

FROM THE PREACHER'S HEART:

WELCOME, VISITORS! We are so honored by your presence. It is our desire to worship the one true God in spirit and truth (John 4:24). Let us investigate the Holy Scriptures and reason together (Acts 17:11; Isaiah 1:18). If you have questions about what you hear or observe, please discuss them with us. We hope you will visit with us again!

Attendance continues to be down due to so much sickness among our members. Some have returned to be with us, but others are still unable to assemble. We miss you and hope you will be better soon. We have been blessed with visitors recently and for that we are always grateful.

Several of our young people and parents were away for "Youth Unite" hosted by the Willette church of Christ this past Sunday afternoon/evening. Some returned to be with us just as our service was ending. We appreciate Justin and Sarah and all others who assist with the youth program. Let's all encourage our youth and remember to thank God, as we did in a prayer Sunday morning, for **every** age group within the congregation. Let there be no generation gap!

Justin has also planned a bowling outing for this Saturday, December 10. The cost is \$10 for a couple hours of bowling and shoe rental. See him for more information. A sign-up sheet is posted.

Ben Smith is to be with us this Sunday evening to give a report on the Lord's work in India. This is always an informative and encouraging report as thousands upon thousands have obeyed the gospel over the past several decades because of this work. Ben will bring us the latest news about the successes and challenges of that work. Plan to be here to hear it. Pray for continued success.

Pray also for the work here as the budget committees meet, plan, and present their findings to the elders who will be finalizing and presenting our 2017 budget the last of December/the first of January. Every member should be engaged in prayer and purposing in heart to be a personal part of the Lord's work in the coming year. No resolution or commitment is greater than this. As stated in the last issue, the primary focus is always on the salvation of souls. Will you personally purpose to lead a soul to Christ in 2017?

We are so happy you are here for the mid-week service. Let's all plan to be back on Sunday morning and for all scheduled gatherings every week. Worship and Bible study are ways to increase and strengthen our faith and provide a positive example to others. Hope to see you Sunday morning!

Edward L Anderson

NEWS & NOTES:

RESPONSES: Rebecca Brown responded 11/27/16 requesting prayers first and foremost for forgiveness, but also for strength as she faces medical tests and uncertainty. W. A. Gibbs also recently requested prayers for forgiveness. Both are commended for their faith in God and their desire to do His will.

SICK: Rebecca Brown underwent more tests last week with reports pending. Robert Fitts, Carol Woodard's brother underwent back surgery on Monday. Gary Lester remains in Trevecca's Health & Rehab facility in Nashville. Scotty Yeaman is scheduled for another knee surgery in mid-January. Dimple Hicks is now at home after a stay in RRMC. Leslie Alford is in Sumner Regional's CCU due to COPD. Irene Gregory was unable to be with us Sunday. It's great to have Ruby Fisher back with us. Little Josie Morris is back at home after a brief stay in Centennial due to RSV. Carolyn Harris had a reaction to a pneumonia shot and was sick a couple of days last week. The following have been dealing with bronchitis/strep/upper respiratory issues since the last bulletin: Jerry Phillips; Pam and Jody Morris; Richard Davenport; Brooke Grisham; Barbara Jenkins; Judy Grisham; Amanda, Aubrey, and Scarlett Hicks; Faye Maberry; Jake White; Hattie Branham; Seth Hackett; Alex Hackett; Emogene Dixon; and Edward and Barbara Anderson. Gaye Yeaman has not been as well the past few days. Joe Hensley's surgery has been postponed until he can consult with a cardiologist. Troy Spivey, Teddy's grandmother and Rick's aunt, was to undergo stomach surgery today (Wed.) in Nashville. It is so nice to have Mary Phillips back home and back with us. W. A. Gibbs' continues his weekly dialysis regimen and is doing well. Mary Jo Hackett is still unable to be with us regularly. Irene Gregory was able to be with us Sunday. Janice Anderson is still suffering with her feet and legs. Remember also the following in prayer: Cathy Stafford; Ray Upchurch; Earl Carter; Leslie Alford; Gary and Sherry Lester; Sherry Pritchett; Jennie Burnett; Karen Howell; Jimmy Rigsby; Arnold Rich; Kenneth Reece; Mary Phillips (Molly Goolsby's mother); Cathy Harville; Bob Harville; and Steve Dowell.

NURSING HOME/ASSISTED LIVING RESIDENTS: Opal Agee; Lovell Chaffin; Curtis Richards; Phronia Rose (Kindred); Linda Black (Carthage Pavilion); Imogene Reeves (Palace – RBS); Frank Williams, Elm Croft in Lebanon; Vestle Gentry (White Oak Nursing Facility, Spartanburg, S.C.).

SHUT-IN AT HOME: Wilma Richardson; Shirley Holmes; James Hall; and Pat Paysinger.

IN MILITARY: Jana Watson, Ann Carter's granddaughter (Army); Matt West, Linda Dicken's grandson (Marines); Zack Tongate, son of Scott & Debbie Tongate (Marines); Randy Carter's sons and Lacey Crockett's brothers, Derek (Army) & Landon Carter (Coast Guard); Benjamin Gentry (Marines).

"A soft answer turns away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger."

SHE IS HERE! Jessica and Jon Grim are the proud parents of a sweet baby girl, Mary Patricia, born Monday, December 5 at 8:05 A.M. She weighed 6 lbs. 3.6 oz. and was 18.5 inches. Mother and baby are reported to be doing well at Tenna Middle (UMC), Lebanon. Larry and Jan Silcox are proud grandparents.

CONGRATULATIONS: To Gregory Lee Norton, grandson of Frances Kemp and son of Glenn and Kathy Norton of Lebanon, on his graduation from TTU (12/10/16), with a B.S. in Education.

THANK YOU: The church has received and read a very nice "Thank You" note from Nick, Pam, Jodie, and Josie Morris.

CARDS FOR SHUT-INS: If you have not done the cards for our shut-ins, please do so ASAP. Stacks of cards and the bags for those to receive them are on the table in the foyer. It will be a blessing to those who receive them and to you as well.

"I HATE YOU!"

These words were written in somewhat small print on a sidewalk leading into an eating establishment. The print was not remotely close to the size of most graffiti. Maybe that's why it aroused my curiosity. As I stooped to get a better look and became aware of what it said, I wondered if the scribe was addressing someone in particular or just anyone who happened to read it. Perhaps the person was just "mad at the world", but I hope it was only a hasty and impulsive reaction to a perceived wrong, which has already been forgiven and forgotten.

Hate is defined as "strong dislike or ill will for; loathe, despise" (*Webster's New World Dictionary*, p 663). A principle Biblical Greek word (*miseo*), "is used especially...of malicious and unjustifiable feelings toward others, whether towards the innocent or by mutual animosity" (W. E. Vine's *Expository Dictionary of NT Words*, p 198).

Hate is of longstanding in the world. Cain evidently hated Abel, his brother (See 1 John 3:11-15). Jesus was the targeted object of hatred and He reminded His disciples that they, too, would be "hated for (His) name's sake" by men *and* nations (Matt. 10:22; 24:9).

However, unlike leaders of some other religions, Jesus teaches His followers to "do good to those who hate you" (Luke 6:27). This is a major emphasis in the Sermon on the Mount: "Love your enemies, bless them who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you, and persecute you, that you may be the children of your Father who is in heaven..." (Matt. 5:43-45).

Because of Jesus' influence and teachings, there are many people in this and other communities, who would leave an entirely different message beside the aforementioned one: **"GOD LOVE YOU, AND I LOVE YOU, TOO!"**

Edward L Anderson