



**COLLBRAN CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH UCC**

ANNUAL TURKEY DINNER

NOVEMBER 15, 2014 IN THE DINING ROOM

SERVICE BEGINS AT 11:30PM TO 1:30PM

November 2014

**Collbran Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
PO Box 160
Collbran Colorado 81624**

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Mobile: 970-274-6846
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THE PROBLEM WITH A POP-CULTURE CHRIST

By Billy Kangas

Recently, an image has been circulating as the latest example of a "relevancy fail" by an evangelical group.

They seem to have mistakenly switched the text up in a flyer that seeks to encourage more prayer by presenting a conversation with Jesus as a series of text messages on an iPhone. Instead of portraying a Christian who gives Jesus' pleading attempts at conversation the cold shoulder, it depicts Jesus as the one who is indifferent to the pleas for intimacy.

It's funny. It's sad. It's not all that surprising. Evangelical churches are notorious for trying to grab people's attention through pop-culture, either through emulation or parody. The results are often groan worthy.

Like many in the Church, I have participated willingly in the baptism of pop-culture for the sake of outreach and evangelism. I have been in bands that made "Christian Rock," I have worn Jesus t-shirts. I even have a couple of the obligatory Hebrew and cross tattoos.

I understand why people do this stuff. They want the message of Jesus to reach people where they are.

The problem is that in the context of American evangelicalism, where religious images are often absent, pop-culture representations of the faith can become the formative symbols and images that a faith community encounters. People begin to actually see Jesus primarily through the lens of materialism and pop-culture, both of which by their very nature are constantly in flux. As a result, evangelical faith becomes faddish, salvation is a style and praise is a phase.

When the Church employs superficial symbols to communicate the Gospel, the Gospel can only take hold of people on a superficial level.

When the Church employs superficial symbols to communicate the Gospel, the Gospel can only take hold of people on a superficial level. Jesus is actually seen as a clingy friend in the image who texts you all the time, mediocre mimic-rock defines your view of who God is, and one's creed is only as deep as a sneaker slogan.

In short: A slogan-branded faith can't communicate the depth of the mystery of Jesus' life, death and resurrection. Perhaps this is part of the reasons there has been such a mass exodus of evangelical children after they graduate from youth group.

Historical Christian symbols, on the other hand, are primordial and polyvalent: Flesh, blood, light, water, birth, death, eating, drinking, hunger and thirst. These symbols are not seeking to emulate the ephemeral but they encompass our entire existence.

The symbols not only contain a wealth of meaning, they contain us. They dig deep into who we are as people in our deepest depths, in our hopes and fears. They are the building blocks of poetry, romance and drama. They have layers of meaning and depths that require a lifetime to divulge. They captivate rather than entertain. In many places these images have been lost, and I believe they need to be reclaimed.

I don't say this in order to look down on churches that are trying to appeal to the wider culture. Rather, I highlight this to underscore the dangers of attempting to fight church decline and irrelevance with the sugar coated sheen of "cool." It's a rush while it lasts, but as trends turn with changing fashion season, you may find that Christ has been discarded along with yesterday's trends.

What I would like to offer are a few ways to explore the rich heritage of symbols that have been lost by many today. The list is by no means comprehensive, but it does offer a few steps forward toward the recovery of a richer Christian imagination.

PRAY WITH SCRIPTURE, LITURGY AND HYMNS

The church has thousands of years of poetic reflections about who Jesus is the Bible as well as in hymns and prayers. Taking time each day to reflect on a Psalm, the text of a hymn or a prayer in an ancient liturgy can often be an illuminating and inspiring experience.

Generations from the past can often offer insights into our contemporary faith in ways we never would have thought about. Giving them a space to voice their own articulation of the faith is one of the greatest ways to explore the rich poetic heritage of the Christian tradition.

RECOGNIZE THE SACRED IN THE EVERYDAY

One of the things I have been most inspired by in Church history is the ways in which everyday things were often viewed as sacred moments. When a meal was blessed, it was with an awareness that eating and drinking were symbols of communion with God. When a light was turned on, it was often accompanied by prayers reflecting on how Christ was the light of the world. I can't emphasize enough how powerful this kind of reflection can be.

CREATE SPACE FOR SILENCE

It's no secret that we live in a noisy world. Part of the reason the creating of a pop-culture Jesus is so tempting is because many in the Church realize that they are competing for the attention of people who are constantly bombarded with images and sounds designed to overwhelm the senses. The fact that there is rarely a moment of stillness in our lives means that we rarely give images and symbols the space they need to settle deeply within us.

Whether we recognize it or not, Jesus is relevant to the deepest parts of our existence. He can bring life into our deepest fears and darkest times.

READ FICTION AND POETRY

This is perhaps the most surprising entry, but it is one that has been essential in my life. When I don't make time for reading that engages my imagination, my faith begins to lose its ability to become imaginative and my devotion becomes stale.

