



CENTERVILLE

CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Todd Parsley

"From Where I Sit"

FAITHFULNESS

**"Be faithful until death, and I will
give you the crown of life."
Revelation 2:10**

I hope you enjoy this article from LaGard Smith on where one goes after they die. He clears up some wrong ideas on death and heaven.
-Todd

Did you read about the gunshot victims in Colorado whose deaths were listed as COVID deaths? Or about those fatal motorcycle accidents and nursing home falls, or the poor guy who landed on his head after slipping off a roof? Why were these victims counted as COVID deaths simply because they coincidentally had the coronavirus at the time of their sudden demise? As an ol' criminal law prof, I can assure you there's no way that the defendant in a murder trial would succeed in arguing that the victim died of COVID when he died immediately from the shooting!

The horrific number of actual COVID deaths is tragic enough without artificially inflating the count. (Please tell us it has nothing to do with COVID-related funding schemes based on the numbers....) The official line from health departments is that including COVID-19 on the death certificate of anyone who's tested positive for the virus in the 30 days leading up to their passing is "crucial for public health surveillance." (Hmmm....) Certainly, having COVID can lead, say, to sepsis, spiraling into respiratory failure and even a heart attack, so there's a sense in which one could say that COVID is the pivotal cause of death. But gunshots, motorcycle accidents, and falling off a roof! When even the CDC acknowledges that only 6% of "COVID-related deaths" were exclusively COVID deaths, what about the numbers we're given? True, half-true, untrue?

With all that in mind, consider the funerals for these unfortunate victims. By way of giving comfort and hope to the mourners, we are certain to hear the familiar words, "We believe in the resurrection of the dead." What could be more fundamental? This temporal world awaits the definitive point in time when the Lord returns from heaven; when the earth's dead rise up at the Resurrection; and when—at the Judgment to come—the "sheep and goats" are divided into their eternal destinies (Mt. 25:31-46). As we regularly affirm, this three-part finale is creedal.

But, in almost the next breath, we hear, "Even now your loved one is in heaven, walking hand in hand with Jesus." And then comes all the (often humorous) talk about our dearly departed having a good time up there, or lovingly looking down on us! Really? Is that true, half-true, or untrue? Notwithstanding Paul's desire to "depart and be with Christ" (Phil. 1:23) and the thief being with Jesus "today in Paradise" (Lk. 23:43), whatever happened to the Resurrection? *(Continued page 3)*



The Shepherd's Pen

In Peter's writing to the Jewish Christians, struggling during the midst of persecution, was to remind them persecution can cause either growth or bitterness. Your response determines the results. Peter encourages them to have the character and conduct that reflects the person of Jesus Christ. Reminding them they have been born again to a living hope and are to imitate the Holy One who has called them.

Peter shared with them words of guidance and instruction for the challenges ahead in I Peter 1:13. These words are beneficial and apply to us today as they did then. *"Therefore, gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."* Peter is saying be ready mentally! There are three ways this should be done. (1) "Gird up the loins of your mind." To gird is to prepare, readying oneself for something difficult or challenging. Preparing oneself for action! Be Alert! (2) "Be sober." Peter is saying be focused. Do not allow ourselves to be captivated by any type of influence that would lead us away from God. Keep a clear mind and exercise self-control. Be Sober-minded! (3) "Rest your hope fully upon God's Grace in Jesus Christ." Grace is the unmerited favor of God. We see it daily in the many blessings which are available to those who seek and serve God faithfully. It is grace that should be our motivation to live faithfully. In God's grace we find Goodness, Redemption, Advocacy, Compassion, Eternal Life. God's grace gives us *"a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."* (I Peter 1:3) It is because of that living hope we are to Be Positive! Let us all move forward in this new year being *"Mentally Prepared"*, having an *Alert Mind, Sober Mind, and Positive Mind.* Why? Because *"He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct."* (I Peter 1:15)

There are several individuals who may not be members of this congregation but have a connection or history with this church family. Through-out the year monetary gifts are given toward different ministries of this church. We are very thankful for those gifts and appreciate the love for this church. Camp Meribah and the Scholarship program are two of our active ministries and we want to thank Maurice Rogers (Paul's brother) for his support toward them.

We again want to thank you for your prayers, encouragement, and support. We are excited about this Sunday and looking forward to seeing you.

