



I trust you've seen the above graphic on a bumper sticker. And, like me, your reaction may not have been positive. The intent of the display is often assumed to be a statement about the equality of all religions and world-views. Since Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life, we know that is not the case. If, however, we are to live in peace in a diverse and pluralistic world, we can, and must, coexist.

A recent article in *Touchstone* had some relevant thoughts I found worth repeating as we enter a new year.

“Do Christians and Muslims worship the same God? Clearly not, if one takes their sacred texts seriously. The Koran repeatedly and unequivocally declares Allah as one and indivisible and rejects the divinity of Christ, and for this reason calls Christians blasphemers. Christians, on the other hand, worship the triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Salvation, they believe, comes only to those who believe that Jesus Christ is God. Jews reject the notion that in Jesus the long-awaited Messiah has already come. And between the Children of Isaac and the Children of Ishmael there is a diametrically opposed reading of God’s promises and intentions vis-à-vis the Children of Abraham. To gloss over these differences is not only foolish but also unnecessary. History is replete with examples of people with these different beliefs living and working together in harmony, but this didn’t happen by their simply denying or failing to acknowledge their differences. To do so shows either ignorance or disrespect.

“Whatever their differences there is in all these world religions something upon which to build a harmonious and diverse community. ... Christians have no warrant in their Scriptures to force their beliefs on anyone, and they are instructed by Christ to love their enemies and pray for those who abuse them.”

Without turning a blind eye to the reality of Islamic terrorism, we can coexist and live in peace with any who will do the same with us. Please pray for peace in 2017.

God Bless, Rick



THE CHATHAM MESSENGER

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Dear Friends and Supporters,

May the blessings of Christ be with you at this special time of the year. We feel so grateful to God and to you as we approach the end of another year in His service. For us, 2016 has been a year of great challenges and blessings.

Challenges: We almost lost our youngest daughter, Kristen, to a nagging illness that she has not quite gotten over as yet. This illness, that her doctors have not yet defined, has hindered her from attending school regularly. As a result, we are afraid she may have to redo her final year in high school. Kristen’s mother is extremely worried about her (Kristen’s) health and consequently her education. We have had several deaths in the Grierfield congregation. Our latest, just a few weeks ago, was a single mother, who died at 44 years old. She was a very faithful Christian. She is survived by several family members in the congregation, so the church was very shaken up by her death. While we were still in the process of making funeral preparations, thieves broke into the church building and stole the church’s drum set and cooking stove. It took the church several years of fundraising to purchase these items. Needless to say, this was another “body blow” to the Grierfield congregation. The worst challenge, however, came from a group of American missionaries who attempted a hostile take over of the missionary work we are doing. Their desire (was) to get the support that is sent to us so they can use it for their own purposes.

Blessings: In spite of the difficulties we endured in 2016, God has been faithful, and continues to be faithful to us. We had several baptisms and one transfer of membership to the ministry. We have two candidates at Claremont awaiting baptism. The insularity issues that came up with the two other ministers have been resolved. My daughter Kristal has graduated from the University of the West Indies with honors. I have been appointed chairman of the Claremont All Age School Board. I am now chairman of two school boards. We received a visit from a sister church in the US earlier this year. They brought us some well needed Sunday School materials. Even though Theo is now 57 years old and Rose 54, they are still in demand for speaking engagements. This allows them to minister for the Lord. Theo’s last speaking engagement for the year 2016 (was) at the Claremont Anglican Church.

Thanks again for your continued faithful support and for your prayers. We wish for you a Christ-filled Christmas and a productive New Year in the Lord. May God continue to bless you richly!

Theo, Rose, Kristal and Kristen

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Sunday Worship Service
 Bible School

9:15 AM
 10:45 AM

Non-Profit Org.
 U.S. Postage
 PAID
 Chatham, IL
 Permit No. 9

STATISTICS

Worship 108
Offering \$7,050.12

SERVING THIS SUNDAY-1/8/17

GreetersGary & Lori Gredzieleski
Visitors' Stand..... Beryl & Jamella Reese
Communion Meditation..... Bill Carroll
Paul Hunley
UshersConnor Bales
Kent Ballard
Chris Luzio
Brad Stirmell
Jim Trimberger
Kirk Polley

WORSHIP NURSERY

Toddlers.....Marilyn Wenneborg
Anna Hunley
Infants..... Dixie Williamson
Emily Hughes
Sunday School
Toddlers.....Julie Divjak
Infants..... Bonnie Ruebush

Let Us Pray For...

