

Serving under the influence

Not much good happens after the sun goes down. That's my experience after spending nearly half of my career as a police officer working the night shift. As part of my job, I have arrested hundreds of people for driving under the influence of alcohol. Each had two things in common:

- They had willingly participated in an activity that they knew would negatively affect their ability to think, speak and control their own body.
- They lacked awareness of the degree to which alcohol influenced their behavior. I routinely asked them if they felt the effects of the drinks they consumed — and if they thought they were safe to drive. More often than not, they replied that they felt little or no effects. Only a few acknowledged they were aware of their impairment.

If you take a prescription medication, often your body has to develop a tolerance to the effects of that medication. This also is true of alcohol. A person who consumes it on a regular basis has to drink more to feel its effects.

"Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world." — 1 John 4:1 (NKJV)

But the effects are there — even though an intoxicated person may not realize it. Terms such as "liquid courage" and "beer goggles" were not created by accident. Under the influence of alcohol, people do things they would not do while sober.

What influences us? As Christians, we are not immune to the influences of the world. 1 Corinthians 15:33 reads, "Do not be deceived; 'Evil company corrupts good habits.'" Just as those who drink alcohol lose the ability to see the negative influence it has on them, Christians can fail to see the negative effects of worldly influences — greed, jealousy, pride. Have we developed a tolerance to these sinful influences? We must stay focused on God's Word and allow it — not the world — to influence our behavior. "Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law he meditates day and night." (Psalm 1:1-2)

God's people should be constantly serving under the influence of the Word of God. We must spend time in the Word. We must test the spirits, checking to make sure that what we hear matches what we read. The Bible gives numerous warnings concerning false teachers and doctrine.

Police officers use a simple test to determine whether or not people are under the influence of alcohol. How much more important is it that we test ourselves — to make sure that we are serving under the influence that God sets before us in his Word?

- SEAN BLAIR, *Christian Chronicle*, December 2016

Sean has served as a police officer for 10 years in the Houston area.

He is a deacon of the Katy Church of Christ in Texas, where he worships with his wife and two daughters.

PRAYER LIST

- Pauline Alvarez (health)
- Lauren Babb (health)
- Aaron Banks
- John Beiler (health)
- Jennell Bransom (recovering from surgery)
- Dawn Clarke (Shirley Kuchynka's daughter)
- Betty Cox (Brent Barnick's sister—Texan nursing home)
- Dixie (Debbie Faires's mother—Alzheimer's)
- Jake Faires (Air Force, deployed to Jordan)
- Paul Faires (health)
- Steven Faires, and Lexi
- Leon Giesecke (Jan Moerbe's father—throat cancer)
- Herbert and Nelle Hahn (health, Herb: Heights 331)
- Debbie Jalufka
- Sandra Jetton (health)
- Kevin and Victoria Johnson (healthy pregnancy/baby)
- Family of Junior Powell (Sharron Mason's brother-in-law, Clay and Shelley's uncle)
- Adrienne Zingrich (Susan Barnick's cousin—cancer)

PRAYER UPDATES

We extend sympathy to the family at friends of **Junior Powell, Sharron Mason's brother-in-law and Clay and Shelley's uncle**, who passed away on Saturday, February 18. Funeral services were held Wednesday in Joshua, Texas. Burial followed in Burleson.

Herb Hahn is improving. **Nelle** is being treated for pneumonia.

If you have any announcements or prayer requests you wish to have included in the bulletin or to sign up for weekly e-mail updates, please contact Victoria Johnson: 325-518-9205, victoria@gonzaleschurchofchrist.org.

NEW TEACHER ROTATION	SUNDAYS	WEDNESDAYS
BEGINS THIS WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1	2 years-Kindergarten.....Jennifer Epley 1st-3rd Grades.....Pam Lind 4th-6th Grades.....Shelley Hendershot 7th-12th Grades.....Zach Babb Adult.....Henry Lind	2 years-2nd grade.....Jennie & Callie Chrismon 6th-12th grades.....Clay Mason Adult.....Rex Boggs

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SABC Sunday

Kirk Eason from Southern Africa Bible College (SABC) joins us **TODAY**. Kirk will make a special presentation about SABC during class time and will preach during morning worship service.

