



THE FOUNTAIN

CHRISTIAN CHURCH



Office Hours:

Tues. -Thurs 9:00 AM— 4:30 PM

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Acts 17:11

"...so they received the message with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so."

Sam Sears

In the distant past of 2001, a green ogre made a splash in theaters and pop culture. With the magic of Dreamwork's CGI animation and the support of other talented actors, Michael Myers brought the titular Shrek to life speaking a wonderful faux Scottish brogue. Now imbedded in our culture the show is still quoted and referenced by multiple generations more than two decades later, including by my 10-year-old son.

In the film, Jonathan Lithgow's Lord Farquaad had banished fairy tale creatures from his kingdom, pushing them into the swamp domain of the local Ogre, Shrek. He had been quite content, alone in the smelly, nasty, ugly mire, and does not welcome the intrusion, which provides wonderful wholesome comedy, and ultimately, a beautiful moral lesson about inner beauty.

However, some folks noticed something in the movie that they found alarming. Among the fairy tale creatures was a talking Donkey, voiced by Eddie Murphy, who became Shrek's sidekick in his quest to save a princess. Some Christian parents thought the talking Donkey was a direct reference to Numbers 22. While most audiences enjoyed the movie, there was a small group accusing the film producers of the ulterior motive of calling the Bible a fairy tale, refusing to consider any similarity with Balaam's donkey could be coincidence. This was before Facebook or even myspace, but I encountered the rumor of the "hidden message" on message boards along with warnings against watching or supporting the movie in any way. I heard the same rumor from friends, and sadly, I believed it.

Balaam was a prophet, but unfortunately, a prophet for hire. Though God had forbidden him to go to King Barak and put a curse on Israel, he asked again and God relented. On the way to Moab, Balaam's donkey was blocked by an angel of the Lord and turned aside into a field. Balaam responded by beating and abusing his animal, and God opened the mouth of the Donkey, allowing it to question the mistreatment and inform Balaam of the angel of the Lord in their path. We see in 2nd Peter 2:16 but he received a rebuke for his own transgression, for a mute donkey, speaking with a voice of a man, restrained the madness of the prophet.

As a zealous young Christian (High School class

of 2003) I saw this as another instance of culture taking a jab at Christians, was filled with a desire to defend truth and the Bible, and shared that desire and the rumor without researching the truth of the claim. When a friend asked the simple question-- "Have you read the book?" I had to confess I didn't even know the movie was based on the book. It turns out there were no fairy tale creatures in the book except for the talking donkey. It was the rest of the fairy tale creatures that were added. If there was a hidden message, as some still hold to, it is commonly held that the villain was a shot a then current Disney executive and former boss of some of the DreamWorks employees. There was no credible evidence that there was a hidden message directed at the Bible, and I now know a talking Donkey isn't unique to scripture-- Pinocchio, The Bremen Town Musicians, and The Little Donkey of Grimms' Fairy Tales all come to mind.

The idea that Shrek was secretly anti-bible faded so quickly most folks today are probably unaware it was ever a talking point. The culture does clash with Christianity in intentional ways, but Shrek is no longer considered a threat to God's Word, and, in fact, Shrek 5 is rumored to be under consideration for production. When thinking about the franchise, I always connect it with some important lessons. In my desire to defend the truth, I had believed unfounded gossip and spread it. Even though I didn't know the actual intent of the author or the filmmakers, I believed what others said about them without verifying those claims.

A desire to support good things can be manipulated with falsehoods. How many times have Christians shared fake news stories on social media because they sound like something that could be true? How many times have we jumped on a bandwagon without verifying the information we have heard? How many times have we believed someone was the bad guy in a situation, and someone else the victim, and been wrong because we only had part of the information? How much time have we as Christians spent on these distractions when there are more important issues to deal with?

Before leaping into action, we should follow the example of the Bereans. Paul commends them in Acts 17:11 for going beyond passive observation, for

Sam Sears

not merely listening to what they heard. They examined and verified doctrine and ideas, comparing them with Scripture before believing and accepting them. The more we become active listeners, verifying what we hear, the more likely we are to avoid falling for error. The less time we spend fighting the wrong battles, the more time we can spend fighting the right ones.



