

Bethel Baptist

September 2015

Thoughts from Pastor Gene

For this is what the high and lofty One says – he who lives forever, whose name is holy; I live in a high and holy place, but also with him who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite. (Isaiah 57:15)

The nation of Israel often wavered and strayed in its commitment to God. At times, the people were disloyal religiously and disobedient morally. Those abandoning Judaism went as far as engaging in sexual relations with prostitutes in fertility religions and offering their children as sacrifices to false gods. Pride, lust, violence, and injustice were widespread.

As a prophet, Isaiah faithfully spoke out against the people's involvement in false religions. He warned the people about their verbal attacks on the minority who were striving to be true to God. His words and the words of other prophets often fell on deaf ears. The wayward people seldom expressed a desire to repent and give up their sinful ways.

Interestingly, Isaiah stated that although heaven is God's home, God also lives with "him who is contrite and lowly in spirit." God knows when we are brokenhearted because of our wrongdoing. He knows when we give up our selfishness, defiance, indulgence, and defensiveness. He knows when we accept our guilt without making excuses or blaming others. He knows when we are remorseful. He knows when we are not thinking too highly of ourselves and understand our need of Him.

As we head into the fall, let's do a spiritual inventory. As Dr. Jim Denison has suggested, "Get alone with God. Take a piece of paper and a pen. Ask the Holy Spirit to bring to your

mind anything that displeases God, and write down what comes to your thoughts. Be very specific and honest. Then confess these sins individually to God. Claim His promise to forgive all you confess. Shred the paper, and rejoice in the grace of your loving Father."

God is eager "to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite."



Operation Christmas Child

We will be kicking off our 2015 Operation Christmas Child endeavor on **Sunday, October 4**. Weekly tips and other information about Operation Christmas Child, including what can be included in the boxes and what can't, will be provided in the Sunday bulletin and during worship services. This is an amazing opportunity to help less fortunate children and teenagers around the world!

This year's packing party will be on **Saturday, October 24**, followed by a Shoebox Celebration on Sunday, **October 25**.

*Copies of the newsletter and monthly calendar are available in the foyer. Both are also available under the **News & Events** tab on our website www.bethelbaptistchurch.net*

faith &
hope love



PowerHouse Kids!

We can do all things through Christ who strengthens us!

This program is open to all children currently enrolled in Elementary school - meaning that all new Kindergarteners are invited to join us too!

We will meet at 11am on Sundays in the sanctuary to join in the music worship, and then we will go out to The PowerHouse (the portable outside to the left).



This year is a special one for Women of Faith...it is the last season for their WoF annual tour. This year's event is called *Loved: The Farewell Tour*, and we're going to be taking a group to Dallas, on **October 2-3** (Friday-Saturday).

Tickets are limited at this point, so if you're interested in going, please contact Glenda Atkinson as soon as possible. The cost is \$97 for the conference (plus lunch on Saturday) and hotel, plus you'll need some spending money for several meals. Pastor Gene will once again be serving as our chauffeur. If you'd really like to go, but finances are tight, please let Glenda know. Limited financial help is available.

Women of Faith has been encouraging women since 1996 with compelling stories, laugh-out-loud humor, heart-tugging music, rejuvenating worship, and more! You'll laugh, you'll sing, you'll cry but, most of all, you will have an incredible time of worship.

For more information on the Farewell Tour, please check out www.womenoffaith.com.



Dog Days of Summer

It's the *dog days of summer* . . . the hottest, most humid days when we're fanning ourselves, checking the AC setting, and scanning the skies for any sign of rain. But, besides lending their name to this time of year, dogs can also teach us some valuable life lessons:

Live in the moment. Dogs don't regret the past or worry about the future. Focus on the here and now!

Nurture a balanced life. Just like dogs, we need exercise, discipline, and affection every day. We're happier if our routines include physical activity, a sense of structure, and the opportunity to give and receive love on a daily basis.

Trust your instincts. Dogs pay attention to nonverbal cues such as body language and energy, and we need to do the same.

Be direct and consistent in your communication. Dogs get confused when rules aren't enforced consistently. And so do people.

Learn to listen. Dogs are great listeners! We need to make the time to lend an ear to those we love.

Don't hold grudges. Dogs don't hold on to negative feelings.

Live with purpose. Dogs like to serve some kind of purpose, even if it's just giving us something to do. When dogs are bored, they develop issues ranging from anxiety to aggression. We all do better when we have purpose to our lives.

Celebrate every day. For a dog, every morning is Christmas morning. Every walk is the best walk, every meal is the best meal, every game is the best game. We can learn so much by observing the way our pets rejoice in life's simplest moments. Take time every day to celebrate the many gifts that are hidden in the ordinary events of your own life.

Adapted from Cesar Millan