

Noteworthy

Kid's Review Class: Next review will be May 9th, in classroom #7, shortly after the PM service.

Afternoon Singing: We will meet again on May 10th at 5pm in the auditorium for another afternoon singing.

Ladies' Bible Study: The next class will be held on May 11th at Kaitlyn Sadler's home (7PM).

Young Adult Study: Our next study will be held on May 29th at Bucky and Robyn Day's home (7:30pm).

Prayer Requests: *Our brethren:* Kayla Cunningham (Nearing the end of her pregnancy), Marian Church, Mildred Church, Betty Eubanks, Linda James, Leon & Ruth Miller (Leon's procedure is scheduled for next week—May 5th), Kirk Marschall (Had emergency appendectomy last week), Butch Morgan (Making good progress), Dottie Reynolds (continue to pray for & encourage), Wayne Ryland (Doing some better lately), Danielle Sheffield (Danielle is now expecting to give birth to her 1st child toward the end of this year. Let us be praying for both her and Chet during this exciting/anxious time), and let's also remember to pray for the Wharton family.

Our friends and family: Please continue in prayer for Larry Wisdom's mother (Canera Wisdom), Hal Lewis, Pat Dickey, Joan Mott (A friend of the Days), Heather Tyre, and Waylon Townsend.

Group Meeting: Group (1) meets tonight after worship. Please make an effort to be involved in this good work.

Traveling/Out of town: Audrey Davis, Bettie Eubanks, and Kirk Marschall.

Fourth Sunday: Tonight we begin a new format for the 4th Sunday of each month. More emphasis will be given to the aspect of singing in our worship, and Keith Marschall will present the sermon from God's Word.

Assignments for Worship Service

Wednesday Night: 4/29/15

Song Leader: Eddie Lawson
 Opening Prayer: David Williams
 Invitation: Ronnie Henderson
 Announcements: Mike Sadler
 Closing Prayer: Trent Stevens
 Parking Lot: Leon Miller

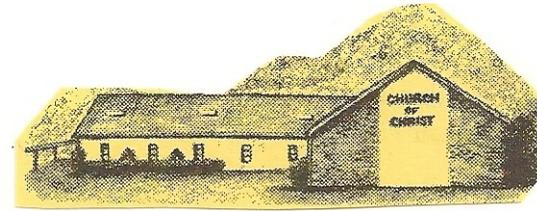
Sunday Evening: 5/3/15

Song Leader: Colby Sadler
 Opening Prayer: Jim Elliot
 Lord's Table: Bucky Day
 Announcements: Larry Hicks
 Closing Prayer: Paul Lloyd
 Parking Lot: David Williams

Sunday Morning: 5/3/15

Lord's Table: Bucky Day (B)
 Jerry Williams (C)
 Serving: Trent Stevens
 Jordan Lawson
 Song Leader: Jeremy Wharton
 Opening Prayer: Colby Sadler

Announcements: Larry Hicks
 Closing Prayer: Charles Goodall
 Parking Lot: (9:00) Norm Blackburn
 (9:50) Mike Sadler



**Lakeland Hills
 Leader**

LAKELAND HILLS CHURCH OF CHRIST

2510 Lakeland Hills Boulevard Lakeland Florida 33805 (863) 688-4336

www.lakelandhillschurchofchrist.com

ELDERS

Larry Hicks (863) 899-7405
 Larry Wisdom (863) 583-4311
 Leon Miller (863) 640-6378

SERVICES

Sunday
 Bible Study 9:00 A.M.
 Morning Services 9:50 A.M.
 Evening Services 6:00 P.M.
 Wednesday
 Bible Study 7:30 P.M.

DEACONS:

Robert Marschall
 Charles Rawdon
 Michael Sadler
 Moses Stevens
 David Williams

EVANGELIST:

Ian Rice (863) 213-9795

“For Growth of the Body”

The Lord desires for His church to grow, yet that growth is not guaranteed. Some congregations become inactive & grow stagnant, while others spiral downward until they cease to exist. To prevent that from happening, let us all be sure we understand and apply the following principles. By keeping these fundamentals in front of us, hopefully this congregation will continue to sustain spiritual growth, and in turn promote numerical growth as the Lord wills.

