

# Call for repentance

**MICHAEL ALEXANDER**  
Central Newspaper Services

Joel 2: 1-29;  
Acts 2: 14-21

Today's lesson is from the Book of Joel, but is centered more on the Book of Acts.

The last verses of the scripture for today are recounted by Peter in his wonderful sermon on the Day of Pentecost shortly after Jesus had ascended to be with God, the Father. This is a wonderful message of hope and gladness for all people in our day.

Isn't it amazing that God foresaw this great period and told about it through His prophet so many years

before it happened? God is truly amazing and His grace is abundant.

## A CALL TO REPENT

*Therefore also now, saith the Lord, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning. And rend your heart, and not your garments. And turn unto the Lord your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.*

Joel 2: 12,13.

Notice that the prophet said that now was the time to repent. For the hearers of this prophecy in the day of Joel, it was to repent and

seek God's forgiveness looking forward to the great day of the Lord's crucifixion and resurrection.

In our time, the call is just as urgent. The time to repent is now! So many people want to delay their response to God's call. There are things to do first or there are situations that need to change first or there are sins that need attention first.

The call to the people hearing Joel was urgent. God's hand of judgment was swiftly coming and to delay would be disastrous.

Who knows when God will close the door of opportunity? Even then, they were unsure of how long He would allow them the possibility of repent-

ing.

Note that He required a repentance of the heart. For centuries, God's people had shown their remorse by renting (tearing) their garments. This was a sign of their contrite condition. However, it is obvious that the act had become ritualistic and not genuine.

Many people today are trusting on the outward acts seeped in ritual worship rather than the heart-broken sorrow of a person truly sorry for their sins. His call was to repent now and to offer true repentance.

## A PROMISE TO RECEIVE REPENTERS

*And it shall come to pass,*

*that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.*

Acts 2:21.

On the day mentioned in Acts 2, a great beginning occurred. Joel's words of prophecy were becoming realized and a time of acceptance and forgiveness were ushered in.

Peter preached a strong message and many people were saved that day. God poured out His spirit on the gatherers, but more-important, on the world.

Jesus had promised His followers that when He returned to heaven, He would send His spirit back. Here was the fulfillment of that promise.

We call this the begin-

ning of the grace period. During this time, the Holy Spirit will convict people of sin, will draw them to Jesus as Savior and will seal salvation on those who repent and claim Jesus.

This time of forgiveness and salvation is limited. No one knows when Jesus will return and the day of grace be closed. No one knows when his physical life may end, thus removing his opportunity to partake of this grace. Therefore, it is imperative that those needing the forgiveness of Jesus make their decision now. It could soon be too late.

*Lessons based on International Sunday School lessons*

## SERVICES/ACTIVITIES

### Great Hope

Great Hope Baptist Church will hold revival Aug. 10 - 13. Guest speaker was Dr. Steve Roy, pastor of Benvenue Baptist Church, Rocky Mount. Service begins at 7:30 p.m. on Aug. 10 and at 8 p.m. Aug. 11-13.

### Good Shepherd

The Rev. Phil Thonneson, Assistant Bishop of the North Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, will install the Rev. Dr. Gary A. Vogelpohl as the first full time pastor of the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Elizabeth City on Sunday, Aug. 10 at the 11 a.m. worship service.

A reception and luncheon will follow the service.

### Bagleys Chapel

Family and Friends Day at Bagleys Chapel Baptist Church Winfall, Saturday evening at 4 p.m., August 9. Dinner will be served. Come one, come all, join us in singing and feast together.

### Saunders Grove

The Saunders Grove Missionary Baptist Church will celebrate its Annual Fall Revival beginning on Sunday, Aug. 10 at 3 p.m. Dr. William Sawyer and the New Bethel Church Family of Hertford will be the special guests.

Aug. 11-15, Prayer and Praise Service will begin at 7:30 p.m. with various choirs and praise teams each night. The evangelist for the week will be Bishop Larry Aiken and Pastor Olivia Aiken from Memorial Missionary Baptist Church, Kansas City, Mo.

