

THE ROCK HILL HERALD

The bulletin of the Rock Hill church of Christ



The Rock Hill church of Christ

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Worship Times:

- Bible Class — 9:00AM
- Sunday Worship — 10:00AM
- Sunday PM Worship — 6:00PM
- Wednesday Bible study — 7:00PM

Elders:

- Jim Boles
- Charles Haley
- Doug Jones
- Scott Wallace

Preacher:

- Park Linscomb

Deacons:

- Reiven Holt
- Hugh Ruebush
- John Smetzer
- Burley Stinnett
- Fernando Zapata

*"We're Here
and We Care"*

UNLIKE ALL OTHERS

Are we really different from the 'average' person with whom we come in contact? I trust we each can be honest with ourselves and consider just how different we are and how different we should be according to Scripture. I am reminded of Peter's overview in ***1 Peter 2:9-12*** which says, "ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people that ye should show forth the praises (virtues) of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light..." Certainly this is in reference to Peter's immediate audience, but it applies to us, too.

We spent much of last week with members of a denominational group of people into which my older brother Bill was converted. This particular group has a tendency to alienate their members from their biological families. They have a custom book as their "bible", and anyone who does not share their beliefs are looked upon as infidels and not recognized in virtually any spiritual form. Bill has promoted this sect for 57 years and is highly regarded among them.

The natural thing to do, I suppose, was to observe the behavior of people on a daily basis who have a spiritual interest. Obviously not in a worship setting, but presumably to measure every-day behavior by biblical standards. I was surprised to observe a significant lack of moral standards involved with casual conversations. If we consider ***Galatians 5:19-26***, we get a glimpse of the differences between "works of the flesh" and "the fruit of the Spirit". In order to present ourselves a "living sacrifice, which is our reasonable service" ***Romans 12:1-2***, we should be aware of the moral standard by which we are measured in every-day life...it is the same standard by which we will be judged ***John 12:48***.

It is difficult to hide our faith when Christ is visible. It is just as hard to hide our worldly ways. Casual talk regarding our favorite alcoholic beverage, our number of divorces, and the use of profanity does little to represent Christian values. Though all are forgivable with repentance, it means little without a necessary change. I am reminded of ***Hebrews 12:1-2***, "let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that which doth easily beset us...let us run with patience the race that is set before us" and let our light shine...unlike all others.

Doug Jones

Family News

"For through Him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God." Ephesians 2:18,19

If you are visiting our congregation, welcome! Please fill out a visitor's card and put it in the collection tray as it is passed. If you have questions, we welcome them; please do not hesitate to ask Park Linscomb, our minister (the tall guy) or any other church member.

N . E . W . S .

LEADERSHIP MEETING was postponed last week to today, Sunday at 4PM. If you have a question or concern to bring up among our leaders, please do so Sunday morning.

NEXT SUNDAY is Christmas Eve and the elders have decided to cancel evening services to allow us all to enjoy family time.

A NEW BIBLE CLASS started this past Wednesday. It is a topical study featuring your questions or those of friends. Submit a question and come study with us on Wednesday evenings.

AN EVANGELISM CLASS — there's a sign up sheet in the back of the auditorium. Learn how to share the greatest news ever told!

NEW DIRECTORY PICTURES — Nancy Jones is wanting to take new pictures for our directory and we need to add a few new folks

CHILDREN'S HOMES CHRISTMAS FUND — Linda S. is collecting money for this annual good cause.

THE PITTSFIELD MA CHURCH — We have an ongoing monthly benevolence program to help the Berkshire County church of Christ in Pittsfield Mass. See Trudy R. to contribute.

OUR PRAYER LIST...

- The Jones family in Doug's brother's very serious medical condition.
- Zeke Rodriguez for his PTSD, depression, and issues with the VA.
- Zeke's sister in law Carmen Rodriguez, macular degeneration.
- John Smetzer asks for prayers for Rose Smetzer, pneumonia.
- Alene Turner asks prayers for husband Lynn (cancer).
- Dianna C. for cancer treatment changes
- Sue Carter: digestive problems
 - Freida R. at home
 - Bonnie D. broken shoulder and, struggling; Suzanne as she cares for her mother
- Fernando Z's

- father, Ramon
- Sandy L's sister, in hospice in MS
- The Stafford's grand-daughter
- Ora Holt, kidney
- the churches in New England
- brethren in India
- our congregational leaders

LONG TERM REQUESTS

- Sarai Lyons' friend Tiffany M.
- Isela Hughes' sister Griselda's illness & friend Jeff with cancer
- Bonnie B.
- Carol P.
- Dale and Lavonia C.
- Julia's nurse friend, Michaela
- The Zapata's friend Isabella with a heart lesion
- Travis Y. feeding tube
- Ken C.

