
THE CURRENT

RIVER OF LIFE CHURCH | AIKEN, SOUTH CAROLINA

Winter 2009

PASTOR'S CORNER: A HALF-DOZEN STATEMENTS

By: Youth Minister Keith Solomon

I love the Lord's prayer. Imagine the scenario leading up to that little prayer. Jesus has followers around Him who have all grown up with the complicated intricacies of Judaism with its many laws, customs, and nuances. Many have watched the Pharisees and Sadducees promote a version of religious life that is packed with rules and guidelines, filled with a dozen different ways to mess it all up. They each were able to grow up knowing full well that nailing down all of those commands and rules, customs and guidelines, traditions and nuances were nearly impossible. Many were probably crushed beneath the burden Jesus spoke of when He rebuked the Pharisees for shackling people with traditions to the point that they were nearly unable to find the God who lives at the center of it. This is the group of people that is asking Jesus Christ to "teach us how

to pray" in Luke 11. What is Jesus' answer? What is the answer God Himself would give when humanity asks how we should communicate with Almighty God? It is...between 6-10 phrases long. It is a small paragraph. It is shorter than the space I have taken to introduce it in this article. Out of all of eternity, God has a moment to straightforwardly explain to us what communication with Him should be like, and its less than a dozen statements.

Why do I love this fact so much? I love it because it shows us the heart of a God who so longs to have relationship with us that He refuses to complicate the process. He breaks it down to the degree that there is no one who could claim that He made the pathway too difficult. He just wants us to be with Him. Our God cuts out all the begging, ranting, fear, penance paying, and performing we

may tend toward and leaves us with a simple conversation. Here are Jesus' words from Matthew 6. "Pray, then, in this way: 'Our Father who is in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.'" Simple. Paul warned us to watch out for religious ways that might kill simplicity and make our relationship burdened by unnecessary baggage. We have an enemy who will continually seek to fill our relationship with God with interference from the outside. Like static and breakup in a cell phone conversation with a friend, the enemy wants to make it hard to hear our Lord and, in turn, to make us feel as though

we are not heard.

In 2009, set your heart to keep your faith simple. Find strength in Jesus' little prayer. If He thought all I needed for an awesome relationship with the Father was a half-dozen short statements as a guide, who are we to make it more difficult. Keep a child-like love, and the knowledge that He wants to be with you

Pastor Keith

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AAA BAND

By: Barbara Rollins, AAA Band Director

The AAA Home-School Band is made up of students who are schooled at home and live in the Aiken Area. The band has 50 members, and performs approximately 50 times during the year. The AAA Band is directed by Barb Rollins. ROLC members

who are in the band are Aleyah Burgess, Fr. Horn; Tiana Burgess, flute; Jacob Moorehead, percussion. Caleb Morris was a member of the AAA Band until he entered public school. Zack Crafton is a former guitar student with the AAA Band.

On Nov. 1, 2008 the Rollins Christian Big Band, an extension of the AAA Band, made its premier performance at the St. John's Apple Festival. This band is made up of adults and students connected with the AAA Band. Our mission is to minister at churches and for Christian events on a love offering basis.

We also have a brass sextet that plays regularly for churches.

FELLOWSHIP GROUPS

Off and running!

By: Kay Mortimer, Editor

Food, Fellowship, Fun. Games, Movies, Biking, and Prayer. What a variety. River of Life's Fellowship Groups have ended for 2008, but the groups are now "off and running," with overall attendance averaging sixty-five.

Some groups were small and intimate, choosing rather to spend time in prayer and worship, and in sharing and caring for one another's needs. Others centered around common interests, such as biking, tennis, games, or movies, as well as building relationships. One even included cooking lessons and tasty gourmet cuisine.

All who attended received various blessings. Relationships deepened by spending time together. Competitive spirits emerged at times. Tears rolled. Prayers for our nation and others ascended to heaven. Tasty treats were consumed. Sweat poured. Laughter erupted. Ministry occurred.

What more could we ask for? For all who attended, there was encouragement and a feeling of connectedness. For the leaders, there was great delight in the

building of relationships and the encouraging of Christ's body. It was truly a win-win.

Next semester Fellowship Groups begin on January 3, 4, and 5, 2009! These include a continuation of the following groups:

- Taste and See
- Are You Game? (Saturday nights)
- Sunday Night at the Movies
- Youth (3rd Sunday night)
- Living Fire
- Care & Share

New Groups planned include:

- Worship with Glory Hoops
- Sign Language (Monday nights)
- Step Into the River (for those desiring to learn more about ROLC)

Don't delay! Sign up soon to be a part of this vibrant area of church life. Don't miss the opportunities for close-knit relationship building, encouragement, and service as a New Year and new season of Fellowship Groups begin! Join in and see what blessings are in store for you!

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY UPDATE

PAL : Police Athletic League

By: Denise Merchant, Children's Ministry Director

Another new year is upon us and that means that it is time to play ball! Basketball that is! Every winter the Police Athletic League, under the leadership of Lalita Ashley, conducts a 6 week basketball series in the ROIC gym. We are blessed to be able to offer the use of the gym to such a worthy endeavor.

