

# 4th & Stewart church of Christ

"...upon this rock I will build my church;  
and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."  
~Matthew 16:18



March 22, 2020

## Contact Us:

3201 4th Street  
Brownwood, TX 76801

325-646-7102

www.4thstreetcoc.org  
office@4thstreetcoc.org

## Meeting Times:

### Sunday:

Bible Study .....9:45 AM  
Worship .....10:40 AM  
Care, Inc. Service .... 2:30 PM  
Worship ..... 6:00 PM

### Wednesday:

Ladies Bible Class 10:00 AM  
Bible Study ..... 7:00 PM

## Elders:

Gene Bannister..... Billy Chism

## Deacons:

Mike Bannister..... Don Smith

John Barnum

## Preacher:

Johnny McCaghren

## Works We Support:

Cherokee Home for Children  
Gospel Broadcast Network  
Heart of Texas Bible Camp (Bangs)  
Mission Printing  
Rohan Jones, Africa  
World Bible School

## A Message to the Congregation

The current threat of the corona virus is one we have been monitoring closely because protecting you both physically and spiritually is of the utmost importance to us. Based upon the latest factual information we have determined that it is right and good to implement some precautionary, temporary measures. Therefore, the following precautions and changes will be immediately placed in effect. **These changes will remain in effect as long as conditions require.**

1. All Bible classes (Sunday morning and Wednesday evening) are cancelled.
2. We will assemble only for the 10:40am worship service on Sunday. There will be no Sunday evening assembly.
3. We advise against physical contact (shaking hands, hugs, etc.). Practice social distancing.
4. Every other pew will be marked with a piece of tape. Please set in these marked pews, which will leave an empty pew between each occupied pew. (Yes, we know, some will have to move from their "comfy spot.") Family and friends who are in regular contact are encouraged to sit together.
5. Pews without tape are to be left vacant so that the men serving communion can walk in front of those being served. This way only the servers will touch the trays.
6. Until the severity of the virus threat is over, all fellowship meals are cancelled.
7. The elderly and those with compromised immune systems have been identified as the most likely to have serious complications if they contract this virus (though the young and healthy may carry it to them). **Everyone should use their own judgment concerning attendance.**
8. It is important that congregation wide communication continues. If you have a need, prayer request, announcement, etc., Johnny will be the main contact person. He will then distribute the information as needed. Of course, you are free to contact us, as well.
9. We cannot stress enough the need for everyone to continue to worship on the first day of the week. This includes the act of giving. Those who will be worshipping at home can mail their contribution to the church building ahead of time and it will be included in the Sunday offering.
10. We have a limited number (100) of prefilled, disposable communion packets. If you need some, let us know.
11. We will attempt to live stream the Sunday morning assembly via Facebook live. (We have never done this before, so please be patient!) You will need a Facebook account and you will need to join the "4th and Stewart Church of Christ" group.
12. **Pray!** Pray for our nation's leaders. Pray for one another. And please continue to pray for us, your elders. We are only men with limited abilities striving to please God by our decisions and actions.

We do not know what tomorrow holds; but we do know Who holds tomorrow.

We love you all and pray for you daily.

Let us know if you want to study  
the Bible to know more about  
Christ and His Church.

Gene Bannister and Billy Chism

# Why Are Congregations Canceling Services?

## It Is Love, Not Fear

Obviously, we live in unsettled times. I have never personally witnessed anything like the closures and cancellations on the scale that we have seen in the last week. Of course, this pandemic impacts churches as much as any organization because the church is made up of people. Congregations have struggled to know what to do and how to respond. I have seen everything from, “We are canceling everything” to, “Nothing will change here, give me a hug!” I personally wish that the answers about the appropriate course of action were clearer, but they are not. These are not things specifically addressed in the Word. Each congregation has to make some of those decision for themselves, and their autonomous decision should be respected like we would other matters of judgment. My personal decision is not a condemnation of your personal opinion.

Unfortunately, I have seen some who seem to imply that congregations who cancel anything are doing so out of fear. As my own congregation has gone through this difficult decision-making process in the last week (and continues to do so), I want to provide some insight into what I have witnessed as my shepherds’ driving motivation: It’s love, not fear!

At this point last week (first week in March 2020), I was not at all concerned about COVID-19 and its impact. I had seen the reports, but I also thought that there was a relatively low chance of it impacting me, and—even if it did—no one was expecting anything too serious. I knew that this virus could cause some serious complications (even death) for certain demographics, but so could any number of diseases. I was not really worried about it and I thought that most people were overreacting.

