

# PALM BETHEL NEWS

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October 2003

From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love Eph 4:16

## Church prepares for Fall meeting

**P**alm Bethel Primitive Baptist Church has initiated a Saturday workday. It is the Saturday before 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday. This time has been set aside to get the church and grounds in shape generally and in particular for the upcoming Fall meeting. The meeting dates are November 14th thru 16th.

Elder Steven Bloyd will be our guest preacher. Elder Bloyd is the Pastor of Mt. Carmel PB Church in Bel Air Maryland. He will be with us on the 14th and 15th but will return to his home church for their Sunday services. Communion service will be Saturday night.

Members of the church have been cleaning, painting, repairing, bleaching, scraping, cutting and polishing, to get everything just right for the meeting.

The sanctuary has been painted and the windows have been repaired. The floor of the dining area has been sealed and some drainage has been installed.

Elder Bryce Lowrance has been collecting suggestion lists (tasks to be done) and will be appointing people for various jobs that still need to be accomplished before the 14<sup>th</sup>.

The church is expecting a large turnout as we have experienced increased attendance in our weekly services and plan to spread the word far and wide in an attempt to fill the church and give Glory to God's name.

There are plans to go out and visit the surrounding community and invite them to our church as well as an invitation sign to be placed in front of the church.

Spread the word to family and friends to come and hear a God-gifted pastor and to glorify God's name at the Fall meeting.

## Brazilian Church group to use Church Building

**T**he members of the church in our October conference unanimously voted to allow a Brazilian group to use our church building on Sunday nights for their services. They hold their services in the native tongue of Brazil, Portugese.

The pastor Gentil Lira approached Elder Lowrance about using the church building. The two began to converse on religious issues and found there was much in common between their beliefs.

Mr. Lira and his family have attended our services on Sunday and Wednesday. Even though he is not proficient in English, his son, Wellington translates for him. They have joined us for our Sunday noon meal as well. They are a lovely group and we have greatly benefitted from their presence. There is now another avenue to glorify God's name. Mr. Lira has been a pastor for over 20 years in Brazil and has written many commentaries on the Bible in his native tongue.

Mr. Lira studies with Elder Lowrance and both are learning each other's languages.

"Boa vinda à igreja de Baptist primitiva do Bethel da Palma

## Sick List

Sick list of the Church still contains many familiar names. God has sustained them in the face of their trials and tribulations and has still blessed them and us in many ways.

Sister Edna Maners is suffering from Alzheimer's disease and is in a nursing home. However, Brother Alva Maners brings her to church as many Sunday's as he can. She always enjoys being here and the members are always glad to see her. She has an indomitable spirit.

Brother Maners besides having breathing difficulties is now afflicted with sciatica. He feels much better standing up than sitting down.

Brother Allen Richard has been at our church rarely due to his variety of illnesses. But despite his declining health he is always cheerful when one speaks with him and is appreciative to the Church for its prayers. He also enjoys being supplied with the sermons by audio tape.

Sister Annie McCurley continues to battle her afflictions.

Brother Dennis Sieloff underwent surgery on his knee last month and is making progress on his recovery. He is very thankful for all that God has done for him in his affliction with MS and is always glad to be in fellowship at Church.

Sister "Dolly" Wyatt fell in her home last month and was taken to the hospital for treatment. She has since recovered and been transferred to an assisted care facility BUT the church can't find out where. Under privacy guidelines dictated by federal law, hospitals and doctors are restricted on what information they can give out about a patient. Basically, nothing. That includes where they go after being discharged. So no one at the church knows where Sister Dolly is. Please pray that she will get better and that the church determines her whereabouts.

Sister Leafa Howe had some medical problems after the birth of her baby but she is doing better now and so is the child.

## October and November birthdays

Brother Jason Chrisley had his on the 1<sup>st</sup>.

Sister Terri Lowrance celebrates another milestone on the 17<sup>th</sup>.

Sister Jessica and Brother Joseph Chrisley have their birthdays on November 23<sup>rd</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> respectively. Our pastor celebrates his on November 20<sup>th</sup>.

*Happy Birthday to you all from PBM!*

## Palm Bethel Fall Meeting

The fall meeting will be conducted November 14<sup>th</sup> thru 16<sup>th</sup>.

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## 2004 Florida Fellowship Meeting

Little Zion Primitive Baptist Church in Davenport, Florida, will host the 2004 meeting. Additional information on the meeting arrangement will be posted here as it becomes available.

