

Dear church family,

As some of you may know, our dear sister Shirley Elliot joined our father in heaven this past week. She was a loving, kind Christian woman who loved our church family. She will be missed so much. Please pray for John and the entire family during this tough time.

Have you ever stopped and considered how many things we do in life that requires preparation? The jobs we do, the everyday chores that may be our responsibility to take care of like cooking dinner or doing the laundry. Everything we do takes preparation-do we have what we need to make dinner or wash that load of dirty clothes? At work, have we done what we need to do to be ready for that presentation or have we done the research to be able to contribute to the task at hand?

Every athlete knows that they just cannot show up for the game without taking the time to get ready to compete. Often, they will spend as much time getting warmed up mentally as they do physically. They take the time to get their mind focused on what they need to accomplish in order to succeed. And every winner has a clear and definite goal in mind before they jump into the game.

Although our worship of God is certainly not a game, there are some very important comparisons of our time of worship and physical sports. The apostle Paul compared living the Christian life to a race and what it takes to win that race.

When we gather together each week to worship, how much time do you spend in getting “warmed up” for the time to give God glory and praise? Often, we look to the leaders to do all the preparations and we just “show up” to be fed. But we have far more individual responsibility to get our hearts ready to be an effective worshipper of the Almighty.

You may have had a difficult week. The stresses and strains that come with living in a fallen and cursed world more than likely have beaten you down a bit. So, it may take a bit of work to shake off all the junk that Satan has thrown at us all week so we can get into a spirit of worship.

But how do we do that?

King David said in Psa 100:4 “I will enter his gates with thanksgiving in my heart, I will enter his courts with praise”!

So here is the formula to get yourself prepared to worship God in spirit and truth:

1. Pray to God thanking Him for everything that is good in your life. Create a spirit of gratitude for all the many ways that you have been blessed this week.
2. Ask God that he might give you a “spirit of praise” during the time of worship. This will give you an ability to truly focus on God while you sing and while you pray. It will help keep you from your mind wandering during this dedicated time to give God glory.

If you are still homebound and unable to physically attend the services but watch online, you may have it difficult to really get into the spirit of fellowship that comes with being physically together.

I would suggest that if you are physically able, get up and get dressed as if you were able to attend physically. If able, when the congregation stands and sings or prays, you do the same thing.

Since you are not there in person, maybe you can consider how you might be a blessing to someone else by making a phone call or a letter or note of encouragement. Maybe share a point that you heard from the bible class or sermon that spoke to you personally.

Whether we are physically or virtually worshipping God this week, may we all be able to say, "I rejoiced with those who said to me, 'Let us go up to the house of the Lord!'"

Contact Kelsy Harbin with any changes or additions to the announcements and prayer requests, her phone number is 304 – 834 – 2715.

### **Shut in/Sick List/Prayer Requests**

- Trina Smith was diagnosed with breast cancer. Continue to keep you in her prayers.
- Sue Eden's daughter Tinika is in Marietta Memorial as she has lost use of her legs several times and they are running tests, please keep them in prayers.
- Please pray for Angie Barnett (Kelsy Harbin's cousin) she has COVID-19 and is in the hospital fighting it with pneumonia in her lungs as well.
- Continued prayers for Stephen Beck as he battles cancer.
- Continued prayers for the Craddock family.
- Jeff and Monica McNutt are going through fertility treatments to have a child, please pray for them.

Each week I'll be putting a few bible questions at the end of the letters we send, I'll share the answers to this weeks questions in next weeks letter and so on.

1. Who set fire to three hundred foxes' tails?
2. What Hebrew served a quick lunch under a tree?
3. Who said, "Is there any taste in the white of an egg?"
4. When did four vegetarians win a young men's beauty contest?
5. What hungry man cursed a fruitless fig tree?