

SUNDAY MORNING 9:00 AM

SONG LEADER Chad Tagtow

BIBLE READING Isaiah Thomas

OPENING PRAYER Isaac McLaurin

LORDS SUPPER Forest Antemesaris

CLOSING PRAYER Frank DeBord

SUNDAY MORNING 10:30 AM

SONG LEADER Jay Roberts

BIBLE READING Brandon Williams

OPENING PRAYER Jim Hall

LORDS SUPPER Kyle Smith

CLOSING PRAYER Mike Thompson

SUNDAY'S SERMONS

AM: Nationalism Run Rampant

(Jonah 4:1-11)

ALSO LIVE STREAM

On our Facebook Page at 10:30

LST WK STATISTICS LAST YR

NA. SUN CLASSES NA

70 SUN AM NA

NA SUN PM NA

NA WED CLASSES NA

NA. CONTRIBUTION. NA

WEDNESDAY EVENING

LIVE STREAM

ON OUR FACEBOOK PAGE

SERVE LORD'S SUPPER IN AUGUST

9:00 am Bob Bauer/Forest Antemesaris

10:30 am Kyle Smith

PREPARE LORD'S SUPPER

NA

SERVING IN AUGUST

ANNOUNCEMENTS: NA

PICK-UP CUPS: NA

OPEN BUILDING: Frank DeBord

CLOSE BUILDING: Bob Bauer/Jim Hall



**BREAD
&
SWEETS**

*We will continue getting bread & sweets. Please feel free to pick up whatever you can use.
We have veggies on occasion.*

If we can't participate in the political game without developing a dislike for people on opposing sides, we shouldn't be playing it. If our Facebook posts are going to make people choose sides for and against us, we should not be posting them. If watching and reading our preferred news sources makes us view fellow Christians or potential evangelistic targets (in other words, anybody and everybody) as an enemy, then we shouldn't be consuming those news sources.



Yeah, you can make the case that as with the Monopoly may-hem, it's not the political game itself that's wrong, but the immature, unchristian way we play it. And that may be true. But that problem isn't going to be fixed overnight, and so the only short term answer I see is to broadly push for Christians to dis-engage for the time being. Turn the news off, unfollow your partisan social media pages, stop posting about the controversy *du jour*, and get busy taking up your Christian mission.

I understand this is an unpopular recommendation. You are free to disagree with me, even to think I'm ignorant or naive. I may be wrong. But we can't move forward without a plan of some kind. How are we going to prevent Christians from losing their allegiance to each other due to their allegiance to their political side? I'm open to any comment you may have. We have to do something.

Orange Street Church of Christ
310 Orange St.
Auburndale, FL 33823

To:

"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. . . ."
(Matt 5:43,45)



CHURCH OF CHRIST

SEEKING TO FOLLOW CHRIST WHEREVER HE LEADS

310 Orange Street | Auburndale, Florida 33823 | 863-967-1757

Sunday August 9, 2020
Volume 1 Number 32

We Invite You To
Attend Any Or All Of
Our Services!
SCHEDULE
Sunday:
Bible Class . . . 9:30am
AM Worship . . 10:30am
PM Worship . . . 5:00pm
1st Sunday of the Month:
PM Worship . . . 1:00pm

Wednesday:
Bible Class . . . 7:00pm

ELDERS
Bob Bauer
Matt Faneuf
Jim Hall

DEACONS
Frank DeBord
Marvin Frazier
Frank Nabors
Chad Tagtow

MINISTERS
Forest Antemesaris
Bob Bauer

Visit us online at:
www.orangestreetcofc.com

America's divide has invaded the church. How will we stop it?

Jack Wilkie

We've known for years that the ideological divide in our nation was growing, but this year certainly feels like we've crossed a point of no return. The debate regarding masks still rages daily as state and local governments hand down their decisions and people view each other as either enablers of tyranny or endangerers of life. Black Lives Matter has provoked people to make passionate arguments about the nature of the movement and its influence on society, with the pro side viewing the anti side as racists, and the anti side viewing the pro side as destructive Marxists. And, somehow almost relegated to a footnote, we have the Trump vs. Biden presidential race, in which both sides view the other as stupid and/or evil for supporting their candidate. Cancel culture has been the undercurrent to it all, as both sides begin to agree that the other should not be allowed a platform or even a livelihood. For example, a Cato survey found that 50% of strong liberals and 36% of strong conservatives believe corporate executives should be fired if they donate to the opposition's candidate.



