

THE CHRISTIAN COURIER

December 2022

Editor's note: we are trying to put the Courier email list back together. All we had to start with were a few file fragments. If you would like future editions emailed to you, please send a quick note to CristianCourier1Cup@gmail.com and we will be happy to add you to our growing list!

Here I raise my Ebenezer

I love singing! I always have! Some of my first memories are singing at Church. As a little boy, I loved the songs "It's bound to be the Lord" and "Twilight is Stealing". As I grew up, of course my favorite songs changed. "Heavenly Love" became one of my favorites, but of course there's too many to list them all. Here recently, I have fell in love with the songs that mention Moses and the Lamb, such as "The New Song" and "On Jordans Stormy Banks I Stand".

A couple of years ago, I heard the song "O Thou Fount of Many Blessings" and it has quickly risen in my top ten favorites. Maybe it's just because I'm getting older and more sentimental. But for me it's a song of absolute adoration for God. The thing that confused me about this song was the beginning of verse 2, where it says "Here I raise my Ebenezer". The only Ebenezer I'd ever heard of was the one in Charles Dickens "A Christmas Carol" and his name was Ebenezer Scrouge. So here is an article I found to help explain its meaning.

God commanded singing as worship, and not entertainment. Paul taught, Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord (Colossians 3:16). Since the songs we sing should teach and admonish, we risk vain worship if we sing words that are in conflict with scripture.

The phrase, Here I raise my Ebenezer, is the beginning of the second verse of the familiar hymn, O Thou Fount of Every Blessing. This hymn, written by Robert Robinson in 1758, stresses the joy of Christianity and the Christian's need to rely on the Lord. Robinson chose the phrase, *Here I raise my Ebenezer*, from 1 Samuel 7:12, because it reminds God's people how He delivered Israel from danger.

Chapters 4 through 7 of 1 Samuel describe a series of battles between the Israelites and the Philistines. In an attempt to defeat the Philistines, the Israelites took the ark of the covenant into battle as a sort of good luck charm. To their anguish, however, the Philistines captured the ark and took it back to their pagan temple. God then sent plagues upon the Philistines and caused the idol of their god Dagon to fall over on its face. Fearing God, the Philistines sent the ark back to the Israelites, but continued to fight. As they fought more battles, the prophet Samuel led the Israelites as their last judge. As prophet and judge, Samuel offered sacrifices to God, so that when the Philistines approached, God thundered with a great thunder (1 Samuel 7:10). In the confusion that followed, the Israelites soundly defeated the Philistines.

As a reminder of the great victory God gave to Israel, Samuel took a great stone and raised it as a memorial between Mizpeh and Shen. As he raised it he called the name of it Ebenezer [or stone of help], saying,

Hitherto hath the LORD helped us (1 Samuel 7:12). Whenever the Israelites looked at the stone, they would remember how God had helped them. Unfortunately, the exact site of the stone is unknown today.

When we sing, *Here I raise my Ebenezer*, we are poetically quoting Samuel, who raised the Ebenezer stone to remind the Israelites of God's help for them in their time of trouble. The words fit well with the sentiment expressed in the hymn: O Thou Fount of every blessing, Tune my heart to sing Thy grace; Streams of mercy never ceasing, Call for songs of loudest praise. Teach me ever to adore Thee, May I still Thy goodness prove, While the hope of endless glory Fills my heart with joy and love. Here I raise my Ebenezer, Hither by Thy help I've come; And I hope by Thy good pleasure Safely to arrive at home. The words of the hymn remind us that God is truly the fount of every blessing, Who deserves our worship and our praise. Although the words, Here I raise my Ebenezer sound obscure to us, they do express the sincere attitude of gratitude we should have to God Who is our help in time of trouble. – *Bob Prichard*

While I agree with what the author wrote, I tend to think of it whenever I partake of communion. Samuel built a monument for Israel to look to for hope. And that's what the communion does for me. It gives me a memorial of hope for a future resurrection when Jesus comes to take us home.

