

SCHEDULE OF ASSEMBLIES

Sunday morning worship (Bible study)	9:30 AM
Sunday morning worship (Preaching)	10:30 AM
Sunday afternoon worship (Preaching).....	4:00 PM
Wednesday evening worship (Bible Study).....	7:00 PM

NEWS AND NOTES

SCHEDULE: The schedule for May is posted on the bulletin board so the men can see what their responsibilities are for the month.

SERVICE TIMES: Thankfully, we have been able to resume our normal schedule of assemblies.

STAYING IN: As a result of the seriousness of the Corona Virus outbreak some members have been staying at home and may continue to do so, as a result of underlying health issues or just precautionary. We respect their decisions.

SICK AND SHUT-INS: Charles Weatherbee fell and cut his head, but the doctor glued (literally) the cut together and he is doing well again. Dottie Henderson continues to improve. Alice Hamm is doing well following knee replacement surgery. Zola Basham is hoping to have hip surgery in the near future. Remember her sister, Sula Maxey, is making good progress following shoulder surgery. Donna Criswell is experiencing health issues. Her aunt, Nell Barrett is not doing well, and neither is her brother-in-law. Donna provides most of her aunt's care. Remember Telford Hamm's brothers and brother-in-law. Jack Elliott will be having a heart ablation in Huntsville on the 27th. Continue to remember Jack's niece. Nancy Summerford's mother is in last stages of Alzheimer's. Virgie Waddle has not been doing well. However, after seeing the doctor and some new medicine, she is feeling some better. Remember her sister-in-law, Jean Malone is in the nursing home in Golden.

TEACHING EFFORTS: Our teaching bulletin, the **EASTSIDE EXAMINER**, was in the **Red Bay News** in April. Copies of this issue are on the table in the foyer for those who do not receive a paper. These may also be used to give to a friend or neighbor. When the copies are depleted, more can be printed. There is also an ad in the local paper once a month offering a free Bible correspondence course. There are DVD copies of past TV programs available. The radio program on 95.5 FM at 10 AM each Sunday continues. Please pray that these efforts will reach people interested in studying God's word.

GOSPEL MEETINGS / SINGINGS: All the meetings that I knew about have been cancelled. If you know of meetings or singings in the area, please tell the one making announcements.

POINTS TO PONDER

- What you do for yourself will soon be forgotten, but what you do for others will be long remembered.
- Many receive advice, but only the wise profit from it.

THE EASTSIDE REMINDER

2Pet 1:12-15

Published by the Eastside church of Christ Red Bay, AL
Meeting at the corner of Hwy 24 East and Meadow Dr.
Web Site: <http://eastsidechurchrb.com/>

Vol. IV - No. 3 – May 17, 2020

Editor: Jerry L. Henderson: Send comments to: The Editor, 1205 Hwy 24 East, Red Bay, AL 35583
Phone: 256-333-0017 or 662 - 542-3170 - email: jerry@hendersons.net

“TOGETHER AGAIN”

By Jerry L. Henderson

The country singer, Buck Owens recorded a song way back in 1964 titled: “Together Again”. There were other country singers that recorded this song also. When I was in High School (yes, I remember back that far) there was a social group called the “Y-Teens”. (I looked it up, November 1956 marked the first national conference of Y-Teens. They were associated with the YWCA.) This social group, composed of teenage girls, would sing a song that went something like this: “the more we get together, together, together, the more we get together, the happier we’ll be, for your friends are my friends and my friends are your friends, the more we get together, the happier we’ll be”. What all this “nostalgia” says is that our society has always recognized the importance of being “together”.

By God's grace we, along with many churches, are together again in **ALL** of our regular services after enduring a “stay at home” order by our governor. However, there was an exception which stated: “except to perform “essential activities.”” The men of the congregation in a business meeting deemed our meeting together on Lord's Day as an essential activity. Therefore, we, as a congregation, continued meeting together for Bible study and worship on Lord's Day morning. Many other congregations in the area and throughout the country decided not to meet together physically, but arrived at ways to continue to worship and study. Many of which I am aware, met in a “virtual way” through the marvels of our electronic age, while others had

“parking lot” services where the members met together while remaining in their vehicles in the parking lot of the church building. However, all these efforts pale in comparison to being together physically.

