

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Church of God Big Sandy

ChurchofGodBigSandy.com

Oct. 18, 2025 • 1:00 p.m. • Sunset 6:45

Bible studies

Interactive study—1:00 p.m. Daniel Hammons

Presentation study—2:00 Dave Havar
(also transmitted live)

Order of service—3:00 p.m.

Song leader Reg Killingley

Pianist Dixon Cartwright

Scripture reading Revelation 21:1–7

Sermon Neil McIver

Quick takes

1. Thank you—The congregation thanks the Feast coordinators (David and Joyce Coleman in Big Sandy and Neil and Martha McIver in Destin) for their effective service.
2. Thank you—The Feast coordinators in Big Sandy and Destin thank all of you who served the congregation and the guests who attended with us.
3. Dominoes tomorrow? Interested participants should contact Sue Jones.
4. Wednesday-night Bible study—Oct. 22 at 7:00.
5. Community Thanksgiving Gathering —Big Sandy Mayor Linda Baggett asked if our building is available for hosting the annual Community Thanksgiving Gathering in November. (Our congregation had the privilege of previously hosting the event in 2019.)

■ Date—Sunday, Nov. 23

■ Time—4:30 p.m.

■ Location—in our building

6. Congregational history with the Community Thanksgiving Gathering
 - History of participation—every year since 2017
 - 2019—Our congregation had the privilege of hosting.
 - 2025—Our congregation has the privilege of hosting again.
7. Edifying the Body—This week's article is "The Blessing of Being Alive" by Shirley West.
8. Among Friends—This week's article is "Saying Good-Bye in This Life" by Shirley West.
9. Eye on the World—Not available at bulletin deadline.

Prayer updates

As you remember, **Timberly Dunnam** generally has a mixture of good health days and challenging health days. Yesterday was a good day. She was able to go shopping with her mother and even enjoy getting a needed haircut. In the Aug. 9 bulletin, we mentioned that the **Dunnams** identified a challenge with mold in their home. Since then, they have been addressing the challenge. On Sunday, Timberly is scheduled to go to her brother's home (**Jake** and **Tiffany** live in Longview) for a while. Following the Feast, Timberly wants to thank everyone for the prayers, cards and food treats during the celebration. The Dunnam family reported: "We have an awesome congregation who are always looking out for others."

Gary Wilson continues to maintain a stable status. He hasn't made the astounding improvement yet, but he has faith and hope in our Lord.

Lisa Smith reports that her kneecap is not broken. She is hoping to have therapy soon.

Ramon Coleman of Kansas City (who attended the Feast at a site in Panama City, Fla.) visited our site in Destin one day and gave a wonderful sermon—discussing his dealing with the death of his wife (**Kate** died on Dec. 10, 2024). As you might remember, Mr. Coleman has experienced many health trials through the past couple of years (including brain surgery and a stroke). His leg is weak (as a remnant of a stroke) and he fell down some steps when he got home. We appreciate his service at our Feast site.

New prayer requests

On Friday evening (Oct. 10), the home of **Justin** and **Nacole Eaton** in Hawkins burned to the ground. They and their two teenagers were present and escaped. They are staying with family and friends as they formulate their plan to rebuild.

Paul and **Suzanne Porter** of Rusk (good friends of **Dixon** and **Linda Cartwright**) are dealing with multiple health issues and have both been very sick for two weeks with a particularly virulent form of covid.

Shirley West of Big Sandy died on Oct. 16. Please remember her family in your prayers.

“The Blessing of Being Alive”

This article is from the “Edifying the Body” section of the Church of God Big Sandy’s website (churchofgodbig sandy.com). It was posted for the weekend of Oct. 18, 2025—following the death of the author on Oct. 16. (A version of this article was posted in the “Edifying the Body” section on Nov. 24, 2018. At that time, the article was compiled from notes that Mrs. West used for an oral presentation at a community Thanksgiving church service on Nov. 18, 2018. Mrs. West had written a similar article for this website on Jan. 5, 2013.)

By Shirley Dobbs West

BIG SANDY, Texas—I strongly believe in the sanctity of life. Therefore, I am pro-life, and the reason is very personal.

Mother was a young bride

My parents were married in 1932. My mother lacked one month being 15 years old and my daddy was 24.

My grandmother gave permission for the marriage because doctors had told her she had only a few months to live. She knew Daddy would take good care of her young daughter. She made Daddy promise that Mother would not have a child before she was at least 18 years old.

Pregnant mother on the floor

In the spring of 1935, my mother became pregnant. My parents wanted a child, and they were joyful. But one day Daddy came in from work and found Mother on the floor. He thought she was dead. He carefully laid her on the bed and she came to—crying in pain and anguish. Then, she passed out again.

