TODAY'S ORDER OF WORSHIP

Welcome by: Bobby Rader /Opening Prayer by: Walden David

Morning Assembly Song Leader: Danny Balch

#647 Soldiers of Christ Arise
#469 Faith Is the Victory

Scripture Reading by: Joseph Girard

#9350 When My Love to Christ Grows Weak
Lord's Supper and Contribution

#648 Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus

Sermon: "How Does Your Garden Grow?"
Proverbs 24:30-34

#650 Send the Light
#470 Victory in Jesus

Closing Prayer by: Tommy Cary

Welcome by: Bobby Rader

Evening Assembly Song Leader: Danny Balch

#286 Wonderful Story of Love
#543 Wonderful Words of Life

Scripture Reading: Brooks McKelroy
Opening Prayer: Daniel Balch

#450 Give Me the Bible

Sermon: "One Word: Inspiration"
2 Timothy 3:16-17

#915 Trust and Obey
#523 I Know the Lord Will Find a Way

Closing Prayer by: Phillip Strickhausen

Other Opportunities For Spiritual Growth

Sunday: 9:00am — Bible Study Classes, 10:00am — Worship, 6:00pm — Worship
Wednesday: 10:00am — Ladies Bible Class, 7:00pm — Bible Study Classes

Sept. 1, 2019

"Stand Firm in…Liberty"

Galatians 5:1

The Christians in the West

A tradition of restorationist thinking, despair over denominationalism, and a commitment to religious liberty combined in the young United States to produce 4 movements, emerging almost simultaneously and independently, that looked to Scripture and the faith and practice of the New Testament church as their guide. We noted 2 of these last week: the O'Kelly Christians in the South and the Smith-Jones movement in New England. The most numerous of these grew largely from former Presbyterians and Baptists in Kentucky and Tennessee. It was led by a man named **Barton W. Stone** (1772-1844).

Stone's family was nominally Episcopalian, and during his teens, he attended Baptist and Methodist churches, though he was not particularly religious himself. Determined to be well-educated, he enrolled in David Caldwell's "log college" in North Carolina in 1790, an excellent institution by the day's standards. Caldwell was a Presbyterian minister, and religion dominated life at the school. Stone was not much interested in such matters, as they distracted from his studies in law. But when a Presbyterian preacher named James McGready conducted a revival, he decided to seek God.

After a year of internal struggle, Stone felt called to preach the gospel. The Presbyterians licensed him and he set out for the west in 1796, settling outside Lexington, Kentucky. Two years later, he sought to be formally ordained. That meant agreeing with the basic Presbyterian creed, the Westminster Confession of Faith, with which Stone had some misgivings. When asked if he accepted it, he replied, "I do, as far as I see it consistent with the Word of God." That was a common reply among revivalists and was accepted. Thus, Stone was ordained and assigned to churches at Cane Ridge and Concord, Kentucky in 1798.

It is helpful here to understand a bit more about the state of religion in early America. We tend to think of the young United States as an ideal "Christian nation" from which we have declined. The truth is more complicated. While many, indeed, came to the New World for religious reasons, religiosity has ebbed and flowed repeatedly since. That's where the periods historians call the "Great Awakenings" come in. The First Great Awakening was a revival that swept the colonies in the 1730s-40s, with the result that interest in Christianity was stirred up in the decades before the Revolution.

But like many postwar periods, there was another decline after the Revolution. In fact, it might surprise you to know that one historian has called it the "lowest ebb-tide of vitality in the history of American Christianity." Fewer than 10% claimed membership in any church; deistic works like Thomas Paine's *Age of Reason* ridiculed Christianity; the lure of fortune in the west captured even many preachers. As before, however, this was followed by a period of renewal: the Second Great Awakening. It began on the Atlantic coast, but it reached its zenith on the Kentucky frontier. James McGready—the same man who had first stirred Stone – moved to Logan County, where a revival took off in 1799. They held "sacramental meetings," based on an old Scottish practice, that brought worshippers from afar to eat the Lord's Supper. These stayed for days at a time, and the "camp meeting" was born.

Family News & Notes

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH YOUR CHURCH FAMILY

Our Sick

Linda Nunan is in Kingwood Hospital and will be having surgery in the next week.

