

Family & Friends..... November 8, 2023

“Victory In Jesus.” What a hymn! It was written in 1939 by Eugene M. Bartlett Sr. He was born in Missouri in 1885, and began his career in Arkansas at Central Music Co. He later formed the Hartford Music Co. in 1918 with friends. He felt his calling was to publish hymns, teach those who sing to sight read, to hold singing schools, and to be a songwriter. In 1939, at age 53, his world changed drastically. He suffered a paralyzing stroke that left him unable to walk or even speak and left him bedridden. He wrote this hymn during the dark days of his life. Looking back on his life, Bartlett realized the love of God had sustained and brought him to where he was that day. Often when we are going through a dark time in our lives, we focus on the problems or circumstances and lose sight of what really matters. In the midst of his troubles, he found he could say, “Victory in Jesus,” as we all should do. It is because of God’s grace and mercy each of us are where we are today. No matter what we face in life, we can walk in victory. We just have to choose to live for him.

*These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world. (John 16:33)*

We love our visitors: Jason & Kim Banks (Kansas City, MO), Sarah and Kaylie Coberly (Pineville, MO), Brian and April Williams (Bentonville), Jane Maynard (Clarkridge), Joyce Parks, Steve & Kris Benton, and Abigail Butcher (BV).

Those on our prayer list: Becky Sloan had a serious leg injury and will be having surgery soon. Doug Klingman is now at home, but has a long healing time. Pray for Elijah High, a 13 year old boy with brain and spinal cancer. Amy Rooney had some lymph nodes removed and may be facing more surgery. Robbie Balentine is recovering from her recent surgery. Continue to remember and pray for Susan Duffy and Eddie Waters.

Items needed for the Children’s Home: Chicken noodle soup, puddings, egg noodles, peaches and trash bags. Food Pantry: Things for Thanksgiving meals, green beans, mac&cheese and cereal.

Jesus is the restorer of life. Love you, stay safe.

Karen

**ELDERS**

- Tracy Bowman.....479-899-3089
- John Caylor.....903-520-2131
- Dallas Dobbs.....479-640-49439
- Perry Johnson.....913-707-8379
- Ray Reiss.....903-908-0203
- Jerry Snyder.....479-282-5501

**DEACONS**

- Mark Bagwell John Bowman Chris Johnson Josh Porter Joe Hott
- Randall Hunt Terry Roberts Aaron Sloan Tyler White

**MINISTERS**

- Jeff Grisham.....479-531-9135
- Parker Willis.....615-587-3208
- Cory Spruiell.....501-941-4525

*Bella Vista*  
CHURCH OF CHRIST

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**SUNDAY**

- Early Worship 8:15 AM
- Bible Class (Livestreamed) 9:30 AM
- Worship (Livestreamed) 10:30 AM

**WEDNESDAY**

- Ladies' Class 9:45 AM
- Bible Classes (Livestreamed) 7:00 PM

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**The Call to Unity**

*“I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. (John 17:20-23)*

On the very night that Jesus was arrested, only hours away from a brutal, humiliating, and torturous death, he prayed for the unity of believers. Let that sink in. With all the other things in his immediate future, he prayed for us. It shows the concern he has for us. It is a bit flattering. It is incredibly humbling. It also speaks to the fact that perhaps he knew how difficult this task would be for his followers.

We see the difficulty of the unity of believers through a large portion of the New Testament. In Acts chapter 6 the unity of the early church is threatened as there is a dispute over the care of the Greek-speaking widows. The inclusion of Gentiles into the people of God in Acts 10 causes debate and discussion, which eventually led to a major church council recorded in Acts 15. Many

**LIFELINES**



of Paul's letters deal with the tension between Christians of Jewish and Gentile backgrounds that threatens the unity of the church. We read of it in Romans, in the letters to the church in Corinth, Galatians, Ephesians, and Philippians. We hear Paul warn Timothy and Titus of the dangers of division and to be on guard against it (2 Timothy 2:14-18; Titus 3:9-11).



