

## Serving This Week:

### Sunday Morning

**Announcements:** Howell Todd  
**Song Leader:** Kyle Richardson  
**Opening Prayer:** Howell Todd  
**Lord's Supper**  
**Presiding:** Ken Grandstaff  
**Serving:** Eric Horne  
Kyle Richardson  
**Preaching:** Howell Todd  
**Closing Prayer:** Ken Grandstaff

### Sunday Evening

**Opening Prayer:** Ken Grandstaff  
**Preaching:** Howell Todd  
**Closing Prayer:** Kyle Richardson

### Wednesday Evening

**Opening Prayer:** Kyle Richardson  
**Devotional:** Howell Todd  
**Closing Prayer:** Ken Grandstaff

### Serving Next Sunday:

**Lord's Supper:** Howell Todd  
**Preaching:** Brian Horner  
**Opening Prayer:** Ken Grandstaff  
**Closing Prayer:** Howell Todd

**To all our visitors - Welcome!**  
**We hope you will come back**  
**and worship with us soon!**

## TEAM MEETINGS

**Correspondence** - Sunday evenings after worship see Kyle Richardson.  
**Visitation/Bible Study** - For assignments see Brian Horner.  
**Member Care** - Regarding Member needs contact Kyle Richardson.  
**Flower Request** - Please call Lynda Ann Sparkman: 444.0938(h) 587.8187(c)

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## Pantry:

Please let Howell know of anyone in our community who needs help!

## God's Plan of Salvation

**Hear** the Word  
(Rom 10:17)

**Believe** in Jesus  
(John 8:24)

**Repent** of your sins  
(Luke 13:3)

**Confess** faith in Christ  
(Rom 10:10)

Be **Baptized** for forgiveness of sins  
(Acts 2:38)

Live **Faithfully**  
(1 Cor. 15:58)

## Daily Bible Reading

Day	Scripture
<b>Sunday</b> ( <i>Epistles</i> )	Romans 11-12
<b>Monday</b> ( <i>The Law</i> )	Genesis 20-23
<b>Tuesday</b> ( <i>History</i> )	Judges 1-6
<b>Wednesday</b> ( <i>Psalms</i> )	Psalms 15-17
<b>Thursday</b> ( <i>Poetry</i> )	Job 11-12
<b>Friday</b> ( <i>Prophecy</i> )	Isaiah 29-33
<b>Saturday</b> ( <i>Gospels</i> )	Matthew 14-16

# Bethel church of Christ

2427 Sparta Pike, Lebanon TN 37090

<http://www.bethelcoc.net>

February 10, 2013

Sunday Bible Study: 10 AM  
Sunday Morning Worship: 11 AM

Sunday Evening Worship: 6 PM  
Wed Bible Study: 7 PM

## Optimism is the Christian's Attitude

I don't suppose that anyone would characterize me as a "change agent," but I would be mistaken if I did not acknowledge that our world is changing. The morality of the world is changing; the politics of the world is changing, and many in the church are compromising with the world so as to change the church. It seems that these days the more a faithful Christian tries to put his feet down, the more the rug is pulled out from under him. All of the efforts being made to oppose righteousness and truth would seem to discourage the faithful Christian. However, the world does not understand that the Christian is the eternal optimist, and that regardless how much he is opposed, he will always press forward.

Merriam-Webster's Dictionary defines the word "optimism" as follows: "an inclination to put the most favorable construction upon actions and events or to anticipate the best possible outcome." I think I would refine that definition somewhat and add at the end of it, "without being naïve." The optimist knows that there are real challenges facing him. He understands that problems and difficulties await him in this life. He realizes that some will oppose his efforts for unscrupulous or irrational reasons, but he presses forward regardless with the aim of obtaining the best possible outcome. I believe that Christians are optimists, and not without scriptural evidence for that belief.

Christians are optimists because they know that God can take bad situations and make good things happen. The apostle Paul wrote in **Romans 8:28**, "*And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*" Joseph's brothers tossed him into a pit intending to kill him, but God used it to prevent his family from starving. He said to his brothers, "*You thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good*" (**Gen. 50:20**). Pharaoh decreed that baby Moses be drowned, but God saved him to lead his people out of bondage. Jews and Gentiles crucified Jesus on the cross, but Jesus was able to bring many sons to glory (**Heb. 2:10**). Paul said of his thorn in the flesh, "*Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake:*

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for when I am weak, then am I strong." Christians are optimists because, while they recognize bad situations for what they are, they know God uses them for the best.

Christians are optimists because they know they have a relationship with God that nothing in this world can destroy. Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." When we hear and follow the voice of Jesus, no one can separate the Christian from God. Paul reaffirmed this same sentiment in **Romans 8:38-39**: "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Christians are optimists because they have the great encouragement to know that God will never abandon his faithful child.

Christians are optimists because they know that the world, with all its charms and vainglory, is passing away. The apostle John wrote, "And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (**1 John 2:17**). Peter, quoting Isaiah, wrote, "For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you" (**1 Pet. 1:24-25**). God's word and those who do God's word have God's guarantee that they will last, regardless the faddish vacillations of the world. Christians are optimists because they have God's enduring word and promise on which to rely.

Christians are optimists because they know who will win in the end. After all is said and done, and this world is no more, God and His people will remain forever in eternal fellowship, victorious over the transient affairs of this life. The apostle John wrote, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure" (**1 John 3:2-3**). In **Revelation 3:21**, Jesus said, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." The Christian is an optimist because he knows that victory awaits the faithful.

As we enter the year 2013, we, as Christians, have many challenges ahead of us. How will we face those challenges? May we as God's people be ever mindful of the reasons we have for eternal optimism, and may we ever draw strength from God and His word to live faithfully for Him.

Kevin Cauley - churchofchristarticles.com

## My Happiness

My happiness lies in sharing  
All that I possess,  
That it may bring to to others  
A bit of happiness.  
My happiness lies in caring  
For someone who needs  
The hope that I may give them  
In love, and words, and deeds.  
My happiness lies in knowing  
That when my day is done,  
I have sought to help someone find  
Their place in the sun.

Author Unknown  
Via church of Christ  
Scottsboro, AL

## If Our Children

- Never see us go to Bible study, why should they?
- Never hear us pray, they will never learn how themselves.
- Hear bickering or cursing at home, they will do the same when they are grown.
- Never see us read the Bible, they won't appreciate its contents either.
- Hear us complain about the preacher, they will do the same.

Why do we think it is OK for us to do these "adult" things and then wonder why our children ignore the Lord or go astray? If you don't think "little eyes" and "little ears" are open to what they see and hear, just watch what they do and say from day to day. They follow in our footsteps.

John K. Wills  
Owingsville, KY

## Remember in Prayer

### Shut Ins:

Fannie Bell Warren  
Janelle Arrington  
William Wells

### Others:

Hollis Cluck  
Muril Todd  
Karen Hudson - cancer  
Christy Garrett  
The Bryan Family  
Annie and JW Smith  
Margie Taylor  
Priscilla and Patrick Graves  
Jessica Richardson  
Dan Smith  
Diane Grandstaff and family  
Joe Allen  
Linda Kay Edwards - surgery recovery  
Edna Forbes  
Janice Garrett  
Carol Goins - Mary L.'s sister  
Lila Kirk  
Wanda Gates - cancer  
Kathy Greer  
Jeff Greenblatt - auto accident  
Please call to inform us of News items or Prayer Requests: Kyle Richardson (495-7106) Dorothy Jean Smith (444-5437)

## February Birthdays:

21 - Edna Forbes  
24 - Delores Wright

"I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship."

Romans 12:1