Meeting dates:

Friday	February	20th	7:30 pm
Saturday	February	21st	10:30 am
Saturday	February	21st	2:00 pm
Saturday	February	21st	7:00 pm
Sunday	February	22nd	10:30 am

## General Church news

Bible study on Wednesday nights is going very well. Members ask their questions in advance, and Elder Lowrance answers those questions in a most edifying way. He uses scripture responses, maps, and a display board to enlighten everyone in the best possible way. Those in attendance are learning a great deal.

Elder Lowrance is doing expository preaching on the book of Acts for the Sunday Sermons. As those in attendance can testify, these are certainly an inspiration to all. The evidence is clear that they are Spirit inspired.

These sermons have been taped and tapes are available on request.

## Elder Guna Returns from "Down Under!"

By Elder Bryce Lowrance

The Lord opened the door recently for Elder A. Gunsekarana to preach the true gospel in Australia.

Soon after the wedding of his daughter, Brother Guna hopped a Singapore Airlines flight to Sydney, Australia, where he was invited by a member of the Nowra Baptist Church. On August 21, at 6:50 PM, Brother Guna set foot in the city of more than 5 million people.

With the John Saunig family home in Nowra as his base, Brother Guna preached in several classes at the Christian High School, conducted Bible Studies, and shared his testimony of God's sovereign grace in his life to many eager ears.

On Sunday, August 24, Elder Guna preached to more than 300 hundred in an evening service that went on despite a horrible wind storm which took out the electricity. The Lord helped our dear Brother to preach even through this storm and a bout with bronchitis and a throat infection. What an awesome God!

Without canceling a single meeting, Brother Guna continued to meet with students and church members the following week.

August 29-31 found Brother Guna preaching at a Men's conference to which he was invited. He spoke five sermons about "A Passion for God" (Lk. 24:32). Many were touched by his good teaching and desired to learn more about the Primitive Baptists. He distributed 25 copies of Elder Zack Guess's book "Undeniable Doctrinal Truths That Primitive Baptists Believe."

During the first week of September, Brother Guna preached in the Nowra Baptist Church, in many of their homes, and in their high school classes once again.

On September 5, Brother Guna preached three services at the Trinity Reformed Church in Tamworth. This church believes the 5 points of TULIP strictly.

From September 8th to the 14th, Malcolm Williams hosted Elder Guna at his church in Sydney. Brother Guna was able to

preach among many university students and at the Bible college there. William's church in Sydney has about 60 members and was founded about two years ago on Baptist Doctrine.

After a farewell party at a Chinese restaurant in Nowra and a message by their pastor Richard Utber, Elder Guna boarded Singapore Airlines flight SQ 232 for Tamil Nadu, South India, on September 17. He changed flights in Singapore, and arrived in Chennai, India, the same day. Brother Guna stayed over night there and took a train to Salem the next day. He reached home on September 18 at about 6:00 PM.

Let us all be thankful that the Lord has brought Elder Guna safely home to his family, the orphans, and his church in South India. Also remember to pray that the Lord will continue to open doors so that the pure gospel as believed by Primitive Baptists may be preached all over the world.

## Persecution Continues -India Update

by Elder Bryce Lowrance

Upon his return home from Australia, Brother Guna was immediately faced with an issue of persecution by the local Hindus and civil authorities.

Brother David, a converted Hindu and Deacon of the Primitive Baptist Church at Veerianthanda, owned some property that contained the neighborhood shrine kept under what was considered to be a sacred tree. This tree was the common worship place for most of the Hindu villagers.

Recently, a strong wind fell the tree; and Brother David, who was already reluctant to having the shrines on his property, removed the tree and all the shrines. (May the Lord grant us the fortitude to act so boldly in His service!)

The villagers turned against Brother David and the Primitive Baptist church. The men assaulted Brother David and prevented many of the 30 children from attending the child care the church provided (services included two meals and education). Brother David then filed charges against the men for the assault. The villagers in return filed a complaint with the

Tamil Nadu government against the Primitive Baptist Church for violating the Anti-Conversion Law, which prohibits baptism without governmental approval.

On September 20, Elder Guna traveled to the village to reason with the people. He was met by about 50 angry men filled with indignation for Guna and the Christians there. Elder Guna asked the villagers to wait while he considered the issue.

Elder Guna, Elder Immanuel, Deacon David, and several church members gathered to pray in the church building to seek counsel from the Lord. After the prayer, Elder Guna read from I Kings 22 and used that as a basis to advise Brother David to give away the land to the villagers.

