



AMELIA PLANTATION CHAPEL

Footprints

Monthly Newsletter

February 2024

A Letter From The Pastor

Upcoming Chapel Events

BY KEN JONES, SENIOR PASTOR

Dear Chapel Family,

In February, as we start the process of retracing the footsteps of Jesus, let us do so by commemorating the five most important days in Lent which are: 1) Ash Wednesday, 2) Palm Sunday, 3) Maundy Thursday, 4) Good Friday and 5) Easter-Resurrection Sunday! In fact, on each one of these sacred days, Amelia Plantation Chapel has a special worship service to commemorate Christ. Make it a point to join us for each special day as we follow the life of Christ.

The Billy Graham Evangelistic Association provides a concise Lenten summary, "As one of the oldest observations in Christendom, Lenten tradition has changed over the years, but its purpose has always been the same: self-examination and penitence, demonstrated by self-denial, in preparation for Easter. Lent, which comes from an Anglo-Saxon word for 'spring,' can be viewed as a spiritual spring cleaning: a time for taking spiritual inventory and then cleaning out everything which hinders a relationship with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ."

During this sacred season, please find a key Bible verse that you will meditate on.

My chosen verse is 1 Peter 5:6-7, which says, "Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you." Another one is the Proverb that reminds us to Trust in God and not lean on our own understanding. Humility before God produces in us a sense of awe of the Almighty, pokes holes in our pride, and stirs us to make better decisions by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Such godly humility will do us all good as we center our hearts on Christ asking God for us to decrease and for Him to increase for the sake of His light and love to shine on more and more people.

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January Men's Breakfast Recap

BY BILL LITTLE



Church member, and ordained minister, Dr. Dennis Hall presented the Men's Breakfast a scintillating argument that not only is God sanctifying us, meaning bringing us closer to righteousness, but he is preparing us through life experiences to help expand His kingdom. He described experiences from his childhood, from his days in the military, to his professional life that caused him to develop a research interest in graduate school aimed at ministries to sex offenders.

Realizing that some sex offenders are prohibited by law from attending church, he developed an interest in podcasting and this former nationally known healthcare executive is now a popular podcaster. He described how

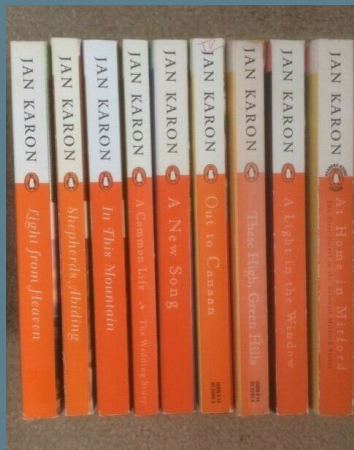
Americans are increasingly choosing not to attend organized church and because of this trend he developed a podcast, known as Church? Hell No, that is aimed at people who choose not to attend church. He gave examples of people who do not attend church because someone at the church hurt them as well as people who do not attend church because they are angry at God. There are many reasons that church attendance is declining and podcasting is one of the ways to reach the unchurched population. More people listen to podcasts than television.

Dr. Hall closed his presentation by stressing that God has prepared each of us for a role in expanding His kingdom and that age is not a deterrent. He quoted General Douglas MacArthur's essay known as Live With Enthusiasm. "So long as your heart receives messages of cheer, courage, grandeur and power from the earth, from man and from the Infinite. When the wires are all down, and all the central places of your heart are covered with the snows of pessimism and ice of cynicism, then and only then, are you grown old indeed, and may God have mercy on your soul."

Dr. Hall's podcast, Church? Hell No can be seen on YouTube and heard on all podcast search engines.

Chapel Library

BY LINDA COLE



You might not be aware that our Chapel Library has a small fiction section. They are shelved on the left side as you walk in the main door of the library. I was browsing through those books the other day and was so delighted to discover a set of the first five books of the Mitford Series by Jan Karon. There are 14 in all, enough to keep you entertained through a long cold winter! These books are not new; in fact, the first one, *At Home in Mitford*, was published in 1994. (I actually thought the books were older than that!) The little town of Mitford is in North Carolina and inhabited by, among others, a lonely pastor, a helpful secretary, several dogs, a homeless boy, and a jewel thief! If you are in the mood for what librarians call a “gentle read” and Amazon calls a “Christian romance,” you owe it to yourself to take a look at these books.



