

Vancleave Church of Christ Weekly Newsletter

Dedicated to spiritual encouragement and local Christian ministry

December 26, 2021

Scripture Reading: Acts 3:19-21

Re-Dedication *Duane Patton*

According to those who've studied it well enough, the period between the writings of Malachi and Matthew covers about four hundred years, the Old Testament Scriptures closing around 397 B.C. This period is sometimes referred to as the "dark period" of Israel's pre-Christian times. This is because during this time there appeared neither a prophet nor an inspired writer. The sad refrain of **Psalms 74:9** seems to indicate as much, "We see not our signs: There is no more any prophet; Neither is there among us any that knoweth how long." It was during these dark days of the Jews that a foreign king, Antiochus Epiphanes (175-163), terrorized the Jews and their ancient faith. As Baxter relates on page 17 in his work *Explore the Book*,

Jerusalem was plundered, the wall torn down, the temple coarsely desecrated, and the population subjected to monstrous cruelties. Thousands were massacred. The women and children were sold into slavery. The temple sacrifices were abolished. The Holy of Holies was rifled and its costly furniture carried away. Jewish religion was banned...a commissioner was appointed to pollute both the temple at Jerusalem and that at Samaria, and to rededicate them, respectively, to Jupiter Olympus and Jupiter Xenius...In 168 B.C. Antiochus caused a sow to be offered on the altar of sacrifice, and then, on the very altar, had a stature erected to Jupiter Olympus."

Three years later, Judas Maccabeus, Jewish military leader of a highly notable resistance movement, captured Jerusalem and refurnished the temple. Then, on December 25th (on the very anniversary of its profanation by Antiochus), orthodox sacrifices were reinstated in what later came to be known as the "Festival of Lights" (viz. **John 10:22**), or "Hanukkah" (fr. Heb. "to dedicate"). Orthodox Jews still observe this special time when the second temple was cleansed from idolatry, the lighting of candles over several days being associated with the event. While Christians are not obligated to celebrate the Jewish-born ritual of Hanukkah, it is interesting to note that Jesus, the "light of the world," is the embodiment of God's *enduring* temple. As Christians, let's re-dedicate that temple this year and always by reflecting His light in our daily lives (**Matthew 5:14-16**)!

For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (Ephesians 5:8)

Seeking first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness...

Services:

Sunday

9:00 AM Bible Class

10:00 AM Worship

6:00 PM Worship

Wednesday:

6:00 PM

Prayer & Bible Study

Local Works of Faith:

Sunnybrook Children's Home

Gulf Coast Bible Camp

Local Food Pantry

Annual Youth Events

Back-Pack Buddies

The Gospel of Christ TV (Fox 25)

(Every Sunday at 6:30 AM)

Foreign Missions:

Guyana

India

Guam

Local Wi-Fi Network Access:

SSID: 2Wire029

Key: 3995723302

E-mail: vcocministry@vancleavechurch.org

Web Site: <https://www.vancleavechurch.org>

Subscribe to these on YouTube:

Vancleave Church of Christ Digital Ministries

The Mississippi Gospel Minute



The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and His ears are open unto their cry. ~ Psalms 34:15

Recent Prayer Requests:

- **Linda Kenney:** Still having some physical pain and troubles. Let's be ever mindful of Linda.
- **Joan Martin** (mother of Wanda Shaw): Passed away recently. Our prayers are helpful.
- **Harvey Goldensup:** Again taken to the hospital. No details, but prayers have been requested.
- **Mary Alice Kenney:** Has been diagnosed as having terminal cancer. She welcomes our prayer.
- **Jeffrey Richardson:** To have surgery on December 29th for blood clot issues. Please pray.
- **David Hines:** Some improvement is shown, still battling serious blood issues.
- **Others:** _____

Please Continue to Remember These in Prayer

Tonya Organ	Joe Dorris Box	Mike Kenney	Frank Sentelle
Jack Hayes	Roy Corbin	Mary McDaniel	Amy Stevens
Mary Culbreth	Mark Damron	Paul Langham	Maxine Robinson

Have requests or other announcements? Send email to vcocministry@vanleavemchurch.org

Announcements: We are very pleased to announce our new work together with Wade and Joanna Phillips. They will be traveling to Guam soon to begin their ministry. Their work is sponsored by the **North Brandon church of Christ, P.O. Box 251 Brandon, MS 39043**. Thank the Lord for willing workers in the kingdom and those who support them!

WEEKLY WORD OF ENCOURAGEMENT: If you feel like all is lost, and that good things are about to end – think again... “Through the Lord’s mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. “The Lord is my portion,” says my soul, “Therefore I hope in Him!

Daily Bible Reading Plan for 2021, Week 49

MONDAY 2 Corinthians 1-4

In what ways might you personally apply the lessons on forgiveness found in 2:5-11?

TUESDAY 2 Corinthians 5-9

What can Paul’s exhortation on financial giving teach us today about sharing our blessings with others?

WEDNESDAY 2 Corinthians 10-13

In Paul’s farewell comments, we learn about single-mindedness and peace. How do we measure up?

THURSDAY Acts 20:1-3; Romans 1-3

Paul emphasizes faith in Christ as God’s saving grace. How does this impact your daily, spiritual life?

FRIDAY Romans 4-7

In Romans 6:15-23, Paul refers to “slaves unto righteousness.” Reflect on the meaning of this.

SATURDAY Romans 8-10

Think for a while today about what it means to be led by God’s Spirit.

SUNDAY Romans 11-13

Give some thought about love in relation to 12:9-21

“...they received the word with all readiness of mind...” (Acts 17:11)