



Allen Church
Worship Ministry Associate

As fall begins, so begins our time for Worship Center renovations. While we transition temporarily to the gym for our Sunday corporate worship, our corporate worship will continue consistently. Moving to a different location will assuredly grow our anticipation to return to the Worship Center that God has graciously provided for us here. Yet, God reminds us from His Word that a specific location is not what He seeks in true worshipers.

In John 4, Jesus encounters the Samaritan woman at the well and gives us an important lesson on the relationship between worship and physical location. The woman, perceiving Jesus' prophetic abilities, asks Him a pressing theological question. She desires to know, as a Samaritan, where the true center of worship was: Samaria or Jerusalem (v. 20)? Jesus, surprisingly, answers the question by saying neither location was superior for worship (v. 21). In fact, He goes on to explain that "the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him" (v. 23).

What does Jesus mean when He says the Father is seeking worshipers who worship Him in "spirit and truth"? There are various interpretations of Jesus' statement, but I believe the surrounding context makes clear that Jesus is continuing to make an authoritative claim about the location of worship. In other words, the kind of worshipers the Father is seeking are worshipers who are not dependent on any one physical location, whether that is Samaria, the temple in Jerusalem, or anywhere else. Since God is spirit (not bound to a single location; v. 24), the Father is seeking worshipers who are not bound to any single location.

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Wherever God is present by His Spirit, worship is not only possible but also sought after by the Father (see Psalm 139:1-12). This is a profound change from the Old Testament, where worship was centered around the tabernacle and temple. Now that God has taken on flesh (literally "tabernacled"; John 1:14) in Jesus, worship must center around Jesus.

As for worshiping the Father "in truth," I believe Jesus is making the claim that worship must be centered around Himself. John's Gospel makes clear that Jesus is the Truth of Scripture realized (John 1:14, 17; 14:6). The Father is seeking worship that is profoundly Christ-centered, where all the promises of God are yes in Him (2 Cor 1:20). Therefore, worship that the Father seeks is not tied to any single place, but to any place where His Spirit resides, to magnify Christ.

As we move our gathering place for corporate worship, remember that the worship God seeks is worship that magnifies Christ, no matter the physical location. As God's people gather weekly, God's presence powerfully sustains His saints through His Word. May Christ be magnified in our worship this fall as we worship the Father in spirit and truth.

In Christ,
Allen Church

August Birthdays

August 1: Sandra McCormack, Wendell Hawes, Rosalie Howard, Bill Earls
August 3: Jason Leverett, Joanna Still
August 4: Adella Pyle
August 5: Ginny Donnell, Helen Heilmann, Jan Wilt, Sean Dreisbach, Marcia Littlefield
August 6: Jenny Barham, Julia Bippus, Diane Wright, Lauren Lovett
August 7: Tom Forshee
August 8: Dawn Campbell, Glen Laffoon
August 9: Jarred Cook
August 10: Andy Dressel
August 11: Andrew Gowans
August 13: Tami Chesser
August 14: Joyce Wolfe
August 15: Ron Arnold
August 16: Mike Jones
August 18: Ken Cooper
August 20: Kim Boyd
August 21: Becky Wiley
August 22: Ed Wiley, Melodie Oliver
August 23: Clarrice Campbell, Emma Clark, Hudson Neher
August 25: Bailee Blankenbaker
August 26: Justin Baird, Hayden Williams
August 27: Bella Bruce
August 28: Bill Croley
August 29: Christopher Embry
August 30: Doris Barriger, Dustin Bruce
August 31: Allie Clark, Johnnie Stewart, Steve Neher

September Birthdays

September 2: Martha Martin
September 3: Stephanie Morgan-White, Eli Pellum, Joseph Wilkerson, Ruby Armstrong
September 4: Jerry English, Grant Billings
September 5: Maxwell Lovett, Eugene Thomas
September 6: Randy Embry
September 7: Kevin Aker
September 8: Emily Smith
September 10: Alan Laffoon, Mike Manwell, Dollie Smith
September 11: Doug Harrington
September 13: Bill Rogers
September 14: Bethany Veltman
September 15: Tammy Hatcher
September 16: Miriam McGalliard, Randall Embry
September 17: Wilson Durairaj, Jenson Immanuel
September 18: Chelsea Smith
September 19: Jan Watts
September 20: Betty Jones, Lane Graham
September 21: Becky Justice
September 23: Kay Barnes, Marion Hahn, Janet Dennis
September 24: Hannah Heffley
September 25: Bob Brock, Mary Hayman, Eli Switzer
September 26: Alice Ryan
September 27: Tim Snider
September 28: Neil Willsey
September 29: Elmo Martin, Bill Salyers
September 30: Gina Salyers, Sue Boyd

Giving Updates as of 7/13/25

Year to Date Budget: \$1,705,538

Received to Date: \$1,601,476

Difference from Budget: (\$104,062)