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CHURCHIN'

"The LEADER'S EDGE" by drmichaelbell

Carey Nieuwhof recently wrote in his blog, "As you know, it's an almost universal phenomenon. Whether your church barely closed for the pandemic or recently reopened, pastors are facing the same reality: A lot of people aren't coming back to church. In-person church that is... Even formerly growing churches - formerly rapidly growing churches - are facing the same challenges. After shutting down to in-person gatherings for even a few months, 30-50% of their congregation disappeared ." Then, Nieuwhof added, "The question is, why? ... What I'm picking up from people who haven't gone back to church (and even among some who have) isn't fear...it's indifference."

There are many obstacles to the pandemic/post-pandemic church taking the next step and one of the greatest of these is indifference. Indifference, from the Latin "indifferentia," simply means apathy; a lack of interest; not feeling for or against anything; not caring. Nieuwhof goes on to say, "Many people who can't find their way back to church have no trouble finding their way to Target, an NBA game, dinner out, a tropical vacation, family reunions, or a concert. They aren't angry, nor are they afraid ... they're just indifferent to whether they come back to church or not."

What's going on?

For one thing, the pandemic broke some folks rhythm. It doesn't take much experience in participating in the Christian community to recognize that people have different kinds of habits regarding church attendance. Some people show up every other Sunday. Some come every time the doors are open. Some are present every Sunday morning, but not for any other service until Sunday morning rolls around again. Noticing this pattern, it seems fitting to point out that church attendance is a habit. The pandemic broke a lot of regular church rhythms with people - and it's hard (but not impossible) to build excitement with broken rhythms.

Let off the gas, and the car will slowly lose momentum, merely because of the laws of physics. Anal-



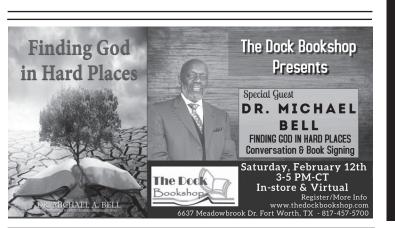
when people don't gather frequently. When people are absent from church, they direct their passions elsewhere. Attendance frequency continues to get worse. The person who once attended every other week is now attending one out of four weeks. Nieuwhof puts it this way, "That's what indifference does - you stop coming, but you never really think of yourself as having left."

Secondly, evangelism is largely absent from congregations. When people lose sight of the main thing, a church's sense of purpose gets lost in the mix.

Thirdly, church leaders are both tired and confused. You can be exhausted but have clarity on what to do. When you lack clarity, exhaustion weighs you down. Right now, a lot of pastors and church ministry leaders have no energy and no direction.

Now is the time to start breaking the indifference cycle. One way to jumpstart energy in the church is by (1) emphasizing disciple-making, not program making; (2) making community a priority, not an option. In Acts 2:42, we see that community was the way of life for the early church; (3) look at your church for what it is, then prayerfully let God reveal to you what next steps you need to take in the renewal process.

*dr. michael bell is Senior Pastor-Resident Theologian of Greater St. Stephen First Church FtW, a seminary adjunct professor, and a certified Life Coach. He is the author of "Finding God In Hard Places."





Speak Life Thought with First Lady & Co-Pastor Yolanda G. Butler

"Life With a Prayer Partner"

"Two people will not walk together unless they have agreed to do so." (Amos 3:3 NCV)

had no idea that value of a praver partner let alone that I needed one in my life. Yet the Father knew what I needed in my life for what lied ahead of me in the years to come. It was in my private time of prayer that Holy Spirit spoke to me to change the posture of my prayer life and connect with a prayer partner. She was a First Lady from Hammond, Louisiana and we did not know a whole lot about each other. We met by phone after she saw a YouTube of me ministering. I spoke at her conference, and we would later discover that we had the same spiritual father. attended her conference the following year not as a speaker but a registrant in need of being poured into. After I returned home Holy Spirit told me to call her and ask if she be interested in partnering in prayer. She responded in her heavenly language. We both knew in our spirit that this was the Father's doing and marvelous in our eyes. That was over nine years ago, and this First Lady became my prayer partner and Kingdom Sister.

