

CHURCH OF CHRIST
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STAMP



National Road Church of Christ

"Equipping the Saints for the Work of Ministry"

VOL. LXXVI

JANUARY 13, 2019

NO. 2

WELCOME VISITOR

We would like to extend a warm welcome to our visitors and invite you to come back and join us again for worship. We ask that you fill out a visitor card in the pew in front of you so that we may have a record of your visit. After our service we would like to give you a gift bag.

THE WAY

-Ryan Parsons-

Before the days of GPS, Amanda and I would travel the roads between Searcy, AR and Houston, TX regularly. Being directionally challenged, I often relied upon Amanda's superior sense of direction to get us to the right location. However, one day on that very long trip, I found myself, by her instructions, on a dead end road in a cemetery deep in the piney forest of East Texas. After 20 years, that trip is firmly embedded in my mind.

Today, we take navigation for granted. Our paved roadways, reflective road signs, 70mph speed limits in air-conditioned vehicles, and the ability to travel hundreds of miles on one tank of gas has spoiled us. Moreover, the advent of GPS and the ability to ask Siri for map directions to our point of interest has all but numbed the sense of direction of billions.

Believe it or not, many "highways" existed in ancient times. In Palestine, there was the Way of the Sea (Isaiah 9:1), the Way of the Land of Philistines (Exodus 13:17), and the Kings Highway (Numbers 20:17). Although they claimed the name of "way" or "highway," they were often little more than worn tracks or paths with sharp turns and steep grades covered with rocks of all sizes. Not only were the pathways dangerous to travel, but they were also perilous to travel alone (Luke 10:30).

Without a mental map and a sense of direction, travel in ancient times could be deadly. Somewhere along the way, God's people recognized the same significance of a spiritual map that would lead them in traversing the spiritual landscape. Knowing that they needed direction in the pathways of righteousness (Psalm 23:3, Proverbs 12:28), they reached out in reliance upon God to provide the map.

David, the man after God's own heart (1 Samuel 13:14, Acts 13:22), says plainly: Psalm 25:4-5, *Make me to know your ways, O Lord; teach me your paths. Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all the day long.*

For over 5 years, I was privileged to work with homeless individuals who we affectionally called "travelers" as they navigated the I10 corridor from Florida to California. One of my first questions was always, "Where are you headed?" With that, I would sit back and listen to the story of their journeys. Often, I would follow up with, "How long have you been a traveler?" and "What caused you to live your life out on the road?" It was interesting to hear their perspective as people who were completely focused on the journey that was their life.

While we are more rooted in one place, we have much more in common with the "travelers" think we probably care to admit. Like them, we are constantly on a journey called life. The big question we must ask ourselves is, "Where are we headed?" and "How are we going to get there?"

David's song reminds the nation of Israel that (1) they are on a journey, (2) their journey should be aligned with the ways of God, and (3) the only way to figure out the way is to ask God. How is your journey going? Where are you headed?

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Slava Seytchelelov.....Ukraine
 Gladwyn Kiddoe.....Jamaica

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Wanda Adamson...304-242-2321

SERVICES TIMES

SUNDAY
 Bible Study9:30
 AM Worship.....10:30
 PM Worship.....6:00

WEDNESDAY
 PM Bible Study7:00

CANCELLED POSTAGE STAMPS

The World Bible School is collecting cancelled postage stamps. If you would like to save these, please cut out postage stamps and cancelled postmark only, 1/8 to 1/4 inch away from stamp and include postmark. If you have any questions, ask Joyce Faber. You can give cancelled stamps to Joyce or Wanda.

NURSERY ATTENDANT SCHEDULE

Week of January 20
 Karen Hartley and Nicole Wallace

IN SEARCH OF THE LORD'S WAY

Week of January 20

"WHY PRAY?"

Does God really hear our prayers? Does God hear and answer everyone's prayer? When I pour out my heart to God, will it make any difference? Can I trust God when I need Him? Will He listen to me? You can watch *In Search of the Lord's Way* every Sunday morning at 7:30 am on WTRF-TV7.

