

The Connection

Volume 5, Issue 8, August 2007

from Pastor Mike...

Church Atmosphere

Money magazine annually rates the 300 best places in America to live. The ratings are based on climate, affordability, amenities, crime rate, public transportation, medical care, and other factors.

A similar approach has been taken with churches. Several major newspapers regularly review churches. A religion writer makes an unannounced Sunday visit and analyzes everything from the sign on the outside to the sermon on the inside. Like a restaurant and movie reviews, some writers even use ratings, from one star (poor) to five star (excellent).

Before protesting such a rating system, reread Revelations 1-3 and recall the Biblical reviews of seven churches in Asia Minor.

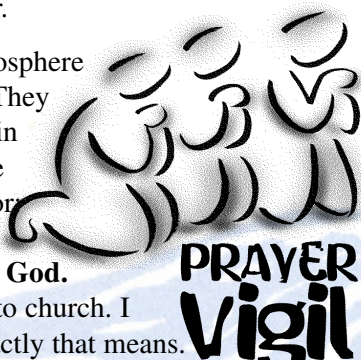
Most people rate church atmosphere within the first 4-6 minutes. They may not be able to fully explain their conclusions, but here are some things they're looking for:

1. Sensing the presence of God.

People expect God to come to church. I wish I could define what exactly that means. I can't. I guess it's like beauty – you know it when you see it even though you can't put words to it.

2. Others Centered.

Some churches are self-centered. Some are others centered. It's not hard to tell the difference. A friend recently entered a church lobby on a Sunday



continued on page 6

Back to School Prayer Vigil

It's that time of the year again, so grab a handful of freshly sharpened #2 pencils, start school supply shopping, and cover those textbooks — school will soon be back in session! Before your child climbs on the school bus, come get on your knees and pray.

The staff at BMCC wants to encourage you to come spend 20 minutes praying for our students to have strength, courage, safety, and the ability to make smart choices this school year.

“Pray also for me. Pray that when I open my mouth, the right words will be given to me. Then I can be bold as I tell the mystery of the good news.”

Eph 6:19

The U.S. Department of Education claims school safety has increased in the last two years. Here are some other recent statistics:

- In 2005, about 28 percent of 12- to 18-year-old students reported having been bullied at school.
- The average girl becomes sexually active at 13 years old.

The Word of God tells us in James 5:16, *“The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.”* and to *“Pray without ceasing.”* 1Thessalonians 5:17

The Fireside Room will be reserved for prayer from 8AM – 8PM on August 28 (the day before school starts) for our students, schools and colleges.

You can drop by or reserve a time at Ministry Central.



From Your Administrative Pastor

Adapted from Purpose Driven Life on-line devotional...

“For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.”

(1 Corinthians 2:2 NIV)

How are you doing with your New Year’s resolutions? You remember – that list you made a little over six months ago with two scoops of optimistic enthusiasm, sprinkled with unrealistic expectations, and topped with the cherry of knowing the list isn’t serious anyway.

A friend of author Jon Walker’s has started making honest New Year’s lists: “I won’t lose ten pounds this year,” “I commit to watching the Super Bowl this year,” “I’ll listen to my iPod at least four days a week.”

But there is one guy who I suspect played for keeps when he made New Year’s resolutions. You know, the zealot who could never do anything half-way, let’s-get-real-about-our-faith, the impossible Apostle Paul.

I can only imagine that Paul’s New Year’s list consisted of only one item, the one made in 1 Corinthians 2:2, where he *resolved* to know nothing but Christ and him crucified.

Paul’s message is radically simple: Salvation is in Christ alone.

Newsletter Deadline

If you have an upcoming event you’d like to promote, faith story or poem you’d like to share, or anything else that pertains to the life of the people of Blue Mountain Community Church, please consider writing a small article (300 words or less) and submitting it to the newsletter. The deadline for articles is the second Wednesday of each month. The editor reserves the right to edit for content and space.

That means –

- It’s not Christ plus your good behavior.
- It’s not Christ plus the years you taught a Bible study.
- It’s not Christ plus your tithe.
- It’s not Christ plus the church you attend.
- It’s not Christ plus the number of verses you memorize.
- It’s not Christ plus your title in the church.
- It’s not Christ plus wisdom from the latest Christian seminar.
- It’s not Christ plus a desert fast (or even a dessert fast!).
- It’s not Christ plus a good driving record.
- It’s not Christ plus well-behaved children.
- It’s not Christ plus your new shined shoes.
- It’s not Christ plus the right job.
- It’s not Christ plus the right spouse.
- It’s not Christ plus the latest technology.

It’s simply Christ. Christ plus nothing.

That’s Paul’s message, and it’s a message that is as right throughout this year as it will be in 2999. May your new resolution for the year be nothing but Christ and Him crucified.

So what?

