

April 2017

THE ANCHOR

A publication of Westport Baptist Church / 2372 Lakeshore Rd. S. / Denver, NC 28037 / 704-483-1000

Senior Pastor's page

As we think about reaching people with the Gospel, it is SO IMPORTANT that we make sure we are being hospitable when they come to worship with us. It can be VERY difficult to get someone to that point that they make that first visit, and yet, it can be SO EASY to fail to do a few small things that ultimately make them decide they don't want to come back! Here is a news article by Thom Rainer (President of Lifeway) that I think is a good reminder to us all...

Five Reasons Growth May Be More Difficult in Your Church

Every year another two million American adults become less receptive to the gospel, and less receptive to churches. Every year.

That is one of the nuggets I took from the Pew Research work on the "Nones" when they first released the data in 2012. Pew has continued to follow the religious commitment level of Americans. From 2007 to 2014, over 12 million American adults have moved from a high level of religious commitment to a low level of commitment. They just skipped the medium level of commitment altogether.

Cultural Christianity is dying.

One no longer has to be a Christian or in a church to be accepted by society. That relatively easy pool of prospective attendees for our churches is disappearing.

But most churches keep doing what they've always done.

As a consequence, they are reaching fewer. They are declining.

Why?

The answer to that question is too complex for a simple blog post, but let me provide five high-level responses for now.

- 1. Church members are not being intentionally relational with those who are not in church.** *The old way of church outreach was more transactional; today it requires the development of relationships. Most church members will not take that step. Many don't know how to take that step.*
- 2. Many churches are stuck in the past.** *While we never compromise the gospel and the Word, our methodologies must reflect an awareness of our culture, and a willingness to be missionaries to that culture. Sadly, too many church members are unwilling to make changes. Church, for them, is about their needs and their preferences.*
- 3. Church members are not regularly inviting people to church.** *Yes, it can be that simple. Many of the religiously unaffiliated will come to church if we invite them. But it's difficult for them to respond to an invitation if they never get one.*
- 4. Many church members fail to act like Christians on social media.** *Unbelievers are watching us on Facebook and Twitter. And many of us are more likely to show our rear ends than Christian love. Social media is where the unchurched reside. And they constantly see our petty quarrels, our venomous politics, and our self-serving attitudes. Look at this blog post about what non-Christians think about us. I wrote it in 2014, but the comments still come in from unbelievers.*



- April 2, 6:00 pm Combined Prayer Service with Denver Baptist and Church at Denver
- April 7, Cold Water Open 9:00 - Noon
- April 9, Joyful Sound - 6pm Concert
- April 16, *Easter*
Full Buffet Breakfast 8:45-10:00
No Sunday School
Special Easter Service & Music 10:30
No Evening Service
- April 17, Office Closed
- April 19, No AWANA
- April 25, Deacon's Meeting
- April 26, AWANA, End of Year Party
- April 29, Women's Spring Fling
- April 30, Weekday Preschool Sunday
- May 5, Cold Water Open 9:00-Noon
- May 7, HOMECOMING
- May 14, MOTHER'S DAY
No Evening Service
- May 17, Wednesday Night Supper
- May 21, Special Speaker a Navy Seal
- May 21, Gideon Speaker Lanny Ford
PM Service
- May 23, Ladies Craft Night
- May 23-25, Ark Trip
- May 28, No Evening Service
- May 29, MEMORIAL DAY, Office Closed
- May 30, Deacon's Meeting

5. ***If they come to church, they only have a mediocre experience.*** The religiously unaffiliated do visit our churches from time to time. But, more often than not, they see our holy huddles and our lukewarm greetings. Most will not return.

Growth is indeed more difficult in most of our churches today. We no longer have the large pool of cultural Christians from which to draw. But we can reach them. We must reach them.

We will have to treat our membership in our churches as missionaries to the community instead of country club membership. Biblical membership is not about getting our perks, privileges, and preferences. It's about sacrificing self for the gospel.