Monday Bible Study

BY JAN SMITH

The New Year is generally the start of something fresh. We look at our calendar and see it is clear for the most part. One thing we as humans tend to do is make some New Year Resolutions. That sounds so good, but for the most part we fail to follow through with the things we resolve to do.



God seems to spend a lot of time convincing us that there is nothing good in us, and that includes our inability to be steadfast in our desire to do good works. The reason we fail so often is because God wants us to look to Jesus, not to self. He is not looking for self effort, but rather for dependence on the Holy Spirit to guide and direct us. God's perfect will is that we learn to let Jesus be our Life, even in the mundane things we live and walk through.

Our Father has given us Jesus to be all the Fruit of the Spirit in us and for us: Jesus is our love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. We are not called to develop these traits in ourselves; God knows it is impossible to do so.

He has provided a better way... a new and living hope. The Father has given Jesus to be all things, and everything for us. As we learn to sense Jesus' constant presence we see the Fruit of the Spirit developed in us, not by our efforts, but by God's Mighty Power.

Jan Smith's coed class will study *Walking in the Spirit* for the next few months using the Bible, and the *Normal Christian Life* book, available in the Chapel office. We meet on Mondays at 10AM.

Sharing Jesus, Easter Baskets, Homeless Children Ministries, Inc.

BY CLAUDIA SMITH



Our Amelia Plantation Chapel Family has the opportunity to share our love of Jesus and the Easter message with homeless children and their families here in Nassau County through our schools' Families in Transition (FIT). This is our ninth year serving.

Our Chapel Family will prepare 120 Christ-filled Easter Baskets for our precious homeless students and families. The Easter Baskets will be assembled in the Chapel's Fellowship Hall on Monday, March 4 at 10 am. After the baskets are completed, they will be delivered to the Nassau Schools' Clothes Closet in Yulee. The school liaison, Mollie Cressey, will notify all families in the FIT program that the Easter Baskets are available for pick-up.

Easter Baskets will be prepared for 5 age groups, 1-2, 3-4, 5-8, 9-12, and 13-18. Baskets include Easter story and activity books, New Testament Bibles, devotionals, and other Christian reading materials, Christian bookmarks and bracelets, cross necklaces, Bible verse coins, stuffed animals, games and toys, school and art supplies, personal care items, and treats to eat. Baskets for the three older age groups are specific for girls or boys. The cost per Easter basket is \$40 to \$50 depending on the age group. Donations can be sent to Sandy Malone, HCMI, 110 Marsh Creek Road, Amelia Island, FL 32034.

Thank you to Mollie Cressey, Judy Hall, the Clothes Closet Coordinator, and all of the angel volunteers at the Clothes Closet, for facilitating this partnership between our public schools, our homeless families, and our caring congregation.

While we are not able to measure the impact our gifts have on our homeless children and their families, we do have Jesus' assurance that some of the seeds we sow fall on good soil, are nourished, and multiply. That is the best news!

There are brochures for the FIT program on the Outreach Committee table in the narthex.

If you would like to help on March 4, please contact Claudia Smith 912-294-4778 or email gandcsmith@gmail.com. Thank you for your support!



Upcoming Men's Breakfasts

February– COED–Join us on Friday, February 9 at 7:30 am as Amie Shields from Bring Your Brokenness speaks! Amie Shields is a faith-and family-loving writer, speaker, singer, and leader. She lives on Amelia Island with her husband, and they have four amazing children. She graduated from Liberty University with a BS in Multi-Disciplinary Studies (Education and Psychology) and a Master of Education in Teaching and Learning. She is also a certified life coach and biblical counselor, and it's her joy to serve those who struggle with eating disorders through Bring Your Brokenness, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that she founded in 2018. She currently serves as the CEO of Bring Your Brokenness and as Executive Director at The Charis House, a nonprofit residential treatment center for adult women with eating disorders. Amie is looking forward to her time with us in February and plans to share her testimony and recovery story, help us understand more about eating disorder recovery, and tell us what God is doing through the ministry of Bring Your Brokenness. Our church is a big part of that as they are one of our mission partners. Amie is so excited to tell us what God is allowing them to do through our gifts.