There are many passages of scripture that deal with and refer to God’s people being together and the importance of it. Notice just a few such passages and I would encourage all to look up these scriptures and read them along with their context. In the Old Testament God’s people gathered together to worship and hear God’s word: Ex 35:1; Deut 31:12; Neh 8:1. Also, in the New Testament God’s people gathered together to worship and hear God’s word: Acts 2:6; 20:7, 8; 1Cor 5:4; 1Cor 11:17, 18, 20, 33, 34; 14:23, 26-28, Heb 10:25. These are just a sample of all the passages that talk about gathering together and show the importance of this practice. You will notice that in some instances it may have been a very small number and in others a very large number. However, when the Lord’s Supper was observed it was the church that had assembled regardless of the size of the assembly. Yes, Jesus is with them if it is an authorized assembly (1Cor 5:4), but that is not the point of Matt 18:20 which many used to justify a small number gathering just for the purpose of taking the Lord’s Supper. I admit that in the past I have used this passage in this way, till I learned better. That passage does not say just because two or three are together that they necessarily constitute a local church.

The passage in Heb 10:25 talks about not forsaking the assembling or ourselves together. You will notice that this verse did not say: “assembly”, but rather, “assembling”. Albert Barnes, in his comments on this phrase says: “It properly means an act of assembling, or a gathering together, and is nowhere used in the New Testament in the sense of an assembly, or the church. The command, then, here is, to meet together for the worship of God, and it is enjoined on Christians as an important duty to do it. It is implied, also, that there is blame or fault where this is “neglected.”” So, this verse is not talking about “leaving the church” but rather abandoning the act of gathering together.

It seems to me that in considering all that the Scriptures have to say about the matter of assembling together, we ought to realize the great importance of it and the benefit we derive from being assembled together. As the song suggest: “the more we get together, the happier we’ll be.” Certainly, it is our prayer that there will be no more interruptions of our assemblies together as a result of disease or any other thing.

RE-VISITING MATTHEW 18:20

By Greg Gwin

There has been a good bit of discussion about Jesus’ statement in Matthew 18:20: “*where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.*” It has been accurately explained that the context of this famous phrase limits its application. Specifically, Jesus was not discussing worship assemblies.

Unfortunately, this passage has been misused to justify brethren absenting themselves from the assembly of the church and conducting their own devotionals (including the Lord’s Supper). They express confidence that Jesus is ‘with them’ because a plurality of Christians are in attendance.

God’s Word identifies that the Lord’s Supper is to be observed “*when ye come together in the church*” and “*when ye come together into one place*” (1Cor. 11:18, 20, 34). The objectors argue that when “two or three are gathered together” it constitutes a church. Thus, they attempt to make their case for the observance of the Lord’s Supper in these settings.

There are some real problems with this explanation. First, if it is true that these gatherings of ‘two or three’ are really a ‘church’, then we have churches popping up - and quickly disbanding - all over the place. Are we to believe, for instance, that a ‘church’ existed in a hotel room for a few moments on Sunday morning (just before the participants headed off to the amusement park)? This ‘church’ observed the Lord’s Supper, and then disbanded never to meet again. Is this really what folks want to defend?

Second, those making this argument need to look at Matthew 18 a little more closely. The context describes how to deal with an erring brother. First you go to him privately. Then you take “one or two more” (note: that would be ‘two or three’ together – do the math!). Finally, you “tell it unto the church”. But, wait! Do you see it?!? The group of “two or three” together is clearly distinguished from “the church”. In other words, Jesus’ own words show that a simple plurality of Christians does not automatically result in the formation of a ‘church’.

So, the very context of Matthew 18:20 proves that these limited, private gatherings do not provide the authorized setting in which the Lord’s Supper is to be observed. Think!