

the Lamp

..as a light shining in a dark place.

2 Peter 1:19



March 2005

Volume XXXV

Number 3

What's Inside

Focus on Worship

This month we are pleased to feature articles from Scott Jackson and Ken Boggs concerning worship. Each article offers a unique perspective which will challenge our hearts and attitudes.

Daily Bible Reading

Here's a tip for keeping up with your daily reading. As you read each day, mark what you read with a highlighter. This way if you read ahead or if you miss a day or two, you can easily pick up where you left off.

Calendar of Events

A calendar highlights special dates along with listings of special events and birthdays for the month of March.

Communion Preparers

Joe Don & Jane Gamble

Greeters

Eddie & Alice Turpin, Amy Bruner, and Eric Sacramento

Contribution Counters

Weldon Womack &
Jim Smotherman

Coming Together

The worship assembly is one of the strengths of this church. Members are very friendly and inviting. We have good participation in the singing. Many provide faithful service for the Lord's Supper, for planning the worship, and for sound system support. Our worship assembly is good, but I believe it can be even better.

Before we consider ways to improve our assembly, let us review what the scriptures say our assembly should be about. In 1 Corinthians chapters 11 through 14, Paul addressed a number of concerns with the meetings of the church in Corinth. In addressing those concerns, Paul had a number of significant things to say about what worship should be about. Let's look at some of those.

The greatest thing Paul had to say was, "Follow the way of love..." (14:1). Of course our love should extend beyond our assembly times, but our regular assembly times are not only occasions to practice love with one another; they are also occasions to establish and build our relationships that facilitate the practice of love beyond our assembly times. When we assemble as with all times, we should be patient with one another, we should be kind, we should not be rude, we should not be self-seeking (13:4-5).

If we are following the way of love, all of our assembly activities will be done to strengthen the church (14:26). We will also encourage and comfort one another (14:3). We will build one another up (14:12). We will edify one another (14:17). For our prayers, praises, hymns, and words of instruction to be effective in strengthening and building up the church, they must be clear and intelligible (14:6-12). When our assembly is meaningful and edifying, it brings added glory to God by

leading unbelievers to "fall down and worship God, exclaiming, 'God is really among you!'" (14:22-25)

How can we make our assembly time better? Although we do well at building our love relationships, it is so important it can't be overemphasized. And as we grow closer to one another we must be aware not to fall into the trap of becoming closed and leaving out some of our brothers and sisters or not welcoming any newcomers God would bring

When our assembly is meaningful and edifying, it brings added glory to God by leading unbelievers to "fall down and worship God, exclaiming, 'God is really among you!'"

to us. I recognize that in an assembly as large as ours no single individual can have a meaningful personal contact with everyone in the assembly, but be aware to do your part to reach out beyond your close circle.

How can we make our assembly time better?

Please be considerate of the time we have allotted on Sunday morning for worship

in song, prayer, and the Word and do your part to contribute to the clarity of the messages. I am sure you do not realize or appreciate the distraction you cause or you wouldn't do it, but some of us are causing distractions and our actions inadvertently send a message counter to the Word God has placed on the heart of Mike McAlister, Ken Boggs, and the others who plan and lead this time. I have to admit there are occasions when I also may have been guilty.

Please join me in addressing these issues.



