

The loss of memory is a sad thing. It cuts us off from days gone by. It strips away the treasured residue of past experience. It erases our personal history and leaves us unaccountably blank pages.

Sometimes we are forgetful because we neglect that which has gone before us and become inattentive to those who have preceded us. We center all of our attention only on our own time and place. We act as though the present is all that matters and the past is some shabby thing that can be safely cast off and left behind like a worn-out pair of shoes.

Here we are on Memorial Day. On this occasion we are called upon to remember and respect those who have died, those whose days are gone.

When reading the Bible it is apparent the importance that is placed upon remembering. Throughout the scriptures we find references to monuments, memorial feasts, and ritually repeated stories, all of which serve to reinforce the sacred memory of the people of God. In various ways the great saving acts of God were rehearsed and re-presented so that the people would not forget what God had done for their sake.

In the Old Testament, Joshua 4:1-9, stands as one example of this practice. The biblical narrative which leads up to this text tells the story of the Israelites' long-awaited entry into the promised land. After forty years of wilderness wandering the people finally reached their destination. The swollen Jordan River blocked their way into the land but they did not stop.

Those who forgot the past fell into thanklessness. It is unlikely that we will do any better. If we forget the value of our heritage and the source of our blessings, it will become very easy for us to take for granted all that we have and all that we are. It will be very easy for us to begin believing that we can make our own way without God. With the blindness of pride we will very likely begin trusting in our own wisdom and power rather than relying upon the guidance and might of our Maker. Then in our wrong-headed self-confidence we will lose our way. For this reason it is crucial that we remember.

I suppose that every culture and country has its memorials. The best memorials lift our sights above the mundane affairs of the moment in order to focus our attention upon the highest aspirations and accomplishments of those who have preceded us. When we visit the Lincoln Memorial or Washington Monument, it is natural to begin meditating upon the impressive deeds and high values of these forebears. Visits to such places can help stimulate us to embrace more noble and exalted goals.

Sometimes dwelling on the past is a means of escaping the problems of the present and the disturbing prospects of the future. Sometimes we are tempted to glorify days gone by. We all know people who seem to continually talk about how great things used to be. Life was simpler, friendships were closer, motives were more pure, morals were higher and so on. This is the Golden Age syndrome.

Hopeful memory does not drag us into the past and lock us there. Hopeful memory does not tell us that the best of life has already come and gone. Rather it thrusts us into the future. When the prophets of old called upon God's people and told them to remember the works that the Lord had done in the past, this was to prepare them for the future.

The Lord's Supper is a hopeful memorial. It does not falsely glorify the past. When we partake of the bread and cup we remember the broken body and blood of the Lord. Images of deceit, betrayal and cruelty impose themselves upon us. In addition it reminds us of the sacrificial love of God. It speaks to us of a love that will not let us go but which reaches out to us, despite our evil. We also see the promise of Jesus Christ that He will come again and that we will eat and drink anew with our Lord in the kingdom of God (Mark 14:25). The Lord's Supper points us not only to the past but toward the promised future as well.

Today as we celebrate Memorial Day upon it is proper to think of the past and of those who have gone from this world. And those of us who are Christians, this is not exclusively an exercise in looking behind and dwelling upon what has been. For we believe that more wondrous things are yet to come for people of faith who have already died. We live in light of the resurrection and we believe that death will not be the end.

LADIES MOTHER/DAUGHTER & FRIEND'S TEA - June 3 11am-1:30pm. Sign up in Welcome Center.

NEXT THEMED POTLUCK - June 11 2017 "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" Sponsored by "Wings of God"

LET'S PAINT! WORKSHOP - ADULTS (OVER 16) Learn how to paint Skies & clouds, trees, grasses & shrubs, mountains, oceans, lakes and waterfalls like Bob Ross, in our upcoming 6-week event! We would like to make available both daytime and evening 6-week events, so everyone can experience "The Joy of Painting". Dates and times to be determined by interest. Each 6-week event is \$80 - 7 reserved seats are available for each event. Pick up brochure in the Welcome Center. For more information, call Cathy Kline @ (269) 365-4251.

