

CHURCH OF CHRIST

Somers Ave Church of Christ
4801 Somers Avenue
North Little Rock AR 72118

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Schedule of Services:

Bible Classes: 9:00 A.M.
Worship: 9:45 A.M.
Evening Service: 5:00 P.M.
Midweek: 7:00 P.M.

For Our Guests:

Attended Nursery at
back of the Auditorium—
infants

**Attended Training
Room** at back of the auditorio-
rium (East side)
[for 1-3 Yr. olds]

Wireless Hearing receiv-
ers available in sound booth at

Coming Soon

- VBS-Mars Hill
Vilonia, AR
June 13-17
7:00-8:30 P.M.
- Vacation Bible School
June 27-30
Levy Hosting

The *OBSERVER*

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Choose Choice

J. Randal Matheny

[The following excerpt is from Randal's new book, *Choose! 13 Choices to Transform Your Heart and Soul* by Forthright Press.]

Walk down the cereal aisle of any supermarket, and see that man is a creature of choice. Free will means having a choice. We exercise that feature of our psyche every moment of every waking day. That feature is called the *will*. The cereal aisle also points up another modern challenge, the overwhelming number of options before us.

In the English language, the word choice is not only a noun, but an adjective as well. Butchers use it to entice buyers by calling a slab of meat a *choice cut*. The adjective means something of high quality, of superior grade, worthy of being chosen. Of course, we know by experience that not every choice we make results in a *choice* decision. But focusing on the process of choosing and what ought to be chosen is a worthy task. Hence, this book.

Some years ago I spent a depressing time telling myself that I had no choice. *I'm stuck. There are no options. I'm facing a blank wall. A dead-end street.* The self-talk was a lie. Though I had reached a point where my goals had been frustrated, I could not see that many other avenues were open to me. Today, I have so many options, it's hard to choose among them.

Some people think they can't choose because Destiny or some other nebulous concept has already checked off their possibilities. The truth is, we have myriad options to choose from every day. We were created to be choosers. Not to choose is a choice to let others choose for us. Inevitably, their choices for us will be wrong. Our automatic choices tend toward the base and corrupt, since that's human nature. In order to overcome that nature, choice must be consciously redeeming.

From birth people are bombarded with messages that our lives make little difference. Big government, big business, big media, we are told, make our efforts meaningless and futile. This lie serves those who desire passive subjects to manipulate. Sure, we labor under obvious physical and social limitations. Most of us could never consider the career of a race jockey, for example. But our possible options are so vast as to be practically unlimited. And we access and take advantage of them through our daily choices.

Choice is based on truth. If you don't have the right information, you cannot choose as you should. Not a few have regretted their choice of mates because they married without knowing the person! Choice brings responsibility and consequences. It entails commitment to working toward making the choice come to fruition.

Choosing means following up and living with the results. But the starting point is choosing to choose. To make myself aware every day that it's all about my choices. There's a lot in this world I can't control. But within my circle of events and results which I can determine, so much waits on my nod.

So I choose to choose. And I want to choose well. I'll get the facts, study my options, understand the necessary commitment, explore the results and consequences. I will choose the best, the highest, the choicest.

But I [the Lord] show covenant faithfulness to the thousands who choose me and keep my commandments.
Deuteronomy 5:10

[**Choose!** is an inspiring book for individual or group devotional. We still have a few autographed copies available for purchase. Contact Sean Ashberry to claim yours.]

Randal and Vicki Matheny have been serving the Lord in Brazil since 1984. They currently live in the San Jose de Campo area. You can find more information on their work along with Randal's teaching and publishing by going to our website. From the homepage click on the Missions tab.

Our Record June 6, 2010

Sunday Bible Classes
207
A.M. Worship
247
P.M. Worship
167
Ladies Bible Class
6/9-20
Midweek Classes
6/9-202

Budget	\$9,080.25
Contribution	\$10,183.53
Average	\$9,775.54

Volunteers are needed for the Wednesday Night Meal for the 3rd week of the month beginning in September. If we do not have volunteers we will skip that week.



