

THE BULLETIN

VBS WAS AWESOME!!



The Manchester church of Christ

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Elders' Link: August

Duane Coss 424-9152
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Barry Fogal 487-2387
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If you have any concerns that the elders should be aware of, or need to speak with them, please contact Duane or Barry this month.

Our Worship Services

Sunday AM: 8:30 & 11:00

Bible Class: 10:00

Sunday PM: 6:00

Small Groups:

West Side Small Group:

6:15PM at Doug Paul's house

Merrimack Small Group:

5:30PM, contact Stuart

Peacock

Wednesday PM Devotional/Bible Classes: 7:00

This weekend a lot of the congregation will be at Gander Brook for our annual retreat, and they will be worshipping at camp on Sunday. Linda and I will be there for Saturday, but we'll be traveling back to Manchester on Saturday evening, so that we can be around for worship services here. Now since some of us will be at Gander Brook and others of us in Manchester, we'll only have one service this Sunday. Our schedule of services will be: morning Bible classes at 10AM, our morning worship services at 11AM (no 8:30AM service),



and our 6PM services.

And by the way, Lord willing and the CD's arrive, this Sunday we'll begin our 6PM singing classes in preparation for Keith Lancaster and his Praise and Harmony Workshop in October. From now through the middle of October our small group meetings won't meet in favor of this program. Whether you are a "singer" or can't carry a tune in a bucket, you're strongly encouraged to come and learn some new songs, maybe learn a singing part for the first time, and enjoy the uplift and encouragement.

OUR FAMILY

NEWS TO USE

"So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household," Ephesians 2:19, NAS95

Coming up in August...

The congregational retreat is this coming weekend. It's not too late to sign up. Pick up a registration form in the foyer, fill it out and give it to Stuart Peacock tonight. There will be lots of fun and fellowship so please come!

What else?

The Labor Day cookout will be held at the Potter's home on Monday, September 6th. There is a sign-up sheet posted on the bulletin board in the foyer. Please sign up so the Potters know how many people will be attending and what food you will be bringing.

The GB Labor Day Encampment is Labor Day weekend from Friday through Monday. Here's an opportunity to visit and associated with other Christians from around New England. There's a poster in the foyer for more info.

The Manchester Teen Retreat is September 10-12 at Gander Brook. The cost is estimated to be about \$25 per teen (more specifics later). This is our annual kick-off of our youth program for the year. See Preston with any questions.

This and that...

Evaluation forms There is a box in the foyer labeled VBS evaluation. Please fill out an evaluation survey even if you did not participate in VBS this year. Your comments are much appreciated.

GB Retreats Registration forms for the Men's and Ladies retreats are available on the table in the foyer. They are also available online at www.ganderbrook.org/retreats.cfm

The Keith Lancaster singing workshop is coming in October, but we should be receiving CDs from him soon with

songs that he would like us to be learning. So, when they do come, we'll begin a Sunday evening class at 6pm-our usual small groups will be suspended for a few weeks, and we'll share a devotional / communion service and a singing class. It'll be great fun and uplifting. Stay tuned for a definite date.

Wednesday evening meals will begin again on September 22. Menu and sign-up sheet will be posted soon.

Food Drive The sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in the foyer still has several food items that are needed. Please take a look to see how you can help this important ministry.

Attention men The service schedule for July through September can be found on the bulletin board in the back of the auditorium.

Worship Leaders

8:30

Songs.....Brandon H.
Closing Prayer.....Doug P.
Scripture.....Mike M.
Lord's Supper.....Jim C.
Coordinator.....Doug P.

11:00

Songs.....Rick G.
Closing Prayer.....Rich T.
Scripture.....Gary D..
Lord's Supper.....Pete S.
Coordinator.....Pete S.

PM Songs.....Ken B.

Wed songs.....Stuart P.

Prayer Concerns

Health: Doreen Lee, Duane Coss, Barry Fogal, Peggy Mailloux, Pete Steffensen, Penny Ranger, Manley Jones

Leadership: Ministers, Elders, Deacons

Evangelism: Bible studies in progress, our website, MNFM, food pantry, Give Away Day contacts

Return to the Lord: Brethren who have forsaken the assembly

THE ATHLETIC CHRISTIAN, PART 1

PARK LINSOMB

One of the commonalities of the ancient world with the modern world is our passion for athletics. We are currently ramping up for what is hoped (among the Red Sox Nation) to be an exciting play-off season, while at the same time savoring the beginning of football season (college and/or pro, your choice). The ancients weren't so different; they had different games, of course, but they were just as passionate about them. Everyone knew the champions, the stars, and the heroes. Everyone followed and well understood the rigors and rules of the games. And that's why Paul's athletic metaphors of the Bible can and do speak to us vividly about our Christian walk. This is a first installment of a series on the Christian athlete, but I'll not be talking about the folks who point and look to the sky as they step on home plate or cross the goal line. I'll be taking Paul's athletic metaphors and trying to apply them practically to our discipleship.

