

God is love and love lives here!



600 North Houston Lake Blvd., Centerville 31028  
(478) 953-3090  
[www.thewellatcenterville.com](http://www.thewellatcenterville.com)  
Office Hours: Mon-Thur 8:30a-12:30p  
Rev. Tommy Odum  
[pastortommy@thewellatcenterville.com](mailto:pastortommy@thewellatcenterville.com); 478/397-9491

Sunday, June 2, 2024

*This week we discuss the role of Pastor in church growth. It's important to also note what we mean by "growth". It's not always numerical even though it's part of it. Growth is a combination of metrics that are often more spiritual than physical. This is a great article I pray you read as we finish up our current series this Sunday. See You There!*

-Pastor Tommy

**Scripture and Sermon:**

Titus 1:5-9  
"Church Growth 103"

**Church Growth: The Place of Metrics in Evaluating Ministry**

NOVEMBER 8, 2023   GRAHAM HESLOP

Attending a conference, denominational synod, or church planting seminar, you do not have to wait long before you are discussing numbers and attendance. It's not even that people specifically ask how big your church is. It is more that the question, "How's it going?" either has the implied meaning of 'how many people are attending your church?' or we instinctively answer with metrics. I do not yet know what to make of this instinct in myself; or that when I ask about your ministry all I am really interested in is how many people are coming. But I know it is not healthy. And I am fairly certain it is not biblical.

**Paul does not mention the size of a church once in his epistles.**

Paul does not mention the size of a church once in his epistles, apart from celebrating their growth. And in Christ's seven letters to the churches in Revelation it is the unimpressive and beleaguered churches that are commended (Smyrna and Philadelphia), while the influential and powerful churches are rebuked (Sardis and Laodicea).

**Metrics Have Limited Value in Evaluating Your Church**

Discussing the place of numbers in evaluating our churches and ministries, Marshall and Payne write, "Numbers can be a blunt instrument for evaluation. On their own, they don't tell the whole story. Good numbers can be a sign of spiritual health, or they can indicate that you are running a non-demanding, people-pleasing ministry that lots of people like." Numbers do not tell the whole story. Yet the way we speak and evaluate each other's ministries I wonder if we actually believe that. After all, it is far more impressive to say your average Sunday attendance is closing in on 1000 than to admit that you are seeing little maturity in your church.

**Let's not forget that Joel Osteen pastors one of the biggest churches in America.**

Read that quote from *The Vine Project* again: numbers alone indicate nothing. Let's not forget that Joel Osteen pastors one of the biggest churches in America. So, in this short post I hope to outline a few of my concerns and thoughts regarding numbers.

**Numbers Can Be Misleading**

I wrote a post a couple of years ago asking if Satan can grow the church. I was not referring to pastors selling their souls or children to the devil in order to have bigger churches—though I reckon some might be willing to do that. In the post I looked at Jesus' parable about the wheats and the weeds in Matthew 13. The conclusion I drew was that Satan is able to mislead God's people by giving them what they desire most, so long as it draws them away from finding satisfaction and significance in Christ. I concluded that post by writing, "[Satan] revels in a church where attendance is the mark of faith and its leaders worship growth."

**Satan is able to mislead God's people by giving them what they desire most.**

We must remember that we may grow a large ministry only to have most of it ripped up and burnt. The warning for everyone here is to pursue genuine gospel growth, and if you read the other 'kingdom parables' in Matthew 13 you will learn that that is often slow.

**Church Metrics Make a Cruel Master**

When the first question regarding an event or service is, "How many people came?" you are setting yourself up for discouragement, or perhaps false confidence. On paper alone attendance is powerful, both to puff up and to pull down. Forgetting for a second the trap mentioned in my first point, let us consider a second trap, one that Satan I am sure also sets: discouragement.

On paper alone attendance is powerful, both to puff up and to pull down.

