

New Beginnings

Then the crowd asked him, "What must we do to do the works God requires?"
Jesus answered, "The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent."
John 6:28-29 N.I.V.

Bonfield Grand Prairie Parish

January 2017



Pastor's Corner

Pastor Mel Nielsen
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Submission to Governing Authorities

13 Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. 2 Consequently, whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. 3 For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and you will be commended. 4 For the one in authority is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for rulers do not bear the sword for no reason. They are God's servants, agents of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. 5 Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also as a matter of conscience.

- Romans 13:1-5 (N.I.V.)

I have heard this passage bandied about since President-elect Trump won the Presidential election. On the surface it seems to be saying submit to all authority without question; but is that what Paul was saying? A government of the people, by the people and for the people was unheard of in Paul's time. The way most ancient governments held power was by force and subjugation. If I still held to the idea that my Savior is nothing more than a bloodthirsty wrath-filled deity then I would agree with Paul. *Submit or else!*

The full scope of the whole Bible reveals a God of love, not wrath. It is true that God commanded the sword to bring the chosen people into adherence of the law, but our Redeemer also chose death to save us from destruction. This same Savior promised to never have anything separate us from His great love and promised to walk with us for eternity.

Let us not forget that if we truly believed these

passages from Paul then the Union Jack would still be flying on our government buildings. If African Americans did not believe that God's law was greater than man's law they would still be slaves instead of free. The Third Reich, Apartheid, General Idi Amin Dada or The Khmer Rouge are the kinds of horror stories we get when the law of the people overrules the law of God.

Dr. Martin Luther King, whose birthday we honor this month, tried to warn America that a government which ruled outside the law of God was in danger of destruction itself. He preached against the policies of the government in regards to racial equality. He was, in fact, preaching about equality for all humans. Dr. King was Biblically correct when he challenged the rulers and leaders about sin-conceived human justice versus God's holy justice.

Dr. King knew he was in danger of sinning when he voiced opposition to government policies. Yet I believe the Apostle Paul would stand with Dr. King. Paul is referring to across the board radical defiance of authority, not a moral stand on a particular view. The main point that is often missing when this passage is discussed is that human law *must* be firmly grounded in God's law.

Our rulers and leaders are given power to rule by a mandate from the people. God has given the people freedom to cast a vote for whomever they choose. Therefore, we can say that yes, God has granted authority to President-elect Trump. Not to do whatever he desires and certainly not to go against the law of God. Every person is filled with sin, yep, even presidents, so they will make mistakes. A mistake is wanting to do the right but the wrong thing is the result. Willful disobedience is another story.

I urge all of you to obey all the laws of this great country. I urge you to pray for President-elect Trump, especially when he makes mistakes. Paul suggests that you follow the rulers of this land but he would adamantly insist that you wrap yourselves in Christ. Which, if we keep reading, is how he ends the 13th chapter of Romans.

Pastor Mel

Prayer Blankets Available

Prayer blankets, made of fleece, are available to anyone who needs a reminder of God's grace. These blankets are prayed over the entire time they are being made. If you know anyone who could benefit from one of these blankets contact Dayle or Pat at 815-932-3352.

Evan Liturgists Needed

Pastor Mel is seeking volunteers to help as liturgists for 2017 Sunday worship at Bonfield Evangelical. Being liturgist means you are to help read selected scripture, introduce the opening hymn, help with announcements and read call to worship. If you are interested in this worship ministry, please contact the pastor. Volunteers will be liturgist for one month.

Multicultural Night Planned

The Bonfield Grand Prairie NOW Committee in conjunction with Pastor Angel Rosalez of Nueva Jerusalem have announced a multicultural night for Jan. 22, 2017 at 3 p.m. at St. Mark's UMC in Kankakee.

Everyone is invited to come attend this special afternoon of word, music, food and fellowship. Pastor Mel will be preaching the Word and the Bonfield/Grand Prairie Parish will be providing the food. The NOW committee is asking for people to sign up so they know how much food to bring. Please look for sign up sheets which will be coming around soon.