While these are the issues of today, they will not simply go away as BLM protests disperse, the Coronavirus fades, and we move forward with whichever President is elected for the next 4 years. Underlying issues are driving these divisions and will inevitably cause further divisions down the road. Can the media be trusted despite a possible slight bias, or are they irredeemably dishonest? Should we move toward a more socialist government, or should we run in the opposite direction? Are conspiracy theories true, or is the official story true? Has America been a mostly good nation with a few glaring flaws, or has it been broken from the start and in need of complete restoration?

The biggest problem about the divide is that it is not merely ideological. It is personal. It's not a disagreement about the best way forward but about who has the moral high ground. The people on the other side don't just disagree, the thinking goes. *Rather, they're bad people who must be defeated.* People in the middle are also bad because their compromise is letting the bad guys win. Here's where the problem comes home: these divides exist in our pews, too. As the national split grows more tangible, we are foolish to think it won't become more tangible among Christians, too. I know Christians who post about how stupid and wrong Trump supporters are, and I know Christians who post about how stupid and wrong anti-Trump people are. And they sit in the pews together every Sunday. I know Christians who believe BLM should have our full support, and anyone who disagrees is a racist, and I know Christians who believe BLM should receive our full opposition, and anyone who disagrees is a racist. And they sit in the pews ... 1

together every Sunday. I know Christians who feel anti-mask people are cruelly inconsiderate of other people's health, and I know Christians who feel pro-mask people are tacitly accepting a new tyranny. And they sit in the pews together (virtually now, in many cases) every Sunday. People from both sides of each of these issues are reading this list, taking their side on each issue, and nodding their head at the characterization of the other side while disagreeing with the characterization of their side.

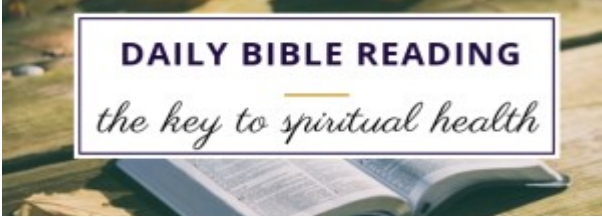
For the nation, the tug of war will not end with one side accepting the other's victory. The ideological gap is too wide when giving in means living under ideologies that are abhorrent. I don't know how far down the road the finish line will be crossed, but as of this year the march toward a national breakup seems to be well underway. If we don't turn the ship around, we in the church are heading to the exact same fate. Our unity is in the process of being shattered as we take sides on every single news issue.

I hope we can agree on one thing to this point: we cannot move forward this way. To any Christian who has ever read John 17, the existence of this kind of distrust and dislike of each other within the church family should be a stomach-turning, tear-inducing, heartbreaking thought. Jesus commanded us to love each other with His brand of self-sacrificial love, and yet here we are dividing over politics. John told us that if we hate our brother then we can't say we love God, and yet we have Christians posting about how stupid their fellow Christians are. Something has to change.

So what's the solution? Let's explore a few options.

"We just need to set them straight." Unfortunately, the people on the other side feel the exact same about you. On an issue such as masks, for example, America's ideological divide means no matter where a person stands, they can find sources that tell them they are in the right and everyone else is in the wrong.

"We're going to have to go our separate ways." I have no doubt that some, if given the choice, would rather drive their ideological opponents out of the church by their efforts to save America than maintain the unity of the church even though it might mean America's demise. This attitude must be repented of anywhere it exists. If our plans to fix the world weaken the church in the process, we stand in opposition to God and should have no expectation of success.



- Aug 9 Jer 7-9
- Aug 10 Jer 10-13
- Aug 11 Jer 14-17
- Aug 12 Jer 18-22
- Aug 13 Jer 23-25
- Aug 14 Jer 26-29
- Aug 15 Jer 30-31

Chronological Bible
Reading Plan for 2020



Changes to our prayer request:

We are attempting to keep our prayers current and accurate.