Then, and only then, will we see our churches start growing again. I have heard SEVERAL great stories about people who came for our INVITE YOUR ONE DAY! Let's not stop inviting. The purpose of our IYO Day was to get us working on making that a habit. On April 16, we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ! This is a day many are inclined to be with a church as they worship. Don't waste the opportunity to invite your neighbors to join you. Remember, God has sovereignly put you where you are so you can reach them!

Blessings to you and I love you!

Pastor Steve Owenby
1 Corinthians 10:31



Men's Dinner

Saturday, May 20, 2017 @ 6:00 PM

Tickets are \$10

Navy Seal "Jare" will be our guest speaker. Please make plans now to attend. Invite friends, fathers, brothers, sons, grandsons, etc. to attend with you.

We are asking for some men to volunteer to buy a table of 7 and bring friends and family and use it as an outreach.

Tickets will be available beginning April 9th.

As Claire and I have been preparing for the coming of our daughter, I've been looking around to see what other parents-to-be are doing. -- As you picture this in your mind, think less "Keeping up with the Joneses", and more like looking-around-the-chemistry-lab-to-make-sure-you're-doing-the-experiment-right. -- I see parents already stockpiling diapers, transforming bedrooms into elaborate nurseries, and getting the latest and greatest in baby-gear.

I'm learning that there are a billion baby products out there and every recent parent swears by one tool or gadget that they couldn't do without. If we tried to get all of these can't-miss products we would be broke, and crazy, and crazy-broke. As much fun as it is looking at these gadgets and toys, (and I love gadgets and toys), I know that many of them are frivolous, and at best only serve to make life ever-so-slightly easier for a parent.

But parenting won't be easy, parenting is tough. I know this. It's also not impossible. Many of us, (who love our parents very much and are in no way seeking to minimize what they have done for us), marvel that we've made it this far in life considering the things we have lived through. Some days that seems like the best possible outcome.

As much as I've studied childhood and adolescent development for my ministry, and as much as I've interacted with babies and children of all ages, I am still very much aware that there's nothing like the real thing and that our worlds are about to irrevocably change. You can only be prepared for so much, or as one of my best friends reminded me recently, "No one can ever be prepared to change a nuclear-blowout diaper at 3:30 in the morning."

There is one thing, however, that I know I am prepared for. I'm prepared to teach my daughter that though I'm her earthly father, she has a heavenly father in God, that loves her with a love purer than I will ever be capable of giving her. I'm prepared to teach her that because God loves her he wants to communicate with her through prayer. I'm prepared to teach her to read, memorize, and love scripture. I'm prepared to teach her that there is one way to heaven, and that's through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This isn't because I'm a pastor, or work in a church, but because I want to teach her the habits and give to her the understanding that any and every Christ-follower should have. It is because as her father, I've been biblically commanded to "train her up as she should go." It's because I know that rather than "keep her safe", my chief objective as a Godly parent is to train her in righteousness.

I may not be completely prepared for all the joys and hardships parenting will bring, but this I am prepared for, and excited for!

I am not prepared, however, to tell you her name yet :)

Pastor Caleb Moore



Youth families, if you are participating in Dive Groups our schedule over the next few weeks will be a little different. There will be no Dive Groups this coming Sunday, April 2nd. Instead please make plans to attend our joint prayer service at Westport with Denver Baptist and Church at Denver. The following week, we will be having Dive groups on Saturday the 8th from 5-8pm at Beatties Ford Park (Rain Location will be the FLC). We will be joined that Saturday by Joyful Sound who will be coming into town for a concert the following evening. The week following that, April 16th, will be Easter Sunday and there will be no PM services or Dive Groups. In the weeks between meetings, encourage your students to pick a passage of the Bible and practice S.O.A.P. notes on their own!

Spring is in the air!! Before you know it, days will be longer and even much warmer than the present. I welcome those warmer days more than the average person, I guess. Since being from the great state of Florida, than explains everything.

Church is really picking up in some newer and additional areas that is exciting; so let me explain what I mean: I know our Youth Pastor, Caleb will be talking about it, but I have seen a great response with our teens on Sunday evenings where he is meeting with them at his house and they are excited about it.

