

I don't believe America is a Christian nation, because I believe Christianity is a decision made one person at a time. I don't wrap any flag around my beliefs, the "Stars and Bars" of the old south, nor "Old Glory". I don't believe that WWI, WWII, or any other conflict had God on one side or the other. No political party, form of government, or national agenda represents God.

So, like Christians at the inception of Christianity described in the New Testament, some things we "render to Caesar" and some things we "render to God". The government exists to "punish the evil doer", and we can pay our taxes, exercise our "appeals to Caesar", and function under it. But never believe that the purpose of government is to determine "right from wrong". Democracies, republics, monarchies, socialism, communism, and every other system of politics, is a flawed system driven by flawed people. God may use them, discard them, all to his own end... but they never define God.

Peter called Christians of his day "strangers and aliens". They lived in the world, but were not part of the world. James mentioned our "citizenship is in heaven, from which we await a Savior".

The best we can hope for is to lead a "quiet life"; we can do that under any system. We can do it if the courts support what we understand to be moral and righteous. We can do it in the face of the Colosseum and martyrdom. The system doesn't define right and wrong, God does that. Our task is to love God and love each other, when we agree with the powers that be and when we don't.

One caution, however. In our disagreement, we are not authorized by God to be hateful, mean, ugly or unkind... ever. We are to be the aroma of Christ and that requires us to treat every being made in the image of God with honor and respect, loving them exactly as God loves them.

It is an exciting time to be God's child... we are beginning to stick out.

Grace and Peace,

Carl

Where belonging to God means belonging to each other.

*St John Church of Christ
609 N Pearl
P. O. Box 241
St John, KS 67576*



St John Church of Christ
A Family of God

June 28, 2015

Some were shocked by things happening within our culture this past month. Confirmation of a changing culture embracing different values than the "old guard" was evidenced in the conversations and decisions coming from governing officials. Facebook, Twitter and other social media venues, a method of glimpsing into the culture, were alive with discussions of right and wrong. I've kept my head low.

That the Supreme Court made a landmark decision about who may marry, in essence giving approval to same sex couples constituting a marriage, was shocking to a great many. In fact, a cursory reading of news reports, entertainment, or social media would demonstrate a changing standard within our country over the past 25 years. Then we also had the statements made by elected officials concerning flags flying over state houses. A century and a half after the Civil War, a banner that for some represents oppression and slavery, while to others it represents a regional pride or self-determination, is being removed. Walmart, National Parks, and others are all joining in on the choices.

As God's child, you no doubt have your views on the meaning and validity of these things. We may agree or disagree about some particulars, but I was forced to look at a larger issue this month. How does a Christian effectively live in a culture that is running counter to their understanding of the will of God?

SUNDAY: Leisure Homestead Service—9:30 am
Bible Study for all ages—10:00 am
Worship Service—10:45 am
Afternoon Service—1:15 pm

WEDNESDAY: Adult Bible Study—7:30 pm
Youth Group—7:30 pm (@ Carl's)

ELDERS: Richard Breusing, Teddy Gingrich, Loyd Ratts,
Terry Sallee, George Shelton

DEACONS: Jerry Kinnamon, Jon Mansel

TREASURER: Richard Breusing

WORSHIP ORDER FOR JUNE 28, 2015

SONG LEADER: Jerry Kinnamon
GATHERING SONG: No. 230—Worthy Art Thou (vs 1)
WELCOME: Tom Turner
SCRIPTURE READING: Romans 5:1-11 (Garland Mansel)
SONGS: No. 129—Amazing Grace
No. 376—He Paid a Debt
No. 375—Oh, the Depth and the Riches
No. 827—Sweet Hour of Prayer

PRAYER: Chris Mansel
SONG: No. 324—Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed? (vs 1, 4)
COMMUNION: Fred Johnson
Teddy Gingrich
Richard Breusing
Jon Mansel

MEMORY WORK: Carl Feril
SONG: No. 517—Heaven Came Down
LESSON: Carl Feril (*Children's Bible Hour*)
SONG: No. 922—Jesus Paid It All (vs 1)
PRAYER: Orrin Feril

(CCLI #2440129)

WELCOME VISITORS

We are pleased you have joined us in worship today and hope that you will come again! We invite you to stay and enjoy lunch with us, right after worship services.

BUSY TIMES

We are in a busy time of year: wheat harvest, holiday, summer camps, vacations, etc. Through it all, we need to remember to stop and be thankful for the many blessings we have. How many (even in our own church family and in our own community) are struggling? Financially, spiritually, emotionally? Search this week for ways to encourage, strengthen and help in ways you may have been overlooking in the past. "Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers." (Galatians 6:10)



The Eastwood Church of Christ in Hutchinson has invited several area ministers to come and speak on Wednesday evenings through the month of July. Carl will be speaking on Wednesday, July 15th, at 7:00 pm.

2015 SILVER MAPLE CAMP EVENTS

July 5-11: Junior Camp (9 to 13 yrs old)
July 8-9: Day Camp (6 to 8 yrs old; 9:15 am to 4 pm)
July 12-18: Senior Camp (13 to 18 yrs old)
July 19-25: Group Camp (9 to 18 yrs old)
September 24-26: Adult Seminar with Jerry & Lynn Jones

PRAYER REQUESTS

Sonny Langford (Baylee Sizemore's father) - cancer
Dan Hampton—health concerns
Donna Laudick (Marla's sister) - cancer; chemotherapy
Lupe Hudson—recent knee replacement surgery
Joe Rosenberg—recovering in Salina at his daughter's home
Gladys Hornbaker—health concerns
Mike Bookstore—health concerns
Charlene Jimerson (Chet's youngest sister) - health concerns
Sherri Holguin & baby (coworker of Joy)
Marion Alpers—stroke
Maggie Harris (Lisa's mother) – recent heart surgery
Racheal Davis – recent surgery
Dixie Hornbaker—health concerns
Millie Whitlow – at Clearwater; cancer
Darla Chapman (in Faith, SD) – thyroid cancer
Carol Gingrich – health concerns
Olen Munz – in assisting living in Great Bend
Jessica Keeton (one of Clint's former BB players) - cancer
Joy (Marilyn's daughter) –health concerns
Dena Mansel – health concerns
Cody Dick – cancer; undergoing treatments
Roger Dick - cancer
Jonathan Batten – chemotherapy
Theo Birkett (Tara's mother)
Jim Sorensen (Tara's brother-in-law) chemo for brain tumor
Eldon Ivy (Marilyn's brother) – health concerns
Jim Soukup (Gingrich's son-in-law [Shari's husband])
Myron Breusing – Leisure Homestead in Stafford
Bonnie Guthrie (Kay's mother) – HomePlus in Stafford
Laura Wyatt—Kenwood Plaza
Vic & Phyllis Staub – Kenwood Plaza
Audrey Nusser - pancreatic cancer

Church website: www.stjohnchurchofchrist.org