

# E-Messenger

## First Church of Christ

Donald Trump said that transgender people should, “use the bathroom that they feel is appropriate.” He added that North Carolina’s so-called “bathroom law” which directs transgender people to use the restroom that matches the gender on their birth certificates, has caused unnecessary strife.

What’s happening to us? Following are six scriptures that provide some insight into the moral freefall that is taking place in our culture.

**Judges 17:6** “*In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as they saw fit.*”

When there was no recognized authority in Israel every person was free to determine right and wrong on their own. What followed was chaos; idol worship, intense conflict, gross immorality and brutal violence. (Read Judges 17-19.)

The same downward spiral toward anarchy is occurring in America.

**Romans 1:22** “*...their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools...*”

A godless culture initially prides itself in intellectual superiority. But without divinely revealed wisdom even the most intelligent become irrational.

**Isaiah 5:20** “*Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness...*”

The carnal nature of man is such that when morality is determined individually, it’s not long before moral values are

inverted; what was formerly good becomes evil and vice versa.

**Hosea 9:7** “*Because your sins are so many and your hostility so great, the prophet is considered a fool, the inspired person a maniac.*”

Any preacher who dares stand for Biblical truth and warn of God’s impending judgment is mocked as an irrelevant fool and a bigoted madman in today’s upside down culture. Courageous Christian leaders like Franklin Graham, Ravi Zacharias and Dr. Albert Mohler are lampooned in the mainstream press and social media as haters and bigots.

**2 Corinthians 4:4** “*The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that*

May Issue

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**they cannot see the light of the gospel...**

Satan is the god of this age. Scripture identifies him as the “prince of this world.” He tempted Jesus by showing Him all the king

## The Main Thing

The following is an excerpt from an article on church growth by Pastor Greg Laurie. He is the pastor of Harvest Christian Fellowship in Riverside, CA, one of the 10 largest churches in America.

This article speaks to a very important item that many of us, I believe, forget. That is to keep the main thing, the main thing. We fret and stress over what we should be doing, where we should be going, how we should confront a situation when the answer to all of these

things is very simple. Do what God has asked us to do, and He will take care of the rest.

**Church-Growth Risky Rule #1:** *If it brings people in, it pleases God.*

*Recently I attended a pastor’s gathering where many participants expressed frustration with the lack of numerical growth in their churches. One pastor said to me, “My feeling is, whatever works, and if it*

*pleases God, that is what I want to do.”*

*I understood his good intentions, but I couldn’t agree with him. “You know, I don’t want to be nit-picky,” I said, “but I really have to differ with you. It’s not whatever works; it is whatever is pleasing to God. Period.”*

*Why? Because if it’s pleasing to God, it will work.*

*If there was ever a church growth plan that did work, it was the one the early*

*Christians used. Talk about numbers. Talk about effectiveness. This church exploded. Why? Because they knew why they were here on earth and what they were supposed to do.*

*A careful reading of Acts 2:42-47 shows that the early church didn’t make bigger and better their business. Instead, they focused on five priorities: worship, prayer, evangelism, learning, and loving. The passage ends with the words, “And*

## Serving in May

### Greeters:

- 1—Scott & Anne Bard (A)
  - 8—Toby & Jane Runyan (A)
  - 15—Scott & Pam Hartman (A)
  - 22—Dean & Sue Smethurst (A)
  - 29—Charlene Dean (A)
- Communion Ministry:

- 1—Jason Gregg
- 8—Brock Rohrer
- 15—Adam Perry

- 22—Bob & Mary Lloyd
  - 29—Dean & Sue Smethurst
- Prayer Warriors:

Angi Davis/Jane Runyan  
Welcome Center:

- 1—John/Nora Altman (9); Ron & Shellee Brown (9:45)
- 8—Lesley Shirkey (9); (9:45)
- 15—Jordan/Heather Day (9:45)

### Nursery:

- 1—Mary Lloyd/Caity Karnes
- 8—Kayla Tonneas/Riley Sabins
- 15—Teresa Gambler/Sabrina Ramey
- 22—Jane Runyan/Grace Rohrer
- 29—Kim Snavelly/Megan Grimm

