

THOUGHTS & TRAVELS



BibleMethodist CONNECTION OF CHURCHES

Events:

Youth Challenge West

Dates: March 26-28
Location: Salyer Lake, Minco, OK

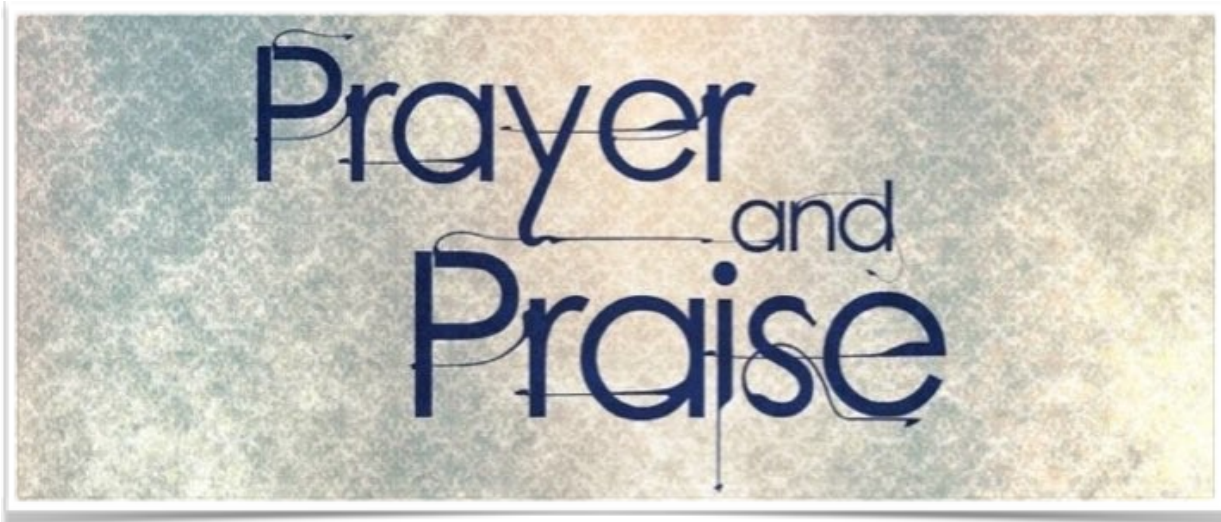
Inter-church Holiness Convention:

Dates: April 21-23
Location: Dayton Convention Center - Dayton,
Ohio

Camp Meeting 2020:

Dates: July 28 through August 2, 2020
Location: Garner Creek Retreat Center,
Dickson, Tennessee
Evangelists: Rev. Harry Plank
Rev. James Plank
Song Evangelist: Jonathan and Jalena Glick
Children Service: Harrold Taylor

Serving churches in:
Colorado
Kentucky
Lousiana
Idaho
Oklahoma
Texas



Prayer and Praise:

- During your Sunday morning pastoral prayer, please pray for Brother Blankenship and the church in Whitehouse, Texas.
 - Sunday please pray for the Southern Conference and Conference President John Parker.
 - Please pray for the President, Congress, Judges as well as state and local officials.
 - Pray for Tim Keep and Bible Methodist Missions.
 - Pray for the ministry in Papua New Guinea along with Shirley Fogleman
 - Pray for the church in Whitehouse, Texas as they search for a pastor.
 - Please pray for Rhonda Gardner, she will soon be scheduled for surgery.
 - Pray for Hector's (Spanish pastor at Lakewood) daughter, Genesis, who still struggling physically.
 - Pray for Krystal. She is Lisa Aman Patrick's daughter and has some connection to Treasure Valley (Caldwell, ID). She lost a baby this week.
 - Pray for wisdom as we consider the possibility of a new church joining with us.
 - Pray for wisdom for the members of the Executive Committee.
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- Praise the Lord for the remodeling that is on going under Pastors Anaya's leadership at the church in Dallas.
 - Treasure Valley Church is rejoicing over new sidewalks and curbs around their church building.
 - Pastor Steele and the people of DeRidder are thankful for the help on their building. They are eager to get moved.
 - Thank the Lord for the great report from Tega Bible College in PNG.

Thoughts:

In Fleming Rutledge's book *the Crucifixion* she quotes Israeli writer, Avishai Margalit. "Avishai took this country severely to task a few years ago for what he viewed as its sentimentality. He defines it thus, "Sentimentality distorts reality by way of turning the object (or event) represented into an object of complete innocence." It is closely linked to self-righteousness, he believes; it is "accompanied by the total blindness to ones own defects." If one can believe in innocence at all, it is only a short step to believing in *ones own* innocence; that is the point. Anyone who believes in his own innocence is offering "the sacrifice of fools; for they do not know they are doing evil." (Eccles. 5:1) A believer in innocence is going to be impervious to the biblical message about Sin. This is a strange thing about us. The more cynical and unshockable our culture becomes in a superficial sense, the more sentimentality it pours forth; the more raw the sex and violence on TV and in film, the greater demand, it seems, for nostalgic kitsch encouraging the pretense that we can escape to a Norman Rockwell world that never was.

In some ways, however, it is becoming more difficult to close our eyes to reality. We are beginning to see more clearly now that children who rape and murder seem to be getting younger and younger, that no school or church seems safe from gunfire, that the Internet has greatly increased our capacity to share lethal information. Too many clergy have been arrested for child molestation, too many teachers have been caught sexually abusing students, too many supposedly upstanding citizens have downloaded too much child pornography. There is something sickening in human nature, it corresponds precisely to the sickening aspect of crucifixion. The hideousness of crucifixion summons us to put away sentimentality and face up to the ugliness that lies just under the surface. The scandal, the outrage of the cross, is commensurate with the offense and ubiquity of sin. Views of atonement wrought by Christ that do not acknowledge the gravity of Sin are untruthful in two respects: they are untruthful about the human condition, and they are untruthful about the witness of Scripture, Old and New Testament alike. Sin is the colossal X-factor in human life. It is not something we do so much as it is something done to us by our mortal foe, the alien Power that has lured us into becoming its agents. There is no room for sentiment here; the stakes are too high. The cross rears up over all human life because it is the scene of God's climactic battle against the power of a malignant and implacable enemy.

As we work our way toward Easter Sunday, may we be reminded of the power and presence of sin. Human lostness, sin, cost the Father the gift of His Son, it cost the Son, our Savior the price of the passion and his death. It cost the Trinity the deep investment of redemption.

Our world needs more than a better educational, health and political system. Our world is in need of a Spirit led re-awakening of the depth of sin and the power of redemption. The great hope for Believer is, first the joy of personal redemption but second the confidence that God is still working in our world. The Holy Spirit is commissioned with bringing conviction and inviting the lost to the saving power of Christ. As we partner with the Trinity we can, with confidence, minister in the Lord's strength knowing that He is faithful.

Personal:

Last Saturday Melba and I got settled in the parsonage of the Pilgrim Holiness Church in Schenectady, New York. The congregation has been without a pastor for about 3 years, so they welcomed us to stay in the parsonage. Sunday I preached for them in the morning and evening services.

Monday Melba drove to Providence, Rhode Island to visit Laurie, our daughter, and her family. I stayed in New York and worked on Conference related items as well as preparing my mind and heart for the revival this week. In the evening I enjoyed dinner with Charles Whitney. He felt sorry for me batching.

Tuesday evening the services began. Attendance has been consistent. There has been some sickness but there are a faithful and supportive group of people. We will be here through this coming Sunday.

Monday we plan to drive to Dayton. Tuesday I have a Doctor's appointment and then we plan to drive home, arriving Wednesday evening.

GCS