



EBENEZER

Methodist Church Dudley Shoals

www.ebenzerm-church.com

Feb '25

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**Pinto Bean
Supper! See p. 3.**

**Charge
Conference, Feb.
9, 3:00 p.m.**



Sunday Services

- 9:00am *Worship Service*
- 10:15am *Sunday School*
- 5:00pm *Adult Choir / 4:00 pm Praise Band Practice*
- 6:00pm *Every FOURTH SUNDAY Ebenezer Methodist Women*

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit...” *Matthew 28:19*



Pastor's Pen



Bible Study Reflections

I was truly blessed to attend Bible Study led by our church lay leader, Mrs. Bleaka Hollar from July to December last year. Bleaka is a dedicated, well-read and knowledgeable bible teacher. I would like to share with you briefly the major insights I gleaned from attending and actively participating in this study and interactions I had with other students.

The authorship of proverbs is widely attributed to King Solomon and classified as part of wisdom literature in addition to Psalms and Job. I noticed that Proverbs accomplishes something no other biblical book does. This book compiles numerous short instructions for living an effective life on earth. This essentially guides and directs persons on the path of wisdom. Every Wednesday evening for the six months that I attended this bible study, we discussed the varied situations of a person's life and possible outcomes arising from a number of choices.

What I learned as an overarching theme of Proverbs is summarized in Proverbs 1:7, “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge” The fear of the Lord means living our lives in light of what we know of God and deferring to Him all honor and trust acknowledging that He is faithful. This is the only pathway of discovering knowledge and wisdom we desperately desire to thrive in our days. I realized that the author of Proverbs hopes that the reader attains practical righteousness or holiness in all our day-to-day transactions. The writer urges the reader to listen from others and learn. Wisdom therefore involves appropriating a measure of humility, first before God and then before others. One must avoid speaking rashly but rather thrive to listen attentively.

Mrs. Bleaka would give a brief overview of whatever proverb we were discussing. She would also encourage each student to identify a portion, verse or phrase of scripture that spoke very clearly or one that needed further illumination. This discussion encouraged the participants to wrestle with meaning as well as figure out how the proverb would apply in our contemporary lives. I learned of many personal testimonies and a variety of life experiences during this period. The message came out loud and clear, “Read it! Then live it!” I concur that Proverbs contains some of the most applicable nuggets of truth in

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WEDNESDAY ACTIVITIES

- 6:30p Prayer Meeting
- 7:00p Bible Study — Adults.



CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:

Mon.—Friday: 8:30—1:00 p.m.
Phone: (828) 396-2214



Meetings, etc.

Charge Conference

Our first Charge Conference as a member organization of the Global Methodist Church will be on **Sunday, February 9th at 3:00 p.m.** All Church Council members should plan to attend. Other members of our church may attend, and offer input, but cannot vote on the motions brought forward during this meeting.

Food Ministry

The next meal will be served on **Monday, February 17, 12-6:30 p.m.** Please contact Ricky Baker for details.

Seniors Gathering

Our Senior citizens are invited to another morning of fellowship with meal on **Tuesday, February 18 at 11:00 a.m.** Details to be announced later.

EMW Meeting

The Women will have their next meeting on **Sunday, February 23 at 6:00 p.m.** Current members should bring a covered-dish or dessert to share. All women of the church are invited to come eat and check out our Women's Group and consider joining. The EMW women do many ministries throughout the year, and help out our church, too. Visitors do not need to bring anything for the meal.

As historian J. Edwin Orr and D. John Mackay have said enlightening the mind with theology comes first, then the heart can be changed.

Something to Pray About

by Cindy Sears

“Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about...”--Acts 1:4b

THE SPIRIT OF EVANGELISM

References: Acts 1:1-8, 14; 2 Kings Chapters 22-23; Acts 6:3; NIV Application Commentary by Ajith Fernando.

