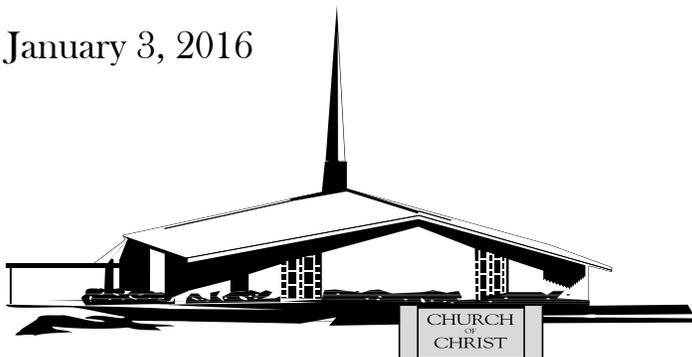


January 3, 2016



DeGaulle Drive

CHURCH OF CHRIST

4700 GENERAL DEGAULLE DRIVE

NEW ORLEANS, LA 70131

www.DegaulleDriveCOC.com

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

SUNDAY

Morning Bible Class	9:00 AM
Morning Worship	10:00 AM
Pew Packers	5:30 PM
Evening Worship	6:00 PM

MID-WEEK

Tuesday Ladies Class	10:00 AM
(September—May)	
Wednesday Bible Class	7:00 PM

ELDERS

Wes Arabie	504-858-2881
Bill Burchett	504-393-2409
Howard Goodale	504-272-0502

DEACONS

Steve Tucker	504-812-2617
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EVANGELISTS

Scott Cain	504-392-4110
Wes Arabie	504-858-2881

EMAIL: office@degaulledrivecoc.com

WORKS SUPPORTED:

Benevolence:

Childhaven of Cullman, Alabama

Media:

Gospel Broadcasting Network
 In Search of the Lord's Way
 The Old Landmarks
 The Truth in Love

MISSIONS:

Budapest, Hungary: Curry Montague,
curry.monta@gmail.com

India: Ron & Karen Clayton
RCIndia@sonet.net

Padova, Italy: Jeff & Tia Brauer Family,
brauer@padovateam.org

Marshall, Texas: Azael & Dinora Alvarez

PREACHER TRAINING:

Memphis School of Preaching

BUILDING A HOUSE OF PRAYER

Part 3

Allen Webster

deliver a full 125 million volts of electricity. Ironically, lightning is much more than what our eyes see. With a lightning bolt traveling at 90,000 miles per second it's hard to realize what is happening. The bolt gets its start from channels of pulsing electric energy two inches across, going from the ground to the clouds.¹ Prayer is the lightning of the church. Like the physical phenomenon, largely unseen and little understood, prayers release tremendous spiritual energy when they start pulsating upward to Heaven. What kind of power can be released in a congregation through the prayers of its members?

Prayer Can Increase Church Finances. Consider a situation where a congregation's whole budget is being used in good works, with no money in the bank, but a young man decides he wants to become a preacher. He wants to enroll in a school to receive training and needs to raise his support quickly before classes begin. Could a congregation pray that the contribution of its members might increase enough to support him? Certainly. Suppose a congregation's elders put together a challenging plan of work that calls for a 25% increase in revenue. Would it be permissible for them, and other faithful Christians, to pray that the contribution increase to match their plans for evangelism, edification, and benevolence? Certainly. Will it work? Paul wrote that God is able to "multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness" (2 Corinthians 9:10) (notice this is in a context of both giving and prayer: 2 Corinthians 9:6-14). If God was able to take money away from selfish Jews who built their own houses while His stood in ruins (Haggai 1:11), He certainly has the power to add money to those who are putting His will first. He does, after all, own the cattle on a thousand hills (Psalm 50:10-12), or to update the language, the money in a thousand banks.

How does God do this? A good steward in the congregation may get a raise at work or a businessman may have an unusually profitable year. A rich widow may leave a fortune to the church. The preacher's sermon may touch one who is not giving enough and motivate him to give more. How did God take the wages of those who were putting them in a bag with holes? (Haggai 1)? Perhaps by reducing purchasing power or increasing expenses. He could reverse the process whereby the church's normal expenses may be less for a few months and thus enjoy an unexpected windfall. Or individual members may come up with unexpected money and have more to give. We do not have to be able to figure it out for God to be able to do it. We may not be able to put a finger on exactly how God keeps His promises, but it is enough to have faith in His power, and let Him take care of the means (cf. 2 Corinthians 5:7).

