



TRUE LIGHT

IZUBA TALIBILI

September 29, 2024

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

SUNDAY

Sunday School :
9:30 a.m.
Worship:
10:15 a.m.
5:00 p.m.

WEDNESDAY

Bible Study.....7:00PM

MINISTER

Stan Dauck
573-293-5620

ELDERS

David Burleson
573-820-0329
David Carson
573-276-5567
Stan Dauck
573-293-5594

DEACONS

Wayne Reams
Rodney Williams

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FIND US ON FACEBOOK:
Bernie church of Christ

"This is the day the Lord
has made. Let us rejoice
and be glad in it."

Psalms 118:24

**We Welcome You
To All Of Our
Services**

Botiyasi kept walking. Already he could smell a problem. The hovel stank like an overflowing latrine. "Don't be a fool. You think Jesus will protect you from leprosy?" "He does whatever he wishes," Botiyasi answered himself. "If Jesus walked here, he would visit this *mudaala* - this old man."

The grass wall made a good place to lean his bike. Botiyasi took a deep breath and held it as he ducked under the low thatch. He peered through the door and retched when he saw the old man's condition. Nobody had helped the leper to the bush to relieve himself. Feces smeared his withered body. Urine soaked his shabby clothing and tattered blanket.

What a vile way to die, Botiyasi thought. I need a hoe and plenty of soap. He scraped the hut clean and buried the filth. While he heated water to bathe the old man, he walked to the river, a sliver of Sunlight soap in his pocket. He knelt on a stone at the water's edge and began to scrub the old man's rags. Then he walked back to bathe the old man.

There wasn't much to wash, his skin was stretched tight over his frame. Veins stood out on his arms and scalp. He was just a black skeleton. As Botiyasi rubbed soap over the fingerless hands, he felt the scales and scabs beneath his fingers. He scrubbed the toeless feet and worked Vaseline into the cracked heels.

Children chattered. Botiyasi looked up from his work. A nervous group toted a food bowl toward the hut. The youngsters crouched at the door and scooted the enamel dish across the sandy floor into the hut. The children scampered away, giggling. Botiyasi poked a finger into the stiff food. Yesterday's tallowed leftovers clung to his skin, cold and greasy.

"Those kids are all the company the old fellow has all day," Botiyasi realized.

He lifted the old man's head and helped him sip warm gruel. "Jesus loves you!" he laughed. "You are not too old or sick to pray." Then he began to sing. "*Izuba talibbili!*" He crooned and rocked the frail body in his arms. "Night never comes to heaven." Supper over, he opened his Bible and read aloud. Page after page, until the ancient slept.

Botiyasi served the old man every day after that. Every day they prayed, and Botiyasi read and sang.

One afternoon the old leper's fingerless paw scraped at his arm. "Baptize me," he said. "Baptize me now, little brother. I want to be with Jesus." "Of course, *mudaala*. You honor me."

Botiyasi rose to his knees. He shoved his sturdy arms under the slight body and lifted. The burden was not great. He carried the old man down to the stream, down to a place well below the pool where people drew their water. People do not like washed-off sins in their drinking water, Botiyasi knew. He wanted no criticism about that.

He waded into the chilly pool with the leper in his arms. There he knelt, easing the old man into the water until all but his trembling head lay beneath the lily pads. Botiyasi pronounced the ancient words of blessing - *I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit* (Matthew 28:18-20) - then dipped the old man's head under the water to join the rest of his fragile body in the waters of grace. As he came from the water, still in Botiyasi's arms, the newborn ancient grinned up at the young man, exposing all three of his snaggly teeth.

"Thank you, young brother," he quavered. "Now I am ready."

Back at the hut, Botiyasi towed the scrawny body. He covered the leper with a blanket and rose to go. "Pray for me, young man. Pray for me," the quavering voice wheezed. Was that the sparkle of tears in his eyes? "I don't want to wait."

"What would you have me say?" "I am ready to die now," the old man whispered. "Pray that Jesus will take me home. Pray that he will take me home right now." Continued on back



BIRTHDAYS/ANNIVERSARIES

October 4 - Faye Dockins
October 6 - McKenzie Beard
Judy Snyder



CHILDREN'S HOMES NEEDS

Vienna Sausages * Cheddar Cheese
Soup * Canned Chicken * Brownie Mix
* Brown Sugar * Shortening
Pick up date: December 16



WILLING TO SERVE

September 29, 2024

Morning Worship:

Song Leader.....Ralph Mullins (guest)
Opening Prayer.....Jon Neely
Scripture.....Jason Karnes
Prayer.....Sam Garner
Closing Prayer.....Jess Lecroy

Evening Worship:

Song Leader.....Rodney Williams
Prayer.....Derek Mays
Scripture.....Ron Garner
Dismissal.....David Burleson

Wednesday, October 2, 2024

Song Leader.....Jacob Clayton
Prayer.....Ron Garner
Dismissal.....Jerry McCoy

October 6, 2024

Morning Worship:

Song Leader.....Rodney Williams
Opening Prayer.....David Carson
Scripture.....Ron Garner
Prayer.....Zack Tanner
Closing Prayer.....Justin Allen

Evening Worship:

Song Leader.....Derek Mays
Prayer.....Wayne Reams
Scripture.....Sam Garner
Dismissal.....Jerry Burleson

Continued from front:

Botiyasi just stood there a moment, speechless. He choked, then cleared his throat. Kneeling beside his friend, he spoke the request the old man coveted. After a quiet moment, he rose, stooped under the low door post, and climbed on his bicycle.

