

“...strengthen thy brethren”



Luke 22:32

CHURCH OF CHRIST of Genesee County

5284 Fenton Road, Flint, Michigan 48507

November 26, 2017

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.

Website: www.coc-gc.org

Church of Christ of Genesee County

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| Worship Service | Bible Classes |
| House to House / Heart to Heart | Tracts and DVDs |
| Internet Telecast of Sermons | Evangelism / Gospel Meetings |
| Online Academy of Biblical Studies | Mission Work |
| Food Closet | Apologetics Press |
| Seek the Old Paths | World Video Bible School |
| Gospel Broadcasting Network | The Spiritual Sword |

P R A Y E R L I S T

- Cindy Atkinson-knee problems
- Betty Crewse
- Marty Stearns-health problems
- Al Haskell and Jeannie - kidney problems
- Chuck Smith—heart, Sciatic, recent fall
- Christena Apostolico-Joan’s sister in Ohio— heart attack
- Ashley Dominey– difficult pregnancy
- Paul Siders-cancer– Joan’s sister in law’s brother
- Patty Lewis-Chuck’s daughter
- Marie Hall-recovering from hip surgery
- Edith Taylor-Bill’s mother
- Cody Cantrell-coma-Bill’s friend.
- Rachel Hall—health problems
- Cindy’s friends-Ireland Family, Wayne Hamilton, Kathy and Misty Davis, Jody Rynca-cancer
- Earlene Currier-Betty’s Aunt, Susan Wills.-Betty’s daughter-Lauren Weidner-Betty’s grand-daughter- encouragement .
- Jeannie’s cousin—McKenna Schummer-cancer (11 yrs. old)
- Dennis—Lou Gehrig's disease-Chuck’s friend
- Chere’s—Tom Corbin -cancer, Pryia Vannoy, Glen (Hoss) Allemen-health, uncle Don Cross—cancer, Bethany Kozel Emendorfer –co-worker facing surgery—
- Eli Clark—Brain cancer: Chere’ requests cards and prayers for Eli: 499 Montgomery Hill Road, Walker WV 26180

Ladies Bible Class
November 28th at 10:00 AM

SERMONS

AM: TWO SEARCHING QUESTIONS Acts 9:5-6
PM: WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE?

"Christ—the Firstfruits"

In 1 Corinthians 15, Paul wrote at length concerning the resurrection of the dead, because some of the Christians in Corinth taught "that there is no resurrection of the dead" (vs. 12). As one of his proofs for the Christian's eventual resurrection, Paul pointed to the fact of the resurrection of Christ, and showed that the two stand or fall together, saying, "if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins" (vss. 16-17)! After hypothetically arguing from the absurd in an attempt to get the Corinthian Christians to see that their stance on the final resurrection completely undermined Christianity, Paul proceeded to demonstrate that Christ had risen, and thus made the resurrection of the dead inevitable. It is in this section of scripture that some find a difficulty. Beginning with verse 20, Paul wrote: But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming (1 Corinthians 15:20-23, emp. added).

In view of the fact that Jesus was not the first person ever to arise from the dead (cf. 2 Kings 13:21; Luke 7:14-15; Matthew 10:8; 11:5), some have questioned why the apostle Paul twice described Jesus as "the firstfruits" from the dead in 1 Corinthians 15. Did Paul err? Was he ignorant of the widow's son whom God revived at Zarephath (1 Kings 17:22)? Did he not know that Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead (John 11:43-44)? How could Paul legitimately speak of Christ as "the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep"?

One solution to this alleged discrepancy can be found in the fact that Jesus was the first to rise from the dead—never to die again. All who have ever arisen from the dead, including the sons of both the widow of Zarephath and the Shunammite (2 Kings 4:8-37), the daughter of Jairus (Mark 5:35-43), Lazarus, et al., died in later years. Jesus, however, accurately could be called "the firstfruits" of the dead because "Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him" (Romans 6:9). All others who previously were raised at one time, died again, and are among those who "sleep" and continue to wait for the bodily resurrection; only Jesus has truly conquered death. In this sense, Christ is "the firstborn from the dead" (Colossians 1:18; Revelation 1:5; cf. Acts 26:23).

Another possible explanation of the difficulty surrounding 1 Corinthians 15:20,23 and Paul's use of the word "firstfruits" (Greek *aparche*) is to understand how "firstfruits" was used in the Old Testament. Under the Old Law, the firstfruits were the earliest gathered grains, fruits, and vegetables that the people dedicated to God in recognition of His faithfulness for providing the necessities of life. The Israelites were to offer to God a sheaf of the first grain that was harvested on the day after the Sabbath following the Passover feast (Leviticus 23:9-14). Paul may have used the term "firstfruits" in this letter to the Corinthian church to reinforce the certainty of the resurrection. Just as the term "firstfruits" indicates that "the first sheaf of the forthcoming grain harvest will be followed by the rest of the sheaves, Christ, the firstfruits raised from the dead, is the guarantee for all those who belong to him that they also will share in his resurrection" (Kistemaker, 1993, p. 548). Jesus is God's "firstfruits" of the resurrection. And, like the Israelites, God will gather the rest of the harvest at the final resurrection. It may be that Paul wanted the Corinthians to understand (by way of metaphor) that Christ's resurrection is a pledge of our resurrection. It is inevitable—guaranteed by God Himself. By Eric Lyons, Apologetics Press

James, a half-brother to the Lord, gloried in the fact that he was a "servant" **James 1:1** "**James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting.**"