--Beryl & Jamella's grandson Michael with drug issues.
--Nancy Martin recovering at home after hospital stay.
--Joe Carter recovering at the Bridges from serious gout in his knees.

ELDERS & PROJECTION AFFIRMED

Bill Carroll, Paul Hunley, Chris Luzio, and Jack Stucki were all affirmed as elders for 2017, and the financial projection was accepted last Sunday morning. We are very grateful for the confidence shown to the leadership of CCC, and pray for God's continual blessing in the new year.



The CCC mailbox is overflowing. Be sure to look for any Christmas greetings for you that may still be there.

HACKED BY RUSSIANS?

You don't need a password, or even a correct web address, to find our church website. If you google "Chatham Christian Church", you'll eventually find one in Illinois. Once your computer or smart phone knows what you look at, "Chatham" or "church" might even get you there. If you're starting fresh, and want to go directly to our website, the address is simply chathamchristian.org. It's easy to find, and international usage proves it.

Bill Carroll is our web master, and he recently got a report that our site was viewed 158 times in the U.S. last month. That may not quite qualify as viral, but it is getting used. What is interesting is that it was also viewed once in Portugal, 7 times in Japan, 8 times in Austria, 9 times in Italy, 10 times in Libya, 26 times in Germany, and...drum roll...130 times in RUSSIA!

I guess it isn't hacking if it's easy to find, but whatever you want to call it, we're delighted that over 100 people in Russia are regularly going to our website. Maybe they are even reading or listening to sermons preached at Chatham Christian Church. How cool is that!

Life of Christ

Our Sunday night adult study of Fulton Sheen's *Life of Christ* will begin again this Sunday at 6:30. Those who have books are encouraged to read chapter ten, "The Choosing of the Twelve" before coming.



The Ball-Chatham Food Pantry is requesting that we help stock the shelves with canned peas, pears, and tomatoes. They also need Ramen Noodles, plastic bags, and toilet paper.

To the CHILDREN of Chatham Christian Church

Dear Young Ones:

THANK YOU!! So much for the \$171.17 we received today! I can assure you that Jesse Yangmi, in Thailand, will appreciate your offering very much. I will tell him of your sacrifice. Your donation is deeply appreciated and will be used to help teach others there about our Lord Jesus Christ, that they may have eternal life in heaven as well.

I understand your gift was gathered over a period of time. That means it was a sacrifice from EACH of you! I am sure our Lord will remember each of you for helping in His work. It is always rewarded when we return a portion of what we have, to the work of Christ. There are many boys and girls in Thailand and surrounding areas that never have the chance to learn about Jesus. But thanks to missionaries, all around the world, many of those children will be able to learn of Jesus and receive the great rewards only Christ can give.

So, again, Children, THANK YOU for your unselfish sharing of your own works for the good of others we will never know on this earth. The example you have set should be noticed by the rest of the Christian World.

May God bless each of you!

Gary and Debbie McKillip
Jesse's forwarding agents



New Year's Eve was a great time of fellowship and games. The evening just flew by and many of us didn't get to try out some of the new games on the table.

So, let's identify a Friday later in January to have another game night here at the church for adults. I'll firm up the date in the next newsletter, in the meantime, let me know which date works best for you.

YOUTH GROUPS

I'm excited to get Youth Groups rolling again this Sunday! All kids are invited back to participate in interactive faith building lessons while enjoying time with your friends. In addition to our weekly meetings, some of the dates have been established for our overnight conferences we normally attend. Here is a breakdown for the different age groups so we can all plan accordingly.

For our 4th & 5th grade students, SuperStart will once again be held in Bloomington on March 10 & 11. We always have a great time at this event! Be on the lookout soon for early bird registration information!

Junior High School students can start planning for our annual Believe conference in Springfield on March 3 & 4. Last year we spent Friday night at our house, which worked out well. If you have other ideas, let's talk on Sunday! The early bird registration is due by February 1st and is \$55.00.

Finally, for the High Schoolers, CIY Move conferences are held all over the United States. This year, the closest two are June 12-16 in Indiana or July 17-21 in Missouri. We will most likely be picking one of those two so please mark them in your calendars.

Our priority is always to grow closer to our Lord, if we can use a fun event as a vehicle to do so, I think that is terrific. Looking forward to a great 2017!



High School Students

We will be postponing our ski trip until February 20th. About half of the interested skiers will not be able to make it in January, so in the interest of all, we are delaying this activity.

A blizzard of epic proportion won't keep us from going on the 20th. There is room in the van for a friend, feel free to invite someone!