

# The Word for 2026 is: 'Begin'

A few weeks ago, my pastor announced that we are going to read the Bible together as a church. He gave two options: the whole Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, or just the New Testament. because of Leviticus. I've never been able to read through that Old Testament book with all its detailed instructions for proper sacrifices, regulations about clean and unclean foods, and what to do about boils and mildeu, among a thousand other things that have no relevance to 21st-century life. I imagine there's something in Leviticus that's beneficial to my soul, but I haven't been able to stay awake long enough to find out. Here's the truth: In the past 45-plus years I've read the Bible (minus Leviticus) many times — but not consistently. Not daily.

Years ago, a woman called me about speaking at her church's women's event and asked rather brusquely, "How much time do you spend in the Word every day?" My face got hot and my heart pounded. I gulped and said, as light-heartedly as I could, "Oh, probably not as much as I should." The conversation went downhill from there. She didn't call back, and I didn't get the gig. Sometimes when people post pictures of their open Bible and a cup of coffee on social media, with a pithy caption like "Can't start my day without either of these!", I feel that same familiar shame. I don't want to feel that way about Bible reading. I want to love it so much that I can't start my day without it. But I'm just not there. Yet. A Christianity Today



NANCY KENNEDY

article once asked, "If Leviticus or Jude suddenly disappeared from Scripture, would we notice?" The author, Ted Olsen, wrote: "When the early church fathers spoke or wrote, they breathed the language of Scripture. They could not greet each other without quoting Jesus or Paul. They used Scripture not just to refer to God, but to describe their interpersonal relationships, daily tasks — their entire world. "To ask them to speak without reference to Scripture would be like asking us to speak without using words with the letter e." If Leviticus fell out of my Bible, I might notice it missing, but it wouldn't make much difference. But I would miss the tiny book of Jude, especially its rich benediction at the end: "To Him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before His glorious presence without fault and with great joy...."

Able to keep me from falling. He presents me before His glorious presence. Without fault — blameless and unblemished. And with great joy. Triumphant joy and unspeakable delight. (Jude 24, Amplified Bible) "To our one God, our only Savior, through Jesus Christ our Master be all glory and majesty... now and to the end of all time. Yes." (Jude 25, The Message) I really do love the Word of God when I take time to digest it. I just haven't taken the time — at least not regularly. But I've signed up to read the Bible every day in 2026 with others in my church, so I'm going to begin. Who knows? I might just be surprised to find that I can't start my day without it. Contact Nancy Kennedy at 352-564-2927 (leave a message) or email at nkennedy@chronicleonline.com.

# Rolled-up newspapers make excellent flyswats

BY ROGER ALFORD

You may remember the joke about the man who was sitting on the back porch at his daughter's house when he asked to borrow a newspaper. "Oh, Dad, this is the 21st century," the daughter said. "We don't waste money on newspapers anymore. Here, try my iPad."

That fly never knew what hit it. All of us beyond a certain age know that a rolled-up newspaper is quite the flyswat. In fact, newspapers are incredibly versatile beyond keeping us up to date on the latest happenings in the community, state, nation and world. Newspapers have been good to me and my family over the past 40-plus years. As a journalist, they have put food on our table and shoes on our feet. They have also given me a front seat to history and have allowed me to meet some incredible people. I was reminded of that not long ago when I was privileged to chat with Jerry Sue Lawson, an absolutely vibrant Christian lady from southeastern Kentucky who happens to bear an uncanny resemblance to the character Madeline "Matty" Matlock in the hit CBS legal drama series "Matlock."

Jerry Sue said people often ask her if she realizes how much she looks like Matty, who is played by Kathy Bates. But I believe there is someone Jerry Sue is far more like than Matty Matlock. That someone is Jesus. You see, Jerry Sue is an encourager, a kind lady whose vibrant spirit lifts up everyone around her the way Christians in the early church did. In the book of Acts, we read about a tiny group of believers in Antioch who grew in number and in spirit. Folks around Antioch couldn't help but notice something very different about these people. They coined the name Christians for the Antioch believers because they were so Christ-like. It's not uncommon to see a person who puts us in mind of someone famous from TV. We're intrigued by that. But when we see someone who puts us in mind of Christ, we truly take notice. There's something truly special about a vibrant Christian. Printed newspapers may one day be totally replaced by iPads, laptops and Smartphones, but nothing will ever take the place of a kind-hearted Christian. Reach Roger Alford at 502-514-6857 or rogeralford1@gmail.com.



