

February 2008

Cyberspace News

Michigan News

Church website
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Lo^{The}d Ou^RRighteousness

Why Do We Go To Church

Elder Charles Moore

Why do we go to Church? There are many reasons why we go to church - some good, some bad, some in between. In January we looked at two good reasons for why we should go to Church. The first reason was: We meet Christ in a special way in church. Celebrating the goodness of the Lord in the company of His people makes the music richer and the teaching fuller. God is present in a unique way in the gathering of His people and we cherish those moments with Him in the company of other believers. The second reason was that Church is where we find completeness. We don't all do the same jobs. But we are all important. We may not be the people in the spotlight, but we matter. Our service is incomplete without the others. Their service is incomplete without ours. In February we looked at one good reason for why we should go to Church. The Church gives us the opportunity to show our love for God in tangible ways through our attendance, our service and our giving. This month I will cover the final two reasons for why we go to Church, but of course there are many more. Ponder this question yourself and see the many other reasons that you can come up with, for why it is essential to *your* Christian walk to go to Church.

The first reason for this month is the Church is where we find strength for difficult times. In Hebrews 10, the author talks about the difficulty of our spiritual walk and the necessity of persevering in our faith. He gives us practical help. He points us to Jesus first, but then to the church. **Hebrews 10:19 Since therefore, brethren, we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, 20 by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, 21 and since we have a great priest over the house of God, 22 let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. 23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; 24 and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, 25 not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more, as you see the day drawing near.**

Do you see this? The author tells us not to give up meeting together . . . Why?

Because He knows we are more susceptible to falling and failing when we are alone. If regular worship is a part of your life, you know what I am talking about. When you miss a week at worship you find yourself weaker, diminished and zapped of strength. I tell people when you don't feel like going to church, it is probably the time that you need to go most of all.

In the church we draw strength from one another. In the church we find sympathy, encouragement, accountability and wise counsel. We strengthen each other by our presence and weaken each other by our absence. In the church we understand the concept of a spiritual battle. We know we will be overwhelmed if we face the enemy alone, so we march together. We understand that at times each of us will stumble, so we must be there ready to catch the other so they will not fall. We celebrate the victories. We cheer each other on. The church is where we find strength to carry on.

The second reason for this month is the Church is a laboratory for Christian living. The apostle John said: **1John 3:16 We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. 17 But whoever has the world's goods, and beholds his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him? 18 Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.** We might be able to learn about

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hope and peace by ourselves but we cannot learn about love in isolation. We can't learn about forgiveness, dealing with anger, or becoming compassionate in solitude. We need to have people around us. The church gives us a community of people to practice on, to love on and to work out our Christianity on, before we face the world.

I hope from the five reasons over the past three months you see the importance of being united to a Church family. If you want to grow, you need the church. If you want to maintain your spiritual health, you need the church. If you want support in difficult times, you need the church.

In light of all we have said, what do we do? I suggest two things. First we have to look at our personal involvement in the church. There is a difference between attending church and belonging to a church. One is a convenience, the other is a commitment. One is a game, the other is serious. One is easy to walk away from. The other is not. In one, you are giving part of yourself, in the other you are committing all of yourself. There was this pig and chicken walking down the road when they saw a sign advertising ham and eggs, and the chicken became a bit proud. The pig quickly corrected her "for you it only involves a contribution but for me it is a total commitment." Are you committed to the church or are you just a spectator? You need the church and the church needs you. It's time to enter into a "commitment" of love with the people of God. It's time to become a full-fledged part of the family.

Second, we must take our role as a church seriously. Are we doing what a church should do? Are we a supportive family? Are we honest in our worship? Do we accept broken people or do we keep them at arm's length? Too many churches are "closed" to newcomers. The doors are open but the people don't feel they are wanted. Let us be a welcoming church. Let us be the welcoming arms of Jesus into the family of God. Remember the church is not a building, it is a people, who have been forever changed by God; who have joined together to bring honor and glory to the one they call Lord, Savior and King; who have come together by the power and leading of the Holy Spirit to be the arm and legs of Jesus. May God help our family grow and may He be honored in all that we do.

