

midtown

M E S S E N G E R

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Uniformity or Diversity

By: Dan Jenkins

The world has changed so drastically from what it was just a short time ago. Morality has been redefined. Marriage has been redefined. Righteousness has been redefined. Realistically, we are not as concerned about godliness as we once were.

We have become a society characterized by being a “non-judgmental” pluralistic one, where each person uses his own judgment and his own definition about right and wrong. Our tolerant attitude seems to delight that such diversity is the norm.

Jesus established the church to bring unity of mankind together in His body, the church. The first century world had many gods and each of them allowed whatever actions their gods approved. Wrath, anger and injustice was part of paganism. Christ built the church to enable men to change and to be part of God’s eternal plan to bring all men together in the one body.

Both paganism and Judaism were splintered by thinking its world view was the right one. “Every man did that which was right in his own eyes” (Prov. 17:6). Christianity was designed to bring uniformity, not diversity. Paul gives the Ephesians the basis of the unity and the bond of peace that Christ could bring about by giving seven “ones” of unity (Eph. 4:4-6).

“There is one body...” (v. 4). That one body is the church (Eph. 1:22-23), and every person becomes part of it by giving up every wrong concept they once embraced. It was not divided into denominations, all wore the same religious

name (1 Cor. 1:10-13), and all spoke the same truth.

“There is...one Spirit” (v. 4). In the absence of the written Bible, the Holy Spirit of God gave the same message to every church in the same words. They followed the words of the Spirit. Unity comes about when we use the words given by the Spirit to discover and define truth.

“There is...one hope” (v. 4). The common goal of getting each other to heaven regardless of the cost brought about a common unity, not diversity.

“There is...one Lord” (v. 5). Here is the key to religious unity. Jesus was the one Lord of every member, and they united together listening, not to their own hearts, but to the one Lord.

“There is...one faith” (v. 5). True faith comes only from the one Book, and unity is found when we build our faith on what He says. He alone defines the one faith.

“There is...one baptism” (v. 5). Every person was immersed in water for the same reason. It was the final step into the relationship with the one Lord.

“There is...one God” (v. 6). Unity is His plan, but it will come about only when we truly make Jehovah our God!

The Immediacy of Baptism Is a Lesson Itself

By: Selected

The subject of baptism is one of the most thrilling of all Bible subjects. Yet, due to the diverse teachings that exist today about baptism, it sometimes loses its thrill in the midst of discrepancy. While the Bible clearly teaches the essentiality of baptism in order to obtain salvation from sins (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16), many religious groups today teach that baptism is not essential to be saved. If that is true, then why were individuals so quick to be baptized in New Testament times? Let's look at it.

On Pentecost, about three thousand souls were baptized “THAT DAY” (Acts 2:41). Why does the Bible even include that detail? What difference does it make to tell us what day they were baptized and how soon after hearing the gospel it happened? Those Jews likely did not come prepared to be submerged in water that day, so why do it THAT DAY? The Bible answer: Because it was essential “for the remission of sins” (2:38).

The Ethiopian eunuch was baptized beside THE ROAD in a DESERTED PLACE (Acts 8:38). The man was traveling home from Jerusalem to Ethiopia by chariot and was in an unpopulated (and likely unfamiliar) location. Why did he get baptized after hearing one sermon? Why didn't he wait until he got home to invite family, friends and witnesses? Why did they STOP everything to be baptized? The Bible answer: Because it was essential for “rejoicing” over his salvation (8:39).

The Philippian jailer was baptized IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT (Acts 16:33). The Bible tells us that Paul and Silas were praying and singing in an inner prison at midnight (16:25). Why does the

Bible tell us the time? What possible difference could that have? They taught the jailer and his household the gospel (16:32), and “the SAME HOUR of the night... immediately he and all his family were baptized” (16:33). Why not wait until morning light? Why go through the trouble of a middle-of-the-night baptism? The Bible answer: Because it was essential to be “saved” from sins and “rejoice” (16:30, 34).

