

RIVER NEWS



From The Pastor's Pen
~ Pastor Sarah Flack

Dear River Community Church,

One of the things I look forward to each summer is traveling to Tennessee to spend a few days where I grew up. Our trips to Tennessee are simple--takeout from Pal's, a trip to Bays Mountain, drives around town to see what is different, and, best of all, time with family. Some summers the timing of the trip allows us to attend church with my Aunt Janice. It's a sweet church, one that has always made us feel welcome, and it is a church that loves to sing.

As Paul and his co-workers traveled from place to place spreading the good news that Christ Jesus had come and that salvation was available to all who would trust in Him, I wonder if they had any idea of just how far the good news would spread? I suspect they knew that just as you cannot stop the light of the sun from spreading across the earth neither can you stop the light of the Son from shining into the darkest places. And, while I love the times that I get to worship with these brothers and sisters in Christ here in Tennessee, and with you all in New York, I can't help but be excited to think that there are those who will come to know Jesus in places that we would never think that the light could penetrate.

Be diligent in praying for missionaries in far-off places and for people in countries where being called a Christian means to be marked for death. But also pray for places and people closer who seem like they would never want to hear about Jesus and who have closed themselves off from the Gospel. Pray for the Christians that God has placed as witnesses to His goodness in schools, in businesses, and as neighbors to the lost--you may even be one of the Christians God uses to bring light into a dark place or situation.

We have much work to do, River Church, good and important work with eternal value. All around us are people who do not know Christ and who need the hope that a relationship with Him brings. We all have a part to play, whether it be prayer, supporting a missionary, sharing your testimony, or any number of other ways we can be workers in the harvest. May we all be faithful to point people to Christ Jesus in what we do and say.

Yours in Christ Jesus,
Pastor Sarah

For we are His creation, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time so that we should walk in them. (Ephesians 2:10)



Grief Ministry
~ Laura Schafer

How Can You Help Someone Who Is Grieving?

It is sometimes hard to know how to help someone who is grieving. You can't "fix" the situation or take the pain away. Grief is a gradual process. Offer hope and love. If you find yourself uncertain of what to do, here are some ideas.

- Speak of the deceased. It is a terrible feeling to think your loved one will be forever forgotten. Instead of saying, "I am sorry for your loss" you could say, "I am going to miss (the person's name.)"
- Don't ask, "How are you?" It is obvious, not good, plus it is the same greeting you offer everyone. It doesn't acknowledge the person has suffered a loss. Try asking "How are you feeling today?"
- Offer hope. Remind them the love, hope and understanding God offers. Acknowledge there is no quick or easy solution but reassure them you will be by their side through the journey.
- Reach out. Check in every now and then just to say hello. They will need you more after the first few weeks when others stop calling.
- Help out. Don't ask "is there anything I can do?" this transfers the burden to the one grieving. Pitch in, do the dishes, grab groceries or mow the yard.
- Help with meals and shopping. The person grieving may have relied on the deceased for meal prep or it may be too overwhelming to think of meals and cook for remaining family.
- Listen, don't advise. Patiently listen to the same story being told over and over. This is often how people work through grief and trauma. Don't offer advice unless asked. Most people grieving want your understanding, not your advice.
- Don't judge. The person grieving has life and emotional changes that may last forever. Let the person grieve and heal at their own pace. Saying "you should move on" or "you should get back to normal" aren't helpful.

Sometimes the very best thing you can offer is your presence. Words or actions are not needed. Just the silent presence that someone is there for you should you need them.



Women's Ministry
~ Wendy Falzano



THANK YOU!

THANK YOU!!

THANK YOU to all of you who helped with the Rummage Sale, particularly my veterans, Edy Kempney, Lillian Green and Carolyn Marriott.

We would never have been able to do it without all the time and energy everyone devoted to setup, working the days of the sales and helping with the clean up! We had only one day to get everything together compared to our usual 4days. Everyone worked sooo hard!!

Oh...and all the goodies. There was nothing left over. Thank you to our bakers!

Thank you also to those who donated. We would not have been able to do it without you!

The community was so blessed. People walked away with what they felt were treasures and bargains.