The little bit of food (in John 6) Jesus handed to the disciples was far short of enough to feed even twelve men. It was nothing more than one little boy's lunch - the equivalent of two sardines and five soda crackers. Even visionary Andrew asked,

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE CHURCH OF CHRIST PRAYS?

One hundred lightning bolts blast the earth every second. These eight million daily surges of power provide more energy than all of the electric generators in the United States combined. Even though three-quarters of the bolt's energy is used up in heat (the surrounding air heats up to 50,000 degrees Fahrenheit), enough energy remains to

“But what are they among so many?” But when God got involved, it was enough. As the song goes, “Little becomes much in the Master's hand.” Who fed the camp of Israel in the wilderness? He that could make one man chase a thousand (Deuteronomy 32:30; Joshua 23:10) could make one loaf feed a thousand. Ours is a God of abundant providence, who does not give stingily (cf. James 1:5, 17). The Lord most fully manifests His power through our weakness and His abundance through our poverty (1 Corinthians 1:26-29; 2 Corinthians 12:9-10). He often uses the small things to greater effectiveness than the things that are thought to be the greatest and most promising.

- God used a baby's cry to move Pharaoh's daughter's heart.
- He used a shepherd's crook to work miracles in Egypt.
- He used a poverty-stricken widow to sustain Elijah.
- He used a young girl to lead the leprous Naaman to Elisha.
- He used Balaam's donkey to teach His truth.
- He used a donkey's jawbone to slay a thousand men.
- He used a little child to teach His disciples humility.

Just as He used one boy's lunch to feed five thousand people, He may use the spare hours of the businessman in the Sunday School, the brief leisure of mother at home for prayer and meditation, or the scanty time of the student to accomplish a great deal. He can also use a small contribution in the hand of a generous Christian for great good. Did you know that just ten individuals giving five dollars extra a week is almost \$2,600 in a year? Skipping one lunch a week could do that!

Prayer Can Help Church Programs. Paul did not cease to pray that the Colossians would be “fruitful in every good work” (Colossians 1:10). He asked the Romans to “strive together with me in your prayers to God for me, that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints; that I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed” (Romans 15:30-31). We should pray for the church's visitation program, its evangelism efforts, its benevolence program, and its edification endeavors. How is the visitation program of your congregation working? The youth program? The Bible school? Are your Gospel meetings well attended and fruitful? What about your mission efforts? If we want to do the Lord's work, we should ask the Lord's blessing. Who doubts, for instance, that when a significant number of Christians pray for several weeks for a Gospel meeting, that it will have a better meeting than if no one prayed?

Prayer Can Help Church Attendance. Something is wrong in a congregation when only half of the Sunday morning crowd comes back to worship God on Sunday nights and to study His Word on Wednesday nights. What can change this percentage? Sermons on church attendance help (God's people do better when they know better.) Making the classes and services (by making them scriptural and meaningful) helps. What about prayer? Could prayer play a role in increasing the numbers on the board? If prayer helps individual Christians become stronger in faith and avoid sin (cf. Luke 22:32; cf. John 17:9-11; 2 Thessalonians 3:3), frequency of church attendance is a sign of spiritual strength and willful absence is a sin (Hebrews 10:25), then it follows that prayer can help church attendance.

Give prayer a try in these areas and see if the church becomes more powerful.

WHAT *COULD* HAPPEN IN THE LOCAL CONGREGATION IF *I* PRAYED?

A very timid woman wanted to participate in the visitation program of her church, but was petrified by the thought of actually visiting somebody. The preacher, sensing her anxiety, recommended that she pray before each visit. He noted God's promise to give peace which surpasses all understanding (Philippians 4:6).

A week later the woman was walking on Cloud Nine. She jubilantly told the preacher, “You were right—prayer works! Before each one of my visits I prayed that the people wouldn't be home, and they weren't!”

Her prayers worked against the best interests of the church. What about mine? Do they work *for* the church? What could happen in the local congregation if I prayed?

God Increases Love Within a Congregation in Answer to Prayer. For what is the church I attend best known? “That's the church that doesn't use pianos.” “That's the church that believes in baptism for salvation.” “That's the church whose members think they are the only ones going to heaven.” “That's the church that doesn't have Sunrise services at Easter or Cantatas at Christmas.” “That's the church that doesn't call its preacher ‘reverend.’”

