

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SEP 21, 2014

SICK LIST:

HEALTHCARE CENTERS:

Ruby Harrison, Cynthia McMeans (Ridgeview, Rm 171)

HOSPITAL: Gail Windham (WBMC, Rm. 2209)

HOME: Freddie Alexander, Fred & Romaine Elliott, Bessie & Michael Files, Henry McDonald, Lizzie Banks, Kristee McDonald, Karen Griggs, Chuck Windham, J.D. Dailey

PRAYER LIST: April Lazenby, Sue Hinds, Harold Walton, Louise Alexander, Donnie Bryant, Joshua Jackson, Elmer Williams, Debra Webb, Patsy Tucker, Rhonda Poe, Debbie Odom, Michael Pope, Robert Turner, Wonda Ivie, Bobby Holloway, Ricky McDonald, David Brown, Kim Elliott, James Felton, Tommy Pope, J.D. Dailey, James Horsley, Brenda Holloway, Kathy Pate, Jake & Diane Chambers, Donna Laratta, Kathy Windham, Lane Clark, Arthur Mason, Kelly Tittle, John Pruitt, Madison Banks, Charles Crump, Martha Ann, Debbie Jackson, Diane Townley, Ralph Moon, Elesia Wright

AM - BEN WRIGHT - SINGING IN WORSHIP TO GOD

PM - SINGING NIGHT

**REMEMBER OUR SINGING SCHOOL SUNDAY IS TODAY WITH ROB GURGANUS.
WE WILL HAVE A MEAL AFTER MORNING SERVICES, SEVERAL TEACHING
SESSIONS THROUGHOUT THE DAY AND OUR NORMAL SINGING NIGHT AT 5 PM**

THE WEST WALKER WELCOMER

WEST WALKER CHURCH OF CHRIST
26036 HWY 78
CARBON HILL, AL 35549
(205) 924-9038
westwalkerchurchofchrist.org

TIMES OF SERVICES

SUNDAY MORNING

Bible Class 9:30

Worship 10:20

SUNDAY EVENING 5:00

WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY 7:00

ELDERS:

Gene McDonald 924-4827

Carlton Myers 221-0637

Neil Myers 924-9289

DEACONS:

Danny Busby 387-0213

David Preston 300-1927

Kevin Richardson 295-8864

MINISTER:

Ben Wright 522-8004

Bruce Windham 221-2348

Chris Robbins 388-1354

Vince Roden 924-4062

The Importance of Good Singing **Stan Mitchell**

I would never tell a “bad” singer to sing more quietly, or not at all. The Bible commands that we “make a joyful noise to the Lord” (Psalm 100:1). The crucial instrument in worship is the heart, not the voice! If this were not true, we would just as well broadcast a recording of professional singers while we who worship sit and listen. The key to worship is that we offer our own voices in praise to God.

So, you might ask, is good singing a concern at all? After all, God judges the heart, not the voice. We sense that good singing lifts the spirits of those who sing. We are human, after all. This was the challenge Isaac Watts faced in his day: “The singing of God’s praise is the part of worship most closely related to heaven,” he declared, “but its performance among us is the worst on earth.”

It was a problem at times in the early days of the Restoration Movement, too. The first instrument to be used in churches of Christ was at the Midway congregation in Kentucky. A small melodeon was introduced in worship. The reason? According to the preacher, L.L. Pinkerton, the cause was the poor quality of their singing. “It scared even the rats from worship” (Bill Humble, *The Story of the Restoration*, p. 58).

Poor singing is never an excuse for inserting an unbiblical practice in worship. A far superior response would be to improve our singing. Congregational singing must be attended to, or else it will suffer atrophy. Allow me to put my song leader’s hat on for a moment and make some observations.

* Church leaders should teach the spiritual importance of singing. We should articulate its role and function in worship. What is its purpose? Do we praise God or teach and admonish each other? What kind of hymn renders healthy teaching?

* Take a look at your songbook. First, read the preface. I have found some distinctly insightful things said about hymns by our hymnbook editors.

* Forget – oh please, please, forget whether a song is new or old. How silly (and harmful) is it to disdain a song because it was written 200 years ago, or last year.

Could we please ask better questions of our songs?

* Are the words biblical? If not, the discussion is over. We don't sing it in worship. If the words are biblical, write down the Bible passages it reminds you of (on a paper, of course, not on the hymnbook, unless the hymnbook is your own).

* Is it a song of praise, prayer or edification? Put the song in a category. That would entail thinking about the hymn, something we rarely do. Thinking about the song might save us from singing an unbiblical song, or, positively, it might make the biblical songs meaningful.

* In a bygone era we used to have singing seminars, where we were taught rudimentary music, how to sing in parts, and new songs. We don't anymore, and frankly, it shows.

* Can we worship while singing exclusively the melody? Of course we can! But hymn writers have used their talents to write music that aids and emphasizes the words of the song. I feel certain that is one reason why God allowed us to use song (and not just reciting words) in worship. One example: Robert Lowry's great hymn "Up From the Grave He Arose" utilizes music that is gentle and contemplative when speaking of Jesus' death and burial, but his music soars in the chorus when speaking of Jesus' resurrection: The words "He arose! He arose!" are sung at the tops of our voices. This is hymn-writing done well, but the effect is lessened when not sung the way the author wrote it.

* Listen to a good singer near you. Follow him, learn the part. I believe that almost anyone can learn to sing better.

"Do your best," Paul urges us, "to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15).

When did God start accepting less than our best?

(I am thankful our elders see fit to help us worship God better in singing through our use of a singing school. This is not done to make us better singers, though it is a byproduct. It is done to allow us to praise our worthy God better - Ben)