Brother Don Greene and his wife, Shirley, have begun an additional Adult Sunday School class and already several have responded. Some have come in to help get it started while other newer folk have come in. That's been a real blessing already.

In our music department, we have added a few more singers and that's always a blessing. Some additional orchestra players have been visiting with us and have taken part at times with the orchestra playing in the services.

Now! All I have to do, is get everyone that's involved musically, to be together all at one time for the service! That's one of my own personal goals this year. What a blessing that would be.

Westport has been involved with "Walking" streets in our community and praying for our neighbors. Folk have promised to just get out and walk a street and pray for each home that's on the particular street. Several came out on Saturday a few days ago and what a blessing to be involved. It was good to walk, but also a thrill to be able to pray for a household that you didn't even know. God does things in mysterious ways at times, right? You never know who is behind those doors and what God has for them.

As you can see, we at Westport are interested in our own, as well as, those in our own community we don't know. From what we can find out, 70% of our own area is not believers and hardly ever attend church. What a challenge and responsibility. I'll leave that little statement with you.

Until He Comes,

Pastor Jerry Mattheiss



Easter Sunday

**BRING
FRIEND**



Egg Hunt
following the
morning service
For children
Age 2 - Grade 3

**JUST
FOR
KIDS**





VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL JULY 9-14 (SUN - FRI)

TIME: 6:00-9:00

AGES: 3 YRS - YOUTH

PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS AND SEE THE SIGN UP SHEET IN THE VESTIBULE FOR WHERE YOU CAN SERVE.

WE ESPECIALLY NEED A COMMITMENT FROM BUS AND VAN DRIVERS, AND MONITORS.

WORKSHOP ~ WORKSHOP ~ WORKSHOP

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL WORKSHOP

April 8th ~ 9-3pm

CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS! (TEACHERS, SESSION VOLUNTEERS, SECURITY, ETC.)

There will be a VBS Workshop to review our program and the exciting changes we're making this year on Saturday, April 8th, from 9:00 - 3:00 PM in the

Fellowship Hall. This will be our only workshop concerning the program and curriculum. Meals will be provided.

ALL THOSE INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING ARE ASKED TO ATTEND.

Please respond to either, Erin Hudgins or Shelly Sikes by April 2nd.

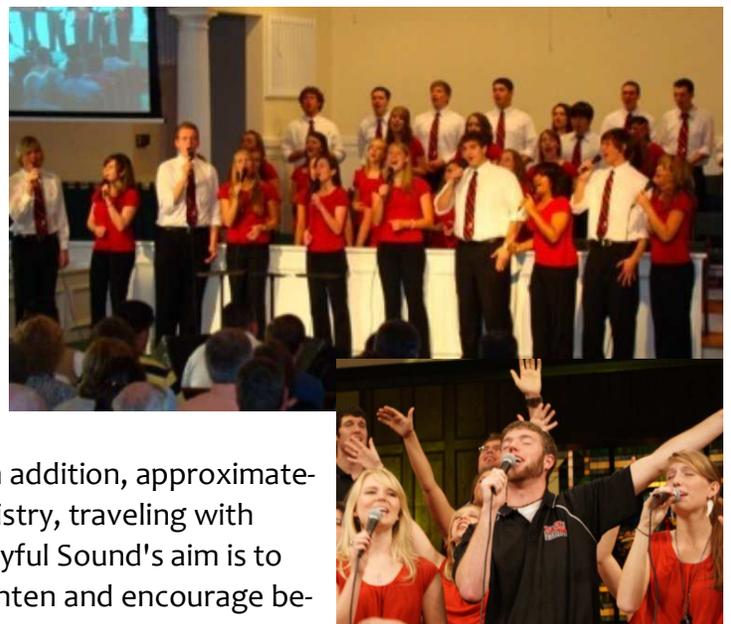
JOYFUL SOUND SINGING GROUP

Worshipping with us

Sunday, April 9th at 10:30 AM

and then in Concert at 6:00 pm

Joyful Sound is BSU's singing ministry team from North Greenville University located in Tigerville, South Carolina. Joyful Sound began in 1977 with just a few singers and has grown to consist of multiple singing teams with a 5-piece band that rotates between each team. In addition, approximately 10 alternate members serve as a vital part of this ministry, traveling with teams when full-time members are unable to travel. Joyful Sound's aim is to serve God through song, prayer and testimony to enlighten and encourage believers, and non-believers alike, to draw near to God. All teams work together as one family.