These are all good things for the community to know about us, but are any of these the thing for which Jesus would want His church *best* known? Wouldn't it be better if they said of us, “That's the church that loves each other” (cf. John 13:33-34), or, “That's a church that really believes in prayer”? A loving, praying congregation will outgrow an unloving, prayerless one every year. Love shows the community that these are Christ's followers in a way sermons never could.

How do we get our members to love each other? Several ways, but one is to pray for it. Paul said, “And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more” (Philippians 1:9).

God Unites a Congregation in Answer to Prayer. Some churches seem to believe in prayer about as much as a ship's captain caught in a storm. When it was evident that the ship would not survive a storm, the captain called out to his crew, “Does

NEWS & NOTE

NEW ANNOUNCEMENTS

UPCOMING EVENTS:

1. **SONG LEADING CLASS:** Will meet today at 4:30 PM.
2. **GENERAL TEACHERS' MEETING:** January 10 at 4PM. All teachers & those interested are encouraged to attend.
3. **POTLUCK:** January 24th after AM worship service. Last names A-L have setup & cleanup.

BIBLE CALL: The Bible Call telephone library received 85 calls for a total of 14 hours & 40 minutes of listening time in November. In December, the Bible Call library received 81 calls for a total of 12 hours & 16 minutes of listening time.

CONGRATULATIONS! Meijah Lieteau has graduated from the University of New Orleans as the first recipient of the school's music composition degree. Way to go, Ms. Lieteau!

IT'S A BOY! Tre'Sean Avion Garrett was born on December 18th at 8:31 AM weighing 7lbs & 1oz. He & his mother Cyera (& his grandmother Yvette) are at home & doing well.

THANK GOD FOR SOFT HEARTS! Justice Pitts responded to Christ's invitation last Sunday expressing repentance for sins & asking for the prayers of the saints.

LAST WEEK'S RECORD

Attendance

Bible Study	49
Sunday AM	73
Sunday PM	n/a
Wednesday	n/a

NEEDING CARE & PRAYERS

Our Members & Visitors

Family of Dan Joseph: Dan passed from this life on December 24th. His memorial service was Thursday at Garden of Memories in Metairie.

Gelanda Riddick: Is recovering from carpal tunnel surgery last Wednesday; she will be out of work for a couple of weeks while her hand heals.

Debbie Starr: Is home & well after a recent bout with pneumonia while in Colorado.

Family of Tommie Brock

John & Mary Cullum

Tony Sylve

Bill & Barbara Burchett

Loretha "Bubba" Starr

LaTonya Brooks-Washington

Our Shut-In

Elwanda Piskorik

Our Family & Friends

Roger Ferrell: Will need further surgery in the near future for a recurrent hernia.

Katy Swayne: Granddaughter of Mack & Chris Meek; was baptized into Christ last Sunday night.

Joby Smith, Jr.: Grandson of Wes & Cheryl Arabie; needs prayers & encouragement. Please send your kind thoughts to him at the following address:

Tennessee Children's Home

Attn: Joby Smith

P.O. Box 10

Spring Hill, TN 37174

Kaiyah Alexander

Family of Delmar Cooper

Roger Ferrel

Mary Macaluso

Allen Morris

Sean Brown

Betty England

Family of Daryl McKinney

Quinn Merryman

Mike Roberts

Deployed Servicemen

Nathan Gillespie: Nathan, Dawn, Tempe, & Dalton are serving in Japan (Well, Dawn & the kiddos are actually here this week, but they're currently *stationed* in Japan!).

Please submit all prayer requests in writing to Scott or Melissa Cain. Please supply regular updates on each individual in order to keep our prayer list up-to-date. For the sake of space, any name (except for shut-ins) will be removed after four weeks unless a new update is received. Thank you for helping us all to stay informed of the spiritual & physical needs of our members, friends, & family.

