

# Reflections

## “The Place of Faith”

by Stefano Mugnaini

“We proclaim the good news of salvation: that is, the forgiveness of sins and confident assurance of eternal life, by grace through *faith alone* in the finished work of Jesus Christ.”

Such creedal statements are ubiquitous in the religious world today; so common, in fact, that there is no doubt in the minds of many sincere religious, God-loving people that there must be Scriptural support for it. Sadly, there is none. The “alone,” tacked on to the back of faith by Martin Luther, drastically changed the religious landscape. Luther’s Theology, and his “faith only,” must be understood in its historical context. It is a tragic example of reactionary extremism. Luther was a revolutionary; he rebelled against a corrupt institution that had bastardized the “faith once delivered to the saints,” and in pointing out the abuses and flawed doctrinal positions of the Ro-

man church he did much good. In staying alive, whereas Wycliffe and Hus had died, Luther was able to constantly contend for the Bible as the only source of authority. However, like Augustine before him and untold legions of theologians after, Martin Luther preached a hermeneutic he himself did not follow. The Roman church taught a “works only” path to salvation; Luther insisted upon a faith only model. The great irony is that the only book in all of Scripture which uses the term “faith only” is James, deemed worthless by Luther as a “right strawy epistle.” Could it be that he disliked chapter 2:24? “You see that a man is justified by works, and not by faith alone.” James’ contention that works are integral to the salvation process was rejected on an a priori basis by Luther; such is the result of his reactionary stance. Calvin would later take faith only to its logical conclusion: God only you have nothing to do

with your own salvation or condemnation. This is a philosophical, not a Biblical position.

Throughout the New Testament, the synthesis of faith and action are presented as that which brings salvation. Were such not the case, then all of the moral teachings of Jesus and his followers are ridiculous and extraneous! When Peter preached at Pentecost, the crowd demanded to know one thing: “What must we do?” There is fear, desperation, in that cry. And there is a call to Action in Peter’s response. Repent (literally, repent and keep on repenting) and be baptized. A survey of the rest of the Bible meshes perfectly with what James says regarding Abraham: “faith was working with his works, and as a result, faith was perfected (completed).” Perhaps this is the crux of the argument. What matters

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Church Fax: 843-556-6085

Email: [evcoc@bellsouth.net](mailto:evcoc@bellsouth.net)

Website: [www.essexvillage.org](http://www.essexvillage.org)

### Schedule of Services

Sunday

Class: 9:00 am

Worship: 10:00 am

Worship: 6:00 pm

Wednesday

7:00 pm



## For the Record Week of 05-25-08

Bible Classes: 79  
AM Worship: 145  
PM Worship: 61  
Wednesday Evening: 61  
Contribution: 5,110.00

## Communion & Baptismal Garments

**Prepare Communion:**  
Christine Herman  
**Baptismal Garments:**  
Natasha Streets  
**Elder of the Month:**  
Howard Streets 766-7727

## Program of Worship

**Announcements:**  
Howard Streets  
**Song Service:**  
Royce Akers  
**Opening Prayer:**  
Herman Porter  
**Communion:**  
Andy Streets  
**Sermon:**  
Stefano Mugnaini  
**Closing Prayer:**  
Tex Patton

*Ava Bullard*  
*Helen Embry*  
*Mark Embry*  
*Scotty Hall*  
*Mildred Inabinett*  
*Leonard McNeill*  
*Lois Ott*



## We Are Praying For...



### Military

*Robert Bagley*  
*Kristopher Black*  
*Adam Bowles*  
*Chris Branham*  
*Adam Carlucci*  
*Russell Coble*  
*James Dalton*  
*Mark Fiorey*  
*Ellis Flenoid*  
*Steven Hilton*  
*Michael Hilton*  
*Matthew Lemieux*  
*Katie McCaskill*  
*Kevin Mitchell*  
*Shawn Reynolds*

Mike Allen, preacher for Chesapeake Church of Christ, has bone cancer. Gary Moody has requested prayers for him.

Larry Cooper, Ruby's son, was diagnosed with lung cancer.

Maxine Doll has some health problems and would like our prayers. Maxine is Pam Ragland's mother.

John Donan, Norma's cousin, has terminal bladder cancer.

Michelle & Kenny Drawdy are having some difficult times and requested prayers. Michelle is a co-worker of Terri Fagan.

Dennis Flatley, a friend of Jim Lamm, is currently undergoing chemo to treat his cancer.

Duke Gregory, Doris & Janie's brother, is in Manchester Rehab Hospital. He will probably be there for 5 or 6 weeks.

Fred & Doris Gregory, are

both at home now and are doing well. Doris & Janie thank you for your prayers..

Wesley Hahn is in need of prayers for his health and employment. His mother is a close friend of Faye Spence.

Clara Haselden was diagnosed with cancer and has just finished receiving her chemo treatments.

