

Apostles, prophets, and teachers roamed from church community to church community, presenting the message that God's promise to Abraham to bless every nation of the world through him was being fulfilled in Jesus. This simple message was the mystery of God, a part of his eternal plan.

But it got more complicated as they started living it out in each other's presence. Some of these inspired people, like Peter at times and no doubt me if I had been there, let the traditions be greater than the message. They would refuse to eat with Gentiles, seeing them as something to be avoided, even after they had become their brothers and sisters through new birth. Jewish Christians equated faithfulness with embracing the traditions of the Old Law, and remember the Old Law was the only Bible they had at the time.

Many of the New Testament books, the ones we call "Epistles" were written to address the misunderstandings and bring people back to the simple message that salvation for all came through Jesus, only. There is a lot of "tradition addressing" going on in these books. Things we might see pretty clearly, like women's veils or holy kisses. But also some things we might not understand as clearly.

Let's be careful as we approach Scripture. There is a simple message; Jesus is the only hope of being with God. Then there is the more complicated "day to day" living stuff; like how we show respect to God or what to do when we've messed up.

It doesn't mean we can't do a good job at it, but untangling from our traditions and just getting the message of God is more challenging. At least it was for Christians at the beginning, and they were a lot like us.

*Grace and Peace,*

*Carl*

*Where belonging to God means belonging to each other.*

St John Church of Christ  
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St John Church of Christ  
A Family of God

January 25, 2015

There is a strong temptation to think that everything in Scripture is either black or white. It simply isn't so. When Gentiles were ushered into a church composed of Jewish disciples, it exposed many assumptions made by people in both groups.

The Jewish Christians assumed that the time honored commands of circumcision, kosher foods, Sabbath keeping, and religious feasts would continue just as they always had. Everyone in their circle was comfortable with these things, had practiced them for a lifetime, and it had become a part of the fabric of their lives.

Enter the Gentiles (that's us by the way) and they brought their own understandings of God/gods. They were accustomed to their gods playing tricks on them, engaging in deceit, and needing to be appeased. They paid for a god's favor with every purchase in the marketplace, or event in day to day life.

As a result of this, their worlds collided dramatically when it came to "church life". The Jews had their scrolls with the words that God had inspired from their history. It was something that they could refer to that was authoritative and spoke clearly to issues of life. For the first twenty or so years of the life of the early church, this was the entirety of the recorded words of God.

SUNDAY: Leisure Homestead Service – 9:30 am  
Bible Study for all ages – 10:00 am  
Worship Services – 10:45 am  
WEDNESDAY: Adult Bible Study – 7:30 pm  
Youth Group – 7:30 pm (at Carl's)  
ELDERS: Richard Brensing, Teddy Gingrich,  
Loyd Ratts, Terry Sallee, George Shelton  
DEACONS: Jerry Kinnamon, Jon Mansel  
TREASURER: Richard Brensing

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### WORSHIP ORDER FOR JANUARY 25, 2015

SONG LEADER: Gary Hornbaker  
GATHERING SONG: No. 435 – Come Into His Presence  
WELCOME: Tom Turner  
SCRIPTURE READING: Psalm 23 (Orrin Feril)  
SONGS: No. 126 – The Lord My Shepherd Is  
No. 139 – In Heavenly Love Abiding (vs 1 & 3)  
No. 544 – Without Him  
No. 778 – Be With Me, Lord (vs 1, 2 & 4)  
PRAYER: Garland Mansel  
SONG: No. 325 – Boundless Love  
COMMUNION: Tom Turner  
Chris Mansel  
Joe Cornwell  
Teddy Gingrich  
MEMORY WORK: Carl Feril  
SONG: No. 450 – Give Me the Bible  
LESSON: Carl Feril (*Children's Bible Hour*)  
SONG: No. 940 – Only a Step (vs 1)  
PRAYER: Jon Mansel

(CCLI #2440129)

### WELCOME VISITORS

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

### OUR SYMPATHY

We extend our heartfelt sympathy to the family of **Wayland Whitlow**, who was the preacher at the Church of Christ in Clearwater, KS for many years. His funeral was yesterday in Clearwater. One of Wayland's loves was promoting the "Give a Goat" program, helping the poor in the Philippines.

### LADIES BIBLE STUDY

The next lesson will be about Ruth and is planned for Saturday, February 21st at 9:00 am here at the church building. Joy will be leading the study and Lory will prepare a light breakfast. Please make plans to attend!

### YOU ARE INVITED TO ATTEND!

There will be a celebration in honor of Loyd Ratts' 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday on Sunday, February 15<sup>th</sup>, from 2:00 – 5:00 pm at the IOOF Lodge here in St John.

**Church website:** [www.stjohnchurchofchrist.org](http://www.stjohnchurchofchrist.org)

### HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Chet Lyons 1/30

### HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

Jeff & Lory Scott 1/26

### PRAYER REQUESTS

(Please provide updates to Janet)

**Harper Sallee** – spent a couple of days in the hospital in Hutchinson last week with pneumonia; came home yesterday. **Mason** has also had pneumonia, but has been able to stay at home. Hannah reports that both are improving.

**Peyton Roush** – sick today

**Mara Feril** – sick today

**Lyndsey Dryden** – ongoing recovery from a serious auto accident a few weeks ago

**Jason Stadalman** – recent auto accident

**Carol Gingrich** – pacemaker in the near future

**Shirley Shelton** – so thankful for a good outcome

**Dennis Rosenbaum** – recovering from surgery for a detached retina

**Pete Witt** – now in Hospice care

**Dena Mansel** – health concerns

**Cody Dick** – cancer

**Roger Dick** - cancer

**Jonathan Batten** – as he continues chemotherapy

**Charlene Lyons** (Chet's sister-in-law) – as she continues to recover from surgery

**Theo Birkett** (Tara's mother)

**Jim Sorensen** (Tara's brother-in-law; monthly chemo for brain tumor)

**Eldon Ivy** (Marilyn's brother) – health concerns

**Jim Soukup** (Gingrich's son-in-law [Shari's husband])

**Wilbur Kinnamon** – Leisure Homestead in Stafford

**Myron Brensing** – HomePlus in Stafford

**Bonnie Guthrie** (Kay's mother) – HomePlus in Stafford

**Vic & Phyllis Staub** – Kenwood Plaza

**Laura Wyatt** – Kenwood Plaza

**Margaret Marks** (Ned's mother)