

HARDSHIPS AND TRIALS

This past week as I walked around in my back yard I watched Palmer walk ahead, bend down, and say “Ewwwww!” She had officially seen her first cicada, but it will certainly not be her last as they are now coming out of the ground at a rapid pace. Of course, I remember the last time the cicadas came but Taylor has never seen cicadas. So I have spent this week trying to get her prepared for what is to come and get Palmer ready for many more “ewwww’s” to show up as well. Although cicadas might look a little funny or gross to some, they truly are another amazing detail in God’s creation. Just think of all the complexity that goes into the life of a cicada.

They spend the beginning of their life buried in the earth, living off of the roots of plants and trees. They spend 13 to 17 years of lives as larva, or nymphs, underground until they all come out of the ground, shed their exoskeleton, and begin to climb the trees to find a mate. When I think about how these insects and how quickly their life transforms, I can’t help but think of how much it is like that of the life of a Christian. We spend our lives in darkness but then we come to the light of Christ and a transformation happens. Just like the cicada sheds its skin and becomes a new creature, when we are baptized into Christ, we do become new. **Romans 6:4** tells us, “We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.” Just like the cicada, we become something new, with a new purpose. **2 Corinthians 5:17** says, “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.”

But, again much like the cicada, just because we are a new creation, that doesn’t mean our journey is over. After the cicada molts it begins the long hard journey up the tree. And cicadas are somewhat clumsy. As they begin their climb and they seek higher ground, they sometimes fall. Maybe because they spent all that time underground and are still getting used to their legs. Maybe the wind blows them off or a bird knocks them off the tree. Regardless of the reasons, they must get back to that tree and continue to climb. The same is true for our spiritual journey as well. When we are a new creation in Christ, we have a new purpose and a new path to take. **Hebrews 12:1-2** says, “Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right

hand of the throne of God.” And, much like the cicadas journey up the tree, our journey is not promised to be an easy one either, but it is certainly worth the reward. Jesus says in **John 16:33** “I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”

Once the cicada does make its difficult journey up the tree, there is something else that it does that reminds us of our Christian walk. The cicada begins call out. The cicada can actually produce sounds up to 120 decibels making it one of the loudest of all insects. Why does the cicada make so much noise? To attract other cicadas to themselves. They use the noise to communicate with other cicadas to both attract mates and to call other cicadas to higher elevation. Just as the cicada finds its new purpose in calling out, we are called to do the same when we are in Christ. Jesus says in **Matthew 28:18-20** “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

One final lesson from the cicadas that reminds me of our spiritual journey is something that I actually saw in our own church parking lot. As the children were playing after church this past Sunday, I watched as one of them bent down, picked up a cicada and placed it on the tree. You know, I am not sure what that cicada had in mind when it first came out of the ground and began its journey, and I am sure it was struggling and in need of help, but I wonder if it ever expected a hand to come and help it along the way. Although our Christian journey is full of hardships and trials, we can rejoice in the fact that God is in control. He is our creator and sustainer. He is actively working in our lives and drawing us closer to himself. Although our spiritual climb may look treacherous, we have a heavenly father who promise to never leave us or forsake us. So let us cling to Him and put all of our trust in His plan and He will see us through.

So over the next few weeks, as you see the cicadas come out of the ground, transform into a new creature, climb up the trees, and begin to call out. Whether you think they are beautiful or “ewww”, take a moment and reflect on the beauty of God’s creation, what it can teach us about our Christian walk as well, and thank Him for all that He continually blesses us with.

Andrew Spivey

COORDINATED BIBLE CLASS STUDIES
Sunday Read – 2 Timothy 1-2
Wednesday Read – 2 Timothy 3-4

Questions for last week's reading of;

1 Timothy 5-6 & Titus 1-3 .

Questions:

- 1. How did Paul expect Christian families to put their religion into practice?
- 2. How is a person's birth and death alike?
- 3. What evils come from loving money?
- 4. What are the older men to teach the younger men and the older women to teach the younger women?
- 5. Why are arguments among Christians bad?

GRADUATE BULLETIN

If you have a student or students that will be graduating from high school, college or technical school at **any time** during **2024** (January-December), please provide the office with a picture, their name, the school they attended, future plans to further their education or work. You may bring a picture with their information and give to the office or email the office at secnashroad@comcast.net with a picture and information. Please have these turned in by May 26th for this year's graduate bulletin.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

VBS will be held **June 2 - 5, 2024**. Please mark your calendars for those dates. More information will follow on theme and time schedule. *We already have enough donations for the snacks. Thank you to everyone that gave. What a blessing!*

SENIOR GROUP

The Senior Group will meet on **Thursday May 16th at 5:00 pm**. Please bring finger foods and drinks.

HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY !

