

*A monthly publication of Memorial Christian Church  
in the interest of promoting the Gospel of Jesus Christ  
and goodwill among His people, our friends.*

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**Chief Shepherd**

Jesus Christ

**Pastors**

- Gordon Addington
- David Benedict
- Forrest Cotter
- Rick Schmeski
- Bill Sites
- Bruce Wolf

**Deacons**

- James Darr
- James Evans
- Gene Frazier
- Gene McCoy
- Joey Peglar

**Preacher**

Gene McCoy

**Youth Ministers**

- Eric Dwyer
- Ashton Schmeski

**Culture War**

**Boycotting "Christmas" by Gene McCoy**

I have decided to boycott the culture war being waged over the greeting, "Merry Christmas." Despite the campaigns being led by prominent Christian and conservative organizations, I have decided there are battles more worthy of my energies and attention.

It isn't that I am unaware of or lack concern about the obvious and overt cultural campaign in which Christianity is the enemy that must be silenced, marginalized, and driven out of the public square. I am just as upset as anyone, and am probably a more vociferous proponent of Christian values and Biblical truth than most of those who are expending a lot of energy in fighting the war over the greeting, "Merry Christmas."

The Bible nowhere instructs us on celebrating the birth of Jesus and never employs the term "Christmas." We cannot identify a date certain for Jesus' birth. Just about everything connected

with the holiday is based in tradition, much of it born in religion we roundly reject as spurious. Yet some Christians expend a lot of energy and devote a lot of ink to protest this indicator that our Judeo-Christian culture is slipping away into apparent oblivion.



While I share this concern, and although I can understand how this issue is a piece of the larger picture that portrays the growing

secularization of society, I'm not convinced that this is a mountain on which I am prepared to die. Nor am I satisfied that this battle will result in the victory we desire.

Consider the fact that the words, "Merry Christmas" do not have the significance many assert. Asked what those words mean, one respondent said, "they put me in a 'give don't receive'

**continued on p. 3**

**Are You Sure, God? by Walt McKay**

It has been just a few weeks since our capital campaign has ended and I want to share how God is already blessing our family.



Let me first share a little background information.

About fourteen months ago, we completed an office renovation on 5<sup>th</sup>

street. Originally, I designed this to be my personal office. So I spared no expense making it an elegant office space.

When we decided to lease out the office, I knew it would be challenging due to the slow economy and

the higher than average monthly rent we were asking. At the time, it wasn't a huge concern because we had savings that we didn't want to use, but could to help cover the mortgage. After fourteen months with no renters, however, the financial situation got a little more

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## Preacher's Pen *by Gene McCoy*

For other articles and information about our congregation, go online [www.memorialchristian.com](http://www.memorialchristian.com)

### New Members

**Don & Judy Truitt**, immersed believers who have been faithful servants of the Lord for many years, have formally offered to become a part of our congregation's work and ministry. He is a retired preacher who has recently concluded an interim ministry with our sister congregation in Flippin.

### Thanks

to **Mike and Paula Mittermeyer** for delivering the Christmas gifts to the Show-Me Christian Youth Home

have been received from the **Mtn. Home Food Basket** for our recent contributions

and from the **Christian Clinic** for the meal prepared and served by the Benevolence Ministry Team and for the devotions presented by Bruce Wolf

A popular southern gospel song asserts that I was on Jesus' mind when He was on the cross. A contemporary song features the recurring phrase, "Oh, how He loves us."

While it is true that Jesus died for sinners and redemption was the focus, there is an apparent obsession with the primacy of man in contemporary thought. It is popular to preach about how important man is and how man's benefit is the primary thought on our Lord's mind. This apparently egocentric approach sells books and fills the coffers of the purveyors of pop psychology that purport to be gospel preachers.

We are not suggesting that sinners were not on Jesus' mind when He hung on Calvary's cross. Justification and atonement have sinners in full view. But some balance is needed, lest we fail to recognize something else that the Bible clearly states was on Jesus' mind.

Underscoring His mission was His purpose of fulfilling the Father's plan. Doing the will of His Father was His central consideration.