- **Simple equation** – Jesus plus nothing equals salvation.
- **Check your beliefs**- Is there something you think you need do or achieve to be fully accepted by God? Are you adding to Scripture, changing it to say, “I resolve to know nothing except Jesus PLUS ...?”
- **Ask God to guide your math** – Pray, asking God to teach you to know nothing but Christ and Him crucified.

Until next time...

Pastor Dan II

I am a Free Servant

I am free that no one, no human institution, no government, no church, no corporation, no judge, no executioner, ever has any authority over me.

Others may mistreat me, oppress me, imprison me or kill me, but they cannot destroy me. Surrounded by the strong and impregnable fortress of the love of God, I am free from all persons. No one but God controls my destiny and my status in the universe.

The Christ who has set me free has also made me a servant. He has made me a disciple and has shown me that I am a redemptive influence to the extent that I live as a servant to others.

Christ walked through the villages of Galilee, healing the wretched and the hopeless. His people were the lepers, the lame, the psychotic, the guilty, the immoral, the poor. He spent his life with them, not as Lord, but as Servant. He put himself in bondage to those who needed him and he set them free.

For
freedom
Christ
has
set us
free.



Christ is in me when I give a cup of cold water to a thirsty person, when I listen sympathetically to one who is in trouble, when I reach out to someone who needs to be loved; in short, when I become a person for others.



Here I find the greatest freedom. I am free from my own selfishness and anxiety and desire to put my own interests first. I am free to be Christ to another, and this liberation makes Christ more real to me.

Galatians 5:1

— William O. Paulsell



Celebrate Recovery

by Teri Stewart

I grew up thinking that spirituality and knowledge were at odds. And indeed the world tries to make it seem as if the two don't mix. I am now very gratified to learn that great schools of learning, (Yale for one), and many great scholars had Christianity at their base.

There was always a search for knowledge in my family home. Mom knew everything. If she didn't know it she would research it and soon we would all know. My brothers are very intelligent. They are always in touch with the latest news and research things in the same way Mom did.

My father was not involved in what I now call the "intelligentsia elite." He was a man of humble manner. A blue collar man, my family talked of how he didn't know much because he never finished school. Unashamed of his lack of education, Dad always had a good word (though inarticulate), a piece of song, or a joke to greet you with. I always felt Dad listened to people. He admonished us to not judge another because we do not know what trials made them that way.

When Dad died, many people came to memorialize him. They told of his good advice, his faithfulness as a friend, how his acceptance helped them through hard times. He had touched many people's lives without ever opening an encyclopedia. The respect he was given for just loving others taught me a lot. Dad was schooled in the **wisdom** of love. Sign me up!

I can't help but wonder: if we spent more time searching for ways to love one another than we spend searching for knowledge, wouldn't the world be a better place?

Principle 3. *Consciously choose to commit all my life and will to Christ's care and control. **Happy are the meek.***

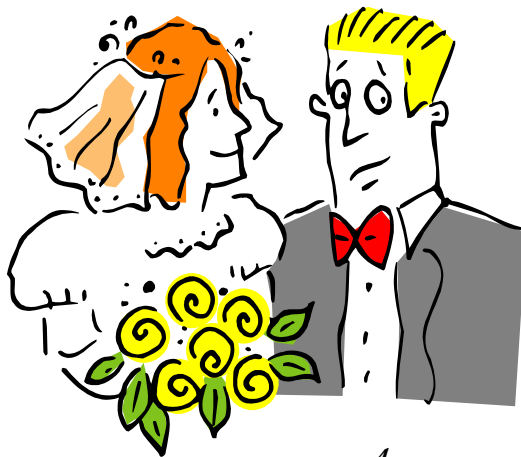
- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 Steve Hood Julianne Hoppen Burl Wallace | 19 Robin Harris Vonette Miller |
| 2 Matt Bennett Laura Rice | 22 John Berger Renee Krivoshein Daniel Ness Michelle Paine |
| 3 Vi Scott Karen Smeed Jim Tackett Larry White | 23 Dale Kelly Karen Skifstad Matthew Wallace |
| 4 Britt Adkins David Elmore Matthew Hutcherson | 24 Linda Clark Sarah McNeil Richard Podolski |
| 5 Kelsie Davisson Rick Jones Florence Lamb Erica Rice Jennifer Stephens David Stewart | 25 Kobee Carrillo Joel Redman |
| 7 Samantha Brink | 26 Dave Conklin Jo Ann McAlvey |
| 8 Steve Irwin | 27 Gary Simmons |
| 9 Nicole West | 28 Austin Hutcherson |
| 10 Aaron Burns Peggy Slosted Sharon Steele Michael Wilson | 29 Jerry Eyestone Levi Kelly |
| 11 Betty Hamby | 31 Scott Napier |
| 12 Ron Knight | |
| 13 Leonard Brown | |
| 14 Kyle Knudson | |
| 15 Ethan Haen Paul Lamb | |
| 16 Naomi Jardon Jodi Riener | |
| 17 Lee Lynch | |
| 18 Shelby Grewell Emily Ness | |



