

TIME OF SERVICES

Sunday:

Bible Classes 10:00 A.M.
Worship Service 11:00 A.M.
Worship Service 6:00 P.M.

Wednesday:

Bible Classes 7:00 P.M.

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Elders

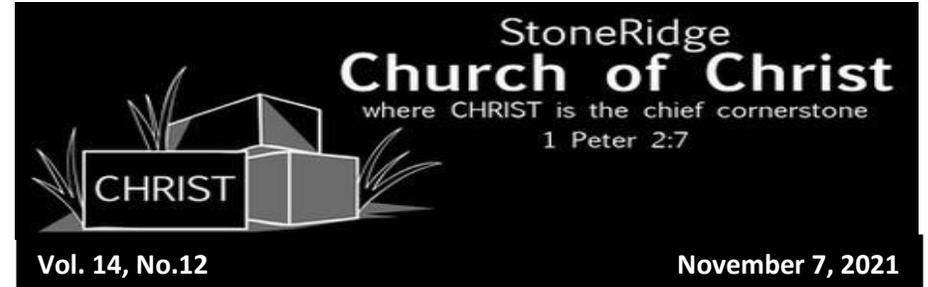
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THE BIBLE AND THE BIBLE ONLY, MAKES CHRISTIANS AND CHRISTIANS ONLY. THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IS COMPOSED OF CHRISTIANS WHO HAVE NOT JOINED A DENOMINATION.



When The Local Church Feels Unnecessary

What if we, way in the back of our minds, have kind of liked not assembling with the church during the pandemic? Maybe it's just the slower pace of Sunday mornings, or more family time, or just the freshness of change of online studies. Maybe there's a slight disappointment when church assemblies start again, a feeling of not being ready yet. We have missed the people but not the worship or the sermons or the work or the serving. Or maybe we haven't missed each other all that much and Zoom meetings feel good enough. An uncomfortable thought pops up. The local church feels unnecessary.

Its about God. Serving God can easily slip into serving in a way that respects our likes and preferences over His. We have to remind ourselves that assemblies are about God and his will not "me" and "my" will.

God knows that when we're together is a great time to "stir up love and good works..." and to exhort one another (Heb 10:25). Assemblies are a great time to remember our Lord in the Lord' supper (1 Cor 11:17-24). Assemblies are a great time to focus on the text of Scripture (Col. 4:16), to pray and sing. Assemblies can even be an opportunity for spiritual warnings, discipline to remove evil influences and to save the erring (1 Cor 5:4,5).

Some may suggest that what they've done at home has been even more helpful and meaningful, more intimate than what is done in a church assembly →

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God says there is value in assembling and so we make it about Him by assembling. However, if assemblies are not edifying, we need to be present to help make them edifying. The Corinthians were not told to stay home because their assemblies were chaotic (1 Cor 14:26) and divisive (1 Cor 11:18,19). Our positive experiences at home during the pandemic can teach us what we should have been doing at home all along, and we can also bring what we learned to make assemblies more edifying.

It's about others. Most discovered that, with a little creativity (like home delivery), we could be self-sufficient during the pandemic (of course, not really since we all depend on supply chains). Maybe we will be tempted to feel this spiritually – that we don't need one another.

A lot of "one another" things happen when the church assemblies. Others need you to stir them up, edify and exhort them, and set an example for them. Although the relationships, forbearing, submission, and cooperation that assemblies require can be challenging, local church assemblies give us opportunities to express our love in all these things!

It's about me. We are often not the best judges about our own spiritual needs. We may need the stirring up and exhortation of an assembly (Heb 10:24,25) without realizing it. A group brings a wealth of knowledge, wisdom, and experience to worship and studies. Assembling gives us an opportunity to have fellowship, to literally not be alone in serving the Lord. The Lord values this and so we value it too.

I heard a brother recently lament that "Satan is sifting us" with this pandemic. It's an allusion to Satan's request to test Simon Peter in Luke 22:31. Assembling with local churches at this time may be a test of Satan. We may find assemblies to be awkward, non-traditional, uncomfortable, distracting, less connective, and maybe less edifying than in the past. Giving up on assembling isn't the answer. The Lord has made assembling with the church important. Now it is up to us to make it equally important to ourselves. *-David Diestelkamp*

News/Notes/Quotes

THE SICK**Joyce Riley** had heart surgery on Friday with five bypasses. She is in ICU at St. Bernard's. Pray for her complete healing... **Madonna Vines** continues to recover from heart surgery... **Editha Kern** is now at Encompass Rehab and will be there a few more days. **Donald Crisler** continues his treatment for cancer... Remember our shutins: **Gail Brooks** at St. Bernard Village... **Shirley Coots** at Lawrence County Nursing Home (hospice car)... **Charles Bradsher** at Craighead County Nursing Home... **Editha Kern** at Liberty Park Assisted Living... **Beverly Allen** confined at home.

GROUP MEETING. Group 1 will meet on November 13 at 5:30 pm at the home of Scott and Sandra Stubblefield.

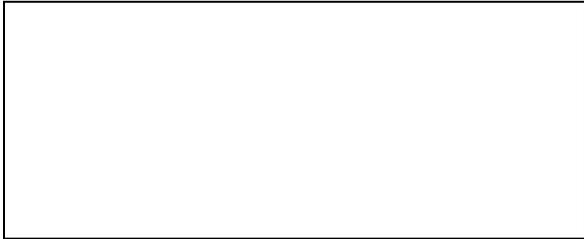
IDENTIFIED. We Welcome **Tommy Johns**, who identified with the congregation last week. If you haven't met him be sure to get acquainted. His contact info is: 3099 CR 683, Lake City AR 72437. tommyj4570@gmail.com. Phone: 870-761-7348. Birthday: 1/28.

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS: 6th – Karen Livesay; 10th – Madonna Vines; 11th – Nola Christenberry; 15th – Stephanie Camp, Zeke Moody; 19th – Jonathan Stubblefield; 26th – Brandi McGregor; 28th – Ann Hudson; 30th – Debbie Bearden, Phyllis Harris

If Christ is kept outside, there must be something wrong inside.

It is not the talented people who serve the Lord best, but the consecrated ones.

False teeth may be justified, but there is no justification for a false tongue.



What Jesus Said

Jesus said that you must believe on him in order to be saved. "I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (John 8:24).

Jesus said that you must confess him before men in order to be saved. "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven" (Matt 10:32,33).

Is this a contradiction? Not a contradiction. It just means both faith and confession are essential.

Jesus said that you must repent of your sins in order to be saved. "I tell you, Nay: but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Lk 13:3).

Jesus said that you must be baptized in order to be saved. "Verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (Jn 3:5).

Are any of these contradictory? No, the same Jesus said all of them are essential. We surely wouldn't accuse the Savior of the world of contradiction. If he would have added the word "only" or

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"alone" to any of them, then we would have a contradiction, because that would have only required that one thing and would forbid adding anything to it. A hint: Jesus knew what he was doing!

Jesus instructed his apostles saying, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. He that believeth not shall be damned" (Mk 16:15,16). Are you saved? The way He said to do it? Have you been to Jesus for the cleansing blood? Are you a disciple of Jesus?

You can be! -db

You must give some time to your fellow men. Even if it's a little thing, do something for those who have need of help, something for which you get no pay but the privilege of doing it." Albert Schweitzer