

## NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

I know many people who never make plans; they are content to leave everything to chance. However, as followers of Christ, we are doubly blessed because we know both our purpose and our goal. However, we must dedicate ourselves because our goal cannot be achieved by accident or coincidence. That is why it is crucial for us to be specific in setting goals that will bring us into a right relationship with God:

- A. Be more God-like (Live a life of love).
- B. Recognize the value of time (Do more for God).
- C. Do not become a slave to the past (Let go and let God).
- D. Establish Godly priorities (Big things first).
- E. Shun the evil of this world (Let your light shine).

*"But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."* (2 Peter 1:5-11 NKJV)

Excerpt from an article by Ron Ellison,  
Randolph Church of Christ, Universal, TX

## ASK A FRIEND TO ATTEND

Volume

27

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CHURCH OF CHRIST  
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# 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)*



MEETING PLACE OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

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**"VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME"**

## LEARN TO LISTEN

Jesus spoke of those who "hearing they do not hear" (See Matt. 13:13-15). Many of His contemporaries were like their ancestors in Isaiah's day, who refused to heed God's truth. "Hear" is defined as "to perceive or apprehend by the ear." To "listen" is to "hear with thoughtful attention" (Webster). Clearly, they heard the sound of the words but refused to listen with thoughtful attention.

Perhaps we can recall our parents asking, "Do you **hear** me?" The question might have been followed by: "You had better **listen** to me!" Yes, we heard the sound of the voice, but the second time we understood the message! W. E. Vine mentions the case of those accompanying Saul to Damascus. Acts 9:7 reveals they "heard the voice" (genitive case), whereas in 22:9, "they heard not the voice" (accusative case). "The former indicates the hearing of the sound; the latter indicates the meaning or message of the voice" (204). One may hear the **sound** of the words of Scripture, but never grasp the **meaning**!

Learning to listen is not easy. Stephen R. Covey observes, "Most people do not listen with the intent to understand; they listen with the intent to reply." An anonymous writer adds: "Listening is an attitude of the heart." Did not Jesus say of some in His day: "Their heart is far from me"? (Matt. 15:8) Bert McCoy offered this thought: "Some people are deaf but can listen; and some people can hear but do not listen." It is quite interesting that the word "listen" contains the same letters as the word "silent"!

It has been noted that God gave us two ears and one tongue. Could this imply we need to do more listening and less talking?! John Wayne described one villain with this line: "You are short on ears and long on mouth". Ears were made for listening! The repetitive words of Jesus remind us of this truth: "He who has an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches" (Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22).

There are all kinds of listeners. It seems that some listen solely to find fault. Many of those listening to Jesus had this as their singular motive (Luke 11:53-54). There are those who listen to gather "ammunition" for their gossiping tongue. There are others who are super-sensitive and listen only for something by which to be offended. Considerable time and money are spent to develop public speaking skills. Listening, on the other hand, is a skill which is largely undeveloped.

May we strive to listen in genuine sincerity and love in our homes, the church, and daily life. Above all, let us learn to listen to God and His Son (Heb. 1:1-2; Matt. 17:5)!

*Edward L Anderson*

## **FROM THE PREACHER'S HEART:**

What an honor it is to be able to gather to worship God in spirit and truth each first day of the week! Though attendance was down a bit due to families being out of town to be with family, it held up quite well because of our visitors - some for the first time and others coming to be with their families! The Hicks family was away due to Chris preaching at Brush Creek this past Sunday. We are blessed to have several younger men who "preach the word"!

We grieve and yet rejoice, in the December 14 passing of Lovell Wilson Chaffin, our dear sister in the Lord. She suffered a stroke in 2005 and had been in Smith County Health/Rehab since that time. She is fondly remembered as a devout Christian, exemplifying joy, kindness, hospitality, and love to all. She was always "ready unto every good work" and often traveled "the second mile". Though departed from this life, her influence will continue in the lives of all who knew her (Rev. 14:13). Our prayers are with her family.

Our elders presented the 2022 budget this past Sunday morning. The budget reflects an emphasis on spreading the gospel, locally and around the world. It also emphasizes edification of the body of Christ here in our Bible study and teaching program. There is also an emphasis on reaching out and doing good in the area of benevolence. The new budget reflects an increase of \$148. Let's all respond generously to be ready when needs arise over and above the budgeted amount.