At a meeting of the leading men of the village, Brother David offered to give the land to the villagers. Their anger soon subsided and they were reconciled to live peaceable with the church.

Soon after the reconciliation, a police officer arrived to arrest Brother David, Elder Immanuel, and two of the child care workers according to the Anti-Conversion Law. When they found that the incident had been resolved, charges were dropped, and all were instructed to live in harmony.

God certainly fulfilled His promise to never leave us nor forsake us. Praise the Lord and do not forget this!



## Pastor's Column

"Charity... Vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up" I Corinthians 13:4c

**H**ave you ever heard someone say, "If I don't toot my own horn, no one will?" Our society today is infatuated with the idea of self-promotion. The struggle to "keep up with the Joneses" has gone beyond spending money that we do not have to filling ourselves with so much hot air we cannot remember it all ourselves.

Strong's Dictionary tells us that a person who vaunts himself employs rhetorical embellishments in extolling himself excessively. This is a fancy way of saying that one brags and exaggerates one's importance. Strong's also tells us that "puffing up" is to make something appear natural when it is not. Both of these terms boil down to one thing; they are LIES!

When acting in charity, we are not to lie, nor are we supposed have the focus on ourselves and our personal pride or promotion.

David speaks of lying in Psalm 52. There we find lying called mischief, deceit, devouring words, and wickedness. David also makes it clear that the judgment of God waits for such behavior because people that lie are trusting in themselves rather than the Lord. Solomon lists lying as one of the things the Lord hates (Proverbs 6:16-19).

Self-promotion, or vaunting ourselves, is in direct contradiction to the life that Jesus lived, the one for which we are to pattern ourselves. Paul teaches the church at Philippi to "let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:6). The Holy God of all glory humbled Himself and took on the form of sinful man. Not only that, but He submitted to a death on the cross with all its humiliation and shame. Jesus Christ loved the children of God more than He loved Himself. Therefore, He gave up His own glory so that we may be glorified. As the old hymn writer said, "Christ laid aside His crown for my soul!" Paul instructs us that we are not to seek vain glory. This means that any glory which we receive of man is only temporary and really has no meaning. Jesus' sermon on the mount, found in Matthew 6, tells us that those who promote themselves among men "have their reward." That is, they get praise of men. This implies it is not honored by God. On the contrary, those who do their humble duty in meekness and quietness are rewarded openly by God.

The Lord tells us in Matthew Chapter 23, "...whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted." Paul expounds upon this principle when he lists "meekness" as an element of the fruit of Spirit, which is not against the law.

However, he lists "idolatry" as a work of the flesh, which deserves the judgment of God (Gal. 5:16-26). We must realize that when we place our own "self-esteem" or pride above the blood Christ, we are committing idolatry. This points to the strikingly horrid sin we commit when we promote ourselves. Christ humbled himself for us. When we vaunt ourselves, we ignore the blood of Christ and make gods out of ourselves and our vanity.

Let us keep in mind the true meaning of charity and that is "self sacrifice for the good of others." If our focus is on our own pleasure or reputation, then we are NOT serving the Lord. Our desire should be to think of others before ourselves (Phil. 2:4).

The heartfelt desire of all those born of the Spirit of God is to feel the love of God in their lives. Just as a natural child longs to feel the love and affection of his parents, the children of God desire to feel the manifest care of their Heavenly Father. John gives us a simple way to perceive or experience this love. He says, "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." (1 John 3:16).

The next time we feel the temptation to "toot our own horn," let us remember our Savior who sought only to glorify His Father. All the riches of praise of men will only feel good for a time, but the blessings of the Father are for eternity.

May the Lord bless you and keep you.  
Elder Bryce H. Lowrance, Pastor Palm Bethel  
Primitive Baptist Church.

## Dedication to Duty

The Third Infantry Regiment at Fort Myer has the responsibility to provide ceremonial units and honor guards for state occasions, White House social functions, public celebrations, and internments at Arlington National Cemetery. They also stand a very formal sentry watch at the Tombs of the Unknowns. The public is familiar with the precision of what is called "walking post" at the Tombs. There are roped-off galleries where

visitors can observe the troops with their measured steps and almost mechanical silent rifle shoulder changes. Soldiers are relieved every hour in a very formal drill that must be seen to be believed. Some may think that in the evening when the Cemetery is closed to the public this show stops.

First, to the men who are dedicated to this work, it is no show. It is a "charge of honor". The formality and precision continues uninterrupted all night.