A translator will be available for the Hispanic portions of the worship. This parish was happy to welcome the Nueva Jerusalem congregation to Grand Prairie last year and now we have the opportunity to return the pleasure.

Martha Circle Report

Martha Circle met Tues., Dec. 6, 2016, at Fran's on 17 for an annual Christmas dinner. Fifteen members and friends were present.

Blessed with contributions from the November Thank Offering and a Christmas party collection, Martha Circle will be able to share \$800 with various members of the community as well as a fund in Kokomo, Indiana.

Joyce Cochran and Linda Scholl will furnish the December meal for the Gift of God Street Church. Walmart gift cards were collected and will be given to Cunningham Children's Home. 2016 prayer partners were revealed and new partners were drawn. There will be no meetings scheduled until spring.

Fellowship concluded with a festive as well as lively gift-passing game, compliments of Shirley and Ivan Brunner. Everyone left with a treasure as well as a delicious piece of cheesecake, again a gift from Shirley and Ivan. Thank you!

Mission Team Forming

A late January, 2017 mission trip to Little Grassy United Methodist Camp is forming now. Not every detail has been formalized but this is what is known; Four people have signed up from the Bonfield Grand Prairie Parish to travel to Little Grassy for a bed building project after January 15, 2017. This will be a four day mission. There is a fee for room and meals. If you are interested in going please contact Marty Kuipers at 815-933-2281. Little Grassy is located Southeast of Carbondale, IL.

Washed Clean

Your morning shower can do more than cleanse your body. Retired pastor Norman Neaves takes time to remember his baptism daily.

"As the water is pouring down on me, I reach up and get water all over my hand. Then I close my eyes and make the sign of the cross on my forehead. 'I have been baptized in Christ,' I say to myself quietly. 'This day belongs to him. I am called to be Jesus' representative whatever I am doing and wherever I might go. Give me the grace, Lord, to represent you well and with integrity.'"

Nov. 2016 Attendance

	<u>11/6</u>	<u>11/13</u>	<u>11/20</u>	<u>11/27</u>
Evangelical	40	52	36	45
First	22	17	17	17
Grand Prairie	34	33	31	33
TOTALS	96	102	84	95

Fellowship Breakfast

The next Fellowship Breakfast has been scheduled for Tue., Jan. 3, 2016, 8:30 at IHOP in Bourbonnais. Come enjoy a great breakfast and even better fellowship with other church members and friends. This is a good way to get to know other people who worship God in the Bonfield area. You do not need to be a member to attend. Everyone is invited to attend.

Firefighter's Breakfast

The next Salina Twp. Firefighter's will be held Sun., Jan. 1, 8 a.m. until Noon. Come and visit with your neighbors, get a great breakfast and help support the local fire station. The firefighters may be volunteer but the bills they need to pay are mandatory, so the whole community needs to help support their local fire fighters by attending this great community event.

Time For Church



Bonfield Evangelical

348 Smith Street, Bonfield

8:00 a.m. Sunday Services

9:15 Adult and Youth Sunday School

Grand Prairie

Rt. 17 Bonfield

9:15 a.m Sunday Services

8:00 a.m Adult and Youth Sunday School

Bonfield First

172 Church Street

10:30 a.m. Sunday Services

9:15 Adult and Youth Sunday School

Upcoming Worship Schedule

The following is a tentative schedule for January 2017 worship.

(Readings & message may change without notice.)

January 1

1st Sunday after Christmas

“God has a plan”

Altar Color - White

OT: Isaiah 63:7-9

NT: Romans 7:10-16

Gospel: Matthew 2:13-23

January 8

Baptism of the Lord Sunday

“Racism”

Altar Color - White

OT: Isaiah 42:1-9

NT: Acts 10:34-43

Gospel: Matthew 3:13-17

January 15

2nd Sunday after Epiphany

“What are you looking for?”