In Christian love, Paul Warford

Published by the Pleasant View Church of Christ in Stilwell, OK
Send correspondence to:
The Christian Courier
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Correspondence must be received by the 20th of the month to be included in the next issue, which is published and mailed on the 25th.
Prayers and support are appreciated!

Congregation of the Month



Eastside Church of Christ
280 Oak St
Ringgold, TX 76261
Service: Sunday 10:30 AM
Speaker: Larry Pollan (580)437-2474
Everyone Welcome! Please drop by!
GPS: 33.819095, -97.941879

Would you like to see your church featured here? Drop us a note with the information and let us know!

YUMA

Camp Meeting

March 11-19, 2023

Get ready to be there! Endless fun, fellowship, worship, festivities, and yes, eating! It's going to be a blast, so don't miss it!!! (Pls see pg 9)

Dennis Davis – (928) 503-3709

Who We Are

We are a collection of congregations of the church of Christ who pattern our worship after the New Testament example of the church in the first century, by precisely following the examples in the New Testament. We believe in the authoritative word of God in determining our doctrine and practice.

We do not tie ourselves to any other name but the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 4:10-12). Jesus Christ said, "*Upon this rock* (that is, the fact that He is the Son of God*) I will build my church*" (Matt. 16:18). Since the church belongs to Him, shouldn't it bear His name, as well? The churches certainly did so in the first century. "*The churches of Christ salute you*." (Rom. 16:16).

How We Worship

You will find each of the following activities in our worship each first day of the week:

Singing. No man-made instruments of music are used. As Christians, we are commanded to sing and make melody in our heart (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). We feel it would be an addition to His will if we used instrumental instruments of music in the worship.

Teaching. The teaching is designed to instruct and encourage all of us in the way of righteousness (Acts 5:42; 2 Tim. 2:2).

The Lord's Supper. The communion is observed as it was when our Lord introduced it. The person attending the Lord's Table will give thanks for the bread, break it as the Lord did, and pass it on to the assembly to be eaten. This is done in remembrance of our Lord's broken body (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:23-24). The person attending the Lord's Table will also give thanks for the cup (singular) of the fruit of the vine and pass it on to the assembly to drink. This is done in remembrance of our Lord's shed blood.

Contribution. The collection is taken only on Sunday worship service. Each member gives as he purposes in his heart (1 Cor. 16:1-2).

Prayer. The prayers are designed to praise God and communicate our thoughts to Him.

CAVE JUNCTION, OREGON

April 13,1954

Dear Brother McCay—

Your good letter was received yesterday, so I will attempt to answer it today. We were glad to hear from you and that you brethren were making a gallant fight for the truth. Of course, I knew you would, as you had such a wonderful example (your father before you). We sure will be glad to see you folks anytime you can come. I had a letter from brother and sister Johnston stating they intended to pay us a visit this summer sometime.

As to the information about the individual bread breakers, I went to Alamogordo, New Mexico in January,1917, and found that old Brother Utt of Payden City, Virginia, had been there and held a meeting and had sown that doctrine. After about a six month's fight, we whipped it out. That was the last I heard of that doctrine till in 1928 or 1929 when Brother Tom E. Smith of Healdton, Oklahoma put a piece in "*The Truth*", defending it. Brother Harper was printing it then. Brother Teurman had burned to death and Brother Harper took it over and moved it to Sneeds, Florida.

In June or July, 1930, we had a debate in Lorenzo, Texas, between Brother Bob Musgrave and Brother J. N. Cowan on the cup question. Brother Bob stayed at my house for the debate and told me of an argument he had with Brother Harper and Brother J. D. Phillips, and they were advocating it then.

We had another debate between Brother H. C. Harper and Brother J. N. Cowan in August, 1930, on the cup question. During the debate, Brother Cowan led Brother Harper into admitting he was advocating his doctrine.

When we got back to the brother's house where we were staying, we had a big argument over it. Brother Harper soon hushed, but Brother Homer L. King and I fought round and round over it.