On Saturday, Aug. 16 at 3 p.m., the church will celebrate its Annual

Homecoming. Elder Sylvester Welch Jr. of Dunn will be the Homecoming preacher. Pastor Mason will close the Revival Services on Sunday morning at 11 a.m.

### Oxley Hill

Oxley Hill Missionary Baptist Church will host a spectacular Rainbow Service on Aug. 10 at 4 p.m. Rev. Vanessa Byrd of Paradise Ministry of Washington along with her choir will render this service.

The church will sponsor its Youth Academic Recognition & Scholarship Banquet on Aug. 16 at 6 p.m. For more information, contact the church at 482-8277. And on Sunday, Aug. 17 at 11 a.m. The Youth Ministry will celebrate its Annual Youth Day. Deacon William Peels, assistant superintendent of Bertie County Schools, will be the guest speaker.

*Items for this column should be submitted in writing by Friday.*

I finally found her bird-house avian zoo and wildlife rehab center located in Gates County along highway 37 between the towns of Gates and Gatesville, almost within sight of Buckland School. The huge yellow letters that spelled "birds" welcomed my truck into her drive, and a friendly Emu named Rusty and collie called Saber greeted me at the gate. The back lawn was a huge series of tall wire pens filled with the chatter of colorful parrots, cockatoos, lovebirds and every conceivable species of tropical plumage you can imagine. Over 700 birds and a variety of other wildlife filled this woman's yard and life, including strutting peacocks, doves, pigeons and Lord knows what else, as well as a cat peacefully reclining in the

### NATURE IN A NUTSHELL



Gail Roberson

midst of it all. I immediately wondered how in the world she paid the vet and food bills.

Jackie Phillips, more commonly known as the bird lady, does without a lot of her life's own necessities in order to be able to care for the birds that have only her to count on. Feeding time takes from dawn until early afternoon. A barn is also filled with cages of smaller birds, not to mention those

she must hand feed from birth or lovingly rehabilitate that have suffered terrible physical and emotion-

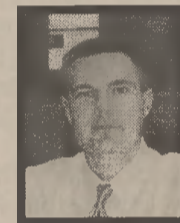
al wounds. Among the other wildlife she cares for was a beautiful barred

Continued on page 6

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## The Carpenter's Tools "Times of Refreshing"

Yesterday my wife and I went to a friend's home and "took a dip" in their pool. It was a hot afternoon in July and the water was just right. Ohhh! What a feeling when you slide in and the freshness of the cool water goes all over your body. It is indeed a refreshing. We swam. We played. We grabbed a float and took a reclining position in the waters of refreshing.



By Wallace C. Phillips

The same can be true of our spiritual lives. As a matter of fact, we had just completed lunch prior to our swimming excursion. Prior to lunch, we had gone through our two Sunday worship services. The Spirit was high. It seemed that God's people were just hungry to worship Him. It's such a blessing as a Christian leader when the people of God long to be in the presence of God. It seemed as though the Saints of God just wanted to linger in the house of the Lord. The altar was full as folk rededicated their lives to Him. I had given the altar call; a hand raised here and then another. One in the back and then two more. I finally concluded by saying... "Why don't we all just make our way to the altar and just get into His presence."



We can often be moved by the Holy Spirit to a place of refreshing and "ohh" it feels so good. But let me remind you that God's Word gives us a spiritual directive concerning this refreshing that I speak of. Acts 3:19 states that there is something that must take place if we are going to experience "the times of refreshing that come from the presence of the Lord". That something is repentance. Anytime you and I repent we can expect the glorious presence of God to bless us. The Lord is pleased when we humble ourselves before Him and open our hearts in genuine repentance.

Are you looking for a refreshing in the Spirit? If you are... search your heart and be willing to repent of anything that the Lord reveals to you. He is faithful and you will feel His touch. Are you looking for a refreshing in the natural? If you are then ask the Lord to give you a friend that has a pool. It's cheaper than owning one. Ha! Ha!

Have an awesome week and be refreshed! Visit us on the web at [www.carpentersshopchurch.com](http://www.carpentersshopchurch.com).

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