SERVE THE CONGREGATION

JANUARY 20, 2019

LEADER - SEAN CRONIN
 SUNDAY MORNING

ANNOUNCEMENTS.....KEITH WRIGHT
 SONG LEADER.....DAVE WRIGHT
 PRAYER.....PAUL MOORE
 PRESIDE AT TABLE.....BRIAN HARTO
 DISMISS.....DERRICK COLEMAN

SERVE AND COUNT CONTRIBUTION

CURT HIPPENSTEEL.....CHRIS KRANSKE
 BILL RODAK.....STEPHEN SHAY
 RICK THOMAS.....SAM HIPPENSTEEL

P.A. CONTROLS.....GARY BECKETT
 POWERPOINT.....AUSTIN SLIE
 USHERS.....JOE MILLS
 RANDY COLE.....BILL SONNENWALD

SUNDAY EVENING

SONG LEADER.....DAVE WRIGHT
 READING.....SAM JACKSON
 PRAYER.....STEVE VAUGHN
 PRESIDE AT TABLE.....JIM POOLE
 DISMISS.....SEAN CRONIN

RECORD FOR PREVIOUS WEEK

BIBLE CLASS.....106
 SUNDAY A.M.170
 SUNDAY P.M.82
 CONTRIBUTION.....\$4606

Family Matters

REACHING OUT MINISTRY

A program called "Reaching Out Ministry" has been started to help our shut-ins. A meal is being prepared and delivered to them every other Thursday. If you would like to help out with this ministry, please inform Jim Poole, Donna Parsons, or Carol Thomas and give any donations for food purchases to Wanda Adamson. Volunteers are also needed to help deliver the meals. We will not have meals in January and February due to weather conditions.

WELTY DEVO

This afternoon at 2:00, we will have the devo at the Welty Home. Please plan to join us.

SYMPATHY

We extend our sympathy to the family of our sister, **Pat Chapman**, who passed away on Tuesday. Visitation will be Sunday 2-4 and 6-8 at Grissell Funeral Home in Bethlehem and service on Monday at 10:00.

We extend our sympathy to the family of **Rochelle Bacardi**, friend of Becky Robson, who passed away last Sunday.

STEPPING STONES SOUP LUNCHEON FUNDRAISER

The Stepping Stones ladies are having a soup luncheon after morning services on Sunday, January 20 in the fellowship hall. Variety of soups, cornbread, and dessert. Takeout is available. Cost of lunch-adults, \$5.00, children (4-12) \$2.50 and children (0-3) are free.

TUESDAY LADIES CLASS

The Tuesday morning Ladies Bible class will meet this Tuesday at 10:30.

WinGS

Ladies, It's that time of the year to consider serving on or leading one of the WinGS (Women in God's Service) committees in 2019. Sign-up sheets are in the foyer for the next few weeks and then a combined list will be printed and distributed. Thank you. If you have any questions, please reach out to: **WinGS Steering Committee**-Andrea Baldwin, Trisha Cronin, Diana Harto, Amanda Parsons, or Cathy West.

MEN'S RETREAT

The Northwest Church of Christ Men's Retreat at Elkhorn Valley Christian Service Camp will be March 22-23. Cost is \$40 for overnight and \$25 for Saturday Only. Pre-registration by March 8. Registration forms are posted on the bulletin board.

TABITHA'S STOREHOUSE NEWS

43 families served

NEEDED ITEMS

Toilet paper, paper towels, and tissues.

Remember to bring in your paper bags, especially those with handles.

Want to give cash or check? Now you can make your check out to "Tabitha's Storehouse" and give it to Pat or Becky Cronin or Molly Williams.

THE NATIONAL ROAD ADVISOR

*A bulletin supplement for
Christian Living in the 21st Century*

To Eat Meat or Not to Eat Meat: Is That the Question? (Reprint)

-Jim Hyeat-

To eat or not to eat meat was a question under consideration in Romans chapter 14, but while it addressed a specific issue at that time, it was not "the" question, but "a" question. "To exercise my Christian liberty or not exercise my Christian liberty;" that was the question. Paul was addressing the specific freedom that Christians had from dietary restrictions, devout recognition of special days, and many other rules for the conduct of a pious life. God had lifted all these ritualistic life regulations and made them give way to an intimate, spirit-driven life. God's people would no longer express their allegiance to the God of Heaven through external rites, but would now measure their faith by their heart. Under this regimen man would have liberty from the law and its rules of conduct, but this new liberty would have to be exercised with caution. Christian liberty was not to be enjoyed at the expense of a brother's spiritual well-being. Just as Paul admonished earlier in the Roman letter, "Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor **giving preference to one another** (Rom. 12:10, emp. add.)," the Christian must forgo his own freedom if the exercise of that freedom should trouble the conscience of his brother such that he would be weakened in his faith. The issue was not whether to eat meat or not to eat meat or whether to recognize special days or not to recognize special days, but "not to put a stumbling block or a cause to fall in our brother's way (Rom. 14:13)."