Let us all be an encouragement, enthusiastic, and engaged! Your Elders

Carter's Corner



Upcoming Events

February 3rd
Lighthouse
(Jenkins & Chilton)
5:00-7:00

February 7th
Souper Bowl Party
(Kate Peters)
6:00-8:30

February 17th
Sweetheart Lighthouse
(Sara True)
5:00-7:00

February 21st
Sr. High Fireside
(Martin & Hudgins)
6:00-8:00

February 25th
Jr. & Sr. High Prayer Breakfast
(Lake Bates)
7:00am

February 28th
Jr. High Fireside
(Wyatt Aydelott)
6:00-8:00

IT IS HARD TO BELIEVE that we are already one month into 2021. As I sat down to begin my article this week, I was surprised by the fact that this would be the last edition of the Messenger for January. In my mind, the year has just begun and now suddenly I am looking at the calendar to start planning activities for the Spring and Summer. I have heard my entire life that the older you get, the faster time moves, and I believe that sentiment wholeheartedly. I find myself looking at pictures of Cade from when he was a baby and being shocked at how quickly kids can turn from infants to toddlers to little boys. It is at times such as this when I stop to appreciate how quickly time passes. I am reminded of what Paul writes in Ephesians 5:15-16, *"Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil."* May we all be challenged to do our best to make the best use of our time every day.

FEBRUARY CALENDARS WILL BE READY to be picked up this week. I am looking forward to another great month of activities with all of our young people. We have an incredible group of students, parents, and youth-minded individuals here in Centerville, and it is a blessing to have a career that allows me to work with so many diverse and wonderful people in the Lord's church each day.

RETREAT SEASON is drawing closer for both the Sr. & Jr. High groups. We are in the process of finalizing the details for each group and hope to be able to pass along specific dates to you all very soon. I know that our annual retreats are the biggest highlights of the year for many of our students, and we are working hard to be able to plan both safe & fun weekends for our students. Have a great week! In Him, Carter

February Celebrations



Coleen Williams
85 Years Old
February 6, 2021



John Thomas Givens
86 Years Old
February 24, 2021



Betty Davis
91 Years Old
February 27, 2021

Sympathy

...We express our sympathy to the family of Don Smithson who passed away. He was the brother-in-law of Linda (Jerry) Bates.

...We express our sympathy to the family of Linda Dotson who passed away. She was the grandmother of Josie Loveless.

...We express our sympathy to the family of Peggy Mayberry who passed away. She was the sister-in-law of Ward Mayberry.

Thank You

Bobbie Lowery writes: "Thanks for all the cards, phone calls, and gifts I received on my birthday. I used to think 80 would be ancient, but it's only a number. I have been blessed with good health, good Christian friends, and able to worship 3 times a week without fear. Pray to God this will continue. There are so many congregations suffering from finances and attendance. We at Centerville Church of Christ are so blessed."

Gary & Becky Gatewood write:

"Our Loving Church Family, On behalf of our entire family, we would like to express our deepest appreciation & gratitude for your outpouring of love, concern, support, & encouragement during Melinda's illness & passing. Our hearts have been deeply touched by your many expressions of love & kindness so graciously shown to us—the many prayers that have been offered; the warm, comforting words that were spoken, written in cards, or texted; the beautiful frame lantern; & the delicious food provided before & after the funeral—all have been a tremendous source of strength & comfort. We feel extremely blessed to share in a special bond of Christian love with you. In Christian Love..."

Shirley and Glen Devore write:

"We would like to thank everyone for their phone calls, prayers, cards, gifts, visits, and food in memory of Melinda DeVore. A special thanks to the church for the beautiful lantern. It provides light at a time of darkness."

Corene Allen writes: "I want to thank the Centerville Church of Christ for the Christmas bag. I really did enjoy it and appreciate it so much."

Wayne & Carolyn Chessor write:

"We would like to thank everyone for all of the cards, phone calls, and especially your prayers during our sickness. We really appreciate your thoughtfulness."

STEWARDSHIP REPORT

CONTRIBUTION

Jan. 24: \$ 13,921.30

Camp: \$ 196.25

Budget: \$ 12,979.00

Happy Belated Anniversary !



