

## 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 auditorium  
East side [for 1-3 Yr. olds]

**Wireless Hearing** receivers  
are available in sound booth at  
back of the auditorium.

### Coming Soon

- 37th Annual Labor Day  
Gospel Meeting  
Lectureship  
McAlmont Church of Christ  
September 5-6
- Change for Children Cans  
due back by September 19
- Annual Homecoming  
Minister's Appreciation  
Airport Church of Christ  
September 25-26, 2010
- Coming in October  
"Grief Share"  
(Real Help for Deep Hurt—  
a grief recovery support  
group)

# The *OBSERVER*

Volume 42, Issue 36

September 5, 2010

This letter was written to Mavis & Rosie Baldwin and is from one of his students in China. Mavis, and his wife Rosie have been teaching English in the University system there. Additionally, they host home bible studies in their apartment. These students show their appreciation for the Baldwins in these letters. Here is just one of many who write lovingly to express how much they have learned about America and about God. This summer, Mavis & Rosie moved to Searcy and will spend time hosting many of the Chinese students at Harding in their home. They had 29 students last week in their home. Mavis will be preaching here at Somers Avenue this morning and also will tell us about opportunities to teach in China.

Dear Rosie and Mavis,

It has been two years since we got to know each other. During the two years, you guide me, love me and help me. You guide me as mentors and show me the road towards the Father God. You love me as grandma and grandpa and I've always enjoy the moment you hug me. You helped me when I was lost and tell me what is the right thing to do.

From you, I can see how God love us and I also learnt what to do or not to do in order to stay close to God.

Well, it's time for you to leave now. You are so kind that God is sure to offer you a wonderful life. I love you!

God bless you!

Yours,

Ivy

This letter is just one sample of the endearing notes these young people wrote to Mavis and Rosie. Each one overflows with gratitude for the attitude of love and caring that the Baldwins showed to the Chinese students. Some have formed entirely new impressions of what Americans are like, and who God really is, and a Christian world-view—all because of the kindness and patience shown by such Christians who will travel so far to teach about God's love.

*Family News*

## IN TODAY'S SERVICES

**A.M.****Song Leader**

Larry Curtis

**First Prayer**

David Holley

**Scripture Reading**

Joe Ellis

Matt. 7:24-27

**Communion Leader**

J. L. Simmons

**Closing Prayer**

Tim House

**Nursery**

Jennifer Daniel

Krystal Lee

**Greeters**

Janet Akins

Contessa Moore

**P.M.****Song Leader**

Chester Ingram

**First Prayer**

Micah Sexson

**Closing Prayer**

Robert Dixon

**Nursery**SEPTEMBER FOOD PANTRY

Pancake Mix

Syrup

Muffin Mix

**Our Record**  
August 29, 2010**Sunday Bible Classes**  
190**A.M. Worship**  
263**P.M. Worship**  
**Burns Park-No Count**  
**Tuesday Night Ladies****Bible Class**  
8/31-11**Midweek Classes**  
9/1-190

<b>Budget</b>	<b>\$9,080.25</b>
<b>Contribution</b>	<b>\$8,385.20</b>
<b>Average</b>	<b>\$9,661.11</b>

The men and women of the 189th Logistics Readiness Squadron request the pleasure of your company at the ceremony honoring **Chief Master Sergeant George P. McDonald** on the occasion of his retirement from the Arkansas Air National Guard on Saturday, the eleventh of September at two o'clock in the afternoon at Thomas Community Activities Center, Little Rock Air Force Base, Arkansas followed by refreshments

RSVP by 9 September 2010  
(501) 835-4048

**ATTENTION LADIES:**

**Tuesday Night Bible Class**—7:00 P.M., in OFR—*The ABC's of a Godly Heart*.

**Wednesday Morning Ladies Bible Class**— 10:00 A.M. in OFR—September 8th, the regular weekly classes will resume. Potluck lunch following class!

**RESPONSES:** Vernal Hale and Andrea Nichols for prayer—August 29.

**CARE GROUPS:**

Our care groups will resume on the 3rd Sunday in September (19th)!

**CHANGE FOR CHILDREN:**

On September 19th, Micah Brinkley from Children's Homes in Paragould will pick up the "change for Children" cans after our morning worship service. Please turn in your cans on or before September 19th to the church office, one of the elders, Joe Gibbins or Joe Ellis.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Wednesday night meals (beginning Sept. 8) will be provided on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays **only** since no one has volunteered to help do this the other two Wednesdays of the month.

**COMING IN SEPTEMBER:**

- 5th— Young men will lead songs and prayers at 4:30 P.M. in the auditorium
- 11th— To Save A Life—free movie in MPB
- 19th— Kidsongs at 4:30 P.M. in the auditorium



**BABY SHOWER:** For Holly and Kaden Moody on Sunday, September 12, following evening services. Holly is registered at Baby Depot, Target and Babies R Us.

**CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED: Monday, September 6.**

*In Our Thoughts*

- **Tom Edwards**-is in Springhill Hospital, room 356, 3rd floor, wing C with a severe bladder infection. He is not doing well at this time.
- **Imogene Swaim**-is in St. Vincent North Rehab unit room 208-A.
- **Marie Denny**-(relative of Neita Phillips) has a blood clot in her lung.

