

Noteworthy

Kids' Review Class: Our review class will be September 6th, shortly after the PM service, in classroom number seven.

Prayer Requests: Remember in your prayers Reagan Cunningham, Linda James, Diana Jordan, Bonnie Meagher (she has been out sick), Butch Morgan, Wayne Ryland (blood pressure), Danielle Sheffield (pregnant), and the Stevens family (Hal Lewis passed away last week). Charles Goodall will learn the results of his surgery next week, Lord willing.

Our friends and family: Please continue in prayer also for Diane Anderson (Linda's sister), Elnora Bennet (Moses Stevens' sister), Mildred Church (shut-in), Betty Eubanks (Sandy Rawdon's mom), and Canera Wisdom (Larry Wisdom's mother). Added to the list this week is Harold Gilbert (Ruth and Leon's brother-in-law. He has cancer).

Group Meeting: Group (3) meets tonight after worship.

Traveling/Out of town: Larry and Cindy Hicks are out of town, and will be returning on the 29th.

Upcoming Events: Our 30th Annual Sing is this Friday (August 28th at 7:30pm)!! Also, please mark your calendars for our gospel meeting that will be held next month with Brad Sullivan (September 25th-27th).

New Member! Great news to share with everyone; Erica Stevens was baptized last Wednesday evening (8-19-15)! The Lord added her to His church (Acts 2:47) when she was baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16)! Now that Erica has put on Christ (Gal. 3:27), we have good reason to rejoice (Lk. 15:32). Let us seek to encourage our newest sister in Christ as much as we can, and to God be the glory!

Assignments for Worship Service

Wednesday Night: 8/26/15

Song Leader: Clay Sadler
 Opening Prayer: Charles Goodall
 Invitation: Jordan Lawson
 Announcements: Mike Sadler
 Closing Prayer: Jerry Williams
 Parking Lot: Ed Lawson

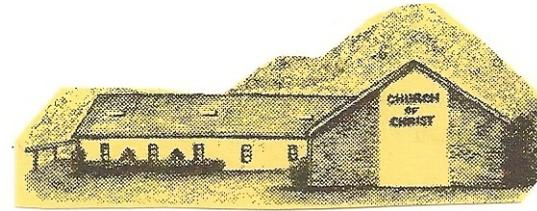
Sunday Evening: 8/30/15

Song Leader: Keith Marschall
 Opening Prayer: Colby Sadler
 Lord's Table: Charles Rawdon
 Announcements: Leon Miller
 Closing Prayer: Jim Elliot
 Parking Lot: Larry Hicks

Sunday Morning: 8/30/15

Lord's Table: Charles Rawdon (B)
 Ben Cunningham (C)
 Serving: Ed Lawson
 Trent Stevens
 Song Leader: Bob Marschall
 Opening Prayer: Larry Wisdom

Announcements: Leon Miller
 Closing Prayer: Wayne Ryland
 Parking Lot: (9:00) David Williams
 (9:50) Mike Sadler



**Lakeland Hills
 Leader**

LAKELAND HILLS CHURCH OF CHRIST

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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

“Please, Do Not Call Me ‘The Pastor’”

I am often referred to as “the pastor”. Although that designation is used by well-intentioned folks, it is a term that’s often misunderstood. Thus, I would like to equip the readers of this article with some basic information concerning the proper use of that term.

The English word “*pastors*” appears only once in the Bible (Ephesians 4:11). The Greek term is “*poimen*”, and is defined as, “*a shepherd (literally or figuratively), pastor*” (*Strong’s Greek and Hebrew Dictionaries*). The same Greek word is also translated into English as “*shepherd*” seventeen times in the New Testament. Sometimes the word will refer to a *literal* shepherd over a flock, such as in Luke 2:8, 15, 18, 20; but sometimes the word is used *figuratively*, such as in John 10:11-12, 14, 16; 1 Peter 2:25. When the word is translated to “*pastors*” in Ephesians 4:11, it is used in a *figurative* sense.

The word “*pastors*” in Ephesians 4:11 is used figuratively in describing shepherds, but whom exactly is the verse talking about? Pastors are described as being *spiritual* shepherds within a local church, and this becomes evident when comparing Acts 20:17, Acts 20:28, and 1 Peter 5:1-2.