Some of us traveled to the Disaster Relief facilities in Nashville recently to help with packing boxes for the tornado victims in Kentucky. There were so many people from the area who came to help. It was amazing to see hundreds of food boxes filled, sealed, and loaded in such a short time. A sign in the packing area said it well: "It is amazing how much can be accomplished for the Lord, when we are not concerned with who gets the credit".

Barbara and I wish to extend our deep gratitude for your amazing gestures of love and kindness during the current holiday season. The many greeting cards are treasured; the gift cards will be put to good use (some already have!); and all the other gifts – too numerous to list – humble us. May God bless one and all. Let us all devote ourselves to God, His word, and His work!

*Edward L Anderson*

## **NEWS & NOTES:**

**SICK:** Faye Maberry spent a couple of days in RRMC last week, but was with us Sunday. Kenneth Kidd has been ill. We have several who have had the flu and respiratory ailments over the past couple of weeks: Michael and Denise Hackett; Mallie Kate Whitaker; John Christopher Klamm; Russell and Emmie Vincent; Josiah and A. J. Hackett; and Will Galey. Dimple Hicks was back with us Wednesday and Sunday. Janice Hicks was with us last Wednesday but was unable to be present Sunday. Janet Rose, Kim Bray's mother, is dealing with lung cancer. Ruby Anderson, Edward and Barbara's sister-in-law; is recuperating from a stroke. Mary Phillips is dealing with infection in her leg. Patricia Brooks saw her oncologist December 15. Barbara Anderson has knee replacement surgery scheduled for April. Lola King, Ruby Fisher, Sally Russell, Barbara Jenkins, and Dayton Jamison have been able to be with us recently. Prayers are requested for Wayne Hall (stroke), cousin to Edward Anderson; 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); Loneta 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).

**SYMPATHY:** To the following: The family of sister Lovell Wilson Chaffin who died Tuesday, 12/15; the family of Cornell Coats (student at SEIBS), who passed away December 22 after a 10-week battle with COVID.

**CONGRATULATIONS!** We are proud to announce Lelani Faustina's recent graduation from TTU, Friday, December 17!

**LADIES' DAY:** There will be a planning session Sunday, January 2 at 5:00 PM for all ladies interested in assisting with a Ladies' Day.

**THANK YOU:** The church recently received and read a nice "Thank You" notes from Michelle Allen; Dayton Jamison; The Gospel Broadcasting Network staff; Todd, Allie, and Carlie Smith (**Note:** The Smith's will be leaving us because of moving, but they promised they would return to visit. We wish them well and much happiness in their new home.)

**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: Elders, Deacons, & Preachers: January 9, 4:30 P.M.; Men's Breakfast: January 15, 8:00 A.M.; Youth Unite: April 24, 5:00 P.M.

**EVENTS UPCOMING:** New Year Countdown, Friday, 12/31. See Justin for details. For everyone!

**AREA EVENTS:** **Gospel Meeting:** Willow Avenue church of Christ, January 9-12, with Dan Winkler, Steve Higginbotham, Glenn Colley, John DeBerry (See posted ad); **Young Men's Seminar (5<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Grades):** East Main church of Christ, February 5, with Webb Williams (see posted ad).

**VISITATION/GREETING PROGRAM:** Josh Brown has a list of newcomers and shut-ins. If you wish to help with new assignments, welcomes, and calls, please contact him. Making a visit can make a big difference in the life of another and our own! See Matthew 25:25:31-46 and James 1:27.

**POTTER CHILDREN'S HOME:** If you wish to assist with items for the children, please bring Liquid Dishwasher Detergent and 30 Gallon Trash Bags to the annex. You can also contribute \$15.00 cash/check for perishable purchases. Or fill a coin can. Bring the items to the annex and the cash/check to Elaine or Edward.

## **MORE R'S CONNECTED WITH RESOLVE**

I appreciate the encouraging comments regarding Sunday's sermon about Resolutions; Righteousness; Reward; and Rest. Here are a few more R's to consider and on which to meditate.

**RESOLVE to Receive:** "Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and RECEIVE with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls" (James 1:21; cf. Acts 2:41).

**RESOLVE to Run:** Therefore, we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us RUN with endurance the race set before us..." (Heb. 12:1-2).

**RESOLVE to be Ready:** "Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be READY to every good work.

*To speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing all humility to all men" (Titus 3:1-2; cf. 1 Peter 3:15).*

*Edward L Anderson*