

Collinsville Baptist Church

February 2017

Lessons with Curtis Curtis is a Chocolate Lab. He is our son Joseph's best buddy and pal.

Last summer Joseph changed jobs and decided to stay with us for a few months until he settles into his new job. Curtis came with him. The new job is requiring a lot of hours away from here, so Gloria and I have stepped in to help with walking Curtis. It has been quite an adventure.

You have probably seen us around town. Curtis at the end of his leash, pulling hard. Always sure that we are either too slow or too fast. Gloria is better with him than me.

I had to learn that sometimes it is really important to get to the next clump of grass. And that it is very important to stop and put his hunting-dog-nose deep into the grass. He is certain that this time he will find something really important there. I am certain that he will not. After a while, I pull on the leash, and we move on again. Except when he suddenly turns back without warning and runs to look at something behind us. If I do not see this coming, the result is a huge jerk on the leash. And pain in my shoulder.

He is really smart. I left him in a room in the basement one day closing the door firmly. I came back later to find him out of the room. Turns out he knows how to open a door with his mouth and paws. One late night we were walking downtown. There had been a big rain, and the creek was way up. He ran over to the wall to look down into the creek. He almost jumped off to the water twenty feet below. He got excited. I looked. Yep. Lots of water. We continued our walk only after I pulled on the leash numerous times. He was unhappy.

On the late night walk, we usually walk up Main Street to the tracks, turn around and come back. As we approached the bridge again, he got excited again, rushing to the wall. We went back and forth along the wall. "Curtis, there is nothing there. Let's go home." Around the corner of the wall, straining at the leash. I was perturbed. "Let's go home." We moved over a few feet to hear a huge splash. There below us was a beaver who had hit the water with his tail as he swam away under the bridge.

Curtis and I froze. I looked over at him. He looked up at me and said, "See. I told you so. I would find lots of other animals if you would just let me off that leash." Okay, he did not say that. Out loud. But if you could have seen the look from those big brown eyes, you would have known that's what he was saying.

Gloria and I have come to love Curtis. And to appreciate much of our time with him. And we remain thankful for the love he gives Joseph. When Joseph is at home, Curtis makes it quite clear that he wants to be with Joseph, not us.

But Curtis and I continue to walk miles with each other. Sometimes, when we are away from most people, I will take him off the leash and let him run free. Down on the path by the creek where he can go get in the water. He is, after all, a Retriever, a water dog. Or along the tracks and through the park. Really nice time together.

Except. When Curtis sees another dog or an animal or a person, he is quite certain that he must confront. It is genetic right. On the leash or off, Curtis lunges for the other.

I yell at him. If on leash, I jerk back. If not, I scream louder. “No. Curtis, no.” Over and over until he is back under control. Then I discipline some. Tell him he can’t do that. He does understand – he is really smart. And he has gotten better.

Until the next time. Last night a cat ran right in front of him. My shoulder jerked out of socket. “No, Curtis. No.”

I do get mad at him. I remind myself he was bred to be a hunting dog. To smell each blade of grass. And to chase all prey. Sometimes he glances at me quickly. Then chases anyway. It is bred into him. And he knows what he wants.

Or, as the world would say: The heart knows what the heart wants. Often said as an excuse for some sin. We live in a world that has elevated what a person feels in their heart as right. No matter what.

We Christians do not have that option. The Bible is clear about depending on the heart. “The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.” “Every imagination of the thoughts of man’s hearts was only evil.” “He that trusts in his heart is a fool.” “For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies, pride, foolishness.” That last sentence was spoken by Jesus. Gulp.

Part of why our country has such problem? People are trusting their evil hearts. Not God. A Christian web site recently had a picture of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden with this caption: “Couple Follows Their Hearts; Billions Dead”.

Is there any hope? Sure. Human history did not end with Eden. And the heart can lead us to God. Emotions can be an important part of the Christian experience. If our hearts are changed. “Let us draw near with a *true heart* in full assurance of faith, having our *hearts sprinkled* from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.” “Pursue faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure *heart*.”

When we let Jesus rule our hearts, they can become pure. We often tell people to invite Jesus into our hearts. When He enters, he cleanses. And our emotions lead to Him. Our hearts – evil. Our hearts belonging to Jesus – pure. Hope for us.

I’d like to stay and write some more. But it is almost time for Curtis’s late night walk. Who knows what he will see tonight. Or what he will teach me.

Scriptures above – Jeremiah 17:9; Genesis 6:5; Proverbs 38:26; Matthew 15:19; Hebrews 10:22; I Timothy 2:22
Quote is from The Babylon Bee.



