



SOUTH LOUISVILLE CHRISTIAN CHURCH
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E-NEWSLETTER

A Christian Church for South Louisville

What are elders? I think this term, in modern English, may be confusing to some. Not all elderly people are elders, and not all elders are elderly! I was only 37 years old when I first became an elder of SLCC, and now I can qualify for the AARP and could even apply for Social Security, so I guess I am now elderly as well as an elder. SLCC has many new members from a variety of backgrounds and I thought it would be helpful to provide some information on God's intended role for elders in the Christian Church. Because Scripture has much to say about the role, qualifications and function of elders as the overseers of Christ's church, I will only be able scratch the surface of that information.

The New Testament uses the terms elder, bishop, overseer, shepherd, and pastor interchangeably. Below are the Greek words used and their English translations:

- **Presbuteros** = Elder =
Presbyter
- **Episcopos** = Overseer =
Bishop
- **Poimen** = Shepherd = Pastor

elders?

By: Joe Douthitt

If you ask me what I actually prefer to be called, I would say, "Joe." But, functionally, my role in Christ's church is that of an overseer/shepherd. The other overseer/shepherds/elders of SLCC are Bob Parrott, Neil Seow, Logan Surles, and Joe Trabue. Also, in his role as Pastor/Minister, Theo Dues serves as a shepherd of the flock and is accountable to the other overseers. New Testament churches were always to have multiple "elders," not a singular "elder," but there is not a specified number required. Collectively the SLCC overseers/shepherds have 125+ years of experience caring for the sheep of Christ's church at SLCC. Paul wrote a great deal to and about church elders/shepherds. For example, in Acts 20:17 the apostle Paul sends for the elders of the Ephesian church and gives them the following directions: (Cont'd. next page)

This Month's Events

- August 10 and 24 – Food Distribution
- August 18, 6:00 PM – "What Would Jesus Eat?" class begins
- August 23 – SLCC's Day of Prayer
- August 30, 31 and Sept. 1 – Family Camp at White Mills Christian Camp

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“Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought his own blood. I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them. So be on your guard!” (20:28-31). The “sheep” or “flock” to be *shepherded* are the members of Christ’s body, the church. Overseers/shepherds are the spiritual guardians of the souls of sheep, just as shepherds in Jesus’ time guarded physical sheep from physical wolves. But, Spiritual wolves kill your soul!

Being an overseer/shepherd is a serious responsibility--**Hebrews 13:17 states, “Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.”** Those who serve as overseers/shepherds will be required to give an accounting to God for their oversight--a responsibility every overseer takes to heart. The “authority” of elders, is from the words and teachings of Jesus and the Apostles. **“Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ.” Ephesians 4:14-16.** In John 10:11-13, Jesus explains the functional relationship between shepherds and their sheep, **“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.”** Shepherds must love the sheep. The qualifications of overseers/shepherds are really the characteristics of what all Christians are to be (see 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9)! Overseers/shepherds must consistently practice these. We should all follow, and set, the example of Christ.

We should all be able to say what Paul said, **“Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.” (1 Cor. 11:1).** The true overseer/ shepherd, knows that he is expected to put the needs and wellbeing of the sheep equal to, or occasionally even above, his own and his family’s care. It is a tough job--but please re-read the passage from Hebrews 13:17 above, it says the sheep/flock **“Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden . . .”** If every church member (sheep) were to pray for every overseer (elder/shepherd) *everyday*, their work would always be a joy and not a burden. I must confess, from my own experience, at times it has not always been a joy and even occasionally a tremendous

burden to serve as an overseer. Occasionally, it takes its toll on me and my family. I am just a weak, ordinary man, who often lacks the encouragement and strength I need to face the burdens (see 2 Cor. 11:28). I continually need the prayers of God’s people to strengthen me for the spiritual battlefield. I am willing to fight the fight, I just need more strength!

In Acts 12 Peter was released from prison, because of the prayers the church was praying for him. Pray for each of your church leader’s each day, and twice a day for Pastor Theo and his family. If you take on the role of overseer/ shepherd, you become a spiritual target for satan’s schemes, those in leadership are satan’s favorite targets! Jesus warned the apostles in **Matthew 26:31** what would happen after his arrest and crucifixion when he said, **“It is written: ‘I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.’”** You know what happened--his closest companions on earth abandoned and denied him and then hid in fear. The tactics of satan have never changed, and if he cannot get to you personally, he will attack your family--those you love most. I sincerely believe that my family and I have been spiritually attacked at times over the years as a direct result of my role as a shepherd of SLCC. But, **“God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear.”** This is why one of my favorite passage of Scripture is from **2 Corinthians 4:8-10, “We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body . . .”.** God has given my family spiritual strength and blessings we would never have experienced, if I had not become a shepherd. It has been and continues to be a joy and not a burden to serve as one of SLCC’s shepherds!

But, we all need to be more committed to prayer as a church, for His reign as the King of Kings and Lord of Lords: in our personal lives; the lives of all of our members collectively; and especially in the lives of our shepherds. If SLCC is following God’s will, He will bless us! However, if we like sheep go astray, we should expect similar results to what the Israelites experienced when they went their own way, instead of knowing and following God’s way.

SLCC is planning a major prayer event, “A Day of Prayer for God to Reign at SLCC.” Come let us join together as a church and commit to pray for SLCC for 24 hours continuously! We will begin on Friday, August 23rd at 6:00 p.m. and have someone praying continuously through until Saturday, August 24th at 6:00 p.m. (please sign up). Prayer will connect the ministries of SLCC to the power of the Holy Spirit, and allow God’s will to be done at South Louisville Christian Church.

What is a deacon?

