

ANNOUNCEMENTS

JULY 5, 2015

SICK LIST:

HEALTHCARE CENTERS:

Ruby Harrison

HOME: Fred & Romaine Elliott, Carolyn Myers, Gail Windham, Willie Nelson

PRAYER LIST: April Lazenby, Sue Hinds, Louise Alexander, Donnie Bryant, Joshua Jackson, Elmer Williams, Debra Webb, Patsy Tucker, Rhonda Poe, Debbie Odom, Robert Turner, Bobby Holloway, Ricky McDonald, David Brown, Kim Elliott, J.D. Dailey, James Horsley, Brenda Holloway, Jake & Diane Chambers, Donna Laratta, Kathy Windham, Arthur Mason, John Pruitt, Madison Banks, Charles Crump, Martha Ann, Debbie Jackson, Diane Townley, Elesia Wright, Margie Thomasson, Larry Alexander, Micah Earnest, Vonciel Phillips, Roger Deihl, Wanda Self, Katie Griffies, Bruce Windham

AM - JESSE WINN

PM - NEIL MYERS

THANKS TO ALL WHO DONATED TO ICYC. WE RAISED OVER \$1,000

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE CAMPAIGNERS WHO WILL BE LEAVING THIS WEEKEND

**BE PRAYING AND PLANNING FOR OUR GOSPEL MEETING WITH WADE WEBSTER
AUG 2-5**

BIRTHDAYS:

July 5: Karen Griggs

11: Ruby Harrison

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
Bruce Windham 221-2348

DEACONS:

Danny Busby 387-0213
David Preston 300-1927
Kevin Richardson 295-8864
Chris Robbins 388-1354
Vince Roden 924-4062

MINISTER:

Ben Wright 522-8004

A Consuming Fire or Just “The Man Behind The Curtain?”

Steve Higginbotham

“For the Lord your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God” (Deuteronomy 4:24). In spite of this truth, Israel disrespected God. They treated God as though he were muzzled, tamed, or even docile. To Israel, God was manageable and could be manipulated to their own advantage. There was no sense of awe, no reverent fear, and no trepidation when they came into his presence.

No better illustration of how they had trivialized God is seen in the life of King Uzziah (2 Chronicles 26:1-23). Uzziah was a very successful King with God’s help, but his success went to his head. Pride filled his heart, and his pride grew, there was less and less a place for God in his heart. Consequently, Uzziah presumed to violate God’s command, enter the temple, and assume the rights that belonged only to the priests. No less than eighty men attempted to stop him, but he had so marginalized God and puffed himself up, that he presumptuously disobeyed and paid a terrible price. He was like the occasional tourist who thinks Panda bears are so cute and safe that he ignores the warnings, reaches his hand through the bars to pet them, only to learn too late, that these bears are wild and untamed.

If there was a single message of which the church needs to be reminded today, in my judgment, it would be that God is a consuming fire; a jealous God! Too many people have trivialized God. When some hear his “thunderings,” they pay no mind as though these “thunderings” originate from the “innocuous little man behind the curtain.”

I believe if we could get “God” right, most of our problems would disappear. If we would stop treating God as though he were tame and able to be manipulated, we wouldn’t presume to change his commandments. Our problems today are really not “the role of women in the church,” “the necessity of baptism for salvation,” or “instrumental music in worship;” rather our problem is more singular. We have failed to emphasize and consequently have forgotten that God is a consuming fire!

How else do we explain that when we gather to worship, instead of hearing gasps of “awe,” we sometimes hear “yawns of boredom?” Instead of God being a consuming fire having the power to refine and even destroy, we have reduced him to a safe, flickering candle that barely provides illumination. We have allowed the familiarity of “sonship” to breed contempt and presumptuousness toward God and his commands.

Friends, God is so much more than “the little man behind the curtain.” He’s more than just a man with a deep, thundering voice (Numbers 23:19). He can’t be manipulated. He can’t be marginalized. He can’t be tamed. And he can’t be put in a box of our making. He isn’t manageable. God is God. He is omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, and omnibenevolent. In spite of revealing himself to us, he remains a mystery. Consequently, we should worship and obey him with awe, caution, and reverent fear. “Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable” (Psalm 145:3).

What Kind of Church is This?

Bryan McAlister

We often say, "It's time to go to church" or "How was church today?" in some way indicating church was an activity in which we participated. Literally the word "church" comes from the word, "ekklesia." In a general sense, this word means "an assembly" and is used to indicate such in Acts 19:32 and 39. In a specific sense, the word means "called out." There is no doubt, those who called themselves Christians in the 1st century, knew they were members of the church, the assembly of God's people, and that they had been called out from their sins, into the sanctity of their Savior Jesus Christ. As to how it is used in the Bible, there are over one hundred descriptive passages where the church is addressed.

First of all, Jesus Christ is the builder of the church (Matthew 16:18), based upon the fact He is the Son of God. Incidentally, the term church and kingdom are used by Jesus Christ in Matthew 16:18-19 interchangeably, indicating they are one in the same. His church, His kingdom is now established, and we need not wait for it any longer. He is the purchaser of the church, paid for by the price of His shed blood (Acts 20:28). The church is the body of Christ (Ephesians 1:22-23). The church being the body of Christ, it is important to note there is but one body of the Lord Jesus, and thus one church, and one identity comprising the one body of our Lord Jesus (Ephesians 4:4).

The Bible speaks of "churches" in the plural (Acts 9:31; Romans 16:16), but only in a geographic sense, not in the sense that would imply or suggest God approves of multiple systems of belief toward His revealed Word. Those who were saved were added to the church, the body of obedient believers (Acts 2:47). Therefore the church is the body of the saved, and one cannot be saved and yet not be a member of the church of our Lord. The church refers to men and women (Acts 8:3).

The church can have an emotional response to disturbing news, as was the case in Acts 5:11, when word of Ananias and Sapphira's death spread, "great fear came upon the church." The church is the house of God (I Timothy 3:15). The church was established to declare "the manifold wisdom of God" (Eph 3:10).

The church has a responsibility to assemble (Hebrews 10:25), observe the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week (I Corinthians 11:18; 23), pray (Acts 4:24), sing (Ephesians 5:19), give of their means (I Corinthians 16:1-2), and teach so others may understand (I Corinthians 14:5). The church is autonomous, or governed locally, independent from any national or world headquarters, for Christ is the head of the church (Ephesians 5:23). The church has a responsibility to remain distinct and not blend or bend the teachings of Jesus with any doctrine or creed of man (Acts 15:1-21). The church should be united under the teachings and standards of Jesus Christ (I Corinthians 1:10); be kind to one another showing forgiveness (Ephesians 4:32); extend help to those in need, especially those of the household of faith (Galatians 6:10). The church is not a sect (Acts 24:5) or a denomination or dividing of Jesus and His teachings (I Corinthians 1:13). The church is the precious gift and creation of our Lord, and has always been His plan by which His truth would be made known, His gospel revealed, and His creation saved through Him. This church desires to serve the Lord and serve you. Our prayer is for the opportunity to do both in love.