I later moved to New Mexico, and the brethren at Deming, New Mexico, had a debate between Homer L. King and D J. Whitten. Whitten was for breaking the loaf, but was a multiple cups man. Brother King was a one cup man but was an individual bread breaker. Both questions were discussed. I do not remember the exact date of this debate, but I think it was in 1937.

I went to California and met J. Douglas Phillips in a debate on this question in October, 1938.

I had a ½ debate with Brother Waters on the same subject at the Orange Blossom School House in 1940.

Why I say a ½ debate he would not affirm their practice, so I affirmed ours for three nights. I tried to get another out of him since, and he affirmed he could read his practice in the New Testament, and I likewise affirmed I could read mine, but somehow he was too busy or the debate proposition did not suit him.

I am sending you some answers to both Water's and Phillip's tracts. The first time I knew of when those boys refused to commune with us was at the debate at Deming, New Mexico, during the debate between King and Whitten (I think it was in 1937). We had our communion in the morning and they met in the evening. I went out to see just how they did it.

I think this doctrine had a small beginning during the early days of the restoration, but died out until it was renewed by H. C. Harper, J. D. Phillips, Homer King, Homer A. Gay, and Tom. E. Smith. There might have been others, but these are the ones I heard of mostly.

Hoping this will be of some advantage to you and that we may see you face to face soon. May God bless every one of you in your fight for His cause. This is my prayer.

Yours in Christ,

J. S. Bedingfield - Cave Junction, Oregon

Please help support our ministries abroad in Africa and Mexico!

Notes and Letters

Thank you for sending The Christian Courier paper. I enjoy reading the articles and hearing the reports from the different congregations throughout the U.S. and also the reports from congregations that are abroad. I am sending a donation to help with your expenses in printing and mailing the paper. May you continue to do God's will and may God bless you.

In Christian Love, Stephen Shirey
Church of Christ, Douglassville, PA

To whom it may concern,

George Cowger was in Cedaredge, CO at the Happy Hollow Church of Christ for many years. This is a little late, but I would like this put in The Courier. If you have any questions feel free to call.

Thanks in Brotherly Love
Tony & Jamie Schell

ps. We included a check to help with The Courier. We appreciate you keeping it going.

A long-time member and friend of the church, Russell Morris, was diagnosed with lung cancer and has been in the ICU at Tahlequah City Hospital for some time now. He is home now resting. Please keep him and his family in your prayers. Thx!

Dear Christian Courier

Just a small note to let you know we here at the Gleed Church of Christ are doing well. We have two baptisms and both men have been rebaptized. Tom Straton and Jim Sage. They are a joy & blessing to the church. Enclosed is a small check to help with the Courier expenses.

In Christian love, Jim Lamb.

ps. Hope and prayer are with you and your team for taking over the paper.

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I missed getting my letter posted for the first Courier from the Stilwell group. Before I say anything more, I do want to express my deepest appreciation to Ellis from all of the Yuma congregation for just how much all that you and those that were involved in getting the letter posted for so many years. Doing all that needed to be done in order that the Churches could communicate letters from each of us so that we could keep informed on the goings on with all of our family in Christ, it is very important to know the welfare of everyone and to express the health and general life that we aren't privy to. Thank you so much Ellis, Lynell the time and energy spent in gathering the correspondences together, certainly a work heavy project. Thanks to all of the rest that would help in the process, I know how everyone would come and help, I attended one time and tried to help. Thanks now to Paul for the undertaking, like so many before that were willing to do this time-consuming job, but thanks Paul, I know you are a busy man and will be even busier now. I know that you understand the importance of issuing of the Courier, so thank you Paul and all of those that will be helping you.