continued on page 4



1 Numbers 26,27 Mark 8:22-38	17 Deut. 29,30 Mark 16
2 Numbers 28,29 Mark 9:1-29	18 Deut. 31,32 Luke 1:1-23
3 Numbers 30,31 Mark 9:30-50	19 Deut. 33,34 Luke 1:24-56
4 Numbers 32,33 Mark 10:1-31	20 Joshua 1-3 Luke 1:57-80
5 Num. 34-36 Mark 10:32-52	21 Joshua 4-6 Luke 2:1-24
6 Deut. 1,2 Mark 11:1-19 065	22 Joshua 7,8 Luke 2:25-52
7 Deut. 3,4 Mark 11:20-33	23 Joshua 9,10 Luke 3
8 Deut. 5-7 Mark 12:1-27	24 Joshua 11-13 Luke 4:1-32
9 Deut. 8-10 Mark 12:28-44	25 Joshua 14,15 Luke 4:33-44
10 Deut. 11-13 Mark 13:1-13	26 Joshua 16-18 Luke 5:1-16
11 Deut. 14-16 Mark 13:14-37	27 Joshua 19,20 Luke 5:17-39
12 Deut. 17-19 Mark 14:1-25	28 Joshua 21,22 Luke 6:1-26
13 Deut. 20-22 Mark 14:26-50	29 Joshua 23,24 Luke 6:27-49
14 Deut. 23-25 Mark 14:51-72	30 Judges 1,2 Luke 7:1-30
15 Deut. 26,27 Mark 15:1-26	31 Judges 3-5 Luke 7:31-50
16 Deut. 28 Mark 15:27-47	

Ministry Spotlight

The measuring stick I use to gauge the effectiveness of most things I encounter is one that is suited perfectly to myself. It measures all things against my expectations, opinions, and reactions so as to gauge these things based upon how well it pleases... me. From serious to fun. Both business and personal. Even my wife and children. All are assessed based on how well it pleases me.

Measuring Sticks

And since this measuring stick is so prolific in my life, why would I put it away when I come to church? I measure our building using the same gauge. I measure Bible classes with the same gauge. Elders, greeters, and today's sermon—they all get the same gauge: how well did it please me?

So there I sit, another Sunday morning worship time logged away, and no sooner do I get out the doors when out comes my stick. "I didn't like that song. I thought Caring and Sharing would never end. Do we have to sing the same thing eighteen times?" There I go again, measuring the effectiveness of the entire worship time based on how well I liked it.

There are many things in my life this measuring stick is perfectly suited to measure—after all, my favorite restaurant is such because it pleases me. However, when it comes to matters of God, our measuring stick is horribly inadequate. God does not gauge his effectiveness based on how well we like what he is doing.

Neither does God ask our opinion about what we like before he moves forward with his plans. In truth, God has little patience for Christians who would gauge the effectiveness of the church based largely on how well they like it.

There are many appropriate questions we can ask to gauge the effectiveness of our worship time.

- Does our worship glorify God?
- Does our worship encourage all who attended?
- Is our worship inviting to non-believers?
- Does our worship uphold the truth revealed in Scripture?
- Is our worship open to the leading of the Holy Spirit?
- Is our worship relevant to our culture?
- Does our worship celebrate our salvation with an attitude of thankfulness?
- Is our worship God-centered or human-centered?
- Is our worship a sacrifice of our best efforts to God?


It is important that we measure our worship and its effectiveness. But when we come to church, let's leave our usual measuring sticks at home and refuse to ask our church to please us.



Ken Boggs

March 2005



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	3	4	5
6 <i>FUSION 316</i>	7	8	9	10 <i>FUSION Chick-Fil-A Night 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.</i>	11	12
13 <i>IMPACT Meal Served</i>	14	15	16	17	18  <i>FUSION SPRING RETREAT</i>	19 <i>Community Prayer Breakfast @ Good Shepherd 7:10 - 9:00 a.m.</i>
20 <i>FUSION SPRING RETREAT</i>	21	22	23	24 <i>FUSION Chick-Fil-A Night 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.</i>	25	26
27 <i>Easter Sunday Blossoming of the Cross FUSION 316</i>	28	29	30	31	<i>— Meals on Wheels —</i>	



- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| 1 - Susan Khonsari, Kayla Whigham | 15 - Michael Byerly, Stan Johnston |
| 2 - Patty Savage | 17 - Kristen Gates |
| 5 - Katlyn McDonald, Adrian Duron | 18 - Mark Counterman |
| 6 - Brad Harrell, Jabari Bailey | 21 - Amy Mitchell |
| 7 - Chance Hanson | 24 - Linda Williams, Rebecca Price |
| 8 - Parker McAlister | 27 - Addie Boggs, Michael Scott |
| 11 - Charmayne McAlister | 29 - Chris Kirklin, Matthew Counterman,
Austin Bouley, Carson Smotherman |
| 12 - Ron Clifton, Tammy Fowler | 31 - Kyle Whigham |
| 13 - Vivian Whigham | |
| 14 - Bob Williams, Keesha McAlister | |

The Women's Book of the Month Club has selected The Yada Yada Prayer Group by Neta Jackson as our next book. Join us in reading!!

