



WEST SIDE CHURCH OF CHRIST

Functional Church

by Tim Tripp

Sept. 5th

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When an organization or entity doesn't get the results it was designed for, it is called inefficient. When it is not working at all or is achieving the opposite results from what was intended, it is said to be dysfunctional. Think for instance of a hospital where more people get sick than get better. It would be called dysfunctional. It would be even more dysfunctional if the hospital board of directors, staff and employees all continued to do the same dysfunctional things with the hopes that things will get better somehow.

The church was designed to be a Kingdom community where God's presence is seen on earth, where believers become mature disciples and where those disciples are sent into the world to represent Christ and to preach the gospel to the unsaved. The church was designed to instruct men and women to be godly, to help those who are married to center their relationships around Christ with love and respect, and to instruct and resource parents as to how to make disciples of their children teaching and showing them how to walk with Christ.

My concern with dysfunction lies in the reports I am seeing that Churches of Christ (as well as most other mainstream Christian churches) are heading towards it. Decline is the catchphrase in our brotherhood. A few churches are growing but are doing so in large part by attracting members from other churches. The most alarming statistics we keep seeing is among our young people. Many of them are leaving the church and exchanging it for nothing. They are leaving church, faith and God behind to join a cultural religion that worships individual freedoms, relative morality and nearly unrestrained sexual expression.

The younger generation blames the older for being inauthentic and forcing tradition down their throats and rightly so when that tradition is billed as law and gospel.

The older generation blames the younger for listening to the "narrative of social media" for truth rather than the Bible and becoming disciples of popular podcasts and social media influencers rather than disciples of Jesus and rightly so where that applies.

Placing blame may have its purpose but it does little to change our course from one of decline to one of walking the right path, being on mission and watching for God to "add to the church daily those who are being saved." That requires all of us to make changes in what we do to align ourselves with Christ's mission in the world. If church leadership moves in the right direction but no one follows, the church is doomed. Likewise, if church members passionately move to follow Christ but leadership blocks their path, the church is similarly destined for irrelevance.

Relevance and alignment rarely begin with an elders' decision or a preacher's sermon. It must begin with an individual Christian's determination to step up and live what they claim to believe. It means submitting to leadership but stepping out in a community for the sake of Christ. It means always being aware of spiritual opportunities around you; opportunities to serve, to empathize, to pray over, and to tell the story of the gospel and what it has meant to you.

Restoring functionality seems a long way off but it begins one person at a time embracing the mission of the church and stepping in obedience to Jesus each day. Functional church starts with you and me.

DIOS LE BENDIGA! (God Bless You!)

by Aris Ortiz

When you read in the Old Testament, you will find how the Israelites time after time ended in the same place: Away from God's commandments; doing the opposite of what God wanted. But how did they end like that? Well, when they saw other people from other nations and how they were living or what they were doing or maybe after 100 years passed, they started thinking that God's law was out of date, or not relevant anymore or not for that new generation, or because was different culture, customs that was not fit for them...? What we read is about leaders taking the wrong direction, kings changing God's way. Even one occasion when a king asked for advice from the elders and from the youth, and that king chose to follow the advice of the inexperienced young people rather than the wisdom advice of the elders. The sad part that we see when we read those stories is how they repeat again and again. But we also can see how patient God was with them and because of the love for his people, he always provided a way for them to return to him. In the New Testament what do we find? Now, a "homework" for you is to compare if there is a difference about Christians doing the same...

Gathering Times

Sunday Morning 10 Am Worship
& Kids for Christ
ages 1yr-5th grade

In- Person Adult/Teen Bible Study
Wednesdays 6:30pm - Room 3 & Cornerstone

Friendship Cafe and Conversational Christianity
Sunday Mornings at 8:45

In- person Adult Bible Study
Sunday Mornings at 9am

West Side News

**Kids For Christ Classes will *not*
meet this Sunday Sept. 5th!**

A new group of Kids For Christ Classes will
begin on Sunday Sept. 12th, and will continue
to meet during our Worship hour.

Classes will be as follows:

1yr olds : Beth Sorrells in the nursery area

2-3 year olds : Jamie Bates

Pre-K / Kindergarten: Judy Holman - Studios Room

1st and 2nd grade: Jen Rentfro - Creator's Canvas Room

3rd - 5th grade: Janelle Miller - Museum Room

***Wednesday Night will offer an Adult Class and
Youth Group only (ages 6th-12th grade)***

Share Group Sign-Up sheets are on the Starting Point desk
in the lobby.

Please sign up by Sunday Sept. 12th if you wish to participate.

Pantry Needs:

We are still in need of items for the Dialysis Clinic.

Needed items are Ritz Crackers (small sleeves)

Canned tuna (in water, not oil), Apples and Unsweetened Applesauce.

Please bring items and leave in the MNFTM box in the hallway.

**Sign up for WS emails at
westsidear.org/subscribe**

Week of: 8-29-2021

Weekly Giving: \$ 10,911

Attendance

Weekly Budget: \$ 13,820

Sunday AM - 273

YTD Giving: \$ 479,477

Wednesday PM -59

YTD Budget: \$ 483,691

Family Illness and Recovery

Danny Davis continues to recover from recent foot surgery.
Please keep him in your prayers for complete healing.

Dena Moore is recovering at home from recent foot surgery.
Please keep her in your prayers for a full and swift recovery.

Trish Bailey's niece, Renee, is recovering from double
mastectomy. Please keep her in your prayers for a rapid
recovery and complete healing.

Eloise Irving was recently hospitalized at the Heart Hospital.
Please continue to keep her in your prayers for overall
improvement.

Johnny Horton, father of Aaron Horton is doing well following
triple bypass heart surgery last Thursday. Please continue to
keep him in your prayers as he recovers.

Sid Womack, father of Ashlee Leavell, was recently diagnosed
with esophageal cancer. He is currently hospitalized at UAMS
recovering from feeding tube and chemo port placement.
Please keep him in your prayers for effective treatment and
complete healing.

Maribeth French, mother of Richard French suffered a stroke
last week. She is hospice comfort care and Richard and
Charlotte have gone to be with her at this time. Prayers for
peace, comfort and strength are appreciated.

Sympathy:

We extend our sympathy to Randy Powell and family in the
recent passing of Mary. Please keep this family in your prayers
for peace and comfort in the days and weeks ahead.

Love. Share. Disciple.