



Faith Connections

United in Faith Helping
People In Need

Volume 4, Issue 2
February 2021

Our Mission: Serve this community † Revitalize the Church † Celebrate Christian Unity

Together We Are Better

Together, as Christians, we can go a long way to fulfilling God's call in our world. In order to do this, we need the power of the Holy Spirit. In Acts 1:8, Jesus told the disciples that they would receive God's power through the Holy Spirit, and in John 17:1-11, Jesus prays to the Father to send his power to all of Christianity through the Holy Spirit. Our definition of power is different from God's definition of power. God's definition of power is the ability to carry out a purpose -- in this case, his work in the world. By coming together, we have even greater power.

The prayer that Jesus prayed in John 17:1-11 is known as the High Priestly prayer because Jesus offers prayers for himself, his apostles and followers -- just like the High Priest offered prayers for people in the temple, and just like I do when I deliver the Prayers of the People during worship services. Something else that Jesus prayed was for unity. After his Ascension, the disciples were united in prayer. Unity exists through prayer. Jesus prayed for unity, and the disciples prayed together to draw upon the only source of power that they had before they received the Holy Spirit -- prayer.

Jesus also prays for everyone who does his work in the world. He prays for us because he knows that the world will reject our message. The unity Jesus prays for will protect us from the grand predator -- Satan. Our unity protects us -- not some doctrinal purity or statements and not theology or worship. When Jesus prays for glory, he is asking for God's presence to be felt throughout the world through our words, thoughts, and deeds. Our purpose on Earth is to glorify God. We must never give up in the face of persecution because Jesus never gave up, even when he was on the cross. When he said, "It is finished!", he was giving a strong affirmation that the work God gave him to do during his time on Earth was now finished.

True life is all about knowing God and knowing Jesus. It is centered on our relationship with God and that relationship comes through knowing Jesus. When Jesus prays for us, he is after something deep in us and in the heart of God.

Jesus did not pray that all believers would agree. The source of our unity is not in human structures or denominations such as Anglican, United, Baptist, Roman Catholic, etc. It is in Jesus Christ. Our unity gives us strength in difficult times for there really is strength in numbers. It reminds me of some of the words in the song "United We Stand". It was recorded in the late 1960s by a group called the Brotherhood of Man. The words I am thinking of are:

For united we stand
Divided we fall
And if our backs should ever be against the wall
We'll be together, together, you and I

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Jesus' High Priestly prayer proclaims our hope and certainty. Jesus and God have glorified each other. Jesus has come from the Father. We are embedded in Christ as Christ is embedded in the Father. We belong to God and are on our way to unity with him and with each other. Unfortunately in our world, divisions can and do happen and often with negative consequences. God gives himself to the godless so that he can receive them into divine communion through atonement and we should do the same. We are to be one with each other just like Jesus, God, and the Holy Spirit are one with each other.

When we divide people into categories of race, religion, sexual orientation or where they live, problems can occur. One only has to think of the Holocaust or genocides, like those that took place in Bosnia, Rwanda, Darfur and other places to see that this is true. It is also true in our own back yard. For example, the murder of George Floyd took place right before our eyes. So did the murder of Breonna Taylor, which was based on a false request for a no-knock search warrant. The sad tragedy is that the person the police were looking for was already in jail. Yet, no one was held accountable. The last example is the insurrection that occurred at the Capital in Washington D.C.

Yet, when we come together as one body, our prayers and deeds are a very potent force to be reckoned with. We speak to God when we pray and in return, he touches, embraces, shapes, and changes us through the gifts he gives us. We are to use these gifts wisely and for the benefit of the world. Sometimes, we have to ask for help but when we work together, we glorify God with integrity, with devotion, and through service and the words we speak.

As children of God, we are united in one faith in a living God who has revealed himself to us in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. We are united in faith in Christ whose words fill us with faith. We are also united in faith in the Holy Spirit whose presence guides us through life. Although we are one in faith, we have to put that faith into action, especially by being one in service. It is in serving that our faith becomes real. When we serve one another, we serve Christ. He is the inspiration in our lives. He is the living example of faith in action. He is the Lord, the Master of our lives, and the heartbeat of our faith; that faith becomes real when we go forth as one in service.

For most people, life is about getting the most stuff and that expresses the consumer mentality that our society has today. Unfortunately, this emphasis is empty, because no matter how much we have or what we buy, there's someone out there with more stuff and better stuff. If we live for stuff and prestige, our life is hollow, empty, and meaningless.

We live in a community in which our churches have divergent/opposing theologies. Yet, we should be able to exist and stimulate each other when we focus on our relationship with Jesus Christ. Changes in the practices and theologies of our churches do not necessarily mean that what has been important to us must be abandoned. We have a place for ideas and concerns that are different and we are able to hold the biblical and Christian principles and the reality of a broken and damaged world in a dynamic tension from which all sides should be able to witness to the love and saving power of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is at the core of our Christian Faith.

Blessings!

Mel

Coming Soon!

Because of COVID, we had to suspend our in-person, quarterly membership information meetings. We are excited to announce that we will be resuming those meetings via Zoom. We will be announcing dates and times soon. Follow us on Facebook and look for more information in upcoming newsletters.



Collaboration Between Churches United and Project Now

At the January 28, 2021, our board of directors agreed to proceed with a collaboration with Project Now to provide transitional housing to those in need. Through this collaboration, we will continue to run Winnie's Place Shelter and serve women and children who are escaping from domestic violence and human trafficking. Churches United will set the parameters for who is accepted into our housing and Winnie's Place will remain an important part of our ministries. Clients will be assigned a Project Now caseworker to assist them transition into permanent housing. Initially, we will be making some necessary upgrades to our housing units. In the long run, this partnership will reduce expenses for Churches United, generate new revenue, and increase opportunities for funding through grants. Our target date for accepting new clients through this collaborative is March 1, 2021.

Project NOW

Community Action Agency



Thank You!

To those churches who
responded to our
emergency request,
thank you.

We are grateful for your
support. Your donations
will have a significant and
lasting impact for those in
need in the Quad City Area.



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Give Today to Churches United

Online at <http://www.cuqca.org/donate.php>

Call us at (563) 332-5002

Mail or drop off your gift:
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2535 Tech Drive Suite 205
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THANKYOU!

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Support CUQCA by designating us as your charity and by purchasing items from our Wish List.

https://smile.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/l/I9QO2R6L5908/ref=nav_wishlist_lists_4?_encoding=UTF8&type=wishlist



Volunteers Needed

Do you have a heart that wants to help those in need? Do you feel like God is nudging you to do something but you're not sure what to do?

Have you considered volunteering for Churches United?

We need volunteers who are willing to assist at our shelter, on our committees, and in our hunger ministries.

For more information, contact Betsy Vanausdeln at (563) 332-5002 or by email at bvanausdeln@cuqca.org.

Welcome!



GREATER HARVEST DELIVERANCE
MINISTRIES COGIC,
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