PRIVILEGED TO SERVE

THIS WEEK

JANUARY 3

Sunday AM

Welcome:

Wes Arabie

Prayer:

Keith Cooper

Song Lead:

Howard Goodale

Communion Scripture:

Paul Macaluso (2)

Hebrews 1:8-13

Lord's Table:

Paul Macaluso (2)

Sermon:

Scott Cain

Dismissal:

Glenn Bates

Sunday PM

Welcome:

Wes Arabie

Prayer:

Roland Keith

Song Lead:

James Cobette

Lord's Table:

Paul Macaluso (2)

Sermon:

Scott Cain

Dismissal:

Don Robinson

NEXT WEEK

JANUARY 10

Sunday AM

Welcome:

Howard Goodale

Prayer:

Roland Keith

Song Lead:

Howard Goodale

Communion Scripture:

Roland Keith

Colossians 1:15-20

Lord's Table:

Paul Macaluso (2)

Sermon:

Scott Cain

Dismissal:

Ron Landis

Sunday PM

Welcome:

Howard Goodale

Prayer:

Paul Macaluso (2)

Song Lead:

Ron Landis

Lord's Table:

Paul Macaluso (2)

Sermon:

Scott Cain

Dismissal:

Howard Goodale

anyone here know how to pray?"

One volunteered with, "Yes, sir, I do."

"Good," the captain replied. "You pray while the rest of us put on our life jackets. We're one short."¹²

Congregations need an "all for one, one for all" attitude. If it were not possible for unity to come about through prayer, then Jesus would never have prayed, "for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me" (John 17:20-21).¹³ The early church continued "with one accord in prayer and supplication" (Acts 1:14).

Is a congregation you know of suffering from disunity? Are brethren "biting and devouring one another"? (Galatians 5:15). Pray for them. Churches grow in love's greenhouse, but die in a freezer.

God Grants Churches Wisdom in Answer to Prayer. How many churches are trying to live down the mistakes of past elderships and preachers?

Some are "boxed in" because they did not have the wisdom to buy enough property; others have properties not conducive to growth because they are so out-of-the way visitors must have directions to find them. Some store up money as if the church were a bank while missionaries and good works go unsupported; others pay interest on hundreds of thousands while missionaries and good works go unsupported. Some have built great sprawling facilities they can never pay for with their membership base; others built too small and had to add on before they got it paid off. Some failed to practice church discipline and now the church is weak and worldly; others practiced it with poor judgment and split the church (cf. 1 Corinthians 5; 2 Thessalonians 3).

Preachers with poor business and ethical judgment have ruined the influence of the church in the community (and then moved on). Some have preached hard and mean and turned away those who were not yet ready for meat (Ephesians 4:15; Hebrews 5:12-14; Mark 4:33); others have set the church up to be led astray by never preaching on doctrine and important contemporary issues (2 Timothy 4:1-6).

Churches have invested in missionaries and Christian education without sufficiently checking the soundness and/or work ethic of those involved and hurt the Cause instead of furthering it.

Churches need wisdom much more than they need money or members. If we have wisdom, we will eventually get money and members. And without wisdom we will likely lose the money and members we now have. Solomon wrote, "The wise shall inherit glory: but shame shall be the promotion of fools" (Proverbs 3:35) and, "There is treasure to be desired and oil in the dwelling of the wise; but a foolish man spendeth it up" (Proverbs 21:20).

How do we keep from making serious mistakes? Pray for wisdom! James promised God gives it freely in answer to prayer (James 1:1-6). Paul told the Ephesians, "making mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him" (Ephesians 1:16-17). He also prayed that the Philippian church would have judgment to "approve things that are excellent" (Philippians 1:9). He told the Colossians that he did "not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding" (Colossians 1:9).

After World War II a great cry arose because the Allies never bombed the railroad tracks which led to Auschwitz. Although they knew hundreds of thousands of Jews and Slovaks were being transported along these tracks to death camps, the Allied forces never bombed the tracks.¹ They had the power but refused to use it.

What about us? Are we less to blame if a congregation and individual Christians are dying and we could help stop the process? Do we use the prayer power available to us to change evil into good? Do we use prayer as a weapon against the things we complain about in our world or even in our congregations?

"Let's have a word of prayer."

Endnotes:

¹¹ Reader's Digest, Aug. 1987, p. 23-29

¹² *Reader's Digest*, July 1992, p. 62

¹³ Though he may not have understood the full import of his statements, Matthew Henry's comment on this passage is worth noting: "Our Lord especially prayed, that all believers might be as one body under one head, animated by one soul, by their union with Christ and the Father in him, through the Holy Spirit dwelling in them. The more they dispute about lesser things, the more they throw doubts upon Christianity. Let us endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, praying that all believers may be more and more united in one mind and one judgment. Thus shall we convince the world of the truth and excellence of our religion, and find more sweet communion with God and his saints."