

“AS MEMBERS OF THIS CONGREGATION, WE WILL FAITHFULLY PARTICIPATE IN ITS MINISTRIES BY OUR PRAYERS...

Patsy Zeigler Becky Derrick Arvan Derrick Dale Wells Patsy Shuler Christopher McCroskey
Jimmy Grahl Jackie McNeill Latson Lewis Steve Aiello Kaye Floyd John Ballentine
Hilda Edwards

Shut-Ins: Shirley Butler; Esther Carter; Gillett Hipp; June Hutto; Linda Maloch; Melton Martin; Georgeann Pace; Jean Raynor; Claudia Sineath; George Taylor

Family and Friends: **Gloria Erd** (friend of Lynn Martin); **Amber Kirby** (cousin of Kelsey Tolliver); **Pearl Geddens** (mother of Tom Geddens); **Laura Horlbeck** (niece of English Percy); **Andrew Jordan** (nephew of John Jordan); **Beverly Lipscomb** (sister-in-law of John Jordan); **Ross Deal** (grandson of Mary Kamoroff); **Jimmy Dawkins** (friend of Jeanette Hornsby); **David Turner** (brother of Pam Turner); **Chip Mixon** (friend of Tommy Gleaton); **Ron Walker** (friend of Tommy & Chris Gleaton); **Merit Takach** (friend of Joyce and Brent Robinson); **Frankie Hendrix** (cousin of Billy Pearson); **Howard Stephens** (former church member); **James Boggs** (father of Claire Boggs); **Stacy Coggins** (daughter of Steve Aiello); **Dan & Leslie White** (brother & sister-in-law of Steve White); **Alva Humphries** (friend of Marty Johnson); **Bill Areheart** (friend of Bonnie Ramsey); **Hayley Beaudoin** (niece of Edwa Meek); **Addie Kinard** (cousin of coworker of Edwa Meek); **Stuart & Penny Lloyd** (son & daughter-in-law of Tom & Marilyn Lloyd); **Megan Corby** (daughter of Carlis Edwards); **Chip Hooker** (Wayne Hooker's father); **Robert Bradley** (Business Associate of Simon Ross); **Gary Becton** (friend of Mark Branham); **Florence Lee Carter, Monnie Tiller** (friends of Chris Derrick); **Adrin & Linda Hargett** (stepfather and stepmom of Christopher McCroskey); **Alexa Lookingbill** (wife of coworker of Kathy White); **Katelyn Rose** (daughter of coworker of Kathy White); **Vickie Edwards** (neighbor of Kathy White); **Teddy Derrick** (uncle of Arvan Derrick); **Haidee Baehr** (friends of Ruth Frady); **Dianne Schmotzer** (sister-in-law of Gale Frady); **Denise Paul, Scott & Karen Nelson** (cousins of Gale Frady); **Dan Conner, Max Johnson** (friends of Gale Frady); **Wayne Blair** (son of Dot Johnson); **Walt & Janet Beck** (friends of Jo Ann Heiting); **Adam Lavender** (son of Phil Lavender)

If you have a friend or family member on the Prayer List, we ask you to please keep us updated. If no word is received, we will trust that our prayers have been answered and remove the name. To update us, please call the office or e-mail us at trinityumcwc@sc.rr.com.

OUR PRESENCE ...

In-Person Attendance 01/22 SS: 13 Worship: 22

OUR GIFTS ...

General Fund 01/22 \$ 1,572.48

OUR SERVICE ...

OUR WITNESS.”

Upcoming Events

01/30 Exercise Class, 10:30 a.m.

02/01 T.a.G., 7 p.m.

02/02 Exercise, 10:30 a.m.

Readings for February 5

Isaiah 58:1-12

Psalm 112:1-10

1 Corinthians 2:1-12 (13-16)

Matthew 5:13-20



Ministers
Pastor
Resident Bishop
District Superintendent

The Congregation
John D. Jordan
Jonathan Holston
Rev. Fran M. Elrod

Our mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Our vision is to Connect, Nurture, Inspire and Transform



The Sermon on the Mount

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Matthew 5: 1-12

The Sermon on the Mount begins with this passage. The Sermon on the Mount is not a sermon but a series of teachings of Jesus to the disciples. Matthew 5-7 are Jesus' instructions to the disciples. These teachings are instructions for Matthew's church and the church today. These are our instructions for living in the Kingdom of Heaven and being disciples of Jesus Christ.