**SYMPATHY IS EXTENDED TO:**

The family of **Bonna Faye Massey** (niece of Pansy Johnson & cousin of Debbie Mosley). Neita Phillips in the sudden death of her cousin, **Steve Sanderson**.

Peggy Mitchell in the death of **Dub Mitchell** (members at Levy) on Aug. 28.

The families of **Kenny Robertson, Kenneth Meyer, Jr. and Gayla Gregory**, (pilot, flight nurse and paramedic) who lost their lives in a Air Evac helicopter crash this week.

## The Epidemic of Loneliness

Sean Ashberry, *Involvement & Outreach*

Loneliness is a universal experience. It is not the same as being alone, or solitude which are choices. Loneliness occurs in people of most cultures and in all parts of the world. Nevertheless, there are cultural differences in some of the causes, effects, and treatment of loneliness. Loneliness may be expressed, experienced, or handled differently among people who live in small rural communities as opposed to those who live in, say, New York City.

Regardless of where we live, most of us reside in what might be called loneliness-producing societies where rapid change and modern technology discourage intimacy and stimulate loneliness. Even in

homes and churches, people avoid one another. In an attempt to find closeness and escape inner feelings of isolation many individuals throw themselves blindly into openly sharing with strangers (like a seatmate on an airplane).

A once-popular song began with the words, “*Why should I be lonely? I have Jesus only.*” These lyrics implied that true believers have no need of human companionship. There is no doubt that many Christians find comfort and companionship in their walk with the Savior, but even while Adam was in the Garden of Eden, God declared that it was not good for human beings to be alone. People need each other if they are to avoid loneliness.

From this we should not conclude that human contact is the only solution to loneliness. Loneliness never disappears completely until an individual is introduced to Jesus Christ.

Jesus loves each of us unconditionally, died for us, makes it possible for us to come to him by confession of our sins and the covenant act of baptism, welcomes us as adopted children, and becomes a friend who sticks closer than a brother. His Holy Spirit lives inside of every believer, helps us, prays for us, and makes us more Christlike.

God is real and his presence can be sensed. He communicates through his Word and often through other people, even though we cannot hear

Him with our ears. God is also intangible; he cannot be touched or seen. This is where his tangible body, the church, enters the picture. The church should be a healing, helping community that radiates love, acceptance, and support.

Next week I will address some ways we can better recognize and respond to the needs of one another and to those in our community who are searching for answers to life’s biggest questions.

Check out my **blog**:  
seanashberry.wordpress.org

Follow on **Twitter**:  
@seanashberry

Friend me on **Facebook**  
sean.ashberry

## November of The Soul: The Enigma of Suicide

**“Would that all suicidal people knew they had a choice other than death.”**

So writes George Howe Colt in the introduction to his book that bears the same title as this article.

November of the soul, says Colt, struck him as an uncannily accurate description of the feeling that lies at the heart of that enigma.

On the first page of *Moby-Dick*, Ishmael describes the onset of a morbid depression that makes him pause before coffin warehouses and bring up the rear of every funeral procession he meets. He calls it a “damp, drizzly November in my soul.” Whenever that feeling comes over him, Ishmael knows what he must do. “Cato throws himself upon his sword,” he tells us; “I quietly take to the ship.”

In 628 pages, this book still only introduces the conversation. There are so many facets to the whole concept of sui-

cide, even to the extent that entire volumes have been written dedicated just to *defining* what suicide is. What qualifies to be called suicide?

For example, what about those poor individuals who *jumped* to their deaths from the World Trade Center rather than be burned to death? Was that suicide? And is what the person does who slowly, over many years, destroys their liver, or heart through abuse—is that the same thing as a suicide accomplished quickly? Who’s to say? Who is, or will be the final authority?

Is refusing treatment the same as suicide? Perhaps we could raise as many questions as we can answer. I am not suggesting that we don’t have answers. But I do maintain that none of this is easy. Of course, it is easy to just quickly pronounce “*Don’t do it!*” and that sounds easy enough. Pretty good advice. Like “Just say ‘no’” is good advice. Is that enough?

What can we do when a reality check shows that people

are hurting? Have we nothing to say or nothing to offer people who struggle with chemical imbalances in the brain? Or to those who have clinical depression—a November in their soul that is not simply feelings or thoughts or attitudes—but something medically treatable?

### FINAL EXIT

The Hemlock society, a group advocating the legalization of physician-assisted suicide and euthanasia, published *Final Exit*—a manual for the terminally ill that offered detailed instructions on how to take one’s own life. This followed their 1981 publication *Let Me Die Before I Wake*.

Right-to-die advocates bring a whole set of other issues to the conversation. Philosopher James Rachels, paraphrasing David Hume said “If it is for God alone to decide when we shall live and when we shall die, then we ‘play God’ just as much when we cure people as when we kill them.” And so it

goes. On and on we wrestle with the hard questions. And these are just a few of the scores of issues surrounding the conditions of the human heart, mind, conscience and soul.

