

Privileged to Serve

Morning Worship

Announcements: Sibio Farrington

Song Leader: Chad Futrell

Opening Prayer: Ben Grant

Lord's Table:
Presiding: Phil Byrd

Assisting: Kyle Pool
Tyler Christian

Sermon: Byran Hatcher

Closing Prayer: Ricardo Alvillar

Those serving Wednesday

Song Leader: Chad Futrell

Opening Prayer: Chad Futrell

Teacher: Chad Futrell

Announcements: Byran Hatcher

Closing Prayer: Phil Byrd

Pantry Item

Green Beans

Sermon Notes

Soldiers of Christ

I. *Defend the Basic* _____

II. *Ever* _____

III. _____ *with the* _____

November 12, 2023

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Welcome!

Cape Fear
Church of Christ

3808 Village Dr
Fayetteville, NC
28304

Phone:
(910) 425-1108

Website:
capefearcoc.org
Find us on
Facebook!

Service Times

Sunday:
B. C. 9:00am
Worship 10:00am

Wednesday Night:
B. C. 7:00pm

Ladies' Class:
Tuesdays 10:00am

Elders
Wade Hedgepeth
Byran Hatcher

The
Cape Fear Crier

“Cry aloud and shout...for great in the midst of thee is the Holy One of Israel.” Isaiah 12:6

Elders, Be Vigilant!

The apostle Paul was heading toward Jerusalem near the end of his third recorded preaching journey, and stopped on the island of Miletus (Acts 20:16). Where, “*he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church*” (20:17). When those elders arrived, he reminded them of his past activities with them. He then turned those elders’ attention to a pressing matter: their responsibility as shepherds of the church. In Acts 20:28-29, we read that the inspired apostle told them, “*Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.*”

These words offered to the church overseers in Ephesus served as a charge, appeal, and warning to them. Members of the Lord’s body must be aware of what God desires and expects from the shepherds of the local congregation. Every elder of every congregation should give special attention to the above-quoted words that Paul spoke to those brethren who had the responsibility of shepherding the flock of God in the early years of the church. In the context of Paul’s charge, there are three areas for which the elders must watch.

1) Elders, Watch Yourself! We see this idea in the very first words of verse 28: “*Take heed therefore unto yourselves....*” For elders who sincerely desire to lead others effectively, the first step is to outline in their own lives the kind of example that the flock can respect and imitate. Every overseer is to be “of good behavior” (I Tim. 3:2). 1 Peter 5:3 indicates, elders are to be “examples to the flock.”

Every child of God is commanded, “*Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves*” (II Cor. 13:5). We are also told to take heed lest we fall (I Cor. 10:12). Such instructions apply to all elders. Being appointed as the spiritual leaders of a local flock of God may cause some to be lifted with pride. Elders, beware! Serving as elders may cause some to feel that they are “above the law” of God and no longer subject to it. Being appointed to oversee the work of a

congregation may cause some brothers to want to become Diotrephes like dictators, lording it over the flock (III John 9,10). Elders, beware!

2) Elders, Watch the Flock! The charge of Acts 20:28 is not simply for elders to watch themselves but also to take heed “to all the flock.” The flock is “the church of God” (Acts 20:28). It is called “the flock of God” (I Peter 5:2). It is not just a flock. It is God’s flock! And some brothers in the Lord are responsible for watching after His flock. Who might that be? Those the Bible calls “elders” (Acts 20:17) or “overseers” (Acts 20:28). There is no greater responsibility in all the world than the responsibility that rests on the shoulders of elders.

God expects elders to take heed to all the flock. That involves acting as its overseers. The word “overseer” is from the Greek word *episkopos*, which is defined as “an overseer, a man charged with the duty of seeing that things to be done by others are done rightly, any curator, guardian, or superintendent” [Thayer’s, p.243, word no. 1985]. So, these men are not just given the title “overseers” but instead really take charge and act as those who have the responsibility to ensure that only the right things are done in the right way by the right people. The Bible’s teaching is clear: God has given the oversight of a local church to those brothers who serve as elders. It is one thing to have brothers’ names listed on the church bulletin or letterhead as “elders.” It is another thing entirely for them to step up, step out, and do the work of organizing, planning, and leading a congregation in carrying out the Lord’s work.

3) Elders, Watch the Wolves! Paul warned the elders from Ephesus about wolves: “*For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock*” (Acts 20:29). Elders are charged with keeping the wolves out of and away from God’s flock. Brethren, it is not wise, and it is not loving, to ignore spiritual wolves. Wolves “draw away disciples after them” (Acts 20:30). Spiritual wolves destroy God’s sheep!

False prophets are wolves (Matt. 7:15). Those trying to convince the church to fellowship denominations are wolves. Those who encourage our young people to disregard the New Testament’s pattern for worship are wolves. Those who advocate that people can marry and divorce as often as they want, for any reason they want, and still be in good standing with God are wolves!

The church of Christ suffers significantly at the hands of wolves. Some damage could be limited if elders were more aware and forearmed against spiritual wolves. Elders need to read and learn about the wolves of our day, their teachings, practices, and manners. You see the wolves in our midst just down the road, in the next county or state, they may try to get into our flock tomorrow. If we are concerned about and watch approaching harsh weather or physical diseases, it is a lot more essential to beware of and track spiritual wolves.

- BTH

By the Numbers

Attendance week of 11/5/23
B. C.: 34 A.M. Worship: 52 Wed.: 32

Family News and Notes

Condolences to **John Ross** with the passing of **Debra Ross**. **Paula Perrin** is recuperating at home. **Carlton Norris**, **Jeanette Freshley’s** dad, is now cancer free! **Linda Jenkins’** son, **Shannon**, is struggling with mental health issues. **John Patchell’s** niece is struggling with her health. **Kim Perkins’** father is doing a little better. **Chuck Perkins** is having some health challenges right now. **John Williams** is having trouble with inflammation in his neck. Wade Hedgepeth’s two brothers, **Mark & Dwight**, have some health challenges. **Frances Salaz** is going through chemo and she had a procedure done last week. **Linda Hernandez** has a significant heart problem. **Barry and Melany Hatcher** are in Indonesia working with the Bible School in Manado, Sulawesi.

Pray for our world leaders at this time. Active military: Pray for all active duty military members; they could be called to a conflict area at a moment’s notice. Remember to pray for their families as well. We have 6 active duty members here at Cape Fear.

Also remember: **Margaret Langston**, **Vicky Carver**, **Deborah Ross**, **Sandra Hedgepeth**, and the **Davis** family. Please pray for those in Bible Studies - teachers and students!

Bible Reading Plan

Nov 12	Nov 13	Nov 14	Nov 15	Nov 16	Nov 17	Nov 18
1 Cor 7-9	1 Cor 10-13	1 Cor 14-16	2 Cor 1-3	2 Cor 4-6	2 Cor 7-9	2 Cor 10-13
Ps 132	Ps 133	Ps 134	Ps 135	Ps 136	Ps 137	Ps 138

Events

Silver Linings: Friday @ 11am. Bring your lunch!

Holiday Baskets: December 8th to assemble, 9th to deliver. Please start bringing candy, gum, and individual personal items.

Holiday Party: Saturday the 16th. Noon-3pm @ the Hatcher residence. See Jennifer for details. Address and directions are in the church app.