Altar Color - Green

OT: None

NT: 1 Corinthians 1:1-9

Gospel: John 1:29-42

January 22

3rd Sunday after Epiphany

“Did we miss the boat?”

Altar Color - Green

OT: None

NT: 1 Corinthians 1:10-18

Gospel: Matthew 4:12-23

January 29

4th Sunday after Epiphany

“A great thirst”

Altar Color - Green

OT: None

NT: 1 Corinthians 1:18-31

Gospel: Matthew 5:1-12



There is POWER in PRAYER

Pastor Mel invites you to join in praying for the following names and causes.

Friends and Family Close to Home

Nursing Home:

Heritage Village:.....Vi Morse

Manteno Veterans:.....Bob Grob, Byron Warren

Assisted Living:

Butterfield:.....Bernice Schultz, Brinkman family

Harvest View:.....Warren Cochran, Roscella Piper, Randy Riegel, Betty Wenzelman

River North.....Ruth Ohrt

Westwood Oaks:.....Fostine Schwark, Don Mau

At Home:.....Jan May, Jackie Wagner

From Our Church Bulletin

Kurt Beghouse, Kurt Boesen, Shirley Brunner, Dennis Bushman, Joann Coffman, Tyler Coffman, Jean Dunn, Dennis Hertz, Sondra Hertz, Butch Lambert, Janice Logsdon, Allen Messer, Sheila Neuby, Merle Penrod, Rob Reiniche, Randy Riegel, Richard Wildman, Pam Wilking, James Vilt., Sr.

Compassion International Kids

Latif Korogo.....Burkina Faso

Maria Clara Maciel Da Silva “Clara”.....Brazil

Dayava Sanchez.....Columbia

Witney Juarez.....Guatemala

Shan Toppo.....India

Junior Okwii BarasaKenya

Genesi Marisol Martinez Vasquez.....Honduras

Samuel Juda Lopez Miranda.....Mexico

Mohini Ahirwar.....India

Cinthia Yolany Carranza Aguila.....Honduras

Sonaton Soren.....Bangladesh

Yeferson David Ortiz Cortez.....Colombia

Nevada Eric.....Rwanda

Anielka Carolina Garcia Roque.....Nicaragua

Schekinah Jean Louis.....Haiti

Salome Vicente Melo.....Mexico

Benjamin Sewu.....Ghana

Lucky Hubiagbe.....Ghana

Rebeca Callapa.....Bolivia

Other requests

Bishop Frank Beard, D.S. Leah Pogemiller, Nueva Jerusalem, Inner City Violence, State Budget, Peaceful transition of power in Washington D.C., First Responders, Missionaries, Military.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

The Bonfield Grand Prairie Parish Prayer Shawl group will not meet in Jan., Feb., or Mar due to possibility of bad weather. All members are encouraged to continue making shawls and if anyone is in need or knows a person in need of one of these shawls, please contact Donna Voigt 815-939-0346 or Dana Dittus at 815-263-0783 and they will make arrangements for you.

Free Refills

God’s kingdom is like free refills at a restaurant. Wait — what?! Jesus used common, everyday items to explain the kingdom of God; we can too! The kingdom is like free refills. Still thirsty after one soda or coffee? Get another — no charge. In fact, the kingdom of God is better than free refills because you don’t even have to pay for the first glass.

It’s like having a parent buy you a favorite meal when you’re young. You sit back and savor it without the price crossing your mind. That’s okay, because the generous giver loves you and wants to be with you. Sure, that’s simplistic, but so are Jesus’ parables. Overanalyze them and they may fall apart. But ponder the single point each makes, maybe get a chuckle and an a-ha! Out of it, and that parable has done its job. So grab another free refill — of your beverage and of God’s love!

—Heidi Mann

©Newsletter, Newsletter



From a church newsletter:

what a special occasion!

The confirmands dawned their Sunday best.

a reception was held afterward

The editor might have *donned* a blush that morning!

Send your own bloopers to service@NewsletterNewsletter.com.