By: Rick Brumleve

The term deacon is derived from the Greek word diakonos, its meaning is “one who serves”.

Why are they necessary and what is their role?

The position of deacon was possibly begun by the Apostles in the Jerusalem church to care for the physical needs of the congregation - at that time it was the needs of the Greek-speaking widows.

In Acts 6:1-6, Luke writes about the growth of the Christian church, the struggles that occurred and the “Choosing of the Seven” by the twelve disciples. The “seven” were tasked with organizing and managing the distribution of food to the poor, among other tasks, so that the apostles could focus on prayer and the preaching of God’s word. Deacons were to assist and serve as directed by the apostles in order to grow the church.

What are the qualifications?

In 1 Timothy 3:8-13, the apostle Paul states the qualifications and requirements of deacon and his wife.

“Deacons are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons.

In the same way, their wives are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything. A deacon must be the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well. Those who have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus”.

Paul’s letter to Timothy gives Christians the instruction necessary to lead the church, counter false teaching, stressing the importance of personal discipline and how to treat people within the church.

However, we as Christians, both men and women, are called to serve the church, make disciples, and bring God to the Godless glorifying Him in all we do.

Five Steps to a Spiritually Happy Family

By: Pastor Ron Matthews

We will be exploring five essentials to build and keep a Spiritually Happy Family. We will be taking a look at one step a month for the next 5 months.

Respect was the first step and hopefully you are doing the studies and demonstrating respect. Now we are going to explore the Second Habit for a Happy Family, which is - Resolving Conflict.

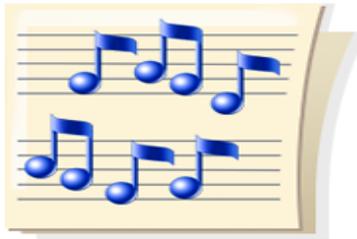
It is very important that we realize every family, no matter how good they look or sound, experience conflict. Whenever and where ever, two or more of us are gathered, conflict created by Satan can and will exist. So what are you to do about it? You may have tried several things, prayer, keeping quiet, avoiding touchy subjects, or even avoiding the individual that creates conflict for you. But as you already know these are mere bandages on an infectious wound.

God gives us glimpses into families throughout the Bible, not to just to keep us entertained, but to help us grow from their lives.

A great example is Esau and Jacob (Genesis 25:21-34; 32; 33 -- read these passages with your family). God is giving us 6 steps to resolve conflict and produce the family He wants us to be.

1. Taking the initiative in communications (Genesis 32:3-6)
2. Identifying the conflict or problem (Genesis 32:11)
3. Praying about the problem (Genesis 32:9)
4. Seeing the other person’s perspective (Genesis 32:20)
5. Telling how you feel (Genesis 33:3,4)
6. Taking action to correct the problem
 - Make restitution (Genesis 33:10-11)
 - Offer forgiveness and acceptance instead of seeking to get even or ahead (Genesis 33:4, 10, 11)

In closing, remember -- successful families follow the Lord’s direction to resolve conflicts by practicing mutual forgiveness, not retribution. May the Spirit be with you as you study and grow.



Hymn Highlight

By: Carl Henry

“Just As I Am”

Charlotte Elliott, the author of “Just As I Am,” lived from 1789 until 1871. She was from a family that held various positions of ministry in the Church of England. When she was around 32 years of age, an illness reduced her to being an invalid for the rest of her fifty years of life. She became depressed and felt she had nothing else to give in life. A minister, Dr. Caesar Milan, visited her one day. Observing her dejection, he encouraged her to give her life to Christ just as she was. Those words began a turnaround in her life. She began a search to find ways to make her life meaningful. Thirteen years after becoming an invalid, she wrote “Just As I Am” in 1834. Even though she grew up in a Christian home, her suffering had caused her to have many conflicts and doubts, which she included reference to in the third verse, as well as struggles with her physical condition in the fourth verse. But ultimately she realized the welcome, pardon, cleansing, and relief she received when she came to Christ anew, which she expressed in verse five. She also penned a sixth verse, expressing the ultimate victory of Christ’s love over all barriers in life if we come to Him and accept His love:

*Just as I am, thy love unknown
hath broken every barrier down;
now, to be thine, yea thine alone,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.*

Sources:

lectionary.org/HymnStories, “Just As I Am”

wikipedia.org, “Charlotte Elliott”

hymnsite.com/lyrics, “Just As I Am, Without One Plea”

The Visitor: Part 1

By: Stephanie High

The visitor was actually really tired of trying new churches; tired of false smiles and temporary cheer. It was a Wednesday night and her very good friend had invited her to visit the church that she and her husband had been attending for the past two months.

Their first stop was in the kids’ classroom. The visitor had two small children and the state of the youth ministry was very important to her. The moment she stepped into the room she was surrounded by chaos. Children (so many children!) running around, arms flailing, screaming and laughing. Every direction she looked, a child was partaking in some kind of wildness. And there, in the middle of it all, sat a lone woman looking calm and serene amidst the chaos. The woman quietly and purposefully lifted her hands and brought them together in quick succession. Clap, clap! Clap, clap, clap! Suddenly all the children stopped what they were doing, turned to the woman and repeated her clapping rhythm. Then, silence reigned as the children gathered around the teacher. Order is restored in the room so quickly that the visitor’s head spins. The woman begins a bible lesson, the children paying rapt attention.

This is when the visitor learns her first lesson about this church.

(To be continued. . .)

Food Pantry Needs for August

- Spaghetti
- Spaghetti Sauce

We need YOUR help! Even though we receive from Dare to Care, we don’t receive everything we need! Please give donations to LaVon Able or the Myers.