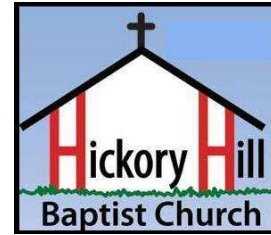


HHBC Happenings



Newsletter from Hickory Hill Baptist Church

Spring 2009 Issue

Greetings in the name of the Lord! We pray that this newsletter finds you and your family well and prospering in the knowledge of the Lord. You are receiving this mailing because you have had contact with Hickory Hill Baptist Church in some fashion. It is our joy to send this to you in order to keep you informed about what is *"happening"* in our local church. Friends, we are not shy about our goal. It is our deep desire to see many folks from our community joining in the worship, the service to God, and the fellowship of the believers at Hickory Hill Baptist. If you are already a member, then please use this media to stay informed about what is happening and how you can be a part of serving Christ through your church. If you are *not* already attending, do consider making HHBC your church home! We look forward to seeing you.

HHBC Focus this Quarter

- **Laboring to preach, understand, and apply the Gospel according to Mark.**
- **Studying the book of Romans together**
- **Practicing the training we received from "Cultivating Gospel Relationships" Month**
- **Preparing for Vacation Bible School**
- **Preparing for Easter**

Attention VBS is Coming



I invite everyone to join us this year for Vacation Bible School as we experience a train ride across Australia, while learning that "It all comes back to Jesus."

The theme **b**ible verse is **I John 4:9 – God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent His One and Only Son into the world so that we might live through Him.** Each evening, there are numerous activities planned to keep the children interested and learning the truth**s** about God's endless love for each of us.


The dates for this year's Vacation Bible School are Sunday, May 31, 2009 – Thursday June 4, 2009. We will serve a meal each evening at 6:00 and all are invited to attend and fellowship with us.

The curriculum stories will follow Peter's interactions during Jesus' time on earth. It begins with Jesus' invitation to Peter to follow him in becoming a disciple. We will learn about trusting Jesus completely and learn how fallible we are. It will be an exciting time for all this year! Please plan to join us.

Announcing Hickory Hill Baptist Church Website

God is so good! HHBC now has an official website at www.hickoryhillbaptistchurch.org

Please visit *regularly* to find out the latest events, download the most recent sermons (either in audio or written format), and especially to read the "blog" (where we post biblical thoughts/lessons and reflections two or three times each week)

From the Pastor's Pen  Last quarter I took the newsletter opportunity to describe and define precisely *what the Gospel is* and what it means. As much as we talk about it, sing about it, pray about it, and read about it, most of us *still* find ourselves absolutely terrified to share or declare it to someone who doesn't already know it (that's evangelism).

I'm convinced that one of the reasons we're so reluctant to speak to those we know and love about this wonderful Good News is because we haven't *seasoned* our speech with Gospel truth. Let's say I've got a friend named Jack. Jack and I run into each other at work all the time, and usually we talk about Mizzou basketball and the latest thunderstorm. Jack has no idea that my soul loves Christ and that I depend upon him for life, breath and everything. But one day, I decide in my heart that I've *got* to speak with Jack about the Gospel because he is lost. That's going to be a terrifying moment! When I ask him, "Jack, do you mind if I share something with you," and then I break into the Gospel, that's going to be like breaking the ice with a backhoe.

If, on the other hand, as Colossians 4:6 commands, my speech, conversation, and relationship with Jack have always been *seasoned* with Gospel truth, then I'm going to be speaking to Jack *all the time* about Jesus Christ. Then when that moment finally comes where I say, "Jack, I've *got* to have a real conversation with you about Jesus Christ," there's no ice to be broken.

So what if instead of keeping Christ a secret until you one day dump the Gospel on them (like dropping a back of bricks into their lap), you regularly used conversations about hopes, dreams, trusts, fears, anxieties, morals, crises, tragedies, struggles, passions, etc. to speak a sentence or two about how the Gospel has *influenced you* in all of those areas?

Then one day *in the midst of that kind of relationship* you say to your friend, "Jack, I've got to be honest with you. Every time I mention Jesus Christ, I see confusion (or distrust, disbelief, questioning, whatever the case may be) in your face. Because I love Christ more than this world and because you are so dear to me as a friend, I would absolutely love the opportunity to explain to you more who Jesus is and what the Gospel that I'm always talking about actually means."

Now maybe at this point Jack would say, "No, absolutely not." Well there you have your answer for right now. Continue to love, pray for, and season your conversation with the Gospel until a later day.

But maybe, just *maybe*, God will soften Jack's heart and he will say instead, "That would be alright." Now you have an opportunity to more fully explain what it is you've been talking about in seed form for your entire relationship.

...But what now? Well that will be the subject of next quarter's newsletter.

This is what we've been talking a great deal about at HHBC. Primarily we long to see God build up this local church by bringing fallen men and women to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Of course, people will from time to time change local churches for various reasons. But *primarily* God's intent is for the local church to be a saving force in the life of a community. May God give us a love for our neighbors and friends and a love for his Gospel such that we begin to introduce the one to the other.

Evangelism Event

At the "Cultivating Gospel Relationships" event, Mark Backes explained we are better at selling a white, Styrofoam cup than we are at sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ. All enjoyed food, having fun and indulging in desserts (especially desserts)!





I WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!!! This may be another way to say what Jesus was saying in Matt 7: 7-8 when He was telling his disciples to ask, seek and knock. Even though prayer is a command that Jesus expects each of us to obey, the more we pray the more we want to pray. Just think about it, each time we pray God pauses and listens to each of us. He likes to hear our voice.

All too often we feel like we don't want to trouble God with a joy or burden that we think is not important to Him. But the surest way to trouble God is to not pray at all.

Prayer does change things and circumstances, but more importantly prayer changes us. When we humbly, persistently, and expectantly pray in Jesus' name (which glorifies God), He will give us a heart that is in tune with His will. God doesn't act like a magician and wave a wand to make things happen. But when we are in God's will, we can pray to God. He is not only eager to hear from us but anxious to respond to us.

Prayer puts us at the forefront of God's work such as evangelism, spiritual and physical needs of the people around us, needs of our church, praying for our pastor, **all the leaders of our church and political leaders**, local and world wide, the list is endless.

Whether we are praying for others or ourselves, prayer connects our hearts together as we bring our joys and burdens into the presence of a loving and powerful God.

Pray without ceasing 1 Thess 5:17

I am Praying for all of you often.
Curtis Busch

Upcoming Events

Easter Sunday, April 12, will soon be upon us, and as such, we should start meditating upon the miraculous resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. It is important to **think critically about** and read Scripture in order to understand that the holiday is more than colorful eggs and a fluffy white rabbit.

Philippians 3:10-12

I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection.... (NIV)

Senior Breakfast---3rd Thursday of each month at 9:00 a.m.

VBS Dates May 31, 2009 through June 4, 2009

Bible Trivia Answers:

Q1—"Fear not: for am I in the place of God?" Genesis 50:15, 19-20

Q2—He prayed for it. Judges 16:28-29