Caring hands to show God's love!



WEEKDAY PRESCHOOL SUNDAY

Sunday, April 30th ~ 10:30 AM

We have invited the Weekday Preschool staff, the children that attend our Weekday Preschool program and their families to worship with us on Sunday morning, April 30th @ 10:30 am. The children will share a couple of songs and we will recognize our preschool staff and parents.

WEEKDAY PRESCHOOL 2017-2018 REGISTRATION

GOING ON NOW!

****SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT****

OUR WEEKDAY PRESCHOOL IS OFFERING A SUMMER CAMP

PROGRAM AGAIN THIS YEAR IN JUNE AND JULY -

CALL 704-483-5835

preschool registration



H O M E C O M I N G

HOMECOMING - May 7th @ 10:30 AM

Guest Pastor ~ Pastor Mike Young, Sr.

followed by a Covered dish meal in the Family Life Center

INVITE FAMILY AND FRIENDS TO CELEBRATE WITH US

On Sunday morning, May 7, 2017 we will celebrate our 51st anniversary as an official church. Homecoming is an annual tradition. And as our tradition, we ask previous pastors to come back and help us celebrate and remember those special years they were here. Pastor Mike Young, Sr. will be our speaker. He served Westport Baptist Church as Senior Pastor for 13 years from July 2001 until June 2014. We also ask church families to bring a covered dish meal that will serve their family plus one more.

Opportunities Include

SUNDAY

9:00 AM Prayer at the Altar
 9:15 AM Sunday School
 10:30 AM Morning Worship
 4:30 PM Adult Choir Practice
 6:00 PM Evening Worship

TUESDAY

7:00 AM Men's Prayer
 10:00 AM Ladies Prayer Time

WEDNESDAY

6:45 PM Children's Awana Program
 6:45 PM Impact Student Ministry
 7:00 PM Adult Worship Service

Important Information on how we can be contacted:

Website - www.westport.church

Church Office - 704-483-1000

Weekday Preschool Office 704-483-5835

Fax - 704-483-7474

Church Staff

Pastor Steve Owenby / Senior Pastor

Email address: steve@westport.church

Pastor Jerry Matheiss / Minister of Music

Email address: jerry@westport.church

Pastor Caleb Moore / Pastor to Students & Families

Email address: caleb@westport.church

Susie Sherrill, Senior Administrative Assistant

Email address: susie@westport.church



April Birthdays

4/05	Brooklyn Sikes	4/18	Stephanie Helms
4/06	Robert Moore	4/18	John Rathemacher
4/06	Bryan Parker	4/19	Austin Hudgins
4/07	Carey Miller	4/20	Virginia Dysart
4/09	Karen Alexander	4/20	Wilma Hudgins
4/09	Noma Hitchcock	4/20	Beth Parker
4/10	Jimmy Perkins	4/21	Rachel Ann Curtis
4/12	Sophia Wilson	4/22	David Balok
4/13	Kellan Feltz	4/24	Michael Wilkes
4/13	Cheryl Richardson	4/25	Pat Rainwater
4/13	Blair Roche	4/27	Sharon Mann
4/14	Darrell Ellis	4/28	Joan Lopez
4/15	Carolyn Hunsucker	4/29	Beverly Cartner
4/16	Katherine VonCannon	4/30	Den Parker
4/17	Monique Sims	4/30	Marie Beard



April Anniversaries

4/05/69	David and Rachel Ann Curtis
4/13/96	Bob and Sharon Mann
4/15/06	Mike and Anita Hayes
4/17/99	Bud and Louise Hoyle
4/20/96	Paul and Lori Blythe
4/22/66	Barry and Janice Still
4/23/72	David and Carol Seigler

