

Why is the congregation not smiling?

By Kittye Craig – Jackson

Psalm 42:11 – “Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why have you become disturbed within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him, the help of my countenance, and my God.”

A smile is outward evidence that everything inside is in good shape. A smile is visible evidence of the joy of the Lord. Anyone can smile. And, everyone should. But, those who put faith and trust in the Lord Jesus have more right to smile than anyone.

People often tell me that I have a nice smile – it’s because I’m doing “excellent” in the Lord. I can count a hundred blessings in my life as a result of the salvation of the Lord Jesus Christ: I’ve been forgiven, cleansed by the blood and born into the family of God. I am led by the Spirit, overshadowed and loved by Him. I have the Word of God, the love of God and the power of God.

The unsmiling Christian is a contradiction. Why aren’t you smiling? The Lord God is the “Help of your countenance,” according to Psalm 42:11. Whatever else that means – some translations say He is the health of my countenance; others say the salvation of it – it surely means He will make you prettier than you would be otherwise.

It’s no stretch to say that sin makes us ugly. Given enough time, the face will register the truth that “the way of the transgressor is hard” (Proverbs 13:15). The face keeps good records. It will not lie.

The Spirit pretties you. God’s senior saints tend to become more beautiful as they age. They have a sweet glow about them that cannot

be bought in a bottle.

As a child, I heard it said that “the devil has no smiling old people but God has a houseful of them.”

There is no one on the planet whose face is not improved by a smile.

Some people say, “I don’t smile.”

Oh my, that’s too bad; you’re not a Christian, not forgiven of your sins, not indwelt by the loving, joyful Holy Spirit. Are you saying you are a Christian but you just don’t smile?

I had a pastor tell me, when I asked why his congregation looked so sad. “They never smile,” he replied.

I asked, “Are you smiling as you teach them that the joy of the Lord is their strength?”

He laughed it off as unimportant. When God’s people are not smiling, they are restraining their joy in the Lord! The only explanation for this is – 1) sin is in their lives or 2) unbelief.

Have you said to someone, “I am smiling?”

You may think you are, but that smile you say you are feeling is hidden deep inside somewhere. Unlock it and let it out. We need to see it!

Sometimes we have to make up our mind to make ourselves smile. Even if someone would call it a fake smile, it’s absolutely essential to decide to put on a smiling face if we expect to project one. We decide to smile. Happiness is a choice – so is smiling.

I’m always amazed at Christians who say that they do not “feel like doing a certain thing” because do-

ing it would be fake. As if it’s their feelings which give validity to their actions. As if feelings are the judge of all that is good. Start running your life by your feelings and you are asking for more trouble than you’ve ever known in your life!

I say to them, “No, it won’t be fake – it will show faith! We live our lives by faith, don’t we?”

Everyone looks better smiling. My advice on how to put a smile on your face ... Get saved – get on your knees and repent of your sins and give your heart and life to the Lord Jesus Christ. Then, from that moment on, every day of your life, make the decision to obey Him no matter what your feelings are telling you. Throughout each day, make the decision down inside your heart to consciously smile. You need to do this regardless of how you are feeling, how much sleep you got or didn’t get the night before or how badly people are treating you. Just smile!

After all, as a follower of Jesus Christ, “it is well with your soul.” Claim that truth for yourself.

Some people say, “I don’t smile because I don’t like my smile.” Or, “I don’t like my teeth.”

Or, “I don’t have a pretty smile.” You’re not the judge of your smile. You are on the inside of it. We’re on the outside, and we see your smile, and we like it a lot!

I smile because I’m still here and I’m always doing “Excellent!”



BORDEAUX WORSHIP CENTER
• Services at 11 a.m. on Sundays.

BUFFALO BAPTIST
3699 Hwy. 28 N.
• Jan. 27: VBS meeting following the worship service. Anyone interested in helping with VBS is asked to attend.

FIRST BETHANY BAPTIST
• Sunday school at 10 a.m. Sunday worship at 11 a.m.
• Second Sunday evening services: Forest View Manor (Callison Hwy.) at 4 p.m. Mission meeting (all ages) at 5 p.m. Finger food fellowship at 6 p.m.
• Fifth Sundays: Fifth Sunday singing and worship at 5 p.m.
• Wednesday nights: Light supper (free) at 6 p.m. Class from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Bible Buddies - birth to five years old. GA (Girls in Action) - first to fifth grade. RA (Royal Ambassadors) - first to fifth grade. EPIC Group (Youth) - Sixth to twelfth grade. Adult Bible study.

FOUNTAIN OF LIFE OUTREACH MINISTRY
• What are your needs? Let us pray. Call in prayer line every Wednesday 5:30 a.m. 218-632-0999. Pin #622939.

MCCORMICK FIRST BAPTIST
• Feb. 12 - March 26: Ladies Bible study “JOB: A Story of Unlikely Joy” by Lisa Harper will be held Tuesdays 9:30-11:30 a.m. or 6:30-8:30 p.m. at upper room fellowship hall. Call the church office for information or to sign up: 852-2640.

