

Times of Services

Sunday

9:00 a.m. Worship
10:00 a.m. Bible Study
11:00 a. m. Worship

Wednesday

7:00 p.m. Bible Study

Other Study and Worship Opportunities

- 2nd Sunday 2:00 p.m. **Trinity** Care Home Worship Service
- 2nd Saturday 6:30 a.m. **Men's Bible Study** on Leadership –Ranch House Restaurant
- 3rd Sunday **Neighborhood Bible Study** on James 6:00 p.m. (TBA)
- **Young Bible Scholars** monthly meeting (TBA)

News and Notes

- **Home Bound Members:** Mike Butler, Eula Mae Harless, Joyce Manasco.
- **Limited Health:** Willena Woods, Wade McCrary..
- **Prayer Requests:** The Jerry Green family. Mike Butler is battling lung disease. Janette Clements continues to recover from an ankle injury. Virginia Logan is battling heart and lung problems and has been hospitalized recently. Eldon Barham was recently hospitalized. Joyce Manasco is homebound with lung and heart issues. Doug Wheeler recently underwent heart bypass surgery and is recuperating at home.
- **Others to remember:** Marion Butler, Steve Coburn, Marilyn Lavender, Jim Ratcliff, David Allen Williams, Elbert Logan, Michael Villamor, deployed in the Middle East.
- **Deaths** – James (Jimmy) Sidney Logan, brother of Elbert Logan, died on Oct. 18, 2018. Doris McCrary, wife of Wade McCrary, passed away on Nov. 2, 2018. Her services will be held at Memorial Gunter Peele on Monday, Nov. 5, 2:00 p.m. Visitation is from 12:30-2:00 p.m. Monday before services.

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East Columbus Bulletin

The Gift That Keeps on Giving

Yesterday I began a task that I've been putting off—cleaning out the closet in my home office. There are lots of boxes, some unmarked, and others simply labeled “memorabilia.”

As I began to sift through souvenirs of trips, family mementos, pictures and some plain junk, I came across cards. Stacks and stacks of cards. There were birthday cards. Anniversary cards. Valentine's day cards. Get well cards. Sympathy cards. Thinking of you cards. And thank you cards.

These cards contained notes from many people all across the country. Some were notes from college students. Others were well wishes from brethren upon moving from one locality to another. There was a note from a 9-year-old little girl thanking me for a sermon I preached. And there some funny pictures kids drew of me preaching. I always recognize myself. I'm the really tall stick figure. There were various notes expressing appreciation, offering support, and sharing a kind word.

I came across many cards noting special occasions from my wife, Norma Jean, my son, Kenny and my daughter Rachél and my late mother, Mattie. Numerous father's day, birthday and anniversary cards containing special and personal words of love and affection. Some were funny. Others serious. All were special.

All these cards and notes from so many sources have one thing in common. They give the gift of encouragement. I realized in reading through them, some from so many years ago, that although I had forgotten some special note, so many people in my life have sustained me through the years with their encouraging words and warm gestures of thoughtfulness.

The Bible often speaks of the need for encouragement. The Hebrew writer exhorted, "encourage one another daily." (Heb 3:13). Paul wrote to Timothy about the need to encourage the brethren in his preaching (2 Tim. 4:2). The Bible admonishes us to "encourage the timid, help the weak and be patient with everyone" (1 Thess 5:14). Three times Paul instructed Titus to encourage the brethren (1:9, 2:6; 2:15).

Everyone needs encouragement. Charles Schwab once wrote, "My own experience is that there is no real effort in life that is not done better under encouragement and approval of our fellow men." Leadership expert John Maxwell expressed the value of encouragement this way "A word of encouragement from a teacher to a child can change a life. A word of encouragement from a spouse can save a marriage. A word of encouragement from a leader can inspire a person to reach her potential."

Encouragement lifts. Inspires. Motivates. And emboldens. Encouragement says someone cares about us. Recognizes us. Appreciates us. And loves us. Encouragement provides the fuel to keep performing at a high level. Gives strength to labor through difficulties. And offers hope when the situation seems hopeless.

Perhaps Goethe was right when he wrote, "Correction does much, but encouragement does more." While there are times we all need to be rebuked, corrected or chastised, that is not enough. We need the encouragement to begin again. To make a fresh start. And to keep on keeping on.

"We should seize every opportunity to give encouragement," once observed George M. Adams. Then he succinctly added, "Encouragement is like oxygen to the soul."

I have been reminded once again of the people in my life

who have offered encouragement in so many ways. I have been sustained by it. And I deeply appreciate it. Never discount a word, note or card of encouragement.

Encouragement. It's a gift that keeps on giving. "Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing" (1 Thess 5:11).

—Ken Weliever, The Preacherman

Reformation or Transformation ...

Rather than a social, political, or moral REformer, Jesus came into the world to be a heart TRANSformer. The heart is purified through obedience to the truth (1 Peter 1:22). He came to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10). Saving the lost involves transforming their lives. In other words, it is His will that we be "transformed" (Gr. metamorphoo, the word from which we get metamorphosis), rather than merely reformed (cf. Romans 12:2).

Reformation brings about cosmetic change, whereas transformation brings about change deeply from within. It is like fixing up a broken down old car. You can give it a new paint job, new tires and new upholstery and it will look much better and draw compliments from passers by, but unless you have fixed the old engine it is not going anywhere. To get it going you are going to have to do something about that engine first.

I fear that too much of our "gospel preaching" is spent in telling folks how to do great paint jobs and not enough on how to change engines. Transformed hearts will indeed reform lives, but so can other factors. It takes believing and obeying the gospel of Christ from the heart to bring about true transformation. It takes being born again (1 Peter 1:23). Then we need constant reminders as to how to stay transformed (Romans 12:2).

Edward O. Bragwell, Sr.