



The office will be closed Monday,  
July 4th, in observance of  
**Independence Day.**  
Have a fun and safe weekend.

## 4th of July



### This Week's Lesson

#### Sunday Morning

*In Paradise*

Luke 23.26-43

#### Sunday Night Sermon

*A Story of Great Faith*

Luke 7.1-10

### GOOD NEWS

We had a record-breaking week at Short Mountain Bible Camp with 330 campers and counselors attending and over 700 present for Family Night! As was announced on Sunday, we also had 12 baptisms at camp this year. On Wednesday night, **Scotlynn Stroud** was baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of her sins. Scotlynn is the daughter of Slade and Susan Stroud. On Thursday night, **Kaige Whitaker** was baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of his sins. Kaige is a teenager who has been coming to our Wednesday After School program and has been attending Matt Collins' Bible class.

When we got back from camp on Friday afternoon, we learned that **Chloe Grace Savage** (daughter of Chris and Karen Savage) was baptized into Christ by her father. What a great week! Please pray for these young people as they seek to follow the Lord.

### IS CHRISTIANITY ON THE DECLINE?

A new Pew Research Center survey found that the self-identified Christian share of the US population declined almost 8% from 2007-2014. Some have drawn the conclusion that Christianity is declining in America. But is that the case?

Despite the numbers, many researchers are of the opinion that Christianity isn't collapsing; it's being clarified. Gallup recently found that weekly religious attendance as a percentage of the US population is about where it was in the 1940s. In fact, evangelical Christianity is growing. From 2007-2014, the number of evangelicals in America rose from 59.8 million to 62.2 million, according to Pew. And despite what many are saying, evangelicals are attending church more than ever. The latest (2014) General Social Survey found that in the last two years of the study, a greater percentage of evangelicals are attending church than in any other time of the past 40 years. Currently, 55% of evangelicals attend church at least once per week.

If evangelical Christianity is growing, or at the least remaining steady, why is Christianity as a whole shrinking? In short, nominals - people whose religious affiliation is in name only - are becoming nones.

According to Pew, unaffiliated Americans grew from 16% to nearly 23% in the past seven years. Many of these who have been labeling themselves as Christians are starting to feel free to be honest about their religious affiliation, or lack thereof. So, the number of people who are practicing a vibrant faith is not fading away. Quite the contrary. Christianity and the church are not dying, but they are being more clearly defined.

Nominal Christians are becoming the nones. It is fair to say we are experiencing a collapse, but not within Christianity. Instead, the free fall we find is within nominalism. That's the real story of this data and one that needs to be told. The nominals are becoming the nones. *(adapted from an article by Ed Stetzer, executive director of LifeWay Research)*

# From John's Desk

**Galatians 1:6-11-17** *For I would have you know, brothers, that the gospel that was preached by me is not man's gospel. For I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ. For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it. And I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers. But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and who called me by his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with anyone; nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia, and returned again to Damascus.*

Paul was called by God to bring God's kingdom to the world. The authority of Paul's ministry came from God himself. Paul's own transformation revealed the work of God in Paul's life. Jesus is the point!

Why is Galatians 1:11-17 important?  
What do we do with a text like this?

1. Our authority must come God.  
Paul did not serve for his own conscience. Paul served because he had been called by God to serve. Do you do what you do because you feel convicted by God to serve in that capacity? It's when we feel conviction from God that the areas we serve in become compelling.
2. Our transformation (from sin to life) should show the world how God works in people today.  
Most people are stuck in a cycle of non-belief. It's not that people don't believe in God. Most people simply believe God is so small that they can't change. Do you believe God has the power to change you? If you believe God is that big, then you will take that message and power to others.

God Bless, **John**

# Collins' Corner

Another update on the **Sycamore Elementary School Supplies** project:

We still are very short on school supplies for Sycamore Elementary. We have 54 complete bags and our goal is 400.

I want to remind you of the exciting opportunity to serve our community coming up this summer/fall. The bags we have in the foyer and lining the walls of the auditorium have a packing list for school supplies that we are donating to Sycamore Elementary. Our goal is to be able to provide every child at Sycamore a "starter kit" for the upcoming school year. The bags on average will cost you around \$15 to purchase every item. Every little bit will help! We hope you will take the opportunity to help a child in need this school year. If you don't have the capability of going and buying the school supplies, but would like to donate money towards that cause, we would greatly welcome your donation. You can see John Nichols or myself with donations. Thanks in advance for your help and participation!