David Hughes, a Citadel graduate from the class of 96, attended Essex Village when he was attending the Citadel. David was injured in Iraq. If you would like to cheer David up with a card or letter, please send them to this address:

David Hughes  
150 Foxfire Place  
Southern Pines, NC 28387

Esther Lamm is having some health problems and would like us to pray for her.

Debra Langford, sister-in-law of Carl Bowles, is in therapy since her stroke. She is still not able to speak clearly or have full use of

her right side.

Nell McIntire has cancer and is the sister of Lois Ott.

Lauren Parker, a friend of Ginnie Streets, has cancer and is not doing well.

Nikolas Riggs is in remission but will undergo chemo for two years and has a long road ahead. Nik is the nephew of Angela Noyes.

Candice Spence, needs our prayers for health problems and is the granddaughter of Chuck & Faye.

Marcia Steckle, a friend of Sharon Rush, had a masectomy and is recovering at home.

John Torres, Johnny Murray's brother-in-law, has cancer and is not doing well.

Tom Vergne, Matt's father, has recovered from his bypass surgery. Thank you for your prayers.

## Here's What is Happening...

### **Baby Shower**

There will be a baby shower for Natasha Streets on June 28th from 11:00—2:00 at the home of Michelle Porter. If you plan to attend, please sign the sheet on the bulletin board. Michelle will need the names of those attending to leave at the gate for your admittance. If you need directions,

they will be on the table in the foyer. Natasha is registered at Babies R Us. For more details please see Michelle

### **Vacation Bible School**

Vacation Bible School is being planned for sometime in late July. More information to come.

## Sermon Series...

Beginning this Sunday, Stefano will be preaching a sermon series entitled "God Is: a study of God's existence, His characteristic attribute and the link between God's nature and Christian doctrine. It will be approximately 10 weeks. This would be a good opportunity to explore for ourselves and explain to others what we believe and why.

## New Address

Carl Bowles is moving to Cottageville and will be worshipping at Walterboro Church of Christ. We have a concordance on the table for everyone to sign for him. His new address is:

2600 Rhode Drive  
Cottageville, SC 29435  
Telephone# 843-323-7007

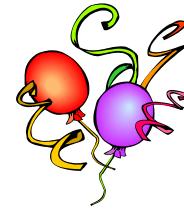
## "The Place of Faith" *continued*

is how faith is defined. Many would define it simply as belief; such would place saving faith in the Hands of the devil and his angels. Others would affirm that it means trusting God as your Savior. But one may trust a life jacket to make you float, and still drown without putting it on!

To borrow a Marshall Keeble analogy: The best washing machine in the world won't clean a thing until you add soap and water and turn it on! Our purpose is not to downplay the importance of faith, but to place it in its proper perspective. IT is absolutely essential that we have faith; it is likewise essential that we don't simply stop at the point of belief or

even trust in God. We have to respond to that belief, to begin walking the path he has laid out for us, and remain in the light. (1 John 1) We have to run the race marked out for us by our Savior. Only by so doing is our faith made complete, i.e., a saving faith.

But faith is the foundation. Hebrews 11:6 says "without faith, it is impossible to please God. Anyone who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." Recognizing that "God is" is the first step. Living like you believe it is the rest of the equation.



*Happy Birthday!*

6/3

Will Loomis

6/8

Debra Scott



*Happy Anniversary*

6/2

Pat Ediajuan

Fagan

6/3

Steve & Peggy

McLawhorn

6/4

John & Rosie

Such

## Bulletin Board

### **Gospel Meeting**

Where: Rutledge Avenue Church of Christ

When: Sunday, June 8th—Thursday, June 12th

Speaker: Brother Orpheus Heyward from the West End  
Church of Christ in Atlanta, Georgia

Please see the flyer on the bulletin board for additional  
information.

### **Homecoming Celebration**

Where: Church of Christ at Johns Island

When: Saturday, July 12th - Thursday, July 16th

Guest Speaker: Brother Errol Reid from Lafayette, Louisiana

Please see the bulletin board for the schedule.

### **ELDERS**

Larry Casbeer	795-0429
Howard Streets	766-7727
David Wakeland	766-3601

### **MINISTER**

Stefano Mugnaini	329-3704
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### **DEACONS**

Rick Porter	556-2679
Activities	
Jim Lamm	556-6756
Benevolence	
Lloyd McLawhorn	556-6709
Worship	
Roddy Akers	559-3565
Song Service	
Larry Polutta	795-5266
World Bible School	
Bill Ragland	556-6711
Building Maintenance	
Hilton Googe	766-4670
Lynn Smallwood	766-8579
Grounds	
Eddie Haselden	767-5511
Financial	
Durwood Collins	869-4199
Youth Activities	

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**Essex Village Church of Christ**  
**736 Savage Road**  
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