

## KEAM ROAD CHURCH OF CHRIST - WEEKLY NEWS BULLETIN

20 Keam Road, Baysville, East London

South Africa, 5201

P.O. Box 958, East London, 5200

Tel: (043) 721 0398

E-mail: [cockel@telkomsa.net](mailto:cockel@telkomsa.net)

6 May 2007

### *"Why Don't You Have Music in Your Church?"*

It is a rather curious thing, is it not? The Churches of Christ sing acappella in their worship assemblies, that is, they sing without instrumental accompaniment. While this makes us appear rather odd or eccentric, it actually reflects the most ancient practice of Christians because the first Christians did not use instrumental music either.

In the first century musical instruments were inexpensive, portable, easy to play and widely used. They were used by the Levitical band during the offering of sacrifices to God at the temple in the Old Testament (2Chronicles 29:20-31) and during the time of Jesus. The pagan temples and banquet were filled with the sounds of musical instruments. Both Jewish and pagan religious festivals were celebrated with songs accompanied by harps, lyres, and other instruments. Instrumental music was a regular feature of Jewish and pagan worship assemblies.

But the worship assemblies of New Testament Christians did not use musical instruments, and the church continued that practice until the tenth century. For almost 1,000 years after the death of Christ, Christians worshipped God without instrumental music. As a result, church music came to be known as acappella music, that is, music according to the chapel or ecclesiastical music. It was music which only used the human voice in the praise of God.

Why did early Christians only sing when playing an instrument was part of their own religious heritage? Ephesians 5:18-20 helps us answer this question:

Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit, as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts, giving thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 5:18 reflects a Spirit-oriented understanding of worship by the imperative: be filled with the Spirit. We are to be filled with the Spirit as we speak to one another, as we sing and make melody, as we give thanks, as we submit to each other. Our worship in song and thanksgiving is an expression of the fullness of God's Spirit within us. The Holy Spirit is the one by whom worship is offered to God by the people of God. Worship is spiritual, that is, worship is offered to God through his Spirit (Philippians 3:3).

#### ASSEMBLY TIMES

Sunday Morning 9:00  
Bible Study and  
Sunday School

Sunday Morning 10:00  
Worship Assembly

Sunday Evening 18:30  
Worship Assembly

Wednesday Ladies 10:00  
Class

Wednesday Evening 19:00  
Bible Study

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#### LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE

Mike Baisley  
Cell: 083 500 7271

Braam Le Roux  
Cell: 072 195 6104

Hugh Granger  
Cell: 082 290 1223

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#### EVANGELIST AND BIBLE TEACHER

Bill Elliott  
Cell: 084 727 8853

Email:

[Bill@ElliottEnterprises.com](mailto:Bill@ElliottEnterprises.com)

In contrast to whether one should worship on the Samaritan mountain or on Mt. Zion in Jerusalem, Jesus announces that worship in the new age will not be associated with a place, but with a person. Worship will be according to the nature of God himself. Since God is Spirit, everyone who worships him must worship him in Spirit and in Truth (John 4:20-24). This worship focuses on the personal relationship between God and his people which surpasses the temple. Jesus himself is the new temple (John 2:19-21).

Now the people of God will worship God through his Holy Spirit and through Jesus Christ (who is the truth, John 14:6). The worship of God will no longer focus on sensual elements such as holy cities, sacrifice, incense, special priests and temples, but now the worship of God will arise from the fountain of living water that wells up inside the people of God through the Holy Spirit (cf. John 4:13-14, 7:37-39) on the ground of Jesus Christ who is God's Truth (his glorification in John 7:39). We worship the personal God who is present to us through his Holy Spirit and in the truth of his Son's grace. While the law (type) was given through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ (John 1:17). We no longer worship by the typological shadows of the old covenant, but we worship in the reality of God's truth through his Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 5:19 also contains a phrase which may reflect a typological understanding of music. Paul links together two verbs, singing and making melody, which are sometimes found together in the Psalms concerning temple worship. They allude to the Levitical choir and band (cf. Psalms 68:25). They sang and played on harps to the Lord (Psalms 33:3; 144:9; cf. Psalms 21:13, 27:6, 56:8, 104:33; 105:2; 108:1). Israel made melody to the Lord on harps in the temple (Psalms 33:2,3; 71:22; 98:5; 144:9; 147:7, 149:3). Paul's language stands in explicit contrast with the language of the Psalms. While the Psalms envision a temple service with a Levitical choir and band, Paul envisions singing which arises out of the playing of the heart rather than the harp. In contrast to playing the strings of a harp, we are to be filled with the Spirit by praising God with the strings of our hearts. Instead of sing and play an instrument to the Lord as it appears in the Psalms, Paul writes sing and play your heart to the Lord.

Early Christians believed that the harps in the Psalms were typological of the heart in new covenant worship. While the temple worship played on the harp and used instrumental voices, Christians play the heart and use living voices. When we remember how integral the musical instruments were to temple worship, along with incense and animal sacrifices, it is most likely that Christians did not use instrumental music because of its association with the temple.

We no longer pray to a holy place like the temple (cf. 1Kings 8:33, 35, 41, 48) because we worship God anywhere through the Spirit. We no longer offer animal sacrifices because Christ is our sacrifice. We no longer offer incense to aid our prayers because our prayers are our incense. We no longer play with the harp to aid our singing because our living voices are our praise to God. It may be that early Christians would no more return to instrumental music than they would return to animal sacrifices and the offering of incense.