Terrified, Daddy ran two miles to the country store that had a phone to call the doctor.

The doctor came and thought Mother was having a miscarriage. But, as time went on and the pain and anguish continued, he knew something else was wrong. He called an ambulance to take Mother to the hospital, 16 miles away.

Would an abortion save the mother?

At the hospital, he conferred with another doctor, and they decided the only way to save Mother’s life was to abort her child.

Mother refused and begged Daddy, “Please don’t let them take my baby.”

Daddy wouldn’t sign the consent form. An elderly doctor was in the hospital attending to a patient. The younger doctors consulted him and he examined Mother.

He told them: “This woman will die if you take her baby. With surgery I believe the mother and baby can be saved. But I am too old to do the surgery.”

Mother agreed to the surgery

The younger doctors said they would do the surgery under the supervision of the older doctor. They also promised Mother they would not take the baby unless it was absolutely necessary. She agreed to the surgery.

I don’t know what the problem was, but the surgery was successful. Mother had to have care the rest of her pregnancy. My grandmother (who was to live three more years) took care of her.

On Oct. 18, 1935, Mother was 18 years old. She was with child, but she had not given birth. So, technically, Daddy had kept his promise.

Not breathing at birth

On Dec. 30, 1935, I was born.

I wasn’t breathing. The doctor put me in a basin of warm water and then in one of cold water. That shocked me into breathing and I let out a good, healthy cry.

The family story is that my grandmother was so happy she slapped the doctor on the back and he almost dropped me.

I wasn’t the only miracle that December night. It snowed in western Oklahoma, which was the first moisture in 13 months in that drought-stricken area of the Dust Bowl.

I was 40 years old when Daddy told

me the story of my birth. He also said I was 15 years old before he got the hospital bill paid.

I am now almost 83 years old. And—just think—I could have been a statistic in a dusty record book in the Beckham County courthouse that reads,

“Dobbs—girl—aborted at three months—June 1935.”

Wonderful opportunities

Because of God’s mercy, my mother’s courage and my parents love, I have had many wonderful opportunities. I have had the opportunity to be a wife for 60 won-

derful years and be a mother, grandmother and great-grandmother.

Each birthday, I remember three tremendous blessings.

- God’s mercy
- Mother’s courage
- Daddy’s love for his wife and unborn child.

And I say a prayer of thanksgiving for the blessing of being alive.

Oh, by the way. My grandmother lived to see my children.

We serve an awesome, awesome God.

“Saying Good-Bye in This Life”

This article is from the “Among Friends” section of the Church of God Big Sandy’s website (churchofgodbig sandy.com). It was posted for the weekend of Oct. 18, 2025—following the death of the author on Oct. 16. (A version of the article also appeared in the “Edifying the Body” section on March 5, 2022.)

By Shirley Dobbs West

BIG SANDY, Texas—Hellos and good-byes are a large portion of our lives. Hello is the beginning of every relationship.

Our parents may not have said the word *hello* when we were born, but they certainly welcomed us. And that is what a hello does—it welcomes others into our space.

Sometimes hello is just a courtesy, shown to a person we meet on the street. Such greetings can be fleeting, like ships passing in the night.

Yet there are times in our lives when a hello forms a lasting relationship that turns into a marriage, family or lifelong friendship.

Just as every relationship begins with a hello, it ends with a good-bye.

Some good-byes are temporary.

“So long, I’ll be seeing you later.”

One of my friends shortens her response to “Later.”

And there is the proverbial “See you later, alligator.”

There are all kinds of good-byes. We say good-bye to childhood and our teenage years as we say hello to adulthood.

There are the good-byes of our early romances, which probably inspired Shakespeare to pen, “Parting is such sweet sorrow.”

The hardest good-byes are the “final” good-byes in this physical life. (We know that we will be seeing our loved ones again in the Kingdom, but we still experience the temporary separation in this life.)

Good-byes in this life touch everyone’s life sooner or later. Some have to say good-bye in their early years, while others live almost a lifetime without saying a good-bye.

I was 29 when I had to say my first *final* good-bye. It was hard to do. It was to our 3-year-old son, who died from leukemia.

Later I said good-bye to my grandmother, who was present when I was born.

In the following years, I said good-bye to another son, who died from carbon monoxide, my father-in-law and my mother-in-law, my parents, dear lifelong friends and, lastly, to my dear husband of 60 years.

It has been said that it is better to have loved and lost than not to have loved at all. That is also true of the people to whom we have said good-byes.

All of them touched our lives. They brought us joy and laughter. They shared with us love and friendship. They left us with a treasure of memories we can keep and cherish until we say our *final* good-bye in this physical life.