[Jesus] said to them, “It is not for you to know times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” –Acts 1:7-8 NIV

How does evangelism happen in the church or in a believer’s heart and life? How does revival become a reality in the church, in the believer's life and then spread out into the world?

The book of Acts could be called “The Book of the Acts of the Holy Spirit” for it recounts the stories associated with the pouring out of God’s Holy Spirit on the early church disciples, and how everyone was empowered by that Spirit to do great and miraculous things in Jesus’ name.

It is here that we learn of three important acts that can and do lead to the growth of God’s kingdom on earth: 1) Teaching and preaching of God’s Word, 2) Fervent and continuous prayer, and 3) the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

In Acts 1:1-3, we learn that Jesus was teaching his disciples and telling them about the kingdom of God. He commissioned them to bring the Good News about salvation through him to all the world, yet, before his ascending back to his Father, Jesus told the disciples to wait (vs 4). Knowledge alone was not enough. They must wait to be empowered by the Holy Spirit (vs. 8). While they waited, they continued to learn God’s Word and to pray together (vs. 14).

“The place of biblical teaching in revival has been debated, and sometimes great outpourings of revival have been criticized for being low on preaching and teaching the Word. This was not the case with Peter’s speech at Pentecost, and several spiritual awakenings have been recorded where the Word was uncompromisingly taught. Whatever may have happened during the revival, it is well established that, as in Acts, Bible teaching has always been done before a revival. As historian J. Edwin Orr and D. John Mackay have said enlightening the mind with theology comes first, then the heart can be changed. In the Old Testament in 2 Kings, chapters 22-23, we see this happen to the nation of Israel when the Book of the Law is rediscovered during the reign of King Josiah and a great return to God and godliness occurs. So, “we must be faithful in teaching the Word to our people” if we want to have revival in our churches today. (see Fernando, p. 53)

“The early church showed that being filled with the Spirit was mandatory for Christians by making it a basic qualification for those who were to administer the distribution of food (see Acts 6:3)(p. 56, Fernando)...” Christians who do not ask for nor seek for the infilling of the Holy Spirit are a “scandal,” because it is God’s Spirit that leads us on to a full and vibrant

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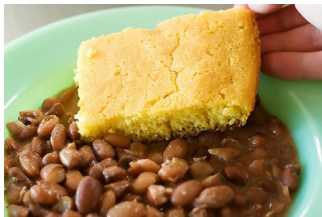


February Fundraiser

Pinto Beans Supper

**Saturday, February 22
4-7:00 p.m.**

Join us for the classic country meal of pinto beans, fried tators and onions, cornbread (including Mexican cornbread), fried cabbage, and dessert with beverage, Take out or eat in for a donation to our church.



Proceeds will go to paying off our disaffiliation loan balance. With your help will retired over 1/3rd of this debt last year! We thank you for your continued support.

Special Giving

We gratefully acknowledge the following special gifts in Dec/Jan:

- **In memory of Rex Teague** by Gwen Teague..
- **In memory of Wayne, Ken, and Gary Reid** by Gail Reid.

“Could it be that the most authentic thing any of us can do is faithfully pursue holiness and obediently follow after Christ?”

—Brett McCracken at
www.thegospelcoalition.org

John Wesley Said:

A Methodist (Christian) is one who loves the Lord his God with all his heart, with all his soul, with all his mind, and with all his strength. God is the joy of his heart, and the desire of his soul, which is continually crying, 'Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth whom I desire besides thee.' My God and my all! 'Thou art the strength of my heart, and my portion forever.' He is therefore happy in God; yea, always happy, as having in him a well of water springing up unto everlasting life, and over-flowing his soul with peace and joy. Perfect love living now cast out fear, he rejoices evermore. Yea, his joy is full, and all his bones cry out, 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten me again unto a living hope of an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, reserved in heaven for me.

How do I hide God's word in my heart? Memorize it!

You are righteous, LORD, and your laws are just.

The rules that you have given are completely fair and right.

