

Family Information

Baby Shower For Ashley Dillinger Next Sunday

A baby shower for Ashley and baby Dillinger is scheduled for next Sunday, February 26th, at noon in room E41-42. They are registered online at Babylist (see Meagan Stover for the link). Hope to see you there!

Wednesday Outreach Meeting Schedule

The next Wednesday Outreach Meeting will be on March 1 at 6:30 PM. For now, the Outreach Team will be meeting once per month, on the first Wednesday of each month. See Jeff or Caleb if you have any questions.

Faith-Based Book Club Meets March 4

The first meeting of the faith-based book club will take place on Saturday, March 4, in the fellowship room (E41-42) from 1:30-3:00 PM. The first book up for discussion is "Simply Christian: Why Christianity Makes Sense" by N.T. Wright. See Caleb if you have any questions.

Children's Classes

We currently have children's classes for ages 2-10 during worship (each of them begins after the Lord's Supper). See Mike Evans for further details. The children's education program needs helpers for all age groups. See Lynn Paden or Emily Graham if you can help.

On Line Bible Studies

Current On-Line Studies

Every other Friday at 7:00 PM - TGIF Bible Study led by Mike Evans. Contact him for details and the current schedule.

Mondays at 7:00 PM - Women's prayer group, hosted by Peggy Kaiser. Contact her for details. If you aren't able to join, you can e-mail prayer requests to Peggy.

Tuesdays at 7:00 PM - Women's Bible study "Abide In Christ", led by Karen Susenna. The current study is in Acts. Contact Karen for more details.

Contribution

	Last Week	Average YTD
General:	\$7159	\$4909
Designated:	\$0	\$10

Service Times

Sunday Morning Bible Study	9:00 AM
Sunday Morning Worship	10:00 AM
Sunday Spanish Worship	10:00 AM
Sunday Ghana Worship	12:00 PM
Sunday Evening Worship	4:00 PM

For sessions that are currently meeting on-line, see the announcements above.

Minister: Caleb Dillinger
Elders: Mike Evans, Jeff McVicker, Jim Robbins
Deacons: Lynn Champney, Perry Coate, Glenn Culler, Darrell Estep, Jack Evans, John Lindsay, Don Milnor, Art Silva
Spanish Ministry: Luis Valdez



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Sowing To Please The Spirit

Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. - Galatians 6:8

God planted his seed in each of us when he made us, and since then he has been caring for it and nurturing it and nourishing it. Our Heavenly Father asks us to open our hearts and minds to him, so that he may produce a harvest of the fruit of the Spirit in us. And whatever may happen in this world, God gives eternal life to those who believe in the message of Jesus and hold fast to him - *May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. - Galatians 6:14*

In nature, our Creator has given us many reminders of his care and his patience. Oak trees flourish in many parts of the world, and they are often used as symbols of understanding and fortitude. Despite how widespread they are, oaks do not begin producing acorns until they are at least 20 years old, some types only begin when they are even older, and many types of oaks produce only a few acorns until they are around 50 years old, when their production becomes more active.

Likewise, God is patient with us, as he gives us every spiritual nutrient we need and as he gives us many reminders to trust in him instead of in our own strength and talents. And he asks us to do the same for one another; he asks us to encourage those who need it, be patient with those who are struggling or confused, to share his words with those who seek the truth, and wait for him to produce the harvest—*Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers. - Galatians 6:9-10*

In their peak years, oaks produce thousands of acorns, sometimes as many as 10,000. Most types of oak trees have an average lifespan of 100-300 years, and some live much longer than that; so in one oak's lifetime, it could produce over a million acorns. While only about one in 10,000 acorns ends up becoming a tree, the others provide food for many kinds of animals (though humans and some other animals cannot eat them), and the trees themselves provide benefits to their ecosystems.

Similarly, when we sow to please the Spirit instead of sowing for worldly gain, our Heavenly Father can use the seed in ways we may never even see; he renews us day by day and he shows his mercy and compassion to us and to others - *Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything; what counts is the new creation. Peace and mercy to all who follow this rule. - Galatians 6:15-16*

When we give God our mustard seed of faith, he produces a garden that only he could have planted.

- Mark Garner

Just A Little Talk With Jesus

I once was lost in sin
But Jesus took me in
And then a little light
From heaven filled my soul
It bathed my heart in love
And wrote my name above
And just a little talk with Jesus
Made me whole.

Now let us have a little talk with Jesus
Let us tell Him all about our troubles
He will hear our faintest cry
And He will answer by and by
Now when you feel a little pray'r wheel turning
And you know a little fire is burning
You will find a little talk with Jesus
Makes it right.

Sometimes my path seems drear
Without a ray of cheer
And then a cloud of doubt
May hide the light of day
The mists of sin may rise
And hide the starry skies
But just a little talk with Jesus
Clears the way.

I may have doubts and fears
My eyes be filled with tears
But Jesus is a friend
Who watches day and night
I go to Him in pray'r
He knows my ev'ry care
And just a little talk with Jesus
Makes it right.

- L. Cleavant Derricks, 1910-1977

Hymnwriter, poet, and musician Cleavant Derricks also served as a minister for a number of churches. He wrote more than 300 hymns and also published several song books; this is one of his best-known hymns, and it has been recorded by numerous singers. One of his sons, also named Cleavant Derricks, is an actor and singer.

A New Heart & A New Spirit

In Ezekiel 36, God tells us that he will give us a new heart and a new spirit when we realize our need for him and turn to him humbly. This week, Paula Robbins writes about the depths and permanence of the renewal God gives us.

God's Unique "New"

God spoke through the prophet Ezekiel to make a promise that must have seemed too good to be true. He promised to give his people Israel, into whom we have been adopted (Galatians 3:7), a new heart and new spirit. He would remove all in us that is corrupt, hardened, and dead and replace that with a heart and spirit that are living, vibrant, and flourishing. Knowing our utter inability to create such a change in ourselves, he assures us that he himself will cause this amazing change (Ezekiel 36:26-27).

The new heart and new spirit we receive from God are new in a way that is completely unlike any new experience or possession offered by this world. As an outpouring of God's own nature into our lives, our new heart and new spirit are eternal. They will never disappoint us; never become old and worn. The blessings of living with our new heart and spirit are "new every morning" (Lamentations 3:22-23).

About 650 years after God made this lavish promise through Ezekiel, the Apostle Paul described how God brings about this transition (2 Corinthians 3:18-19). As we come to him in humble faith and choose to fix our attention on our Lord Jesus, God transforms our nature into his own nature. God entirely empowers this change, but we must choose to keep our focus on Jesus and submit to the Spirit's work in our lives.

This gift of our new heart and new spirit is part of God's process of weaving each of our stories into his eternal story. Living in this dual reality, what I've heard called a state of "already-not yet", is not always comfortable. We feel the tension of being in the world but not of the world (John 15:19; 17:14-16). But as we continue to experience God's transforming work in our lives we will realize that Jesus is indeed working in us to continue what he began to do while he was on earth (Acts 1:1). Our new heart and spirit will make us increasingly effective in living as subjects of and ambassadors of God's kingdom for which Jesus taught us to pray (Matthew 6:10; 2 Corinthians 5:20). And when our time on earth is finished, we will be welcomed into God's completed kingdom where our eternally new heart and spirit will be perfectly at home.

- Paula Robbins