BEYOND THE BARRIERS - A mentoring program to help reintegrate prisoners back in to society, is looking for volunteer mentors. A mentor or coaching's job is to be a sounding board, and encourager, and a resource partner all without judgement or condemnation. Beyond the Barriers provides one on one mentoring and life coaching wit trained matures and compassionate people. We have licensed counselors in our group that are willing to help you as well. If you are "looking" to live victoriously "beyond the barriers" and would like a mentor of life coach to walk with you. On your journey, contact us today at 269-459-1333 or www.beyondthebarriers.org

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL - Please mark your calendars Monday, July 10 - Thursday, July 13. We need all the help we can get, please see Brooke Camp. Thank you and God bless!

UGANDA CHILDREN'S CHOIR - Will be at 12th Street on Sunday July 16. The choir & chaperones will arrive in the evening of July 13 and will depart after the morning service. We are in need of Host Families to house 2-3 children and a chaperone on Thursday, Friday and Saturday evening. If you are interested in being host family there will be a short meeting next Sunday at the front of the church following the morning service.

MISSION TRIP TO UGANDA - The Fegaly mission trip to Uganda is scheduled to take place July 12th -27th. They are allowed to prescription medicines, non prescription medicines and vitamins with them (Expired is ok if less than 1 year) Prescription medicines such as antibiotics can not be expired.) Following are items they are accepting donations for to take with them to Uganda: Multivitamin for Children and Adults, Prenatal vitamins, Acetaminophen, Ibuprofen, Antibiotic Cream or Ointment, Allergy medicine, such as Benedryl or Zyrtec, Amoxicillin for children or adults, Robitussin, Zicam cough medicine, Zantac, Prevacid, Prilosec (heartburn), Lisinopril, Imodium, Metform, Oral Rehydration Salts, Antifungal creams, Lotrim. If you have any questions please see Carolyn or Dave Fegaly.

UNITY CHRISTIAN MUSIC FESTIVAL - August 10-12th. The Family Affordable Event of the summer! Guests will be, 10th Avenue North, Toby Mac, Matthew West, Casting Crowns, Carrolton, Zach Williams, and Matthew West to name just a few. Discounted tickets available in the Church Office. \$25 for 1 day pass, \$45 for 3 day pass and \$175 for 3 day Family Pass.

ANNUAL CHURCH CAMPING TRIP - August 11-13 at Fort Custer. Each family needs to reserve their own campsite on line. Sign up sheet is available at the Welcome Center. 1-11 & 40-45 are ideal. If you have any questions please see Brandi or Cole Roberts.

UPCOMING SUMMER CAMPS AT BARR LAKE - We have information at the Welcome Center for the following summer camps. Kids 8-11 years old, camps available June 25th - July 1st or June 25th - 28th or June 28th - July 1st. Middle school camp grades 6th - 8th July 16th - 22nd.

VISIT www.12thstreetbaptist.net for sermons, bulletin, events and other updated information.

FOOD PANTRY - Help others in need of food. See Krista Asher or Lynn Anderson.

MEN'S PRAYER BREAKFAST - Tuesday 8:30am at McDonald's on 9th Street.

AWANA - Wednesday @ 6pm.

YOUTH GROUP - No youth group this evening

NURSERY TODAY - Tami, Judy and Abby.

JUST LIVE IT!

MAY 14	
Tithes and Offerings	\$4,627.59
Memorials	230.00
Childrens Offerings	1.00
Coffee & Donuts	6.54
Total	\$4,865.13
MAY 21	
Tithes and Offerings	\$4,573.73
Missions	5.00
Childrens Offering	2.25
Coffee & Donuts	16.00
Total	\$4,596.98