Of course, every athlete needs to train and condition himself. You might remember Rosie Ruiz, who attempted to "win" the Boston Marathon by not running the whole marathon. Suspicions were raised early when interviewers noticed, among other things, that she couldn't seem to recall many things that most runners know by heart, such as intervals and splits — training and conditioning methods used by all modern marathon runners. When they realized she hadn't been training, they knew she couldn't have been the winner. She'd taken short cuts, and had hoped to wear the victor's wreath given to the Boston Marathon winner.

Every athletic endeavor demands laborious training and conditioning. Lucian of Samosata wrote, "Without hardship [the victor's crown] cannot be acquired. The man who

covets it must put up with much unpleasantness in the beginning before at last he can expect the profitable and delightful outcome of his exertions." Modern athletes aren't as wordy: "No pain, no gain." And so it is in the Christian life.

Paul, in Acts 24:16, told the Roman governor Felix that he had always done his "best to maintain always a blameless conscience both before God and before men." Acts 24:16, NAS95. The phrase "I also do my best" comes from a Greek word which strictly meant "to train as an athlete". Later, toward the end of his earthly life, Paul told young Timothy, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith;" 2 Timothy 4:7, NAS95. The first portion of this phrase, "fought the good fight" twice uses the verb and noun form of the Greek word "*agon*" from which we derive the English word "agony"; and it was used of athletic practice and competition. Then in v. 12 Paul tells Timothy to "make this your practice", as if to say "make sure you put your time in at the spiritual gym" — something he already alluded to in his earlier letter to Timothy, "... On the other hand, discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness; for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come." 1 Timothy 4:7, 8, NAS95.

So what's in that spiritual gym?

Bible reading — Here is the food of spiritual champions! Here are the necessary coaching tips! Here are the ace bandages and balms for aching spiritual muscles! You can't "eat right", you can't get the right game strategy or even the rules of the game, and you can't find the

relief for injury; if you don't spend time in the Scriptures.

Prayer time — Here is time with the Coach; an opportunity to talk about the problems you need to overcome to win. Here's a chance to ask for the gifts and the help and the comfort we need to win the victor's crown. And here's a Coach who can really help.

Worship Assembly — Every athlete needs strength from the team, even games that are one-on-one. We need peer encouragement, peer critique, and even a "pep rally" to "fight the good fight".

Work in the Kingdom — Here's the exercise portion of the gym; putting our talents and energies to work: serving, teaching, encouraging, helping, and giving. Here's where the blood starts pumping, the sweat starts pouring, the skills get sharpened and expanded, and even the spiritual endorphins start kicking in (don't you feel good, when you're actively doing good?). And this one is to be done even when it gets hard. It builds up the endurance to do what's right in the midst of trial.

It is this regimen that gets us to the end, finishing the course, keeping the faith. Make no mistake about the Christian life, it is a marathon not a sprint; and without the proper conditioning, without putting in our time at the spiritual gym, we'll fade on "Heartbreak Hill" or some other challenge that Satan will throw our way. There are no short cuts, and there will be no "Rosie Ruiz" claimants getting the victor's crown on the last day.

Our Congregational Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
22	23 Happy Anniversary: Dave & Cecilia Skerry	24	25 Bible class 7pm	26	27 Manchester Happy Birthday: Darlene Chamberlain	28 Family Retreat
29	30 Happy Birthday: Randall Chaffin	31 Happy Birthday: Ken Bell Glen Lauzon	1 Bible class 7pm Happy Birthday: Corey Roukey	2	3	4 Happy Birthday: Judy Perreault

Stats
 Sunday morning attendance.....No count
 Sunday morning contribution.....\$3562.60
 Weekly budget.....\$3710.00

Thought Food –
 Trust in the Lord and do good;
 dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture.
 Delight yourself in the Lord
 and He will give you the desires of your heart.
 Ps. 37:3,4

Teen Stuff
FUSE: Tuesday, Aug. 31 @ the church building. 6:30 – 8:00 PM. Bring \$3 per person to cover food.
Teen Retreat: Friday, Sept. 10 – Sunday, Sept. 12 @ Gander Brook Camp. This will be a special event for anyone in the youth group. Not only will there be food, games, and devotionals, but we will also establish the theme for this next year. It also marks the first event of seventh graders in the youth group. You do not want to miss it! Plan to leave Manchester about 4:30 PM on Friday and return early afternoon on Sunday. The weekend will cost \$25 primarily covering food expenses. Bring \$ for dinner on the road on Friday. More details will be coming soon.
Edgewood Youth Rally: Mark your calendars for the first youth rally of the school year in Mansfield, MA on Oct. 1-3. Parents, please consider chaperoning this event.

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