

TODAY’S ORDER OF WORSHIP

Welcome by: Bobby Rader / Opening Prayer by: Don Taylor
Morning Assembly Song Leader: Danny Balch

#869 We’re Marching to Zion
#837 I Need Thee Every Hour

Scripture Reading by: Matthew Girard
#300 Praise Him! Praise Him!

Communion Devotional by: Robert Ward
Lord’s Supper and Contribution

#480 Blessed Assurance
Sermon: “Joy in Life”
Ecclesiastes 1:12-2:26

#940 Only a Step
#523 I Know the Lord Will Find a Way
Closing Prayer by: Zach Arthur

We will be watching the second season of
“The Chosen” at 5:00 p.m. on Sunday nights in
the fellowship room.

Other Opportunities For Spiritual Growth

Sunday: 9:00am — Bible Study Classes, 10:00am — Worship, 5:00pm — Worship
Wednesday: 6:30pm — Bible Study Classes

July 30, 2023

“Stand Firm in...Liberty”

Galatians 5:1

Red Door Churches

Sometimes we reprint articles in this space; normally, I go a few years without doing that. But we are about to kickoff our small groups program again for 2023-24 next week, and this relates so directly to what they are all about, that I felt it was worth it to revisit it again already—plus, the article itself was reprinted by the author after only a few months because it proved so popular, so I figure what’s sauce for the goose is for the gander. This is by Ken Weliever, a gospel preacher for more than a half century. You can read more of his work at ThePreachersWord.com. But more to the point, if this concept sounds appealing to you, I implore you to get involved with our small groups program. We had a massive turnout in the spring, but we envision a day when the whole church participates in it. That’s what we are doing to make this a “red door church.” BP

Nancy Kennedy, religious writer for our local Citrus County Chronicle recently wrote a column entitled “Red Door Churches” that caught my eye. Kennedy relates touring a new meeting house of a church that had red doors. She learned that traditionally and historically, dating back to the medieval day that churches had red doors. While the red door was symbolic of Jesus’ blood shed on the cross, thus reminding us of sal- vation in Christ, it also had a cultural significance. During times of persecution, people could seek asylum at a church that had a red door. Apparently, this was prevalent during England’s War of the Roses. A soldier on the losing side could hide in a church with a red door and his enemies would not harm him. They would- n’t violate the red door.

Kennedy makes the point that the church ought to be a place of sanctuary. Safety. And refuge.

I’ve been thinking about “Red Door Churches” for several days. And what that means in a personal, practi- cal sense in our congregational relationships. The Bible speaks of the Christian’s relationship in Christ’s church where we:

- Accept one another (Rom. 14:1).
- Care for one another (1 Cor. 12:25).
- Bear one another’s burdens (Gal. 6:2).
- Through love serve one another (Gal. 5:13).
- Encourage one another (1Thess. 5:17).
- Show tolerance for one another (Eph. 4:2).
- Comfort one another (I Thess. 4:18).

While the churches to whom these epistles were penned didn’t have red doors, in fact, they didn’t even have church buildings as we know them, they were encouraged to be “red door churches.” I wonder, are the con- gregations to which we belong really working to be “red door” churches? More personally, and pointedly, are we working to be “red door” Christians?

Family News & Notes

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH YOUR CHURCH FAMILY

Our Sick

Robert Modisette is on hospice care.

Lon Hobbs is in PAM Rehab Hospital in Humble, room 209.

Peggy McIntosh fell and hit her head and had to have stitches.

Continued Prayers

(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Geri Cryer, Steve Ward, Oscar Cantu, Caitlin Smith, Virginia Cole, Ken Coleman, Joe Edd Stifflemire, Donna Wilson, Bryan Sene-gal, Cynthis Deblanc, Patricia Prater, Richard Prater, Edna Semien, Wilson Semien, Gloria Moore, Betty Spencer, Willie Spencer, James Wilson, Jo Ella McKewen, Brooke Ann Smith, Tony Fontenot, Winston Leifester, Kelly McCain

Shut Ins

(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Jim Smith, Winona Angelle, Myrtle Sheffield, Catherine Parker, Peggy McIntosh, Lois Watts, Willo Dean Ellis

Upcoming Activities

Elders, Minister meet Monday, July 31st at 5:30 p.m.

We will have a Houston Food Bank truck on Tuesday, Aug. 1st at 8:00 a.m.

Primetimers will be meeting at Ranch Hand Café on Tuesday, Aug. 8th at 6:00 p.m.

Summer Book Club

The book we are reading and studying is “Gentle and Lowly”. A sign up sheet is on the bulletin board. We will meet each Thursday at 6:00 p.m. If you are interested in this see Bryant.

Sympathy

We extend our sympathy to Joe Edd Stifflemire and his family on the death of his brother in law, Gerald Bagwell. He passed away Monday night.

Our Missionaries

Aaron & Marisa Bailey in Montepuez, Mozambique, Rod Kyle in the South Pacific

Through the years we’ve been blessed to be received warmly by the churches with whom we’ve ministered. While every preacher can recount some slight or ill-treatment, overwhelmingly our experiences have been positive, supportive, and uplifting. Yet, that’s not the case with everyone in every congregation.

We have both seen and heard of situations where brethren have not treated others with the spirit of kindness, concern, and compassion. At times, we’ve received letters or emails, from brethren who are heartbroken, describing their feelings of loneliness, indifference, and even rejection where they worship.

Most churches have a sign that says “Visitors welcomed.” Yet, sometimes visitors are ignored. Judged by their appearance. Quickly condemned for their beliefs. Viewed with suspicion. And generally made to feel uncomfortable in the assembly.

In some churches, cliques exist. Preferential treatment is given to members of means, position, or social standing. The sins of some are overlooked because of family ties. And new Christians are left on the outside looking in, never feeling a part of the fellowship.

In some places, preachers may be failing to “speak the truth in love,” being unduly harsh, or else failing to preach the Truth at all. Some pastors may be failing to shepherd the flock, and not protecting those assigned to their care. Other churches may have members who are divisive, self-willed, and spiteful. Yet, nothing is done to rebuke or discipline their sins. And the church suffers.

Hopefully, this bleak description is not widespread. But it does exist. Every preacher, pastor, and Christian should work to make their congregation a “red door” Church.

Is your church a place where...

...Hurts are healed?
...Fellowship is inclusive?
...Needs are met?
...Help is provided?
...Souls are saved?
...Hearts are mended?
...Prodigals are forgiven?
...Compassion is shown?
...Grace is extended?
...Mercy is bestowed?
...God is glorified?
...Christ is exalted?
...People are valued?
...Love is shared?
...Faith is strengthened?
...Hope is offered?

Regardless of the color of the door, the church where you worship can be a “red door” church. Now, what can you do to make it so?

“Stand Firm in...Liberty”

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