MONTH OF JUNE:

Peanut butter
Jelly
Toilet paper
Crackers

Family News

Bridal Shower for Allyson McDougald bride-elect of Jonathan Penrod tonight following evening services. They are registered at Bed, Bath and Beyond, Target and Dillards.

Sympathy is extended to the family of Gerald Hale. The funeral services will be held on Monday, June 14th at 11:30 A.M. at NLR funeral home. The visitation will be today from 2:00-4:00 P.M. at the funeral home.

Sympathy is also extended to Gary Robinson in the death of his aunt, Betty Acroman.

Response-Judy Rye for prayers-June 6.

Additional Wednesday Night Adult Bible Class Offered: On Wednesday, June 9th, a second adult Bible class began in the old fellowship room. The format style is a discussion/participation class on "Sharing Your Faith". The class will be taught by Mike Penrod and Chad Necessary.

Tuesday Night Ladies Bible Class will begin on Tuesday, June 22nd at 7:00 P.M. in the old fellowship room. The topic will be "*The ABC'S of a Godly Heart*". Please sign the list on the table in the back of the auditorium or let Tress Ashberry know if you plan to attend.

Reminder: Summer Tailgate parties beginning on Friday, June 25th at 6:00 P.M. We will have our first of three tailgate parties. Bring your food, drinks, chairs and outside games and join in the fellowship on our parking lot.

Area-Wide VBS will be hosted by Levy this year on June 28-30 from 9:30-11:30 A.M. for K-6th grades. Childcare will be provided for children birth through pre-school. A special kick-off service and sandwich supper will be held on June 27th at 5:00 P.M. Helpers are needed. Sign-up sheets & brochures are available on the back table.

In Our Thoughts

- **Joe Gibbins** is feeling much better! Doctors removed his drainage tube on Tuesday. He will continue IV medications until July 2.
- **Jonathan Barfield** will begin a new Leukemia trial study in July. His doctors are very hopeful that the new medications will be successful in controlling his Leukemia.
- **Jim Akins** underwent testing following recent hospitalization due to blood pressure problems. Tests revealed some blockage and he has been referred to a neurologist.
- **Michael Lee** (son and grandson of the Lee's, Ford's, Hutton's) is dealing with severe emotional stress.
- **Betty Sapp** (cousin of Ann Camp) will enter Baptist Hospital in LR for saliva gland cancer surgery on Tuesday, June 15th. Betty is a member of the Lord's church in Tuckerman.

FRIENDS & FAMILY Prayer Requests

~ **James Akins** (Akins' grandson); **Janet Akins**; **Rick Beason** (friend of Micah Sexson); **Susan Cloninger** (Tom & Barbara's daughter-in-law); **Annie Culpepper**; **Betty Edlemon**; **Jonathan Esquivel** (Wilma Ingram's nephew); **Bill Frazier** (friend of the Haggards); **Ruth Fuller**; **Wanda Gadberry**; **Ann Ghee**; **Joe Gibbins**; **Page Gibson** (Treva Voyles' family); **Billy Hale** (brother of Gerald); **Gerald Hale**; **Myrtle Henry**; **Gail Jenkins**; **Vivian Johnson** (Carl Reynolds' sister); **Henry Huckeba** (Don Huckeba's father); **Bob Mauldin** (NLR Fire Chief/boss of Steve Smith); **Alice Miller** (Haggard's friend); **Carolyn & Charles Moore** (Contessa Moore's parents); **Juanita Nance**; **Marie Necessary** (Chad's mother); **John Noles**; **Neva Raper** (Neita Phillips' mother); **Judy Rye**; **Kyle Rye** (Danny & Judy's son); **Marshall Sexson** (brother of Matt and Micah); **Mary & Radine Shock**; **Jenny Smith** (Steve Foster's aunt); **Pat Smyres** (friend of Huckeba's); **Jourdan Wood** (friend of Kathy Trickey) and **Harry Word**.

Contact Elder for June — Tim Ashberry

“The last first”

So on Tuesday I held my youngest child, Cooper, on my lap as he received his very first haircut. The moment was poignant for me knowing that this was the last first haircut we would experience (you smart alecks be quiet here). I am blessed to have held each of my children for their first haircut. It's a daddy thing. Or maybe it's just a Sean thing.