**Hymn Sing
August 10th 6PM
@ Quail Park Shannon
Ranch**

**Come and visit seniors, and enjoy
classic hymns. You don't have to be
a singer to join us! Let the office
Know if you are interested!**



BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

August 2023

| | |
|------------------------|----|
| Joseph Ajluni | 3 |
| Carol Stone | 3 |
| Heather Ritter | 6 |
| Charles Southard | 7 |
| Preston Correa | 12 |
| Lorraine Turl | 13 |
| Laura Gunning..... | 21 |
| Carlos Rojas..... | 21 |
| Patrick Hogan..... | 22 |
| Vanessa Totty..... | 23 |
| Candace Ramsey..... | 26 |
| Neoma Cowing..... | 30 |

Happy Anniversary!

Buz & Donna Southard..... 11



PRAYER CONCERNS

August 2023

Pray for the desire and opportunity to effectively share your faith! Our Nation and Leaders. Teachers & Students in Visalia. Our Brothers & Sisters at Elim.

Health: Nadine Lack, Ana Morales, Ann Elder, Bonnie Henson, Donna Eastin, Fred Wilder, Heather Smith, Jason McKaughan, Jean Lamb, JoAnne Jordan, Jordan Lewis, Kevin Guy, Kevin Ray (DHF pastor), Marilee Douglass, Pam Shattuck, Tim Sears.

Cancer: Bill Morland, Charlene Brazil, Clay Jones, David Thomas, David Welch, Joe Grant, Keith Moore, Mike Gunning, Olly Ajluni, Randy Gurule, Sandra Campbell, Shannan Ajluni.

Other Needs: Nina Suttles (Vision)

Military: Brett Boland – Virginia, Michael Reid – San Diego, CA, Preston Correa – Marine, Tyler

Richwine – Marine

Missionaries: some of our missionaries cannot be listed for their safety.

Nationally Based Global Mission Organizations: Adolfo Ibarra, Crosslink Development International, Central Missionary Clearinghouse, Soaring for Christ, Radical Truth, Maven, Gideons International, Our Daily Bread Ministries, Jews for Jesus, Pioneers, Team Expansion

Local Ministries: Care Pregnancy Center, Good News Jail Ministry, Hands in the Community, Love In the Name of Christ, Stephen Ministries, Tulare Kings Right to Life, Turning Point, Visalia Rescue Mission, Visalia Senior Housing

Ukrainian Individuals in danger: Michael, Andrew, Alex, and Angela. (Last names withheld for safety.)

ATTENDANCE & GIVING

July 2023

Average In Person Attendance

69

General Offering

\$11,492.35

WOMEN'S RETREAT

September 15-17, 2023

A weekend of rest and refreshment



Speaker
Carole
Leathem



Music
Kelsey
Luis

Contact the Office For more details



Church Potluck Aug 13.

Please sign up to bring food at the connect desk!

Please bring food pre cooked.
You can plug in croc pots to warm the food.

We will have a meal right after service.



Faith & Food Wednesdays 6:30 PM

Wednesday nights return starting 8/23 @ 6:30. Adults will meet in the fireside room and begin a study of 1 st Samuel and Kids will meet first in the gathering place and then move onto the classroom for their own curriculum and fun. The first night will be pizza night and it will last an hour. To help fund the food, we are asking that individuals donate at least \$5 a person, unless they truly cannot, as we still want you there! We will have a jar in the fireside room for those donations, so we can keep the meals going!



August 2023

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|--|---|-----|---------------------------------|--|----------------------------|-----|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 10a Berean Watchmen | 4 6:30a Men's Group | 5 |
| 6 10:30a Worship | 7 10:40a Prayer 12p Women's Bible Study | 8 | 9 | 10 10a Berean Watchmen 6p Hymn Sing | 11 6:30a Men's Group | 12 |
| 13 10:30a Worship and Potluck | 14 10:40a Prayer 12p Women's Bible Study | 15 | 16 6p Back To School Bash | 17 10a Berean Watchmen | 18 6:30a Men's Group | 19 |
| 20 10:30a Worship | 21 10:40a Prayer 12p Women's Bible Study | 22 | 23 6p Faith & Food Night | 24 10a Berean Watchmen | 25 6:30a Men's Group | 26 |
| 27 10:30a Worship and Elder Meeting | 28 10:40a Prayer 12p Women's Bible Study | 29 | 30 6p Faith & Food Night | 31 10a Berean Watchmen | | |



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Coming Events

Hymn Sing ~ Wed, August 10th ~ 6:00pm @ Quail Park Shannon Ranch

Church Potluck ~ Sun, August 13th ~ After Service

Back To School Bash ~ Wed, August 16th ~ 6:00pm

Stop by our website for more information on Bible Studies
and coming events at www.thefountaincc.org