

## CHURCH OF CHRIST

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

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Office@somersavenue.org

### 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

- 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 37

September 12, 2010

## Hope for the Hurting

*Alex Wells*

In last week's bulletin articles we took a look into the reality of pain and suffering that can so easily go unnoticed, unspoken, and misunderstood. There is no escaping the hurt of the human soul. There is no way to run far enough or fast enough to escape the fear and the unknown that pounce unexpectedly upon us. And yet, so often, we are left standing alone against these storms.

With Sean we drew near to an understanding of the loneliness that engulfs so many. We were reminded that from the beginning God knew that it was not good for anyone to be alone. Yet, even when surrounded by crowds of people, we can become very lonely. It is this loneliness that can be alleviated by a deepening of connection and intimacy with our Creator and with his body, the church.

As we read Oran's article, we stood along the shoreline of the ocean of this great enigma we call suicide. We even felt the pulsing waves of the unspoken washing over our feet. Perhaps we were challenged to take a new and honest look into the eyes of those who struggle with thoughts of suicide and with other serious mental health issues.

In my article I tried to help us see the common ground on which we all stand. Though our pain is unique, we all share the brokenness of humanity. Though our pain is often silent, our pain is very real. Though for some pain only comes to visit now and then with great expanses of peace and joy in between and for others the sting of pain seems to be an inescapable and daily battle for life, we are united in our desperate need to escape that pain. We are bound together in our need for comfort.

This week's articles are dedicated to that comfort. Join with us as we explore the comfort received from the word of God, from the body of Christ, and from the Holy Spirit. This week's articles are about the comfort and hope we that have in Jesus, the Christ.

*"Comfort, comfort my people," says your God.  
Isaiah 40:1*

*Family News***IN TODAY'S SERVICES****A.M.****Song Leader**

Robert Dixon

**First Prayer**

Don Huckeba

**Scripture Reading**

Chris Colclasure

Matt. 28:18-20

**Communion Leader**

George McDonald

**Closing Prayer**

Ryan Hunter

**Nursery**

Tammy &amp; Caitlyn

Necessary

**Greeters**

Gary &amp; Pam

Lewis

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

Chad Necessary

**First Prayer**

Jovan Hill

**Closing Prayer**

Tyler Smith

**Nursery**

Mary Hughes

**SEPTEMBER FOOD PANTRY**

Pancake Mix

Syrup

Muffin Mix

**Our Record**

September 5, 2010

**Sunday Bible Classes**

175

**A.M. Worship**

236

**P.M. Worship**

130

**Tuesday Night Ladies**

Bible Class

9/7-8

**Midweek Classes**

9/8-188

<b>Budget</b>	<b>\$9,080.25</b>
<b>Contribution</b>	<b>\$11,170.17</b>
<b>Average</b>	<b>\$9,703.03</b>

**RECENT RESPONSES:**

Jameka Taylor-9/6/10-For baptism

Brandon Drause-9/5/10-For baptism (Hayti, MO)



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

**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.

**CARE GROUPS:**

Care group meetings will resume on the 3rd Sunday in September (19th)

**COMING IN SEPTEMBER:**

•19th—Kidsongs at 4:30 P.M. in the auditorium

**WEDNESDAY NIGHT MEALS:**

Meals will be provided on the 2nd, 3rd and 4th Wednesday nights of the month—no meals on the 1st or 5th week. Meals will be served from 5:30-6:30 P.M. The cost is \$4.00 per person and \$8.00 for a family.

**Meal Schedule:**

2nd Wednesday —Barbeque

3rd Wednesday —Chicken

4th Wednesday —Catfish

**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 the old fellowship room. A potluck lunch will be provided immediately following class.

**MEN'S MONDAY NIGHT BIBLE CLASS RESUMES:**

On Monday, September 13th, Mike Hughes will be leading a class study on the book of Romans. We will meet in the old fellowship room from 7:00-8:00 P.M. This is a non-formal study for men desiring to gain a better understanding of the Bible. Please contact Mike if you would like to participate in this class.

**REMEMBER TO CHECK THE BULLETIN BOARD BY THE WORLD BIBLE SCHOOL OFFICE FOR RECENT THANK YOU NOTES!!***In Our Thoughts*

- **Imogene Swaim**-is in St. Vincent North Rehab unit room 208-A.
- **Darrell Barker**-(son of Dollie Barker) is recovering from a recent heart attack.
- **Marie Denny**-(relative of Neita Phillips) has a blood clot in her lung.