The next morning, Botiyasi found the old man dead.

“Ha ha ha!” the locals mocked. “What a Christian you are! You pray for people and they die! Ha ha ha! You will soon die of the same disease, you silly fool.”

Botiyasi hefted his hoe. The same hoe he had used to clean the floor. Perhaps those who taunted him thought he might strike at them. Instead, he turned his back on them, found a decent gravesite, and began to hammer the earth. The same strong arms that had buried the man in water the day before now laid him in God's earth. The same embers that once boiled the old man's soup, served now to incinerate his shack.

Job done, Botiyasi dusted his hands and swung a leg over the saddle of his cycle. As he cranked the pedals toward home, he began to sing, “*Izuba talibbili...*”

Forty years have passed since then. On his deathbed, Botiyasi gave instructions for his own funeral. “Weep if you wish,” he said. “But don't wail like people who have no hope. When you put my body in the ground, I want you to sing *Izuba talibbili*. When you start to sing that hymn, know that I have left you and entered the gates of heaven.”

Roy and Kathi Merritt, www.heartlight.com

Attendance for September 22: 98

Contribution for September 15: \$4204

REMEMBER IN PRAYER

David Burleson has started treatment to reduce his PSA levels * Laken Waters remains in St Louis at Children's Hospital and hoping to be released soon * Janie Burleson still dealing with some health issues * Faye Dockins recovering from a bad reaction to medication * Gloria Moore is home and improving * Cathy Provance struggling with knee and hip pain * Richard Owens (Scott and Judy Flannery's son-in-law) has been released from the hospital and is improving.

Continue praying for these members of our church family: Trish Baldwin * Rick Beard * David Burleson * Janie Burleson * David Carson * Pat Cooper * Scott and Judy Flannery * Sue Flowers * Karen Forkum * Patsy (Hardy) Gregg * Darlene McGowan * Helen McGowan * Jeff McGowan * Donna McKuin * Gloria Moore * Ida Roberts * Waynetta Rodgers * David Terrill * Bettie Thurston * Marty Watson * Woody Wood

Those dealing with cancer (non congregational) :

Melinda Akers * Chastity Beard * Cathy Bennett * Rodney Britt * Roxanne Carson * Sherry Chambers * Tammy Clark * Randy Cravens * Barbara Denson * Bill Fitzpatrick * Audrey Galloway * Emily Garner * Patricia Greninger * Stan Goodman * Nolan Hollowell * LeAnn Jacques * Tommy Jacques * Pam Jeralds * Holly Johnson * Kristin Meadows * Connie Lemmons * Ponna Mahan * Mike Napier * Betty Nicholson * Keagan Owens * Nikki Reif * Bobby Thornton * Mindy Tomah * Joe Vincent * Alan Woodward

Our Shut Ins

Pat Cooper * Sue Flowers * Ida Roberts * Bettie Thurston * Marty Watson

Looking Ahead

TODAY: Fifth Sunday singing at 2 p.m. at Fisk.

October 2: Our Wednesday fellowship meal will be taco salad. Desserts will be needed.

October 6: First Sunday potluck and early evening service. We will have a potluck meal following morning worship and an early, 1 p.m. evening meal. Everyone is encouraged to attend.

October 8: Ladies Lunch Out at 11:30 at Catch 22 in Dexter. There is a sign up sheet on the table in the foyer if you'd like to attend.

October 27-30: Our Gospel Meeting with Spencer Furby. Be praying for a successful meeting.

November 1-2: Men's retreat at Dexter church of Christ with guest speaker Joe Wells. More information can be found on the SEMO Churches of Christ Facebook page.

November 3: Alex Bayes will be our guest speaker.

November 10: Wedding shower/potluck for Zachary Tanner and Bailee Williams following morning worship. They are registered at Amazon, Target and Walmart.

THE COFFEE BEAN BOWL

I'm not a coffee drinker, but one sniff of coffee beans brings me a moment of both solace and wistfulness. When our teenage daughter Melissa was making her bedroom uniquely hers, she filled a bowl with coffee beans to permeate her room with a warm, pleasant smell.

It's been nearly two decades since Melissa's earthly life ended in a car accident at age seventeen, but we still have that coffee-bean bowl. It gives us a continual, aromatic remembrance of Mel's life with us.

Scripture also uses fragrances as a reminder. Song of Solomon refers to fragrances as a symbol of love between a man and a woman (see 1:3, 4:11, 16). In Hosea, God's forgiveness of Israel is said to be fragrance like a cedar of Lebanon (Hosea 14:6). And Mary's anointing of Jesus' feet, which caused the house of Mary and her siblings to be filled with the fragrance of the perfume (John 12:3), pointed ahead to Jesus' death (see v 7).

The idea of fragrance can also help us be mindful of our testimony of faith to those around us. Paul explained it this way: *We are to God the pleasing aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing* (2 Corinthians 2:15).

Just as the scent of coffee beans reminds me of Melissa, may our lives produce a scent of Jesus and His love that reminds others of their need of Him.

Dave Branon