## Birthdays & Anniversaries



- 2 Linda Hill, Becky McBride, Keaton Singer
- 3 Gail Wyrick
- 4 Dean Smethurst
- 6 Jon List, Jane Perry
- 8 Deb Hallett, Dick Kuszmaul
- 10 Ron Brown, Brienne Hetrick
- 12 Kortney Hartman, Norma Lorentz, Brady Rhodes
- 14 Megan Grimm, Carrie Moninger
- 15 Troy Hug, Leo Thomas
- 20 Kim Snavelly, Kayla Tonneas
- 21 Cherie Whitman, Taylor Frazer, Jeremy Lohse, Mary Pinckley
- 23 McKenzie Reasor, Gerald

- Wetmore
- 24 Marilyn Thornburg, Miranda Wiese
- 25 Cole Day, Kirk Savage
- 26 Scott Hartman
- 28 Jimmy Thornton Jr.
- 29 Janet Leppelmeier
- 31 Joan Bauer

- 15 Doug & Vickie Grimm (23)
- 16 Jacob & Makenzie Manges (1)
- 21 Joe & LuAnn Jerger (28)
- 25 Harmon & Brienne Hetrick (14)
- 25 Steve & Connie Tressler (48)



- 1 Evan & Kelly Kill (1)
- 4 Larry & Jean Baumgartner (33)
- 14 Gary & Hollie Carroll (22)

**Veterans Weekend**  
**We will be honoring ALL veterans who have served or are presently serving our country. It will be held in the church fellowship hall May 14 & 15 (set up on 5/13). We are asking our veterans to bring photos, awards, medals, uniform (s), or other memorabilia**

**from their military service. This includes ALL branches of service. Please contact Dan Gallagher or the church office if you are interested in participating.**

**The Strength of Love  
Love is the ingredient  
that makes every relationship in life, whatever it is, a**

**little better.**

**Love has a capacity to mend the broken, heal the hurting and inspire the despairing.**

**Love that reaches beyond the misunderstandings and the failures is a love that unites and encourages. Such a love is one of our world's greatest needs.**

**—C. Neil Strait**





Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 8:00 Worship 9:15 Sunday School 10:15 Worship  6:30 Evangelism Life Group	2	3 10:00 Craft Group	4 5:30 Supper 6:15 Fusion 6:30 Ladies Bible Study 6:30 Men's Bible Study	5 9:30 Ladies Bible Study @ Seasons 9:30 Senior Seekers	6	7
8 <b>Mothers' Day</b> 8:00 Worship 9:15 Sunday School 10:15 Worship	9	10	11 6:30 Volunteer Appreciation @ Jaycee Pavilion	12 9:30 Ladies Bible Study @ Seasons 9:30 Senior Seekers	13	14 8:00 Men's Breakfast @ 4 Seasons 6:00 Mission Team Meeting @ Rohrer's <div>Veterans Recognition</div>
15 8:00 Worship 9:15 Sunday School 10:15 Worship 6:30 Evangelism L.G. <div>Veterans Recognition</div>	16	17 12:45 Visitation Ministry	18	19 9:30 Ladies Bible Study @ Seasons 9:30 Senior Seekers 10:30 Shipshe-wana Day Trip	20	21 1:00 Seth Ramey Grad Party @ Ney Legion Hall
22 8:00 Worship 9:15 Sunday School 10:15 Worship  6:30 Evangelism Life Group	23	24 11:45 Lunch Bunch @ Applebee's in Defiance	25	26 9:30 Ladies Bible Study @ Seasons 9:30 Senior Seekers	27	28 
29 Unity Sunday 9:00 Breakfast 10:15 Worship	30 Church Offices Closed Memorial Day	31				



## FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Love All, Worship One,  
Make Disciples

[Bryanfcc.org](http://Bryanfcc.org)

Connect with us!