We are all in pretty good health here in Yuma right now, we've had that horrible cold/flu that has crisscrossed the country but are now on the mend, still some dregs left over, sniffles but generally feeling pretty good. News from Yuma, not much. Susie and I along with my Sister Diane and Bruce went back to Yuma after spending the summer in Alpine, Az. but then Susie and I then travelled to have Thanksgiving with our son in Hemet, California; Diane and Bruce went to be with their son in Missouri. A special prayer for a special young lady that is undergoing Chemo for a very rare cancer, I couldn't begin to explain the type of cancer, but it is Diane and Bruce's son Fred's wife Lynn there in Missouri and they are now heading back to Yuma again. So a prayer for Lynn Cuming and Fred their son.

We got together and have decided on our yearly meeting and the date is in March as usual beginning Saturday March 11 through Sunday the 19th of March. So we would like to invite any and all that would like to join us during that time frame, we would be honored to have you. We are a very small congregation and have no facilities to accommodate in living quarters, but we do have spaces for trailers or motor homes. It is usually very nice weather as those that have attended know. We have had some rather warm climate at a few of our meetings, so we try to have it as early in March as possible.

Dennis Davis
Yuma, AZ

WE NEED Your Help

Articles to print

Letters from congregations

Updates on baptisms, births and passings

Dates on weddings and funerals

Details on Church Meetings

Updates on prayer requests

Help us keep our Bulletin Board up to date please

Want to be *Congregation of the Month*?

Send us a picture of your church house, and maybe an elder or two, congregation name, contact phone#, address, worship service times and GPS coordinates.
Traveling members need this information to be able to visit. ** We need to visit more! **

Catching Up

With Bro. Otto Alvarez (Old Mexico Mission)

July 7, 2022

It is a pleasure for me to be able to write to you hoping that when you receive my letter all of you are in good health physically as well as spiritually. Many thanks for this valuable participation in this work of predication of gospel. Thank you for your fellowship with me in this work of the Lord in Mexico. I inform that during the month of May again I had the opportunity of to visit the brothers in Cardenas Mexico for have a series of preaching during 4 days (Thursday – Sunday) that the brothers had programmed. In this small city it is very difficult so that people listen to the gospel but thanks to the Lord we had several interested people and we think that the Church can grow. I also comment that in the city Matamoros we are making a strong evangelization work and we had baptisms. Thank you for your prayers. Maybe one day you come to visit brothers in these places.

Your brother in Christ - Otto Alvarez and Mariela

July 23, 2022 - Brothers,

I greet you cordially in the name of Christ, hoping that your family and faithful in the faith have excellent health. I comment that during if finishes it week of June we visit some brothers in Mexico and when returning home Mariela and I feel sick. We visit to doctor and I diagnose us with Covid 19 and during two weeks we remained at home under quarantine. Thanks to God and the Lord Jesus Christ we are already recovered of the health and working among the brothers are again. During the month of August we have plans to preach the gospel in several areas of Mexico and some persons of them possibly obey and be baptized.

Brother Wade; Thank you for their prayers and participation to preach the Gospel in Mexico.

Evangelists in Spanish - Family Alvarez



August 27, 2022 - Dear brothers in Christ,

I sent them a strong and the desires that the Lord blesses to all moment in your lives. Thank you for your participation and help in the preaching work in different areas of Mexico. I comment that I am more good of my health after the problem of the Covid that during several days I affect, but in this moment are God (good?)

Reports for work between people speak Spanish.

Brothers: During this month works in are of San Luis and work with two churches because there was a person sick (he lives the whole in seat of wheels [wheelchair]) and desire that by present during this baptism and that of this wife. Is very difficult to baptize a person in seat of wheels but thanks to the Lord we are able to make it in a river. Present several members of the congregation were during the baptism. Also during this days we achieve that some evangelists were present and study every day to prepare better in the work of the Lord. I am also making plan to visit other areas of Mexico the contacts that I have with some peoples religious interested in the truth of the Gospel. Again; thank you in the name of the Lord for your participation in this difficult work that the Lord assignment to save souls.