It is not enough to simply console ourselves with having the “right” answers—“Suicide is wrong.” That does little to help anyone. Assigning guilt, passing judgment are of insignificant value to the hurting, afraid and hollow souls crying out to be heard.

### Whose Life is it Anyway?

Nicholas Berdyaev in his 1962 “*Essay on Suicide*” remarks:

*“My life is not solely my own, it does not belong to me absolutely, it belongs to God first. He is the absolute owner; my life also belongs to my friends, to my family, to society, and finally to the entire world which has need of me.”*

That brings us to a rock-solid starting place for real answers! Next week—a sure word from God.

## OUR ELDERS

Jim Akins  
Tim Ashberry  
Mike Hughes  
Mike Penrod  
Danny Rye

## ELDERS OF THE MONTH

Danny Rye  
Mike Penrod

### Available

Sunday, September 12  
6:00-6:30 P.M.

Wednesday, September 29  
7:15-8:00 P.M.

**We're On the Web:**  
[www.somersavenue.org](http://www.somersavenue.org)

## Upcoming Teen Events

### Regular Weekly Activities

- Teen Room will be open Wednesday after school
- Monday 6:00 Disc Golf at Burns Park
- Friday Family Game Night in the MPB 7:00

### This Month

- September 12—Devo
- September 19—Devo
- September 26—Devo

### Looking Forward

- October TBA—Girls Retreat
- October 15-17—Guys Retreat
- October 30—Trunk or Treat
- November 5-7—Family Camping Weekend

*The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord make his face to shine  
upon you and be gracious to you;  
the Lord lift his countenance upon  
you and give you peace.*

## Somers Avenue—A place to call HOME

### Coming in October

GriefShare is a 13 week series covering topics essential to promote healing from the hurt of grief and loss.

Each week your group will watch a video produced in a compelling television magazine format and featuring interviews with grief recovery experts, dramatic reenactments, on-location video and real-life stories of people who have experienced the death of a loved one.

Each week is independent of the others so you can join the group at any time and continue

through the series, making up the sessions you miss during the next 13-week rotation. The accompanying workbook provides a way to record key points



of each week along with resource material for those times in between meetings.

Our first group will begin **Monday, October 4th from 7:00pm to 8:30pm** and meet

for 13 Monday evenings. A concurrent group will begin **Thursday, October 7th meeting from 10:00am-11:30am** for 13 Thursdays. All meetings will occur in MPB #2 and Sean Ashberry will facilitate each group.

More information along with materials to share with friends will be available soon.

You can also check out more info at [www.somersavenue.org](http://www.somersavenue.org) or directly on the GriefShare site at [www.griefshare.com](http://www.griefshare.com).



## Everybody Hurts

*Alex Wells, Youth and Children's Ministries*

Abandonment. Abuse. Accident. Anger. Betrayal. Broken Trust. Brokenness. Bullying. Cast Aside. Consequences. Cut off. Death. Depression. Diagnosis. Divorce. Disappointment. Disease. Despondency. Excluded. Failure. Fear. Forgotten. Frailty. Goodbye. Greif. Hatred. Heartache. Ignored. Infidelity. Interpersonal Relationships. Jealousy. Job Loss. Knowledge of the Unavoidable. Loneliness. Loss. Low Self Esteem. Malignancy. Mocking. Neglected. Ostracized. Poor Self Image. Rebellion. Separation. Silence. Sorrow. Terror. Transfer. Unappreciated. Unknown. Unnoticed. Unwilling.

We know all too well the hurts that come into our lives. Without even knocking at the door, pain barges into our homes, our families, our friendships, into our hearts, minds and souls. Sometimes it floods in unexpected, other times after our time of dread our fears are confirmed. Either way, the pain

still comes. And it is very, very real.

Looking over that list again, how many faces come to mind of those who have struggled so deeply with the pains that those words represent. Young faces and old faces. Faces of grandmothers and of grandsons. Faces of uncles and of nieces. Dark faces and light faces. Hairy faces and smooth faces. Thin faces and full faces. Faces with blue eyes, green eyes, brown eyes, tear filled eyes, and dry eyes. My face and your face.

The point is: we all hurt. We are all together in that shared experience. Yet, so often, in our pain, we feel completely alone. But pain is the tragic part of our common humanity. It is one of the ties that binds us together. And as much as we would give to have that pain taken away from ourselves or more so from the ones we love, it will keep coming back to visit us and our loved ones for as long as the world continues to

turn.

There is a camaraderie that we gain when we realize that we are not alone in our suffering. There is a unity found in our suffering. There is oneness found in knowing that at some level, our pain is understood—that our burden is shared.

So often our pain is silent. Sometimes our silence is due to fear of rejection, ridicule, embarrassment, being seen as too needy, or being weak. Sometimes our silence is because of our need for some personal space. Sometimes that silence is ok. But so often it is crippling and causes us to endure our pain longer and deeper that we would otherwise.

What's more is that God has offered to walk with us through that pain if we are willing to share it with him, and he has set up the body in the expectation that we would share our pain with one another, helping each other through those struggles. None of us ever need suffer alone.