

Is the church still relevant?

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Sabbath School

Summary

Friendly churches are nice to attend, caring churches are even better but God calls us to be a carrying church. And carry each others burden.

Program Aim

Friendly churches are nice to attend, caring churches are even better but God calls us to be a carrying church. And carry each others burden.

Scripture References

Ephesians 6:21-24

Theme Song(s)

#348 The church has one foundation

Program Audience

[All Ages](#)

OPENING SONG: #348 The church has one foundation

(Men and women sing different verses)

SCRIPTURE READING: Ephesians 6:21-24

(Read responsively after each punctuation)

PRAYER:

(Pray in groups of two)

WELCOME:

Good morning everyone. It's good to see you once again, another Sabbath. Welcome to Sabbath School. I pray that our fellowship would be an uplifting one and that we would be spiritually blest. A special welcome to those who are visiting with us today. Your presence is greatly appreciated. Come again soon.

SUPERINTENDENT OPENING REMARKS:

Brothers and sisters, why is the SDA church in existence?

The local church exists to glorify God the Father by making disciples of Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit.

As members of the local church, we play an invaluable role in the body by caring for others. As Paul writes in Ephesians 4:11-16

And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the statute of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

According to this passage, the church, (which is the body of Christ) has been given ministers that have the express purpose of "equipping the saints for the work of ministry." This type of ministry that the saints are called to do, will differ from person to person on account of the fact that they all possess different gifts. While the types of ministry will differ, the commands to be obeyed in the context of ministry will not differ. For example, while one may have the gift of service and

another has the gift of leadership, both are expected to show forth the love of Christ to others. We are not exempted from showing care and love for others because we are “introverted.”

Ultimately, our faithfulness to Christ’s commands affects the health of the body of Christ. In other words, if we care for others, the church will grow in maturity and unity in Christ. If we do not care for others, the church will wither and eventually die as a local expression of the body of Christ. Churches that are comprised of members that do not show genuine care and concern for one another will not be effective.

SPECIAL MUSIC:

Friendly Churches

We all want our churches to be loving environments. But what does that look like? How do we make that happen? Some churches work to be more friendly --- and that’s good. Some move beyond friendly and move to caring --- and that’s better. But, there is another step. That step is being a carrying church.

Let’s look at the progression.

We need to be intentional about the friendliness of our churches. A church can be an intimidating environment for newcomers, so we must start taking steps to make everyone feel more comfortable when they enter. We have things like welcoming teams and greeters at the door.

In the past, churches weren’t as intentionally friendly. Oftentimes no one would greet you at the door. But now, there are smiling faces at the door and when you enter, someone says to you, “Hey, good to see you!”

Friendly churches are a step in the right direction in transforming our churches into places that better reflect the love of Christ.

It’s nice to feel as though you’ve walked into an approachable and agreeable environment. But we can go further.

MISSION STORY:

Caring Churches

As time passed by with more and more churches becoming friendly churches, we begin to realize that people weren't just looking for a friendly church.

They were looking for friends. A friendly church doesn't mean friends. It just means you taught people how to greet one another—which is a good thing, but there's more to friendship than that.

A friendly church is basically a greeting church. But a caring church is a church that is moving into deeper community.

In a caring church, people have an intentional engagement in each other's lives. It is in a caring church that people find friends.

In a caring church, people are not only identified as members of a community, but are also they are able to participate as members of the community. We can't be a caring church when we are always sitting in the sanctuary.

That's not community; that's just proximity.

We want to move people from sitting in rows to sitting in circles.

Small groups are a great structure to accomplish that, which is why today a caring church is almost always going to have some form of small groups. In small groups, people can build true relations with some of the people they sit next to each Sabbath in church. Contrary to popular misconception, a caring church does not have to be a small church.

Large churches can stay caring through their small group ministry, or other ministry that does the same job as a small group ministry.

But there is still more.

LESSON STUDY

Carrying Churches

So, there are friendly churches and sometimes we go a step further to be caring churches. But I think Jesus has called us to go even deeper---- he has called us to be a carrying church. God has called us in scripture to “ carry each other’s burden and in this way you will fulfil the law of Christ.” Gal. 6:2 We are not only to care for one another, but we are to carry one another.

Caring for one another may look like having an empathetic or sympathetic approach to another’s pain and hurt. In a caring church, we at least know about one another’s burdens; in a friendly church we may not even know. But a carrying church means we are going to engage in each other’s care and hurt. We need our churches to move to be the place where there is a deeper caring, a deeper compassion, a deeper level of love.

Let us read 1Corinthians 12: 26

When we think of members, we often think of members of the church. But what Paul is talking about here is members of the body. Think of the word “dismember”. If you cut your arm off, you’re dismembered. You’ve lost a part of the body. We, the church, are the body of Christ. If one member suffers, all the members suffer with it, just as one part of your physical body hurts, the rest of the body feels an effect.

For the majority of churches, it is assumed that a person’s family will provide the carrying while the church provides the surface level, or sometimes moderate level caring.