Many volunteers, some from ROLC some not, come out to invest their time, gifts and talents into the next generation. These children ages 4-13 are broken up into equal teams and are taught the basic rudiments of basketball. But that is not all they are taught. They are taught the value of teamwork, the benefit of hard work and the ability to win or lose with grace and dignity.

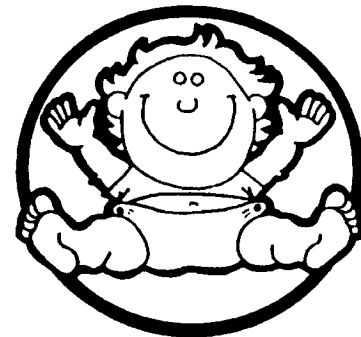
Games begin on Saturday, February 7th and we would love for the ROLC family to come out and support the teams. There are several of our very own ROLC children that play. We are in need of volunteers for the concession stand and there are ministry opportunities as well.

ROLC Children's Ministry has initiated a Character Counts Campaign with material from the Josephson Institute Center for Youth Ethics. We spend 5-10 minutes with each team after they play and talk about The Six Pillars of Character; Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, and Citizenship. A person of the Bible is chosen and highlighted that exhibited that specific trait. A drink and snack is given and we close in prayer. This will be the second year that we have been blessed to be able to be involved in the ministry aspect of PAL. If you are interested in being a part of the awesome opportunity to minister to the next generation, please contact Denise Merchant (644-5968 or 336-8997)

We will operate the River Side Café for the second year as well. This is a fundraising opportunity for the different ministries of ROLC. If you are interested in working at the River Side Café, please contact Cassie Zimmerly (474-1078).



NURSERY CLASS



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Contact Denise Merchant (644-5968 or 336-8997) for more information!

SPECIAL WRITING

The Love of God

By: Kerri Solomon

Love like there will be no tomorrow
like the sun will never rise
and the earth will be no more
Love with all you hold inside
with all that you can give

Passionately lay down your life
Give your heart and soul
and others shall behold...
The amazing and never-ending love
of God

FAMILY AND MARRIAGE COALITION

Marriages and Families at ROLC

By: Roger Rollins, FAMCO Director

This past Christmas season brought to our minds once again that God sent Jesus as a baby, to be a part of a family. Jesus didn't all of a sudden pop up on earth with a crown on His head, ready to rule and reign. He grew up in a family, just like the rest of us.

So evidently God thinks the family is important, since that's the first place Jesus shows up. Just a side thought – If Jesus showed up in your family as a baby, what kind of family life and upbringing would He receive?

Harry Benson, in his book "Mentoring Marriages", suggests three core elements of marriage:

- Marriage is the formation of a new family unit.
- Marriage is an unbreakable promise.
- Marriage is a framework for absolute and complete intimacy.

When the two individuals, a man and a woman, come together, in God's eyes (and should be in ours also), a new entity is formed. You

now have the man, the woman, and the family. If the man and woman separate – divorce – the family is destroyed. A death occurs. God is not pleased with that. We shouldn't be either.

This family unit has many unique characteristics, above and beyond the individual components. It's called synergy – that is, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. This can only happen effectively, however, when the two parts yield to the importance of the whole. It's called 100% participation by both, not 50%-50%.

Which leads to the next core element. Marriage is an unbreakable promise, a total and complete commitment to the spouse. It represents God's total commitment to us. He will not break His word and His promises to us. Neither should we to our spouse.

Cohabitation (unmarrieds living together) seems to be the in-thing today. But the survival statistics are grim and the im-

pact on adults and children is devastating. The main reason it doesn't work is that it isn't God's plan. The absence of a covenant is probably the key missing feature. There is no promise or commitment. The two become one only in the physical sense, and in no other way.

Hence to the last of the three core elements. Marriage is a framework for absolute and complete intimacy. To paraphrase Benson, in a covenant marriage, as one flesh, both spouses ought to be able to reveal their greatest differences without fear or reservation. Before the fall, Adam and Eve had this kind of relationship.

But after the fall, when they broke free of God's rules, Adam and Eve became aware of their nakedness, and they hid from God. Why did they all of sudden become aware of their nakedness? What did the sin of disobedience have to do with the absence of clothes?

Perhaps it is because they were now aware of their most obvious areas of difference. Whereas

Adam and Eve were able to reveal their areas of greatest difference before the fall and live in perfect intimacy, they were afraid of these inevitable differences after the fall.

The result was conflict. Currently we know that the key predictors of marital difficulties turn out to be the negative ways in which we handle areas of greatest difference. Couples who have achieved a high level of intimacy with each other handle their inevitable differences well.

If you want your marriage to work, enter into a covenant relationship where your goal is complete intimacy. No secrets. Can we do this on our own? No. It requires God's intervention in our lives and our marriages.

ROLC has trained marriage mentors who can help you deal with marriage and family concerns. Check with Pastor John or Roger Rollins and get help.