Through this relationship I have learned the lesson of letting down my guard to welcome a prayer partner. I advocate this unique God-ordained Holy Ghost led relationship. You and I were created to be interdependent meaning we need someone in our lives to help us where we cannot help ourselves. Here are words of wisdom in welcoming a prayer partner in your life:

1) Prayerful choice – Philippians 4:6 says "...in everything by prayer and supplication let your requests be made known unto God." This is not a choice of your own but a God choice. He orchestrates it and it is up to you to ask and then say "yes" to His choice.

2) Kingdom connected relationship. This is not a "forced" relationship or one made out of pity but divinely orchestrated. 1 Samuel 18:1 says, "...the soul of Jonathan was knit was the soul David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul." They were literally bound together. This was a unique covenantal close bond. Through the vehicle of prayer and over time, you will find yourselves becoming twins (knitted) in the spirit.

3) Trust code. Proverbs 18:24 says, "...there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother." If this relationship is birthed through prayer, then most assuredly what is shared, prayed, and revealed through prayer must be protected and preserved amongst each other.

4) Not one sided. No one is stronger than the other. Rather, each lean on the strength of each other while building on their weaknesses. Romans 12:3 says to not think more highly of yourself than you should. You will discover that you each bring to this relationship a strength and a prayer that will be life changing to say the least.

5) Build each other through word and prayer. Jude 20 says, "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost."



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6) Find your prayer rhythm. Ephesians 4:7 "But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." You each have your own unique oil and style in how you pray. My prayer partner wars in tongues. I pray more prophetically and declaratorily yet together we are a force to be reckoned with in the spirit.

7) Set a schedule and be open to Holy Ghost season shifts. Acts 16:25, "And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them."

8) Carry each other. Even if you are not able to pray every day, carry each other. Philippians 1:7, " So it is right that I should feel as I do about all of you, for you have a special place in my heart. You share with me the special favor of God, both in my imprisonment and in defending and confirming the truth of the Good News."

So dear hearts, be determined to be opened to welcoming what the Father has preserved to help build you where you are unable to build yourself up in word and prayer.

Dr. Yolanda G. Butler is Co-Pastor and Church Administrator of Praise Center Community Church, where her husband Bishop Donald H. Butler is the Senior Pastor. She is an intercessor, evangelist, mentor, and published author. Follow her on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and at www.firstladybutlerministries.com.

CHURCHIN'

Grand Opening!! **Grace Memorial Funeral Home** Mr. Daryl R. Davis, I., **Funeral Director in Charge**

Grace Memorial Funeral and Cremation was started from a vision of Raquon Barrett to open a funeral home. Seeing many of his friends and loved one's experience death inspired him to make his vision a reality. After finding a building, he began the task of turning his vision into reality. He was faced with so many obstacles and roadblock, after several months his dream became reality. In January of this year. Grace Memorial Funeral and Cremation became reality!!!

Grace Memorial, located in the Hubbard Highland Addition in Southwest Fort Worth at 4551



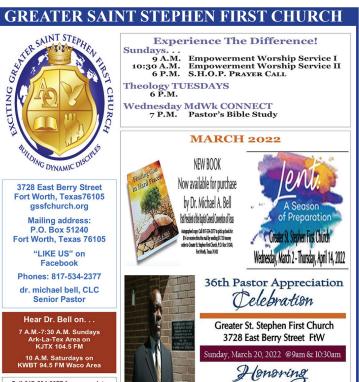
James Avenue on the corner of James and West Hammond in a newly renovated 2200 sg. feet "state of the art" facility that is here to assist those in their time of grief. Our facility offers an intimate chapel, two private family state rooms, handicapped assessable restrooms and offices to serve your every need.

Our firm is led by Mr. Daryl R. Davis, I. as Funeral Director in Charge who brings over 50 years of experience to Grace along with others who serve to make Grace Memorial one that families will come to appreciate and love. We have a Community Relations Manager, Jose Villatoro who will assist and

serve our Hispanic Community. We want to be servants to all cultures, nationalities, and religions. Our motto is "Providing a Ministry of Comfort and Grace, That Surpasses All Understandings" and our goal is to do just that.