On Thursday Nights, March 10th and 24th – between 6 and 8 PM, Chick-Fil-A and FUSION Student Ministries are teaming up on a Mexico Mission Trip Fund Raiser. Anyone who comes to Chick-Fil-A between the hours of 6-8 PM and says they are there for the Friendswood Church of Christ, we will get 10% of the money. So please come out and support our youth ministry!

Coming this March 18-20 – The Spring Retreat 2005. *Theme – Phenomenon: Experience the Power of God.* The Spring Retreat is an event where students, parents and FUSION staff can get away and focus on growing in relationship with God and each other. At Gulf Coast Christian Camp in Columbus, TX. Meet at FCOC at 6 PM. Cost: \$30 for Students, \$15 for Adults.

Blossoming the Cross – On Easter Sunday, March 27, 2005, the Fellowship Committee asks that all Church Families participate in the ceremony of “Blossoming the Cross.” This event requests each Church family on Easter Sunday to stop and pick a bouquet of wild flowers from their yard or the roadside and bring them to the Church building. Please remember not to pick Bluebonnets. When you arrive at the Church, please spend a few moments before or after class as a family attaching your wild flowers to the Cross. The Cross will be setup securely on the floor in front of the podium. The Cross surface will be adorned with wire, and ribbons will be available to help you fasten your flowers to the Cross. There will be some carnations set aside for visitors and Church members who are unable to pick wild flowers that morning. The Fellowship Ministry Group prays that this event will be a meaningful time of family worship that will allow each family a time for reflection on the personal nature of our Lord's sacrifice.

Growing in Christ

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IN FRIENDSWOOD

OUR LIFE IS TO KNOW CHRIST AND HIM CRUCIFIED
AND THE POWER OF HIS RESURRECTION
WE FULFILL GOD'S PURPOSES THROUGH THE JOY OF ...



·REACHING SPIRITUAL MATURITY IN CHRIST
·KEEPING THE UNITY OF CHRIST
·SERVING OTHERS FOR CHRIST AND
·DISCIPLING TO CHRIST



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JUSTIN BRUNER, YOUTH AND FAMILY

ASSEMBLY SCHEDULE

SUNDAY

BIBLE CLASSES 9:00 A.M.
WORSHIP 10:15 A.M.
CARE GROUPS 6:00 P.M.

TUESDAY

LADIES BIBLE STUDY 7:00 P.M.

WEDNESDAY

BIBLE CLASSES 7:00 P.M.

THURSDAY

LADIES CLASS 10:00 A.M.

continued from page 1

Many people are still finding their seats well after we have started our worship. Many people continue private conversations well into the worship. Who wouldn't consider it inconsiderate of their fellow movie goers to continue a conversation through the first scene of a movie? You may not mean it, but what are you saying to your fellow worshippers when you continue your private conversation as they lift their hearts and voices to "magnify the precious name of Jesus?" What are you saying to seekers who visit our worship service? What are you saying to God?

Many people get up and exit the auditorium during the song after Mike's message. I appreciate that you have been respectful of Mike and others by not exiting during Mike's message, but I ask that you be respectful and consider that song as part of Mike's message. Mike and the worship team have selected the song to emphasize an important point to go with his message. When they are saying "Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of Hosts," what are you saying by your exit?

Thank you for considering these issues, and I am confident that all of you will respond positively and God will help our assembly to be an occasion for growing in love, for encouraging one another, for building each other up, and proclaiming the presence of God to our community.

Scott Jackson
