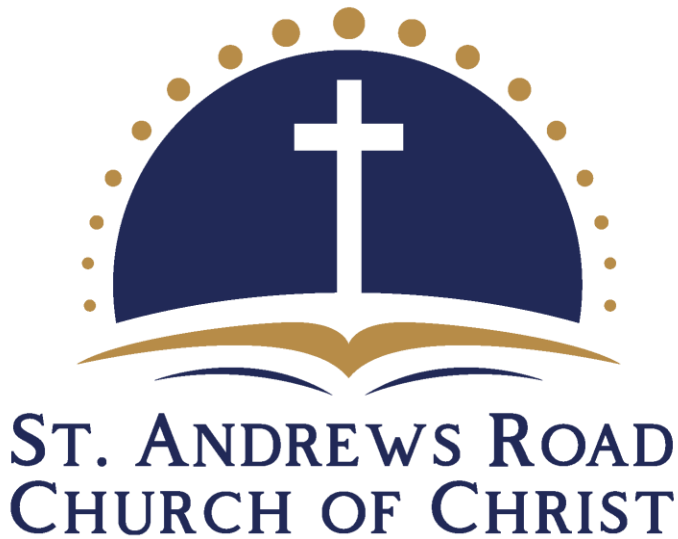


January 29, 2023

Volume 57 Issue 5



Worship Services & Bible Study

SUNDAYS	10:00 AM	Bible Class
SUNDAYS	11:00 AM	Worship
SUNDAYS	6:00 PM	Worship
WEDNESDAYS	7:00 PM	Bible Study

425 Saint Andrews Rd / Columbia, SC, 29210
803-772-0102

YouTube: Church of Christ St Andrews Rd

Whatever Happened to Sunday Nights?

It used to be if October 31st fell on a Sunday, that the community would automatically have "trick or treating" on the preceding Saturday night. There were no complaints from anyone that I recall, for a lot of people went to church on Sunday nights or had respect for those who did. Sadly, times have changed. In 2021, the neighborhood in which I lived, as well as many others, celebrated Halloween on Sunday night. Now I loved trick or treating as a child, and I love seeing my children get excited about it today. But our communities have gone down a dark path by teaching children that candy is more important than the Bread of life.

But it is not just the world that has lost its reverence for Sunday nights. Most if not all congregations that I'm familiar with have fewer members that attend on Sunday nights than on Sunday mornings. An informal survey done by The Jenkins Institute in January of 2022 showed that about 30% of churches of Christ have no Sunday night service. The survey also revealed that only 30% of congregations have more than half of their Sunday morning attendance return for Sunday night, while about 40% of congregations have less than half return for Sunday night service (<https://www.thejenkinsinstitute.com/research/2022/1/sunday-night-return?rq=attendance>). These numbers confirm what most of us already know.

It is understandable that some cannot make it back on Sunday nights, such as those who cannot drive well at night, or who may have some condition which reduces the amount of activity they can do in a day. However, I believe most folks just choose to do something else, and justify it by stating that there is no Bible verse which says one must come back on Sunday nights. I disagree. There is Scriptural authority to return on Sunday nights, for **Hebrews 10:25a** says, **not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together**. Some read that passage and think of "assembly," and as long as they were at the assembly on Sunday mornings, then they have complied. But the word is not assembly, but "assembling." That means whenever there is an assembling of the church, we should not forsake it. There is an assembling here on Sunday mornings, Sunday nights, and Wednesday nights under the direction and oversight of our elders, and we are to submit to their authority (Hebrews 13:17).

In exploring the context of this passage a little more, we read that the writer of Hebrews greatly encourages us to #1) **hold fast [to] the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful**, and to #2) **consider one another in order to stir up love and good works (Hebrews 10:23-24, NKJV)**. How do you think we can carry out God's will in these two things? Well, we're not left to come up with the solution on our own, for the inspired writer of Hebrews tells us how to do God's will. First, by **not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some (v. 25a)**. There is the possibility that Christians can "waver" (v. 23), as the very next verses state: **For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries (vv. 26-27)**. Our assembling focuses on "the knowledge of the truth," so that we may be motivated to "hold fast to the confession of our hope." Secondly, by **exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching (v. 25b)**. There is the possibility that apathy can replace "love" and "good works." This can be prevented by assembling with God's people in order to "exhort one another."

Since there is an assembling here on Sunday nights, it is God's will that we all be in attendance.

Brotherly,
Jamie

KEEP THY HEART

Proverbs 4:23

A JOT FROM JOHN

The necessity of keeping the heart: “*Out of it are the issues of life.*” The heart is the inner man, the seat of the desires, the affections, the purposes. It is the source of our outward life the fountain from which the stream of conduct flows, the soil out of which our good or evil deeds spring. If the fountain is polluted the whole stream is polluted. As it is always important to attempt to discover the source of any epidemic (etc. Covid), it is vital to discover the deadly moral and spiritual results by allowing the heart to become polluted. If sins enter there, the whole stream of life is polluted. “Sow a thought,” says someone, “and you reap an act; sow an act, and you reap a habit; sow a habit, and you reap a character; sow a character, and you reap a destiny.” It is in the heart that thoughts are sown. Keep, therefore, thy heart. Watch over your thoughts, your desires, your affections, and guard against everything that suggests evil thoughts, that stirs up evil desires and affections. ***“Watch and pray, that you enter not into temptation.” (Matt. 26:41)***

The importance of keeping the heart: Yes, that appears from what has already been said; but it is impressed upon us in our text by the words ***“with all diligence,”*** which are literally, “above all which thou guardest.” They mean that of all the parts of our nature that need to be kept the heart is the most important. In the context the wise man speaks of giving heed to the mouth, to the eyes, to the feet. But, he says, above all that thou guardest, keep thy heart. We are all alive to the importance of taking care of our health, our property, our reputation, our character. But none of these are to be compared in importance with the heart.

The only effectual way of keeping the heart: With all our watchfulness we cannot keep the heart as it ought to be kept. We must give it to Another to keep. ***“Son, give Me thine heart.” (Prov. 23:26). “The grace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall guard (keep) your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus.” (Phil. 4:7).*** Therefore, we must give our hearts to God!

Onward Rejoicing,
John B. Daniels, Associate Minister

Senior Bible Study

February 14
10:00 AM

Men's & Preachers Mtg

February 21
10:00 AM

Bible Bowl Practices

Today, January 29

3:00 PM

Upcoming Dates

Feb 1 ~ 7 PM, Fellowship Hall

Feb 5 ~ 2:00 PM

Feb 8 ~ 7 PM, Fellowship Hall

Feb 11 ~ 10AM – 12PM

Feb 12 ~ Lunch, 12:15-5:30 PM

Feb 15 ~ 7 PM, Fellowship Hall

BIBLE BOWL SUPPLIES NEEDED

For lunches, we need canned sodas, bottled water, individual wrapped chips, and Debbie Cakes.

If you can help, please place these items in the kitchen by February 12.

Double the Valentine Fun for 5 grade & under

February 5 ~ 12:15 – 2 PM

Lunch & Cookie Decorating
Service Project



February 10 ~ 6 – 9 PM

Kid's Night Out

Games – Crafts – Project - Singing

Leadership Day for February
has been cancelled and will
resume on March 12.