During the nighttime, the drill of relief and the measured step of the on duty sentry remain unchanged from the daylight hours. To these men the continuity of this post is the key to the honor and respect shown to these honored dead, symbolic of all unaccounted for American combat dead.

The fury of Hurricane Isabel came through and "smote" the area one night, while most slept. The place looked like it had been the impact area of an off shore bombardment. The Regimental Commander of the U.S. Third Infantry sent word to the nighttime Sentry Detail to secure the post and seek shelter from the high winds to ensure their personal safety.

THEY [the sentry detail] DISOBEYED THE ORDER. During winds that turned over vehicles and turned debris into projectiles the measured step continued. One fellow said "I've got buddies getting shot at in Iraq who would kick my butt if word got to them that we let them down...I'm sure as heck have no intention of spending my Army career being known as the idiot who couldn't stand a little light breeze and shirked his duty."

Then he said something in response to a reporter's question regarding "silly purposeless personal risk." He said, "I wouldn't expect you to understand. It's an enlisted man's thing." God bless the rascal. At a time in our nation's history when spin and total PC seem to have become the accepted coin-of-the-realm; there beat hearts which fully understand that devotion to duty is not a part-time occupation. While we slept, we were represented by some fine men who fully understood their post orders and proudly went about their assigned responsibilities unseen and unrecognized, in the

finest tradition of the American Enlisted Man. - DN [don't know who DN is-ed]

On the ABC evening news, it was reported tonight that, because of the dangers from Hurricane Isabel approaching Washington DC, the military members assigned the duty of guarding the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier were given permission to suspend the assignment. They refused. "No way, Sir!" Soaked to the skin, marching in the pelting rain of a tropical storm, they said that guarding the Tomb was not just an assignment, it was the highest honor that can be afforded to a service person. The tomb has been patrolled continuously, 24/7, since 1930.

Fox News Channel interviewed the Commander of the soldiers who guard the Tomb of the Unknowns. He took the shift when Isabel was unleashing her fury, because he did not want to ask any of his men to do this - he felt it was his highest honor to be on duty during that time. Very, very proud of our persons in uniform!!!!!!

## Persecution of Christians In

**America** by Ann Coulter September 25, 2003

David Limbaugh's new book, "Persecution: How Liberals Are Waging War Against Christianity," will make you cry for your country. (But don't pray for your country if you're anywhere near a public school!) Released this week, Limbaugh's copiously researched book documents how the courts, the universities, the media, Hollywood and government institutions react to any mention of Christianity like Superman recoiling from kryptonite, Dracula from sunlight, or Madonna from soap and water. His straight, factual narrative of what is happening in our public schools will make you wonder how much longer America can survive liberalism.

In a public school in St. Louis, a teacher spotted the suspect, fourth-grader Raymond Raines, bowing his head in prayer before lunch. The teacher stormed to Raymond's table, ordered him to stop immediately and sent him to the principal's office. The principal informed the young malefactor that praying was not

allowed in school. When Raymond was again caught praying before meals on three separate occasions, he was segregated from other students, ridiculed in front of his classmates, and finally sentenced to a week's detention.

Before snack time in her kindergarten class in Saratoga Springs, N.Y., little Kayla Broadus held hands with two of her classmates and recited this prayer: "God is good, God is great, thank you, God, for my food." The alert teacher pounced on Kayla, severely reprimanded her, and reported her to the school administration. In short order, the principal sent a sternly worded letter to Kayla's parents advising them that Kayla was not allowed to pray in school, aloud or with others.

The school board then issued a triumphant press release crowing about its victory over a kindergartner praying before snack time. Thus was creeping theocracy in Saratoga Springs stopped dead in its tracks! Kayla's mother brought a lawsuit, winning Kayla the right to pray out loud. But she was still prohibited from holding hands with others while she prayed. Hearing the G-word in kindergarten might interfere with the school's efforts to teach proper sexual techniques in the first grade.

Thanks to the vigilance of an alert teacher at Lynn Lucas Middle School outside of Houston, two sisters carrying Bibles were prevented from bringing their vile material into a classroom. The teacher stopped the students at the classroom door and marched them to the principal's office. (Maybe it was just the sight of public school students carrying a book of any kind that set off alarm bells.) The sisters' mother was called and warned that the school intended to report her to Child Protective Services. When the mother arrived, the teacher threw the Bibles in the wastebasket, shouting, "This is garbage!"