BIRTHDAYS



- | |
|---|
| 4 John & Noralea Ordway Ron & Kim Skifstad |
| 5 Matt & Shaunna Bennett |
| 6 Ed & Zenada Voss |
| 8 Bob & Phyllis Branscum |
| 12 Orvil & Gloria Wilson Ron & Marilyn Groom |
| 16 Jerry & Shirley Musick |
| 18 John & Bridget Blom |
| 20 Donovan & Karen Skifstad Scott & Sheila Woelfle |
| 23 Raymond & Zeld Kelso Rich & Kris Eagon |
| 24 Rick & Carol Grubb |
| 25 Myron & Wanda Rogers |
| 27 Dave & Sharon Hale Randy & Carrie Knudson |





Monthly Events

- 9 SAMS 10:00 AM
Board of Elders Meeting 6:30 PM
- 11 Men's Breakfast 7:30 AM
- 14 Quilter's Guild 6:00 PM
- 26 Manic Drive Concert

Important Date Change

The Homecoming Celebration, a musical night of gospel hymns and Gaither- style harmony, has been moved to a new date: Sunday, September 16th. Letters of invitation are being sent to area churches, and we hope for a wonderful turnout and broad participation. Afterwards, come on over to Baker Hall for more fellowship and goodies.

Weekly Events

Sunday

Middle School Group 6:00 PM

Tuesday

Taking Off Pounds Sensibly 5:30 PM

Boy Scouts 7:00 PM

Wednesday

Women's Bible Study 9:30 AM

Adult Bible Study 6:30 PM

High School Group 7:00 PM

Thursday

Worship Team Rehearsal 7:00 PM

Friday

Celebrate Recovery Dinner 6:00 PM

Celebrate Recovery 7:00 PM

continued from page 1

morning and walked straight into a donut and coffee hour. The people were talking and having a good time. They liked their church, but they never noticed her. After a few minutes of uncomfortable invisibility, she proceeded to the worship center where she sat in a pew alone for the next ten minutes. Finally, an older lady sat and talked with her. The older lady also was new.

By contrast an other-centered church is immediately interested in new people, what they need, and how the church can help. The members of other-centered churches do not believe it is the job of ushers and greeters only to make new people feel welcomed. This responsibility belongs to the whole congregation.

I trust that every one of you who calls Blue Mt Community Church your home will reach out and welcome new people. I will follow up next month on other key factors to healthy church atmosphere.

Summer Fun Fact Quiz

Here are some summer fun facts to help keep you cool and impress your friends.

1. What was the highest summer temperature ever recorded in the United States?
124 degrees F 134 degrees F 144 degrees F
2. When does summer officially start in the Northern Hemisphere?
May 30 June 21 It varies
3. About how many hot dogs do Americans consume each year?
Fifty-two million Twenty billion
Forty-five billion

4. Why on earth would anyone wish to be an Oscar Mayer wiener?
Because you'd be invited to neighborhood BBQ's
Because you'd plump when they cooked you
Because everyone would be in love with you
5. Which place on earth receives the longest period of daylight on June 21?
The North Pole The South Pole
The equator
6. What Country has won more medals (2,189) at the Summer Games than any other country.
The United States Japan USSR
7. The first zoo opened on July 1, 1874. Where was it?
Chicago The Bronx Philadelphia
8. Who was the first dog movie star in the United States?
Tirti-Pastor Sharon's dog
Lassie Rin Tin Tin
9. What is the most popular Pet Name?
Max Shadow Tiger
10. What candy used to take 27 hours to make?
Laffy Taffy Valentine message hearts
Marshmallow Peeps
11. What is cotton candy made of?
sugar only sugar, corn syrup, and cornstarch
Who cares — it tastes good!
12. How many ways can you put together six Lego bricks of the same color if each brick has eight studs?
48 384 102,981,500

Answers on page 7

God's LOVE has
been poured
into our
HEARTS
through
the
HOLY SPIRIT
that has been
given to us



Romans 5:5, NRSV

Our Ministry Team

Senior Pastor — Mike Hinrichsen
Administrative Pastor — Dan Huntley
Children's Pastor — Sharon Wiles
Student Ministries Interim — Adam Hinrichsen
Worship Interim Pastor — Richard Easton

A monthly publication of **Blue Mountain Community Church** 928 Sturm Ave., Walla Walla, Washington 99362, (509) 529-1212, www.bluemountainchurch.com, Editor: Julie Caton, bmccbulletin@gmail.com. Deadline for submissions: The second Wednesday of the month prior to publication. Editor reserves the right to edit for content and space. Unsolicited materials welcome.
© 2006 Blue Mountain Community Church.