

OUR NAME

You may have at some time heard of or seen the name Church of Christ. The usage of the name has often been misunderstood. The name Church of Christ is not used as the identification of a denomination, religious organization, or institution. The name, which is taken from Romans 16: 16, is meant to identify and confess our allegiance to Christ. The more accurate way to describe what we mean is that we are the church, which belongs to Christ. We wish to be known as people who are following in the footsteps of Jesus Christ our Lord.

OUR DESIRE

Our foremost desire is to love the Lord with all our heart, soul, mind and strength (Mark 12: 30). While love is often thought of in an emotional way, we are convinced that we must diligently search the Scriptures to see how God wants us to love Him (1 John 5: 3). This principle of searching the Scriptures for authority is the means by which we understand how we should think, live and worship in order to be pleasing to Him. One of the greatest difficulties for Christians is separating what God commands in the Scriptures (which is mandatory) and what is tradition (customs developed and handed down by men which are not mandatory). We try to do this to the best of our ability, yet because of our imperfections, we sometimes fall short of this ideal.

OUR WORSHIP

We believe that the focus of our worship services should be worshipping God, not entertaining one another. While encouragement of one another is important (Hebrews 10: 24, 25), we believe that focusing on God and trying to please Him is of utmost importance. By doing this, we will be an encouragement to our brothers and sisters. It will encourage them to also try to

please God and it will encourage them with the knowledge that there are others who are striving to do God's will. Because of this focus on worshipping God, and our guiding principle of searching the Scriptures, some of the practices in the churches of Christ may seem different to many people. The reasoning for these practices has been developed through our desire to serve and please God by searching His Scriptures to find out how the first century church, under the leadership of the apostles, worshipped Him. This has led us to worship Him in ways we feel are Scripturally based and, therefore, the way God wants us to worship.

A. Bible Study

It is our goal to be as much like God as we possibly can. In order to do this, we understand the need to search the Scriptures diligently to see how God has revealed His will to us through the recording of His actions, through His words, through His messengers, and through His Son (Hebrews 1: 1 – 3). In Acts 17: 10, 11, the Bereans were commended for searching the Scriptures to determine if the Apostle Paul was preaching the truth to them. Therefore, we set aside special times on Sunday and during the week to study together. We also encourage each individual to study on their own.

B. Prayer

We include several times for prayer within our assemblies. Prayer is the time during which we can share our burdens, our needs, and our thanks and praise to God, our Father. There are several passages in the Scriptures, which urge us to pray. We can also see the importance of prayer for the apostles by their asking of Jesus to teach them to pray (Luke 11: 1) and by reading of how often Jesus prayed to His Father. Since God is also our

Father, it only makes sense that we would spend much time in prayer as well.

C. Singing

This practice has been one of the most debated within the churches of Christ and centers on the fact that the only form of musical worship mentioned in the New Testament is vocal singing (a cappella music). In the New Testament, we are commanded to sing, but nothing is said about God wanting or commanding us to use mechanical instruments (e.g. pianos, organs, drums, etc.). There are many reasons, which can be given for the use of singing only, but the greatest reason is our desire to worship God in the simplest and purest fashion possible. We believe that in so doing, we will have the greatest possibility of pleasing God.

D. Preaching

God, in His infinite wisdom, has determined that "...through the foolishness of the message preached..." those who believe would be saved (1 Corinthians 1: 21). It was through the preaching of Jesus that the message concerning the kingdom of heaven was delivered. It was through the preaching of Peter that the doors to the church opened on the Day of Pentecost. Through the preaching of Paul, the good news was delivered throughout the nations of the Gentiles. Today, we continue to have men who deliver the message of God through sermons, which are based upon the Bible.

E. Giving

Members of the congregation are instructed by Paul to "...lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper..." (1 Corinthians 16: 2) in order to further the work of the Lord in their community and throughout the world. Each member is provided with the opportunity to

give every first day of the week. No one is forced or required to contribute other than what their love for God constrains them to give. This collection is used for many purposes, such as: helping those in need, spreading the Gospel message, various activities to promote the spiritual, physical and mental health of the members, up-keep of buildings and property, etc.

F. Lord's Supper

We also partake of the Lord's Supper every first day of the week. We are charged by Jesus to do this in remembrance of Him until He returns (Luke 22: 14 – 19). Paul corrects the Corinthians, in 1 Corinthians 11: 20 – 29, concerning their lack of regard for the Lord's Supper. He stated that when they came together in one place they were having a "party" instead of a proper observance of the Lord's Supper. Therefore, when we come together on the first day of the week, we partake of the Lord's Supper in keeping with the command to remember Jesus and His sacrifice for us. This is one of the most important aspects of our worship service. It is because of Christ and His sacrifice that we have the hope of eternal life (1 Corinthians 15: 12 – 19).

G. Fellowship

Throughout the New Testament, not only do we see the need to assemble for worship, but we also see the gathering together of Christians at other times. While we try to take the time whenever we worship together to talk with one another and deepen our relationships, we also set aside special times to get to know one another in more relaxed settings. These times are important in the development of a community spirit and the development of our bonds of love and peace. These times are also useful as a means for

others to learn more about us and get to know us in an informal, personal setting.

OUR INVITATION

We wish for everyone to know that they are welcome to come and worship God with us. We are very pleased about the presence of each and every visitor who comes our way. If you are looking for a group of people who love God, want to serve and please Him, desire to discover His Truth as revealed in the Holy Scriptures and try to make changes in their lives to do His will, please take the time to visit with us. You will not find people who are perfect, but you will find people who are perfected in Christ and desire to become more like Him each day. May God bless your search for Him and His Kingdom.

That You May Know



CHURCHES OF CHRIST

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