

Clay's Corner

It's 6:45 a.m., Tuesday morning as I pen the article for this week's bulletin. My mind is a jumbled mass of thoughts as Mary and I have gone west to escape for a few days and just enjoy some quality time outdoors with each other and perhaps, if the opportunities present themselves, we will fill our freezer once again with another year's worth of venison. While we are gone, Louie will fill in for me in the pulpit.

Jesus, in the hours leading up to the crucifixion, had gathered His disciples around Him to teach them once again, many things. From John's discourse in chapters 13 and 14, I get the sense there is an urgency about Him; He doesn't have much time left and there is so much to say and teach them.

One thing He taught in chapter 13, verses 34 and 35 stands out among the rest: "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." (ESV)

Of all the religions in the world there is only one that preaches this: "Love one another. By this all will know you are mine." You can look at those who practice other religions and simply by what they wear you can tell who and what they are. None, that I am aware of however, are called to be known by how they are to react and treat others except those called by Christ.

As I was reading this passage from John this morning, another thought popped into my head. It was something that I had only heard mentioned in passing, supposedly something said that someone once heard. That is, until I began preaching as part of my ministry. "You people can't get along with each other! How in the world are you going to react to my situation and learn to get along with me?" I have actually heard those words on two different occasions now and it breaks my heart because I have seen the truth behind them. More than that, I am aware of who is behind them, Satan.

The Good news is this: I see among us as a congregation a huge movement of the Spirit of God working among us, leading us beyond the stigmas of the past. And my challenge to each and every member of our congregation in the coming holiday season is do what you can, do what you must, that all will know who and whose you are simply by the way you love each other.

What does that kind of love look like? Paul said it bears all things, hopes all things, it never quits.

He also said that one could have all the knowledge and wisdom in the word and still be totally worthless to the Kingdom of God, if there is no love. Think about it. Do others know that you are a Christian because you say so? Or do they know you are a Christian by your love?

I said all of that to say this: The Holiday season tends to bring out the best and the worst in most everyone. Whether it be in a parking lot, a checkout line, or traffic on the freeway, there is always an opportunity to choose. Already this season I have caught myself tempted to succumb to anger when it would have been just as easy to smile and wait. I know that sometimes, time is of the essence and getting stuck somewhere isn't the most convenient. But, I also know that God is always working the plan and as such, I am always, as long as I follow Him, where I need to be at the moment. Think about it. Happy Holidays from our house to yours. May God Bless you and keep you until He calls us home.

PRAYER UPDATES

Pauline Alvarez had an appointment on Friday to have her stitches removed. After she completes her in-home therapy, she will be able to come home to Gonzales and continue her rehab at the Wellness Center.

Lorin Watson, Victoria Johnson's father, took a fall while walking the dog after returning home from visiting for Thanksgiving. He had a lot of cuts and scrapes, and required seven stitches on his face. He is very sore, but otherwise okay. He also continues undergoing testing for the source of his chest pains.

If you have any announcements or prayer requests you wish to have included in the bulletin or to sign up for weekly e-mail updates, please contact Victoria Johnson: 325-518-9205, victoria@gonzaleschurchofchrist.org.