**New Address for
Ruth Ohrt
who lives at River North**

**Ruth Ohrt
650 N. Kinzie, Room 100
Bradley, IL 60915
Front desk ph. 815-933-1666**

Bible Quiz

In Matthew 13, to what does Jesus compare the kingdom of heaven?

- A. A farmer sowing seed
- B. A mustard seed
- C. Yeast
- D. Hidden treasure
- E. A merchant who finds a pearl
- F. A fishing net
- G. All of the above

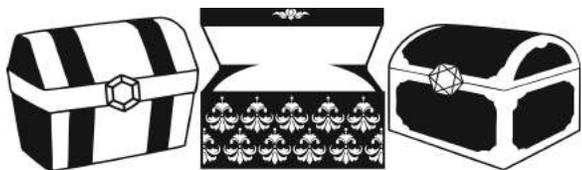
See answer below

November Memory Verse

Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for
I am your God
Isaiah 41:10

+ *Christian Symbols* +

Three Chests



Sometimes called “three arks,” this image represents the gifts the Magi brought to the child Jesus: gold, frankincense and myrrh (Matthew 2:11). Because Scripture lists three gifts, the legend arose that there were three wise men. But the biblical account doesn’t say how many travelers visited the Holy Family.

Quote Of The Month

“Resolution One: I will live for God. Resolution Two:
If no one else does, I still will.”
—Jonathan Edwards

“Never trust anyone completely but God. Love people,
but put your full trust only in God.”
—Lawrence Welk

“Laughter is the sun that drives winter from the human
face.”
—Victor Hugo

Answer: G (See Matthew 13:24-51.)

Meatball Sliders

reprinted from delish.com



INGREDIENTS

- 28 oz. can crushed tomatoes
- 4 tsp. minced garlic
- kosher salt
- Black pepper
- 1/2 c. breadcrumbs
- 2 tbsp. chopped fresh Italian parsley
- 1/4 c. grated Parmesan cheese
- 1/2 tsp. crushed red pepper flakes
- 1 large egg
- 1 lb. ground beef
- 8 small slices mozzarella cheese
- 8 Slider buns
- 1 c. baby spinach

DIRECTIONS

- 1.) In a medium saucepan, cook crushed tomatoes, 2 teaspoons garlic, 1 teaspoon salt, and 1/2 teaspoon pepper for 5 minutes; keep warm.
- 2.) Preheat oven to 350 degrees F and line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper. In a medium mixing bowl, combine breadcrumbs, remaining garlic, parsley, Parmesan, crushed red pepper flakes, egg, 1 teaspoon salt, and 1/2 teaspoon pepper and combine. Add ground beef until well incorporated; do not over-mix.
- 3.) Divide into 8 meatballs and place on baking sheet. Bake until golden brown, 10 to 15 minutes. Place piece of cheese on each meatball and return to oven until cheese melts.
- 4.) Serve meatballs on slider buns with tomato sauce, spinach, and meatballs.