Pat Nunan, Linda's husband, is in Kingwood Hospital in CCU and will be having a triple bypass on Monday.

Continued Prayers
(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Gwen Pettit, Gary Nielsen, Harold & Geri Cryer, Steve Ward, Jackie David, Frank & Tina Garcia, Eric Davis, Dayla Hale, Minny Owen, Doris Trahan, Joe Edd Stifflemire, J. P. Williams, Nancy Hempel, Randy Snell

Shut Ins
(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Jim Smith, Winona Angelle, Myrtle Sheffield, Dr. Ronald Davis, Larry Hicks, Mark Wilcox, Bill Lunceford

Our Missionaries

Aaron & Marisa Bailey in Mwanza, Africa, Rod Kyle in the South Pacific

Upcoming Activities

No Elders, Minister meeting Monday

We will have a Houston Food Bank truck on Tuesday, Sept. 3rd at 8:00am.

Primetimers will be having an Italian Dinner on Tuesday, Sept. 10th at 6:30 pm in the fellowship room. A sign up sheet is on the bulletin board.

Ladies class will resume on Wednesday Sept. 18th at 10:00 am.

Sympathy

We extend our sympathy to Sharon Lartigue and her family on the death of her husband James. The funeral was Saturday.

Sunny Glen Children's Home

We are collecting 275 boxes of macaroni and cheese for Sunny Glen Children's Home. A barrel has been placed in the foyer. We have collected 251 boxes.

Mark Your Calenders

1st Annual Brotherhood Wide Door Knocking on October 5, 2019.

Exciting news: we have committed to participate in this effort. Mark your calendars for Saturday October 5 and plan to get involved! More details will follow in the coming weeks.

"Stand Firm in…Liberty"

is the weekly bulletin of the Liberty Church of Christ 3201 North Main, Liberty Texas 77575
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Privilege to Serve

Sunday, Sept. 1st

Communion Preparation: Daisy Cary
Nursery Attendants: Tania Balch, Pat Hobbs

Communion Preparation for Sunday, Sept. 8th: Gayle Coleman
Nursery Attendants for Sunday, Sept. 8th: Jane Tinkle, Rita Upton

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At Cane Ridge, 200 miles away, Stone was wrestling with 2 problems. One was his growing uncertainty with Calvinistic theology; he would later write that as he preached on human depravity and helplessness while calling those same supposedly helpless people to repent, his spirit "would be chilled at the contradiction." His second problem was a growing spiritual apathy. He heard talk of revival in Logan County and went to observe their methods, returning determined to try them himself.

Accordingly, in August, 1801, the revivals climaxed at Cane Ridge with a camp meeting unparalleled in American history. The most reliable estimate places as many as 30,000 in attendance. It continued night and day for 6 days. Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians all participated; generally, there were 5 or 6 different preachers going on in different places at once. The Methodists and Presbyterians even joined together in a communion service. According to Stone later, "All united in prayer – all preached the same things – free salvation urged upon all by faith and repentance."

That blurring of denominational lines—not to mention a gospel of "free salvation for all" that hardly seemed consistent with Calvinism—soon found Stone and his fellows in hot water. Before a heresy trial could be conducted, he and 4 others withdrew from the Synod, forming their own association, the Springfield Presbytery, and writing a defense that argued parts of the Westminster Confession were contrary to Scripture. But within 5 months, the men came to believe there was no authority for their organization, either, and so disbanded it with a remarkable document, the *Last Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbytery.* Google the document for yourself; it is a clear call for restoration and unity that still has great influence on churches of Christ (with some things that have been sadly forgotten): Christians should follow the Bible alone; each local congregation should run its own affairs, with no larger organization; we should pray more and dispute less.

What name would these wear, if not Presbyterian? At the suggestion of Rice Haggard—a man who made the same suggestion a decade before to James O'Kelly and happened to be visiting Cane Ridge by one of those wonderful coincidences of history – they agreed to call themselves Christians only. The movement faced some struggles over the next decade, but by the 1820s there were 12,000 members in churches characterized by an almost chaotic insistence on Christian liberty, lest anything be an obstacle to unity. While a noble impulse, and understandable given their history, it threatened to undo them. It would thus be left to another independent movement to help provide the Christians some organizing principles.

Bryant Perkins