

**Noteworthy**

**Prayer Requests:** Jo Anderson (*on-going medical*), Joe Brown (*cancer*), Mildred Church (*shut in*), the Day family (*sickness*), Mary Elliot (*complications with her ear*), Charles Goodall (*on-going medical*), Linda James (*recent fall; pending unrelated surgery*), Bennie Jones (*rheumatoid arthritis*), Paul Lloyd (*rehabilitation in Toledo, Ohio*), Becca Marschall (*medical*), Linda McKenzie (*medical*), Butch Morgan (*ongoing medical*), Dottie Reynolds (*back, ongoing medical*), Suzette Stevens (*ongoing medical*).

*Family and friends:* Mary Ergiyit (*Bob Marschall's sister*), Ned Hicks (*Larry Hicks' father, ongoing medical*), Brian James (*cancer*), John Marschall (*Bob Marschall's father*), Lindy McReedy (*Cindy Hicks' aunt, cancer*), Wayne Ryland (*ongoing medical*) and Ardis Tucker (*Paula Sullivan's sister-in-law*). Remember and encourage others who are struggling physically and spiritually.

**Out of Town:** Larry & Cindy Hicks; Jordan Lawson is preaching at Trilacoochee this morning and this evening.

**Group Meeting:** Group 2 will meet tonight after the evening worship service.

**Fourth Sunday:** Mike Sadler will preach during the PM assembly next week (*Sept. 23rd*).

**Men's Training Class:** 4th Sunday of each month at 5 pm (*Sept. 23rd, next week*).

**Gospel Meetings:** The Plant City Church of Christ begins their meeting today with Rick Lanning (*Sept. 16-19*). Our fall meeting with Leon Mauldin will be next month (*Oct. 21st-26th*).

**Assignments for Worship Service**

**Wednesday Night: 9/19/18**

Song Leader: Joe Brown  
 Opening Prayer: Jerry Williams  
 Invitation: Sherman Johnson  
 Announcements: Larry Hicks  
 Closing Prayer: Mike Sadler  
 Recordings: Clay Sadler  
 Usher: Leon Miller

**Sunday Evening: 9/23/18**

Song Leader: Joe Brown  
 Opening Prayer: Sherman Johnson  
 Lord's Table: Larry Wisdom  
 Announcements: Leon Miller  
 Closing Prayer: Eric Stevens  
 Recordings: OPEN  
 Usher: Gus Johnson

**Sunday Morning: 9/23/18**

Lord's Table: Larry Wisdom (B)  
 Bucky Day (C)  
 Serving: Ed Lawson  
 Trent Stevens  
 Song Leader: Colby Sadler

Opening Prayer: Jordan Lawson  
 Announcements: Leon Miller  
 Closing Prayer: Mike Sadler  
 Recordings: Kirk Marschall  
 Usher: Gus Johnson



**Lakeland Hills  
 Leader**

**LAKELAND HILLS CHURCH OF CHRIST**

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**ELDERS**

Larry Hicks (863) 899-7405  
 Leon Miller (863) 640-6378  
 Larry Wisdom (863) 583-4311

**SERVICES**

Sunday  
 Bible Study 9:00 A.M.  
 Morning Services 9:50 A.M.  
 Evening Services 6:00 P.M.  
 Wednesday  
 Bible Study 7:00 P.M.

**DEACONS:**

Robert Marschall  
 Michael Sadler  
 Moses Stevens  
 David Williams

**EVANGELIST:**

Ian Rice (863) 213-9795

***“The Spiritual Simplicity of Our Singing”***

In the 1940's Elmer T. Clark observed that is "a peculiar type of mind which is convinced that God is interested in whether his worshipers sing with or without instrumental music" (Small Sects in America, p. 16). Clark's words carry a twentieth century bias. The truth is that the mind which he thought so peculiar was once dominant in "Christian" thought. The use of musical instruments in the worship of the churches is a relatively recent development. Most Protestant churches in America did not yield to the practice until the nineteenth century.

The unadorned simplicity of our spiritual singing is not a cultural statement but a matter of faith — a response to the teaching of the New Testament.

The worship of the Old Testament church with its complex rituals was not simple. During the intricate rites of the temple sacrifices a Levitical chorus was commanded to sing and a Levitical orchestra to play (2 Chron. 29:25-28). But the New Testament refers to the appointments of temple worship as "carnal ordinances, imposed until a time of reformation" (Hebrews 9:10). This reformation is dramatically illustrated by the total absence of any reference in the New Testament to Christians worshipping God with sacrificial animals, incense, lamps, choirs, or orchestras. There is only the admonition for the disciples to speak to each other and to the

Lord in "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16). Christian worship in song is not a choral contest. Spiritual singing has spiritual ends. Since God's ways differ radically from our own (Isaiah 55:8-9) it is of no consequence that in the mind of some the absence of musical instruments (or of devotional lamps and incense) diminishes the appeal of the singing. What is important is that we have sufficient trust in God to follow His instructions with the confidence that His methods achieve His purposes.