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4—5:30

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Michigan Report

Aurine Moore

If it's February in Michigan, there must be an Annual Winter Retreat in Howell, Michigan. This year the weather was fairly decent – no one had to get a jump on their frozen car battery and the Gibson center building at the Nazarene District Center was pretty nice and toasty. (The rest of the month brought enough snow to compensate.) Roy Gee was the featured speaker again and he spoke on topics from the book of John: Water into Wine, The Spirit Stayed and Miracle Upon Miracle. Dave and Ruth Charles were up from Florida and enjoyed visiting with numerous GREAT grandchildren (Lynn and Rob Vaughn's grandchildren). Brad Charles brought his fiancé, Sarah, over for a visit; Ethel Johnson and her friend Shirley were there to fill our stomachs and minds with food and conversation; and Sonya Pease made it in from New York. We loved hearing and seeing the Echoes of Happiness Sabbath morning and Elder Moore's sermon on *How Can I Know I Am Really Saved*. The Sabbath evening effort to watch the movie "Amazing Grace" overheated the projector, which had to be shown in measured phases (for that's the kind of hot movies WE watch). It was a wonderful weekend for visiting, praising, learning and doing picture puzzles together. Finally, there was a great group of young people there that your reporter just enjoyed, without getting names. We missed Nate and Joel Valentine this retreat season but they were away, suffering the wonderful breezes by open windows in Florida. They stayed, as they have several times before, with very good friends of Nate's deceased son, Mark. They always enjoy those visits and come back refreshed.

Several people we know need our prayers this month. Tom Chuhuran, husband of Judy Chuhuran and son-in-law of Violet Chapman, died after a long fight with leukemia. Marshall Lawrence, Executive Director of Silent Blessings – a ministry for deaf and hearing impaired people and their friends and family - lost his mother this month. Nate Valentine lost a friend, Virgil "Ray" Spears. Cheryl Lymond discovered she has had a heart attack recently, Marcia Moore has congestive heart disease, Jeff Begeman had a serious infection on his leg from a snowmobiling injury, Kathy Gearhart's neck is hurting, and Tisha Begeman has a hand injury.

We really enjoyed our home Bible studies for the first half of the season. Tim Begeman took the lead on taking us through a delightful 'Book by Book' study by Paul Blackman on the book of Jonah. The class had good discussions on the book as they learned that God is the GREAT evangelist.

Kathy and Joe Smeltzer made it to the Phoenix area to visit Joe's mother, Sally, and his brothers' families. We hear they even made it up north a bit and had time for dinner with Kane and Jennie Begeman at Jon and Berty Lane's. The Michigan church is always grateful for their unflinching 'Out West Hospitality'. David Begeman's hockey team recently won a big regional game in Allen Park and will be going to the State competition in Grand Rapids. His dad, Brian, coaches the team and is pretty proud of the job his son and teammates are doing. We'll report on the game's outcome next month. Until then, may God be with you and you with Him.

C.O.L.O.R. YOUTH CAMP

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DIANE BEGEMAN

JUNE 15-20

Cyberspace News genevabegeman@charter.net

The month of February is the shortest month of the year but the weather lengthened its days. Winter was here in glorious detail.

February is winter retreat month and the weather kept some people away from Michigan, but thankfully not everyone! We were sad that big snow threats kept the Stoners from risking the travel across the Pennsylvania Turnpike which can be treacherous. It certainly snowed on that Friday, but most of us were able to get out to Howell. As you go in the lovely gathering room there is a fireplace with a lively fire going which makes it very warm and inviting.

As usual we met 'whoever can get to Big Boy in town early' for supper and catching up. The Gee's were there from Auburn, CA. They had arrived on Thursday evening (see picture of Bennie arriving at the rental car) and after a long rest were out on the town looking for bargains. They are so familiar with Howell that they feel like they are home. They were both fine, but Bennie asks for prayer for her dear brother who has just been diagnosed with lung cancer. It is very serious and he is having difficulty with the chemo. Please remember him and Bennie also.

Folks trickled in all evening as we sat by the fire and chose rooms for the weekend. David and Ruth Charles had driven up from Florida with a car for the Nevils, and due to a snow day in Bridgman schools arrived early with Kay and Jim. Later Katie Nevil and three friends arrived for the weekend from Spring Arbor College. They were in to jigsaw puzzles and managed to help finish several that weekend. How nice to get acquainted with some new young people!

Sonya Pease arrived from New York state by plane and was not as late as the weather indicated. Melinda pulled into the parking lot with Ethel Johnson (her pies etc take a lot of room), Ethel's friend Shirley, Sonya and Katie. Melinda's taxi service has become a regular routine with them.

Sonya particularly missed seeing Laurie Eckles this year as she was unable to come. Laurie's two active sons keep her very busy.

February is a month for visiting Arizona I have found. Mike, Gemma, Jack and Gemma's mother were there for a week. They enjoyed getting caught up with Jon, Berty, SheaLyn and Scott, Kane and Jennie. There was also golf for the guys. At the end of the month Kathy and Joe Smeltzer flew out to visit Sally (Joe's mom), and I will report next month with more details on their activities.

