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ingness to forgive them, I asked what it was that held them back from just falling on God's mercy. I was taken aback by the answer.

"I was a part of churches for a long time. I have no doubt God can forgive me, but I don't think churches operate the way God does." As we continued to talk the statements were made, "I would be regulated to second class citizenship, always looked on with suspicion."

It is easy to be defensive. "Well, they don't know us." Or, "that might be how it used to be, but we are different now" fall quickly from our lips. Perhaps too quickly.

First century sinners found mercy and forgiveness with Jesus, but things didn't go so well in synagogues. Religious leaders tended to set up barriers for "lesser" folks while Jesus helped them.

This has been a troubling conversation for me to process these past few weeks. How do we break this pattern if it exists with us? How would we know if that is the perception of those who feel alienated? These are important questions for us to answer.

*Grace and Peace,
Carl*

Where belonging to God means belonging to each other.

**St John Church of Christ
609 N Pearl
St John, KS 67576
620-549-6146**



Recently I was speaking with someone who is recognizing a huge hole in their life, the place where God should be. They know it, in fact God has been a big part of their life in the past. In the past few decades this person has wandered in some dark places, they've been through a couple of marriages, along with numerous relationships. Now the hopelessness surrounds them.

I spoke to them of God's unfailing love, the richness of his mercy toward those who have finally realized he is their hope. These were all familiar themes for them, well known but somehow distant from them.

I knew that they understood they were lost, adrift from God, and in a hopeless situation. They know that they can't make things better on their own, in fact that was why we were talking. The statement that introduced our meeting was, "I've failed again and Satan has a death grip on me."

After talking about God's desire and will-

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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

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

DEACONS: Jerry Kinnamon, Jon Mansel

TREASURER: Richard Brensing

Worship Order for July 20, 2014

SONG LEADER: Gary Hornbaker

GATHERING SONG: No. 230—Worthy Art Thou (vs 1)

WELCOME: Tom Turner

SCRIPTURE READING: Colossians 2:13-15 (Chris Mansel)

SONGS: No. 361—Nailed to the Cross

No. 376—He Paid a Debt

No. 470—Victory in Jesus

No. 797—Lord, We Come Before Thee Now

PRAYER: Richard Brensing

SONG: No. 176—Lamb of God

COMMUNION: Tom Turner

Ben Sizemore

Orrin Feril

Teddy Gingrich

MEMORY WORK: Carl Feril

SONG: No. 611—Heavenly Sunlight

LESSON: Carl Feril (*Children's Bible Hour*)

SONG: No. 907—Hark, the Gentle Voice (vs 1)

PRAYER: Joe Cornwell

(CCLI #2440129)

Welcome Visitors

We are pleased you have joined us in worship—please come again!

Silver Maple Camp

Session #3—July 20-26 (Kids of all Ages) **THIS WEEK!!**

We have been asked to supply **brownies for camp** for Wednesday, July 23rd. If you signed up to make some of these, please have your pan here at the church bldg by Tuesday afternoon (July 22nd).

Black Hills Bible Camp

Family Camp—August 3 through 9

Carl and Janet are planning on making the trip again to South Dakota for this camp session. If you are interested, talk to them or you can find details on the website: www.blackhillsbiblecamp.org

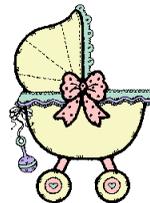
Baby Gift

If you would like to participate in a monetary gift for Trent & Hannah Sallee, in honor of Harper Dawn's recent birth, please contact Janet by next Sunday (July 27).



Baby Shower!

A baby shower is being planned for next Sunday afternoon, July 27th, at 1:30 pm to honor Ben & Baylee Sizemore. They will not know the gender of the baby until it is born, so keep that in mind when buying gifts!



Upcoming Wedding

Jace Smith is soon to be wed to his fiancé, Sarah. If you would like to participate in a monetary gift, please contact Joy in the next week.



Prayer Requests

(Please provide updates to Janet)

Shelly Brensing—is in Kansas Heart Hospital; scheduled for a heart cath at 10am this morning

Kay Kinnamon—is now home, recuperating from a recent partial hip replacement

Nick & Kara Neidig, big brother Easton and baby Landon—continue to keep this family in prayer with Landon's health concerns

Bonnie Guthrie (Kay's mother) - HomePlus in Stafford

Don Hornbaker—Kenwood Plaza

Baylee Sizemore's Aunt Suzanne—Leukemia

Dennis Lyons (Chet's brother) - health concerns

Charlene Lyons (Chet's sister-in-law, Dennis' wife) - health concerns

Diane Manilla (Meagan's sister-in-law's mother) - cancer

Eldon Ivy (Marilyn's brother) - improving

Theo Birkett—Tara's mother

Barbara Schuette—Marla's half-sister

Jim Sorensen—Tara's brother-in-law; brain tumor

Jim Soukup—Gingrich's son-in-law (Shari's husband)

Vic & Phyllis Staub—Kenwood Plaza

Laura Wyatt—Kenwood Plaza

Wilbur Kinnamon—Leisure Homestead—Stafford

Margaret Marks (Ned's mother) - declining health

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

Richard & Shelly Brensing 7/23

Youth Group

Youth Group will resume once school is back in session.

Church Website - www.stjohnchurchofchrist.org