

**GOD IS FAITHFUL TO HIS PROMISE**

God said in the long ago, “*While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease*” (Genesis 8:22).

The changing seasons are proof of God’s faithfulness to His Word. Even in the bleak deadness of winter, we can be sure that spring will blossom in life. God keeps His promises!

That is why it is not difficult for us to believe what he had said about life beyond the grave, the future resurrection from the dead, and the glorious consummation of our hope in heaven. God is utterly dependable!

*“The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance”* (2 Peter 3:9).

-Florence Avenue church of Christ, Grass Valley, CA, via Bulletin Digest 2/2005-

<u>ASK A FRIEND TO ATTEND</u>		
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CHURCH OF CHRIST 711 N. Main Street P.O. Box 88 Carthage, TN 37030 RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED		Non-Profit Organization U.S. Postage PAID Carthage, TN 37030 Permit No. 12

**SMITH COUNTY  
LIGHT**

*“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”(Matthew 5:16)*



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SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Sunday Worship

9:00 A.M.  
6:00 P.M.  
12:30 P.M. last Sunday of month

Bible Study

Sunday Morning  
10:15 A.M.  
Wednesday Evening  
7:00 P.M.

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Steve Harper  
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Sunday & Wednesday Services broadcast on Facebook & YouTube

FREE Bible Correspondence Courses, Tracts or Home Bible Study/ Videos.  
(615-735-0114 or 615-735-2462)

**“VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME”**

**WHAT’S THE STANDARD?**

Edward L. Anderson

The dictionary lists several synonyms for “standard”: **gauge, basis, pattern, guide**. Standards are important in life, family, government, business, and religion. There was a time when the Bible was the recognized, revered, and respected standard for doctrine, worship, attitude, conduct, and morality. However, the sacred Scriptures have been laid aside for other so-called “standards”. These false “standards” include the following.

Some have enshrined **FEELINGS** as their **guide** (see synonyms). “I feel” has become the mantra for multitudes. Worldly philosophy says, “If it feels good do it”. Sadly, it has been adopted by many in religion. All people have feelings, but feelings are not faith. Faith comes, not from feelings, but from hearing God’s Word (Rom. 10:17). We must “walk by faith” (2 Cor. 5:7), not feelings. Prior to his conversion Saul of Tarsus “thought” he ought to do “many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth” (Acts 26:9). He did what he did in “all good conscience” (Acts 23:1). He obviously “felt” he should do these things against Christ and His church, but he was wrong.

Others allow **FAMILY** to replace God’s Word as their divine standard. Family tradition becomes their **basis** (see synonyms), for religious practice regardless of where it leads. It is not a matter of the way our father and mother or our children did it, but rather what “The Way” teaches us to do (See John 14:6). Personal faith, as previously noted, comes from God’s Word. The reason for that Word is the production of faith in Jesus as God’s Son (John 20:30, 31). Family traditions can, and often do, conflict with truth. While we are to honor our father and mother (Eph. 6:1-3), we must honor the Lord even more (Matt. 10:37).

The **FADS** of the day are often the **gauge** and **pattern** (see synonyms), for worship and doctrine. A “fad” is a temporary fashion or manner of conduct, especially one followed enthusiastically by a group (*Random House*, 473). These “fads” allow the world to infiltrate the church (See 1 John 2:15-17). They undermine “the faith once delivered” (Jude 3). Some of us are old enough to remember Flip Wilson’s “The Church of What’s Happening Now”. Entertainment has replaced reverent praise and edification. Creeds are changed; disciplines are updated; manuals are revised and even reversed, but the word of the Lord remains unchanged (Matt. 24:35).

Jesus said, “He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him - the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day” (John 12:48). It would be wise to accept and apply that Word as the only standard in life.

**FROM THE PREACHER’S HEART:**

Our attendance was excellent on Sunday in spite of illness, the cold, and a couple of families being out of town. The Hasslers were at Brush Creek where Jeremy preached Sunday morning. The Mauldin family was at Liberty (near Granville), with Justin preaching morning and evening.

We were blessed by visitors again. We do our best to get a Visitor’s Packet to all our guests which includes a bulletin, tracts, and other information about the church. But nothing makes a better impression than a warm, friendly personal greeting. So many of you make it a point to greet our visitors. Let’s keep on keeping on!

I just concluded a nice visit with Byron Henbest from Potter’s Children Home. He came by to pick up the commodities, coin cans, and checks/cash you have given to that good work. All items and money will bless the children which are being cared for. Thanks to all who gave.

A visit can make a world of difference (See Matt. 25:36). Josh Brown does an excellent job coordinating our visitation program. There is an emphasis on contacting newcomers to the area. Contact Josh and let him know you are willing to assist. If we will but “lift up our eyes” and look upon the fields, opportunities for good will be before us (See John 4:35).

Our ladies are planning a “Ladies’ Day” for the spring. The date has been set – Saturday, March 12. Kelly Bell will be the speaker. More details will be given later. Thanks to all the ladies involved in organizing this effort.

The men’s breakfast (1/15/22) was a success with a grand meal and a wonderful period of fellowship with both younger and older enjoying the time together. Thanks to all who prepared food, attended, help clean, and remove trash.