March–Stacy Rinehart will speak on Friday, March 8 at 7:30 am. Stacy serves as Facilitator for Pastor Mentoring International Network (www.pastormin.org). Stacy is the Founder of MentorLink International (www.MentorLink.org). He holds a ThM from Dallas Theological Seminary and a DMin from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. He is the author of two books on Spiritual Leadership: UPSIDE DOWN: The Paradox of Servant Leadership and LEAD IN LIGHT OF ETERNITY: The Jesus Model. Stacy and his wife Paula live in Raleigh, North Carolina and have two grown children and seven grandchildren. For the last 5 years, Stacy and Paula have been spending a month on Amelia Island and attending the Chapel. He will be talking about the critical need for developing pastors (quality and quantity) for the global Church. He will also talk about their ministry's outreach into the Muslim world. His ministry touches over a hundred nations.

April–Chapel Member Harry DeNoers will speak on Friday, May 10 at 7:30 am. From Harry: A Florida native, I began my academic journey at the University of North Florida, earning a B.A. in 1976 and an M.A. from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in 1983. My life's joy is my family with Jan, my wife. Our blended family includes six children, fourteen grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren. Together with Jan, I've navigated the entrepreneurial world, building and selling three businesses over 35 years. Our shared passions include traveling, biking, and walks on Amelia Island. In quieter times, I engage in Bible study and reading. Currently, I'm fine-tuning my faith-based screenplay, "Unholy Justice," aspiring to see it on the big screen.

May–News-leader columnist Richard Doster will join us on Friday, April 12 at 7:30 am. For the past nine years Richard has written "Practical Theology," a weekly column in the Fernandina Beach News-Leader, where he hopes to show readers how biblical principles are to be woven into our everyday lives. He's also been the editor of byFaith, the magazine of the Presbyterian Church in America, since 2004. Richard's planning to talk about the Cultural Mandate (Genesis 1:26-28): What does it mean to Christians today, in our culture? And how does it relate Jesus' Great Commission given in Matthew 28:19-20?



Crossover of Hope

BY JENNIFER ST. CLAIR



Behold the wonders of beach life! Every single day presents a new vista of unique sunrises, changing sand patterns and variegated groupings of shoreline birds, not to mention the umpteen zillion sweet surprises scattered in unexpected places as I approach the crossover to the Beyond. There is absolutely no way to predict what lies ahead. Instead, I remain open to 'SEE' any clues awaiting my discovery.

My photographer neighbor used to tell me I had an uncanny knack of being in the right place at the right time. It certainly appears to be partially true. There are countless examples in my photo gallery (totaling in the tens of thousands now) to show that to be the case. Actually, you readers have seen many of those included in previous articles and postings. However, would I have witnessed these sightings if I had not been open to receive?

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you; for every one that asks receives; and he that seeks finds; and to him that knocks it shall be opened." Matthew 7: 7-8

That being said, a few days ago I ventured to the beach, excited to merely sit on the almost hidden crossover railing and bask in the warm rays of sunshine. Windy conditions the past few weeks have heaped piles of sand on top of our dunes causing steps and other portions of the wooden structure to disappear, not to mention a drastic decline to reach the bottom! Very steep!!!

After enjoying the views surrounding me for a while, yes, I dared to carefully walk down the sand-piled pathway to put my bare feet in the water. Eastward bound, quite some distance from the water, I spotted something on the sand. As my steps quickened, I saw a small wooden cross. Several plastic daisies lay upside down close by, as if plucked from a floral arrangement or wreath perhaps in memory of a loved one.

After glancing up the beach to check and see if anyone appeared to have been involved in this distribution, I picked up the 6 1/2 x 4 inch cross to examine it more carefully. What to do!!! Shall I leave it so others can be reminded of Jesus, name above all names? Would I be selfish in taking it with me to add to my treasure trove of beach keepsakes? I decided to carry it back to my condo and knew the purpose would be revealed.

And so it was. A day or so later, a new neighbor knocked on my door seeking comfort and shelter from the ferocious winds howling with a force of 40+ mph. She told me she was so scared! I invited her inside and

proceeded to say, "All is well. I've prayed. We are safe." She saw my Bible on the coffee table and asked if I attended church. "Yes, I do."