Makes: 4 servings

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Total Time: 30 minutes

January Birthdays

January 1.....	Kevan Wilson Tina (Sikes) Pfeiffer Mary Nicklas) Charter	January 19.....	Jeremy Riegel Kathy Dahn Kathleen (Buente) Holmes Morgan Norton Adam Weber
January 2.....	Carla Taylor Dale Pfeiffer Lindsey Rice	January 20.....	Gavin Milk Scott Peters Wayne Meyer Linda Wagner
January 3.....	Fran (Burton) Marcotte Julia (Morrow) Fecke Ed Diefenbach	January 21.....	Amy (Jackson) Meyer
January 4.....	Wesley Pastorel Troy Wilson Lesley (Chouinard) Dato	January 22.....	Alison Adams Cyndee Meyer Warren Cochran Julia (Williamson-Goodman) Obenhauer
January 5.....	Ronald Wildman	January 23.....	Jason Dahn Rick Hoffman
January 6.....	Jacob Grob Dan Riegel	January 24.....	Grant Wenzelman Dana Riegel
January 7.....	Jacob Mau Alan Rieke Cindy Melhorn	January 25.....	Abigail (Pfeiffer) Allen
January 8.....	Paul Larkins Michael Weber	January 26.....	Ian Charter Matt Ward Judy (Pfeiffer) Bushman Marie (Cooper) Brunner Linda (Riegel) Lindley Melissa (Orwig) Denoyer
January 9.....	Rachael (Friese) Tracy Jason Buckley	January 27.....	Gerrick Weedon Kamden Lockwood
January 11.....	Jim Diefenbach Chad Sullivan Matthew Goodman	January 28.....	Andrew Pfeiffer David Sackett
January 12.....	Elizabeth Meyer Scott Bland Stacey Bland Michelle (Wilking) Hertz	January 29.....	Dustin Kingsland Casaundra (Casi) (Dato) Tapp Timothy Messer
January 13.....	Cade Turro Anthony Hawks	January 30.....	Andrew Wulff
January 14.....	Wayne Osenga Terry Goodman Jeanne (Clifford) Dau Bob Scholl Jenny Jensen	January 31.....	McKenzie Riley Paetsch Marjorie Smith Randy Riegel Alexis Graf Briana Marcotte Gerald Frank Fecke, Jr. Jason Kirk
January 15.....	Stacey Alrandi Tommy Lee Davis		
January 16.....	Shawna (Davenport) Havener		
January 17.....	Robert Buente Valerie Evans David Dayton Marla (Pilotte) Orwig		
January 18.....	Lori Brinkman		

J A N U A R Y 2 0 1 7

Sun., Jan. 1	Mon., Jan. 2	Tue., Jan. 3	Wed., Jan. 4	Thurs., Jan. 5	Fri., Jan. 6	Sat., Jan. 7
Fireman's Breakfast @ Fire Station 8 a.m. - Noon	Journey Prayer Group @ Evan UMC, 10 a.m.	I-HOP Fellowship Breakfast 8:30 a.m.	Men's Prayer @ Evan, 6:30 a.m.			
Sun., Jan. 8	Mon., Jan. 9	Tue., Jan. 10	Wed., Jan. 11	Thurs., Jan. 12	Fri., Jan. 13	Sat., Jan. 14
	Journey Prayer Group @ Evan UMC, 10 a.m.	Parish Ad Board @ Evan, 7:00 p.m.	Men's Prayer @ Evan, 6:30 a.m.			
Sun., Jan. 15	Mon., Jan. 16	Tue., Jan. 17	Wed., Jan. 18	Thurs., Jan. 19	Fri., Jan. 20	Sat., Jan. 21
	Journey Prayer Group @ Evan UMC, 10 a.m.		Men's Prayer @ Evan, 6:30 a.m. Bonfield Youth Group @ Evan, 6:30 p.m.			
Sun., Jan. 22	Mon., Jan. 23	Tue., Jan. 24	Wed., Jan. 25	Thurs., Jan. 26	Fri., Jan. 27	Sat., Jan. 28
Multicultural Night @ St. Mark's 3:00 p.m.	Journey Prayer Group @ Evan UMC, 10 a.m.		Men's Prayer @ Evan, 6:30 a.m.		February 2017 Newsletter Deadline	
Sun., Jan. 29	Mon., Jan. 30	Tue., Jan. 31				
	Journey Prayer Group @ Evan UMC, 10 a.m. Pastor gone to Covenant Keepers	Fold Newsletters @ Evan, 8:30 a.m. Pastor gone to Covenant Keepers	Men's Prayer @ Evan, 6:30 a.m.			

A Divided UMC: How We'll Fail At The Main Thing

A BLOG BY REV. DR. JAMES C. HOWELL, SENIOR PASTOR OF MYERS PARK UNITED METHODIST CHURCH IN CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA

I've blogged quite a few times about our fragile United Methodist Church, making the case for, but really just pleading for unity. I've reflected on how our Book of Discipline functions, on why Robert's Rules of Order create dysfunction in the Body of Christ, on how we relate to fellow members in that Body who think differently.