This Sunday is a fifth Sunday so that means we will have a fellowship meal for Sunday morning worship and Bible study. The meal will be provided, except for desserts. Please bring your favorite. Following the meal, we will assemble at 12:30 P.M. for our final service of the day, which will be led by our young men with Matthew Jones speaking.

Thank you for being with us this Wednesday evening. I trust we will all be able to be present Sunday morning with our Bibles in hand, a song in our heart, and a smile on our face! **Edward L Anderson**

**NEWS & NOTES:**

**SICK:** Michelle Allen is to have hip surgery at a later date. Charlotte Henry is recovering from eye surgery and is back with us. Ciera Haffner is now at home after another stay in Vanderbilt due to blood clots. Lola King begins new chemo treatments this week. Carolyn Harris and Barbara Jenkins were able to be back with us Sunday. Faye Maberry has been unable to be with us lately. Janice Hicks has not been as well due to seizures, and she also has an upcoming brain scan. Janet Rose, Kim Bray’s mother, is dealing with lung cancer. Sally Russell is still unable to be with us. Jerry and Mary Phillips are about the same. Remember Patricia Brooks in your prayers. Ruby Fisher has not been able to be with us recently. Prayers are requested for Brenda Aikens (cancer), a friend of Dayton Jamison; Ruby Anderson; Joe Armistead; Wayne Hall (stroke); Wanda Fisher’s mother, Brenda Forrest, and her sister, Bea Davis; and Gary Vinson, (cancer).

**NURSING HOME/ ASSISTED LIVING/ SHUT-INS:** Wilma Richardson; Judith Newberry; Mary Lou Smith; Ricky Branham; (SCHR); Lonetta Bains (Pavilion); Pat Paysinger (Shut-in).

**IN THE MILITARY:** Jana Watson, Ann Carter’s granddaughter (Army); Randy Carter’s sons and Lacey Crockett’s brothers, Derek (Army) & Landon Carter (Coast Guard); PFC Samuel Burton (USMC), Darlene Fariss’ grandson; Benjamin Gentry (USMC).

**AREA EVENTS:** *Young Men’s Seminar* (5<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Grades): East Main church of Christ, February 5, with Webb Williams.

**CONGRATULATIONS:** Belated congratulations to Dalisa White who recently received her Master degree.

**EVENTS CALENDAR:** *Smith County Health Care/Rehab Center Devotional:* First Sundays of February, May, August, November (as permitted by covid regulations), 2:00 PM; *Fifth Sunday Pavilion Devotional:* January 30, 2:00 PM; *Coffee/Fellowship:* First and third Thursdays, 6:30-8:00 AM ; *Ladies Day:* March 12, with Kelly Bell; *Youth Unite:* April 24, 5:00 P.M.; *Vacation Bible School:* June 6-9; *JSCYC:* July 17:23; *Annual Friday Night Singing:* August 5; *Gospel Meeting:* Gary Hampton preaching, October \_\_\_\_.

**VISITATION/GREETING PROGRAM:** Josh Brown has a list of several newcomers and shut-ins. If you wish to help with new assignments, welcomes, and calls, please contact him.

**THANK YOU:** A note of gratitude was received from Janice Hix for all the cards and prayers.

**DEVOTIONAL AT PAVILION:** We are to conduct the devotional at the Pavilion Assisted Living this Sunday afternoon at 2:00 P.M.

**WHAT A FRIEND WE HAVE**

Knowing the influence that friends have on each other, the Lord advises that “the righteous should choose his friends carefully” (Prov. 12:26). Friends, even as the Bible uses the word, are not mere acquaintances. True friends build a relationship which can surpass even that which they experienced in their own home. Solomon stated that “there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother”, and “a friend loves at all times” (Prov. 18:24; 17:17). (This is why husbands and wives need to be best friends.)

Moses spoke of a friend “who is as your own soul” (Deut. 13:6). That’s the kind of friends that David and Jonathan were to each other. First Samuel 18 says, “The soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul...Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul” (18:1, 3).

Do you have a friend that you would trust and value “as your own soul”? Many of us can identify that person(s) in our lives and we cannot imagine trying to exist without their close and constant companionship. Can I remind you of another friend you cannot live without?

The following passages paint a portrait of God that I think we need to have refreshed in our hearts. “So the Lord spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend” (Ex. 33:11). Meditate on that for a minute. Moses and the Lord were very close friends.

James tells us that Abraham “was called the friend of God” (2:23). In the Old Testament, Abraham truly was called God’s friend. I 2 Chronicles 20:7, King Jehoshaphat appealed to God and referred to “Abraham your friend forever.” But, it was not just others calling Abraham a friend of God. In Isaiah 41:8, the Lord Himself said, “Abraham, My friend.” Meditate on that for a minute. God proclaimed, “Abraham is My friend.”

We have a friend who sticks closer than a brother (cf. Heb. 13:5-6). We have a friend who loves at all times (cf. Rom. 8:35-39). We have a friend who loves us as His own soul (cf. Eph. 5:2; Isa. 52:10-12; Heb. 4:15).

Now, go and read John 15:13-15. He loved His friends and laid down His life for His friends. But, we are only His friends if we do as He has commanded us.

Would the Lord call you, His friend? Is He your close, constant companion? Is your soul knit to Him? David Sproule