And you?" "No."

She explained that her parents were not church goers, thus she had never visited a church. "But, I am curious," she said. Recently, she told me she had met someone who invited her to go to their church. I am familiar with this younger congregation and encouraged her to attend, especially since another young neighbor goes there also.

And are you ready for the answer as to the purpose of this little wooden cross I found? Why, it was meant to be gifted to this inquisitive young woman to hang on the wall in her apartment as a reminder that Jesus loves her!!! It will jump-start her new spiritual journey. As you see, this 'cross'-over adventure is just another one of God's sweet surprises!!!

Upcoming Sunday Classes

BY JON SCHNEIDER



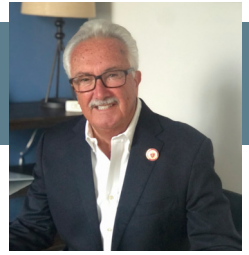
The next two months include great plans for the Adult Sunday School class. February will see a continuation of the class on the seven "I AM" statements from John's gospel as presented by Harry DeNoers. Harry graduated from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary with a Masters Degree and is currently working on a faith-based screen play, "Unholy Justice," which he hopes to have presented on the big screen. Each class will cover a different "I AM" statement from Jesus and a discussion of Christ's nature and mission during His earthly incarnation. In each class, we'll learn that Jesus's teachings can transform our daily interactions, decision-making, and challenges, guiding us toward a fulfilling relationship where we intimately know Christ and are known by Him. As we continue, we'll look at Jesus' claims to be the door, the good shepherd, the resurrection and the life, the way, the truth, and the life, and the true vine. Each class stands well on its own, so please attend whenever you're available.

As we approach Easter in March, the truth of Christ's resurrection will come alive. Ordained minister, Dennis Hall, will present three lessons on reasons to believe in the resurrection. Dennis earned his doctoral degree in apologetics from Liberty University, making him an ideal teacher on the subject. Come and be prepared to recognize the truth behind the miraculous claims of the Bible.

If you would like to receive weekly e-mail reminders of the Sunday School classes including a short statement about each week's lesson, please e-mail Jon Schneider at jpsadastra@outlook.com to be added to the Sunday School e-mail list.

Membership Matters

BY FRANK VACIRCA



“I planted the seed, Apollos watered it but God grows everything”. 1 Corinthians 3:6

I am pleased to report that we closed 2023 with a total of 50 new members to the Chapel as compared to 44 as previously reported. At the close of December, we had 3 new couples enter our church family. The Board of Governors has asked me to chair a newly created Membership Study Group. Our first meeting was held on Thursday, January 11th in the upper level of the Fellowship Hall. We are a prayerful and enterprising group of individuals composed of Ken Jones, Sr. Pastor, Jan and Clayton Smith, Stan Wilson, Ellen and Fred Lupone, Violet Boerescu, Lorelei Jacobs, Henry and Sue Ann Turner. Suzanne Vacirca is volunteering to serve as secretary. Kurt Marasco is assisting us as a technology resource. I am grateful to each one for their time and commitment to the success of this project.

One of our goals is to examine our present membership enrollment with the objective to expand membership, improve attendance at Sunday Services and advance discipleship. We are studying our present church membership along with the demographics in our community. There is a healthy amount of information to read, analyze and discuss. These meetings are “working lunches” with no expense to the Chapel for food and beverage. I will keep you, our valued Chapel members, apprised of our progress.

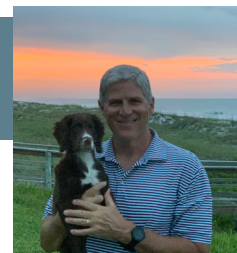
In my January article, I asked if each one of us, as Chapel members, would pledge to advance discipleship by bringing at least one new individual to church as a potential candidate for membership. How are we doing regarding this request? Please pray over this important request and make it an active part of your new year’s resolutions.

Thank you for your faithful support.

Wintley Phipps

BY MARK EDWARDS

Wintley Phipps was born in Trinidad before his family immigrated to Canada at an early age. He became a profoundly gifted, yet unknown, baritone singer. In his early years of trying to launch a singing career, he recorded a few Christian songs with the hope of getting discovered.



