

December 29, 2024

The View

“Sirs, we wish to see Jesus.” – John 12:21

Welcome Visitors

Our goal at the Folsom church of Christ is to do everything according to God’s word, including respecting its silence. We are not a denomination, not part of anything larger than this local church; we have no earthly “headquarters.” The five elders oversee this church and, ultimately, we answer only to Christ. The comments you hear today are primarily for the benefit of our own members, as we examine Scripture and seek to be built up in our faith in Christ. If you don’t understand something, please do not hesitate to ask the preacher or one of the elders. We welcome and appreciate your comments and questions on any issue and especially if you see or hear anything that you feel does not correspond to God’s word. We are here to serve; please help us do that.

We do not solicit donations from visitors. Please fill out a visitor’s card and put it in the collection plate when it is passed. See page 4 for more information.

Schedule

The Lord’s Day

9:30 AM Bible Classes

Auditorium: Ecclesiastes

Young Adult Class (room 12): “Acts, Sharing Our Faith”

Room 13/14: “Relationships”

10:30 AM: Assembly

Preaching Today: Scott Gardner

“Are We There Yet?”

James 4:13-17

Livestream at 9:30 & 10:30 <https://tinyurl.com/5f2cbm3y>

Sunday Afternoon and Evening Bible Classes @ the Building

1:30 PM, Genesis (see Grant Mulligan)

5 PM, Praying the Psalms (Auditorium)

Additional Classes

High School Class, 5 PM on Sundays @ David & Christie Posey’s home

Young people monthly meeting (middle school): contact David Sanderson

(david.r.sanderson@intel.com) or Seth Reagan (sethreagan@gmail.com)

There are several on-going Bible classes in the homes of members.

Check with David Posey, Len Baker or one of the elders.

2nd Saturday Men’s Bible Study: 7 to 8 AM

Bel Air Market on Bidwell in Folsom. “Iron sharpens iron” (Proverbs 27:17). Mentoring (Titus 2:1-6).

Wednesday 7 PM @ Building

Same classes as Sunday, 9:30 AM

Articles published in the View reflect only the thoughts and opinions of the author alone, not necessarily the editor, the elders or any member of the church at Folsom.

Progress, goals & a reason for caution

BY DAVID POSEY

I was sitting at my desk looking over some numbers and ran across some congregational statistics from 2011. Back then, we had 264 adult members and 108 young people from newborns to high school, a total of 382 in the directory. From 2011 to 2019, we hovered around that same number, although the number of our baptized members grew. Many of those new Christians were children of our members. We celebrate those conversions, unlike some places where you'll hear people say, "we had five baptisms but they were just children of members." **Just!??** Anyway, the number of converted members grew steadily until late 2019. That's when the Covid pandemic hit and several of our families decided to move to other states for various reasons (and, for the record, we respect that decision and feel no ill will toward anyone who moved away from us; we miss them). Counting adults and children, we lost 119 people in that year or two. With baptisms and move-ins, our numbers are not back up to the level we had previously but we are right at 300 directory entries at the present time.

Given the growth of the city of Folsom (projected to be 93,000 by 2028), one of our main goals in 2025 is to make sure that people who live here and are moving into the area know that there is a conservative, Bible-focused, Christ-exalting church for them to attend — or at least check out. We'll start by improving our website to make it more visitor friendly. We'll keep you posted on that.

Meanwhile, the elders know that we have a strong body of Christians meeting here. There is so much talent and potential and one of our main responsibilities is to utilize the talent we have. Our *main* goal, though, is to fulfill the "marching orders" spelled out in Hebrews 13:17,

Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.

"Keeping watch over your souls..." is our first and most serious responsibility and I can assure you that the elders do not take that charge lightly. We will continue to be vigilant. We request that if you learn about something that is detracting from the work here that you speak privately to us about it. Trouble in churches is rarely a matter of some sudden change. It's more likely to occur from someone coming in and then surreptitiously stirring up division from within.

