

Those to Serve

Sunday, March 22, 2020 (AM & PM)

Announcements: Matt Holman

Song Leader: Justin Turney

Scripture: Walt Holman/Chris Young

Prayer: Scott Griffith/Morgan West

Speaker: Derrick Coble

Dismiss: Ray Shafer/Tony Tindle

NHC Worship Service

(March 22, 2020)

Group 4 – Bo Young

Song Leader: Cancelled

Prayers: Cancelled

Speaker: Cancelled

Communion: Cancelled

Wednesday (March 25, 2020)

Announcements: Matt Holman

Song Leader: Justin Turney

Scripture: Richard Griffin

Prayer: Chris Young

Invitation: Clint Cannon

Dismiss: Bill Burns

Bus Driver: Bo Young

If you cannot serve, please call or text Gary Dodson at 510-8078

Contact Us

Elders

Bill Burns - 738-9737

Ray Shafer - 761-5290

Jeff Turner - 738-8678

Preacher

Derrick Coble - 837-2298

wscoc@blomand.net

Church Office

Monday - Thursday (9:00-3:00)

836-3790 or 836-8194

westspartaoffice@blomand.net

Online

westspartacoc.org

simple-faith.net

Worship Times

Sunday

Bible Classes: 9:00 am

Worship: 10:00 am and 6:00 pm (2nd & 5th Sunday afternoon worship at 1:15pm)

Wednesday

Bible Classes for all ages: 7:00 pm

West Sparta Messenger

westspartacoc.org

Christians and Lethal Force

Much has been said in recent days about the “church shooting” in Texas on Sunday, 12/29/19—the right and wrong of it. The initial shooter was clearly wrong. He was evil incarnate, whose history of bad choices ended in a final bad choice to take innocent human life. God’s judicial standard played out in textbook fashion: “Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in His own image” (Gen. 9:6). Which raises the question, “Is lethal force ever justified?” We are not addressing the war question or whether a Christian can be a cop. Most Christians, I assume, would not object to such, based on Rom. 13 and the role of civil government. But what about individual Christians? Is it ever right for a Christian to take the life of another human being?

If killing is motivated by personal hatred, anger, jealousy, or revenge, the answer is clearly ‘no’, for those passions are themselves sinful, and any behavior flowing from them would be sinful as well (Matt.15:18-19; Gal. 5:19-21, etc). But note carefully God’s reason for justifying the use of deadly force in Genesis 9: “for God made man in His own image.” The reason a murderer deserved to die was not because his life had no value, but because the life of his innocent victim did. That principle carried forward to the Mosaic age. Though the sixth command said “Thou shalt not kill” (Ex.20:13), other laws justified the use of lethal force, both judicially (21:14) and individually (22:2). The unspoken reason for such provisions was clear: the life of the innocent victim, created in the image of God, had value.

The same principle is true today. We, too, are created in the image of God with great worth. No wonder that God, in the New Testament age, retained capital punishment as a just response to evil (Rom.13:4; Acts 25:11). But what about Christians? Although Jesus condemned the use of armed force to further the kingdom (Matt.26:51-54; John 18:36), He actually commanded the apostles to arm themselves (Luke 22:35-39). Those swords were not used to defend against persecution (Acts 12:1-3). So, what purpose did they serve? They would have certainly deterred evil threats against their lives in their numerous evangelistic journeys. Some push back, “Turn the other cheek”(Matt.5:39). But this was spoken concerning vengeance (vs.38); and protecting innocent life is not taking vengeance. Others say, “Love your neighbor” (Matt. 22:39). To which we reply, “Exactly!” Is it “loving” for a man to allow an intruder to kill his neighbor, rape his wife, and sell his daughter into slavery? Pity the poor family whose head interprets love this way. First Timothy 5: 8 is not just about food.

Lethal force does not negate trust in God. David trusted God even as he picked up the stones for his sling. The Psalmist wrote, “Rescue the weak and needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked” (Psa. 82:4). So, let’s do that! ~**Warren King**

Remember In Prayer

- **Judy Null** is scheduled to have back surgery, Friday, March 20, at St. Thomas Hospital in Nashville.
- **Mike Moore** (Virginia Moore's son), is in serious condition at home. He has been diagnosed with terminal cancer in numerous areas of his body.
- **Angie White** has the flu.
- Please remember all the tornado victims in your prayers.

Please keep these in your prayers.

Shut In

Lenard Broyles
Sarah Eller
Melavie Heath (NHC Cookeville)
Alton & LouVernia Lowery
Ruth Phifer
Faye Smith

Life Care

Edward Baker (407B)
Carol Baker (205)
Margaret Cunningham (528A)
Bobby Haile (216)
Marie Seibers (201A)

NHC

Ernestine Holman (226B)

Churchwide Calendar

W.C.C.T.S. has been cancelled for the rest of the month of March. We will resume in November.

Youth Devo (March 22): The youth devo is cancelled due to the coronavirus. Please see Matt Holman.

New Bible Class Quarter (April 5): The Spring Bible Class Quarter is scheduled to start Sunday, April 5th. This will be postponed until services are back to their normal schedule.

Special Contribution on Sunday, March 22: We will have a special contribution on Sunday, March 22, to aid the Christian families in Cookeville who were affected by the tornado. Some entire families were killed, many lost their children, parents, homes and all their possessions. All monies collected will be sent to different congregations of the Lord's church to help their members. Plan ahead to see how you can help. We will let you know how much money was collected in next weeks bulletin.

News and Notes

BITS: NHC & Life Care have requested that no visitors come to the facility for the time being. So, if you have visits to make at NHC or Life Care—you just need to send a card, until further notice. We don't want to take any germs into these facilities that might compromise the health of the residents. The progress for each team is recorded on the board outside the fellowship hall. This no visitor policy has come from their main office for all facilities.

Health Concerns: There is so much sickness going around! Let's use the hand sanitizer in the foyer and outside the fellowship hall often. Also, let's try doing elbow bumps instead of hugs and shaking hands. Maybe we can help each other stay healthy this spring!

Question & Answer Night (March 29) Service at 1:15pm: Our monthly Q & A night is the last Sunday night of the month (which is also the 5th Sunday!). Our worship time will be at 1:15 for Q & A and is geared toward answering questions from the youth. So, parents and teachers, please help your children write down their questions for Derrick to answer. This all depends on what decision the elders make regarding services. We may not be meeting at the building for evening services—more information to follow.

Cumberland Caverns Singing that was planned for Friday, April 3rd, has been cancelled. The Crossville church of Christ said it will be rescheduled at a later date.

2020 Commitment Sheets: The 2020 commitment sheets are in your mailboxes. The elders are asking that one form per Christian in your family (front and back) be completed and returned to the office by March 31, 2020. We know some of you have recently completed a commitment sheet, but there are new items on this updated form. Please complete another one, anyway. This way, we will have an up to date record for every person and make assignments accordingly. We appreciate your cooperation.