



SEEDS NEWSLETTER

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MEET THE FAMILY

Wes & Jessika Wade



Both are from Harrison County, and live in Bourbon County, where Wes has a farm. They were married in 2012. Their daughter, Olivia, was born in 2015.

Jessika received Christ as her Savior in 2019, Wes in 2020.

In addition to farming, Wes works part time at our church, where he is responsible for managing both the children's ministry and the church property. Jessika homeschools Olivia and helps to care for her grandmother, who attends church here.

(See "Developing a Ministry" on Page 4).

Erik & Whisper Johnson

They are part of the Johnson clan from Texas—Todd and Danelle Johnson (Dad and Mom), sons Levi, 23 (not to be confused with our other Levi Johnson, 17, no relation) and Elijah 18, and daughter Noelle, 20. There is also Kayla Johnson, eight months old, daughter of Erik and Whisper.

None of the above are related to Ray and Judy Johnson, parents of Shannon Lawson.

Erik and Whisper met and married (2020) at Victory Baptist Church in Copperas Cove, TX, where they served in ministry together.

Erik served on a local planning and zoning board for five years, has worked in Real Estate, and is a business owner. Whisper was an Associate Professor at A&M University in Texas, has worked as a law office manager and is a business owner and mother.

They moved here earlier this year to pursue a business opportunity.



PASTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

How To Love Your Church

One third of the New Testament is comprised of letters by the Apostle Paul to churches that he planted, or to ministers in those churches. Each of the letters is deeply personal, almost love letters. Paul saw his converts as his spiritual children and the churches as both gifts and burdens, never ceasing to pray for them, rejoicing in their spiritual growth, bearing the inner weight of their sufferings and persecution, and grieving over their mistakes and failures.

As Scripture, the letters are spiritual food; as love letters they are intensely convicting and inspirational, returning again and again to the theme of unity and love in the Body of Christ.

Paul's letter to the Ephesians sets the framework for everything else he has to say about individual churches in each locality, and the church as a whole. In 1:23-24 he describes the church as the Body of Christ; in 2:20-22 he describes Christ as the cornerstone of a spiritual building of which each of us is a part; and in 3:21 he speaks of the glory of God that will be revealed in the church.

In Paul's first letter to Timothy, he describes the church as "the pillar and ground of the truth".

References in other New Testament letters provide a clear outline for each of us to follow as we contemplate how to love our church.

1. Be There! Hebrews 10:24
2. Be Committed: Colossians 1:23; 2:16-19
3. Be Involved: Philippians 1:27
4. Be United: Philippians 2:1-4
5. Be Supportive; 2 Corinthians Chapter 9.

As an additional thought, bear in mind that the word "minister" means "servant", and the word "ministry" means a service to the church or on behalf of the church. An important expression of love for our church is the degree to which we are involved in ministry to God as worshippers, ministry to each other as servants within the Body of Christ, and ministry to those who are unsaved—family, friends, neighbors in our community—through our service as bearers of the Gospel.

WHAT'S HAPPENING!



Highlights in July were a record turnout for **Gospel Blitz** (with the help of the Empty Nester LifeStage) and a record turnout for the **Men's Prayer Breakfast**.



Developing a Ministry

By Wes Wade

In the fall of 2022, Pastor Fannin asked me if I would like to join the staff at Bluegrass Baptist Church. In the 2 years that Jessika and I had been attending here a fire was growing in me and I did not hesitate to accept the invitation.

I had lived 30 years for myself, avoiding churches for all the usual reasons—they had no life in them and did not interest me. Then Jessika attended a Bible study at Jenna Vance's home and prayed for salvation that very night! I was not enthusiastic about it, thinking that I had lost her to dead Christianity, until I agreed to attend Bluegrass with her. God had already been working on my heart through the witness of Ryan Vance (Jenna's husband), and on our first visit to church I experienced real spiritual life for the first time. People were so joyful that I suspected it was artificial, except that the new life in me somehow resonated with theirs! We visited again, and again, and then I was baptized (Jessika had done it months earlier), and to this day, the people around me are still always full of joy like mine.

I continue to hear the same thing from new families joining us, that there is something different here, people are so welcoming, people are always full of a joy that comes from God.