On Thursday, I got a text from one of our members. It just said, “Hi West!! Do you know if we will be going to the individual-per-package for the Lord’s Supper?” That text hit me like a ton of bricks. You see, his wife is a currently struggling with a kidney transplant and is

severely immunocompromised. If this virus enters her body, she could die. Then I started thinking of the names of all the people in our congregation who were in similar situations. All people I love and worship side by side each Lord’s Day. Then I started thinking about our elderly—whom you can count on always being there whenever the doors are open—regardless of the threat—even when they should not. All of a sudden, I realized that these measures are not about me at all, they are about others whom I love.

Paul wrote in Philippians 2:3-4, “*Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.*” That great Christian principle is really what this is about. There is strong evidence now that asymptomatic (apparently totally healthy) people are spreading this virus. Children particularly may not show any symptoms at all, yet spread it among everyone with which they come in contact.

People are not canceling school and calling off youth sports because they are primarily worried about your kids getting sick. They are primarily concerned about those at home who are so vulnerable. It is this concern for others that is the driving motivator behind canceling some of our traditional activities, even if it is a personal inconvenience. In my congregation, we have canceled all congregational activities except for Sunday morning worship for the time being (and even that is subject to change). That service is being divided by location and age to prevent unnecessary contact.

When Martin Luther was dealing with The Black Death plague, he wrote these wise words that should give us some perspective as we think about what it means to be a Christian in the face of this pandemic or any other earthly challenge. He wrote,

I shall ask God mercifully to protect us. Then I shall fumigate, help purify the air, administer medicine and take it. I shall avoid places and persons where my presence is not needed in order not to become contaminated and thus perchance inflict and pollute others and so cause

(Continued on page 3)

### Television

In Search of the Lord’s Way (Phil Sanders)

Sunday @ 7:30am on KTAB

Life In The Light (Chris McCurley)

Sunday @ 10:00am on KTAB

### Radio

Preaching the Word (Michael Light)

Sunday @ 9:00am on KOXE 101.3

### Internet

TheGospelRadioNetwork.org

Gospel Broadcasting Network (Gbnv.org)

### God’s Plan for Redeeming Man

**Hear** Learn the saving message of Christ’s sacrifice (1 Cor. 1:18; Rom. 10:17).

**Believe** Jesus is the Son of God (John 8:24)

**Confess** Jesus as your Lord, Lawgiver, and King (Rom. 10:9-10; Matt. 10:32-33)

**Repent** of your sinful conduct (Luke 13:3,5)  
Complete your initial obedience to the gospel by being **baptized** for the forgiveness of your sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16)

**Live faithfully** (Rev. 2:10; 2 Tim. 4:7-8)

### Bible Reading Schedule

[video.wvbs.org/access/interactive-bible-reading-plan/](http://video.wvbs.org/access/interactive-bible-reading-plan/)

**Mar. 22** Hebrews 1—2; Ps. 82 (video)

**Mar. 23** Hebrews 3—4; Psalm 83

**Mar. 24** Hebrews 5—6; Psalm 84

**Mar. 25** Hebrews 7—8; Psalm 85

**Mar. 26** Hebrews 9—10; Psalm 86

**Mar. 27** Hebrews 11; Psalm 87

**Mar. 28** Hebrews 12—13; Psalm 88

**Mar. 29** James 1—3; Psalm 89 (video)

*“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”*

(2 Timothy 2:15)



### Visitation Meeting

- ◆ Last week **45** contacts were made. **Cards will be available to sign on Sunday morning.**

### Announcements

- ◆ If any of our members, especially our shut-ins and elderly, are in need of food or other items, let us know. We will all work together to make it through this.
- ◆ We are collecting non-perishable foods, paper goods, and hygiene products for the church at San Saba. Their only grocery store in town burned Thursday night. Drop things in the multi-purpose room by Tuesday, and we will get them to San Saba.
- ◆ Vonda Smith's move was postponed again. Stay tuned for this coming Saturday.
- ◆ CARE, Inc. has temporarily cancelled our Sunday afternoon worship service there due to health concerns.