We offer a full-service facility, Cremations. Pre-need Insurance and we also assist our families with securing VA, Social Security and any other benefits that families might need during their time of bereavement. We also assist families with Grief Counseling for adults as well as children along with any other services that they might need.

We welcome you to visit or call us anytime, our numbers are 682-250-6619 (office) where our telephones are answered 24 hour a day. Our Community Relations Manager's contact number is, 817-495-6251 and our 24-hour number is 682-346-8242. Feel free to call us or come by for a tour of our facility.



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Dr. Michael A. Bell

'ROUND THE CLOCK' CELEBRATES 20 YEARS SALUTING GOSPEL ARTISTS PRIOR TO THE STELLAR AWARDS SHOW



The Stellar Awards Show honoring the top acts in Gospel music has been going on since 1984. And for more than half of those 38-years, Round the Clock Entertainment has held one of the premiere pre-Stellar events.

Round the Clock's very first "Industry Celebration & Artists Showcase" was held in January of 2002 in Atlanta. Seemingly coming 'full circle', this celebration of gospel artists will be back in Georgia's Capital city this summer.

The "Who's who" of the gospel media will again mingle with legendary performers like

DEBUT ALBUM RELEASE CONCERT

Dr. Bobby Jones, Myron Butler, Billy Dorsey, Dorthy Norwood, Gerald Alston, Mel Holder, Lemmie Battles, Dr. Leonard Scott, and some of the hottest current artists ie. Zacardi Cortez, Karima, Earl Bynum, Lucius Hoskins, Michelle Brooks-Thompson, Isabel Davis, Cortez Vaughn, Latice Crawford, Joshua Rogers, Keyondra Lockett, Clareta Haddon, Keyla Richardson, Myron Butler, Jabari Johnson, Oscar Williams Jr., and many more at the 2022 edition of Round the Clock Entertainment's annual pre-stellar extravaganza.

It will be on Thursday, July 14th, at the Omega World Center at 3971 Snapfinger Parkway in the Atlanta suburb of Decatur.

The V.I.P./ invite only reception at 6pm, Red Carpet @7pm with 'live' performances going from 8pm to 10:30 pm



Call 817-534-2377 for a com Calendar of Events & Opportunities!







IN COLL

What to do if You're Unhappy at Your Church by Kelly Levatino (info@kellylevantino.com)

The fact is there are lots of awesome church people out there that have decided it's not okay for them to leave their churches because they don't really have biblical reasons to do so.

So they are staying. Right where they are. And, truth be told, they are miserable. They find it difficult to be at their churches. They aren't happy, and unhappy people have difficulty connecting with others and with God. What then? Are they obligated to stay at their churches and be miserable? No.

God doesn't want you miserable at your church. Barring any unbiblical things going on, God wants you happy at your church. Read that again. God wants you happy at your church, not at a new church.

How do I know that?

a) God loves us and wants us to be happy (Psalm 68:3). God is a compassionate God who weeps with us and rejoices with us and is able to relate to every emotion we have (Matthew 14:14, John 11:35, Hebrews 4:15). He desires for us to feel happy, but that is not the end all be all of our existence, and if our happiness and our growth in Christ are at odds with one another. God will choose to attempt to grow us every time (2 Corinthians 3:18)

b) If there is one thing the New Testament stresses to the church, it's unity (2 Corinthians 13:11). When people leave their church bodies in search of personal happiness in a new church body, whether they intend to or not, they effectively stress fracture their former body. Whether they leave quietly or recruit loudly as they go, they weaken other believers in that body by taking away their services (assuming they were serving in the first place) and by causing other believers to wonder if they should leave too.