READ-THE-BIBLE-IN-A-YEAR

- Dec 17, Hebrews 1-4
- Dec 18, Hebrews 5-8
- Dec 19, Hebrews 9-11
- Dec 20, Hebrews 12-13
- Dec 21, James all
- Dec 22, 1 Peter all
- Dec 23, 2 Peter all
- Dec 24, 1 John all

Colossians 1:19, 20 — "For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in [Christ], and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross: through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven."



A word of Encouragement

"For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it." Hebrews 2:1, NAS95.

DID YOU KNOW?

This is the Christmas season. Most of us know, of course, that it is not just about Santa Claus and gift giving; the reason for the holiday is supposed to be about Jesus. But the Christmas story has often been tweaked and added onto. If you'd like to learn a few interesting facts about the story of the birth of Jesus, keep reading.

Let's start with the time of His birth. We don't really know what day Jesus was born on. December 25 is only one of several proposed days of the year that have been guessed over the centuries. Since there were shepherds in the fields on the night of His birth, many have even suggested that perhaps His birth was in the spring, since the winter months in Israel are usually cold and rainy and shepherds and their sheep would more likely be someplace warm and dry.

And Jesus was born in about 6 BC. Yes, I know, BC stands for "before Christ", but the fellow who did the original calculation to the year of Jesus' birth messed up. His name was Dionysius Exiguus and he made this calculation in the year AD 525 (AD standing for *anno domini*, Latin for "year of our Lord"). Since then, it has been securely determined that king Herod the Great died in 4 BC. And since Jesus's family ran away from Herod's murderous scheme to kill Jesus, when Jesus was about 2 years old (see Matthew 2:7,14-16), we must assume that He was born in at least 6 BC, maybe 7 BC. Other historical markers found in Luke 2:1,2 (Caesar Augustus and Quirinius) point to the same time.

He was indeed born in Bethlehem in a stable, but since wood is generally too expensive a building material for a mere animal shelter, the stable was most likely a cave (which are plentiful in this area) furnished with a wooden or perhaps stone feeding trough (manger). It would not have been a wooden barn or shelter like we commonly see in "manger scenes".

Jesus' real father wasn't Joseph, Jesus was born of a virgin after the Holy Spirit put Jesus into her womb. But Mary didn't remain virgin; she was a married woman and would have been sexually active with her husband afterward. This doesn't imply that she was not a holy person. The Bible tells us that sex between husband and wife is in no way sinful or inappropriate. Mary had other children by her husband Joseph (Matt.11:55,56).

The wise men are an important part of the Christmas story, too; but here's something you might not have known, we don't know if there were three wise men or a dozen who visited. Three is guessed, because the Bible mentions three kinds of gifts. There could have been three, but there could have been a dozen with each of them bringing frankincense, gold, and myrrh; we are simply not told.

Moreover, the wise men were not kings, but magi. Magi were the ancient world's highly educated mathematicians, architects, astrologists, sign readers, and scientists. They were traditionally centered around Babylon, and the Daniel of the Bible was one of them (see Daniel 2:48). In fact, there is some speculation that the reason that the wise men came is because of prophecies left by Daniel of a king of the Jews that would be worthy of worship and of his sign, a star.

Something else that you might not have realized, Jesus wasn't in the manger when the wise men visited; He was probably about 2 years old. When the wise men arrived in Jerusalem asking for the one who was born king of the Jews, a paranoid but clever Herod asked when they had first seen the star that they followed (Matt. 2:7). The wise men apparently told him about 2 years, so when they wise men returned home by a different route, not telling Herod the location of the infant Jesus, he sent out soldiers to kill all the male children in Bethlehem 2 years old and younger (Matt. 2:14-16). In fact, the text tells us that the wise men visited the "house" in which Jesus' family lived (Matt. 2:11) and the original Greek text uses the term "child" rather than "infant".

None of these corrections of the popular story detract anything from the miracle of the incarnation. One of the Godhead clothed Himself with human flesh to live among us, to suffer with us, to teach us, to pay for our sins with His own life through His death on the cross, and to rise again to prove that our sins can be forgiven and that we too will one day be raised from the dead.

If you'd like to know more about the Bible, and separate the biblical facts from popular fiction, join us at the Rock Hill church of Christ in Frisco TX in Bible study and worship. There's much more to learn.

Park Linscomb