I have tried to point out that sexuality, while enormously important, and at the core of what it means to be holy, is not at the center of our theology. Our cardinal beliefs, which pertain to salvation, are about God, not us – and our sexuality is always a bit broken, fallen, bedeviled by subterranean forces we hardly understand. I would exit the denomination if it declared Jesus was just a man, or we are saved by works. But not over a single practice among hundreds.

Most importantly, I've explained how splitting up would be the worst conceivable witness to the unchurched, and to our cynical world. If we can't do any better than the division and rancor in our country right now, we prove we have nothing to offer.

Now, during this hazy time when the Bishops' Commission has been named, and when all we can do is pray for them, and for ourselves – and as many of us feel gloomier than ever, fearing or even expecting a split, I keep drifting in my mind to utterly practical questions. Like, if there is the dreaded split right down the middle: What will I be doing for a living and where? Where will my pastor friends wind up? What signage will need changing? What won't get paid for any longer? And in a way, the most pressing question of all: What will become of the church where I am serving?

Suppose we get the divorce. One denomination becomes two, a conservative, brooking no deviation from straight or celibate sexuality, and a progressive, allowing and even affirming same gender marriage and LGBTQ ordinations. What then? The General Conference sends a memo to me and our board chair, giving us ninety days or six months to select which way we go?

Our case is pretty interesting, indicative of why

there will be more carnage than we anticipate, utterly harrowing and heartbreaking to me and the people I love. Just the property: our trustees hold, in trust for the conference, massive neo-gothic structures sitting on prime real estate in Charlotte. Both of the new judicatories would covet the property, and the apportionment income. Our contributions are a significant percentage of our conference's income now. But that amount will shrink drastically for whoever winds up with our facility.

Because internally we would be forced to make a choice we do not wish or need to make. We have engaged in the arduous labor our denomination as a whole has never engaged in: a prayerful, thoughtful, respectful conversation on the theology and practice of sexuality. With broad and strongly felt disagreement on the matter, we have chosen to stay together, to love, and by our very unity to be a witness to the world.

And yet we would be compelled to make a choice. How would that happen? Is it simply an item on the agenda of the next Administrative Board meeting, and majority wins? Do we take a congregational vote, with each member getting to cast a ballot? Would there be campaigning within? Or even from outside groups lobbying to win Myers Park?

I've tried to guesstimate what the tally here would be. We have 5,200 members. We treat the children like members, and also the super active adults, especially young adults, who've never actually joined. But let's leave them out for now. Of the 5,200 official members, I'd guess 1,600 wouldn't pay attention or open their mail. Of the 3,600 left, I'd imagine 1,400 would rally to the progressive side, and about 1,000 would go conservative. Or maybe it would be roughly a tie. Or maybe 1,400 to 1,000 the other way. What would happen to the "losers"? Of course, the remaining 1,200 would be too disgusted to vote at all. Our young adults would, quite simply, be done with us.

Many – several dozen, I'd estimate – would exit and become Southern Baptist, or Episcopalians. I'd suspect that many more, though, in the hundreds, would just give up on church altogether, if the one they loved and trusted couldn't do any better than this sorry state of affairs. And I would not blame one of

THING

(Continued from page 8)

them. We'd suddenly have more Sunday School classes, since they'd have to split too. Families would be divided over which way to go. A 5,200 member church gutted, with maybe 1,500 left.

We would quickly have to lay off two thirds of our staff, and hack our mission spending down to a small fraction of what it's been. Within months, a clinic in Haiti would shut down, families moving out of homelessness would head back to the streets. We'd be the laughingstock of Charlotte. The new conference of the new denomination wouldn't even be all that glad to have us, as we'd have so little money left to send in.

