

Stop Dating The Church

by Steve Higginbotham

I recently read a book by Joshua Harris by the above title. In this book Harris affirmed that there are many people who “date” the church, but who are unwilling to fall in love with and be committed to the church. And you know, I think he’s right. How many people do you know who are “believers” but they’re not “belongers.” They believe in Jesus, but don’t want to be tied down. They “date” the church, but want to remain independent and free of commitment and responsibility.

Friends, instead of seeing the church for all its flaws and foibles, why not see it as the wisdom of God (Ephesians 3:9-11), and the beautiful bride of Christ (Ephesians 5:25-32). Committing to the church doesn’t tie one down, rather it anchors one through the storms of life. And it’s flaws? It’s flaws provide us with an opportunity to love, serve, practice patience, and grow more like our Savior.

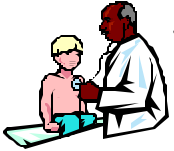
Listen friends, don’t allow yourself to use the excuse that the church is too messed up to commit to it. Jesus is the only one who has the right to disown or give up on the church, but he never has and never will.

Therefore, let me leave you with this challenge. Many people are fond of saying that we need to develop a heart for the poor or a heart for the lost, and these are good desires. But may I challenge you to also develop a heart for the church? Get involved. Get committed. Take on responsibility. Invest yourself. After all, if Jesus loves the church, shouldn’t we?

From MercEmail May 21, 2009

Sick

Continue to remember in prayer: **Marguerite Charles, Margaret Kratz, Lyn Anderson, Martha Keith, Miriam Majors, Betty Jenkins, WJ Wood, Jonnie Charles, Buddy Martin, Jo Ann Paul, Tim Darr**



Jim Dorsett continues to improve. He was expected to go to the Raleigh Court Rehabilitation Center over the weekend for a short time to build up his strength before going home.

Michele Nikkel will have a procedure on June 8 in Charlottesville.

Velma Vaughn, **Collin Gregory's** sister, is in ICU at LGH.

Peggy Paxton will have surgery on May 29.

AW Martin, **Bobby Martin's** brother, will have surgery in July.

Happy Birthday this week to:

Laura Simms—5/26
Myrtle Peverall—5/31



Happy Anniversary this week to:

Bobby & Peggy Paxton—5/25
Claude & Mary Ellen Crowe—5/27



MAY ITEMS FOR THE STAFF-

FORDS: Hormel Real Bacon Bits, assorted Ziplocs. Give your items to Jeanny and she will ship them over!

*Remember the container that is going to Tanzania this summer. We are collecting items for the Stafford and Farigi Paul families until June 14th. If you need another shopping list, see Jeanny.

WOW

Next WOW meeting will be on Tuesday, June 9, at 10:30.

Upcoming Events:



Team 1 (Durham) will be in charge of set up for the Gospel Meeting Fellowship. They will Feed The Preacher on Monday at Marc & Jennifer Laplante's home at 4:00. Please pay \$1 per person for the meat to Jennifer by May 20 and sign up on the board.

Team 2 (Garby) will be responsible for drinks & ice for the Gospel Meeting Fellowship. They will Feed The Preacher on Tuesday at Mama Maria's at 5:15.

Team 3 (Valentine) will be cleaning up after the Gospel Meeting Fellowship. They will be Feeding the Preacher on Wednesday at the building with a catered meal. Sign up sheet located in the hall and pay \$5 at the door.

Teens

Teen Class will meet in the Auditorium this morning for class.



May Events

Gospel Meeting—5/24-27
Young Men Conduct Services—5/31
Last day for RSVP to the Banquet—5/31

The teens will be doing **odd jobs** this summer. If you have a project the teens could do for you please let Luke know!

Luke is also looking for **devo speakers** (male & female) for this summer. Please let him know by May 31 if you are interested.

Horizon's, CTS and Bus Forms are located in the foyer. **Get yours sent in today!!** Give Bus Forms to Mike Durham.

Jack & Lori Cook will be hosting an Open House in honor of Amanda's Graduation on June 6 from 11- 6.

Weekly Reminders

For Your Information

BIBLE CLASS

All classes from middle school up will meet in the auditorium this morning to hear Wade Webster.

FELLOWSHIP MEAL

Hope you brought a dish for the fellowship today—if not come anyway—there will be plenty as usual!

GOSPEL MEETING

West Side's Spring Gospel Meeting starts today with Wade Webster, of Southaven, MS. Make your plans to be here every night.

Remember services tonight start at 7:00.

FEED THE PREACHER

The Feed the Preacher schedule is on the board and everyone needs to sign up for these events!