Fellowship Meal

Please join us for our monthly fellowship meal **TODAY** in the annex following morning worship. Everyone is invited!

Singing at The Heights

Please join us **TODAY at 3:30 p.m.** at The Heights of Gonzales nursing home (701 N Sarah DeWitt) for our monthly singing and fellowship.

Ladies Bible Class

Ladies Bible Class continues this Tuesday. We are concluding our study, *Wives After God: Encouraging Each Other in Faith and Marriage*. **We will meet at 9:30 a.m. (please note time change) at Jennie Chrismon's house in Shiner and then go to lunch together.**

Church Yard Cleanup

Please make plans to help with our church yard cleanup **this Saturday, March 4, beginning at 8 a.m.**

VBS Planning Meeting

There will be a planning meeting for VBS **next Sunday, March 5, immediately following morning worship**. This year's VBS will be held June 11-14.

Community Lunch Series

Please make plans to attend the Community Lunch Series at First Baptist of Gonzales on **Wednesday, March 15 at noon**. Clay is delivering the message and lunch is provided immediately following at First United Methodist.

Service Project: Stock the Rainbow Room

The Gonzales County Child Protective Services (CPS) Rainbow Room is currently in need of donations. **Please pick up a flyer in the foyer for a list of most-needed items. A collection box to receive donations is located in the foyer.**

Wednesday Evening Meal & Bible Study

Please join us at **5:15 p.m. this Wednesday** for dinner in the annex. This week's entrée is **sandwiches**. Anyone who is able is asked to bring sides to share, but please do not let that prevent you from joining us. Classes for all ages follow at 6 p.m.

Volunteers Needed: Wednesday Night Meals

Volunteers are needed to prepare the entrée for meals on Wednesday evenings. To help, please sign up in the foyer. **If you signed up to prepare a meal, please send your menu to Victoria by Wednesday the week before your turn.**

Volunteers Needed: Communion Prep

Volunteers are needed to prepare communion in the coming months. This task takes very little time and is a great service to the congregation. Please sign up on the large bulletin board in the foyer.

Sunday Night Small Group

There is a small group that meets in the annex each Sunday evening from 6-7 p.m. The Lord's Supper is available.

Tuesday Morning Men's Prayer Breakfast

All men are invited to the annex each Tuesday morning at **6:20 a.m.** for a time of breakfast, prayer and fellowship.

Mark Your Calendars

March 26—Teacher Appreciation Day, Singing at The Heights
April 9—Egg Hunt & Family Field Day

YOUTH ZONE

Congratulations to Morgan and Kayla Mason who will be inducted into the National Honor Society tomorrow night at 6 p.m. at Gonzales High School in the new gym!

TUESDAY, FEB. 28
 HIGH SCHOOL SOFTBALL
 GONZALES @ MANOR, 6:30 P.M.
THURSDAY, MARCH 2
 HIGH SCHOOL TRACK & FIELD
 GONZALES @ NAVARRO RELAYS
 JUNIOR HIGH TRACK & FIELD
 GONZALES @ YOAKUM RELAYS



MARCH 2-4
 HIGH SCHOOL SOFTBALL
 GONZALES @ WEIMAR TOURNAMENT
SATURDAY, MARCH 4
 HIGH SCHOOL TRACK & FIELD
 GONZALES GIRLS @ MARION RELAYS

Rae'Anna Flores—Gonzales Jr High Track & Field
 Coach Kevin Johnson—Gonzales HS Girls Track & Field

Morgan Mason—Gonzales HS Varsity Softball, Track & Field
 Cassidy Pitts—Gonzales Jr High Track & Field