PRAYER LIST

- **Monty Allen** (Susan Barnick's friend's brother—cancer)
- **Pauline Alvarez** (recovering from knee surgery, 845 S Magnolia, Luling, TX 78648)
- **Lauren Babb** (health)
- **Brooke Bertling** (Haley Ratliff's friend—breast cancer)
- **Terry Boaz** (Haley Ratliff's step-mother—Hendrick Hospital, Abilene, Room 7904)
- **The Family of Kelly Boyles**
- **Ty Brooks** (Winegearts' grandson—recovering from ankle surgery)
- **Dawn Clarke** (Shirley Kuchynka's daughter)
- **Betty Cox** (Brent Barnick's sister—homebound, rheumatoid arthritis)
- **David Davis** (Joyce Faires's brother—job hunting)
- **Eric Davis and Rose**
- **Helen Davis** (recovering from hip surgery)
- **Joyce Faires** (knee)
- **Lance Fougerat**
- **Keith Glass** (health)
- **Chestly Gobar, Jordyn and Lucy**
- **Herb Hahn** (health)
- **Sandra Jetton** (health)
- **Jacque Jungbauer** (Moerbes' friend—recovering from back surgery)
- **Katy and Family** (Kelly Mason's friends—Katy's sister injured in motorcycle accident)
- **Evlynn Lawrence** (Sweeneys' granddaughter)
- **Justen Lawrence**
- **Guy Lowe** (Clay Mason's friend—health)
- **Leanne Mason** (recovering from surgery)
- **Claudia Morris** (Perry Winegeart's sister—health)
- **Sid Roberts** (Faireses' friend—health)
- **Paris, Lexus & Maelyn Robertson** (Johnsons' friends—Maelyn born 10 weeks premature)
- **Ruth** (Joyce Faires's sister-in-law)
- **Sharon Saint** (Zach Babb's mother—recovering from surgeries)
- **Maria Vasquez** (Joyce Faires's neighbor—health)
- **Lorin Watson** (Victoria Johnson's father—health)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Thank You Card for Bus

As most of you know, the congregation recently received a generous donation so that we could purchase our very first bus! There is a thank you card to the donors on the table in the foyer and everyone is encouraged to sign it.

Ladies Christmas Party

This year's annual Ladies Christmas Party is **this Thursday (Dec. 10) at 6 p.m.** at The Chrismons' house in Shiner (321 CR 351 A, Shiner, TX 77984—for GPS, input "Prince Albert Street"). Please bring a \$10-15 gift for our exchange and a dish to share. If you have any questions, please see Jennie Chrismon.

Pancake Supper with Santa

Next Sunday, December 13, as part of Youth Sunday, we are having a Pancake Supper with Santa at 4 p.m. in the annex. There will be crafts for the kids, pictures with Santa, hot chocolate, and of course pancakes! Following the pancake supper, we will move to the auditorium for a devotional.

Please sign up in the foyer if you are available to help.

Thank You Notes

The congregation received thank you notes from Leanne Mason and Valerie Moses, a student in the Adventures in Missions (AIM) program at Sunset Bible Institute. Those notes will be on the large bulletin board in the foyer for anyone who would like to read them.

Volunteers Needed

Volunteers are needed to help with communion preparation in the coming year. This is a great service opportunity that does not take much time but is a great blessing to the congregation. If you are able to help, please sign up on the sheet on the large bulletin board in the foyer.

Tuesday Morning Men's Meeting

All men are invited to the annex each Tuesday morning at 6:20 a.m. for a time of breakfast, prayer and fellowship.

December Calendar

December calendars are now available in the foyer. Be sure to pick one up and take it with you.

YOUTH ZONE

SUNDAY, DEC. 6
GONZALES SELECT SOFTBALL @ GULF COAST
BOMBERS TOYS 4 TOTS TOURNAMENT (VICTORIA)
MONDAY, DEC. 7
GIRLS BASKETBALL
SHINER JUNIOR HIGH @ WEIMAR, 5:30 P.M.
TUESDAY, DEC. 8
BOYS BASKETBALL
GONZALES VARSITY V. AUSTWELL-TIVOLI, 6 P.M.
DEC. 10-12
BOYS BASKETBALL
GONZALES VARSITY @ FLATONIA TOURNAMENT



THURSDAY, DEC. 10
BOYS BASKETBALL
GONZALES 8TH "B" @ WIMBERLEY, 5 P.M.
GIRLS BASKETBALL
GONZALES 7TH "B" V. WIMBERLEY, 5 P.M.
GONZALES 7TH "A" V. WIMBERLEY, 6 P.M.
DEC. 12-13
SOFTBALL
GONZALES SELECT @ HUBER RANCH
BLUE SANTA TOURNAMENT (SEGUIN)



Jacy Chrismon—Shiner Junior High Girls Basketball
Rae Anna Flores—Gonzales Select Softball
Fernando Garcia—Gonzales 8th "B" Boys Basketball

Tyler Hendershot—Gonzales Varsity Boys Basketball
Coach Kevin Johnson—Gonzales 7th Girls Basketball