

Info from CBC March 2020 Newsletter

What is Christianity to a lost and dying world? I do not mean in a theological sense but in an observational one. What do lost people say about church? I am not sure, but I know that even Christians who are growing up in the evangelical church are leaving and not coming back. The largest denomination in America has lost 1 million people in the past decade, and nobody blinks an eye. This past year, we baptized the least amount of people since WWII, and there were only 140 million people back in 1945. Clearly, there is something missing or wrong. I know statisticians will bend numbers subjectively how they view them, but there *is* something wrong. I am seeing an apathy that is becoming so deeply rooted in churches that only God can save us.

There is an absence of grace. We hear about grace, but the thing about grace is that it must be demonstrated. We love to talk about grace unless we are the ones called to dole it out. I am not naive to think that Christianity should be sanitized and neat. I am not stating that the Christian road should be paved in sappy goodness. I know the saints of old endured hardship for Christ from all sides. Maybe, that is the problem. We as the modern church have inoculated ourselves from the very thing that molds us to the image of Christ. We avoid the thing that causes us to run desperately to Him. We build our fortress to keep out the very thing that will sanctify us. We have built an impenetrable force field from suffering. It is natural to want the suffering to abate or to avoid it at all costs. The Apostle Paul was suffering terribly with some sort of infirmity and sought the Lord three times, and God told him, "My grace is sufficient for you; my strength is made perfect in weakness." Did you see it? The very thing we avoid is the very thing we need. Amazing!!!!

I do not want to sound masochistic, and I do not yearn for pain or trouble. However, I/we must learn to embrace suffering and seek to find Christ in the middle of it. This may take years or a lifetime to learn, but we must be a willing student if we want to know Christ and His suffering. I heard a story of Dietrich Bonhoeffer during his imprisonment in a Nazi concentration camp in WWII. The daily executions were taking place, but today was different. There was a little boy standing on the gallows. He could not have weighed more than 60 pounds. The prisoners were ushered to their place of death, and the crowds became angry and shouted their taunts about God to Bonhoeffer. In the blackness of that horrible moment, the executioner pulled the lever,

and all of the victims' necks snapped instantly. There was only one hanging there and wiggling to live or die. It was the little boy. The people were horrified and enraged. The people asked Bonhoeffer, "Where is your God now?" In a moment of pause, he said, "There He is" as he pointed to the little boy hanging in the gallows. Bonhoeffer was teaching a vital lesson that day. God is never closer to us than in our suffering. Many times, we destroy the very tool that will usher us into the presence of God. We shun the pain, we avoid the pain, and we ignore it. We do everything except what God wants us to do with it, embrace it. We must look for God in it. We must look for His will and ways in it.

In our culture, we are learning a dangerous lesson. If we have troubles, run from them. If we have pain, take a pill. If we have hurt, strike back and make them feel the same pain or even worse pain. All of those examples are a bridge to nowhere. Jesus taught us in the suffering of the Cross, there is redemption. King David helped us see that in our deepest, darkest depression (*Psalms 6*) there is victory over the darkness, in Jehovah. Job screams to us that in our grief and deepest sorrow we can overcome and be restored 100 fold. Finally, Paul educated us that God's grace is sufficient for us no matter the malady that befalls us. The emergent church would do well to learn the lessons of old. Instead of complaining about our suffering, we should exuberantly thank God for it and squeeze every lesson He is teaching us in the trial. Remember, "sorrow may last for the night, but joy comes in the morning."

*Just a Servant,
Pastor Mike*

Deacon Update

How awesome was it to see a full sanctuary last Sunday!! And what a great message from Pastor Mike. As the Pastor said, "We don't need to understand the why, but understand the WHO". That who is GOD, and it is HE that is in control of it all. What a great reminder we all need to hear sometimes.

Pastor Jon reported that the Spring Break mission trip is on schedule. There will be a youth lock-in soon. Youth will lead morning worship on March 1. Please plan to attend and show support for our youth. Cleveland mission trip will be in April, and Summer camps will follow.

Pastor Mike reported that the Sumter Pregnancy Center Banquet will be on February 27. Teen Challenge will be visiting the March 22 morning

service. There will be a special testimony given on the morning of March 8.

Pastor Mike lifted up Wayne and Connie Burke and Ray Richburg in special prayer during the meeting.

The membership voted on two issues this month, and the measures passed 63-0 and 61-2. One of those measures, as you know, was the nomination of Bobby Pierce as Treasurer and the formation of a new counting committee with the following agreeing to serve in this capacity: Jewell Brown, Tom Chappell, Adriane Gaff, Chandace Tanner, Tabitha Gardner, Jody Thompson, Derek Lee, and Robert Etheridge. Our new system, which includes dual controls and layers of accountability, is now in place and will be handed off to Bobby and the counting committee soon. There will be a brief training session scheduled.