As the snippets of hair floated to the ground, I thought about how this was the first hair that had grown from his head. Wow! The hair that was being cut was the last first hair, at least first real hair, he would ever have. I wanted to make sure I was there when it was cut.

Tressa allowed me to make the decision about the

cut. A little more here...a little less there. One day perhaps none of my children will seek my input much less allow me to make their decisions. From my own teaching and instruction they will even have the ability and freedom to undo the very things I have tried to teach and do for them. But on this day it was all me. I didn't want to mess this up. All day long I thought about this last “first.”

There are so many last “firsts” in life. God experienced the very first “last first.” It doesn't get any earlier than “in the beginning.” What must it have felt like to create the first humans knowing that the perfect creation God had crafted would soon undo his beautiful world? And yet God

freely and lovingly created and gifted and enabled us to mature and grow and learn and reason and decide.

Although God created the last “first” humans and the last “first” earth as the world might think, He has promised us that this is not the last “first” of His creation:

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. 2 Cor. 5:17

But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. 2 Peter 3:13

Because of God's love for us He could not leave us having messed up our “first.” *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever be-*

lieves in him should not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16)

God knew that one day His children would not seek His input much less allow Him to make their decisions for them. From His own teaching and instruction they would have the ability and freedom to undo the very things He had tried to teach and do for them. But on that day, that day of firsts, it was all Him. And praise God that it still is.

Check out my blog:
seanashberry.wordpress.com

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Walking Alone at Eve

Oran Burt, Pulpit Minister

“I have a great delight in those wonderful scenes above,” sang Will W. Slater.

I have such a delight too, and I have a special attachment to that old hymn and here's why.

First, it makes me remember my grandpa. When I was five years old, and living with my grandparents, he used to take me for “moonlight strolls” among the tall pines near Pine Bluff. Years later, when I lived in Booneville and he had moved to Waveland AR, I would watch him tap his foot keeping time to that song being sung in the assembly of the small country congregation at the foot of Mt. Magazine.

Will Slater, composer of the song “Walking Alone at Eve” was born in Logan County Arkansas in 1885. Maybe that's what made the connection stronger, knowing that he too watched the sunset over the same ridges as he penned that song.

A second reason I love

that song is that it makes me think about Abraham.

God came calling on a man to test him and see if he would be another “start” in mankind with which to build a nation and prepare a lineage leading up to the Messiah.

“Go to a land that I will show you.” God said to Abram (Gen. 12) Abram, God's friend and ours, got up and went, following God fully by faith. He was able to become totally committed to God's will by the obedience of his faith.

Then God said to him “Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward.” (15:1)

But Abram said, “Lord God, what will you give me seeing I go childless...?”

Then it happened—an amazingly simply yet profound act—**“God brought him outside** and said *“Look now toward the heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them... so shall your descendants be.” (15:5)*

God brought him outside! Look at the stars! Promises from God and amazing evidence to go with them.

So Abraham believed in the Lord and God counted it to him for righteousness.

The heavenly messengers had already asked Abram and Sarai “is anything too difficult for the Lord?”

Abraham overcame any doubts by the time Isaac was born, and was learning to trust in the Lord God completely.

Then, when God asked the ultimate sacrifice, “take your son Isaac, your only son, whom you love, ...and offer him as a burnt offering to me.” Abraham was actually able to go to the very brink. How could he possibly do it? He had an idea. A truth. A teaching from his walk with God! He concluded that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead.” (Heb. 11:19).

A third reason I love that song, is that it makes me think about God, His creation and His promises. At evening,

when I walk, watching the sun set, I sometimes sing. *“Walking alone at eve and viewing the skies afar, bidding the darkness to come to welcome each silver star. I have a great delight in those wonderful scenes above, God in His power and might is showing His truth and love...*

...Closing my eyes at eve and thinking of heaven's grace, longing to see my Lord, yes, meeting Him face to face; Trusting Him as my all where-so-ever my footsteps roam, pleading with Him to guide me on to the spirit's home!

O! For a home with God, a place in His courts to rest, sure in a safe abode with Jesus and the blest; Rest for a weary soul once redeemed by the Savior's love, Where I'll be pure and whole and live with my God above!