MEET THE VAUGHNS RECEPTION

Stay and meet the newlyweds, Bethany and Matt, after evening services on May 31 in the Fellowship Room. Light refreshments will be served. Anyone desiring to give a gift is asked to participate in a "money or gift card basket" that will be available that evening (Kroger & Target gift cards are suggested).

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We welcome Jeff Guilliams to West Side! Jeff was baptized into Christ Thursday night. Be sure to extend your congratulations and a warm welcome to Jeff.

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VCC

Virginia Christian Camp will be on June 21-27 and will be here before you know it. Plans are being made for another great year at camp!

Applications are in the foyer. Deadline was May 15 so hurry and get your application sent to Curtis!!

The Craft Department is in need of felt back plastic table cloths and disposable \$1 plastic table cloths. See Jo Ann or Melissa.

Prayer list:

- Marguerite Charles
- Lyn Anderson
- Martha Keith
- Miriam Majors
- Betty Jenkins
- WJ Wood
- Margaret Kratz
- Roy Doss
- Jonnie Charles
- Jo Ann Paul
- Jim Dorsett
- Tim Darr
- Velma Vaughn
- Michele Nikkel
- Peggy Paxton

Activities:

- Gospel Meeting & Fellowship
5/24
- Gospel Meeting—5/25-27
- Feed the Preacher—5/25-27
- Young Men Services—5/31
- Vaughn Reception—5/31



May 2009

Welcome to Our Gospel Meeting!

Announcements	Mike Durham
Song Leader (AM)	Eric Earnhart
Opening Prayer (AM)	
5/3	Collin Gregory
5/10	Glen Hartman
5/17	Bob Martin
5/24	Charlie Gwaltney
5/31	Jeff Durham
Preside at Communion	Charlie Maness
Serve Table	Mark Brooks Bradford Durham Gene Benefield Norris Gearhart
Closing Prayer	
5/3	Herb Baker
5/10	Barry White
5/17	Jeremy White
5/24	Mitch Jearls
5/31	Roger Mays
Song Leader (PM)	David Brown
Opening Prayer (PM)	
5/3	Garrett Durham
5/10	Richard Simms
5/17	Jim Cooke
5/24	Jerry Anderson
5/31	Danny Guard
Scripture Reader	Sam Valentine
Closing Prayer (PM)	
5/3	Tom Rogers
5/10	Nathan Pelfrey
5/17	Charlie Puckett
5/24	Ethan Rogers
5/31	Paul Mays
Serve Table (PM)	Jim & Jimmy Harrington
Song Leader (Wed)	Tom Rogers
Prayer (Wed)	
5/6	Jason Oldham
5/13	Bob Garby
5/20	Cameron Brown
5/27	Shawn Simms
Open/Close Bldg Greeters	Bob Garby Argabright/Cook
Nursery Attend	Bonnie Mellon S. Mountcastle
Ushers	Bob Garby Curtis Oakes
Handouts	Jeff, Caleb & Tanner Reed
Alternates	Lyn Shrader
Prepare communion	Grace Myers Sandra Neighbors
Cards & Pencils	Noah & Garrett Laplante

Last weeks attendance 5/17&20/09

Bible Class—149 Worship Service—189
Sunday Eve.—142 Wednesday Eve.—146
Contribution—\$5443

Today marks the beginning of a series that we have looked forward to for quite some time. Our Spring Gospel Meeting with Wade Webster begins today. Wade is the evangelist for the Southaven Church of Christ in Southaven, Mississippi. He and his wife (Jennifer) have been married for 19 years. They have four children- Parker (age 10), Claire and Emma (age 6) and Sophie (age 1). Wade is a graduate of the Memphis School of Preaching and Jacksonville State University (B.A. and M.A. in English). He has worked with congregations in Alabama, Tennessee and Mississippi. He has served as an adjunct professor for Jacksonville State University and Faulkner University in Alabama. He has been involved in full-time preaching since 1989. He conducts several meetings each year and speaks on numerous brotherhood lectureships. He is the director of the annual Power Lectures at Southaven and is the editor of that lectureship book. He is a very capable writer and outstanding gospel preacher. We are delighted to have him and Emma and Claire with us this week. We welcome them to Salem and to West Side.

If you are visiting with us today, you honor us by your presence. Even though you are our guest, we want you to feel right at home. If you have any questions regarding our worship or any other Bible topic, we will be more than happy to assist you in finding a Bible answer. We hope your being with us today will prompt you to return for more of this series. We would be honored to have you at any time. Please avail yourself of any of the instructional material in our foyer and, if we can assist you in any other way, please let us know. We invite you to stay and have lunch with us following our morning worship. Again, thank you for being here.

-Eddy

May 24, 2009

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