**Ken & Tina Dickerson
Married 53 Years
January 19, 2021**

(Continued from page 1) I appreciate that there are widely-varying theological perspectives on life after death. Yet, one thing seems certain: Flippant talk about what the dead are doing up in heaven is at best misleading, given that Scripture plainly tells us they're not there yet. (When Lazarus was raised, he sparked no rumors about heaven!) So, it's first things first. God's sequence, not ours.

Eager as we may be to usher our loved ones immediately into celestial joys, on the way to heaven there are scheduled stops—including the one we tend to talk about the least. As the Hebrews writer reminds us (9:27), "It is appointed for man to die, and after that to face Judgment. Even if we're 'safe in the arms of Jesus,' at death we have yet to hear the Master say (as in Jesus' parable), 'Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter into the joys that await you.'"

As with which deaths should be counted as COVID deaths, the difference between truth, half-truths, and untruths, is never unimportant—most especially about things eternal. So, why rush to trivialize the coming glory? Given God's embracing stillness (Rest In Peace), heaven can wait!

F. LaGard Smith



PRAYER REQUESTS

...Ruth Reece is recovering from surgery for a brain bleed in ICU at Skyline after falling at her home.

...Kim Boehms is doing much better as she recovers from Covid.

...Megan Arnold, daughter-in-law of Anita & Steven Armstrong, is in Centennial Hospital. She has been sick for several weeks.

...Ruth Staggs is dealing with ongoing health issues and would appreciate the prayers of the church.

...Claude Teet is recovering at home after being in the hospital for pneumonia.

...Jessie Seagraves will have surgery January 28th.

...Allison Staten, young mother and daughter of an Elder in Centerville, Ohio, has been diagnosed with cancer.

...Laura Miller, daughter of Wayne & Janis Rediker, is in need of your prayers due to severe back and leg pain. She lives in Texas.

Recovering from surgery or other illness:

Gage Dotson, Donna Gaspard, Ritchie Teet, Randy Hammer, Don Luther, Jim Thrasher, Randall Rummage, Teresa Carroll, Lovada Burklow, Loudean Qualls, Mark Chessor, Jimmy Copley, Norma Aydelott, Dot Dickens, Jesse Seagraves, Aubrey Dickens, Alden Chilton, Wanda Dotson, Reba Horner, Dan Elkins, Kitty Pharris, Ann & J.C. Wells, Ruth Reece, Ann Spencer
Hospice: Bobbie June Kittrell

Please Pray For Those Who Are Dealing With Cancer:

Buster Peters, Jim Gossett, Gail Kincade, Orpah Easley, Diane Hubbs, Steve Higginbotham, Everett Kelley, Thomas Gaines, Colleen Polk, Michael McCarley, Allan Newton, George Peterson, Cletus Carroll, Lonnie Gilliam, Elizabeth Givens, Phil Shelton, Ann Luran Plunkett, Jimmy Jenkins, Susan Hardy, Jimmy Copley, Gwen Rogers, David Talley, Jerry Shepard, Jimmy Mathis

Home:

Mildred Bridges, Margie Willis, Lonnie & Marilyn Gilliam, Bobby & Joyce Mayberry, Claudine Morrison, Dorris & Margie Claud, Floy Gatewood, Floy Lyell, A.J. & Willie B. Coates, J.W. & Sue Roder, Troy Parks

