

# NEWSLINE

## Great Smoky Mountains Church of Christ

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### A Sparrow's God

We see them as they fly gracefully through the air, perching serenely on a limb, or resting on the edge of a nest filled with hungry babies, freshly hatched. We think of them as just another bird...but the Scriptures tell us that they are very precious to our God. His eye is always on them.

Each sparrow is a reminder of how intensely God looks after the smallest detail of our lives...how much He cares about us when we struggle with our finances, our children, our aging parents, or, when we have fallen away from His loving fellowship.

He clothes the sparrow with His gentle nature, watches over her young, and provides for her every need. He is the sparrow's God who is always watching over her.

Jesus tells us that we need not worry about our physical needs or be anxious about what tomorrow may bring. He just urges us to look at the birds of the air or the grass in the field and see the protective hand of God. He tells us that not a single sparrow can fall from its nest without God taking careful note of its plight. Surely a God who is concerned about such intricate matters will be there for us when we need Him.

The sparrow's God is never far away. No night is too dark, nor any day so long that He decides to leave us alone. The apostle Paul tells us that we cannot really fathom the love of God; its depth, height, or breath is astonishing to our limited minds and surpasses our greatest experiences. We never capture the full dimensions of that love in human relationships.

Sometimes I wonder if God is near. Sometimes it's hard to feel His presence. Those are times when I have forgotten...when I have taken my eyes off of Him, and when I refuse to see what He has done in my life. Or, they may be times when I have received some tough blows from unlikely sources. In those times I need to look at the sparrow and remember that God is near.

When sin takes control and we question whether God can love us and receive us back, we need to look at the sparrow and remember that God has never left us alone. He is always present. He wants to take care of our needs, even the needs which grow out of our sinful rebellion.

Our physical needs may be threatened by the loss of a job or the invasion of our bodies by a dreadful illness. We may need food, or clothing, or shelter. Still, God is near. He holds tomorrow in His hands. And He knows what to do about each situation.

Our limited faith sometimes falters. He understands, and will lift us up if we remember the sparrow who always trusts the sustaining processes God has created for her. He will also lift us up...He will take care of us when we see and trust Him through the eyes of a sparrow.

— Al Behel

**Other Sick:** Bob Adair is recuperating from surgery. Patty Adair had repair surgery on her knee in Nashville on Wednesday. Please keep both in prayer.

**To Volunteer To Help With Disaster:** If you are a member of the GSM church please sign up in hall between foyer and fellowship hall. If you are a visitor, please go to [www.churchesofchristdrt.org](http://www.churchesofchristdrt.org) and register. This allows for an effective coordination of workers. Thank you for your service!

**Food Contact For Month:** Leah Turner

**Elder Contact for Month:** Marc Hayes (1-731-608-4148)

**Sermon Topics:** A.M. - "Another Comforter" (John 14:15-26)  
P.M. - "Make The Best Choice-Excerpts from Proverbs"

Interpreter for deaf and hearing impaired available for AM and PM worship

### Our Known Sick

-Dez Anderson— suffering many health issues. Prayers and cards are encouraging and appreciated.

-Geordie Haynes will have ear surgery at a later date.

-Sheryle Elkins-continuing chemotherapy. PET scan was good.

-Bill Valentine is in Pigeon Forge Rehab Center, Rm 121. The family requests no visitors at this time as Bill is weak and visits tire him greatly. He appreciates your thoughts and prayers. Please continue to pray for him and Gail, along with Larry and Linda.

-Joyce Keyser-Joyce suffers from peritoneal cancer. It is always so good to see her back with us when she feels up to coming.

-Shirley Harmon—Heart Cath December 22. Remember her in prayer.

-Bill Green—suffering from many health issues.

-Jean Compton—is recovering at home.

-Kathy May—battling ongoing health issues.

-Jerry Dyer—Keep Jerry and Jeanette in prayer.

-Charles & Frances Copeland-newborn great granddaughter, Madeline Grace Kirby, is very ill with a genetic disorder. Prognosis is not good. She is home at this time.

### Friends and Family News/Prayer Requests

-Linda Blass, Vicki's mom, in rehab facility recovering from hip surgery.

-Jackie Stearsman, minister friend of Al's, the Littletons, and Copelands, has leukemia. He is now in a nursing home and treatments have been stopped. His wife, Joyce, is also waiting for cancer surgery.

-Nita Watern, Brenda Scott's niece, chemo for liver cancer.

-Lida Cliett, Rick's aunt, ill with heart failure and cancer.

-Meagan White, Joyce's cousin, pain post brain surgeries.

-Sue Hayes' sister-in-law, Jane Hufford, suffering from leukemia, to receive another stem cell transplant soon. Prayers are requested.

-Jim & Judy Watkins—Rick's sister and husband, health issues.

-Dee Lewis, friend of the Cliett's, 6th occurrence of stage 4 cancer.

--Breana Ward, age 32, stage 4 cancer-has three children. Prayers and cards requested. Address in foyer. This family visits with us.

--Grief Support Group—See Patty Adair for updates.

-Ladies Bible Class: Suspended for this month.

**How To Donate For Response To Crisis :** Make checks payable to Great Smoky Mountains Church of Christ and earmark "Fire Relief Fund". Mailing Address: P.O. Box 173, Pigeon Forge, TN 37868

### Special Events

**Men's Prayer Session**  
Monday mornings at 8:30

**Sunday Adult Class**  
I Timothy 4-5 —Al Behel

**Wednesday Night Class**  
Danny Cline will lead our study

### Building Fund

Loan balance on 12/18/16 is **\$991,664.14**. Extra contributions to reduce the loan debt are needed and appreciated. Envelopes are available in the pews.

### Nursery

Located across main foyer. Closed circuit TV allows viewing and participation in worship.

CDs and DVDs of Sermons are available free at sound booth. Also available on the website at: [www.greatsmokymountainschurchofchrist.com](http://www.greatsmokymountainschurchofchrist.com).

### Times of Services

Sunday A.M.  
Bible Study 9:30 AM  
Worship 10:30 AM  
Sunday P.M. 6:00 PM  
Wednesday 7:00 PM