In contrast to temple sanctuaries, Christian worship is rooted in the indwelling Spirit through whom we have access to the Father by Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:18-22). We are the temple of God. We are living sacrifices (Romans 12:1-2). We offer the sacrifice of praise with our lips (Hebrews 13:15). Anything which detracts from this central idea or diverts our attention violates the fundamental principle of Christian worship; we worship God by the Spirit of God who lives in our hearts. Our worship must arise out of our hearts and be offered with our lips as we offer God our bodies as a living sacrifice.

Given this understanding of Christian worship and the typological character of temple music, instrumental music is fundamentally out of character with the nature of Christian worship, just like holy places (a temple), a priestly tribe, animal sacrifices, election by physical birth, and incense are out of place. Instrumental music has the kind of typological meaning that incense, holy places, and animal sacrifices have. Just as we no longer offer incense to help our prayers, and we no longer pray toward a special holy place (like Jerusalem), neither do we any longer worship with mechanical instruments.

John Mark Hicks  
 Professor of Theology  
 Lipscomb University  
[JohnMark.Hicks@lipscomb.edu](mailto:JohnMark.Hicks@lipscomb.edu)  
<http://johnmarkhicks.faithsite.com>  
<http://www.123jesus.com/Sermons/IM.htm>

### WEEKLY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

#### **TONIGHT 6<sup>th</sup> - TEA AFTER EVENING ASSEMBLY**

A reminder to all ladies of the congregation to bring the usual plates of eats. Thank You.

**Ladies on duty: Team 1. (NB: Please come early to help prepare the fellowship hall).**

#### **TUESDAY 8<sup>th</sup>**

Singing cancelled on Tuesday.

#### **WEDNESDAY 9<sup>th</sup>**

**LADIES BIBLE CLASS - At 10:00** - Lesson by Dot Lieberum, tea will be hosted by Gwen & Petro.

**MIDWEEK BIBLE STUDY - At 19:00**

#### **FRIDAY 11<sup>th</sup>**

**YOUNG ADULTS – At 19:00 at the building**  
**Games and Pizza Evening.** Bring a cooldrink and a pizza.

#### **YOUTH - At 19:00 at the building**

Travelling Supper organised by Jan and Erika Roberts.

#### **Scripture Reading & Sermon Topic Today**

**AM: Colossians 2:13-17 "What about instrumental music?" Part 1**

**PM: Colossians 3:14-17 "What about instrumental music?" Part 2**

#### **PRIVILEGED TO SERVE**

<b>TODAY 6/5/2007</b>	
<b>SONG LEADER</b>	AM - M. Baisley PM - M. Baisley
<b>OPENING PRAYER</b>	AM - J. le Roux PM - Q. le Roux
<b>LORD'S TABLE</b>	AM - N. Lentz PM - B. le Roux
<b>SCRIPTURE READING</b>	AM - Q. le Roux PM - A. le Roux
<b>PREACHING</b>	AM - B. Elliott PM - B. Elliott
<b>CLOSING PRAYER</b>	AM - I. Engelbrecht PM - N. Nyemba
<b>FLOWERS</b>	Tracy Burke
<b>NEXT WEEK 13/5/2007</b>	
<b>SONG LEADER</b>	AM - Q. le Roux PM - Q. le Roux
<b>OPENING PRAYER</b>	AM - I. Engelbrecht PM - M. Baisley
<b>LORD'S TABLE</b>	AM - Jason le Roux PM - N. Lentz
<b>SCRIPTURE READING</b>	AM - N. Lentz PM - Jason le Roux
<b>PREACHING</b>	AM - B. Elliott PM - B. Elliott
<b>CLOSING PRAYER</b>	AM - S. Granger PM - Justin le Roux
<b>FLOWERS</b>	Brenda Baisley

### **LAST WEEK'S ATTENDANCE FIGURES**

Sunday AM Assembly	<b>87</b>
Sunday PM Assembly	<b>58</b>
Wednesday PM Bible Study	<b>66</b>

#### **BENEVOLENCE**

**For next week please provide:**  
**Soya Mince 200gr / Sugar 1kg**

#### **PRAYER REQUESTS**

Please consider the following in your prayers; Wilson & Tippy Crossley, Milly Crossley, Robbie Walters, Neville and Myra Lentz, and Brad Johnson.

#### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

##### **LADIES MEETING**

There will be a short meeting at the front of the auditorium after this morning assembly for all the ladies. This is to discuss some things for Ladies Day – please make an effort to be there.

##### **CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**

There will be a congregational meeting at the church building at **17:45 tonight**. If you have items for the agenda that you would like raised please put your name on the form and the items that you would like raised on the list on the board in the foyer.

It is requested that **ALL members** of the congregation attend.

##### **CONGRATULATIONS**

The church congratulates **Hugh and Cecile Kirby** who got married yesterday at Inkwenkwezi. May God bless your marriage as you continue to walk in His footsteps.

##### **BIRTHDAYS**

Paddy Robson & Dulcie le Roux	<b>9 May</b>
Celeste Gordon	<b>10 May</b>
Daniel Walters	<b>12 May</b>

**Happy Birthday, enjoy your special day!**

##### **BULLETIN CONTRIBUTIONS**

Until further notice **Pearl Nyemba** will continue to do the bulletin as Pam Share is away during the week for the next few weeks. Pearl's contact details are; e-mail: [pearl.nyemba@eskom.co.za](mailto:pearl.nyemba@eskom.co.za), phone **0844707010**. Please send announcements no later than 16:00 every Friday. Thank You.