The heritage of the Jewish Christian came with an array of dietary restrictions which prohibited many foods. Under the Christian dispensation the Jewish Christian was no longer bound by these dietary guides. But he, indeed, could very well come to Christ with them still ingrained in his habits. His religious tradition continued to bind these restrictions upon himself and he might be offended if another put foods before him that he determined were unclean. It also may have been possible that a Gentile convert came with his own dietary regimen followed as part of his pre-Christian belief system. If he were a vegetarian and young in the faith, he might be offended if another in his Christian liberty were to put meats before him. In his letter to Rome Paul had discussed the matter of eating or not eating meat as it related to that which had been offered to idols. He wrote, "We know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is no other God but one (1Cor. 8:4)" suggesting to the Christian an idol is nothing and, hence, the meat sacrificed to an idol is also nothing. Knowing that "for [him] there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and [he] for Him, and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and through whom we live (1Cor. 8:6)," Christian liberty allows he can eat meat that had been sacrificed to an idol with a clear conscience. The meat is just meat regardless of how others may have foolishly used it. But, Paul

warns "there is not in everyone that knowledge (1Cor. 8:7)." To him who has insufficient knowledge of God the meat has taken on a different essence; it has been changed into something defiled. His conscience cannot come in contact with meat that has been so altered and he would be offended to see his brother eat such meat. Christian liberty would allow for the full faith Christian to eat the meat for what it is... meat. But Christian liberty does not allow that one should be offended by another's liberty. The mature Christian should refrain from eating meat that had been offered to idols in the presence of the brother who does not have full understanding; far less should such meat be placed before him. Hence, Paul writes, "Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food (Rom. 14:20)."

What we see, then, is that all things regarding the exercise of Christian liberty is gauged by its benefit to others. The spiritual well-being of our brother or sister takes precedence over our freedom. Paul continued, "The kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit (Rom. 14:17)." It is true that it is not what goes into a man that defiles him, but only that which comes out of him (Mt. 15:11), and it is also true that what God declares as clean is suitable for food (Acts 10:15), but we should not allow our freedom to cause our lesser enlightened brother to be grieved by our fuller understanding exercised to his offense.

Paul also applied the principle of Christian liberty to the recognition of special days. He wrote, "One person esteems one day above another; another esteems every day alike. Let each be fully convinced in his own mind (Rom. 14:5)." He continued that whether you observe a day or do not observe a day, do it to the Lord (Rom. 14:6). In another place Paul expressed it this way, "And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord (Col. 3:17)." Everything that we do and everything we refrain from doing should be done with respect to God. [Note: We should add at this point that liberty extends only to those things which are matters of opinion or personal habits. One cannot sin in the name of the Lord.]

Beyond the sins of the flesh, we live in a world of many decisions. Most of them are innocuous. But some seem to extend into gray areas. For example, Paul wrote that the kingdom is not about eating and drinking. Drinking is not a reference to drinking water, but alcoholic beverages as Paul wrote, "It is good neither to eat meat nor drink wine nor do anything by which your brother stumbles or is offended or is made weak (Rom. 14:21)." Clearly he is referring to the consumption of alcoholic beverages (wine). Some Christians may think that consuming a moderate amount of alcoholic beverage is an acceptable practice while others do not. Notwithstanding the potential ills of alcoholic consumption, a brother ought not to judge another brother for consuming alcohol beyond, perhaps, a warning as to what may result, or lead to, from such consumption or an intervention if he consumes it to his detriment. By the same token a brother should not put such a beverage before another brother who is troubled by such a practice. Whatever each decides to do with day to day habits, to eat meat or not to eat meat; to observe special days or not to observe special days; to drink wine or not to drink wine, "Let each be fully convinced in his own mind (Rom. 14:5)."