Two young women spent hours trying on shoes and sorting through clothes for themselves and their children. The next day, one of the young women came back with her little boy and girl and let them shop a little bit.

Another woman spent an hour or more going through things on Saturday when everything was by donation only and then apologized for the little money she had to offer for the clothing she had found. She has an adult child with a disability and was so full of gratitude for what she was able to find. She wanted to come back the following week and bring some money. I told her that what she had was more than enough and helped her load up her car.

I really had so many misgivings about having the rummage sale this year and was feeling a little overwhelmed with so much to do in such little time. But YOU did it and I got to see the fruit of your labor and generous donations.

We brought in \$1,691.50. That's a lot of items that went out of here, as most things were 25 cents!

Just a reminder, our next Circle gathering is Saturday, 8/14, 10 am – 12 pm. We will be having fun with a Biblical scavenger hunt. Mark your calendars, come take the journey and have some fun!



Breaking The Chains Biblical Recovery Ministry

~ Ken & Michelle Kavanagh

When Does Abstinence Hinder Repentance?

The definition of Abstinence: The fact or practice of restraining oneself from indulging in something.

The definition of Repentance: The action of repenting; sincere regret or remorse of one's conduct by surrendering to God; turning 180 degrees toward God.

In reading through several commentaries and theological dictionaries concerning the terms repent or repentance, there are many detailed definitions of the terms. I can even toss in the term "repentant" and this adds more detail. I encourage you to look up all the terms in various theological dictionaries.

The reason for this editorial is to point out something that many do not consider. First, here is the reason why I am writing this. I have read in the past and even lately that one is to "abstain" from (a) sin. On the surface, I agree with this statement. However, when does one's personal actions of abstention, hinder the Holy Spirit's conviction to "repent" from (a) sin? When does one's personal actions of abstention come between remaining in slavery to or freedom from, bondage to (a) sin? When does one's personal actions of abstention keep one dependent on something or someone, rather than dependence on God for transforming into the likeness of Christ?

These are questions to be answered while looking in the mirror.

Galatians 5: 16 I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. 17 For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.

Abstention can be a conditioning of the flesh while being repentant is fruit of a renewing of the mind. One is about remaining in bondage to (a) sin while physically forcing oneself from pursuing (a) sin. The other is separating from or being freed from the bondage of (a) sin. This is why I raise this issue, when has one's abstention (acts of abstaining) hindered what the Holy Spirit desires to work in (change) the life of anyone who has faithfully accepted Christ Jesus, as their personal Savior?

Romans 12 1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

When has "your" work of abstention become a "conforming to this world," that has prevented any transforming work of the Holy Spirit? Contextually, the Word of God teaches freedom from (a) sin = (a) sin no longer has power over you. But Ken, the Word of God also states:

1 Thessalonians 5:22 Abstain from every form of evil.

Yes, the Word relays abstention from evil very clearly, I said that on the surface, I agree that brethren are to abstain from sin. It is the how or why one abstains that is the real meaning concerning what is "under" the surface. The true meaning of the "change" that the Word of God will bring into the life of one who is bound to (a) sin. Look at it this way, when one "only" abstains from (a) sin, have they been "changed" by being freed from (a) sin?

In viewing the 1 Thessalonians 5:22 verse, abstinence is the fruit that is produced after the renewing of the mind, as one has been freed of (a) sin. They understand that (a) sin has no power over them. Some commentary illuminates that one is to stand "aloof or on" evil. Trample the evil, under foot (are free from). To simply abstain from sin, is to not place the sin under one's foot. It means to keep oneself shackled to (a) sin while doing all one can to not succumb to (a) sin which they believe (no renewing of the mind), still has power over their own flesh.

It (sin) does NOT!

In a very short conclusion, think about that. Forcing oneself to not succumb to (a) sin that has dominated their own flesh but yet, HAS NO power anymore. Compare that to renewing of the mind and the power of (a) sin is "removed" by the power of the Holy Spirit as one is liberated and then, stand on (a) sin so you do not do it (to abstain).

