

THE BULLETIN

BLESSINGS FROM BEING EARLY

Growing up I was in “that family”. You know the one. The one by which you measure yourself. My family was the “late family”. If you pulled into the church parking lot and saw the brown '78 Toyota Celica or silver Cavalier station wagon, you knew you were late.

I think now about all the things our family missed out on by being late. There are many blessings to being on time and even early for worship services and Bible study.

- Being early gives time for fellowship. Spending time conversing and building up other Christians is a blessing (Heb. 10:24).

- Being early gives one time to prepare for worship. When we are late or even right on time, we feel rushed. By getting to worship early, there is time to relax and focus on studying God's Word.

- Being early is an encouragement to Bible teachers. They have spent a great deal of time preparing. When a child comes in late, teachers often restart the lesson. Precious time is lost. It is an interruption and distraction to the adult class, too.

- Arriving early sets a good example. We are early or on time for things that are important to us. Let's show our children and our church family that worship and Bible study are important.

Come whether you're running late to worship or Bible class anyway, but for your own sake shoot for early. There are blessings to gathered that will fill your spirit and make the reason you came in the first place so much better realized and enjoyed.



Craig Evans
adapted

The Manchester church of Christ

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Our Ministers:

Park Linscomb 540-0287
Mark Casella (501) 388-1687

Our Elders:

Barry Fogal 487-2387
Gerry Millette 497-3105
Mike Moser 429-9487

Our Deacons:

Tony Casella- Finance
Fred Hillhouse- Facilities
Doug Paul- Education
Stuart Peacock- Worship
Pete Steffensen- Facilities
David Skerry- Benevolence & Outreach

Regularly Scheduled Services

Sunday worship: 9:30am
Sunday Bible class: 11:00am
Sunday evening: 6:00pm
Wednesday Bible class: 7:00pm


THE DEVIL'S BOOTS
DON'T CREAK
(SCOTTISH PROVERB)



Our Family News

"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.

If you're a visitor to our church, welcome! If you have questions, we welcome them; please don't hesitate to ask Park Linscomb our minister (the really tall guy) or any other church member.

THIS AND THAT...

MARK IS PREACHING THIS

MORNING—We're looking forward to a great lesson from God's word this morning!

TODAY is our regular fellowship luncheon Sunday. If you had forgotten and didn't bring anything, please come and join in the fellowship and food anyway

DARLENE CHAMBERLAIN

broke her leg last Sunday evening as she mopped her floor. She had surgery on Thursday afternoon, and at this writing she is in Concord Hospital, room 6050. She is not certain how long she'll be kept in the hospital, but is very open to visitors.

RYAN MCKEY had some surgery at CMC, mid-week, but was released and is at home resting and recovering. Earlier there was some concern about a lengthy recovery time frame, because of his new job; however, recovery time is considerably shorter his job is secure. Praise God!

MOVING BOXES NEEDED. the Silva family will be selling their home for health reasons and need large cardboard boxes for packing. If you have some, bring them to church where

Tamara can collect them for use.

GANDER BROOK STUFF

- **Registration for camp** (online and paper) is now open. The online address is... ganderbrook.org/online-registration/
- If you'd like to help rebuild the director's cabin, the camp has a **webpage where you can contribute online** — ganderbrook.org/directors-cabin/. Otherwise, checks can be given to Park who'll forward them to GB's treasurer.

- **Gander Brook is going to be building a new dorm soon**, and likewise needs donations toward that project. Again checks can be given to Park to forward to camp's treasurer.

- **Work and Worship Week** will be held on June 27-July 1 this year. WWW is a wonderful week of family camping, a great way to contribute to Gander Brook, and features a great spiritual uplift each evening. This year's speaker is Arnie Holmes. Arnie was the preacher for the church in Manchester CT until his recent retirement.

WEDNESDAY DINNER: Roasted turkey, dressings, potatoes, green beans, salad, and dessert.



AREA EVENTS

- *Area Wide Hymn Sings*
 - May 1, in Springfield VT.
- *Ladies' Days*
 - May 7, in Fall River
 - May 14 Manchester CT.
- *A men's day*, May 21, at the Concord church; "Iron Sharpens Iron". Park Linscomb and David Rollert will be speakers.
- *Special Lectures*
 - The New England Lectureship, May 6-8, in Taunton MA. More info on the foyer bulletin board



PRAYER CORNER:

Good Works: Bible studies in progress, our website, MNFM, food pantry, Penny Ranger's evangelistic efforts online

Health: Tom Jones, Cy Stafford, Deb Dlutowski, Marge Simon, Lynn Millette, Penny's niece Chelsea, Mary Jane Parker, Dave Seguin, Natalie Cleavitt, David Lovering, Linda Tetrault and her brother Bob, John Matthew and Anni

Struggles: Randy Stevens, Jim Kenison, and finally, brethren who have forsaken the assembly.

Leadership: Ministers, Elders, Deacons, Teachers, Parents



A Word of Encouragement

"For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it." Hebrews 2:1, NAS95.