ORDER OF SERVICES
SUNDAY
May 12, 2024
9:00 AM
BIBLE STUDY

(Classes for Nursery – High School upstairs)

Song.....Bob Brown
Opening Prayer.....Don Wilson
Auditorium Lesson.....Andrew Spivey

10:00 AM SERVICE

Welcome.....David Johnson
Scripture Reading.....J.D. Senn
Song Leader.....Bob Brown
Opening Prayer.....Eric Stephenson
Lord's Supper.....Jonathan Senn
Servers.....C. Suddarth, M. Coley, M.Ellis
T. Cummins, T. Strickland, G. Rowlett

Sermon.....Andrew Spivey
Closing Prayer.....Josh Johnson

5:00 PM SERVICE

Welcome.....David Johnson
Song Leader.....Bob Brown
Opening Prayer.....Carl Newby
Sermon.....Andrew Spivey
Lord's Supper.....Tony Butler
Closing Prayer.....Kevin Siler

WEDNESDAY
May 15, 2024
7:00 PM

Welcome.....David Johnson
Song Leader.....Bob Brown
Opening Prayer.....Fate Evans
Lesson.....Andrew Spivey
Closing Prayer.....David Thompson

Ushers for May.....Robert Buck & Lowell Clark
Communion Care for May.....David Johnson
Door Greeters – West Door.....B & S Sever
East Door.....B & M Smith
Visitor's Desk Volunteer.....Jessica Rowlett

IF YOU CANNOT SERVE, PLEASE CALL
Alex Sherrill.....615-289-9935
Church Office.....615-452-3431

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 Gallatin, TN 37066
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SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Sunday Bible Study 9:00 a.m. - Sunday Morning Worship 10:00 a.m.
 Sunday Evening Worship 5:00 p.m. - Wednesday Evening Worship 7:00 p.m.

SICK LIST

Sara Savells will have hip replacement surgery on May 16th. Sara Hosman is home now and recovering from surgery. Ann Tyler is now at NHC. David Williams is in Sumner Regional, Room 575. Janice Johnson is home now. Pat Crump cancer has returned and is having more tests done. Faye Hart had back surgery. Faye is now home. JoAnn Williamson is home and doing better. Ottis Cothron had abdominal surgery and is home doing better. Pat Watson, former member, health issues. Virginia Long, sister of Gary Stallcup, has a parathyroid illness and is bedridden. Paul Gruber neighbor of Bob & Sherry Sever has been diagnosed with bladder cancer. He is now undergoing a new drug therapy for the next few months. Larry Bailey, son of Tina Bailey a former member, has been diagnosed with liver cancer and had surgery on May 2nd to remove tumors.

PRAYER LIST

James & Mary Spivey; Ottis Cothron; Sara Hosman; Anita Cato; Shauna Lockett; Tony Perry; Jean Knowles; Zach Tooley; Mary Ann Reinhart; Shelby Ross; Sandi Jones; Lena Baggett; Maxine Cothron; Frances Catron; Charlie Cliburn; Heather Lemley daughter of Michael & Cathy Lemley. Elaine Reynolds, friend of Christie Coleman; Alan Greene, nephew of Carl & Pam Newby; Bethany Shoulders, granddaughter of Evelyn Harris; Samantha Hager, friend of June Thompson; Bryan Grissom cousin to Joyce Clark & Robbie Glover; Vycki Puckett, daughter of Jack & Anita Cato; Ty Tyler son of Ann Tyler; Wade Kennedy father of Diana Stephenson; Ida Lou Sherrill, mother of Alex Sherrill; Taylor Lackford, niece of Brenda Veale; Dustin Lackford, nephew of Brenda Veale; Larry Conley, friend of Wanda Proctor; Harold Cole, friend of Lena Baggett; Bobbie Carter, sister of Janice Johnson; Walter Wooten, brother of Wanda Sherrill; Aza Topik, grandson of Charlie & Wanda Seals.

SHUT-INS

Melba Hill; Jean Deaton;
 Jane Hughes, 126 Seabury Dr., Greenville, SC 29615.

We depend on families and friends to help us update this list. Please notify us of any changes.

OUR RECORD THIS WEEK

Bible Study.....	100
Morning Worship.....	160
Sunday Evening.....	72
Wednesday Evening.....	NA
Contribution.....	\$8,114.00
Youth Group Account.....	\$3,027.00

Elders

Tony Butler.....	615-452-0560
Jim Cherry.....	615-479-2149
David Johnson.....	615-300-9084
Alex Sherrill.....	615-289-9935
David Thompson.....	615-598-6621

Deacons

Carl Newby	Jonathan Senn	Brent Smith
Eric Stephenson	Adam Williamson	

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ANDREW SPIVEY, Pulpit and Family Minister
 TIM STRICKLAND, Associate Minister
 GARRETT ROWLETT, Youth Minister