

## Service Opportunities

Announcements: Ted Wheeler  
Usher: Delbert Leavens

### RECORD

Attendance: **60**

Contribution: \$ 2800.00

**Weekly Budget: \$ 2920.00**

### *Thought for The Day*

“Our deeds determine us, as much as we determine our deeds.”

GEORGE ELLIOT

#### *Sermon:*

The Foundation for a New Year, *Luke 6:46-49*

## Church of Christ of Venice

4301 SR 776  
Venice, FL 34293

### MORNING SERVICES

Opening Prayer: Mike Weber

Songs: Dale Schwartz

Sermon: Ted Wheeler

Closing Prayer: Glen Law

### EVENING SERVICES

Opening Prayer: Wayne Vowell

Songs: Dale Schwartz

Sermon: Song Service

Closing Prayer: Troy Wheeler

### COMMUNION

Tim Simmons Marty Wingo

Bill Burnside Delbert Leavens

# Church of Christ of Venice

"A friendly church, proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ"

December 31, 2006

Volume 16, Number 52

## Year-End Inventory

The end of the year is generally the time that most companies and businesses devote to doing the often dreaded, but greatly needed, task of taking inventory. Inventory allows you to determine what you have, what you are lacking, what you have accomplished, what you failed to do and the areas that need attention for the coming year. It would be a foolish and risky decision to neglect such a helpful and informative introspection.

The end of the year is also an opportune time to take a spiritual inventory. A self examination of this nature is even prescribed by the Word of God. *"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves"* (2 Cor. 13:5). When was the last time you took inventory of your life, the direction you are going and what you hope to accomplish? For most it may have been this time last year, in which case you are in desperate need of, and are long overdue for, a spiritual inventory.

Take an inventory of your prayer life. Much can be learned about your level of spirituality by examining your prayer life. Did you do much praying this year? If you did, when was it? Did you pray fervently when there was a sickness, financial problem, death or other difficulty? These are certainly times when we NEED prayer. In times of difficulty and hardship we need the help of our Father. The best part is, He desires for us to come to Him with our weaknesses, illnesses, heartaches and troubles (1 Pet. 5:7). But if this is the ONLY time we utter a prayer there are changes that need to be made. Perhaps you

A SPECIAL WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS!

Please fill out a blue visitor card so that we might have a record of your visit. If needed, there is a **nursery** available at the rear of the auditorium. **Bible classes** for all ages are available Sundays at 10:00 am and Wednesdays at 6:30 pm. We hope that you will join us for these studies. Please come and worship with us again soon.

#### Elders

Delbert Leavens  
Wayne Vowell  
Ted Wheeler

#### Minister

Ted Wheeler

#### Sunday Services

Bible Study-10:00 am  
Worship-11:00 am  
Evening Worship-6:00 pm

#### Wednesday

Bible Study-6:30 pm.

#### Church of Christ

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pray more often than that, but it is only a few half-hearted words muttered out of guilt or obligation. If so, there are changes that need to be made. If your inventory reveals a frequent, fervent and heartfelt prayer life, keep it up next year (Jam. 4:16; 1 The. 5:17).

Take an inventory of your study habits. How much time did you spend this year in Bible study? You cannot count the time spent studying in Sunday morning or Wednesday night Bible classes because this is the bare minimum that anyone who wears the name of Christ should study (Psa.1:2; 119:97). How much did you study on your own? Did you spend more time reading the paper this year than the Bible? If so, changes need to be made.

Take inventory of the spirituality of your family. During the past twelve months did you make the church the center of your family (Mat. 6:33)? Did you put spiritual things first or were they occasionally neglected due to other things? Did sports, trips or friends come before spiritual things or worship services and Bible classes?

Take inventory of your place in this congregation. This year did you help or hurt the work of the Lord here? Did you get on board and work to accomplish the goals set by our overseers, or did you stand on the sideline criticizing and complaining? Each member is a vital part of the body, but those members must be working together (1 Cor. 12:12-27).

**Brandon Britton** (adapted)

## Tomorrow - A New Year

The new year ahead of us will be, in some ways, like every other year that has ever been. It will repeat cycles that are centuries old. There will be the ageless round of days and seasons. There will be births and deaths, joy and sorrow. There will be triumphs and defeats, honor and shame. Solomon, the wise, perceived this truth: *"That which has been is what will be, that which is done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun"* (Ecc. 1:9).

But in other ways the new year ahead will be unique, a solitary set of events that have never before taken place and that can never happen again. As long as the world lasts, there will never again be exactly the same combination of circumstances. Never again will we be at precisely this point in our lives. Never again will we be able to see things from exactly the viewpoint we enjoy this year. Doors will open that have been shut, and will never be open again.

Because of the one-time opportunities the next twelve months will bring, the new year will be what we make of it. The Scriptures counsel us to *"redeem"* the time carefully (Eph. 5:16). We may joke about "New Year's resolutions," but without resolve the new year will be less than it should be. We ought to rise early and work late, crafting the year's moments into worthwhile achievements. The unique value of the coming year will be damaged if we fail to act vigorously. This year is ours to do with as we choose.

Sadly, many of life's greatest deeds are often left undone. Rather than "seizing the day" and proactively doing the good that is within our reach, we presume that there will be plenty of opportunity "later" to take care of these things. Through simple neglect and the mere postponement of effort, we let months and years slip by unused. The result is that our lives are

unimproved. Solomon said, *"Because of laziness the building decays, and through idleness of hands the house leaks"* (Ecc. 10:18). If you're like me, your life's "house" is leakier than it should be, given the time you've had to work on it.

Looking at the opportunities we failed to make use of in past years, we often wish we had been more decisive and more consistently exercised our will in the direction of good. For most of us, regret is an all-too-real component of our emotional life. And of course, the reason why that is so is that we have failed to discipline ourselves. As someone has said, there is no alternative: either we will live with the pain of self-discipline or we will live with the pain of regret. But acting wisely in the present can best diminish the pain of regret. During the New Year, we will again be presented with daily opportunities to use ourselves actively for God's purposes. What will we do with those opportunities? Let us, resolve to do *each day* things that *tomorrow* we will be glad we did *yesterday*! I hope you will join in this resolve.

We ought to keep in mind, however, that the true value of the New Year consists in what God will make of it, and not we ourselves. Ultimately, we are able to speak and act for good only because of the graciousness of God. Honor for the New Year's accomplishments should be His. To Christians, Peter wrote, *"As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen"* (1 Pet. 4:10-11).

A year is not much time, really. Before we are ready, it will be this time next year. When that time has come, what will be our memories of *this* year? May each of us put first things first all through this year. When the next twelve months have come and gone, may we have grown, with God's help, toward Him in many ways. May we walk with Him, and live for Him each and every day!

## Sympathy

We extend our deepest sympathy to Ola Mae Navarre and family at the passing of her mother this weekend. Dick & Ola Mae are in Louisiana for the funeral and will be home later this week.



## Remember in Prayer

KERRY KEATHLEY

JANET WEBER

DORIS WHITE

CLARENCE RIGGENBACH

PATRICIA SMITH

FRANK SMALL

IVA & LEM TURNER

PATRICIA FORD

JEANETTE THOMPSON

TED WHEELER

## Mark Your Calendars

- ✓ Dec. 31: Song Service
- ✓ Dec. 31: New Years Party @ Tim & Penny Simmons
- ✓ Jan. 7: Fellowship Meal
- ✓ Jan. 15-18, 2007: Florida School of Preaching. *32nd Annual Lectureship: Do You Understand The God Of The Bible?* The 15th is a holiday and hopefully we can get a group to go up on that Monday.