

News and Notes

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

- Patrick King - Hemiplegic Migraine
- Lee Moses - On medication and in therapy.
- Sandy Craig - Ongoing kidney problems.
- Jo Ann McLerran - Back problems/COPD.
- Glenda Marble - Faithful Christian at Lexington, Okla. Heart problems.
- Debbie Post - Wife of Doug Post, Salisbury, Maryland preacher - Cancer.
- Sissy Craig - For spiritual and emotional strength.
- Charles and Linda Pogue - Congestive heart failure.
- Nancy Verkist - Ellensburg, Washington. Von Hippel Lindau disease.
- Chuck Verkist - Ellensburg, Washington. Prostate Cancer.
- Don Smith - Faithful brother in Christ persecuted for teaching fellow inmates in an Ohio prison.

HEALTH ISSUES - Patrick reports that he has been diagnosed with Hemiplegic Migraine. This condition typically includes weakness of half the body which can last for hours, days or weeks. An attack resembles a stroke, but unlike a stroke, it resolves in time. Brother Chuck Verkist reported the good news that tests showed his prostate cancer had *not* spread to any other parts of his body.

KENYA REPORT - Contributing to the Kenya Fund this week were the Berea church of Christ, Rives, Tenn.; and Harold and Ruth Tydings, Broken Arrow, Okla. Within the next week or so, Jerry will return to Dub McClish's home in Denton, Texas to pack up and mail books from the late brother Dub Mowery to brethren in Kenya.

HUNTSVILLE MEETING - The meeting with Fish Hatchery Road was an absolute delight, with great support from the brethren at Spring. Fish Hatchery Road has three sound elders, Weldon Blake, Lovell Henry, and Bruce Stulting. Bruce also preaches there. What a joy it was to be with this good church.

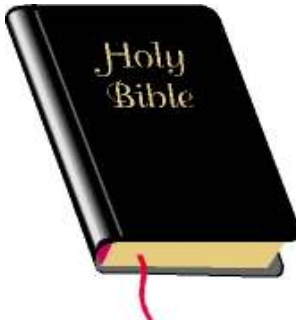
PREACHING THIS WEEK - This is the fourth Sunday, so Earl Reed will preach at both worship periods.

MEET, EAT, AND MEET - We will meet at the regular times on Sunday morning this week, eat a meal together, then meet for afternoon worship immediately afterward.

[Website - www.necocelkcity.com](http://www.necocelkcity.com)
[Face Book - www.facebook.com/necurchofchristecok](https://www.facebook.com/necurchofchristecok)
[You Tube - www.youtube.com/channel/UCjd5rSEV1vXCNx52ouOrXoQ](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCjd5rSEV1vXCNx52ouOrXoQ)

<p>Those Who Serve Sunday Morning, Oct 22, 2017 First Prayer - Patrick King Closing Prayer - Jerry Brewer Communion - Patrick King Offering - Landry Brewer Sunday Afternoon, Oct. 22, 2017 First Prayer - Dylan Brewer Closing Prayer - Earl Reed</p>	<p>Records - Oct. 15 Attendance Bible Class.....14 Morning Worship.....14 Afternoon Worship.....14 Contribution.....\$155.00</p>
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<p>Weekly Meeting Times</p>
<p>Sunday Morning Bible Classes.....9:30 Sunday Morning Worship.....10:30 Sunday Afternoon Worship.....5:00</p>



Sound Doctrine

“But speak thou the things that become sound doctrine” (Titus 2:1)

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A “Method” Of Teaching The Gospel?

Jerry C. Brewer

The mission of the church is singular—preaching the gospel to a lost world. That was stated by Jesus in Matthew 28:19-20 and Mark 16:15, and that is precisely what the church in the first century did (Acts 8:1, 4). The mission of the church is *not* to feed and clothe people, pay their rent, or their utility bills. Those things fall under the category of benevolence and constitute a work of the church to aid those who *cannot* (not, *will not*) provide for themselves. However, over the years—and for several decades now—many elders and members of churches of Christ have concluded that benevolence is a *method* of teaching the gospel to the lost. It isn't. Benevolence does not teach anything. It is a demonstration of our love for the poor.

This view of benevolence as a teaching “method” is an adaptation of the Social Gospel which views religion as ministering to the material needs of others—a concept entirely foreign to the New Testament. The Social Gospel began in Northern Protestant churches in the late 19th century and grew among them well into the 20th century. The following account of its beginning is from this bulletin for April 17, 2016:

Another of the defining theologians for the Social Gospel movement was Walter Rauschenbusch, a Baptist pastor of a congregation located in Hell's Kitchen. Rauschenbusch railed against what he regarded as the selfishness of capitalism and promoted a form of Christian Socialism that supported the creation of labor unions and cooperative economics. In *A Theology for the Social Gospel*, Rauschenbusch states that the individualistic gospel has made sinfulness of the individual clear, but it has not shed light on institutionalized sinfulness: “It has not evoked faith in the will and power of God to redeem the permanent institutions of human society from their inherited guilt of oppression and extortion.” This ideology would be inherited by liberation theologians and civil rights advocates and leaders such as Martin Luther King, Jr.

