

*“...strengthen thy brethren”*  
*Luke 22:32*



## CHURCH OF CHRIST

of Genesee County

**November 9, 2014**

5284 Fenton Road, Flint, Michigan 48507

Welcome All:  
We are thankful to have you with us today. The Lord's church here is dedicated to the restoration of New Testament Christianity, respecting both the authority and the silence of the Scriptures.  
Again, thank you for worshipping God today.

### Schedule of Services

Worship...	Sunday	11:00 a.m.
	Sunday	6:00 p.m.
Bible Study...	Sunday	10:00 a.m.
	Wednesday	6:00 p.m.

[www.coc-gc.org](http://www.coc-gc.org)

Preacher: Michael Golwitzer (810) 771-4627

### Sermon:

AM—Walking by Faith

PM—Life or Death

### Gospel Meeting

Harrison Morgan  
for our Year End  
Meeting on the 27th and 28th of  
December.



## Prayer List

Marty Stearns-health problems  
Elsie Jaques-health problems  
Helen Summers.  
Kim Penoyer-more breathing problems  
Dale Gregory-health problems  
Barbara Johnson-health problems  
Austin Clark-health problems  
Michael Golwitzer  
Chuck Smith-heart & Sciatic nerve  
Earlene Currier-recovering from surgery  
Lauren Weidner-for encouragement  
Edith Taylor - Bill's mother.  
Pam Bentz—friend of Sue has cancer  
Stan Bozich—friend of Chuck.  
Scott Bateman-health  
Ashley Beaver-health problems  
Donna Duford-Betty's daughter.  
Art Booth-Aunt Helen's son  
Misty Davis- health problems  
Janet Davis-health problems

## Is Clapping of Hands Appropriate in Worship?

The question was raised primarily in reference to applauding at a baptismal service. The one who asked it remarked that it seemed to him that it was equivalent to saying "Amen" at the end of someone's prayer, and merely indicated approval of what was being done. If it were merely equivalent to taking his hand and saying, "I rejoice in your obedience," I would have no objection to it. However, it involves other significant principles.

Let us examine some and try to arrive at a scriptural answer to the question. When we say "scriptural answer" we do not claim that we know a scripture that deals directly with the question, for if there was an approved example of early Christians doing it, or a command that indicated the propriety of it, we would not need to discuss the matter. If we could find a scripture that said, "Do not clap hands" we would not need to discuss the matter. So we must examine principles and scriptures that deal with broader matters, and strive to make logical application of them.

First, let us look at the assumption that the clapping of hands is no more than simply expressing agreement with a statement or action, as "Amen" might be. When an audience claps and shouts approval of Michael Jackson's performance, would it evidence about the same thing if the audience said, "Amen?" The basic meaning of "Amen" is "may it be so." It has various nuances in other contexts, but the basic idea is approval of what another has said. The basic purpose of clapping of hands in our society is to show approval of a person's performance, involving his skill or ability.

When a person is baptized properly, it is approved of God and by all subjects of God. When a person prays appropriately, takes the Lord's Supper or sings properly, the same thing is true. Should we applaud at any or all of those times? If not, why?

Note two or three significant things. If a professional singer performs and the audience applauds, they are normally applauding the performance of the musician. Is there anything in God's word that leads one to assume that when a person leads a song, leads a prayer, or preaches in worship, his performance is to be

applauded? Is he, or his performance the center of attention? Or should our attention be on the message and the Christ whom the message should exalt?

If the argument about clapping hands being equivalent to saying "amen" were valid, you would. If you had been standing at the foot of the cross when Jesus died, and knew the purpose for which He died, would you have approved of his loving sacrifice? If so, would it have been appropriate for you to applaud as the soldier thrust his spear into the side of our Lord? If you can see why not, it should not be too difficult for you to see why not in the other cases mentioned.

There are other principles involved. The performance of a singer or pianist on the stage is supposed to be a performance which calls attention to the skill or ability of the artist who is performing. Thus, it is appropriate to applaud or withhold applause in terms of how you valued the skill or ability of the performer. That is not true with reference to the act of baptism, preaching, prayer, singing in worship, or waiting on the Lord's Table. But my point here is that applause always calls attention to the performers of the act, whatever the act may be. At a baptism, preaching, praying, etc. we should be calling attention to the grace and love of the Savior who authorized those acts. If I applauded, I would be calling attention to his performance. This is inappropriate, and has no place in an assembly for the worship of God. If you have thought it appropriate to applaud at a baptism, because you are merely showing gladness or approval of the act, and still think so, then try to give a sound and sensible answer to the question, "At what place in the worship or service of God would you not want to applaud by clapping the hands, since you should approve of every scriptural act?" Should it be done after the songs, after the reading and/or prayer, after the Lord's supper, after the sermon, or any time and every time you feel like rejoicing? T. Pierce Brown

*[Editor's note: Showing approval by saying "amen" is specifically authorized by scripture (1 Cor. 14:16). The New Testament contains fifty examples of "amen" being used to solemnly confirm a prayer, blessing, statement of praise or statement of truth. No authorization or example of clapping hands to show approval or for any other purpose is found. R.D.] Edited slightly to fit our bulletin from The Old Paths.*