Ananias asked Saul of Tarsus why he was WAITING to be baptized (Acts 22:16). What an interesting question to ask. So, why did Ananias ask this question? Why didn't Saul wait to go back to Jerusalem and gather the biggest crowd possible to witness this persecutor being baptized? The Bible answer: Because it was essential to “wash away sins” (22:16). That cannot wait!

In every way possible, the Bible affirms in clear language that baptism is an absolute requirement in order to be saved from sins. If it wasn't, all of these examples could have waited for another day or another location. Let's allow the Bible to do the teaching and for us to do the obeying.



Upcoming Events

February 20-22, 2026: Midtown's Youth Winter Retreat at Peach Valley AIM Camp for 6th –12th grade. Flyers and schedule are in the foyer in the hallway. It is also available on our website under Files.

Area events:

Area events/details are posted on the bulletin board in the hallway. Please check them out.

Prayer List

Prayer Requests:

Caiden Serenil, grandson of Eddie and Veronica Serenil, who was in the ER and had to go to Driscoll Children's Hospital last week for surgery.

Rieki Bass who is recovering from her wrist.

Gina Gawlik who is on hospice care. She is Veronica Serenil's daughter's mother- in- law.

Members

Jeff Cannady and Veronica Serenil.

Read the Bible in a year with us!

The January Bible Reading Schedule can be found on the table in the foyer, on our Lightpost app under files, or on our website under files.

Volunteers Needed

The Sign up sheets for ways to serve for 2026

are on the bulletin board in the hallway.

Please sign up.

Service Roster

Week of January 18, 2026

Sunday Morning

Scripture Reading Will Burleson
Song Leader Doug Jobes

Opening Prayer Ken Dorries
Closing Prayer Lupe Escojido

Lord's Supper & Offering

Bread Jake Jacobs
Cup Barry Lehtinen
Offering Ron White
Assist Blake Jacobs
Assist Luke FitzSimmons
Assist Jack Jobes

Sunday Evening

Song Leader Kevin Sheeran

Opening Prayer Mark FitzSimmons
Closing Prayer Benny Horton

Lord's Supper & Offering Clifton Rutherford/
Bryce Dolan

Wednesday Evening

Adult Class Cody McCoy
Song Leader Jack Jobes
Devotional James Cammock

Other

Prepare Communion for Jan Ferman Rosales

Congregational News This Week

Birthdays

Nina Siegel Jan. 21
David Terry Jan. 22

Thank you!

Thank you to everyone who
helped make our Ladies Day a
success!

If you have any prayer requests, upcoming
events to be announced, or updates/corrections please contact
our secretary, Nina Siegel, at (361) 573-0030 or email
office.midtownchurch@gmail.com

Our Elders

Mark FitzSimmons
Ron White

Our Deacons

James Cammock—Evangelism
Lupe Escoido—Benevolence
Doug Jobes—Safety, Men's Encouragement &
Winter Youth Retreat
Kevin Sheeran—Worship Organization and
Communication
Bryant Siegel—Education and Finance

Our Minister

Cody McCoy

Weekly Reading

Be ye therefore ready also; for the Son of man
cometh at an hour when ye think not.
Luke 12:40

Service Times

Sunday Morning Bible Class.....	9:00 A.M.
Sunday Morning Worship.....	10:00 A.M.
Sunday Evening Worship.....	5:00 P.M.
Wednesday Bible Class.....	7:00 P.M.

Attendance Records

Week of January 11, 2026

A.M. Bible Class.....	67
A.M. Worship.....	100
P.M. Worship.....	69
Wednesday Worship.....	70

*Financial information is located on the bulletin
board in the hallway.*

Supported Works

Southwest School of Bible Studies



5901 N. Main
Victoria, TX 77904
361-573-0030

midtowncoc.org

Weekly Communication! To receive the *Midtown Messenger* and other congregational news to your inbox each week, please email events.midtowncoc@gmail.com.