[Washington] Gladden (1836-1918) was an American clergyman. His words and actions earned him the title of “a pioneer” of the Social Gospel even before the term came into use. Gladden spoke up for workers and their right to organize unions. For Gladden, the “Christian law covers every relation of life” including the relationship between employers and their employees. Rauschenbusch articulated the false notion that there is such a thing as “corporate guilt” and that civil institutions and government are responsible for alleviating the social and civil ills of society. That is the Social Gospel in a nutshell.

There are probably few churches of Christ which have adopted the Social Gospel philosophy in its entirety, but there are great numbers who have adopted a modified form of it. They view benevolence as a “method” of teaching the gospel. Their concept is that a Social Gospel approach makes folks “receptive.” But that’s “public relations”, *not* benevolence

The 5,000 whom Jesus fed were not “receptive.” (Mark 6:35-44; John 6:4-13). After feeding them, He took a ship to the other side of the Sea of Galilee where the multitude followed Him, asking, “Rabbi, when camest thou hither? Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled” (John 6:25-26). He then taught them that He is the Bread of Life (John 6:35, 47-51), and they went away (John 6:66). His feeding them was not a “method” of teaching and certainly did not make them “receptive” to His truth.

The Social Gospel in its modified concept among churches of Christ today is manifested in many of their “programs.” Among those is the most popular, in which churches of Christ have fellowship with denominations—the, “unfruitful works of darkness” (Eph. 5:11)—by joining them on a rotating basis to provide meals for public schools’ athletic teams. At this season of the year, many churches are feeding local football teams in their modified version of the Social Gospel. That is absolutely wrong. Jesus did not die to make His church a dispensary for local athletics.

By ignoring Scriptural authority, they commit sin. (Col. 3:17). If they cannot find that kind of thing authorized for the church to do—and they *cannot*—then they are adding to God’s word and sin in so doing (Deut. 4:2; Prov. 30:6; Rev. 22:18). Feeding football teams is neither the mission nor a work of the church for which Jesus died, and it is certainly not “benevolence” as defined in Scripture (Jas, 1:27). The idea that this makes folks “receptive” to teaching is a public relations ploy—a “bait and switch tactic” like the deer hunter who sets up his feeder, waits for the deer to come, then shoots them.

Members of churches of Christ which have degenerated into dispensaries of loaves and fishes need to read the New Testament, understand the grave mission of the church to preach the gospel to save souls, distribute gospel tracts, conduct gospel meetings, make personal teaching contacts, and place teaching articles in their local newspapers and on the internet. The fields are white unto harvest and souls are heading for eternal torment, while many brethren go merrily along dispensing the bread which perishes (John 6:27).

“Is It Nothing To You, All Ye That Pass By?” (Lam. 1:12)

Jerry C. Brewer

Sometimes people’s attitudes are more clearly expressed by what they *don’t* say than by what they do say. This may be the case in the wake of the concert produced Nov. 17, 2002 at the high school’s Tornado Dome by the “Custer Ave. Church of Christ” in Clinton, Oklahoma. After mailing out 40 some letters to area churches in Oklahoma and Texas (including the Clinton elders) opposing their denominational show, there has not been a single reply in defense of—or opposition to—that spectacle performed by Seventh Day Adventists, Mennonites and members of “The Church of Christ.” Yes, some of the people the “Custer Ave. Church of Christ” hired for the performance were members of denominations. That was confirmed in an email message from a member of the group, Vocal Union. I received the following message after visiting the Vocal Union website and asking singer Steve Camping about their members’ religious affiliation.

Jerry,

“Thanks for checking out the website! Hope you liked the music on there, we are constantly out touring the country, keep your eye on the tour schedule...we may get to your neighborhood soon. As for your question on my church. I live in Reno, NV and go to a small non-denominational community church here. To tell you the truth, we have a rather diverse church background amongst our members, we have Church of Christ, Seventh Day Adventist, CMA, Christian Reformed...its amazing what God is doing in our group and the harmony we continually find in Him. I hope this answers your questions. Keep God the main focus of your life and you will never go wrong! In Him, Steve C” (Email message from Steve Camping, stevecamping@hotmail.com) sent Wed., Nov. 6, 2002)

But that pales into insignificance when one considers the number of elders, preachers and brethren in western Oklahoma who fancy themselves “sound in the faith” but who apparently suffer from spiritual lockjaw. Their silence, so far, says a great deal more about their alleged “soundness” than anything they could shout from the rooftops. Fifty years ago faithful brethren in our area would have been up in arms about such fellowship with denominationalism. Sadly, brethren have become so hardened through the years by the tiny, step-by-step departures away from the old Jerusalem Gospel that this atrocity committed against the Bride of Christ is nothing to them.

In the 1960s and 70s there were a few—very few—voices raised that, in the light of history, saw this apostasy coming. But brethren in rural areas like ours didn’t believe it would ever affect us country folks. Those things, they thought, happened in the “big city” churches like those in Abilene, Dallas, Nashville, or Houston. They had a false sense of security because of our rural situation and largely ignored the warnings. Now it is too late. Those warning voices of 30 and 40 years ago are now vindicated and apostasy’s chickens have come home to roost in rural western Oklahoma and the Texas Panhandle. The saddest part is that few seem to care about, or even recognize, apostasy among us, and those of us who dare to speak up are censured for pointing out that the emperor is naked.