

new life news

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF NEW LIFE CHURCH OF CHRIST AUGUST 2018



Steve says...

... that in the past year or so, I have been challenged to look at the scriptures with new eyes. As one person put it to me, If Jesus was raised in a Jewish society, with a Jewish scripture and a Jewish culture and Jesus became a Jewish rabbi; wouldn't it make sense to understand the culture, the scriptures (the Old Testament), and the way the rabbi's operated? Another person put it this way. The biblical writers had limited space in which to write and so they did not write what everyone already knew. (The culture and the customs of the day) Our problem is that we don't know today what everyone knew in the culture and time of the writers.

Doug Greenwald from Preserving Bible Times says that we have learned how to water ski across the pages of scripture when what we really need is to scuba dive in their depths. His point is that we often skim through the text. This is especially a problem for those of us who have been reading the Bible for a long time. Have you ever started to read something and said to yourself, "yeah I know this" and just sort of moved along to the next portion of scripture. I have done this and it is a problem because in that moment I am not really open to hearing what God has for me from His word. I am water skiing across the text. Even when I read it, if I don't put myself in that time and context, I tend to see and understand it from a modern perspective-which may be a wrong understanding.

The alternative, scuba diving, is to slow down in our reading of the text and to ask a series of questions that will ultimately lead us to a deeper understanding of what is being said and what is being assumed by the writers. What questions are these? Questions about geography (Where is this happening? , questions about language (What words are used?), questions about history (What else happened here?, questions about literature (What kind of writing is this?), questions about culture (How did people handle this sort of thing in that culture?), and question about the visual (What did it look like?).

This is a lot of questions and requires a lot of resources to find out the answers. However, we have many resources available to us through technology that are incredibly helpful. I recently preached a sermon in which I detailed the background of several of the 12 apostles and noted how they came from diverse backgrounds and yet were united by the gospel of Jesus Christ. Many commented that they had never heard much of that information before. That sermon was the result of this type of study.

I will be sharing more about this approach to scripture and how to follow it in the months to come, but let me just end with this statement. The depth of the scriptures and the way in which they are interwoven becomes apparent as we carefully study them. This has left me with no doubt that with God, nothing is random. He has a plan and we are a part of it. The more I dig into the Word, the more sure I am of this truth!

Church Events

August 15

- **Sr. Moments @ Bella Bleu's at 12:00pm**
- **Comfort & Joy Sewing 5:30pm**

August 19

- **Tech Support**
- **Pray for Me**

August 26

- **Celebrating Milestones**

Golden Anniversary

Early history of the congregation is not available as the records have been lost, but according to the history of Richland County, the beginnings go back to around 1820. In 1830 a Mr. Moody built a mill in Bellville and on Sundays would preach in the mill even though it continued to operate seven days a week. A short time later a church house was built, but in 1850 this building was moved to make way for the railroad.

In 1864 the Cumberland Presbyterians deeded the building at the corner of Main Street and Howard Smith Boulevard to the Elders of the Christian Church in 1864 and was fully purchased in 1871. Through the years there have been additions to the building on three sides.

There were periods when the church partially closed but in 1912 the doors were reopened. In 1948 the congregation changed the name and incorporated as the Bellville Church of Christ. Brother John Barry was the minister at that time.

Plans to relocate and build the current building go back several years. After much discussion, the present site was purchased from Mrs. Nellie Frye in 1964. She was a member of the church and the mother of Harold B. Frye and Arveda Barr, both members of the church. In 1966 the building was designed by John A. Brown and Associates of Crawfordsville, Indiana. Mr. E.E. Biddle of Lawrenceburg, Indiana was employed as "Church Builder" in 1967 with plans to begin construction as early as weather permitted in the Spring of 1968.

Groundbreaking services were held on Sunday afternoon, February 25th, 1968. Among those participating in the groundbreaking service were: Paul Hatfield, Kenneth Mowry, Forrest Wilkin, Howard Ward, Dwight Pritchard, James Mowry, Dan Long, Paul Farst, Fred Lindeman, Ron Ernsberger, Cleo Calhoun, Med Riddle, Charles Ward, Don Fast, Billy Watson, and Sarah Mowry. Construction began early in March and the building was occupied September 22. Total cost of land, building and parking area was nearly \$150,000.

While the New Testament Church has existed from the first century, each congregation has left its mark on the pages of Kingdom history. From its beginning in a working mill, to a small wooden building on Main Street, to the brick and mortar of the present building, the body of Christ in Bellville has continued its commission legacy. Now called the New Life Church of Christ, we join with nearly two centuries of believers--following Jesus, loving God, loving people, and making disciples.

February 2018 marked the 50th Anniversary of ministry at this location on Durbin Avenue. **We look forward to August 26th as we remember the past five decades as a church during our Celebrating Milestones event. There will be one combined worship gathering @ 10:00a and our Luncheon program will begin at 12:00p.** We look forward to seeing you!