We find eventually that “Abraham breathed his last and died in a ripe old age, an old man and satisfied with life and he was gathered to his people.” (Genesis 25:8)

I can hardly wait until time for my next stroll.

OUR ELDERS

- Jim Akins
- Tim Ashberry
- Mike Hughes
- Mike Penrod
- Danny Rye



Bruce Grice

Summer Series 2010
Imitating Christ: Until Christ is Formed in You

Bruce is the pulpit minister for the Westside church of Christ in Russellville, Arkansas. He served as their Youth Minister from 1994-99 and as Associate Minister from 1999-2009. And began serving as Pulpit Minister in January.

He served as our Youth Minister at Somers Avenue from 1984-1994. Bruce & Mary were married here at Somers nineteen years ago. They have two children: their daughter, Erin is 17 and their son Brandon, is 15. He graduated from Harding University in 1984, (B.A. in Bible) and from Harding Graduate School in 1989 (Master of Divinity).

Bruce will speak Wednesday June 16, on the subject: "Imitating Christ's Obedience & Submission to the Father's Will."



More Things You Can Do On Our WEBSITE:

- Link to other sites
- Check Calendar of events
- Read Blogs from Somers
- Print picture directory or pdf list of members & much more: www.somersavenue.org

Host A Teen Devo

See Alex to sign up now to host a teen devo this summer.

Upcoming Teen Events

This Month

- June 18—Splashdown, \$16 sign up with Alex now.
- June 20—Devo
- June 10-24—Uplift, \$70
- June 27—Devo

Looking Forward

- August 2-8—Florida Trip
- September 4-6—Area Wide Retreat

Teen Somer Nights

Another reminder: for the summer quarter our Wednesday evening classes will begin right at 7:00 in the senior high room. With our class time extended now we will go right on through the bell, dismissing at 8:30. Topic this summer: Wholeness.

Enough

This week we have been painting the old junior high classroom. Yesterday I was getting ready to put the last coat of paint on the yellow part of the wall, but as I picked up the can of paint I noticed that there wasn't much left. I thought that I would run out and that I would have to run down to the paint store and buy another quart to finish up.

So, I started painting. I didn't go light to make it stretch. I just went on painting, rolling it on as before. My pan went dry and so I picked up the paint can and poured more in. I thought I would hit the bottom of the can with that pour, but after my pour there was still a little more.

I ran out again just shy of the end of the wall. So, I poured what little paint I would need into the pan and rolled the last few passes. The wall was finished. I don't think I could have painted another 2 feet of wall with the paint that was left. There was just enough to finish the job.

As I was pouring the last time I thought of the story of the

prophet Elijah and the widow who lived in Zarephath. And I told Farah and Chris, who were there helping me, about the story and how my paint bucket had reminded me of it.

The prophet Elijah had been fighting syncretism that seemed to always creep into Israel. He was asserting that YHWH, not Ba'al was the true God; and that he alone was the ruler of the rain, thunder, and lightning.

And So Elijah prayed in the presence of Ahab, the King of Israel, "As the Lord, the God of Israel, lives, before whom I stand, there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except by my word." Elijah begins a contest here that will culminate in a powerful display of God's power and sovereignty on Mt Carmel three and a half years later. But that is getting ahead of the story.

The lack of rain causes a famine throughout the land. In the midst of this famine God sends his prophet to a widow living in Zarephath. (It is interesting to note that God did not send him to a

widow in Israel but to a gentile, a fact that Jesus takes note of in Luke 4. But again, that is a discussion for another day)

Elijah finds a woman who we learn is gathering wood to prepare a fire to cook her last bit of flour and her last drops of oil to have a final meal with her son before they starve and die.

But upon hearing the promise of the prophet of God she prepares the meal for Elijah instead. And because of that faith to obey the word of God, and to place the needs of another above her own, though used, the flour was never spent, nor did the oil run dry, but she and her whole household were given enough until the Lord returned rain to the land.

She obeyed, and found that in her obedience God always gave her what she needed. She always had enough.

The challenge, our challenge, is to have that kind of faith. To know, whatever the circumstance, that our God will always be sure that we have enough, and so often much much more.

Alex Wells, Youth and Children's Ministries