When the body gets multiple stress fractures from multiple people leaving, it becomes so weak it breaks. And when the body breaks in multiple places, it hurts. A lot. For a long time. Ministry is crippled, to some degree, among the remaining church members as they are left to try to salvage the body. Energy and resources have to be focused on healing the body rather than on what the church should be focusing on: spreading the Gospel and discipling believers.

c) Every time we feel like our happiness is at odds with an opportunity for us to grow, we aren't viewing the situation how we should (James 1:2-3). We need a heart change quick. We should value above all else our conformation to the image of Christ. That should be our chief source of happiness, and being miserable at your church affords you the perfect opportunity to grow. Rejoice.

So, if you're unhappy at your church, can I gently challenge you to stop waiting for the things around you to change to suit your preferences and to start changing yourself?

If you want to feel happy about going to your church, stop the self-focus - "What

am I not getting?" - and train your mind to focus on others (Philippians 2:3-4) -"How can I serve others here today?" If you're not serving, start (1 Peter 4:10).

Now, the tricky part is we can serve until we're blue in the face and still feel unhappy about our churches because our hearts are still focusing on ourselves while we go through the motions of serving others. Psalms says God doesn't value that kind of external sacrifice, he wants our hearts (Psalm 51:16-17). When we serve with the motivation to honor the Lord, others will experience the love and truth of Jesus, and we will gain joy knowing the Lord is happy with us (Ephesians 6:7).

If you are among the minority of church members who do serve and are others focused, but you still feel unhappy with your church, there is one other area that needs to change.

Consider that everything your church does is not for your benefit. If you're a seasoned believer, the outreach arm of your church is not trying to make you happy, it is trying to reach unbelievers and new believers and welcome them into the church so they can come to know Christ. What's more important than that? (Matthew 28:18-19)

Knowing this, seasoned believers should approach outreach times not with an "I'm not getting anything out of this" attitude but with a rejoicing heart that the Gospel is being preached and non and young believers are getting exactly what they need - small doses of scripture and

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basic truths (1 Corinthians 3:2). Your jobs during outreach, seasoned believers, is to bring non and new believers so they can grow and to pray for the Spirit to move. Rejoice that seekers are being introduced to Christ at your church!

Likewise, if you're a young believer, the intensive Bible studies that are way over your head are not trying to make you happy, they are trying to help seasoned believers go deeper in their relationships with the Lord (Hebrews 5:14). If you're in one of these classes, and your eyes are glazing over because you don't care about the original Greek, your job is to pray that the Spirit would move and grow these other members in their walks with Him. Rejoice that seasoned believers can grow at your church!

This is the kind of perspective change - to value others more than ourselves - that is called maturing in Christ. If you church-hop in this moment, you lose. You lose the opportunity to mature in your faith (Ephesians 4:15). You lose the opportunity to be apart of others coming to know the Lord.

If none of this is helpful, you need to call your pastor, schedule a meeting, and have an open, honest discussion with him about how you're feeling. Tell him that you are unhappy and that you don't want to leave, but you don't know how to get happy, and allow him to speak to the sources of your unhappiness. Some of the very things that cause you the most trouble could be simple misunderstandings. Or they could be legitimate problems that your pastor needs to be aware of so he can redirect the church.

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Wednesday Services Wednesday Prayer Service & Bible Study 7:00 P.M.







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Morning Worship	11:00 AM
YPWW	6:30 PM
Night Service	7:30 PM
Tuesday Ser	rvices
Morning Prayer	11:00 AM
Bible Band	7:00 PM
Friday Ser	
Morning Prayer	11:00 AM
Night Services	7:30 PM

Sunday Services

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Joyful Giving by Ken Barnes / Christian Living

The Lord said to Moses, "Speak to the people of Israel, that they take for me a contribution. From every man whose heart moves him you shall receive the contribution for me." (Exodus 25:1-2 ESV)



How we give is an indication of the condition of our hearts and how we relate to God.

While instructing Moses on how to provide the materials to build the Tem ple, the Lord indicated that it was not to be through taxation but a voluntary contribution. They were not to give because they had to give, but because they wanted to give from the heart. Matthew Henry, commenting on giving, said, "We should ask, not only, what must we do? But what may we do for God?" Giving is a privilege.