MT. LEBANON BAPTIST

Parkville
• Feb. 9-10: Women’s Empowerment Weekend. Theme: Sensational Women - Accentuate the Positive and Eliminate the Negative.
• Feb. 9: Sensational ladies in denim and pearls at 11 a.m. Wearing denim and pearls is encouraged but not required. Invited guests are Christian comedienne Nakisha Bell Anderson and keynote speaker Evangelist Rhonda Kelly Farmer. First Lady Kathy Thomas will serve as worship leader. A luncheon will be held following the conference. Mary Kaye and Paparazzi Jewelry vendors will be present during the luncheon.
• Feb. 10: Women’s Day. Sunday school at 9:30 a.m. and worship service at 11 a.m. The guest preacher will be Minister Tjuana Griffin. The worship leader will be Minister Latonya Leverette. Attendees are encouraged to wear red. The Rev. Joseph Thomas is pastor.

MT. ZION A.M.E.
185 Mt. Zion Church Rd.
• Church school at 9 a.m. Worship service at 10:15 a.m. The Rev. Lebbie Ligon is pastor.

NEW HOPE MISSIONARY BAPTIST
• Jan. 26: Simmon Ridge Samaritan Baptist Association Ushers and Nurses’ Auxiliary planning session at 10 a.m. Anyone who is not a member but are interested in becoming a part of the Samaritan Baptist Association of Ushers’, Nurses’ and Greeters’ Ministry is invited to join. Contact President Lynda Butler at 864-223-4801 or Vice President Nancy C. Johnson at 864-223-9219. The Rev. Michael A. Butler is pastor.

NEW MACEDONIA F.B.H.
209 Deason St.
• Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success.

PINE GROVE A.M.E.
317 Pine Grove Church Rd., Plum Branch
• Church school at 9 a.m. Morning worship service at 10:15 a.m.

PLUM BRANCH BAPTIST
• HisKids children’s ministry and PBBC youth meet Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m.
• Current sermon series: “The Attributes of God.”
Feb. 3: Super Bowl tailgate and watch party at 5:30 p.m.

REPUBLICAN UNITED METHODIST
865 Chamberlain’s Ferry Rd.
• Sunday school 10 a.m. Church Service 11 a.m.

SOLOMON POOL CHURCH OF INTENSIVE CARE
• Worship service Sundays at 11 a.m.
• Drug and Alcohol Addictions Class every second and fourth Tuesday at 7 p.m.
• Bible study every second and fourth Wednesday at 7 p.m.
• Feb. 15: Sweetheart Banquet at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$25 for a single and \$35 for a couple. Call 864-554-3092 for more information. Peggy W. Zellars is pastor.

SPIRIT AND LIFE
615 Hwy. 378 West
• Regular weekly order of service for January: Prayer and Sunday school 10:15-11:15 a.m.; worship experience 11:15 a.m. (Communion on the first Sunday); Nursing home ministry the third Saturday at 3 p.m. Call 864-337-0818 or 864-337-6415. Bishop Donn M. Lee is founder and pastor.
• Telephone Bible study on Wednesdays from 6-6:45 p.m. The call-in number is 712-451-0923, and the access code is 279337. Guest teachers are also being solicited.

ST. PAUL UNITED METHODIST
301 Edgefield Rd., Plum Branch
• Sunday service at 9:45 a.m. Come as you are. Bible study at 9 a.m.

VILLAGE CHURCH OF CHRIST
• Village Church of Christ meets Sundays at 9 a.m. Contact Michael Kolb at 864-391-4543.

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Visit the Messenger’s online events calendar to get the word out about your community and church events:
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Michael Allen, Pastor
Michelle Allen, Children & Youth Director

Sunday	Sunday School	9:45 AM
	Morning Worship	11:00 AM
	Evening Service	6:00 PM
	Youth Program	6:00 PM
Wednesday	Children’s Program	5:30 PM
	Prayer Meeting	6:00 PM

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Mark Your Calendar

HAPPENINGS COMMUNITY THREADS FOR JANUARY 2019

Thursday, Jan. 31, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.: Regular Open Sew Session in the Bordeaux Room at Hickory Knob State Resort Park. Bring your project and supplies to enjoy a day of sewing and sharing. Join us for lunch in the restaurant. If you are new to the area, or just want to know more about Community Threads, please contact Belinda at quiltingworkshops@gmail.com or call 843-860-5403. Community Threads is a program of the McCormick Arts Council at the Keturah (MACK), and all are welcome. No sewing experience necessary. “Come Stitch With Us!”

ing experience necessary. “Come Stitch With Us!”

BLACK HISTORY DINNER AND SHOW

A black history dinner and show featuring the nationally known Geechee Gullah Ring Shouters will be held Feb. 2, 2019 at 5 p.m. at the Mims Community Center. Tickets are available now for \$20 per person. No tickets available at the door. Contact Sarah Moss at 391-2296 or Dorothy Rivers at 391-2095. The event is sponsored by Willington African American Cultural Center and the Mims Community Center.

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Church School....9:45 a.m.

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