Then where would the clergy we'd have to let go wind up? Not only would the financial decimation reduce the number of pastoral jobs out there. We would also have a rash of mismatched clergy and congregations. If congregations get to choose which denomination to go with, I'd imagine the clergy would get to pick too. At least in my part of the world, and I suspect all across the United States, on average the clergy are far more progressive than their congregations. In Western North Carolina, for instance, out of 1,000 clergy I'd estimate at least 500 would choose the new progressive institution; but no

more than a few dozen churches would do the same. Where would the clergy work? And who would pastor the conservative churches?

I'm not a pessimist by nature. But I do sense there is considerable naivete about how neatly a split might proceed. I know those who think that basically the Southeast and the Midwest would overwhelmingly go conservative, and the West and Northeast would go liberal, or there might be a semblance of an urban/rural split, like the one we see now in presidential elections.

But it's way more complicated state by state, and even church by church. The unforeseen ripple effects of a forced division, even in a single parish like mine, would be catastrophic. A split in United Methodism, beyond the heartache, the lost relationships, and the embarrassment of theological surrender, would create a black hole of practical disaster. We would be the butt of church humor for the next generation. And whatever shared mission work we cherish would evaporate.

Purists will say you should do the right thing, no matter what the consequences are. But within our denomination, aren't we picking one right thing, which isn't really the main thing, and then by picking that one right thing to be right about, we render ourselves incapable of doing all the other right things that really are the main thing?

Reprinted with permission by the author.

Bishop Beard Calls Us To Pray For "The Way Forward"

Bishop Frank J. Beard is asking that the Illinois Great Rivers Conference set aside the week of Jan. 22-28, 2017, as a Week of Prayer for the Way Forward Commission and its work.

The week selected is part of a church-wide call to prayer in 2017 and 2018 as the Commission moves forward its work. Bishops of the church have covenanted with one another to pray 15 minutes each day for the Commission. The second phase is involving each individual annual conference in prayer for a week.

Birmingham Area Bishop Debra Wallace-Padgett told a gathering in Jacksonville, Fla. That the prayer emphasis was two-fold. "We are praying that God help us to more effectively fulfill the mission of the church. And we are praying to be one in Christ," she said.

Bishop Beard said the selection of the week of Jan. 22 was strategic in that events inside and outside the church have called for people to be united.

"The week will be the first week in which a new president will be leading the country following a very contentious campaign," he said. "And the week overlaps the Week of Prayer and Christian Unity, a worldwide ecumenical focusing on unity within the Christian faith."

The Upper Room has developed a website called www.umcprays.org. The website features many tools and resources to help you to plan for the week of prayer and additional information will be forthcoming in the next few weeks.

“Twas The Night Jesus Came

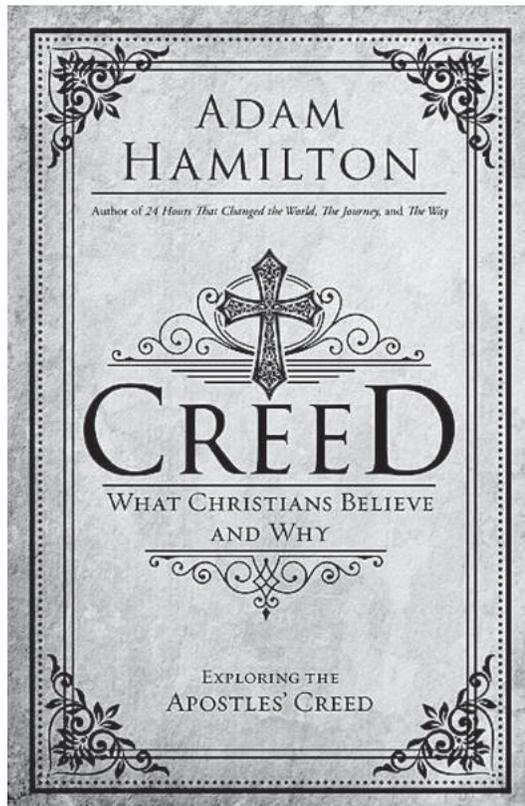
Twas the night Jesus came and all through the house. Not a person was praying, not one in the house. The Bibles were left on the shelf without care, for no one thought Jesus would come there. The children were dressing to crawl into bed, not once ever kneeling or bowing a head. Mom was in her rocker with baby in her lap was watching the Late Show while I took a nap.