Weekly Ministry Schedule

Sunday:

Youth Group - 6:00pm in the Sanctuary

Tuesday:

Adult Bible Study - 12:30pm in the fellowship hall
Breaking The Chains Biblical Recovery Ministry - 6:30pm
in the fellowship hall

Wednesday:

Walking Group - 9:00am and 6:00pm under the carport

Thursday:

Young Adult Bible Study - 6:00pm on Zoom.
Men's Bible Study - 7:00pm at the home of Sunny Mitchell.

Upcoming Ministry Fellowship

Men's Ministry Outing: On Tuesday, September 14th the men plan to attend a Mets baseball game. The cost to attend is \$15 which includes the ticket and gas. The deadline to purchase your ticket is August 29th. For more information or to purchase your ticket, please contact J.D. Flack at 315-405-0330.

Women's Ministry - The next gathering for The Circle will be held Saturday, August 21st at 10:00am.

Breaking The Chains News

As of June, Breaking The Chains was blessed to open up a second meeting place on Thursdays at 6:30pm at the following location:

The Father's House Prayer Chapel
31600 County Route 143
Black River, N.Y.

If you miss one meeting, you have the option of attending another! At this time, our Black River location is on zoom. If you would like the information to join us on zoom, please call or text us at 315-408-1354 or email us at btcbrm@yahoo.com.

Just a heads up for our Tuesday night members, there will be no BTC meeting Tuesday, September 14th. However, you are welcomed to check out a BTC meeting at our Black River location.

Special Called Business Meeting

There will be a short meeting to discuss and vote on a budget item on August 22nd immediately following service.

Ministry Opportunity

Would you like to be involved in a ministry to those who are unable to attend church? We are looking for those who would like to encourage shut-ins through cards, notes and prayer.

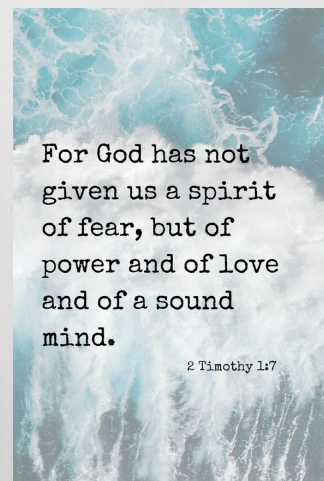
If you are interested in participating in this ministry, please fill out the form in this Sunday's bulletin or contact the church office at 315-686-3194.

Upcoming Event For August

Ice Cream Social & Rain Gutter Regatta
Sunday, August 22nd @ 6:00pm

Come join us for our Ice Cream Social and Rain Gutter Regatta and bring a friend! There will be different toppings to choose from for your ice cream from hot fudge to strawberry to sprinkles and crushed oreos!

As for the Rain Gutter Regatta, there will be different age categories for adult and children. Checkout last Sunday's bulletin for the details on making a boat to bring or stop by our Facebook site to see the bulletin online.



Were You Able To Guess Who The Elders Were Last Month???

Last month we enclosed some darn cute baby pictures of our elders, but I heard it was kind of tough to figure out who was who! Lets see if how many you got right (or wrong!):



Dean Wilkie



Nancy Augliano



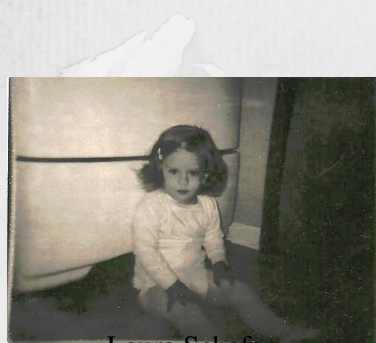
Pastor Sarah Flack



Wanda Collins



Barb Dier



Laura Schafer



Tom Augliano



Bud Dier



*Happy Birthday to those celebrating their
Birthday in August!*

08/06 Nancy Augliano
08/14 Noah Flack
08/14 Larry Weigand
08/28 Calub Cavanaugh

Welcome to RCC Newest Traveling Family!

Pastor Sarah happily shares this photo of just one of a pack of racoons that had wandered across the front lawn of the church recently. Not sure what this one was looking for but he may have been their scout.