Church Goal \$2,000
Given - \$2235
Over Goal - \$235

Collinsville Baptist Church
P.O. Box 558
Collinsville, AL 35961



Church Goal \$2,000

Non-profit Permit Imprint
Permit Number 2
Fort Payne, AL 35967

Feb Anniversaries

15 Carl and Bennie
Clayton

27 Phyllis and Mickey
Jones

February Birthdays

1 Charlie Godshall, Jacob
Preston

3 David Ryan

5 Colton Pendergrass

6 Brooke Jones
Sarah Morgan

7 Kimberly Brown
Bev Petty

8 Judy Jones

12 Josh Alexander

14 Lorenza Ramirez

15 Adam McKinney

17 Jo Ann Burton

18 Buddy Acker

19 Carmen Barkley

21 Rebecca Fields
Mark Morgan

22 Wayne Smith

24 Clay Gifford

25 Autumn Barkley
Brenda Navarro

26 Ashley Kasinger

27 Abigale Garroute

28 Bronner Jones

Thank you to all who helped in making the **Community Christmas Service** possible. There have been many who expressed how much they were blessed. Thank you for your faithfulness in prayer! It was richly blessed by God. Great music, great participation by local churches, great fellowship and food afterwards. *He Is Here* was the theme. And He was.

Thank you to all who helped make the **Christmas Morning Service** so special. Lighting of Christ Candle, Special Children Participation in Service, Lord's Supper, Baptism, Wonderful Music. Let's have Christmas on Sunday every year.

Congratulations to

Sarah Jones who made her profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior in December. She was baptized on Christmas day.

Thank you for the Christmas gift from the congregation. And thank you to all of you who did so many acts of love for us during the Christmas season. John and Gloria

Chili Cookoff Results

First Place Lue Deen Perkins, Second Place Symphony Graves, Third Place Jennifer Wilkins. There were questions about the validity of the vote from the other six who entered chili, but all of those present agreed it was a great day and a great meal.

Men's Day has been moved to Feb 19 Youth Fundraising Dinner after service

Feb 20 DeKalb and Fort
Payne Schools Out

Lent Begins Ash
Wednesday, March 1

Week of Prayer for
North American Missions
March 5-12

Schools Spring Break
Fort Payne and DeKalb
March 27-31

Palm Sunday April 9

**Quarterly Ministry
Meeting and Covered
Dish Dinner**
Sunday, April 9

Maundy Thursday April
13
6:00 Service at Church

Good Friday April 14

Easter Sunday
April 16
6:15 A.M. Sunrise
Service and Breakfast
10:00 Sunday School
11:00 Worship

National Day of Prayer
Thursday, May 4

**Feed My Starving
Children** April 29,
Rainsville Civic Center
(DeKalb Schools Center)
The goal this year is to
have 600 volunteers pack
at least 120,000 meals
and need to raise \$26,400
to pay for the food to
prepare the meals
(22cents per meal).

Mother's Day Sunday,
May 14

**Collinsville High School
Baccalaureate** Sunday
May 21 6:00
Harvest Center

**Collinsville High School
Graduation** Monday
May 22 6:00
Gadsden State Coliseum,
Centre

Last Day of School
May 25 or 26

**Lord's Supper
Volunteers - February** –
Mark and Glenda
Morgan; March – Clyde
and Sandra Killian; April
– None – (Lord's Supper

will be served at the
Maundy Thursday
Service); May – J.R. and
Donzella Bobo; June –
Joey and Terri Bobo

**Operation Christmas
Child** January
toothbrush, toothpaste
February – small plush
toys – watch sales after
Valentine March – Hats,
gloves, scarves – watch
for winter clearance

A Reminder – The
Nominating Committee
Report is no longer
issued as an annual
report. The Committees
remained the same. Let
the Committee know if
you would rather not
continue to serve in a
church position.

The Sharing Tree is in
the hall across from the
kitchen. Food and other
items donated by you are
available for anyone
needs help. Please
continue to make sure the
tree stays full of food.

Building a Home

Women's Retreat

March 4, 2017

Please Pray for the Retreat

Please Plan to bring other
women.

The speaker is Cassie
Shields of Hokes Bluff.

She is on the staff at
Hokes Bluff Baptist
Church.

Please Be Gathering items
(new or gently use) for the
Upscale Yard Sale

Which helps cover costs
for the Retreat

And don't forget to bring
a couple of cans of canned
food for a local food
pantry.