Carrying is thought of as a familial function.

But in the New Testament, carrying is a congregational function. It can and should be the reality of our congregations today, too.

The church needs to move into deeper community that truly expresses what love is. We need to bear one another’s burden, pray for one another and have a deeper compassion for one another.

We are a family. No one is too heavy for us to carry, because they are our brothers and sisters. We should be willing to work together to carry one another's burdens as we suffer with those who suffer.

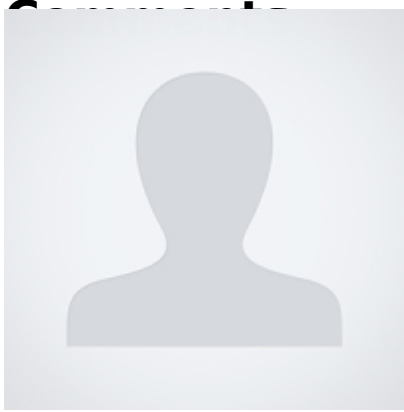
My exhortation to the church today is that with God's help we take deeper steps to embody being a carrying church, as the church was in the New Testament.

***** End of Sabbath School *****

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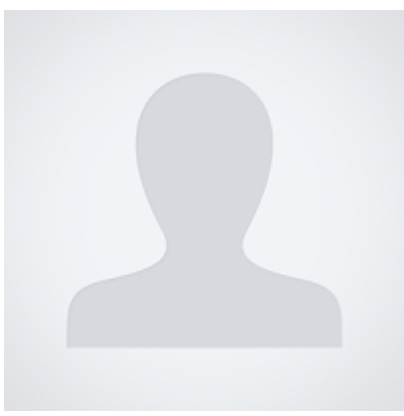


Danny (not verified), Jun 17 2020 - 3:32am

I loved the sabbath school program given to me and hope it would be interesting and of great blessing to my church

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Shevonisaacs88... (not verified), Jan 02 2021 - 7:42am

Wonderful lesson

- [Reply](#)



Claudia Baptist (not verified), Apr 15 2021 - 10:23am

I so love the progression in this program. Definitely what we need in our churches and in our programs.

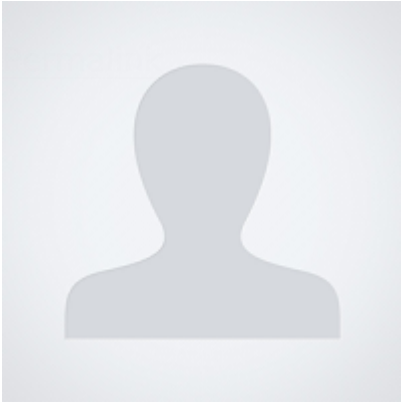
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Michelle Ferguson (not verified), Jan 26 2022 - 3:34pm

I love the coming together at the church

- [Reply](#)



Balarin Jerry (not verified), Jan 26 2022 - 7:01pm

Love the Sabbath school Program, i believe with all my heart that it will be very interesting and it will change my routine every sabbath

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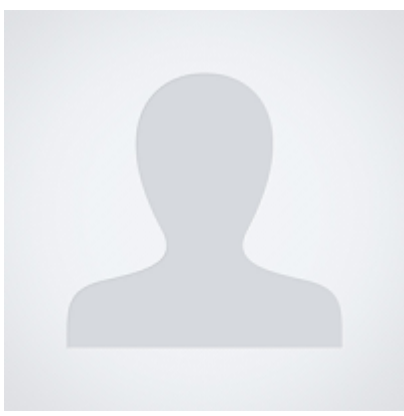


Caroline campbell. (not verified), Jan 26 2022 - 7:17pm

Awesome! I like the carrying church, such soul searching program, thanks a lot, I pray the Lord will continue to cover you both under his wings, and continues to inspire you. God bless you my brother and sister in Christ ?♥

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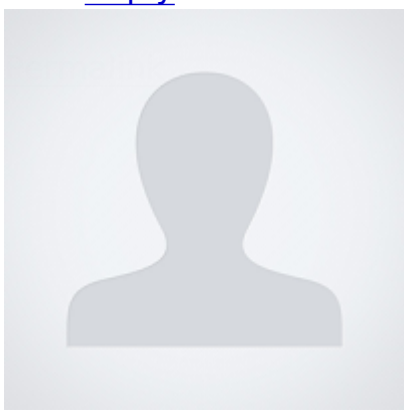
Yake Maxon (not verified), Jan 26 2022 - 7:36pm
Really Love the Program.

- [Reply](#)



Getrude (not verified), Jan 26 2022 - 11:32pm
Wonderful lesson and will definitely help us as a church to grow.

- [Reply](#)



Benson benny (not verified), Jan 31 2022 - 4:51am
excellent lesson

- [Reply](#)



Altrice (not verified), Oct 01 2022 - 4:29am
Powerful lessons to all of us members

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Ntombo (not verified), Sep 05 2023 - 11:17pm
Amen

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