ROGER ALFORD

## FBC NEWS

BY BRO. BRAD BANKS

We concluded our study of Colossians on Sunday morning with a message entitled, "Ordinary People with Extraordinary Impact." The message from Colossians 4:7-18 dealt with who God uses. He uses faithful people who show up, encouraging people who strengthen others, praying people who labor secretly, and willing people who serve with seriousness. During the evening service, Dylan Duvall gave an update on the mission work in Panama where he is serving. We are rejoicing that we ended December setting a new record for the Lottie Moon International Mission Offering with \$32,875 being received. Praise the Lord! Our annual Family Fun Fellowship will be on Sunday, January 18 starting at 5:30pm. A night of fun activities in the Family Life Center and Fellowship Hall and a soup, sandwich, and dessert fellowship. The Church League Volleyball kicks off on Monday, January 19. Our annual Lay-Led service will be Sunday, January 25 at both morning

services at 9:00 and 11:00am. Danny O'Toole and Jaden Treichel will be our speakers. All Hunters, mark your calendar for Friday, February 27. We will host a "Wild Game Supper" that will include several door prizes and giving away 8-10 guns. Our speaker will be Chuck McAlister, founder and host of AdventureBound Outdoors. More information to come! Our students and children meet each Wednesday at 6:30pm.

Our Children's Church Ministry is offered during the 11:00am worship service. Come check out our new children's ministry room. The FLC is open Monday – Friday from 8:00am – 1:00pm, Saturday from 9:00am – 1:00pm, and Monday/Tuesday/Thursday from 4:00-8:00pm. Our weekly service times are Sunday at 9:00am, 11:00am, and 6:30pm. The Sunday School gatherings start at 10:00am. Our Wednesday service

begins at 6:30pm. Our church would like to remind you that you can connect with us through our website at owentonfbc.com, Face Book at FBC Owenton, download our church app, join us on twitter or Instagram. You can also call the church office or email us at office@owentonfbc.com. God bless you, your family, and our community. See you Sunday!

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**316-318 SULPHUR AVENUE, EMINENCE, KY 40019.** DUPLEX AND EACH UNIT IS TWO BEDROOMS, ONE BATH, KITCHEN, LIVING ROOM, AND UTILITY ROOM. THE FRONT UNIT RENT IS \$600 AND THE REAR UNIT IS \$500. THERE IS ONLY ONE WATER METER, SO WATER IS INCLUDED WITH THE RENT. WATER INCLUDES SEWER AND SOLID WASTE REMOVAL.

**248 MERRIWEATHER AVENUE, EMINENCE, KY 40019** SINGLE FAMILY HOME WITH THREE BEDROOMS, TWO BATHS, IN NEED OF SOME REPAIR. GOOD LOCATION AND GOOD RENTERS IN PLACE THAT PAY \$600 PER MONTH AND TENANT PAYS ALL UTILITIES.

**2230 CHRISTIANBURG ROAD, SHELBYVILLE, KY 40065** SINGLE-FAMILY HOME IN GOOD CONDITION, SITTING ON 1 ACRE. THE HOME HAS THREE BEDROOMS, 1.5 BATHS, 1,100 SF, LIVING ROOM, KITCHEN AND UTILITY ROOM. THE PROPERTY ALSO HAS A METAL BUILDING ON IT FOR A SHOP AREA OR EQUIPMENT STORAGE.

**8644 CROPPER ROAD, SHELBYVILLE, KY 40065** SINGLE FAMILY HOME ON A LARGE LOT. ONE BEDROOM AND ONE BATH. THIS HOME NEEDS SOME REPAIR.

**PUBLIC INSPECTION WILL ONLY BE ON SUNDAY, JANUARY 11TH 2-4PM**

**TERMS: A 10% BUYERS PREMIUM WILL BE ADDED TO THE FINAL BID TO DETERMINE THE FINAL SALES PRICE OF EACH PROPERTY. THE WINNING BIDDER SHALL PUT DOWN 10% OF THE TOTAL SALES PRICE AS A DEPOSIT AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE AUCTION, WITH THE BALANCE DUE ON OR BEFORE FEBRUARY 16TH, 2026.**

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