MEDITATION

[Jesus]

was speak-

ing,



Josh Tucker St. Matthew's Lutheran Church

Pharisee invited him dine with him; so he went in and took his place the table.

The Pharisee was amazed to see that he did not first wash before dinner. Then the Lord said to him, "Now you Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and of the dish, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness. You fools! Did not the one who made the outside make the inside also? So give for alms those things that are within; and see, everything will

While be clean for you." Luke 11:37-41

> Grace to you and peace from God our Father, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Now more than ever it seems so easy to fake being a Christian. It's seems so easy to put on a spiritual front where on the outside one can appear devoutly pious in their faith practices but, like the Pharisee's dishes Jesus references in this week's passage, their insides are filled with hatred, selfishness and faithlessness. Modern tools and resources make this counterfeit Christianity possible. With information at our fingertips and the ability to interact with others via social media, the opportunity to portray a false sense of one's religious self is made more readily available.

In this encounter with the Pharisee, Jesus makes it known that to be a true disciple one has to be made pure not only the outside, but the inside as well. Discipleship then is about more than our actions and outer presentation - things that make us appear faithful; internal discipleship practices are vital as well – those things that we are called to do as Christians that help us build upon and further develop our faith foundation. Discipleship is about becoming a deeper person in the faith.

Jesus implores us in this passage to be faithful in our spiritual practices so that our insides are sanctified. Jesus says that if we focus our Christian growth on developing our spirituality within, the outsides would be made clean as well: we would experience that same type of growth on the outside too. Spiritual cleanliness starts within and works its way out. This passage is about growing in our faith and deepening our relationship with God. How might we be faithful stewards of our insides, our souls and our very beings so that we grow in the faith internally? For me, a regular practice of Bible study, prayer and seeking God's presence in the world promotes growth in my relationship with God. What spiritual practices promote a connection to God and growth for you? I encourage you to be intentional about developing your faith and discipleship from within and see how God will continue to foster nurture growth on the outside as

Prayers requested for Ebola victims, families

Area churches are being asked to offer a special prayer on Sunday that God would stop the deadly Ebola virus in West Africa.

Christians around the world are being * asked by SIM, the global mission organization of which SIM USA is a part, to set aside some time during the week for prayer.

"For two millennia, the church has prioritized the sick and marginalized, we are called to do no less today," said Joshua Bogunjoko, international director of SIM.

SIM encourages prayer specifically for the people of Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea, where the Ebola outbreak has been most severe. SIM urges prayer specifically for healthcare workers, grieving families, church and government leaders and protection for those who otherwise come in contact with the deadly disease.

Bogunjoko said that Sunday should be a day of focused prayer by churches and individuals in stemming the tide of Ebola.

'We know that when Christians unite in prayer and call upon God, He acts," said Bogunjoko.

Fellowship & Faith

Church Service Directory

KINGS MOUNTAIN Long Creek Presbyterian Church 701 Long Creek Road

704-629-4406

Love Valley Baptist Church 2032 Bethlehem Road 704-730-0075

Macedonia Baptist Church 1101 S. Battleground Avenue 704-739-6811

Midview Baptist Church 703 Margrace Road 704-739-6711 Mount Zion Missionary Baptist Church 220 N. Watterson Street 704-739-8354

Mountain View Agape Church 506 Sparrow Springs Road 704-739-0160

Mt. Olive Baptist Church Compact School Road 704-739-4516

Mt. Zion Baptist Church 220 N. Watterson Street 704-739-8354

New Beginnings Church of Jesus Christ 541 Crocker Road 704-730-9507

New Bynum Chapel AME Zion Church N. Cansler Street 704-739-2606

New Camp Creek Baptist Church 863 New Camp Creek Ch. Road 704-487-7128

New Life Family Worship Center 428 Oak Grove Road 704-739-9371

New Way Missionary Baptist Church 105 Waco Road 704-724-0414

Oak Grove Baptist Church 1022 Oak Grove Road 704-739-4833

Oak View Baptist Church 1517 York Road 704-739-7831

Pathway Baptist Church 3100 Parkdale Circle 704-734-0852

Patterson Grove Baptist Church 301 Oak Grove Road 704-739-5826

Peoples Baptist Church 1010 Groves Street

Proclaiming the Word Ministries 7011 Cleveland Avenue

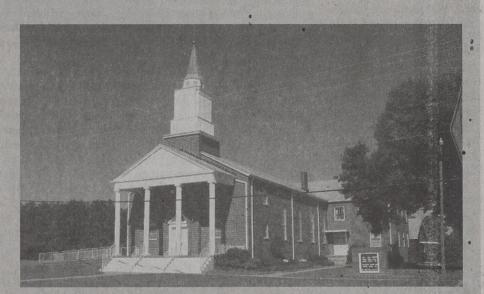
704-739-0398

Progressive Church of Our 1001 Cleveland Avenue

704-734-1070 **Resurrection Lutheran** Church 600 Crescent Circle

704-739-5580

Royal Praise Ministries 2055 Shelby Rd.



Featured Church of the Week: David Baptist Church

Saint Matthew's Lutheran Church 201 N. Piedmont Avenue 704-739-7466

Second Baptist Church 120 Linwood Road 704-739-4216

Shady Grove Baptist Church 339 Shady Grove Road 704-739-8920 St. Paul United Methodist Church N. Cansler Street

Sunrise Baptist Church 208 Mail Road 704-692-3007

704-739-1256

Temple Baptist Church 612 N. Cansler Street 704-739-4716

The Favor Center Church 602 Slater Street

True Gospel Holiness Church 1608 Shelby Road 704-739-6764

Unity AME Zion Church 948 Unity Church Road 704-228-0328

Vestibule AME Zion Church 2175 Vestibule Church Road 704-739-7961

Westover Baptist Church 114 Westover Drive

GASTONIA Bethesda United Methodist Church 3714 S. New Hope Rd

Grace Community Advent Christian Church 206 West 3rd Avenue 704-739-9230

GROVER Bethany Baptist Church

423 Cleveland Avenue 704-937-3010

Carolina Praise and Worship Center 201 N. Main Street 704-937-7541

First Apostolic Church of Blacksburg 205 E. Cherokee St. Blacksburg, SC704-937-7390864-839-1873

WACO **New Testament Missionary Baptist Church**

Notice: In order to accommodate the number of churches in our communities, we will print two alternating lists of churches each week. If you don't see the church you're looking for, be sure to check next week.



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