Your brother in Christ – Otto

September 29, 2022 - Brothers in Christ,

By means of this simple letter I send you greetings hoping at the moment you read it you may be enjoying good health in the Lord. Many thanks for this valuable help and thanks for your fellowship with me in this work of the Lord. I inform that I had the opportunity to visit brothers in several places during this month and we had several meetings of family studies to teach this is very important to make it to have spiritual growth. All the brothers accepted and I working so that they practices it continued among the brothers. I also comment that I have plans of visiting the brothers in Green River Mexico because there a family that want to be baptized and me invite so that I help and preach during several days in November. The brothers in Guatemala talk me on the phone and they invite me to visit because are some doctrinal problems in one church and they request my help for to study with the brothers. I have the trust that the Lord permit me to possibly during December, I request your prayers to the Lord for this necessity and so that I have economic means to remain during one month. Send some pictures of meetings of studies with the brothers in the houses.

Your brother in Christ - Otto and Mariela Alvarez

October 30, 2022 - Appreciate Brother Ellis:

I greet you cordially in the name of the Christ hoping that when this letter arrives enjoying good health. I am very thankful for your fellowship with me in this work of the Lord.

The Christian Courier: I inform that during this month of October we had activities in the evangelization work in different parts of Mexico. In the city of Pachuca we had studies during several days and some persons were baptized. This church this growing and it is necessary to continue working in the evangelization and edification of the new members. We also had studies during for day in the church of Cardenas City and the brothers decided to rent a local to continue meeting in the city. Several brothers of congregations of the center of Mexico are making plans to meet in December in (Green River City) to be known among the brothers and to have 3 days of studies. This is very important to have communion among the brothers of different areas. The brothers in Guatemala are requesting that we visit to help them I the preaching and edification in the churches and I am plans if the Lord permit us to make. Thank you in the name of the Lord Jesus for your participation in this work of preaching of the Gospel and edification of all the faithful brothers and you are direct part of this work. {Matt 28: 19, 20} I send pictures of new church and baptism in Pachuca city.

Your brother in Christ - Otto and Mariela Alvarez











Bulletin Board

Baptisms

Tom Stratton	Gleed, WA
Jim Sage	Gleed, WA

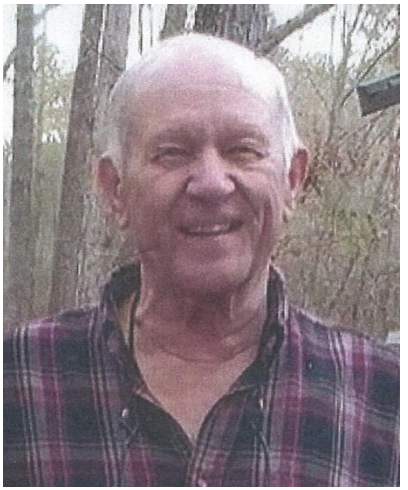
Meetings

Yuma Camp Meeting	Mar 11-19, 2023	Yuma, AZ

Those in need of our prayers

Wayne Queen		Broken leg
Troy Mooney		Knee replacement
John Rawlins	Ottawa, Canada	Needs heart transplant
John Kombo	Nakuru, Kenya	Diabetes, enlarged heart, heart attacks
Wilkister Silvester	Gaita, Tanzania	Malaria
Agrippina Silvester	Gaita, Tanzania	Severe back problems
Linda Camp	Broken Bow, OK	Cancer
Vicki Camp Perrin	Broken Bow, OK	Cancer
Carolyn Queen	Broken Bow, OK	Back pain
Debbie Wilkerson	Cedaredge, CO	Fighting cancer
Billy Martin	Citrus City, AZ	Fighting cancer
Mike Wilcher	Citrus City, AZ	Fighting cancer
Pauline Holloway	Gleed, WA	Uterine & cervical cancer
Ilene Thrush	Gleed, WA	Several strokes & heart issues
Otto Alvarez	Harlingen, TX	Dangerous travels, two angioplasties
Mariela Alvarez	Harlingen, TX	Dangerous travels, thyroid issues
Jackie McCay	Via Lorenzo, TX	Recovery from gall bladder removal
Jessica Chastain	Stilwell, OK	Health issues
Reba Morris	Stilwell, OK	Lupus
Russell Morris	Stilwell, OK	Effects of stroke, lung cancer
Retha Morris	Stilwell, OK	Fighting Parkinson's disease
Darletta Spencer	Stilwell, OK	Cancer
Tony Brister	Yuma, AZ	Chemo & fighting cancer
Fred Cummings	Yuma, AZ	Congestive heart failure
Dennis Davis	Yuma, AZ	Back & leg issues

In Loving Memory



George Henry Cowger, Jr.

