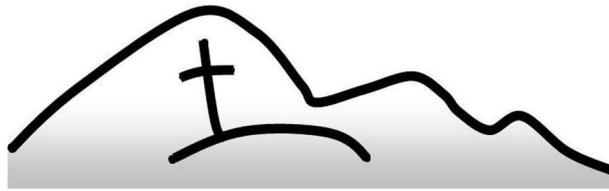


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THE MOUNTAIN CITY MESSENGER



First Christian Church
Mountain City, GA
Building God's Church One Home at a Time

Our Vision

To become a Biblically-functioning family of believers growing:

- Deeper through worship
- Larger through evangelism
- Stronger through discipleship
- Warmer through fellowship
- Broader through ministry

WELCOME TO OUR NEWSLETTER!

Volume 5, Issue 6
June, 2015

Thanks for 4+ Years!

It is hard to believe that we are facing the end of this chapter in the life of FCC of Mountain City GA. It feels like it was just yesterday when we arrived at Kevin and Sara's house with a van and truck full of stuff that could not fit in our moving pod.

February 13, 2011 was our first day and June 14, 2015 will be our last day with the church. The first day was full of excitement and anticipation because I was eager to find out how the Lord was going to use me as the Minister. Now I am looking forward to what God has in store for us beyond June 14!

FCC of Greenwood SC will be starting a new chapter as they say goodbye to their minister Dan Hodge on June 28. From that point forward, I will be standing behind the pulpit for as long as God decides to use me in that location.

As I fill the pulpit there, the search for the next minister here will begin. During this time of transition, my prayer is that you will follow God's lead and refuse to settle for anything less than what is best for God's church here in Mountain City.

Good enough will never be great. And great is what this church needs to be in order to make a difference and reach those who need Jesus.

May 31 - Imitators of God
June 7 - The New Life
June 14 - Give Me This Mountain

"¹³Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, ¹⁴I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 3:13-14 ESV)

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**KEEP CALM
AND GET READY FOR
NEXT CHAPTER**

"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might."
(Ephesians 6:10 ESV)

Week of 5/31:

Mon - John 8:31-38
Tues - 1 Cor 7:17-24
Wed - Ephesians 6:5-9
Thur - Colossians 3:22-25
Fri - Colossians 4:7-9
Sat - Philemon

Week of 6/7:

Mon - Numbers 13:1-24
Tues - Numbers 13:25-33
Wed - Numbers 14:1-12
Thur - Num 14:13-25
Fri - Numbers 14:26-38
Sat - Joshua 14:6-12

Memory Verse:

"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might."

(Ephesians 6:10 ESV)

Now that the next chapter is upon us, we must continue to press on towards the goal that is waiting for us at the end of the race. Let's fight the good fight of faith both here and in Greenwood, SC!

-Earl Winfrey
Earl@mkdisciples.org

Check us out online:

www.fccmtnctny.org

Mailing Address:

PO Box 402
Mtn Cty GA 30562

Church Office:

706-746-3168

Facebook:

FCC Mountain City

Mkdisciples Study Group

Early Morning Snuggles

Missions we support

Johnson University in Florida

Open Door Libraries

Rio Bravo Ministries

Please keep us informed of any address changes so we can keep our records up to date.

Friends never say goodbye (Sara Lantzer)

When my cousin was a teenager, she wrote a song for her friend who was near the end of a terminal illness. The tune and lyrics invariably make me cry, especially at the times like when I am standing in the barn room and Amanda is playing it on the piano and singing. I keep the CD recording in my car and listen to it often while traveling.

What a blessing this song is! I remember sharing it with a niece and nephew, and thereafter followed a hours' conversation about heaven and dying friends and Jesus ... very significant since they were only 6 and 4 at the time. It often comes to mind when I am on a mission trip, especially at the times like when I am leaving the beautiful children in the street kids' home in Kiev, or the staff at the Training Christians for Ministry headquarters in Vienna.

More recently, it has been playing often in the jukebox of my mind, simply because I have friends in so many locations and I only know how to be in one place at a time. You might think I would get used to saying "Good-bye", and that it wouldn't bother me that much since it is such a common occurrence. You might think it would just be more preferable to stay in one location so that I wouldn't be stirring up more situations that lead to more good-byes.