Take time to read something full of beauty and romance. Think about it. Imagine it. Take notes, highlight passages and talk about it with your friends.

Whether we recognize it or not, Jesus is relevant to the deepest parts of our existence. He can bring life into our deepest fears and darkest times.

But oftentimes in the rush to make Christ cool, communities can lose track of the very nature of the incarnation: that God choose to be revealed in a simple man who endured human life in all of its pain and brokenness and revealed in it the fullness of God's light and life.

Christ did not come with the ephemeral luster of popular fashion but in universal and timeless language of humanity itself, a language that is never exhausted, for it is the wellspring from which all our deepest longings and highest hopes spring.

[REPRINTED FROM RELEVANT MAGAZINE — THE ONLINE MAGAZINE ON FAITH, CULTURE & INTENTIONAL LIVING]

If you missed last Sunday's church, you also missed the surprise pot luck dinner for our pastor, Gary. We had a great meal and good fellowship and I ate too much. Have you noticed the colors on the trees this fall? I think they are the prettiest I have seen since I moved here eight years ago. I can hardly believe it has been that long. What a wonderful place to live! The best! . And it's the people that make it so. I have had my eyes worked on this past week to remove cataracts and on 30th, will have the other eye done. What a difference! Didn't know I was so blind. I don't lack for help in getting to the Drs or the check ups and again – it's the wonderful people here that look out for you. Thank You !!!! Doris

Womens Fellowship.

Our September meeting, we completed 11 layettes and 18 partial layettes of r the Grand Junction Pregnancy Center. They sent us a very nice Thank You card. So – Thank You to all the ladies that donated items to put in the kits and who made blankets a well.

Our regular meeting for October was 10-14-14. We met in the dining room of the church. It was cleaning day to prepare for Turkey dinner scheduled for November 15, serving from 11:30 to 1:30 pm. Everyone is welcome, ask your neighbors to come with you.

Our November meeting will be the 11th at 10 a.m. And we will prepare the silverware and tables for the turkey dinner.

Our December meeting will be on the 16th and we are making kits for the Grand Junction Rescue Mission. We will meet in the basement dining area and all are welcome to come and help at 10 am. We have a short meeting while having our coffee and then start our projects.

President – Nancy Karlson 487-3740

Anniversaries for November
 Jerry and Debbie Hamm
 Wayne and Pat Van Guilder
 Jevon and Monica Klingler



Birthdays for November
 Gary Bryant
 Marilyn Eidson
 Clara Mae Ward
 J D Hill

Heavenly Father, walk through my home and take away all my worries and illnesses. Please watch over and heal my families and friends. Bless my home, family and friends with peace, love and joy in Jesus Name. Amen

Tips For Success:

1. Enjoy what you do.
2. Surround yourself with the best people.
3. Make time for you and your family.
4. Learn from mistakes—never let them defeat you.
5. Take risks. Be open to new ideas.
6. Never take criticism personally. Move on.
7. Set realistic budgets—don't spend more money than you have.

Never Let Anyone Dash Your Dreams!

 **SERVING OUR COUNTRY** 

Andrew Bellotti
 Adam Brown
 Corey Martin
 Alan Salamanca
 Eric DuVall

Jaron Lachinet
 Chris Box
 Jason Hallett
 Kimberley Schneider
 Kasindra VanMeter

Elijah Brito
 Tony Clements
 Jake Harris
 Chad Schneider
 Sarah Tressel

Mark Lachinet
 DJ Schuman
 Alan Salamanca
 Justin Cady

BIBLE QUIZ

18. This Egyptian-born Hebrew leader predicted the coming of a prophet like himself.
19. This prophet took David to task for numbering the people of Israel.
20. This prophet predicted that Jeroboam would be king over 10 tribes of Israel.
21. This reluctant prophet was thrown overboard in a storm.
22. This man of Tekoa was a simple laborer who had the audacity to confront the king's priest at his shrine.
23. This man prophesied against Nineveh.
24. This prophet was famous for his marriage to a prostitute.
25. This prophet predicted the outpouring of God's Spirit upon all people.
26. This man wrote a brief book against Edom.
27. This sister of a Hebrew leader was herself a prophetess. For a time she was afflicted with leprosy.
28. The only female judge of Israel, this woman was considered a prophetess.
29. This apostle of Jesus recorded his visions of the world's end times.
30. This man, who traveled to Antioch with Paul, Silas, and Barnabas, was considered a prophet.
31. This prophet spoke of the need to purify temple worship after the return from exile in Babylon. He spoke of the coming of someone like the prophet Elijah.
32. This man of Moresheth was a contemporary of Isaiah. He spoke of the need to walk humbly with God.
33. This prophet, who posed much of his book in the form of questions and answers, concluded that "the just shall live by faith."
34. Active during Josiah's reign, this prophet spoke about judgment and the coming "day of the Lord."
35. This unlucky prophet delivered an unfavorable message to King Ahab.
36. This false prophet wore a yoke, which Jeremiah broke.
37. This traveling companion of Paul was considered a prophet.