Foretelling His death, Jesus said it was for the purpose of glorifying the Father's name (John 12:28). In offering His body as a sacrifice Jesus was doing the will of the Father (Hebrews 10:7-9). From Gethsemane's garden Jesus could see the cross silhouetted against the dark horizon atop Calvary's hill. In deep anguish He prayed that the Father's will

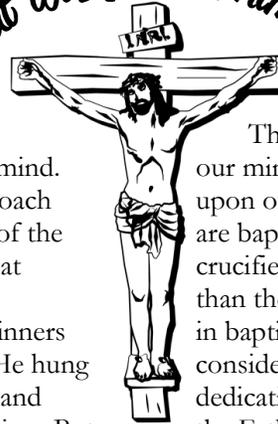
be done (Mark 14:36). His dying words were, "It is finished" (John 19:30), indicating He had completed the work for which He was sent to Earth.

Yes, it was for sinners that Jesus died. But let's not lose sight of the fact that it was for the fulfillment of His mission and the Father's will that was prominent in His mind as He hung on the cross.

This is what should be on our minds when we are hanging upon our cross in baptism. We are baptized into His death, crucified to sin and self. More than the benefits we are receiving in baptism should be our consideration of how we are dedicating ourselves to fulfilling the Father's will in our lives.

If fulfilling the Father's will is not the central consideration of Calvary, it won't be the central consideration in our lives. If man is the primary consideration at Calvary, then man will be the primary consideration in the entire relationship between man and God. Such an egocentric viewpoint has ramifications with regard to sacrificial service and discipleship. Obedience is contingent upon my convenience and rendered on my selfish terms. Carrying our cross necessitates the crucifixion of sin and self and the coronation of Jesus as King of our lives. Crucify self and put Christ at the center, where he belongs. ■

*What Was Jesus Thinking?*



### "Really, God?" *continued from p. 1*



challenging. In fact, when the November payment came close to being due, our family took action. We had a garage sale and deposited all our spare change to make the payment. We were thankful to make the payment, but it left me wondering, what was going to happen in December. We were fortunate to have investments for retirement. And it looked like we

would have to start selling these as a last resort.

At the same time, God answered another one of our prayers. For many months I had been looking for another therapist to join my counseling practice. In November a local social worker agreed to join the practice. Not only did I gain a great therapist, but I also gained some rental income from her. This extra income was going to be used toward the

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**Bahl Humbog**

spirit.” Another said, “It means ‘have a happy holiday.’” Yet another said the greeting means, “Be happy. Forget about your problems and concentrate on your blessings.” The greeting apparently doesn’t have the spiritual impact assumed by many crusaders.

What is the value of the victory won by those who persuade, cajole, and pressure retailers to employ the magic words, “Merry Christmas?” So you flexed your marketing muscles by boycotting their stores or products. Did any of those

retailers or manufacturers confess the name of Jesus as Lord? How many did you baptize into Christ as a result of your campaign? Would we be satisfied we had fulfilled our mission on Earth if we succeeded in getting every business to employ the word “Christmas” in their advertising? Or if retailers required their clerks to greet every customer with a cheery, “Merry Christmas?”

Don’t misunderstand. Expressing yourself by boycotting retailers that you perceive to be opposing Christianity is certainly acceptable and understandable. But don’t limit your Christian

testimony to protesting and punishing those businesses.

Consider the reversal in our cultural decline should Christians give as much attention to actively evangelizing the culture as they do to opposing its behavior that is only natural for secularists.

How different it is to boycott businesses, products, and concerns that promote behaviors that are immoral and destructive to society in blatant rebellion to God’s expressed will. Our energies and efforts will be better spent in those contexts. Bypass the symptom and address the sin. ■

## ***Building Committee Update*** by Jim Darr

The November rains finally stopped and good progress on the new building has been made. The footings have been poured and 80% of the plumbing and other utilities that will be under the floor slab have been set.

The slab for the floor will be poured in seven sections as specified by the architect. The first concrete pour for the floor slab took place on November 25th. The second pour took place on

December 1st and the third pour took place on 10th. If the weather continues to hold (no rain and not too many freezing temps) the floor slab could be completed by the end of January and framing of the walls could start in February.

