

LET US GET ACQUAINTED

BY WAY OF INTRODUCTION

Many people hesitate to visit a church unless they know what it will be like when they go. We hope this short tract will help you know what to expect when you come and visit with us here in Hampton, Virginia

WE ARE NOT A DENOMINATION

Neither are we inter-denominational. It is our sincere desire to be non-denominational, to bear no other name than Christ's, and to be known simply as Christians, members of the body of Christ (Acts 11:26; Ephesians 1:22-23). Collectively we refer to ourselves as the church of Christ, the Lord's church, or some other Scriptural description to identify ourselves as the saved people belonging to Christ (Ephesians 5:23).

WE STRIVE TO BE THE SAME CHURCH DESCRIBED IN THE N.T.

It is our purpose to be identified with the Christians of the first century. We believe this to be possible to all who will learn, believe and be guided by the plain teaching in God's Word. When Jesus declared such to be "the seed of the Kingdom" (Luke 8:11), He was emphasizing a known fact of nature that specific kinds of seed, when planted, will always produce after their own kind (Genesis 1:11). For example, wheat will produce wheat. In like manner when the Word of God is planted in the hearts of good and honest people, and when obeyed, will produce Christians just as it did in the first century - nothing more and nothing less. [For more information on this subject please see our tract entitled What Does It Mean To Be Just A Christian?]

WE HAVE NO HUMAN HEAD

There is no man, or group of men, who legislate for the church or the Lord which meets here in Spruce Pine. We have no one to answer to except Jesus Christ our Lord. He is the HEAD of the church (Colossians 1:18). There is no human head. As was true in the first century, there is no inter-congregational organization. Congregations of the Lord's body in different locations function independently of each other, each having Christ as Lord. According to the authority of Christ, when a church matures to the point where two or more men meet the qualifications, overseer's (also called bishops, elders, and pastors in the New Testament and are varying descriptive terms for the same office) are appointed to look after all the affairs of the Local church. Such men are appointed when they meet all the qualifications listed in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. They have the responsibility to "feed the flock" with spiritual food found only in the Scriptures, and are to be examples for others (1 Peter 5:1-5). In churches of Christ, preachers are not "pastors" (unless they meet the qualifications cited above), but are simply teachers of the Gospel. Preachers also do not wear any special titles such as "Reverend, Father, ect.", since to do such is a clear violation of plain Scriptural teaching.

THE BIBLE IS OUR ONLY GUIDE

Therefore we have no man-made creeds to follow. We are governed in faith and in conduct by the Bible alone. While recognizing the guiding principles of the Old Testament, we seek to conform to the pattern of the New Testament (Hebrews 1:1-2; 1 Peter 4:11). We accept the Bible as being both verbally inspired and infallible in content (2 Peter 1:20-21; 1 Corinthians 2:11-13). Consequently, when the Bible speaks upon any given subject, its pronouncement is accepted as final. By its own testimony, no one may alter a single word with impunity (Deut. 4:2; Proverbs 30:6; Revelation 22:18-19).

OUR PLEA FOR UNITY

We plead for unity among all who obediently respond to the doctrine and commandments given in the New Testament. Such is in harmony with the prayer of Jesus, and the pleadings of the Apostles (John 17:20-21; 1 Cor. 1:10; Ephesians 4:1-6). We consider such unity to be possible, or Jesus would not have prayed for it. Since division has always been the departure from God's pattern, we believe division can be healed by a return to the revealed truth of God's Word. For this unity we plead.

WHAT IS DONE IN OUR ASSEMBLY

Our worship procedures are simple, spiritual and orderly, key-noted by the words of Jesus who said, "True worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth" (John 4:23-24). The frenzied emotionalism so common in churches today is absent. Each element of worship finds its origin in the commands and examples found in the New Testament.

SINGING

The entire assembly joins in singing gospel songs. There is no choir or special groups, but simple congregational singing. Since there is no evidence in the New Testament that the early church used mechanical instruments to accompany their singing, we do not therefore use them in our worship (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16).

PRAYER

The congregation is lead in prayer by one of the men in the assembly. We pray, not only to praise and thank God, but also to ask for our needs and the needs of others (1 Timothy 2:1-4).

PREACHING

The lessons and sermons are designed to teach God's Word so as to encourage compliance by those who listen. It has become increasingly popular for preachers to appear sensational by discussing subjects not revealed in the Bible, and even laying claims to miraculous powers. We make no claims for sensationalism - just plain Bible teaching and study.

THE LORD'S SUPPER

Like the church during the time the New Testament was written, we partake of the Lord's Supper each first day of the week (Acts 20:7). The supper consists of unleaven bread and the fruit of the vine as memorials of the body and blood of Jesus (1 Cor. 11:20-36).

GIVING AS WE PROSPER

We do not take up a collection every time we meet, but only on the first day of the week (1 Cor. 16:1-2). Should you attend our Sunday Service when the collection is taken, you are not expected to give. This is the responsibility of the members, not our guests.

WHO ARE WE

We are a group of men and women, boys and girls who have formed and constitute a congregation such as those described in the New Testament. We are simply Christians (Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Peter 4:15-16), followers of Christ, and we comprise a church that is "of Christ" (Romans 16:16). We do not wear or accept any designations not found in the Scriptures, and we do not subscribe to any creed written by fallible men. Christ is our only creed, the Bible our only guide.

We are striving to be a church after the pattern found in the New Testament - in how we become Christians and in how we live as Christians; in what we teach; in the work we do as a church; and in the way we are organized.

We are trying to speak where the Bible speaks and to be silent where the Bible is silent, to do Bible things in Bible ways and to call Bible things by Bible names. We are interested in honoring God, in following Christ, and in learning, doing and teaching only God's Word.

We are your neighbors, your fellow-workers, and your fellow -students. We are Christians who desire that all men be saved just as God does (2 Peter 3:9).

PLEASE COME AND WORSHIP WITH US

When you visit our assembly, you will be warmly received. We believe this to be the attitude of those who truly love God and fellow mankind. We hope that you will come to know us and count us as your friends.