### Upcoming Special Events at 4th & Stewart

- ◆ October 11-14—Fall Gospel Meeting w/ Denny Wilson

### Other Upcoming Opportunities to Learn and Grow

- ◆ April 5-8—Gospel Meeting @ Hamilton w/ Kerry Clark
- ◆ April 12-15—Gospel Meeting @ Bangs w/ Ross Haffner
- ◆ April 18—Ladies Day @ Colleyville w/ Kathy Pollard & Jennifer Webster, "Broken but Mended". Flyer on board.
- ◆ April 25—Ladies Day @ Comanche w/ Evelyn Bonner
- ◆ April 25-26—Lectureship @ Hico
- ◆ May 3-7—Focal Point @ University (San Marcos)
- ◆ June 21-25—Junior Camp
- ◆ July 12-17—Senior Camp

(Continued from page 2)

their death as a result of my negligence. If God should wish to take me, he will surely find me and I have done what he has expected of me and so I am not responsible for either my own death or the death of others. If my neighbor needs me however I shall not avoid place or person but will go freely as stated above. See this is such a God-fearing faith because it is neither brash nor foolhardy and does not tempt God.

This is not about fear. As Christians, we can look death square in the eye without fear (1 Cor. 15). This is not about putting God in a secondary place in our lives. At this moment, we need God and the lasting hope that can only come through Him. We are working diligently to make sure that our faith actually grows rather than shrinks through this time of trial. Measures are being taken to ensure that God, His Word, and His fellowship stay front and center during this crisis.

Our decisions as leaders in the church were based solely on love—for God and His children. That does not mean that if you chose to do less that us that you love God any less. Please don't hear that. Every situation and context is different. It just means that is why we are doing what we are doing is motivated by a desperate love for others. A lack of fear and love are not incompatible concepts. Hear the words of 2 Timothy 1:7, "For God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control." Power and love actually walk hand in hand in all our decisions. It's love, not fear!

Westley Hazel (plainsimplefaith.com)

## Isolation

"Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor. For if either of them falls, the one will lift up his companion. But woe to the one who falls when there is not another to lift him up" (Eccl. 4:9-10 NASB).

"Then the Lord God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him'" (Gen. 2:18).

As I write this I am halfway through a two-week-long self-quarantine due to having traveled back to the U.S. from Asia and because of the rapid spread of the Corona Virus or Covid-19. Though this quarantine began as a recommendation, and was limited to a two-week period, the situation has changed considerably. In my state there is not yet a legally mandated "shut-down" of travel and other activities, but that could be imposed at any time. My quarantine may be extended considerably, as will that of most in this country.

Loneliness is not generally a problem for me. I can be fairly content

(Continued on page 4)

## Celebrate

"Rejoice with those who rejoice..." (Romans 12:15)

**March Birthdays:** Kevin Ross (1), Ken Maninger (4), Wayne Kahlich (9), Ann Walker (10), Susan Ford (17), Allen Griffith (20), Mileen Kahlich (21), **Jessica Stultz (28)**, Dru Wilson (29).

**March Anniversaries:** James & Cindy Fuller (2), **Randy & Laura Huckaby (23), Tom & Carol Wilcox (23).**

Mistakes? Left Out? Let Johnny know...



## Records

	Mar. 8, 2020	Mar. 15, 2020
Bible Class	38	46
AM Worship	44	52
PM Worship	38	39
Wednesday PM	32	—
Contribution	\$2,695	\$2,021



# Privileged To Serve

"...be ready to every good work," (Titus 3:1)

	This Week: 3/22/20	Next Week: 3/29/20		
<b>Sunday AM:</b>	Song Leader: Tom Wilcox	Song Leader: James Fuller	<p><b>March 2020</b>  <b>Make Announcements:</b>                      John Barnum  <b>Prepare Communion:</b>                      Barnum Family  <b>Clean Building:</b>                      Barnum Family</p> <p><b>April 2020</b>  <b>Make Announcements:</b>                      James Fuller  <b>Prepare Communion:</b>                      Johnny &amp; Cindy McCaghren  <b>Clean Building:</b>                      Johnny &amp; Cindy McCaghren</p>	
<b>Greeters</b>	Dennis Family	John & Tina Barnum		
<b>Opening Prayer</b>	Gene Bannister	John Barnum		
<b>Communion</b>	James Fuller*, Coyce Reed John Barnum, Ryan Rudloff	Joe Dennis*, Caleb Dennis Rafe Smith, Vernon Zier		
<b>Closing Prayer</b>	Joe Dennis	Mike Bannister		
<b>Attendance Cards</b>	Aaron Smith	Ian Barnum		
<b>Sunday PM:</b>	Cancelled	Cancelled		
<b>Opening Prayer</b>				
<b>Scripture Reading</b>				
<b>Communion</b>				
<b>Closing Prayer</b>				
<b>Wednesday Devotionals:</b>	March 25 Cancelled	April 1 Cancelled	April 8 Prayer Night	April 15 Rafe Smith