One day Wintley was on an airplane where he met a flight attendant. He noticed that she seemed particularly down so he gave her a cassette of one of his very first recorded songs – It Is Well With My Soul. He didn't know what was troubling her but he hoped that this might help lift her spirits.

Soon thereafter, that same flight attendant met a man named Cliff Barrows on another one of her flights. She discovered that Mr. Barrows was the Musical Director for the Billy Graham Crusades. She asked him if he had heard of Wintley Phipps and, unsurprisingly, he had not. She then reached in her purse and gave him the same cassette that Wintley had given to her.

A few weeks later, Wintley received a call from Mr. Barrows and he offered him a job as a soloist with the Billy Graham Crusade. With one phone call Wintley went from an unknown artist to one whose talents are heard and appreciated around the world. His act of kindness and concern for the flight attendant had been repaid a thousand times over.

We are at our best when we are serving others. God made us that way. He uniquely gifted each of His people to be able to serve others. The joy that comes from blessing others with our gifts can never be matched in serving ourselves. While all can feel lost from time to time, we often find ourselves when we are serving others.

Ephesians 2:10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

1 Peter 4:10 As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace.

Here is some great wisdom on serving others:

The highest form of worship is the worship of unselfish Christian service. -Billy Graham

Great occasions for serving God come seldom, but little ones surround us daily. -Saint Frances

We can do no great things. Just small things with great love. -Mother Teresa

Do yourself a favor and listen to Wintley Phipps sing It is Well With My Soul and His Eye Is on the Sparrow. You won't be disappointed.

What Does The Lord Require of Thee?

BY JOE MARASCO



MICAH 6:8 – “He has showed you, O man, what is good, And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.”

I fell in love with this verse of scripture as a college junior at the University of Pittsburgh in 1952 when I was asked to chair the Religion-in-Life Week program and Micah 6:8 was chosen as its theme. That was a profound week in my faith journey. This transcendent scripture verse has helped to keep me grounded in my faith.

Chapter 6 of Micah begins with Micah reminding the people of Judah of God's goodness to them-redeeming them from Egyptian slavery and giving them strong leaders such as Moses, Aaron and Miriam, and how He helped them cross the Jordan to settle in Gilgal. But the people of Judah had short memories and forgot about God's covenant with them; they were self-centered and took their gifts from God for granted.

In verses 6 and 7, Micah asks some rhetorical questions – “With what shall I come before the Lord and bow down before the exalted God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I offer my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?” Simply stated in contemporary terms, maybe I can bargain with God! Then comes the “money line” in Micah 6:8- “He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.”

If we expect social justice to come about through secular institutions, we deceive ourselves. We must have a change in our hearts. We must act justly and love mercy, but you and I need to walk humbly with the Lord. It is the transcendent step that we need to make. The concept is simple, but the step is hard; it requires deep faith and our prayerful commitment to our gracious God!

Chapel Happenings



Chapel Calendar

February 2024

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1 Adventures in Prayer 8:55 am	2	3
4 Sunday Bible Class 10:15 am	5 Petal Pushers & Pedal Express 10 am Coed Bible Study 10 am	6 Tuesday Bible Study 10:30 am	7 Choir Practice 3 pm	8 Outreach 1 pm	9 Men's Breakfast 7:30 am	10
11 Sunday Bible Class 10:15 am	12 Petal Pushers & Pedal Express 10 am Coed Bible Study 10 am	13 Tuesday Bible Study 10:30 am	14 Choir Practice 3 pm Ash Wednesday Service 5 pm	15 Adventures in Prayer 8:55 am Board Meeting 10 am	16	17
18 Sunday Bible Class 10:15 am	19 Petal Pushers & Pedal Express 10 am Coed Bible Study 10 am	20 Tuesday Bible Study 10:30 am	21 Osprey Village Communion 1:45 pm Choir Practice 3 pm	22	23	24
25 Sunday Bible Class 10:15 am	26 Petal Pushers & Pedal Express 10 am Coed Bible Study 10 am	27 Tuesday Bible Study 10:30 am	28 Choir Practice 3 pm	29		

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