Books of the Bible

P D F E B R C W F Q K T M Y K D C V O N W I L P C N M A Z R
Y V A S U C G D O S R G G O Y B D I Y F L W L X I V R C C R
V T B Z B W U A Y R K W T V R M H S G Y S E C C C I I W L U
J M D E Z N D O U F E S T H E R U L I G N Y M L I Z J P N Q
Z Z W A U D K U N K R P W U X T C X L Q H X K S O C M K T V
C I L G R K G N I E Y S T J I X L Y F U R H G G F N Q V X X
F J N P Z T D M B L E V I T I C U S O B G N N Q N G T S R L
H N P F A H B M A L A C H I Z E P H A N I A H A B A K K U K
G Y F T S F U X C V J P S Z Q X K E H K Y S L M Y Q D H T U
K P Y I R N G I Z C P B Q P F L S O I Z E C H A R I A H H X
F X S M A B N A Z R J Q Y D R O J X F G A D T B T I P H M M
H C E O U O N X O V Q F M Q H O C S D C S Z W J M I A Y Z F
A C T T R S W B L N E Q Q X H Z V U R M E P H E S I A N S R
Z K B H U C O V Q K D Q H D T J J E L V U R R N D H R N N S
J R C Y X J I N U I K S S G S X U A R O L E A A J A M E S O
H F P O M K W L G L N T Y B B N S N W B J I B I Q S F N D C
W I Y M R Y E T V O P H I L I P P I A N S O M N X T A J C W
L X K A I I D I I U F E Y E Q B T R S S P G N V H M A T I H
W H M D K C N T X M V S A C A O Z W O E T I X A O U V O A S
B B B E G U A T O I T S O C R E P L H E C N I R H E I I C K
H T Z U E T R H H K Y A U L L I O O F S O M B S E M A B T X
T E K T N X P M L I B L N E O C L M M I E X O D U S R O S I
O F Q E E T W E A S A O I S U M V B T H W J U H I P K K X F
J Y M R S W O G T S M N K I A P O A E E X J A Q C B W U G P
B A R O I J G W J E A I S A L M L N H B Q N V N C X T B C X
L G M N S A K V L D R A P S W E U T V R F L L R B U S R T I
F A W O H G A I W Z D N U T V W T E K E L T R W D V L I E U
X F R M S N H Q K M T S I E D A M P L W H P Q N O C V V Q Y
G R B Y W P F S V F G T R S M K F N X S V K X N H B R C O R
V Z Y L C T J Y G S A I R H B E V Y B O A Y V X E A U V D Z

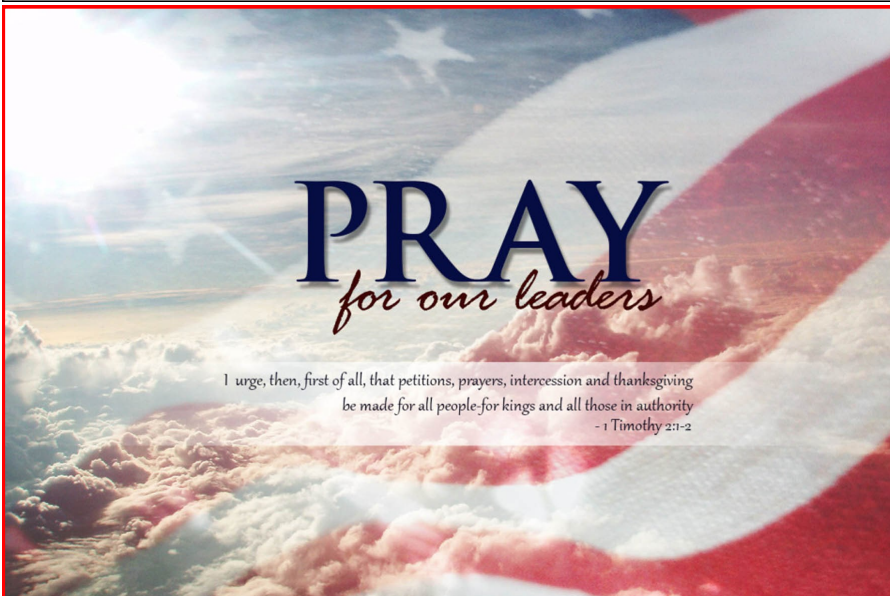
Acts
Amos
Chronicles
Colossians
Corinthians
Daniel
Deuteronomy
Ecclesiastes
Ephesians
Esther
Exodus
Ezekiel
Ezra
Galatians
Genesis

Habakkuk
Haggai
Hebrews
Hosea
Isaiah
James
Jeremiah
Job
Joel
John
Jonah
Joshua
Jude
Judges
Kings

Lamentations
Leviticus
Luke
Malachi
Mark
Matthew
Micah
Nahum
Nehemiah
Numbers
Obadiah
Peter
Philemon
Philippians
Proverbs

Psalms
Revelation
Romans
Ruth
Samuel
Song of Solomon
Thessalonians
Timothy
Titus
Zechariah
Zephaniah

PLACE
STAMP
HERE



Prayer Week
Of January 31

S.M.W.
Jeremy Qualls

S.M.D.
Jonathan Aydelott

S.E.W.
Alan Potts

S.E.D.
John Bradley

W.E.B.S.
Edgar Beard

W.E.D.
Weston Elkins

Preside
January 31

Brian Qualls

Read Scripture
January 31:

James Aydelott

Elder's Prayer
January 31:

Wayne Qualls