## Search the Scriptures

Be like the Bereans who "received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so." (Acts 17:11)

### Studies for the week of March 22, 2020

Sunday Class ..... **Cancelled**  
 Wed. Class ..... **Cancelled**

<p style="text-align: center;">Why Did My Savior Come to Earth?  <b>"I Did Not Come to Bring Peace but a Sword"</b></p> <p><i>"Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword" (Mt. 10:34). "Do you suppose that I came to give peace on earth? I tell you, not at all, but rather division" (Lk. 12:51).</i></p> <p><b>I. Is there a major discrepancy?</b></p> <p>A. Did not Isaiah prophecy that He would be the "Prince of Peace" (Isa. 9:6)?</p> <p>B. Zacharias spoke of his son, John the Baptist, being the one who would "guide our feet into the way of peace" (Lk. 1:79), pointing people to Jesus.</p> <p>C. The angels announced Jesus' birth, "peace, goodwill toward men" (Lk. 2:14).</p> <p>D. The subject of peace came up in Jesus' discussion with His apostles (Jn. 14-16).</p> <p><b>II. "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you" (Jn. 20:21).</b></p> <p>A. It seems to be very evident that our Lord lived in a hostile environment.</p> <p>B. His followers were also part of a hostile environment; they did experience criticism, ridicule, and, in some cases, physical violence and death.</p> <p>C. The followers of Jesus in our present time also live in a hostile environment.</p> <p>1. There are societies, even today, where people suffer in much the same way as did followers of Christ in the 1<sup>st</sup> century and for the same reason.</p> <p>2. Those of us who are Christians in the United States are living in a society that is becoming increasingly hostile to our Lord and His teaching.</p> <p><b>III. Much can be learned from the two statements under consideration.</b></p> <p>A. Luke 12:51 was first, chronologically, as the Lord taught "an innumerable multitude of people," while focusing primarily on "His disciples".</p> <p>B. Matthew 10:34 was spoken later, as Jesus sent His disciples on the "limited commission".</p> <p>C. The account in John 20:21 where peace is mentioned is also connected to our Lord sending His apostles on a mission – the Great Commission.</p> <p><b>I. The "divisive" message of Jesus means several things.</b></p> <p>A. I can know that peace does not always mean the absence of conflict.</p> <p>B. I can know the difference between joy and pleasure.</p> <p>C. I can know that the smallest act of service does not go unnoticed.</p> <p>D. I can know who my Father is.</p> <p>E. I can know where my real family is.</p> <p>F. I can know what my destiny is.</p>	<p><i>(Continued from page 3)</i></p> <p>by myself for reasonable periods of time. But total isolation is certainly not my preferred condition. At this point I am especially grateful for a loving spouse with whom I am sharing this two-week quarantine. Cabin fever is less of a threat when one has someone else with whom to share.</p> <p>The Bible is clear that humankind was created to be "social animals." That is, we like and need the company of others of our own kind. Pets are wonderful, but they don't completely fill that need (Gen. 2:19-20). God in his wisdom created two humans, differing in gender, and by so doing created marriage and the home. Only then did he observe all that he had done and proclaim it, "Very good" (Gen. 1:31). This first social institution led eventually to many others.</p> <p>Wise Solomon proclaimed, "Two are better than one" (Eccl. 4:9). There are strict limits to what one person alone can accomplish. When united with others of compatible minds and abilities, those limits are extended greatly. When God saw the work done by the descendants of Noah after the flood he stated, "Behold, they are one people, and they all have the same language. And this is what they began to do, and now nothing which they purpose to do will be impossible for them" (Gen. 11:6). It is wonderful what even a small group working in harmony can accomplish.</p> <p>This quarantine is necessary, and hopefully, by God's grace, it will be effective in limiting the spread and devastation of the Corona Virus. But it also helps us to recognize the blessing we have in our relationships with family, friends, and fellow Christians. We may be forced to isolate ourselves for a time, but we can remain in close contact via our phones, the internet, and other technology. And when the time comes that gatherings are again feasible we can enjoy direct company even more than before. Let us pray that time comes quickly.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Michael Brooks (forthright.net)</i></p>
---	---