



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

Oct 16, 2022

P.O. Box 416
129 S. Chamberlain Ave.
Rockwood, TN 37854
865-354-0855

Elders:

Kendall Bear
Dana Carter
Don Chandler

Deacons:

Larry Brackett
Aaron Evans
Larry Hill
Steve McCreary

Minister:

Dale Barger

Service Times:

Sunday

Bible Study 10 am
Worship Service 10:45 am
Worship Service 6 pm

Wednesday

Bible Study 7 pm

Email:

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Website:

Rockwoodchurchofchrist.com

Going to Church

Many reasonably good people seldom, if ever, “*go to church.*” Meeting with others to study the Bible, God’s word, and to publicly worship Him is something easily ignored in our busy world. To these, church is where you go for a wedding or a funeral, but little more.

The early Christians didn’t just “*go to church*”—they were the church. They were the *ekklesia*, the “*called-out-ones,*” called out of the world by the gospel of Christ to be a light to the world. They were a community of believers, commonly referred to as “the body of Christ” and even “*the bride of Christ.*” In Christ, they were bound together in “*one body. And one Spirit...one hope...one Lord, one faith, one baptism*” and “*one God.*” (Ephesians 4:4-6). As such, to not meet with other Christians to encourage one another and jointly express their devotion to the Lord was not considered an option.

Had not the Lord said, “*Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them*” (Matthew 18:20)? Had He not instructed them in the partaking of the Lord’s Supper, saying, “*This do in remembrance of me*” (Luke 22:17-22; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26)? From the first, the church, consisting of penitent baptized believers, “*continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine, in the fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers*” (Acts 2:42). Acts 20:7 tells us that “*Upon the first day of the week...the disciples came together to break bread.*” Christians who were becoming neglectful were admonished, “*Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching*” (**Hebrews 10:25**).

Christians are not called to be “*lone rangers*” in a world hostile to God, but to be bound together with brothers and sisters in Christ in a common struggle. Sharing together in worship and in the word of God should be something much desired by those who love the Lord.

via Arthur Church of Christ
Arthur, IL

Outside Looking In

A young girl stood alone, watching the other children play. She leaned against the window, trying to be unnoticed but watching intently while the rest of the kids laughed and held hands and talked excitedly. She shifted her weight back and forth. Her body language clearly said she wanted to be included in the group. She wanted to be right in the middle of all the other kids, but she didn't know how. She was afraid. She was alone. She was on the outside looking in. All she really needed to change all of this would be for just one young boy or girl to come over where she was, and say, "*come on in!*"

Most of us have experienced the fear and awkwardness of being in unfamiliar surroundings and not knowing where to go or what to do. We have been to places where we were alone while everyone else seemed to be with other people enjoying themselves. Do you remember how uncomfortable it is to be in a church or around a group of people who are all enjoying themselves, who are obviously friends, but you are not one of them?

While sitting with our friends, it's not uncommon for church members to look over and see a person or a family that they don't know and say, "*Who is that?*" "*I don't think I've seen them before, have you?*" But do nothing.

I ate with a church earlier this year. It was a "*fellowship*" dinner for their gospel meeting. As the speaker, I was invited to be first to eat and sit. A man came to sit with me. He asked, "*I was told that most visiting preachers usually have to sit alone at church dinners, is that true?*" "*It is,*" I told him. He was one of the elders. Interestingly, all of the elders came and sat with me. First time in 40 years of preaching!

It just takes one. Barnabas brought Saul into the church at Jerusalem (**Acts 9:26-7**). Andrew brought Peter to Jesus (**Jn. 1:40-41**). Jesus said, "*I was a stranger, and you took me in,*" (**Mat. 25:35**).

At most services we have visitors. They may be traveling or just moved near us and know little about God, or maybe looking to find a group of Christians to work with or... they have come to our "*home*." They are testing our beliefs. They are testing our manners. They are testing our hospitality and shifting their weight and wondering – waiting – hoping for someone. Be looking out for those who are looking in.

Tim Orbison
Maysville church of Christ
Gurley, AL