Every Part Must Do Its Share

The apostle Paul (inspired by the Holy Spirit) wrote of how each member of the body must do his or her part for us to grow “... *from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.*” (Eph 4:16) Paul also instructed that everyone should use whatever abilities he/she has in order to do God's will, while being sincere in our love toward each other (See Romans 12:3-8). Also, we *can* draw strength from each another, as we read, “*Blessed be the God and Fa-*

ther of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, ⁴ who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. ⁵ For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds through Christ.” (2 Cor 1:3-5)

Members can provide strength to those who need comfort, however, notice the order of where true comfort originates. Read the text again and take note; the “mercies” and “comfort” — all originate from God! Therefore, we may extend the proper type of mercy and comfort to others -- if only we are seeking those things from above first. In other words, if I wish for the body to grow, then I *as an individual* must ultimately strive for strength from the Head, 1st and foremost. If I wish to be a true source of comfort to others, then that means that I must be diligent in prayer, be diligent in study, and be seeking to do good works myself. Striving to be found “... *holding fast to the Head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase that is from God.*” (Col 2:19) For a church to grow as the Lord desires, then that is a goal that all must work toward, individually and collectively. Every part must do its share.

Select members cannot be excluded from this endeavor. When members “do not do their share” the church cannot perform to its full potential, and thus put at a disadvantage. When certain members do not do their part, often others struggle under the extra burden of having to make up the difference. People who struggle under such burdens may then in turn become so discouraged that they give up. Every member is important (1Cor. 12:12-22), so seek to use the talents God gives you to His glory (Matthew 25:14-30)! I pray that you and I will be determined, that whatever we do... That *we will do our* part to grow spiritually, and that in turn we will provide instruction *and* encouragement to others! Every part *must do* its share.

Another principle of growth that we must understand and employ is that...

The Strong Ought to Bear With the Weak

The weak among a congregation must be cared for, and there are instructions for us to be patient with one another. Paul wrote, “*Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the faint-hearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all.*” (1 Thess 5:14) Many times we are

to be reminded: not everyone has had the benefit of good role models in their past. Also, some may not know what their godly responsibilities are as spouses, parents, or children, etc.. Whether it be a new convert, or one who has had very little background in learning as they should have, every church has its weaker members. Remember their value, and also remember that it takes patience for the strong to fulfill the command of *Romans 15:1-2*, “*We then who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves. ² Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, leading to edification.*”

One must be patient, and the weak need to be edified. That said; the weak and the strong will do well to understand what “edification” really involves. Edification actually involves a whole lot more than just encouragement. Encouragement may (at times) be part of the edification process. However, the word edification means, “***the act of building, building up***” (*Thayer*). Therefore, edification also (at times) will require convincing, (or at times) will require rebuking, or exhorting, and teaching (2 Tim 4:2). The weak must learn and grow to understand and embrace that as a fact (*By the way, he will only learn that fact by being taught of it*). On the other hand, the strong brother who is doing

the convincing, rebuking, exhorting, and teaching -- must learn to do so with “*all longsuffering*” (NKJV), or “*complete patience*” (ESV). Hopefully, what we can all learn along the way is that all edification is to be done for our neighbor’s good, and not in an effort to please ourselves. I am convinced that many churches fail to grow because the strong expect too much from the weak too soon. But then again, I am also convinced that many other churches fail to grow because the weak are not being taught – in how *to actually grow!* May we all have a tender heart to grow in the Lord as He desires.

In conclusion, we have considered merely a couple of principles that aid in the growth of the church. There are indeed a host of other principles we can note, but the emphasis has been for us to consider that church growth will improve as each part does its share, and as the strong and weak continue to work together. Let us all reflect on what we need to be doing in order to help the Lord's church grow.

-Ian Rice