Last night, I attended the World Premiere of *Beyond The Mask* with many cast and crew members. It was a night of fancy dresses, red carpet, lots of hugging and saying "hello!" for the first time in 2 years, lots of chatting and picture taking and even giggling along with each other during humorous parts of the film. Fun times don't last forever, though, and before I knew it, the time had come to part ways. I watched as one by one of the people I *so* enjoyed being around began to leave and go to their vehicles and drive off to their separate lives. Maybe that is the reason I stuck around to the last possible moment, to avoid leaving and making the parting complete.

This morning, I wonder if this is anything like God feels. Does He get used to humans choosing to do things without Him, or forgetting about Him, or not even knowing He is around? Does He get bothered, even though it happens *billions* of times a day?? Does He ever prefer to just hang out with those who are currently populating Heaven and not stir up the happenings on earth because that would mean more situations for humans to be separate from Him? I sure hope not!!

What a blessing that He still pursues relationships with humans, that He still takes a vital interest in earth circumstances, that He still is planning a great, big, splendid, World *and* Heaven get-together at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb - and this is one get-together that will last forever. This is such a wonderful hope :) (Continued on page 5)

The Best and Worst of Times (Part 2)

*"The conclusion, when all has been heard: is fear God and keep His commandments."
Ecclesiastes 12:13*

The doctors went to work on Barbara while Christians across the country prayed. Her heart beat so quickly (200-300 beats per minute) that it was not filling with blood and her blood pressure went down. This low pressure could harm the baby if it continued.

The doctor made a quick decision. Using electric shock, he successfully reduced her heart rate to 75 beats per minute. Afterward, through tears, we gave thanks for God's intervention in saving both Barbara and the baby.

We talked quite a bit after that terrifying event. Often we think we are in control. We think we can plan our lives. We struggle over so many insignificant things, but we find ourselves asking, "What really matters?"

In the midst of these best and worst of times, a certain book reached us like a beacon in the darkness. It's a book that rips away the veil of idealism about life. It deals with purpose and significance. It gives meaning to life's storms, to prosperity, to our search for security. The book? Ecclesiastes.

In its pages Solomon paints the paradoxes of life better than Charles Dickens ever dreamed. Whether we're experiencing the best or worst of times, God must be our reference point (see Ecc. 12:13). If not, then life is emptiness-void of meaning.

*As I drove away from the hospital later that afternoon, I reflected on how different people respond to crisis situations. And I wondered, *What is their reference point for a life and death situation? Where do they find meaning? How do they make sense out of suffering?**

That night, as I put our five children to bed, we crowded together and prayed. Benjamin, then eight, prayed as only a child can: "Father, we give thanks that Mommy got sick 'cause we know You want us to give thanks in everything...and we give thanks that she's okay, too."

He prayed with childlike faith, and a mature perspective. He understood how God wants us to respond in the best and worst of times. Sometimes it takes a child's faith in God to remind us, doesn't it?

Devotion taken from "Moments Together for Couples" by Dennis and Barbara Rainey

Ladies' Night

June 15 at 6:30pm (Destination TBD)

2015 Conference Opportunities

NACC—June 23rd-26th Cincinnati, OH (www.gotonacc.org)

If you keep doing what you have always done you will continue to get what you always got.
If you want something different, the change starts with you!

"Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians..." - Acts 17:11

The church in Berea was known for their hunger for the truth. The people were constantly checking the scriptures to see if they were being represented correctly. This was not a result of their distrust for the speaker but instead, it was their maturity in their faith as they understood the importance of making sure the information that was being passed on to them was truth. Here are some helpful suggestions so you too can become a good Berean:

- Know your Bible

The people in the church of Berea would not have been able to discern what was true if they were ignorant of the Scriptures. Likewise, we can't expect to be able to tell the difference between a false teaching and a truth if we don't know our Bible. Take the time to build a solid foundation by reading the Bible every day and studying it to gain a fuller understanding of what the Word of God contains, and it will be much easier to spot a fake.

- Don't be afraid to ask for clarification

If there is anything that is the most harmful when it comes to checking up on a teaching, it is failing to take the time to understand fully what is being taught. Take plenty of notes, ask for clarification on what is not clear, and if possible, check with somebody who heard the teaching to see if you might have misunderstood what was being taught. A few extra minutes at the beginning checking on what was taught could save you from spending hours later trying to apologize for the misunderstanding.

- Know what you don't know

This is the hardest part of being a good Berean because sometimes it is hard to admit when you don't know something. It is ok to ask for help in understanding scripture because we are all human, and none of us are "Experts" when it comes to interpreting the Bible. Anyone who claims to be the authority on scripture should be questioned as only the Lord Himself can make that claim.