The sermon begins with the blessings of Jesus commonly known as the Beatitudes. The tendency is to read the Beatitudes as if-then statements. If you are this now, you will receive that in the future. That is a very simplistic way of reading these verses. They are the blessings of living according to the teaching of Jesus both now and in the future. The beatitudes identify those who are blessed now and in the future. The Beatitudes link the promises of the end times with the disposition of God's blessings in the present.¹

The word translated as blessed can also be translated as fortunate. Therefore, the Beatitudes identify those who are fortunate now and their future reward. Looking carefully, we see those who are fortunate are not whom we would expect.

After the early attempts to break the sound barrier, a legend arose. The plane's controls would go haywire as it neared the sound barrier causing the pilots to lose control of the plane. One pilot, Chuck Yeager, noticed when he approached the sound barrier, the controls would begin to act oppositely. On his historic flight, instead of pulling the control stick back Yeager pushed the stick forward to lift. He controlled oppositely, thus he broke the sound barrier.

This story has been debunked by General Yeager but it does give a graphic illustration of what Jesus is teaching his disciples, Matthew's church, and us. Blessing and fortune in the Kingdom of Heaven are opposed to the kingdom of the world.

Let's look at who is fortunate according to Jesus and their future reward. To get a more modern sense of these blessings, I will use my translation, albeit rough.

Those who are poor in their inner being are fortunate because they are of the Kingdom of Heaven. Poor in the inner being does not mean a lack of faith or belief but realizing one cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven on their own. One can only be reconciled to God by God. Those who know they are poor in the inner being enter the Kingdom of Heaven through God's grace. We are fortunate to recognize the poverty in our inner being and the need for God's grace.

Those who are mourning are fortunate because they will be comforted. We tend to view this as personal equating mourning with grieving the death of a loved one. Jesus is not speaking of mourning as grief but mourning as lamenting. The ones who lament over the state of creation will be comforted. We lament the violence in the world- war, mass shootings, sexual assault, and gang warfare. We lament the oppression of people by governments and human trafficking. We lament the condition of the environment and the natural world. We lament but we are comforted knowing God is restoring creation to perfection.

¹ Donald Senior, *The Gospel of Matthew* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997) 103.

The humble and gentle are fortunate because they will gain possession of the earth. We think those who are powerful will conquer the earth. Throughout history, many have tried but no one has conquered the earth. The earth is God's creation and cannot be taken from God. The humble and gentle are whom God chooses to give the world.

Those who hunger and thirst for a relationship with God and do what God requires are fortunate because they are satisfied. Many who hunger and thirst for money or things are never satisfied. The more they get, the more they want and are never content. Those who seek a relationship with God are satisfied and content. Because they are content they can do what God requires. We are satisfied with our relationship with God.

Those who are actively compassionate are fortunate for they will receive mercy and compassion. The actively compassionate are those who feel compassion and then act out of compassion. They give "thoughts and prayers" and then do something about the situation. The action may be on a large scale like donating to Oliver Gospel Mission or small like carrying easy-opening canned food and bottled water in the car to give to the person with the cardboard sign. God is a God of compassion and mercy. So as we give active compassion to others, we receive God's compassion and mercy.

Those who are pure in their inner being are fortunate because they will see God. The purity of the inner being is freedom from guilt and corruption. We may be guilty of past sins but we repent and God removes the guilt of our sins. Our thoughts turn from the evil of the world and toward God. We begin to see God acting in the world as we rid ourselves of evil thoughts.

Those who are peacemakers are fortunate because they are called children of God. God is love and love leads to peace. The word Jesus would have used was shalom. Shalom is a Hebrew word translated as peace but also carries the connotation of well-being and health. A peacemaker would seek to resolve conflicts and the well-being of others. As children of God, we seek inner peace and resolution of conflict.

Those driven out and persecuted for doing what God requires are fortunate because theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. What God requires is living according to God's rule not the rule of the world. God's rule and the rule of the world conflict; leading to ostracism, rejection, and persecution. That doesn't matter for we live according to eternal rule, not the temporal rule.

You are fortunate when you are denounced, driven out, accused of all evil, and lied about because of Jesus. Be glad and extremely joyful. Your reward will be great in heaven for this is the way the world treated all God's prophets. The fact that the world does not accept you indicates you are living according to God's kingdom. God's rule turns the world's rule completely upside down which the world cannot tolerate.

I hope that in looking at the Beatitudes in this way, I have conveyed that they are not pats on the head but a radical way of living. Jesus is saying to the disciples, Matthew's church, and us that following him is radically different from the way of the world. We are blessed now because we are living in that different way. We are comforted because we know God is restoring creation. We are blessed now for we are satisfied and content with what we have. We are blessed now because we see God working in the world. We know we are children of God. We know that our future reward will be great in the Kingdom of Heaven for we live according to the Kingdom of Heaven now. We are so fortunate.