**SYMPATHY IS EXTENDED TO:**

Bea Edwards & family in the death of our dear brother Tom who passed away on Friday, September 3. Visitation and funeral services were held on September 8th at Somers Ave.

## The Antidote for Loneliness

Sean Ashberry, *Involvement & Outreach*

As I stated in last week's article, *The Epidemic of Loneliness*, the church should be a healing, helping community that radiates love. In all of society, the church has the greatest potential for being a caring and healing community. Local bodies of believers can bring a sense of belonging to the members, opportunities to develop skills, support to those who feel weak, healing to troubled individuals, and guidance as people make decisions and move toward maturity.

The church was created to fulfill the great commission of making disciples (this included evangelism) and teaching. The early believers came together in a fellowship, or *koinonia*, that involved a community relation-

ship with one another, a partnership that actively promoted the Gospel and built up believers, and a mutual sharing of insights, experiences, worship, needs, and material possessions. Jesus, the head of the church, summarized his teaching in two laws: to love God and to love others. As a result, the early believers "turned the world upside down" and made a significant impact on their culture.

All of this is meant to take place within the confines of a group of believers, each of whom has been given the gifts and abilities needed to build up the church. As a group, guided by servant shepherds, the believers direct their attention and activities upward through

worship of God, outward through evangelism and community care-giving, and inward through teaching, camaraderie, and mutual burden-bearing. When any of these is missing, the group is unbalanced, the believers are incomplete, and the church is not able to be a completely caring community.

Somers Avenue can and should be an antidote for loneliness, pain, and brokenness both to members and those in our community. We offer Dynamic Marriage, Financial Peace University, Grief Share, Employment Seekers Support, free movies that provoke discussion about life and offer opportunities for deeper spiritual conversations. All of these, while NOT inclusive, are

attempts to bridge the gap between this congregation and those with whom we have relationships in our daily lives.

**I love each of you and I love this congregation.** But shame on you if you neglect an opportunity to tell someone about these or any other of the life support ministries we are extending. Not everyone is able to do personal evangelism and that is okay. But everyone can say "call this number" or "check out this website" or "read this brochure."

Yes, Jesus is the answer. But if people don't have an opportunity to ask their questions how will they ever come to the answer? Would you withhold antidote from the sick?

## The Enigma of Suicide (part 2) To Whom Shall We Go?

Coping skills may well mean the difference between life and death. Often, it boils down to "How do you handle life's pressures?" Where do you turn for help and support? Do you have somewhere to go for refuge, or a person who will listen and offer encouragement? Are you able to re-frame the hurt & emptiness and thereby recover? Have you ever thought maybe the world would be better off without you? Do you think no one cares if you live or die?

### Whose Life is it Anyway?

Nicholas Berdyaev in his "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."

Right-thinking produces the best results. And when we remember that we belong to

God first, then we can put things into a better perspective.

### Every Life Is A Plan of God

Regardless of our background, God intends for our life to be devoted to Him, if we will just choose to allow it to be so.

Saul's dark past was widely known throughout the church. Ananias, at first, was reluctant to go to Saul. But God had this to say about Saul:

*"go...for he is a chosen vessel to me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake."*  
(Acts 9:15, 16)

Not only does God have a purpose for the "chief of sinners," (Saul), but He also can "present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." And God is not willing that any should perish, but that all would choose repentance and life.

### Living Words

Words have life, They are formed by living souls, through living bodies and are read or heard by the same—thereby achieving their communication power.

Mere words are not *mere*. A simple "Will you marry me?" is a life-changing question. "Leave me alone!" has a way of changing things as well.

Is it really so difficult, then, to grasp the idea that God's word is alive? That it has life-changing power? [Heb. 4:12]

### Thoughts and Intentions

From within our deepest self, our thoughts and our imaginations; our motives and desires; all these things—the very fiber of our being—can be brought out to the world through our words! "Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks."  
(Matthew 12:34)

Conversely, the bible speaks to our innermost being, the thoughts and intentions of our

heart, the deepest needs, the darkest fears, the good, the bad and the ugly are all addressed by the One who watches over the sparrow and the lily.

### To Whom Shall We Go?

Jesus made claims that God was His Father. Jesus claimed to be able to give "living water" (John 4) so that one need never thirst.