Consider the statement, “Only 20 people attended the prayer meeting.” Sure, that might be disappointing when you consider what percentage of your church 20 people represents. But 20 Christians did gather to pray. They surrendered their time and submitted their requests to our Father in heaven, and surely that cannot be an absolute discouragement. When numbers are the primary measure of our ministries we will be crushed by disappointment and grow discouraged, often in spite of the work of God before our eyes.


They Indicate Trends, Not Transformation

This is an important point that brings us back to Marshall and Payne, quoted above. Numbers can indicate if the church is growing, on a plateau, or in decline, but little more. When attendance is dropping we must ask some hard questions about that ministry or event. If the numbers have stayed exactly the same we may need to consider change and innovation. And if there is a growing trend we should ask if we are merely filling seats. However, in all three cases the numbers reveal trends and not conversions or Christian maturity.

Numbers reveal trends and not conversions or Christian maturity.

Therefore, in closing, I agree that numbers can play a useful role in helping us evaluate our ministries, through the force of undeniable statistics. But we cannot let numbers deceive us with false growth, nor can we allow numbers to rule over and discourage us.

Keep The Faith,  
Pastor Tommy



5  
Patia Dyal  
Bill Reedy

6  
Ben Clemons  
Jeff Morrison

8  
Carrie Blackburn

Bible Reading Plan	
Week of June 2 <sup>nd</sup> :	
Sunday.....	2 Cor. 5
Monday... ..	2 Cor. 6
Tuesday... ..	2 Cor. 7
Wednesday.....	2 Cor. 8
Thursday.....	2 Cor. 9
Friday.....	2 Cor. 10
Saturday.....	2 Cor. 11

Flowers on the Altar and Gifts Given to the Glory of God

- ✿ In honor of Tony Rozier and Louie Sampson by Nancy & Leon Hudson
- ✿ In memory of Bob Parker by Nancy & Leon Hudson, Margaret Henley, Bennie & Joyce Wyatt
- ✿ In memory of Debbie Herrington by Jim & Barbara Hilliard, Miss Terry’s Circle, Nancy & Leon Hudson, Margaret Henley, Bennie & Joyce Wyatt
- ✿ In memory of Kay Darnell by Margaret Henley, Bennie & Joyce Wyatt
- ✿ In memory of Sarah Mayer by Margaret Henley, Bennie & Joyce Wyatt
- ✿ In memory of Frank Milner by Margaret Henley



- ✓ 06/04-06/24 CMC General Conference, Laurel, MS
- ✓ 06-10-24 Finance Meeting 6p

Community Missions

- The Food Pantry is open June 12, 10a-1p, come on out and volunteer! You will be blessed. Our Food Pantry Team rocks!
- The Open Door Mission Closet (Clothes Closet) is now open every Wednesday from 9am until 12 noon. We would love for you to stop in for a brief visit when possible and/or become a volunteer. We work on a rotating basis so you would not be obligated to work every week. Please see Brenda if you are interested. Tuesdays will become our new Sorting/Processing day and volunteers are also needed on that day.
- June 5 volunteers- Cynthia Boutwell, Marie Davis, Elaine Hubbard

Yard Sale

**Postponed**—Due to Worship Services being held in the Fellowship Hall while the a/c is out in the sanctuary and it’s until further notice - The Clothes Closet and Food Pantry community yard sale on June 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> has been postponed to the Fall... stay tuned for dates to be announced.

Youth News

Sundays- 9:30a-9:45a- breakfast and socialize; 9:45-10:15a- Sunday School lesson  
June 23- Swimming and lunch after church at J.O. & Lynn Miller’s pool  
July 3- Youth Bowling Night  
July 14-17- VBS, there will teaching and activities age appropriate for teens  
July 21- Swimming and lunch after church at J.O. & Lynn Miller’s pool  
August 3- Wild Adventures for the day and Skillet concert that evening

Thank You

“Thank you to all who set up the Fellowship Hall for Worship, Tommy, the Worship Team, the Choir, communion servers, Caleb, Eli and Jeffrey on audio – great job!” ~~ Debbie Gray ~~