—Psalm 119:137-138 GNT

February Celebrations



- 4th—Ashly Pitts
- 14th—Brian Knepp
- 19th—Judy Smith
- 20th—Dylan Baker

Our Military

Ricky Garland
Shane McRary
Jamie Mullinax
Hunter Tolbert



Please pray for the men and women who protect our freedoms.

Ministry Committees

Pastor Simon believes in having everyone in our church doing some form of ministry. A form was provided recently for members of our congregation to checkmark types of ministries they would be interested in helping in.

We now have a list of 21 new ministry groups with coordinators. This list was printed in the bulletin on Feb. 2nd. Please find your name and the ministry or ministries you have been assigned to participant in. Simon wants to meet with every coordinator and assistant coordinator before the end of February.

Cindy will be contacting the Coordinators to set up a meeting with 5-6 coordinators per meeting. Simon will explain the purpose of each committee and how these groups are going to work with each other to amplify each service and cooperate more fully with one another. Copies of the list are available upon request. Thank you.



Something, cont'd

(Continued from page 2)

relationship with our Lord. When this relationship blooms in the power of the Holy Spirit, we believers become more able to witness and to give to the kingdom's work, and to work better in the kingdom. "The fullness of the Spirit is essential for Christian life and ministry (Fernando, p. 56)."

In verses 6-8 of Acts 1, Jesus told the disciples not to be inquisitive about the "end times" (or earthly power, which is what they were really asking about), but to be concerned with witnessing at home, in their cities, in their countries and all the world—after they were filled with his Spirit. We do not serve in our own power, but with God's power. He imbues us with salvation, and he imbues us with power to be his disciples and his kingdom witnesses and workers.

"The Spirit of Christ is the spirit of missions, and the nearer we get to him, the more intensely missionary we become." —Henry Martyn (1781-1812)

We believers here today cannot witness with the same experience as the first disciples who saw, touched, spoke to, and heard directly from Jesus in the flesh. Yet, our witness must also come from a personal encounter with Christ that to us is just as real as what the disciples experienced. The only way to do that is by being filled with the Holy Spirit.

The presence of the Holy Spirit is vital to missions, to the spreading of God's Word and the Good News about salvation in Jesus. We need the Spirit's presence, guidance, his works in our mouths, his strength, his power, his holiness, his boldness. He leads us to go, where not to go, and when to go, and when not leave or let go. "The Christian mission and ministry, then, can only be done in the power of the Spirit (Fernando, p.57)."

So, evangelism isn't all about feelings. It isn't all about knowing the Bible and church doctrine fully and completely. It involves both heart and head, love and truth telling, preaching and teaching about sin and forgiveness, about the wrath of God and the grace (mercy) of God, about God's power and about his love, about his Sovereignty and Kingship over us and his Fatherhood to us, about God's set boundaries and our freedom from the burden of sin and guilt in Christ.

"From Acts 1, then, we can infer that the ideal Christian teaching is done by Spirit-empowered individuals whose teaching is grounded on objective facts of the gospel and should result in evangelism (Fernando, p58)." †

Pastor's Pen, cont'd

(Continued from page 1)

all of the Bible. Most of the proverbs are catchy statements that are full of life imagery from the real world. I would encourage everyone to spend some time reading this book if you have already have not done so. Each proverb may be applied to a variety of everyday situations that we may encounter. Proverbs reminds us that God concerns Himself even with the small things of life. My challenge to you is, are you following God, even in those seemingly "small" circumstances? I invite you to allow Proverbs to refocus your attention on all the public and hidden moments of your life. Join the group as I teach the book of Acts now.

Grace & Peace, *Pastor Simon*

Upcoming Events & Ministry Opportunities

Feb. 9 — Ebenezer's Charge Conference

Mar 4—Apr 8 — Pastor Simon on vacation

Mar 5 — Ash Wednesday Drive By Imposition of Ashes

Mar 10 — Red Cross Winter Blood Drive

Mar 22 — Chicken & Dumplings Supper Fundraiser



HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY!

Feb. 14