CERTAIN ABOUT HIS CALLING AND CHOOSING YOU—PERSEVERANCE

2 Peter 1:6 "and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness,"

One of the dangers of discipleship over over a span of years is that the disciple can—if he's not careful—become a little too comfortable with his or her level of maturity. Though we might never actually say that we're satisfied with "good enough", we might grow weary with putting out the sort of effort that Paul describes in Philippians 3:13, 14, "Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."

Why keep pressing on? Paul and other inspired writers of the New Testament knew that if we're not growing spiritually, we are likely to be getting weaker spiritually—and growing spiritually weaker could end in falling away and losing our soul. And this is exactly why Peter writes, "Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble" (2 Peter 1:10).

So, we've been talking about a series of virtues—found in 2 Peter 1:5ff—that Peter urges upon us, things in which we can grow and which will help to safeguard our souls. We looked at diligence, moral excellence, knowledge, and self-control. This time perseverance.

The Greek word for perseverance here is *hupomenè*. It's meaning is rooted in Spartan military tactics, describing a heroic volunteer who would stay behind in a retreat to protect his comrades to his dying breath. This heroic role, then, became the word for a courageous sort of patience—greater than ordinary patience or "long suffering". And it became the preferred word in the New Testament for Christian endurance. And here, Peter encourages us to obtain (v.8), practice (v.10), and increase (v.8) in it—along with the other virtues.

"OK, so, how do we obtain it?" Obtaining the virtue of perseverance begins with a real faith in the God who rescues. Quintessential examples of perseverance can be found in Daniel's friends Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, when they said, "If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire; and He will deliver us out of

your hand, O king. But even if He does not, let it be known to you, O king, that we are not going to serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up." (Daniel 3:17, 18). Listen to that faith! Such faith provides the confidence and strength that are at the core of Christian perseverance.

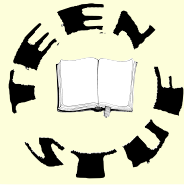
"But, how do we practice it?" That comes with recognizing the battle. Now, while we may not be required to face the same flames as S,M,&A, we do live in a world with plenty of opposition to God's way, plenty of opportunity to exercise a courageous "standing firm" (1 Cor. 16:13; Eph. 6:11-14; Php. 4:1; and others) **against** the wrong and standing up **for** what's right. The battles are engaged when someone entices you compromise your morals, when someone speaks against the Lord, when others argue *for* things that the Bible says are wrong, or when the temptation is strong to go along to get along. The world has tried to "train us" to just passively put up with the persecution, but the Lord calls us *hupomenè*. Recognize and use opportunities to be courageous for the Lord.

"But, how do we increase in it?" In the regular practice of *hupomenè* and getting practiced at standing firm in unashamed and courageous perseverance, we learn and we grow in it. The more you are trained in it, the better your responses will be to anti-Christian persecution and opposition, the greater your trust in the Lord will grow, the easier it will be to resist the forces in the world that seek to conform us to the world's ideas, morality, and way of thinking. Think of it like self-defense training—as you train and practice, the right "move" become more instinctual and perhaps leads to combinations of moves, leading to expertise, etc.

Why does perseverance matter in making our calling and election sure? Mere long suffering just hopes to hang on long enough. But perseverers are fortified with courage and defiance of the wrong. Such Christians do more than merely endure their beating; they courageously stand against the "world forces of this darkness" (Eph. 6:12), knowing in *Whom* they've believed and knowing *His* ability to give the victory, when they stand firm!

Park Linscomb





***Movie Night** Friday night from 7:30-9:30 at Mark and Anns house, bring a snack or drink and come hang out!

***Monday** April 25th from 1:30-3:30 we will be at Families in Transition! Meet at the building at 1:30 and we will go from there.

***Progressive dinner** will be April 30 from

5-9. Meet at the church building to start. Pick up will be at the Spence's house! The cost is 5 dollars to help cover the cost of food. Please let us know by the 24th if you can make it.

***We are thankful for each and every one of you! Keep on making time to be with your brothers and sisters during this busy time of year!**

Bible Reading Schedule for this Week		
Sunday	April 17	1 Corinth 7
Monday	April 18	Psalms 119
Tuesday	April 19	Psalms 119
Wednesday	April 20	Psalms 119
Thursday	April 21	1 Corinth 8-9
Friday	April 22	Psalm 120-121
Saturday	April 23	Psalm 122-123

Service Schedule for April 17 through April 20		
Call to Worship	Park Linscomb	
Song Leader	Doug Paul	Doug Paul
Scripture	Dave Skerry	
Lord's Supper	Fred Hillhouse	
Closing Prayer	Mark Casella	
Worship Tech	Barry Fogal	
Coordinator	Rich Therrien	
Devo		Fred Hillhouse

Our Congregational Calendar for April 17-30						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
17 Worship @ 9:30am Bible class @ 11am Bldg sm grp-- 6pm Third Sunday fellowship luncheon	18 Area preachers' meeting in Concord	19	20 6pm dinner 7pm Bible study	21	22 Teen movie night	23 Gander Brook board meeting in Kittery ME
24 Worship @ 9:30am Bible class @ 11am Bldg sm grp-- 6pm	25 Teens at Families in Transition	26	27 6pm dinner 7pm Bible study	28	29	30 Teen Progressive Dinner