- Have good resources available

This is a tough one because of the abundance of material in today's Christian bookstore market. Finding good resources can make the difference between being accurate and being misled so be careful, and seek advice as to what resources would be good for you. I can help you find the resources you need if you will just let me know what you are looking for.

- Innocent until proven guilty

It is very important for you to enter into a "Berean" situation with an optimistic outlook. If you begin the process with the assumption that the teaching is false, it will be hard to find the truth. Keep an open mind and assume that the teaching could be true, and don't pass judgment until the evidence presents itself. Way too often, a teaching gets rejected based on the fact that it doesn't sound like anything that has been taught before, and this can cause tunnel vision when it comes to correctly handling the Word of God.

- Earl Winfrey

(... from page 2)

~ *Friends Never Say Good-bye, by Amanda Little* ~

*"For as long as I can remember, we have know each other.
We've done so many silly things that I will always treasure:
Like when you lost your boot in the creek out back,
Or when we got homesick our first week of camp,
Or when we played games, and Barbie's, too.
Alison, I'll never forget you!
So let's keep in touch, no matter what, because -*

*Friends never say "good-bye";
Just "see ya 'round" or "later".*

*'Cause no matter what tomorrow brings,
Joy and laughter, or fights and screams,
We will see each other again down here on earth or in heaven.
'Cause friends like us never say good-bye.*

A few years ago we were the best of friends.

But now I don't know what happened.

It's just a "hi" here, and a few words there, but nothing really spoken.

Until I found out that you were sick,

Then it came back to me really quick

How much that you mean to me, and have touched my life completely.

But I take comfort in knowing that -

*Friends never say "good-bye";
Just "see ya 'round" or "later".*

*'Cause no matter what tomorrow brings,
Joy and laughter, or fights and screams,*

We will see each other again down here on earth or in heaven.

'Cause friends like us never say good-bye.

...See ya later"

One of the good-byes I am not excited about is when the Winfrey family will no longer be with the church body at Mountain City, but will be moving to the body at Greenwood. "Good-bye" seems so final, so hopeless almost. I can't handle that thought! "See ya later" is much easier to swallow, and it is much closer to the truth. What a blessing that God has provided us with the hope of heaven, when "Good-bye" will be stricken from the language, never to be remembered again thereafter. What a blessing that I can look forward to seeing my movie-making and missionary and remote location friends again, that I don't have to be weighed down by a final and forever separation. What a blessing that the Winfreys are leaving this area with our constant friendship, with our encouragement to do the work God has for them in the other location, with the bittersweet memories that we have all had a part in making. See ya later!

"Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer." - Romans 12:12 (NIV)

CALENDAR OF EVENTS - JUNE

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
S.S. - 10am Worship - 11am Wed Meal - 6pm Study - 6:45pm	1	2 Elders Meeting 6:30pm	3 Elders/Deacons Meeting 5:30pm	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11 Men's Night 6:30pm	12 Craft Day	13 VBS at Rabun County Church of Christ
14 Fellowship Meal Earl's last Sunday	15 Ladies' Night 6:30pm	16	17 Food Pantry 5:00pm	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				Every Tuesday at Chick-Fil-A 7am: Men Discipleship Group

Don't forget to pray for those churches around us and near our hearts!

- First Christian Church of Franklin, NC
- Rabun County Church of Christ (Tiger, GA)
- Toccoa Christian Church (Toccoa, GA)
- Bethany Christian Church (Bumpass, VA)
- East Win Christian Church (Memphis, TN)
- First Christian Church of Fairburn, GA
- Lilburn Christian Church, GA
- Tucker Christian Church, GA
- Southlake Christian Church (Groveland, FL)
- Christian Church at Deleon Springs, FL
- Tomoka Christian Church (Ormond Beach, FL)
- First Christian Church (Kissimmee, FL)
- Port Orange Christian Church, FL
- First Christian Church of Greenwood, SC

If anyone knows of any churches that need to be added to this list, be sure to let Earl know.

Servers for June:

- Morning Prayer - Lee Lantzer
- Offering Prayer - Mark Mason
- Server - Chris Duke
- Communion Meditation - Luke Turner
- Communion Preparation - Albers

Servers for July:

- Morning Prayer - Shawn Albers
- Offering Prayer - Kevin Berg
- Server - Mark Mason
- Communion Meditation - Josh Berg
- Communion Preparation - Tiffany Berg