### Facts & Figures

April 3	
Attendance SS 39	Worship 33 /127
Offering	\$5,021.00
April 10	
Attendance SS 25	Worship 35/107
Offering	\$17,904.00
April 17	
Attendance SS 32	Worship 53/110
Offering	\$5,303.00
April 24	
Attendance SS 29	Worship 51/116
Offering	\$3,491.00

Needed for Budget \$5,828.86

## Love All

*Our Service Personnel:* Kevin Bergman (GA), Igor Blinzler (MO), Lindsey Kaiser, Stewart Martin (NC), Jessie Stillman (OH), Josh Severs (Afghanistan), Josh Tonneas (MA)

*Cancer:* Gwen Acker-Dickinson, Arlene Boyer, Brent, Tim Bright, Sherry Buchsteiner, Jennie Case, Chuck, Martin Collins, Gwen Acker-Dickinson, Diane Distan, Weston DuBois, Carrie H., Gene Johns, Molly Johnston, Kent, Judy Koerner, Chuck Lees, Marshall, Tim Mavis, Aaron Nartker, Connie Pence, Jim Pringle, Elaine Purdue, Kathy Rittenhouse, Bob & Sue Secoy, Gail Siebenaler, Lyle Snavelly, Dinah Stiltner,

Jaime Trevino, Tammy, Joe Vaccaro, Linda Walker, Kathy Walton, Drew Wayman, Al West, Gloria Wright. *Other Concerns:* Jennifer Mavis, Bill McCarthy, Brianna Lloyd, Amy Boyd, Jo Harman, Troy Hug, Trevor Bailey, Leona Puff, Neighborhood, Geri Cox, Dale Boyer, Danielle Strouse, Bob Wagner, Paul Newcomb, Denise Easterday, Asher Cravens, Brenda Ridgway, Annie Engel, Cindy Wolf, Brent & Natasha, Zach Swisher, Steve Lundy. *Shut Ins:* Fountain Park: Maribel Duckworth, Hillside: Floyd Puffenbarger, Home: Linda Lewis, Fairlawn Haven: Gerald

Wetmore, *Genesis:* Vivian Holdsworth, *The Lakes of Monclova:* Roger Ellis, *Tendercare Health Center (MI):* Georgianna Weaver.

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doms of the world and claiming, "I can give them to you if you just bow down and worship me." Temporarily, until Christ returns in power, Satan rules most of the world's kingdoms.

It's because the god of this age is in control and he has cleverly blinded unbelievers to the truth. The god of this age has blinded them to truth and common sense.

**Revelation 12:12 "But woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has gone down to you! He is filled with fury because he knows that his time is short".**

Followers of Christ are stunned at how rapidly spiritual values have been abandoned. Just fifty years ago stores were closed on Sunday. Only twenty-five years ago sodomy was illegal. Less than ten years ago Barak Obama declared that marriage should be between a man and a woman only. Five years ago a socialist had no credibility in America. How could we lose so much ground in such a brief period of time?

I think it's because Satan knows his time is short and is filled with fury knowing he is destined for a fiery pit. A football team becomes more intense in the final minute of a close game, especially if the stakes are high. Satan is aware he is nearing the end and is intensifying his efforts to kill, steal and destroy.

The stakes are high for those of us who are believers also. There is a heaven; there is a hell, and there is a hurry. Indications are we are drawing near to our "blessed hope," the triumphant return of Jesus Christ to earth. The late Adrian Rogers used to say, "The world is getting gloriously dark."

This is no time for lukewarm or cowardly Christianity. This is a time for spiritual intensity and boldness. "Be very careful then, how you live – not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is." (Ephesians 5:15-17)

Destined to Win,  
Larry Snavelly

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*the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (KJV). The first church didn't have a problem with growth because God took care of the growth as they took care of honoring His principles.*

*Church growth is ultimately God's business, not ours to control. Our commission is to live out the gospel individually and wholeheartedly in community. Then, in keeping with God's will, "the Lord added to the church daily" will become the success story of our church. Not every pastor will necessarily have a "megachurch," but he will have a growing one.*

Let's remember to remain focused on worship, prayer, evangelism, learning and loving and watch the Lord "add to the church daily such as should be saved."

Continually Overcoming,

Tim Calvin