Jesus said that He was the bread of life (John 6). Hard sayings have a way of helping people decide where they stand with God. Many turned away from Jesus—the very one who could help them—and no longer followed Him.

"Do you also want to go away?" Jesus asked His disciples. Peter replied, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." (John 6:68).

How often life's darkest hours become the hours of our brightest hope, when we view the world through Scripture!

## OUR ELDERS

Jim Akins  
Tim Ashberry  
Mike Hughes  
Mike Penrod  
Danny Rye

## ELDERS OF THE MONTH

Mike Penrod  
Mike Hughes

### 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

### This Week

- Teen Room will be open Mondays and Wednesday after school until 5:30
- Monday 6:00 Disc Golf at Burns Park
- Friday Family Game Night in the MPB 7:00
- Movie *To Save A Life* in the MPB 6:00, register online

### This Month

- September 12—Devo  
At the Wells Home
- September 19—Devo
- September 26—Devo  
At the Necessary Home

### Looking Forward

- 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

### Comfort—A Personal Perspective

*Janet Akins*



One year ago this month, I was diagnosed with breast cancer. That news was as terrifying as you can imagine, but I have always believed in the promises of God and that whatever happened I would share my story and use it to glorify God.

I have always tried to be a “comforter,” but during the past year I saw and experienced the full spectrum of receiving comfort: a compassionate embrace full of tears in the doctor’s office from a strong and faithful Christian husband who I knew would stand with me through whatever

was to come; loving hugs from my parents who knew my battle for life was ahead; constant encouragement from our children – a daughter who prayed and requested prayers from all over the world and was always there with a smile to lift my spirits – a son who showed his love for me by shaving his head, beard, and mustache on the day I lost my hair – a daughter-in-law who helped me in any way; a tearful hug from my closest friend who shared my fears and was ever present to give support and show love in so many ways; long talks with other breast cancer survivors helping me with diffi-

cult decisions; my church family using their talents to help us with special needs; and an outpouring of love and support from the 40+ who wrapped their arms around me and literally “held me up” during the *Race for the Cure* walk last October; and so many other expressions of comfort.

I have been blessed to witness the love of Jesus (the supreme Comforter) through my family and my brothers and sisters in Christ; comforting words were spoken and the bond of love was evident by actions – I thank God for being a part of such a loving family of God.



### The Comforter

*Alex Wells, Youth and Children’s Ministries*

*“I will pray to the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth...for he dwells with you, and shall be in you.” (John 14:16-17)*

They are among the most beautiful words that Jesus ever spoke. It is one of the most hope filled promises to ever reach the ears of mankind. And it is a promise that we have the right and ability to receive.

The gospel of John shares more with us about Jesus last days with his disciples than any other record of Jesus’ time here on the earth. We see Jesus sharing meals with his disciples. We see Jesus’ final confrontations with the religious establishment of the day. We see the betrayal, the fleeing, the arrest, denials, trials, beating, crucifixion, burial, confusion, resurrection, and restoration!

Through the pen of John we see the words of Jesus growing deeper and more ominous during his last days on this earth.

We watch as he begins to explain to his followers that he is going to have to leave them. We see their struggle, trying to understand—trying to believe, yet lost in confusion and filled with more and more questions.

And it is in the midst of this confusion and at the onset of the faith shattering event of the Christ’s public trial and execution that we read Jesus’ words, “I will not leave you comfortless” (John 14:18)

Jesus knows that they are about to wander into the midst of a darkness and a pain unlike any they had known. Jesus knew the hope that would die inside them as he hung and died on the cross. Jesus knew that they would be filled with doubt.

They were losing their teacher. They were losing their friend. They were losing the one in whom they had placed their hope for the restoration of Israel. They were losing the one for whom they had left everything—family, occupation, reli-

gious acceptance.

Jesus knew that they would indeed be broken. He knew that they would feel abandoned. He knew that they would be hurting. Grieving. Lost.

And so he reveals to them the next piece of God’s plan. He promises comfort. He promises the indwelling of the Holy Spirit of God; and from that indwelling come comfort, knowledge, intercession, and hope.

That promise is also for you and for me. As the apostles begin to preach the fulfillment of the plan of God and the beginning of his church, they reiterate that great promise: “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven, and you will receive the gift which is the Holy Spirit.”

How could we be more blessed? We have God, the Holy Spirit, living inside of us—to know our hurts, to know our pains, to know our fears, to comfort us.