



# FROM THE PREACHER

By: Blake Hudson

## A Cappella Worship Service: Setting the Context, pt. 2

Last week we pointed out how a cappella music in worship, far from being an oddity, was the norm throughout the early Church. This week, we'll pick up with the Protestant Reformation and consider some subsequent developments. One trend that is seen especially during this time period is the connection between Church reform and the rejection of instrumental music in worship.

At the time of the Reformation, two attitudes towards instrumental worship in the Church arose. On the one hand, Lutherans and Anglicans, seeking to maintain as much continuity with then-current practice as possible, maintained instrumental worship. On the other hand, the Reformed branch (those influenced by Calvin and Zwingli, such as Presbyterians) and the Anabaptists rejected instrumental music in public worship. Their argument for doing so is simple and familiar: the New Testament does not authorize it, the early Church rejected it, and the corrupted Roman church introduced it.

Over time, however, the descendants of these movements began reintroducing instruments into worship, but not without protest. Within Presbyterianism, for example, there remains a significant branch that continue to insist on a cappella worship. In fact, as I write this, I have before me a book published by a Presbyterian publishing house titled *Joyful Voices: A Cappella Singing in Congregational Worship*. Baptists are another group which have a history of rejecting instruments in worship. For example, Charles Spurgeon, while giving freedom to other congregations to do otherwise, nevertheless strongly insisted on a cappella music within the congregation he led. Today, the group known as Primitive Baptists continues the practice of a cappella worship.

As mentioned above, the Anglican Church continued to use instruments in worship; however, the early leaders of Methodism (which began as a reform movement within Anglicanism) rejected instruments in the Church. Adam Clarke, Methodism's most influential biblical commentator, is worth quoting at length on this topic. In his commentary on Amos 6:5, Clarke writes, "I farther believe that the use of such instruments of music in the Christian Church, is *without* the sanction and *against* the will of God; that they are subversive of the spirit of true devotion and that they are *sinful*... I here declare that I never knew them productive of any good in the worship of God; and have had reason to believe that they were productive of much evil. Music, *as a science*, I esteem and admire: but instruments of music *in the house of God* I abominate and abhor." Clarke then goes on to quote John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, as quipping, "I have no objection to instruments of music in our chapels, provided they are neither HEARD nor SEEN."

Again, the argument so far is not that, because John Wesley and Adam Clarke agree with a cappella worship, therefore it is correct. The point simply remains that there is very strong historical precedence for a cappella worship in the Church. Next week, Lord willing, we'll consider the great American reformation movement, commonly referred to as the Restoration Movement. Here too, as we will see, is a call to biblical faithfulness which leads to an insistence on a cappella music. But, as is the trend throughout history, we will also see how subsequent generations moved away from that original position.



There will be a Devo on Sunday, September 14th hosted by the Sanfords. We hope all our teens will make plan to attend! If you would like to host, please sign up on the bulletin board.

COME HAVE FUN WITH US IN OUR

# YOUTH GROUP OLYMPICS


HOSTED BY MIDWAY CHURCH OF CHRIST

**SATURDAY, 20 SEPTEMBER 2025**  
3:00 PM

MIDWAY CHURCH OF CHRIST 10408 HWY 6 HITCHCOCK, TX

PLEASE GIVE US TENTATIVE NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS BY 9/7  
PATRICK ARMSTRONG 903-503-8752

Please see one of the elders if you plan to participate, if you have any questions or would like more information.

 There will be a planning meeting on September 14th, after evening service. For more information please, see Blake.

### OUR SYMPATHY

Services for Doretha Mack, Kathleen Vereen's mother will be this Saturday, September 6, 2025.



Visitation from 10 to 11am. Funeral service will be at 11am at Jerusalem Baptist Church in Brazoria, TX.


Also, We express love and sympathy to John and Meggin Trammel in the loss of John's grandmother, who passed away August 24, 2025, in St. Augustine, TX

### Canned Meat Drive

Goal: 10,000  
Current: 4,824

Please put all can donations on the cart in the foyer. Office staff will count them and move them into the auditorium.

September 28th, James Henry will speak during morning services. Scott Ratcliff will speak in the evening, on the missions and missionaries we support. Please make plans to attend.



We have begun collecting bags of candy for our annual Trunk-or-Treat. A date for the event will be announced soon. If you would like to donate please leave them in the foyer.

# Please Pray

Rick Arnold will see a neurologist this month...Emma Fagan is home following a visit to the ER...Barbara Filipp is in room #616 at Country Village for rehab...Shirley Brown, aunt of Sharon Austin has been diagnosed with cancer...Phil Carter is home but, still having some health concerns...Jackie Haynes will have back surgery tomorrow...Charm Moser, sister of Donese Peltier, still needs our prayers

**PLEASE REMEMBER:**  
Deena Damron, Robert Gautney, Jeanie Granger, Cliff Harper, Erin West Janik, David Johnson, Karen Lowe, Dorothy King, Marie Leblanc, Theresa Malish, Karen Smith, Charles and Elizabeth Street, Andy Tilley, Johnny Toon, Ceaser Vereen, Maggie Walker