**Matt**

**cultivate**

**SCHOOL SUPPLY DRIVE**

- COLORED PENCILS
- #2 PENCILS
- CRAYONS
- WIDE RULED PAPER
- COMPOSITION NOTEBOOKS
- SCISSORS
- GLUESTICKS
- EXPO MARKERS
- CAP ERASERS
- CONSTRUCTION PAPER
- 3 RING BINDERS
- BACKPACKS

**HOW YOU CAN HELP:**

- PRAY
- HOST TEENS IN YOUR HOME
- DONATE SCHOOL SUPPLIES
- PREPARE DESSERTS
- SET UP/TAKE DOWN CREW
- SHOW UP

**AUG. 5-7**

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## News, Prayers & Announcements

Sympathy to **Bobby Allred** in the death of his father, **Sean Allred**. His funeral was held Monday.

Sympathy also to **Carolyn Fisher** in the death of her mother, **Claudine White**. Her funeral was held Friday.

**Karma Carter** received her test results. She does have Hodgkin lymphoma cancer and will start a four-month chemo treatment on July 12. She request our prayers.

**Cheri McCormick** now has a cast on her broken leg.

**Lyman Schroeder** has been dismissed from Cookeville Regional.

**Jeremy Fortner**, son of **Ken & Marty Clark**, is recovering from surgery. His family request prayers for fast healing so he can continue his chemo treatments.

The following are all now recovering at their homes: **Ruby Anderson, Louise Flatt, Ann Judd, Renee Mayher, Cheri McCormick, Opal Nichols & Clarcie Bush** is at the home of her granddaughter, Jamie Allison.

**Graduation Congratulations** to **Andrew Manley** for graduating High School Valedictorian. He will be attending Pepperdine University this fall, studying chemistry.

**Wedding Congratulations** to **Ashleigh Hamilton & Brandon Crossman** on their recent wedding, June 25.

**Grandbaby Congratulations** to **John & Barbara Brown** on the birth of a grandbaby girl, **Daphene Emogene Scott**, born to their daughter, **Amy Scott**, on Monday, June 20.

**NHC Worship Service:** Jefferson Avenue will conduct the worship service on **Sunday, July 3 at 2:00pm**. **Leighton Sissom's Class** is scheduled to assist.

**The Amazing Ladies** will meet at Mama Rosa's on **July 11**, at 11:30 AM. Please sign-up on the Family Board. Contact **Marilyn Scott** for details.

**Bridal Tea:** There will be a bridal tea for **Bobby Allred & Allison Hamilton** Sunday, **July 17**, in the Fellowship Hall, from 1:30 to 3:00. We will post where they are registered at a later date.

### **Young at Heart:**

#### **Nashville Sounds Game July 23**

Sign up sheet is on the YAH board for the Nashville Sounds Game. Tickets are \$20 each. **Everyone** is invited. We will leave the parking lot at 5:00pm; game starts at 7:05pm. See **Curtis Shinsky**.



## Our Shut-Ins

**Bethesda:** Lyda Taylor & Jan Shuster

**Heritage Pointe:** Peggy Cooper, Wilma Hayes & Marian McDoniel

**Morningside:** Ann Judd

**NHC Healthcare:** Evelyn Solt, Aletha Tino

**Senior Lifestyles:** Lyman Schroeder

**At Home:** Hugh & Kathy Adams, Herman & Becky Bean, Maggie Brown, Matilda Craighead, Margaret Cunningham, Mary Dyer, Geneva Glasgow, Ralph Medley, Sterling & Pat McCanless, Gladys Simmons, Claudine Smith, Marty Smith, Cornelia Steakley, Jordan Terry and Charles Williamson

### **THANK YOU!**

Thank you for all the well wishing phone calls and beautiful uplifting cards that I've received during my confined time at home, with this fractured knee.

In Christian Love, **Jan Lowe**

Dear Jefferson Avenue Church Family, thank you so much for all of the visits, calls and lovely cards that we received following the passing of my mother, Nancy Gaw. We are also so thankful for all of the prayers offered on our behalf. We have reaped the benefits of God's comfort and love through each of you.

Love, **Jack & Dorinda Gaw & Family**

**Blood Drive** The American Red Cross will be in the Fellowship Center, **Tuesday, July 5**, from 1 pm to 5 pm. Make your appointment by calling 1-800-RED CROSS or online at [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org).

**Christian Service Group:** Leaders for the month of **July** are **Jim & Marian Dale**. Assisting are **David & Laura Fox** and those with **last names beginning** with the **Letters E, F, G, H, I and J**.

