

Coronavirus forces churches to walk the old paths again



America's Heartland
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man asked. "Don't you know that's a waste of good ham?" "That's just what you do," she replied. "That's the way my Mom taught me to prepare a ham for baking."

"But why?" the husband asked. "I'm not sure," the woman said "But I'll call Mom and ask."

Her Mom said, "I'm not sure why we do that. I learned it from your Grandma. Call her, and let her explain why."

Grandma explained, "My baking pan is a little small, and that's the only way I can fit a ham into it."

Can you imagine that, people doing things a certain way for generations without knowing why or bothering to ask why?

I wonder if the way we do church would change if we were to examine the things we do and ask the "why" question. "Why do it that way?" "Is there a better way to do it?"

When COVID-19 became dangerously widespread in the local area, we began to ask, "is there a safer way to do church?" At our church, for the past 150 years, we had been gathering in the sanctuary, singing praises and listening to sermons. But we realized continuing to crowd into the sanctuary could put our most vulnerable church members at risk. We asked ourselves what we could do to protect them without shutting down altogether. The answer we came up with was drive-in church.

We bought an FM transmitter that allowed us to broadcast a signal that covered the church grounds. That allowed our folks to drive in, point their front bumpers toward the church, turn their radio to a specified frequency, and see and hear everything from a pulpit that we had set up on the porch.

As you might have suspected, attendance went up immediately. We saw people on the first Sunday whom we hadn't seen since the pandemic started. We also saw many first-time visitors who appreciated an approach to church that kept them protected from COVID-19.

What we had done, in a sense, was to go back in time to pioneer days, when folks

didn't worship inside church buildings, when there were no church buildings, nor padded pews, nor theater-style seating. It was a time when families drove in on wagons, wrapped themselves in warm blankets in cool weather, and heard the Gospel proclaimed.

Turns out that by doing drive-in services, we were worshipping in much the same way our forefathers did. We had run smack into Jeremiah 6:16, which admonishes us to "ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls."

Roger Alford is pastor of South Fork Baptist Church. Reach him at 502-514-6857 or rogeralford1@gmail.com.

OBITUARIES

Printed free as a public service. Contact the funeral home to have an obituary included. Photos included at no charge. Local obituary lines - Lewis (723-8558) & Toler (723-4242) Contact the Estill County Tribune at (606) 723-5012 to have any out-of-county obituaries placed in this newspaper.

Sunday, January 17, 2021 Thomas Wayne Sparks, 68

Thomas Wayne Sparks, age 68, of Pitts Road in Ravenna, Kentucky, passed away Sunday, January 17, 2021, at his home following a long illness.

He was born February 24, 1952 in Estill County and was the son of the late Lonnie Thomas and Minerva Cox Sparks. He was a former employee of the Estill County Road Department and had lived in Estill County all his life.

Mr. Sparks is survived by his wife of 45 years, Lisa Powell Sparks; two sons: Shawn Sparks and

Dan Sparks, both of Estill County; one sister, Emma Tipton, Estill County; one brother, Albert Sparks, Estill County; and three grandchildren, Landon, Ashton and Trenton Sparks.

He was preceded in death by two sisters, Dorothy Fike and Mildred Rawlins; and two brothers, Billy Sparks and Gene Sparks.

Memorial services will be held at a later date.

The Warren F. Toler Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

<TolerFuneralHome.com>

Thursday, January 14, 2021 Amy Lorene Townsend, 54

Amy Lorene Townsend, age 54, of Clay City, Kentucky, wife of Jeff Townsend, passed away Thursday, January 14, 2021 at her residence.

She was born in Irvine, Kentucky, September 20, 1966 to Austin and Carol Sue Horn Brewer. She was a member of the Wildwood Chapel and a life member of the AMVETS Post 67 Ladies Auxiliary.

Mrs. Townsend is survived by her husband, Jeff Townsend of Clay City; one daughter, Frances Baber (Phillip); two brothers: Brian Brewer and Mark Brewer; and a sister, Shelly Jones.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Austin and Carol Brewer; a son, Benjamin James Brewer; a daughter, Rebecca Alana Townsend; and a brother,



Amy Townsend

Darrell Brewer.

A celebration of life was held Sunday, January 17, 2021 from 2 till 5 p.m. at the AMVETS Post 67 Building in Clay City. Bro. George Sparks officiated.

Grayson Funeral Home Clay City was in charge of arrangements.

<GraysonFuneral.net>

Sunday, January 17, 2021 Shirleen Barnett Chaney, 71

Shirleen Barnett Chaney, age 71, of Cow Creek Road in Ravenna, Kentucky, passed away Sunday, January 17, 2021, at the University of Kentucky Hospital in Lexington, following a short illness.

