The Question Box

Use KJV
for wording & spelling

The Shortest Gospel

Mark: Lesson 2 (Chapters 9 - 16)

You are invited to devote a few minutes of your God-given time in reviewing the shortest of the four gospel records of the life of Jesus Christ. This study of Mark is the second of two lessons covering the "Shortest Gospel." (See previous issue of the MM for the first lesson.) All answers can be found in the **last 8 chapters** of the book of Mark.

By taking just a little time to answer the "Question Box," you will be edified, others will be encouraged and

you may be selected as our new Bible winner. (Each issue of the MM, we randomly select the name of one student who has sent in answers to the "QB" and to him/her award a beautiful new Study Bible.)

Please send your **completed** lesson to us. This time, **YOU** may be our newest Bible winner. Thanks for your interest in Bible study and thanks for sending in your answers.

(alf, MM editor/QB author)

True or False

(Based on the writings of **Mark chapter 9**, indicate with a "T" or "F" which of the following statements are either true or false. Also write in blanks provided the correct references where answers are found.)

1. Jesus taught that the kingdom of God would come with power during the lifetime of some who lived during the first century. (Mark ____:1)
2. The ninth chapter of Mark mentions two *different* men with the name "Elias" [Elijah]. (____&____)
3. Mark does not reveal what Jesus, Moses and Elias talked about on the mount of transfiguration; however, I know the topic of their conversation. (Study Mark 9 and Luke 9) The topic was: _____.

Locate Verses

Locate each of the following verses or parts of verses found in the **last eight chapters of the book of Mark**. Meditate on the meaning of each message. Okay? Also, write in the missing chapter or verse.

1. "...He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark 16:____)
2. "And with him they crucify two thieves; the one on his right hand and the other on his left." (15:____)
3. "Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready but the flesh is weak." (____:38)
4. "Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away." (____:31)
5. "...Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." (12:____)
6. "...My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves." ____:17)
7. "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." (10:____)
8. "Where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched." (9:____)

Matching

Match each word in the left column with the appropriate word or phrase in the right column. (**All answers are found in the last half of Mark.**)

- | | |
|-------------|------------------------------|
| ___ Garden | 1. Box of ointment |
| ___ "Skull" | 2. Abomination of desolation |
| ___ Daniel | 3. Cyrenian |
| ___ Simon | 4. Golgotha |
| ___ 300+ | 5. Gethsemane |

Who Said/Asked?

Match the person(s) in column one with the appropriate statement/question in column two. (**Mk 9-16**)

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| ___ Young Man in white | 1. "Master, we saw one casting out devils... he followeth us not... we forbade him...." (Mark 9:____) |
| ___ John | 2. "...Which is the first commandment of all?" (____:____) |
| ___ Centurion | 3. "...Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand and the other on thy left hand...." (____:37) |
| ___ James and John | 4. "And what I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch." (13:____) |
| ___ High Priest | 5. "...Master, behold the fig tree which thou cursedst is withered away." (____:____) |
| ___ Jesus | 6. "...Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" (14:____) |
| ___ Simon Peter | 7. "...Truly this man was the Son of God." (____:____) |
| ___ A Scribe | 8. "...He is risen; He is not here." (____:____) |

Please Send Your Answers To Us

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State _____

Zip: _____ Phone: _____

Notice: Each person who sends in answers will be recognized in the next issue of the "MM" (see page 21). Also, by random drawing, the name of one student will be selected to receive 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

We
Ventured
Out of
Our Area
to
Vidor
Texas



460 East Freeway; Vidor, Texas

A few weeks ago, on July 31, 2011, my June and I ventured outside of our usual area for MM news. We were in Vidor, a small city in SE Texas, near Beaumont.

We were privileged, not only to visit with my one and only sister (**Ina Jay Sadler**), but also to visit the Sunday services of the East Freeway congregation. We were richly blessed.

We found a friendly church that extended a warm welcome. We also benefited from the capable teaching of **George Worlow**, an elder, who taught the adult auditorium class. Afterwards, the preacher, **Tony Pulliam** manifested his talents *both* as a song leader and preacher in the presentation of a very meaningful lesson. He combined spiritual songs, scriptural readings and practical exhortations showing the power of Christ when we allow Him to control our lives.

The visit was even more spe-

cial when I was given the opportunity of preaching at the afternoon service and also introducing the *Magnolia Messenger* to the east Texas church.

Our special thanks to the Vidor church of Christ which is overseen by elders **Frank Anderson, Keith Barnes, Chuck Bryant, Archie Tibbits** and **George Worlow**.

In their weekly bulletin the following statement is printed. "We welcome you to the church of Christ that meets at 460 East Freeway, where we strive to follow God's plan for the church as outlined in the New Testament. We are delighted that you have chosen to be with us. You are invited to worship with us in spirit and in truth and search the Scriptures daily."

I want to thank all of the Vidor church family for what you mean to my sister, Ina. She truly loves the Vidor church and it is apparent that you love her. Thanks! (alf)

Newest Bible Winner **Brenda Dierkes** Charleston, WV *Congratulations!*

Please Consider Answering
"The Question Box"
Increase your knowlege, encourage others, PLUS you may be our next Bible winner!

BROOKHAVEN -- MT. ZION

Al recently preached in a Gospel Meeting at the Mt. Zion Church of Christ near Brookhaven, Mississippi. We truly enjoyed the meeting at Mt. Zion -- wonderful people, wonderful fellowship. We are also pleased to announce that **Taylor Smith** was baptized into Christ during the meeting. We especially enjoyed our association with **Ronnie and Sharon Lofton**. Ronnie is the preacher for the Mt. Zion congregation.

Summer Flowers

as seen in my
June's yard
in Kosciusko.

More of the
beauty of God's
handiwork.

So is life.

"The grass
withereth, and
the flower
falleth:

But the word
of the Lord
abideth
forever."
(1 Peter 1:24,25)