The silence of the New Testament on instrumentally accompanied singing has had its impact in history. The early centuries not only reveal no use of instrumental music in worship but an expressed opposition to it as belonging to the spiritual infancy of the Old Testament church. Eusebius of Caesarea (early 4th century), commenting on Psalm 91:2-3: "Of old at the time those of the circumcision were worshipping with symbols and types it was not inappropriate to send up hymns to God with the psalterion and kithara... We render our hymns with a living psalterion and a living kithara with spiritual songs. The unison voices of Christians would be more acceptable to God than any musical instrument."

Chrysostom (late 4th century): "It was only permitted to the Jews, as sacrifice was, for the heaviness and grossness of their souls. God condescended to their weakness, because they were lately drawn from idols; but now, instead of organs, we may use our own bodies to praise him withal." Theodoret of Cyrhus (early 5th century): "Question: If songs were invented by unbelievers to seduce men, but were al-

lowed to those under the law on account of their childish state, why do those who have received the perfect teaching of grace in their churches still use songs, just like the children under the law? Answer: It is not simple singing that belongs to the childish state, but singing with lifeless instruments, with dancing, and with clappers. Hence the use of such instruments and the others that belong to the childish state is excluded from the singing in the churches, and simple singing is left" (Questions and Answers for the Orthodox).

The Roman Catholic Church continued this opposition at least until the time of Thomas Aquinas (1227-1274) who wrote: "Our church does not use musical instruments, as harps and psalteries, to praise God withal, that she may not seem to Judaize." The Greek Church (Orthodox) has never used musical instruments. Several Protestant reformers held to the same sentiment. Calvin wrote that "musical instruments in celebrating the praises of God would be no more suitable than the burning of incense, the lighting of lamps, and the restoration of the other shadows of the law" (Commentary on Psalm 33). Wesley was more succinct: "I have no objection to instruments of music in our chapels provided they are neither heard nor seen."

The use of instruments in worship is not progress but a carnal retreat to spiritual kindergarten. We should glory in the supreme spirituality of our singing, sanctified by God and accompanied by the higher melody of our hearts.

~ Paul Earnhart

### *"The Church's Purpose"*

What is the purpose of the Lord's church? Is it to eradicate poverty, disease, social injustice, illiteracy from among men? Is it to bring about a cessation of war and conflict? Is it to campaign for a temptation-free society for Christians to live in?

If the church had as one of its great goals the eradication of disease, the Lord could have easily equipped it to accomplish that goal. Could not the same power that enabled one blind man to see have enabled all blind man to see; that enabled one lame man to walk have enabled all lame people to walk; that cured many people of varied diseases have cured all people of all diseases? And could not this same power have been given to the church in all generations?

If the church has as one of its great goals the eradication of poverty, the Lord could have easily equipped it to accomplish this purpose. After all, He fed the five thousand with five loaves and two fishes. He similarly fed four thousand on another occasion. Could not He who did these marvelous works have enabled His church in all generations to feed, clothe, and shelter the impoverished masses of the world through miraculous powers?

If the Lord had wanted His church to become a lobbyist group to apply political pressure toward a temptation and persecution free society in which to live, He would have given instructions in that direction. He did not even lead His church into a direct effort to destroy slav-

ery, but taught the Christian slave to be a better slave and the Christian master to treat his slaves as he would have his heavenly Master treat him (Col. 3:22-4:1).

The church's purpose is to save souls and prepare people for eternity- It holds out to the impoverished the hope of some day walking a street of gold; to the suffering a time when there will be no pain; to the sorrowing a moment when "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." It tells the tempted and persecuted that there is value in these afflictions, that the testing of their faith is "more precious than of gold," and to rejoice - It tells all to live godly lives in whatever environment they find themselves. It seeks to change people through the power of the gospel, not society through the coercion of legislators - Its weapons "are not carnal, but are mighty through God." Its motivating theme: "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

When churches become involved in hospital and health clinic work, or when they build schools for the education of their children, or when they see as one of their great missions to provide for the world's poverty, or when they feel obligated to create social upheaval and campaign for human rights, or when they feel called upon to express their views on the government's use of nuclear armaments or whatever, they have a distorted view of the purpose of the church.

~ Bill Hall