In another display of tolerance at Lynn Lucas Middle School, school administrators snatched three students' books with covers displaying the Ten Commandments, ripped the covers off, threw them in the garbage, and told the students that the Ten Commandments constituted "hate speech." (Also, it would be insensitive to expose the Ten Commandments to

students who had never been taught to count to 10.)

After the massacre at Columbine High School, students and families were invited to paint tiles above student lockers. The school district had taken all reasonable precautions, immediately deploying an army of secular "grief counselors" with teddy bears to descend on the school after the attack. Nonetheless, some students painted their tiles with "objectionable" messages, such as: "4/20/99: Jesus Wept" and "God Is Love." This would not stand: The school removed 90 tiles with offending religious messages.

A federal court upheld the school's censorship of the religious tiles. Of course, Columbine school officials had earned a measure of deference after having inculcated such a fine sense of morality in their students that two boys could walk into school one day and stage a bloody massacre. You don't argue with a track record like that.

Not all mentions of religion constitute "hate speech." In Tupelo, Miss., school administrators methodically purged all Christmas carols of any religious content – and then led the children in a chant of: "Celebrate Kwanzaa!" At Pattison Elementary school in Katy, Texas, Christmas songs are banned, but students are threatened with grade reductions for refusing to sing songs celebrating other religious faiths.

In New York City, the chancellor of the Department of Education prohibited the display of Nativity scenes in public schools, while expressly allowing the Jewish menorah and the Islamic star and crescent to be displayed. Some would say that was overkill inasmuch as New York City is already the home of the world's largest public display built in commemoration of Islam: Ground Zero.

Between issuing laws prohibiting discrimination against transgendered individuals and running up a \$38 billion deficit, the California Legislature mandated a three-week immersion course in Islam for all seventh-graders. A "crash course" in Islam, you might call it, if that weren't so ironic. Students are required to adopt Muslim names, plan a trip to Mecca, play a jihad game, pray to "Allah, the

Compassionate" and to chant "Praise to Allah! Lord of Creation!" They are encouraged to dress in Muslim garb. Students are discouraged, however, from stoning girls at the school dances, abusing their "Jew" math teachers or blowing up their classmates.

A popular student textbook, "Across the Centuries," treats the Inquisition and Salem witch-hunts as typical of Christianity, but never gets around to mentioning the Muslims' conquest of Spain, the Battle of Tours, or the execution of Jews in Qurayza. Or 9-11.

There is no surer proof of Christ's divinity than that he is still so hated some 2,000 years after his death. Limbaugh's "Persecution" covers it all in staggering, heartbreaking detail. His methodical description of what is happening in our public schools alone will call to mind the hate speech banned in Columbine: "Jesus Wept."

## In Closing

...Churches may be to blame for the downward slide of American culture. That's the opinion of Family Research Council president Tony Perkins. He believes the religious element of American society has to share the blame for the depravity that is running rampant throughout the nation's culture. "There's no doubt that we're seeing a cultural shift, [and] part of the 'anchor' that should be there -- the Church -- in many ways has contributed to the drifting," he says. According to Perkins, many churches have rejected the teachings of the Bible and embraced a secular worldview of life while the remaining churches kept quiet. Activists say both of those attitudes have contributed to the culture's decline.

## GOOD FOR THE JUDGE!

An atheist was quite incensed over the preparation for Easter and Passover holidays and decided to contact the local ACLU about the discrimination inflicted on atheists by the constant celebrations afforded to Christians and Jews with all their holidays while the atheists had no holidays for them to celebrate. The ACLU jumped on the opportunity to once again pick

up the cause of the downtrodden and assigned their sharpest attorney to the case. The case was brought up before a learned judge who after listening to the passionate presentation by the ACLU representative, promptly banged his gavel and said "Case dismissed!"

The ACLU lawyer stood up and objected to the ruling and said "Your honor, how can you dismiss this case? Surely the Christians have Christmas, Easter and many other observances. And the Jews-why in addition to Passover they have Yom Kuppur and Hanukkah.....and yet my client and all other atheists have no such holiday!" The judge leaned back in his chair and simply said "Obviously your client is too confused to know about or for that matter even celebrate the atheists' holiday!"

The ACLU lawyer pompously said "We are aware of no such holiday for atheists-just when might that be?"

The judge said "Well it comes every year at the same time---April 1<sup>st</sup>"  
"*The fool hath said in his heart there is no God.*"  
(Psalm 14:1)

Duty ... is the sublimest word in our language. Do your duty in all things ... You cannot do more--you should never wish to do less. RE LEE

Proverbs 16:3 Commit thy works unto the LORD, and thy thoughts shall be established

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