CHURCH SERVICE TIMES

SUNDAY

Sunday School
for All Ages 9:15 am

Sunday
Morning Worship
10:30 am

Sunday Evening Worship
6:30 pm

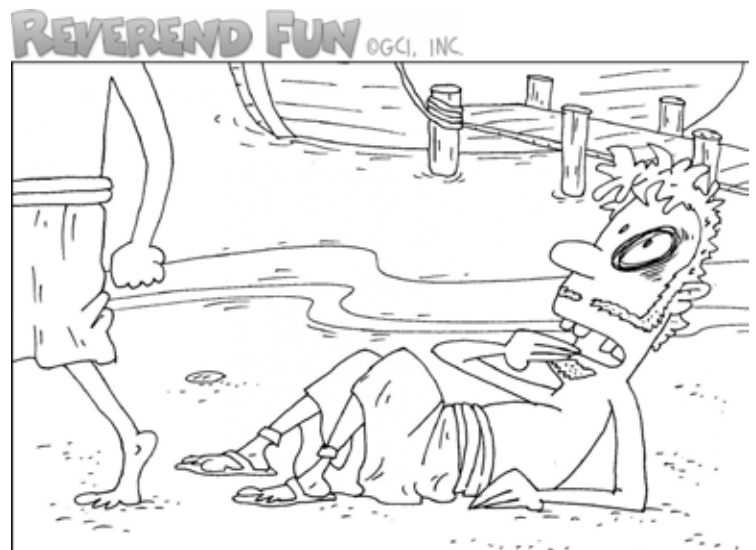
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WEDNESDAY

Church Dinner 6:00 pm
Overflow Youth Ministries
7:00 pm
Ministries for all ages
7:00 pm

SATURDAY

Evening Prayer Service-
every 1st and 3rd Saturday at
7pm in the new sanctuary.



HONESTLY JONAH, IF YOU DIDN'T WANT TO GO WHALE WATCHING WITH ME YOU COULD HAVE JUST SAID SO

HEAVENLY NEWS

By: Kay Mortimer, Editor

Don't miss "Heavenly News," an original Easter drama, scheduled for performances on Saturday, April 4 and Sunday, April 5, 2009. The drama team met Sunday to kickoff this exciting project for the body at ROLC and for our community, family, and friends.

We rejoice in the opportunity to serve the Lord with a drama given by the Lord, and want to take His message and minister through it to all those who come.

We believe this will be a very powerful drama, and can minister to everyone who comes in unique ways, with a special emphasis on evangelism. So feel free to invite friends, neighbors, and family to come see the drama as well.

If anyone is interested in working with the Drama Team, there are still opportunities to serve. Contact Kay Mortimer, (803) 215-6327, for more information. Team members will be notified as to upcoming meetings and rehearsals as the date draws nearer.

The next Drama Team meeting is scheduled for Sunday, January 18, 2009 immediately after the morning service for approximately 30 minutes only. All Drama Team members are encouraged to attend this brief, but important, meeting.

We trust that our body will be in prayer as we seek to bring this message to our church in a powerful, visual way. Plan to come, and invite others. Find out the scoop on the "Heavenly News!"

MINISTRY HIGHLIGHT: SOUND TEAM

Let him hear

By: Kay Mortimer, Editor

Come to Sunday morning services and hear clear, crisp, well-balanced sound every service. That is the goal of the Sound Team working behind the scenes to produce top quality sound for all to hear.

Come to Sunday morning services and see clear, crisp song lyrics and sermon notes every service. That is the goal of the Multimedia Team working behind the scenes to enhance your Sunday morning worship experience.

Both of these teams of individuals devote their time to enhance the services for all of us, encouraging us to enter into true worship and

praise, as well as enhancing our reception of the Word of God.

Their job is tedious, almost hidden, and many times thankless. Yet, they labor in love for the body of Christ at ROLC. They are glad to serve the body here in this way, and strive to give their all in this service. We want to say "thank-you" to all the team members who strive for excellence in this behind-the-scenes ministry.

Anyone interested in getting involved with the Sound or Multimedia Ministry should contact Calvin Mortimer at (803) 215-6326.

DATES TO REMEMBER

JANUARY

Sun-Tues, January 11-13	Prayer and Fasting
Wednesday, January 21	Children's Ministry Spaghetti Dinner

FEBRUARY

Sunday, February 5	Darkness to Light Seminar
Friday, February 13	Valentine's Dinner
All Saturdays	PAL (Police Athletic League)

MARCH

First Two Saturdays	PAL (Police Athletic League)
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APRIL

Fri and Sat, April 4-5	Easter Drama "Heavenly News"
Saturday, April 25	Children's Ministry Car Wash

All church-sponsored events must be recorded with Linda Solomon in the business office with an Event Form prior to being placed on the calendar.

CHILDREN'S CORNER

WHAT ARE THE FIVE RESPONSIBILITIES OF A BELIEVER?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

BIBLE TRIVIA

I told a man to read some writings and then to tie a stone to them and cast them into a river. Who am I and which river did I tell him to cast them into? **ANSWER: Jeremiah and the Euphrates river.**