CHRISTMAS RECITAL

IN MEMORY OF SHIRLEY LYONS WILL BE HELD:

DECEMBER 7, 2014 AT 5PM

COLLBRAN

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO PERFORM PLEASE CONTACT SUE
BELLOTTI AT 970-487-3474 BEFORE NOV. 15, 2014



FREE WINTER COATS

GLOVES, BOOTS, SCARVES

FOR MEN, WOMEN, AND CHILDREN

COATS ON DISPLAY AT COLLBRAN
SUPPLY

203 MAIN ST

DONATIONS OF WINTER COATS, SNOW GEAR, OR BOOTS
MAY BE LEFT AT COLLBRAN SUPPLY

SPONSORED BY COLLBRAN CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
WOMENS FELLOWSHIP



COLBRAN CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH WOMENS FELLOWSHIP is once again providing free winter coats, snow gear, mittens, and hats for anyone in the community that is in need of warm winter clothing.

We wish to thank everyone for their donations. Donations may be left at Collbran Supply or contact Nancy Karlson or Sue Bellotti.

Fred Feller, of Collbran Supply has been very generous in providing a space for the coat rack each winter.

Please stop by the store and see if there is something you or someone you know can use for the upcoming cold weather.

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS RECITAL.

Shirley Lyons was a long time music teacher for the Plateau Valley. Her quiet teaching methods and gentle, patience impacted many of us.

During her last year as a teacher she had limited her students to Max and Wyatt Rollins. She was concerned that there would be no Christmas Recital, which she felt was a highlight for the students and the music is always such fun to play. She asked if the community might join in with her students for a Christmas Recital. That was in 2005.

She passed away in 2008. The community has come together to celebrate her gift to so many musicians in the valley with performances of all kinds. We have had vocal solos and groups, readings, violin solos, flute trios, piano and organ pieces, and the much loved songs accompanied by guitar or mandolin.

The community has begun to anticipate the Christmas Recital as an opening of the Christmas season.

We hope you will come join us, either as a performer or in the audience, on December 7, 2014, at 5 PM at the Congregational Church, to celebrate in the joy of the season.

Let us not forget how incredibly blessed we are. We have so very much to be thankful for...

In the business world, the rearview mirror is always clearer than the windshield.
Warren Buffet

Anger makes you smaller, while forgiveness forces you to grow beyond what you were.
Author – Cherie Carter-Scott

Don't confuse being "soft" with seeing the other guy's point of view. George Bush

Wisdom is knowing what to do next;
Virtue is doing it. David Starr Jordan

Competition is a painful thing, but it produces great results. Jerry Flint in "Forbes"

Envy can be a positive motivator. Let it inspire you to work harder for what you want.
Robert Bringle, Quoted in Redbook

Let us hope that we are all preceded in this world by a love story. Don Murphy

Japanese proverb – One kind word can warm three winter months.

Americans are overreachers; overreaching is the most admirable of the many American excesses. George F will

I see my body as an instrument, rather than an ornament. Alanis Morissette

Look back and thank God.

Look forward and trust God.

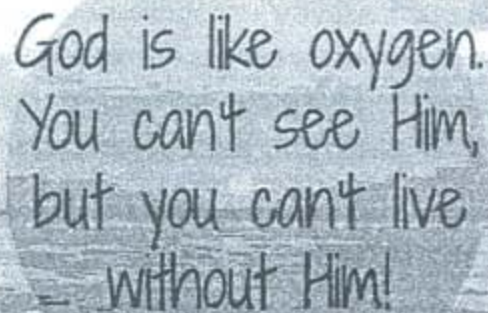
Look around and serve God.

Look within and find God!"

*God closes doors no man can open and
God opens doors no man can close.*

QUIZ ANSWERS

18. Moses (Deuteronomy 18:15)
19. Gad (2 Samuel 24:10-14)
20. Ahijah (1 Kings 11:29-40)
21. Jonah
22. Amos
23. Nahum
24. Hosea
25. Joel
26. Obadiah
27. Miriam (Exodus 15:20)
28. Deborah (Judges 4:4)
29. John
30. Judas Barsabas (Acts 15:22, 32)
31. Malachi
32. Micah
33. Habakkuk
34. Zephaniah
35. Micaiah ben-Imlah (1 Kings 22:8-28)
36. Hananiah (Jeremiah 28)
37. Silas (Acts 15:32)



God is like oxygen.
You can't see Him,
but you can't live
without Him!

ADVENT

Be Hopeful
Be Ready
Be Joyful
Be Love

PREPARE the way
of the Lord
Isiah 40:3

Worship
with us