It was decided to install a crash bar on the sanctuary door that leads to the breezeway. This will match the rear door on the canopy side. This will aid in the effort to keep our folks safe by locking the two rear doors once the service begins, with the only entry allowed being the front door where an usher is stationed and monitoring cameras. The rear doors, once locked, will allow exit but no entry.

If you miss a service, don't forget
www.sundaystreams.com/go/cbctv

As always, please pray for your Pastors and Deacons as we, partnered with you, seek the center of God's will for Clarendon Baptist Church.

Jay Gardner
Board Secretary / CBC Clerk

¹⁹My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, ²⁰because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires."
(James 1)

"Remember, as anger forms in our mind, we can slowly become convinced we are right. And it's a short journey from believing we are right...to believing we are righteous." ~ *Clay Smith*

Calendar of Events

- 1** Children/Youth Lead Morning Worship
- 8** Daylight Saving Time begins
(Turn clocks ahead one hour before bedtime on March 7th.)
- 10** Deacons Meeting, 7 pm
- 15** Mission Committee Meets
After PM worship in FH
- 22** Movie Night, 6 pm, "Overcomer", FLC
- 29** 5th Sunday Dinner

Looking Ahead to April
(10) Good Friday (12) Easter
(12-16) New Orleans Mission Trip
(14) Deacons Meeting

Workers for March

Audiovisual:

- 3.1** Scott Tanner, Bryson Woodard
- 3.8** Robert Etheridge, Aimee McWhite
- 3.15** Mack & Glenna Mutchler
- 3.22** Jaimie Batchelor, Will Thomas
- 3.29** Cory McWhite, Hal Thompson

Nursery:

- 3.1** Crystal Thompson
- 3.8** Erica Hodge
- 3.15** Tabitha Gardner
- 3.22** Allyson Goff
- 3.29** Christi Morris

Toddlers' Church (ages 2 thru 4):

- 3.1** Adriene Jones
- 3.8** Adriene Jones
- 3.15** Adriene Jones
- 3.22** Adriene Jones
- 3.29** Kim Gardner

Children's Church (K5 - 8-yrs. old):

- 3.1** NO CC
- 3.8** Pastor Jon Jones
- 3.15** Elizabeth Briley
- 3.22** Chandace Tanner
- 3.29** Lauren Lee

Flowers

- 3.1** Adriane Gaff
- 3.8** Donna Simpson
- 3.15** OPEN
- 3.22** OPEN
- 3.29** OPEN

Building Attendant: Terry Gaff

Ushers: Stacey McInnis, Cory McWhite, Rob Morris, Aaron Powell, John Smith, Scott Tanner, Bryson Woodard, Justin Woodard

March Birthdays

- 1** Erica Hodge
Steve Lowe
- 6** Elizabeth Ann Geddings
- 7** Connie Burke
Effie Russell
- 8** Kathy Lee

- 10 Allard Brogdon, Sr.
Maybin Gardner
- 11 Aiden Thompson
- 13 Jaimie Batchelor
Denise Jones
- 14 Stormy Coulette
Tori Coulette
- 15 Jason Woodbury
- 16 Lani-Grace Powell
- 25 Mac Eaddy
Christian Hussey
- 26 Tommy Thompson
- 27 Karen DeCosta
- 29 Chuck Goff
Dale Thomas
- 30 J Eaddy

Shut-in of the Month:

Jessie McCabe
2031 Tearcoat Road
Alcolu, SC 29001
803.473.2426

Students of the Month:

Lauren Gardner
8598 Sumter Hwy.
Alcolu, SC 29001

Tolley Horton
4246 M.W. Rickenbaker Rd.
Manning, SC 29102

Harvest Seeds

Collecting Sunday school literature,
devotionals, and other religious material.

Point person: Karen DeCosta

*Drop donations off in the Confident Heart Sunday
school classroom (first room to the left, CBC FLC)*

*If we have missed your birthday,
please call the church office so that we can
add your name to our birthday list.*

Prayer Ministry

Johnny Baker, *Welborn Brewer, Wayne Burke,
Karen DeCosta, Esau Dennis, Ed Hinson, David
McCabe, Jessie McCabe, Ray Richburg, Shaun
Richburg, Calvin Stone, Wayne & Deborah Ward,
David Young

Feb. Monthly Records

Avg. Sunday School Attendance: 85
Avg. Worship Attendance: 109
Monthly Offering Total: \$18,068.00
Building Fund: \$360,973.07

Movie Night

Come and watch "Overcomer"
with us on Sunday, March 22, 6 PM
in the Family Life Center.

The Creator defines His creation.
"Overcomer" dares to leave you filled
with hope, inspired to dream, and asks the question,
"What do you allow to define you?"

Encouragement Opportunities

Faith Promise Missionary:

Chip Atkinson
Crossover Global
PO Box 211755
Columbia, SC 29221
803.691.0688