

Duncan: More pray in D.C. than you'd think

Prayer is a bigger part of decisions made in the U.S. Congress than most Americans realize, according to Congressman Jeff Duncan.

Speaking at the Sunday morning worship service at Ware Shoals First Baptist Church, Rep. Duncan said he arrived in Washington three years ago wondering if he would find other believers. The answer, he says, is yes.

"When you first get to Washington, you don't always know how to vote," he said from the church's pulpit. "So the Speaker called us into a room about the size of this sanctuary and explained the bill we were to vote on in another 30 to 45 minutes."

"A group of us from the South Carolina delegation milled around and talked about how we should vote," Rep. Duncan recalled. "A representative from Florida walked up and asked, 'How are you South Carolina boys going to vote on this?' He later became my good friend. He said he was going to have to find a quiet place so he could pray about it."

It was then, according to the second term Republican, that his roommate, then Rep. Tim Scott and current U.S. Sen. Tim Scott, asked what would be wrong with the group of them just praying where they were. So five chairs were pulled together so the Congressman could bow and ask God to guide their decisions.

From then on, Rep. Duncan said, he began to notice there are many believers in Washington despite what you might hear otherwise.

"You may not see it, but God is at work in our nation's capital," he exclaimed.

A former Ware Shoals resident and graduate of Ware Shoals High, the Congressman shared how he had sat in the pews of Ware Shoals First Baptist as a teen.

"Since I was a teenager, I probably sat in the back or up in the balcony," he said. "My Dad was the Greige Mill superintendent. Being in textiles, we



Congressman Jeff Duncan (R-SC) speaks with worshippers Brooke and Jennifer Balentine following services at Ware Shoals First Baptist Church Sunday. The lawmaker shared his testimony and recalled his teen years spent at the local church.

moved around a lot when I was growing up—about 10 to 12 times."

But, he added, just to show how God always has a plan for our lives, it was during his years in Ware Shoals that he met the former Melody Hodges, who has been his wife of 25 years now.

Rep. Duncan said he was nervous about being back at his old church—more nervous that he would be if he was speaking to millions across the world on the House floor.

"I'm here for one purpose—to glorify God," he added, saying he was in Ware Shoals to share his testimony, not his political beliefs.

The Congressman said he was

saved in 1973 while his family was living in Asheville, NC. Speaking before a group of pastors in recent years, Rep. Duncan told them he had not had a Damascus road experience like the Apostle Paul. A pastor from Dacusville later told him to never apologize for not having a Damascus road experience, that lots of people have an Emmaus road experience.

To that, Rep. Duncan explained that like the two followers on the road to Emmaus, he had always known Jesus, that he simply did not realize it at the time.

He also spoke about Abraham and God's command that he sacrifice his son, a difficult command the Old

Testament character was willing to carry out, only to be stopped by God at the last minute. Noting he has three sons, Rep. Duncan said he understands just how difficult that would have been for Abraham, and that he does not know how he would react if God asked him something that hard. Yet God sacrificed his Son Jesus for us.

The Congressman told the congregation how he had texted a fellow representative early Sunday morning to tell him he would be speaking at a church. The other Congressman asked Rep. Duncan to let his audience know there are believers serving in Wash-

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Congressman Duncan talks about prayer

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ington.

Rep. Duncan noted that just off from the Capitol rotunda is a small room known as the Member's Chapel. There is no sign above the door, just a number like all the other numbers identifying rooms in the huge building. Inside the chapel is a back lit, stained glass rendering of George Washington kneeling in prayer.

He recalled how he, Rep. Mick Mulvaney, then Rep. Scott and others had gathered in that chapel to pray prior to a crucial House vote a year ago. Several members of the media

noticed them entering and asked what they were doing, so the representatives gave them a quick tour of the chapel, then asked to be excused so that they might pray together.

"I was a little surprised when Melody texted me shortly thereafter and asked if I was in the Member's Chapel praying," he said. "I told her yes and was curious how in the world she knew that. She said they had just reported on Fox News that the South Carolina delegation was praying about the upcoming vote in the Member's Chapel."

Rep. Duncan said God has spoken to us through his Word and that he

all should seek his guidance in all things, including government.