**New Concerns**  
Jennifer Spence

**Continue Prayers for:**  
Family of Debbie Herrington  
Family of Alex Strozier  
Savannah Boggs  
Terry Diesch  
Gloria Nelson  
Family of Ed Meehan  
Julie Peacock  
Dennis & Kathy Davis  
Marshall Ferns  
Family of Kay Darnell  
Mary Lee Carter

Tom Gamble  
Betty Bowen  
Michael & Jennie Walston  
Betty Byrd  
Leon Hudson  
Mary Prater  
Jim & Mary Leary  
Virginia Eadie  
Bill Reedy  
Our Country, Leaders, Military

Finance Report for	
May 26	
Operating Budget.....	\$6,293.30
Food Pantry.....	251.50
Total.....	\$6,544.80
Worship Attendance	
110	
Sunday School	
53	



Family Promise

If you are interested in helping out with Family Promise on our next rotation, contact J.O. or Lynn, this is a very blessed ministry of our church... check out their website at <https://www.familypromisehoustonco.org/>

Men on a Mission

**For our church members who may be widowed, a single mother, or an elderly couple:** the Men at the Well offer a service called "Men on a Mission" to assist you with minor repairs and/or minor renovations to your home. You simply pay for the needed materials, and the Men ask that you donate a love offering (as you feel led) to our church to cover labor costs. Contact Stevie Bowen or our church office at 953-3090.

Are you Looking for a place to serve? To get involved? We have it!

This Week's Schedule:

Sunday- June 2

Ushers

10:30a J.O. Miller, Tony Rozier  
Mel Smeltz, Cheri' Cox, Roy Carter  
Keith Mobley, Stevie Bowen  
Joy Fleming, Sherrie Shell

8:30a Staff Meeting

9:15a Sunday School  
10:30a Worship

Greeters

10:30a Joy Fleming, Susan Glidewell,  
Susan Howdeshell

Communion Servers

Don & Sharron Schall  
Sherrill Pinckney, Paula Williams

Finance Stewards

Nancy Hudson, Amber Gamble, Joy Fleming

Assisting with Children

Sunday- June 2

Nursery- Joy Fleming, Laura McKenzie  
Children- Nancy Hudson  
Sunday- June 9

Nursery- Linda Blanton, Cinderella Sampson  
Children- Sherry Armour

Monday- June 3

10:00a Quilters  
7:30p Narcotics Anonymous

Tuesday- June 4

9:00a Worship Service Meeting  
9:15a Movin' n Groovin'  
10:00a Partners in Prayer  
10:00a Yoga  
11:30a Life Group IV  
6:30p Miss Terry's Circle  
6:30p Bass Club  
7:30 p Narcotics Anonymous

Wednesday- June 5

8:00a Men's Fellowship Breakfast  
9a-12p Clothes Closet  
1:00p Life Group I "Under Construction"  
6:30p Choir Practice  
7:30p Narcotics Anonymous

Thursday- June 6

9:15a Movin' n Groovin'  
10:00a Yoga  
7:30p Narcotics Anonymous

Friday- June 7

7:30p Narcotics Anonymous

Saturday- June 8

7:30p . Narcotics Anonymous



## Sunday School at 9:15a

Are you looking to get involved in Sunday School? We have a great line up of classes to explore! Maybe you've been attending Sunday School regularly but see a topic you're interested in – it's okay to move around and try different classes – let's learn and grow together!

### Sunday School Class

Seekers

Issues & Answers

New Beginnings

Christian Fellowship

Youth

### Studies

Nehemiah

Mark

Revelation

Ephesians

Grace

### Teacher

Kathy Rutke

Joy Fleming

Nancy Hudson

Don Schall

Eric & Gloria Nelson

# Men at the Well

## Cooking Baby Back ribs



for your

# July 4<sup>th</sup>

\$25 each, pick up Wednesday, July 3, 8a-1p

See any “Man” or come by/call the office to get yours!