George Henry Cowger, Jr. was born July 25, 1931, in Lynchburg, Virginia.

He served in the United States Marine Corps in Lynchburg, then enrolled in Virginia Tech at Blacksburg, Virginia to study agriculture. There he was attracted to the United States Air Force for his future, to "Soar in those magnificent flying machines", as he liked to say of his flying career. George was with the 393rd Bomb Squadron stationed in Roswell, New Mexico, where he met and married Barbara Chadwick Cowger. We were married for 63 years.

George retired from the USAF to buy a small farm in New Mexico. He was soon attracted to flying again and served as Captain for Eastern Airlines. We lived at two different cattle farms in Virginia: Brandy Station and Racoon Ford. Here our children spent most of their school years. We went to Seattle, Washington, and then to Conyers, Georgia where we owned & operated *Magpie's Fancy*, a stained-glass business. George retired from Eastern Airlines, and we moved to Colorado where we bought a sheep ranch. We spent many happy years there.

I believe George was a man who thought on these things from the Biblical quotation of Philippians 4:8: "Think about whatever is true, honorable, right, pure, lovely, commendable, and praiseworthy." I think this describes my husband truthfully. He was idealistic, upright, and expected others to be so, as well.

George Henry Cowger, Jr. died at home, peacefully and of natural causes December 19, 2021, at 90 years of age. Earlier that evening we had been on a pleasant drive with Roger and Leslie enjoying Christmas lights. When we got home, George and I had a nice talk about family and friends. I told him how I treasured the good talks we often had together.

George was a true Christian. He was a loving husband, a good father, and devoted to our family and friends. He was talented, energetic,

thoughtful. He was proud to have served his country.

George Henry Cowger, Jr.
Aviator, Rancher, and True Christian

George is survived by his wife, Barbara Joan Chadwick Cowger, and his 4 children, Leslie Grant, Jeanne Jenkins, Molly Hammons, and Chadwick Chaffin Cowger.

He has 10 grandchildren and 8 great-grandchildren. Grandchildren are Jake and Jacqueline from the Grant family, Sibyl, Erin, Tyler and Ethan from the Terry Jenkins family, Jaimie Lynn and Barbara Evelyn from the Hammons family, and Ike and Luke from the Chad Cowger family. Great-grandchildren are Junaleigh Grant, Ava and Owen Pearce, Wyatt and Harper Jenkins, and Emma, Kinsley and Bennet Jenkins.



Jaetta Studer Loftis

Jaetta Studer Loftis, 92, of Lubbock, TX, and formerly of Lorenzo, TX, entered Heaven's gates on Friday, November 25, 2022. She was born July 13, 1930 in Seymour, TX to Howard and Mary Arvie Studer. She married the love of her life, Jimmie Ray Loftis on July 28, 1945 in Seymour. They shared a life together for 75 years before his passing in 2020.

Jaetta was a fulltime homemaker and found great joy in taking care of her family. She was also a substitute teacher in Lorenzo for many years. She was a long-time member of Westside Church of Christ in Lorenzo. She loved spending time with her family and being involved in the church.

She is survived by four daughters, Cynthia Diane Hoffman, Rebecca Sue Forsman, Carolyn Ray Hatter and husband Keith, and Sharon Jo Moore and husband James all of Lubbock; her son, Howard Ray Loftis and wife Sharon of Lubbock; 18 grandchildren, multiple great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her husband, her parents and four sisters, Frankie Jo Goodwin, Shirley Beatrice French, Reba Jane White and Mary Olene Howe.