So, accepting a position to work here as part-time property manager was an easy choice, although I was a bit hesitant about also managing the Children's Ministry. In my past I had managed people in a factory, but never children. Was I qualified to perform this responsibility? Pastor Fannin said he would guide me, and so began an incredible journey.

To understand what it was all about, Jessika and I started by working with the junior teens, and then transitioned to teaching the 9 to 11 year old Sunday school class. The kids here are bright and knowledgeable about the Bible and keep us on our toes with their thought-provoking questions. We watch them debate amongst themselves about Scripture passages and their faces light up when they see the truth. It's a blessing that I cannot put into words. Our relationship with Christ has grown because of this ministry.

By the way, if you have a teaching gift and are not part of this ministry you are missing out on an incredible blessing. Remember, it is not the qualified that God calls; it is God that qualifies the called!

ENCOUNTERS:

LIVING AS A CHRISTIAN IN A POST-CHRISTIAN WORLD

In this section we share anecdotes from church members about their experiences (inspirational, amusing, or sad) as Christians living in a world that is increasingly hostile to Jesus Christ. Written submissions should be 200 to 300 words in length, or you could simply tell us your story.

There is no age limit to being a personal evangelist. This month's story is about a child sharing his faith, and reaping the reward.

Liam Stewart is 14 years old and enjoys participating in our church neighborhood evangelism outreach program. He has practiced what to say and how to say it, and he's not afraid to say it to strangers on their doorsteps.

But that's not what this story is about. When Liam was 12, he introduced his 11-year-old friend to Christ and listened as he prayed out loud for salvation. It happened in the driveway beside his home, after they had shot some hoops together. That's how Liam and Kenny first met, at the basketball hoop outside Liam's house where he and several friends were hanging out together. Kenny lived with his uncle a few streets over and asked if he could join in. Their friendship grew from there. Over the next few months Liam shared details of his faith with Kenny until one day the younger boy blurted out that he was afraid of dying and going to hell. He wanted to know how to be saved, like Liam.

The boys went to sit down on the edge of the driveway, where Liam carefully explained the Gospel steps to salvation. At the end, Kenny asked what he should do next, and Liam suggested he should pray out loud, admitting that he was a sinner and asking Jesus to forgive his sins and save him.

"I listened as he prayed," says Liam, "and it sounded genuine. Kenny seemed happy too!"

The boys are still friends. Kenny attends a church in Georgetown with his uncle.

BIBLE QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Life comes at us in a hurry, sometimes making it difficult to get timely answers to questions that confront us while reading the Bible or wondering how to apply Bible truth to real-world problems. Here we aim to answer your questions while also providing a resource for our church family.

This Month's Question: How can I stand up to sinful people without seeming to be mean or harsh?

The Answer from Pastor Zach Kirchner is that the Bible instructs us to speak the truth in love.

The first truth that Christians must come to grips with is that some people are going to think we are mean or harsh. It cannot be avoided! By simply being a Christian, I am at odds with the world (see John 6:53–58, 15:18–23).

Professing Christians who live like the rest of the world will not be perceived to be at odds with the world, but their personal lives will be very unpleasant because they try to serve “God and mammon” (Matt. 6:23). In reality, their lives cause them personal difficulty and do great damage to the cause of Christ!

The Apostle Paul sums up what our goal should be in Ephesians 4:15 when he exhorts the Ephesian believers to “[speak] the truth in love” so that people would see Christ in us. Sometimes it’s challenging to speak the truth because we may fear that people will think negatively about us. Or we may be concerned about how it will affect a particular relationship. But we must take the opportunities to speak truthfully when God presents them!

I’ve often used the following thought to motivate myself to speak truth: ***I would rather have an awkward conversation than for someone to die and go to hell because I did not share the Gospel with them.*** That statement helps me to see the big picture and keeps me from being ashamed of the gospel (Rom 1:16)!

We see the proper attitude described by Paul, in Romans 9:1–5. He declares that he has “great heaviness and continual sorrow” in his heart for his Jewish brethren who reject Christ. His burden is so great that he genuinely wishes he could be “accursed from Christ” if it would lead to their salvation.

I would hesitate to go that far! But we should be always seeking to follow our Great Shepherd’s model, by making use of every opportunity to share the truth, with a compassionate spirit.