She was born March 9, 1949 in Estill County and was the daughter of the late Lloyd Barnett and Lula Bailey Webb. She was a former Ajax employee and had lived in Estill County for the past 15 years.

Shirleen is survived by her daughter, Gidget Chaney, Estill County; four sisters: Priscilla Woods, Estill County; Judy Dunaway, Madison County; Bonnie Hall and Gayla Melton, both of Es-

till County; two brothers: Bud Barnett, Estill County; and Mike Barnett, Madison County; one grandchild, Chesney Tipton; and several nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by two brothers, Kenny Ray Barnett and Phillip Keith Barnett.

Visitation for the public will be held Wednesday, January 20, from 6 to 9 p.m. at the Warren F. Toler Funeral Home. Private funeral services will be conducted by Bro. Terry Barnes with burial at the Hood Tipton Cemetery.

The Warren F. Toler Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

<TolerFuneralHome.com>

Tuesday, January 12, 2021 Donald Ray Rawlins, 57

Donald Ray "Duck" Rawlins, age 57, of Turner Avenue in Irvine, passed away Tuesday, January 12, 2021, in Louisville following a long illness.

He was born September 28, 1963 in Madison County and was the son of the late Donald and Ona B. Morris Rawlins. He was a retired employee of Sherwin Williams and an avid pool player. He attended the Green Pastures Worship Center and had lived in Estill County all his life.

Mr. Rawlins is survived by his wife, Tobie Ann Richardson Rawlins; one son,

Justin Ray Rawlins, Estill County; three siblings; and one grandchild, Madison Raylynn Rawlins.

He was preceded in death by his nephew, James Michael Rawlins.

Graveside services were held Friday, January 15, 2021, 1:00 p.m. at the Chestnut Stand Cemetery by Bro. Doug Baker.

Pallbearers were Budd Tucker, Tony Garrett, Keith Tuttle, Chris Rader, Dwight Willis and River Norton.

The Warren F. Toler Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

<TolerFuneralHome.com>

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If you don't have a King, You ain't playing with a full deck

Wednesday, January 20th, 2021 Message
 Bro. Warren Rogers, Retired Baptist Minister

Based on Hebrews 8

After the death of Elvis, it was fairly common to read in the tabloids, "I was a Elvis love child," or "Elvis' ghost is my father." Many claimed to be related, maybe to try and inherit or just wear his name. While this was going on, a Detroit radio station ran an ad that said, "For \$2 and a self-addressed, stamped envelope, you, too, could become a Elvis child." For that sum you would receive an authentic birth certificate from the radio station signed by the radio disc jockey. The certificate claimed it entitled the bearer to appear on any talk show in the country. About 2,000 people sent in their envelope and became a child of the king.

Most everybody knew it was a worthless piece of paper; you could not become an Elvis child because of it. People who got a letter had no legal standing.

Why? Why couldn't you become an Elvis child by purchasing one of those documents? Because the radio station did not have the authority to issue the document in the first place.

It is much easier to become a child of the True King

Let's look at what Hebrews tell us:
 #1 -- What the writer of Hebrews is telling us is that there is now a legal document -- a new covenant, that makes us children of the King. See Hebrews 8:10 & 1 John 3:1

Hebrews 8:6 tells us the ministry Jesus has received is superior to theirs -- founded on better promises. "But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises." What did this new covenant have that the old one did not?

#2 -- That we have a new relationship -- the old covenant was something you were born into -- if your parents were Jewish, you were an Israelite Jew. You were because your family had been Israelites. It wasn't a choice you made -- it was

made for you.

But to become a Christian is something else again. You can't be born into the church. You can be born of Christian parents and brought to church every Sunday of your life, but you cannot be a Christian because your parents were. **John 3:5** says You have to be reborn of the water and the spirit. "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

Things you must do to recognize Jesus as your King:

You must believe that Jesus is Christ, the Son of the Living God.

You've got to recognize you are a sinner in need of forgiveness and repent of your sins.

You need to confess that Jesus is your master, the one who will now run your life.

No one can make that decision for you.

But when you make that decision we can claim as **Romans 8:15** tell us, "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." Hebrews 8:10 says the covenant was made with Israel, so where do we fit in? We were not born Jewish; we were what people in Jesus' day called Gentiles.

Read Ephesians 2:11-13 & 17-19

1 Timothy 6:11-15, "But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. ¹²Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses. ¹³I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession; ¹⁴That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: ¹⁵Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords."

Do you have a King? Are you playing with a full deck?

If you find you have question about who is king of your life, you may call me @ 606-481-0444.

Until next week, may God keep you in his care, Bro. Warren Rogers, Retired Baptist Preacher

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