The color for the roof shingles (Rustic Hickory) has been selected, as has the color for the face brick (Badland Valor) and the accent split block (Buff). ■

## **"Really, God?"** continued from p. 2

unrented office mortgage, along with helping with another business that is slow during the recession. It was a huge relief to gain this extra rental income.

Then came the time for our family to make our financial commitment for our new church building. As the capital campaign director, I had been encouraging the

congregation to ask God what to give. Therefore, that’s what I did. I asked God to show us what to give. I immediately received an answer — an answer that I wasn’t a big fan of. When I say I received an answer, it wasn’t a voice that announced a specific amount. It was a clear gut instinct that would not be something I would come

up with on my own. When I asked again, just to check, I got the same response. I was led to give the monthly rent from the new therapist in my office. I thought, “Really, God?!” This was my safety net, my security blanket that God was asking me to give. But I remembered God provided this to me in the first place. So why shouldn’t I give it back? So

concluded on p. 4

## **JANUARY MEETINGS**

- 5 Benevolence Ministry Team
- 6 Finance Ministry Team
- 10 Family Life Ministry Team
- 11 Elders
- 21 Outreach Ministry Team
- 21 Building Committee
- 24 Missions Ministry Team

## **Looking**



We are looking for ways to give you a tax deduction! So let’s team up to achieve both goals! Make a contribution to our Forward in Faith capital campaign before the end of December and we will provide you documentation for a deduction on your 2009 tax return.

## **NOTICE**

**ALL** questions or observations regarding construction progress should be addressed to Jim Darr. He is the only one who is to have direct contact with the contractor.

## Capital Campaign Underway Out of the Starting Blocks!

The illustration to the right reveals the fact that the capital campaign has begun well. The first Sunday of the campaign, November 22, boasted the largest offering in memory, if not the history of the congregation. Each Sunday since has seen generous contributions, indicative of the faithfulness of our folks in keeping their commitments.

One of our Treasurers reported that the congregation of which her cousin is a part is at the same stage of their capital campaign. The commitments from that congregation of 1,500 attendees came in just above our current level of commitments at \$600,000. This should encourage us, a



**an increase!**

**\$55,212 received**

congregation ten times smaller. But we should not allow ourselves to rest in our accomplishments. We are still urging members and friends to make a commitment to this three-year campaign, which will formally conclude at the end of November in 2012.

We will continue to press toward the goals displayed in the adjacent column as our Follow Up Team (Rick & Jan Schmeski) develops new members and friends. Our desire is to have no debt at the conclusion of the campaign.



concluded from p. 3

that's the monthly amount we pledged over the next three years. This was definitely a sacrificial gift for us.

Here's the exciting part of my story that you have been waiting for. After fourteen months of trying to rent the 5<sup>th</sup> Street office and running out of options, God did something amazing. Just two weeks after we made our financial commitment to the new church building, God provided a renter for the 5<sup>th</sup> Street office. The same day we signed the lease, I had another individual who wanted to rent the space as well. This was clear to me that God is in complete control, and that He has a great sense of humor.

For those who have not taken the opportunity to give to our new building, it is not too late. In fact, I hope you will also ask God what you are to give. When He answers you, I hope you listen. It is my prayer that you will give God the opportunity to again prove to you that He is in control.

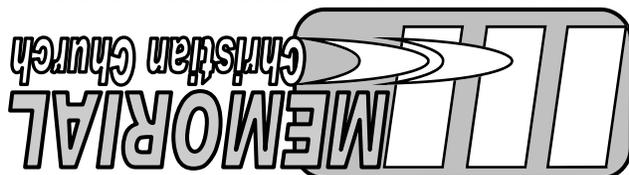
The LORD'S COMMISSION IS OUR MISSION  
Matthew 28:19-20

Sunday Morning 11:00 Bible Classes  
9:30 Worship  
Wednesday Evening 6:30 Supper  
6:30 Bible Classes

### Meeting Schedule

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

P.O. Box 388 Mtn. Home, AR 72654 870-425-8323  
(located at 315 W. 6th St.)



Sent With a Prayer to

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