Duties	Sunday Morning	Sunday Evening	Wednesday
Opening Prayer	Nekoda	Matthew	
Song Leader	Paul	Jason	
Lord’s Table	Bill Clayton	Harold	
Lord’s Table	Jim Wo, Cameron		
Speaker	Jason	Paul	
Announcements	Jason	Jason	
Closing Prayer	Chuck	Oxley	

Family Notes



Continue to keep in prayer:

Our prayer list is shared in the assembly and with members.

- **Prayer requests and member news are shared in the assembly.**
- **Caleb and MaKayla Heard will be on their way to begin working with us by the end of the month!**

Prayers & Announcements

Mailing Address:

“I was sick and you visited me . . .”

October 18, 2026

Spiritual Foresight

You have been a Christian now for several years. You've fought a decent fight up to this point, winning some major battles against various sins, such as controlling your tongue, addictions (or that one sin you forever battled which you have now gotten under control), and you have developed an all-around more spiritual attitude. You've made some major accomplishments! Now what do you do? Where do you go from here?

Let's make plans, just as Jesus did. Jesus always knew what was next on His "agenda." He was always planning and preparing. He knew what His mission was while on earth, and stuck with it. He knew His life was leading up to a crucifixion, and He focused His life toward that moment. Those major events in Jesus' life had been planned from long ago. Another interesting aspect of Jesus' life is that even the minor details along the way were planned. For instance, Mark 14:12-16 tells us the story of the preparations Jesus and His disciples made for the Passover. The disciples approached Jesus and asked what preparations needed to be made for the Passover. Jesus gives them a concise, detailed response to their question, revealing His preparation for the event. Another example of Jesus' preparation was His exit from the earth. Even His death was in preparation for something. "I go to prepare a place for you," Jesus tells His disciples in John 14:2. Like Jesus, if we plan now, we can always know where we want to go next in life.

Mesa Valley Church of Christ

Meeting Times

Sunday

Bible Classes 9:30 AM

Morning Worship 10:30 AM

Evening Worship 4:00 PM

Wednesday

Bible Classes 7:00 PM

How To Contact Us

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(Continued)

our spiritual lives.

Pick our plans. Titus 3:1 tells us to “be ready for every good deed.” Be prepared! The first thing we have to do before we can know where to go from here is to determine our ultimate goal. As Christians we are striving to perfect ourselves, becoming like Jesus Christ. Of course it is a lofty goal, and one that we will be working toward our entire lives. Since we know that is our goal, we must decide which areas in our lives require development. In what ways are we not like Christ? Select a few areas that need the most work and determine ways to improve them. Discipline your body and bring it into subjection (1 Cor 9:27). You cannot improve if you do not know what you need to improve, and if you do not arrange for improving those things.

Choosing unwisely. Preparing yourself for destruction is also possible (Romans 9:22). God gives you that option, though He loves you and wants you to go to heaven. The key to this preparation is to make all of your plans based upon this life; simply “plan according to the flesh” (2 Corinthians 1:17). Set goals as though this life is what is truly important, and you will be ready for destruction before you know it.

Do you know what direction your life is headed? My college football coach told our team, “You either get better or get worse. You do not stay the same.” You are headed somewhere. If you feel you are not growing as you should, the solution is to reevaluate yourself. Discover where you do not match up to the stature of Christ, and write down plans for improving those areas. If you can learn to plan carefully as Jesus did you can say as Paul did, “Not that I already obtained it, or have already become perfect, but I press on in order that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus” (Phili. 3:12).

Dandy Designs:



Life is full of beauty. In the early days of the Does God Exist? ministry when we traveled long distances to lectureships in a station wagon pulling a pop-up trailer, my wife's mother went with us. Edith was a collector of anything she saw beauty in, which meant her house was full of things she collected. She shared my interest in geology and rocks, and she loved to collect geodes. The outside of a geode is not impressive but if you cut it in half with a rock saw or smash it with a hammer you will find the inside is full of beautiful colors — purple (amethyst), red (jasper), yellowish brown (iron), orange (agate), or light blue (chalcedony). She would also buy slices of rocks that had veins of minerals running through them that were full of color and intricate designs.

We love the beauty of the birds on our feeders, especially the ruby-throated hummingbirds. We marvel at the colors of the butterflies that visit our special butterfly bushes, and we relish the smell of our roses. The flicker of fireflies, the song of a wren, and the intricate pattern of diatoms under an electron microscope all impress us with the beauty built into the creation around us.

But what is beauty, and why should it exist? Is it an intrinsic property of our world —like mass? Is it an artifact of human perception? Does it arise by the operation of physical laws, and if so, how do these laws generate a quality so pleasing to us that we strive to create it? Is it something done by a Designer who values beauty and wants to impart that value to those created in his image?

From the position of a utilitarian naturalist, natural selection is the sole cause of beauty. The smelliest flowers are the ones that get pollinated the most by insects, so roses are simply selected over less fragrant plants. The colors of birds and butterflies and frogs are just camouflage according to this view and we just like the camouflage. There are many problems with this explanation. The extravagance of design is far beyond what is needed for basic camouflage. Many of the animals involved are color blind, so the elaborate color patterns are unnecessary. Look at the bleeding heart or the iris and ask why the flair? Many examples of beauty are in nonliving things and thus not selected in my way. Sunsets, sunrises, the auroras, mineral colors, the intricate patterns in snowflakes, patterns in galaxies and nebula are generally unnecessary to their existence. If the universe is only a machine grinding away for billions of years then its beauty has no value. Those things we think are beautiful are just a commodity to be used up — to suit our appetites. Nothing is of value unless it is useful to human beings — now or in some future generation. What good is a wilderness to a naturalist? If you cannot drill for oil — why protect the wild? What good are salmon if we can grow them in concrete vats? What good is a forest if it does not yield board feet of lumber? Why worry about non-human species if they are not fit and you are? Measured by its consequences, the utilitarian ethic and the naturalistic foundation on which it has been built have been disastrous.



Those of us who believe in God concur with biologist J. B. S. Haldane's discussion of the enormous range of colors and patterns in beetles when he said, “the cosmic designer must be inordinately fond of beauty.” Offering no survival benefit the logarithmic spiral of the nautilus caused Descartes to identify the mathematical beauty of what his equations described. The beauty around us provides standards for science, language, and literature. It calls us out of ourselves and inspires affection and gratitude. Rejoice in it. Care for it.

John Clayton