When out of the east there arose such a clatter, I sprang to my feet to see what was the matter. Away to the window I flew like a flash, tore open the shutters and lifted the sash. When what to my wondering eyes should appear but angels proclaiming that Jesus was here! The light of His face made me cover my head - It was Jesus returning, just as He said. I cried when I saw Him in spite of myself. In the the Book of Life which He held in His Hand, was written the name of

every saved man. He spoke not a word as He searched for my name; when He said, “It’s not here,” my head hung in shame. The people whose names had been written with love, He gathered to take to His Father above. With those who were ready He rose without a sound while all the rest were left standing around. I fell to my knees, but it was too late, I had waited too long and thus sealed my fate. I stood and I cried as they rose out of sight; oh, if only I’d known that this was the night. In the words of this poem the meaning is clear, the coming of Jesus is now drawing near. There’s only one life and when comes the last call. We’ll find that the Bible was true after all.

Reprinted from “The Last Door Newsletter” The newsletter of the The Last Door Gospel Rescue Mission & Gift of God Street Church Soup Kitchen.

What Christians Believe and Why



Lenten Bible Study

Adam Hamilton's

Creed

6-week study beginning
Monday, March 6
1 p.m. & 6:30 p.m.

*We will be gathering in the Upper Room at the
Bonfield Evangelical Church
348 E. Smith Street, Bonfield*

Participant book price if ordered by the Parish office.
Cokesbury \$13.39

If you would like the church office to order a book for you, please make checks payable to Bonfield/Grand Prairie Parish, with “Creed” in the memo line.

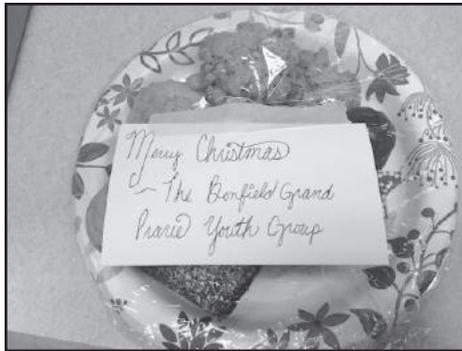
Chapters include:

- 1 God
- 2 Jesus Christ
- 3 The Holy Spirit
- 4 The Church
at the Communion of Saints
- 5 The Forgiveness of Sins
- 6 The Resurrection of the Body

Youth Group Delivers Christmas Cookies



Photos by Pastor Mel



Several Bonfield residents were surprised by Christmas Elves on Wed., Dec. 14 between 7-8 p.m. Actually those visitors were nine of the Bonfield/Grand Prairie Youth Group who went around town delivering home-made Christmas cookies. Pictured top left is the assembling line of cookies being prepared for home delivery. Left is a sample of a cookie plate, each one had a special note written by the group. Above is the whole team warming up after all the cookies had been delivered and hot chocolate had been shared. They are sporting the new hats they made as part of the evenings fun.



New Book Club Forming

The new Book Club is beginning on Tues., Jan. 17, 2017, 6:30 p.m. with meetings being held at the parsonage. Anyone is welcome.

The first book selected is called "Slender Reeds" by Texie Susan Gregory.

We can order copies for anyone wanting to participate or you can try to get copies through your local library. Please RSVP to Tricia Cochran Coffman or Debbie Nielsen

We are excited about this opportunity to fellowship through this new club.

Please let us know A.S.A.P. so we can order books and get them to you before the first meeting. Hope to see you all soon!

Sunshine Circle News



Photo by Jim Diefenbach

Pictured above are the members and friends of Sunshine Circle who met at the home of Donna Diefenbach for a Christmas party and meeting on Thurs., Dec. 15. The evening featured delicious finger foods and desserts along with fun games, door prize for the ugliest Christmas sweater and devotions.

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January 2017