- “From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for **the elders** of the church.” (Acts 20:17)
- “Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you **overseers, to shepherd** the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.” (Acts 20:28)
- “The **elders** who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow **elder** and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: **Shepherd the flock** of God which is among you, serving as **overseers**, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly;” (1 Peter 5:1-2)

In summary, the Ephesian “elders” were called and given charge to be “overseers” (bishops: **ASV**) and they were to shepherd the flock in which they were among (Acts 20:17, 28). The elders in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia were also instructed to shepherd the flock of God in whom they were among (1 Peter 1:1, 5:1-2). We see here that pastors are described as *spiritual shepherds* within a local church, but also we see *different terms* to distinguish the role & function of those leaders.

It would be helpful to note that, in the Bible, there are three terms used interchangeably for pastors. Look to these original definitions, but be sure to study the passages with your own Bible.

The spiritual leaders of the flock (the local church):

- Are called **Bishops**. The Greek word is “*episkopos*”, and it means “**overseer**”. The bishops’ duty was to oversee the local congregation (Acts 20:17, 28; 1 Timothy 3:2; 1 Peter 5:1-2).
- They are called **Elders**. The Greek word is “*presbuteros*”, and it means “**elderly, older, a senior, Christian presbyter**”. Elders are meant to be older men (Acts 14:23; 20:17; Titus 1:5-7).
- They are called **Pastors**. The Greek word is “*poimen*”, and it means “**shepherd**”. Their charge is to shepherd and feed the flock of God (Acts 20:28; Ephesians 4:11; 1 Peter 5:1-2).

⇒ (*Definitions from Strong’s Hebrew and Greek Dictionaries and Thayer’s Greek Definitions*)

The Bible does not reveal three separate offices in these passages. Instead, we simply have *different ways to describe* the spiritual leaders of a congregation in connection with their work. Many have taught error on this and caused confusion concerning who pastors really are.

Confusion can also be traced back to discrepancies taught concerning *the qualifications* for pastors. The qualifications for pastors (bishops; elders) are found in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. See also 1 Peter 5:1-4. Within the list of qualifications, we read that an individual “*must be*” “*a man*”, “*the husband of one wife*”, “*having faithful children*”. Also, they are referred to

as “*elders*” (which means the man must be “elderly, older”). Consequently, these characteristics rule out *females, single men, the childless, and “young” men* from being pastors. Some denominations appoint such to be “the pastor”, but for them to do so reveals a grave misunderstanding of the Bible (2 Peter 3:16). What’s more, every time we see the mention of these spiritual leaders for a congregation in the New Testament (i.e., bishops, elders, pastors) the terms are used in **plural form**! So then, there should be no such thing as “the pastor” today, because as far as the Bible record goes, there never was “just one” in any local church!! Confusion on this subject can be resolved if only we get back to studying our Bibles, and I hope to encourage you in doing so *for yourself*.

When folks call me “the pastor”, I’m quick to point out to them that I am not one. However, the church that meets at Lakeland Hills Boulevard is blessed to have three pastors. They are named Larry Hicks, Larry Wisdom, and Leon Miller. The words evangelist (Acts 21:8; 2 Timothy 4:5) and gospel preacher (Romans 10:14; 2 Peter 2:5) describe accurately what I aspire to be and to do, but my role here is distinctly different from the pastors (See Ephesians 4:11). So please, do not call me “the pastor”.

Unless noted, all quotations from the New King James Version. (Bold-type settings added by me for emphasis.)

- By Ian Rice

WHAT MUST I DO TO BE A CHRISTIAN?

- ◇ Jesus taught obedience (Matt. 7:21-23; Luke 6:46; Matt. 28:20)
- ◇ Jesus taught that unless we believe in Him, we will die in our sins (John 10:31-39)
- ◇ He taught repentance (Luke 13:3; 24:46-47)
- ◇ He taught confessing Him before others (Matthew 10:32-33)
- ◇ He taught baptism as a necessity (Mark 16:15-16; Matthew 28:19-20; John 3:5)
- ◇ He teaches faithfulness unto death (Revelation 2:10)