This section of the bulletin will now be used for immediate prayer request such as surgeries, new illnesses, injuries etc.

Our midweek newsletter will continue to list all of our prayer request with any details know about specific prayer needs.

If you request prayer for someone please provide frequent updates.

If request are not updated within 30 days request will be removed from the list unless it is for long term illnesses.

Upcoming Surgeries:

Florence Lindsay - Knee surgery
September 1st

Carl Chambers - Wound care

"We need to listen to each other." I understand the sentiment. I've pushed for it numerous times over the last few years. But I no longer believe we're in a place where that is a valid strategy anymore. People who view others as bad people, as a threat to their family and their way of life, aren't interested in hearing each other out. They don't seek to spend time together. What are church leaders going to do? Lock people in a room together and hope it leads to fewer controversial Facebook posts by the two parties?

"We should just keep our politics to ourselves." I've also advocated this approach previously, and I also believe it, too, is now outdated. The vitriol is such that even if a person isn't broadcasting their views, they will inevitably have a Christian or an evangelistic contact in their life who will hold opposing views. If the person has not dialed back their consumption of the good vs. evil narrative, then it will damage their ability to love the other.

I'm going to offer this next point as merely my recommendation. I don't offer this authoritatively as "the way" to reunite us. It's simply the only way I see in which we can be faithful and refrain from splitting the church going forward.

Redevelop a sense of mission. Most Christians seem to have no sense of mission whatsoever, and that alone is the cause of much of our strife. When we aren't humbly submitted to serving others in the greater service of God, we start getting defensive of our desires. The answer to the coming political split is to begin disciplining Christians – both from the pulpit and especially through relationships – to have a sense of mission. As Paul became all things to all men to win some, so must we (1 Corinthians 9).

To give real world examples, a Christian who is mission-minded will not broadcast his every opinion on the issues of the day, because he knows it will alienate some of those around Him. When the government says you have to wear a mask, you wear a mask. Is it a gateway to tyranny? Maybe. But carrying a Roman soldier's pack a mile was a hallmark of an established tyranny and Jesus said to carry it two miles (Matthew 5:41). When the world says you have to choose between BLM and the police, the Christian chooses neither. Our churches can affirm that racism is wrong, and they can affirm the importance of respecting our authorities, but that does not mean we must go so far as to take sides with people who are not on our side.

TO LEAD
PEOPLE
TO BECOME
FULLY DEVOTED
FOLLOWERS OF
CHRIST.

Our side is the church, and our duty is to side with each other in the mission of proclaiming Christ. This precludes us from joining a side in an earthly conflict that will take precedence over our loyalty to our church family.

Notice how little socio-political commentary the New Testament offers, despite dealing with a political system that affected the church greatly. The emperors are hardly named, and almost not discussed at all. That is not an accident. A mission-minded disciple knows that our mission is not to build a perfect life here but to help people first see the eternal. "No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier," said Paul (2 Timothy 2:4). **God is not going to fix the world before He saves it, and we'd be wasting our time trying to fix it without God's help.**

So, here's the unpopular part. For the time being, I believe this means it's time for us as Christians to disconnect from the political. I don't mean to say the Christian can't vote, but our everyday advocacy is contributing to a split that we simply cannot let happen. It's my contention that the political climate has become so toxic and controversial that a Christian cannot vocally participate without driving a wedge between them and their fellow man. The news media has convinced us that the sky is falling every single day. Social media has convinced us that we have a platform to do something to keep the sky from falling. Both are lying to us. All we're doing is fracturing the church and driving outsiders away.

Growing up there was a summer in which my brother, sister, and I were banned from playing Monopoly together. It wasn't that my mom had a moral objection to the game of Monopoly, it was that we couldn't seem to play without the situation devolving into a gigantic fight. "If you can't play this game without getting mad at each other, then you're not going to play at all," she ruled. You could rightly say that Monopoly wasn't the problem, and that there was a bigger heart problem that needed to be fixed. But since that wasn't an overnight fix, the game had to be taken away first to prevent the deterioration of our relationships in the meantime.

"If you turn off the news and talk to your neighbors, you'll find that our country is far more harmonious than you're being told."