For certain people have crept in unnoticed who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

Jude 4

Our role is to guard against that kind of intrusion with all our strength. There are always a few "rogue" members of churches of Christ who have a "new idea" for how to make the church more "relevant," "interesting" or "exciting." Division takes different forms but often begins with people talking behind the elders' backs. There are men (and women) in

churches who think they have discovered some new idea that, apparently, has been lying dormant for 2,000 years and they start promoting that idea to the point where it leads to division in a local church.

One my fellow preacher-friends had a daughter who attended a church in a southern state and saw and

heard some unusual things and told her dad about it. So the preacher decided to talk directly to the preacher at that church who also happened to be an elder. Here's how it went:

I talked with the preacher/elder about some of their beliefs and practices and he repeatedly refused to tell me what he believes and teaches on whether or not instrumental music is unscriptural to use in worship... I also asked him about his view of how to establish scriptural authority and applying the New Testament pattern. He was vague and non-specific... he said that he was *beyond* using command, approved examples and necessary inferences (or similar terms) to define what is and is not scriptural.

Some of the young people in that church were reading and recommending "Blue Like Jazz" — a book written by Donald Miller, a marketing expert, not a preacher or a theologian. The book promotes a post-modern, relativistic view of Christianity. According to one reviewer, "the author rails on ordinary Christian folks who are so dull and unthinking as to attend a church in the suburbs." Miller takes pains to let us know that they're Christians, too, and therefore he has "no choice but to love them." But at the same time, Miller and his circle of highly "enlightened" friends clearly think that *all* white suburban churches are "dens of mediocrity."

Continued on page 3

Continued from page 2

That's pretty typical of the elitist attitude of some of the people I've met who attend churches of Christ. They sit in judgment of everything the church is doing or teaching. Instead of just leaving that church they think they have to impose their views on the church. In too many of those cases, the elders are caught completely off-guard (it's worse in churches that don't have elders).

There is no lack of false teaching in churches today. Years ago, a friend told me in a letter, after I questioned him about some things going on where he preaches, that he's not convinced that the examples we have in Scripture are authoritative. So, for example, he's not so sure we can't take the Lord's Supper on any day of the week and in any manner we want and he's not sure that instrumental music is wrong. Another preacher told me in a letter that believing in the authority of the apostles is an "raggedy old tradition" – yes, he used those exact words (see Matthew 18:18, Jesus speaking to his apostles, "whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven").

Another preacher told me in a letter that believing in the authority of the apostles is an "raggedy old tradition" – yes, he used those exact words.

Later, some preachers in the northwest decide that the Lord came back in AD 70 and said that is his second coming. One preacher opined that, since the second coming has already occurred, no Scripture in the Bible teaches about the future *after AD 70*. And, there's more – division over "MDR" and the disagreements about the qualifications of elders, women's roles in the church, etc., etc., etc.

Don't get me wrong; we should always be examining what we believe and what we do and why we do it. We should never grow complacent. For one thing, each generation needs to be taught about the authority of God as revealed in the Bible. There's a right way and a wrong way to do what we are told to do. Peter tells us "if any man speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God" (1 Peter 4:11).

We will continue to cover the basics here at Folsom as well as teach in a way that stretches our minds and, where appropriate, challenges our "status quo." But the Bible hasn't changed and we will always adhere to what the Bible says not what some elitist has decided it says or doesn't say.

Classes at the Building, starting January 5th

Classes for all ages of children and young people starting with toddlers through high school.

For the adults...

Auditorium, a study of "Joy" [see Scott Gardner]

Classroom #13/14 – "Transformed Relationships" from Romans 12-16. [David Posey & Ben Woodside]

Classroom #5-6 – "Getting to Know the Holy Spirit" [see Ed Sanderson, Sr.]

Classroom #12 – "Journeys with Jesus: small group discussions on the Master's teachings." [see Terry Raposa]

For *additional classes at the building on Sunday afternoon and evening*, see the front page of the View.

If you're interested in attending a *Sunday afternoon class in a home*, check with Len Baker or David Posey.