Skip ahead around 2000 years and we find that we still struggle with being united in Christ. There are divisions and factions and people divided into camps of "conservative" or "progressive." Some of these divisions are because of major doctrinal teachings; others are over things that are much less important. We see this and realize that something should be done. But what can we do? Is there hope?

If we were to ask those early followers what they would suggest as a way forward in answering this prayer of Jesus, it appears they would suggest we look again at the Gospel.

Paul makes this plea to the church in Philippi: *So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who,*

*though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:1-11)*

This short, well-known section of Philippians has a lot to say to us about how to continue to pursue unity.

It reminds us that when it comes to the authority for the church and who decides what is in or out, Jesus is preeminent. He is the one whose name is above every name. He is the one before whom everyone and everything will bow. Occasionally, our divisions are due to our impulse to be in control. Paul removes that problem as he reminds the Philippians (and us) of the identity of the King.

This passage also helps us in dealing with one another in those moments of disagreements. Disagreements will come. We all have our preferences. We all have certain

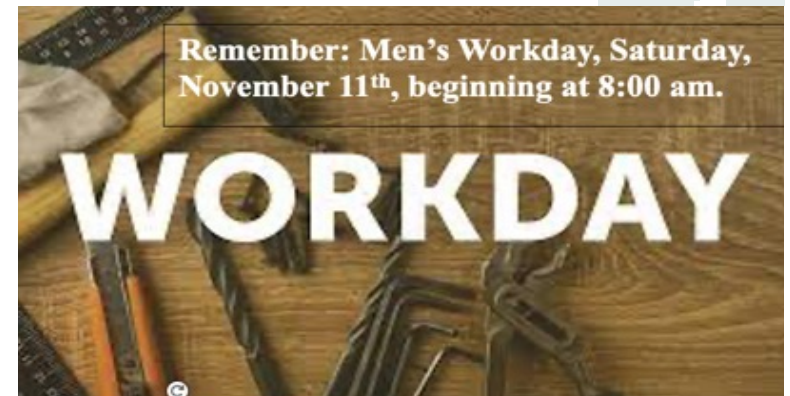


lenses through which we see the world and through which we view Scripture. Unity is not uniformity. Unity doesn't mean that we will all agree on all things all the time. Paul reminds us that in those disagreements we treat one another with love and respect. We look out for the needs of others and do nothing out of selfishness and demonstrate self-giving love that we see from Jesus while submitting to him as our ultimate authority.

But still, the task seems too big. How in the world are we going to be able to unite all these various strands? We start in our own lives, in our own families, and in our own local congregations. We let Jesus lead through the Spirit that he has given us, and let humility and love govern our interactions with one another.

May God continue to bless us as we continue to be the people he has called us to be.

-JEFF GRISHAM



### SUNDAY SERVANTS November 12, 2023

#### First Service

Welcome, Prayer & Scripture ..... Joe Hott      Song Leader ..... Bright Newhouse  
 Greeters ..... Chad Dobbs, Terry Roberts, Gary McCool      Communion Scripture & Prayer ..... Chris McSweeney  
 Closing Prayer ..... Kim Metheny  
 Nursery Workers ..... Angie Christiano, Hillary Porter

#### Second Service

Welcome, Prayer & Scripture ..... Matt Grisham      Song Leader ..... Mike Martin  
 Greeters ..... Chad Dobbs, John Bowman, Stan Hankins      Communion Scripture & Prayer ..... Jim May  
 Closing Prayer ..... Ray Reiss  
 Nursery Workers ..... Brenda Branstetter, Vicki Lunsford      Van Driver ..... David Ellison

#### November Worship Coordinators

Worship Coordinator ..... Mike Lunsford      Streaming Coordinator ..... Marquis Elliott  
 Audio Coordinator ..... Jim Caylor      Video Coordinator ..... Aaron Bagwell