Worship Gathering Time Change

We have consistently struggled to keep the timeframe of our worship gatherings to an hour in length. While in some instances we know that a gathering will run long during its planning, other times there are reasons unforeseen. The issue is when the first worship gathering runs over, it cuts into Sunday School time. A ripple effect begins forcing Sunday School to run long into the second worship gathering that begins on time regardless. The leadership has decided to extend the length of the worship gatherings to 75 minutes in order to help alleviate this issue. Below is the new itinerary **beginning on September 2nd:**

8:30a	First Worship Gathering
9:45	<i>Fellowship/Transition</i>
10:00	Sunday School
10:45	<i>Fellowship/Transition</i>
11:00	Second Worship Gathering
12:15p	Dismissal

We appreciate your patience as we prepare and implement this change. It is our prayer that the new timeframes will better enable us to worship together as the body of Christ while decreasing some of the constraints we have struggled with in the past. We will do our best to maintain the new timeframes knowing that flexibility is important in ministry.

Pray 4 Me

On August 19, we will kick off our Pray 4 Me event for the 2018-2019 school year. We have received so much positive feedback from students and adults over the last few years and continue to give God praise for the impact you are making. We are restructuring our Pray 4 Me ministry to include K-12 once again.

Last year we implemented, MentorME as a means to meet the specific needs of our secondary students. Throughout the year it became clear that there were too many aspects of the ministry that were unsustainable due to a lack of coordination and other one-to-one ministry considerations. Not wanting to leave our youth disconnected, we decided it was best to return them to the Pray 4 Me ministry plan.

You will hear more information soon about Pray 4 Me as we approach August 19th. On that Sunday, **you may pick up a student name following the worship gathering. You will also need to pick up a booklet that outlines the Pray 4 Me ministry and the desired outcomes. Please let the worker know whose name you chose so that we can be sure every student has their own adult prayer warrior.**

Thank you for investing in the lives of our young students.

Jason's Jam

It's back to school time already!!!

First off, please pray for our kiddos as they face new challenges and events as the school year begins.

As we shift into a new season we also are shifting into some new procedures in the children's ministry.

First, promotion Sunday is the first Sunday in September.

Also, starting in September, Jr. Church schedule for the kids changes a bit. First, check them in either in the kids wing or by the toddler room, when you arrive, then pre-school through third grade will attend worship, communion and offering with you as a family. They will be dismissed for Jr. Church after the offering prayer.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask. I look forward to continuing to partner with our volunteers and you in raising our kids to be kingdom kids.

August Birthdays

- 1 – David Crawford
- 2 – Becky Sharp
- 6 – Tristan Cromer
- 7 – Tyler Ehret, Ed Nichols, Ryan Sharp
- 9 – Jeff Culler
- 10 – Nathan Hickerson
- 11 – Barry Fluty, Gary Fry
- 12 – Pam Mowry
- 14 – Makenzie Frontz, Lois Worne
- 15 – Ben Bushong
- 16 – Irene Beal, Brittney Ehret
- 17- Marlee Cromer
- 19 – Jane Olson
- 23 – Sylvia Lining
- 24 – Ericka Kistler
- 25 – Deb Rockwell, Jack Starling
- 26 – Joshua Clark
- 29 – Warner Manning, Gavin Sharp
- 30 – Jenny Armstrong,
- 31 – Chris Cromer

Kyle's Korner

"May they all be one, as you, Father, are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us, so that the world may believe you sent me." -John 17:21

In the hours leading up to his arrest Jesus prayed for us. The Savior, who was about to give His life as a ransom for many interceded for those for whom He was about to die. In His prayer we see an intense desire for unity among His followers. For Jesus, this unity is a priority. Is it for us?

Jesus Christ roots His prayer in His eternal relationship with the Father. He and the Father always have been and always will be One. It is an impossibility to have the Son without the Father or the Father without the Son. We see from other Scripture that the Holy Spirit is also intimately and necessarily linked to the Father and the Son. These relationships provide the backdrop for our understanding what Jesus is praying here. He desires His followers to live in connection with one another, united as one, inseparable. He is praying for us to all be in *necessary unity*. As there are Three Divine Persons existing eternally as One God, there are also many human persons existing as One Church.

But what is the basis of this sort of unity? Jesus prays next that all His followers be part of the community of the Trinity: "May they also be in us..." It is the Spirit Who seals us, fills us and makes this possible. He draws us to the Father and the Son and ties us to Their unity so that we become a new sort of humanity that is one with God. This is what God desires and it is the reason that Christ came to save us, so that in Him we may have "very great and precious promises, so that through them [we] may *share in the divine nature ...*" (2Peter 1:4). We have been invited into the Divine Community, and God has provided all that is necessary for us to participate in this Community. And since this Community is unified, we who are joined to this community are called to also be unified. Christ prays that we live out the unity that we are invited into.

Unity isn't something that the world is used to seeing. Western civilization is built on competition and, whether it be at work, school or the sports field we are in a constant state of struggle to be better than the next guy. We naturally draw party lines and segregate according to opinions or preferences. In America we are deeply polarized over many issues. What if this polarized world saw a Church that was as unified as what its Savior prayed for her to be? A natural result of this unity is that "the world may believe that [the Father] sent [the Son]. The message of the Son entering into human experience and drawing mankind into communion with God is the essence of the Gospel we have been entrusted with. The preaching of the Gospel is severely damaged when it is preached by divided churches.

Christian unity was and is a priority for Jesus. Where does unity in the Body of Christ fall on our priority list? What are we doing to be peacemakers who work for unity in Christ's Church?

UPCOMING EVENTS FOR SEPTEMBER

Wednesday, September 5

- Comfort & Joy Sewing @ 9:00am

September 19

- Sr. Moments Brunch @ 11:00am
- Comfort & Joy Sewing @ 5:30pm