Joyful giving always comes from a revelation of how good Christ has been to us. Our motivation to give should never be about what will happen if we don't give, but a response for undeserved blessings we have already received from a gracious God. The Bible says that "we love because he first loved us" (1 John 4:19). God loved us first by giving His Son while we were yet in our sins. The only reasonable response is giving our means, time and love back to him

The Bible tells us in 2 Corinthians 9:7 that we should never give under a reluctant compulsion. Everything that God does is about seeking a relationship with us. God does not want our money if our giving isn't accomplishing this.

As the old song goes, "He paid a debt he did not owe, I owed a dept I could not pay. Christ Jesus paid the dept that I could never pay."

If this song rings in our hearts, we will always be joyful givers.

NOW HIRING

Harvey Avenue Baptist Church is looking to employ a Lead Guitar Player and a Keyboard Player who sings. For information contact Pastor Jack Teeler at (817) 927-2739. The church is located at 1257 E. Harvey Ave, Fort Worth, TX 76104

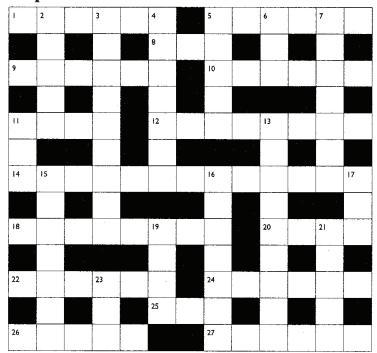


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BIBLE CROSSWORD PUZZLE Topic: TO GOD BE THE GLORY



ACROSS

I Judge or faultfinder (Job 40:2) 5 Deprived of something (ler. 18:21) 8 Son of Abdiel (1 Chron. 5:15)

9 Young woman (Gen. 24:16, KJV) 10 "When you give a gift to a _, don't shout about it as the hypo- crites do"; panhandler (Matt. 6:2)

II "Take off your _ , for you are standing on holy ground"; foot covering: sing. (Exod. 3:5)

12 One's name and personal recognition factors (Acts 7:13)

14 "I pray to the Father that out of his glorious, unlimited resources he will give you the mighty inner of his Holy Spirit"; making healthier

(Eph. 3:16) 18 "When darkness overtakes the man who delights in doing God's commands, light will

come ____in"; suddenly breaking out (Ps. 112:4) 20 "Go on others; then

they will do the same for you"; not hard (Luke 6:37)

22 Cling to (Acts 15:1) 24 "If a soul commit a trespass,

and sin through ignorance, he shall make for the harm

that he hath done"; repara tions (Lev. 5:15, 16, KJV) 25 Damage; jeopardize (Ruth 4:6, κjv) 26 "Release all the animals, birds, and reptiles, so that they will abundantly and reproduce in great numbers"; propagate (Gen. 8:17)

27 "Do not bring an idol into your home and worship it, for then your doom is sealed.

to a

Utterly _____ it, for it is a

without flavor (Prov. 27:7)

5 "A pastor must enjoy having

guests in his home and must

Scripture (1 Tim. 3:2)

teacher":

be a good

19 Thing in a series or collection (Num. 3:31) 21 Front and back, as of a scroll cursed thing"; hate (Deut. 7:26) (Ezek, 2:10)

23 Until (Hos. 8:5, KJV)

16 Worn or emaciated

17 Happy; lighthearted

(2 Sam. 13:4)

I I Female sibling: inform. (Gen.

13 Softest: most chewable (Amos

your praise"; sound following lightning (Ps. 93:3)

(9:31)

6:4) 15 "The mighty oceans

Studywith us

at SUNDAY SCHOOL 4 Making watertight (Ezek. 27:9) В Ν 6 Soft floor covering (Lev. 11:32) 7 "No mountain, however high, can stand before Zerubbabel! 1 ۲ I C B E B



DOWN 2 "Eternal peace was within your _____ and you turned it down"; grasp (Luke 19:42) 3 "Even honey seems _____ to man who is full; but if he is hungry, he'll eat anything";

