

University Heights Church  
of Christ  
445 Columbia Ave.,  
Lexington, KY 40508  
(859) 255-6257  
www.uheightschurch.com

**WORSHIP SERVICES**

**Sunday**

Bible Study: 9:45 AM

Worship: 10:45 AM; 6:00 PM

**Wednesday**

Bible Study: 7:30 PM (This is  
immediately followed by a  
short worship period)

**First Friday of Each Month**

Singing: 7:30 PM

**LEADERSHIP**

**Elders**

David Collins  
John Thompson  
Troy Antle

**Evangelist**

Adam Litmer

**Deacons**

Richard Brundige  
Matt Thompson  
Adam Litmer  
Bill Morelan  
Jim Parsons  
Pat Seabolt  
Adam Daniels  
Jamie Powell

**IN NEED OF PRAYERS**

Bill Osborne, Rachel Thompson, Larry  
Billator, Julie Patton, Karen Spivey,  
Sandra Russell, Jeff Howerton, Janet  
Brundige, Rhonda Boyd (and her  
sister, Dorothy), Paul Atkisson, Julia-  
Ann Dixon, Ed Allison, Dwight Antle,  
Keia Burton, Robert Brundige,  
Valerie and Barry Boyd, Janett's  
mother, Sandy Driver, Erlene Young,  
Larry Sells, Evelyn Damron, Jean  
Gartland, John Blessing, William  
Roberts, Paul Lyda, Pete Soro,  
Harleigh Spartman, Mattie Johnson,  
Elijah Epling, Sandra Queen, Linda  
Moore, Sheila Johnson, Virginia  
Gordon, Glenn Lake

# University Heights Messenger

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**“I Will Never Leave You Nor Forsake You”**

Adam Litmer

Our Lord's words from Hebrews 13:5 are very encouraging. The word “forsake” means, “To leave in times of danger.” Dangerous times are always difficult and frightening. They are even more so when one must face them alone. Jesus, however, has promised that he will not forsake his people. Indeed, his actions throughout Scripture demonstrate this to be true. Let's consider a few examples.

When Jesus sent out his apostles on their limited commission he did not hide that eventually their reception would grow cold, even hostile. *When they deliver you over, do not be anxious how you are to speak or what you are to say, for what you are to say will be given you in that hour. For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.* (Matthew 10:19-20) When arrested and forced to make a defense before authorities with the power to punish and kill, Jesus made it clear they would not face such situations alone. The Spirit of their Father would be with them there. How encouraging!

At another time Peter displayed great courage, faith, and trust in stepping out of a boat and walking toward Jesus on water. However, the blowing winds and choppy sea frightened him. His faith wavered and he began to sink. Matthew 14:31 says, *Jesus immediately reached out his hand and took hold of him, saying, “O you of little faith, why did you doubt?”* Jesus did not forsake Peter when Peter's faith

wavered. Though he did offer a mild rebuke, he reached out for Peter “immediately.”

Some time after the establishment of the church, seven men were chosen to serve the Hellenist widows who were being neglected. One of those men was Stephen, a saint full of grace, power, and great works. (Acts 6:8) When the enemies of the Lord were working themselves into a murderous frenzy, Stephen turned his gaze toward heaven. *Now when they heard these things they were enraged, and they ground their teeth at him. But he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.* (7:54-55) Jesus knew what was happening to Stephen and cared immensely. As Stephen’s life bled away, he cried, *Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!* (7:59) Lord Jesus did just that. In dying a violent death, Stephen was not forsaken by his Lord.

Years later, Saul of Tarsus, who had been in full agreement with the death of Stephen, had been transformed by the cleansing blood of Christ and become one of the greatest men of God to grace this earth. This “born out of season” apostle reached the terribly wicked city of Corinth. He was afraid for his safety. The Lord knew and cared. Appearing to Paul in a vision Jesus offered him comfort and encouragement. *Do not be afraid, but go on speaking and do not be silent, for I am with you, and no one will attack you to harm you, for I have many in this city who are my people.* (Acts 18:9-10)

Several years after this, Paul found himself in a prison cell with death imminent. In a reflective mood, he recalled the circumstances of his first defense. The brethren failed him, refusing to stand by his side. Even so, Paul was not alone. *At my first defense no one came to stand by me, but all deserted me. May it not be charged against them! But the Lord stood by me and strengthened me, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. So I was rescued from the lion’s mouth. The Lord will rescue me from every evil*

*deed and bring me safely into his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory forever and ever. Amen.* (2 Timothy 4:16-18) Paul was forsaken by his brethren, never by his Lord.

Another apostle, John, found himself exiled to the isle of Patmos. He was there “on account of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.” (Revelation 1:9) On a remote island and away from the action of the mainland, John was not forgotten or forsaken by his Lord. Indeed, he was chosen by the Lord (1:10-20) to record the incredible final book demonstrating the ultimate victory of God and the saints over Satan and his minions. Jesus knew where he was and he cared. He did not forsake this apostle whom he loved.

This list could be extended to encompass so many more children of God, yet “the time would fail me” to list them all. Paul penned heartbreaking words when he said, *For Demas, in love with this present world, has deserted me.* (2 Timothy 4:10) Praise God that our Lord is no Demas! Even if forsaken by all others, the faithful saint will never be forsaken by his Lord. This was the Lord’s promise to his people.

The entirety of Hebrews 13:5 reads, *Keep your life free from the love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.”* At first blush, one may be tempted to limit being content with what we have to the material blessings of this life. Contextually, that is certainly part of it. Yet note that the Hebrew writer’s reason for being content is the Lord’s great promise, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.” That truth excels all the riches of this world combined. What a reason for contentment! Is it any wonder, then, that the Hebrew writer’s next statement is the great quotation of Psalm 118:6? *So we can confidently say, “The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?”*

Let us praise our loyal, loving, gracious Savior!