I heard this month from Kevin and Heather Lane (California) and they report nothing exciting except their jobs. They are already preparing for retirement. I have a hard time believing they are old enough to do that. Everyone is supposed to stay the same age because it keeps me young!

Dorothy Layton and I have visited on the phone a couple of times and we are sorry to hear she is going to have hip surgery March 31. She fell a couple of times while recuperating from her knee replacement surgery in December and they found her hip is so bad that she will get no better unless she gets her hip replaced. Please pray for her before, on, during, and after that date! She wants to get out and about again without help. A card would not hurt either. Dorothy, we wish you the best.

Ila Baker has moved to a Livonia facility near her daughter Sandy Fine as she is falling quite often and there was a need for her to have constant care. Her address is Country Lane, 325500 Seven Mile Road, Livonia, MI 48512. Sue Trueman (daughter) reports that she has adjusted well and seems satisfied there. God is good!

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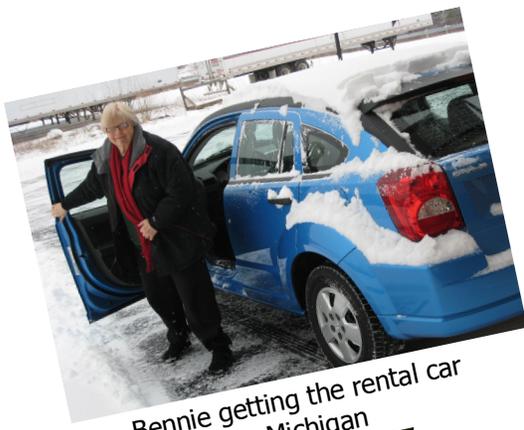
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All Time Dumbest Questions Asked By Banff Park Tourists

How do the elk know they're supposed to cross at the "Elk Crossing" signs?
At what elevation does an elk become a moose?
Is there anywhere I can see the bears pose?
Is it okay to keep an open bag of bacon on the picnic table, or should I store it in my tent?
What's the best way to see Canada in a day?
Are there phones in Banff?
So it's eight kilometers away... is that in miles?
We're on the decibel system, you know.
Where can I get my husband really, REALLY, lost??
Where do you put the animals at night?
Do they search you at the B.C. border?
Is this the part of Canada that speaks French, or is that Saskatchewan?
I saw an animal on the way to Banff today -- could you tell me what it was?



Bennie getting the rental car in Michigan



The Gee's plane getting ready to leave.



Stopping by the church on the way to the airport



Roy & Bennie in Howell



Jamie Vargas



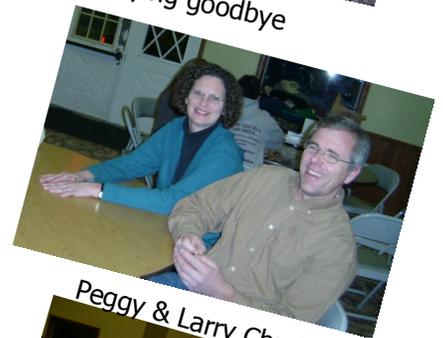
Technical difficulty with the projector



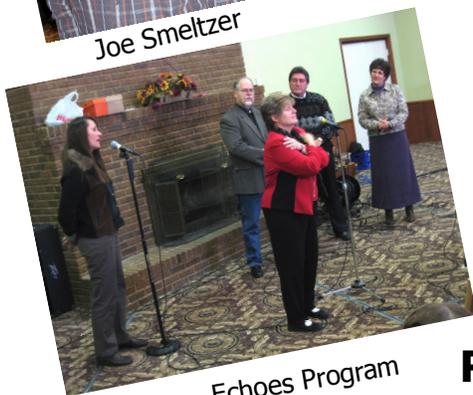
Saying goodbye



Joe Smeltzer



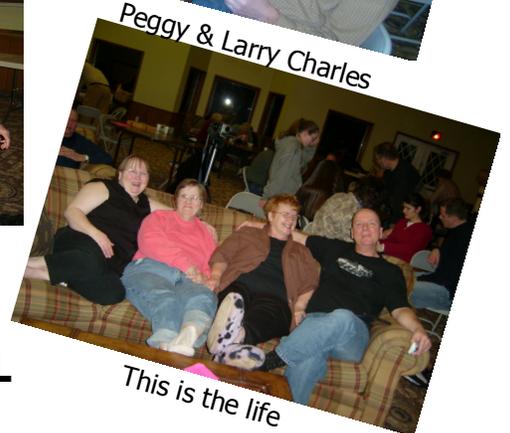
Peggy & Larry Charles



Echoes Program



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