

## “BEING THANKFUL FOR GOD’S PEOPLE” (CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE.)

of main-line, liberal groups (again according to theological definition and again cooperating extensively with one another). We also have a Jewish population, a Buddhist retreat-complete with a Buddhist monk, and two organization that qualify as centers for eco-theology and “worship” centers. One organization in this last named group has shrines to a host of gods and goddesses including one I personally examined dedicated to one of the pagan gods of ancient Greece.

Outside of “organized” religion we also have a large number of people who unhappy with or uninterested in “group” religion worship according to their own belief-system. In one case I visited with a family who had attended our church, were seemingly very happy, but did not agree with our practices regarding communion. No wonder, I soon discovered that the wife considered herself the spiritual leader of the household while at the same time claiming no church had any right to set their own guidelines for communion. Under her “authority” as spiritual leader she served the Lord’s Supper herself to her husband and young son once a month.

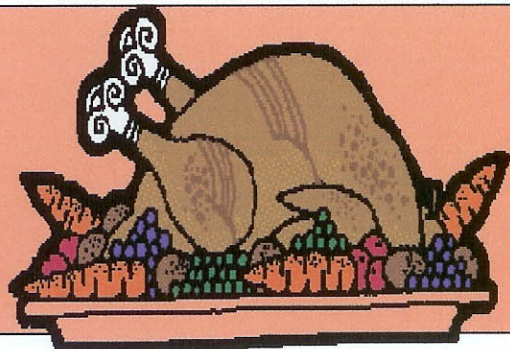
I hope you see my point. I hope you see why I consider our church qualified as a microcosm of what churches across our land face. I hope also, that every faithful supporter of their local church will take courage from the resolve of our congregation to resist those influences which bring confusion and harm to the Church of Christ. The faithful people of God across our nation should be praised. It is by their conviction, support, prayer, and encouragement that stalwart and uncompromising churches continue to exist.

When we drive by a church building that has been converted to a play-house, youth center, or some other secular purpose our heart grows very heavy. We cannot help but think of all the lives that were given to Christ in days gone by. We cannot help but consider what good doctrinal instruction was given from the pulpit of this now dead church. Also, we cannot help but think of all the work parties, individual labor, prayer, and sacrifices that were made to ensure the survival of that church. Such a converted church will now never be able to give the spiritual and emotional highlights to the lives of believers that it once supplied.

The life of a church cannot be reduced to an easy, step-by-step flow chart. The “success” of a church is not guaranteed by following the latest master plan of the current “super” church. Christ must be in control of the local church. (See Revelation chapters one through three.) The congregation of the church must be in submission to Christ and actively involved in obeying His commands and doing His will. When a congregation desires to please Christ, then that congregation is something to be truly thankful for.

Maintaining a church is a personal commitment to the fulfilling of the Great Commission. The prudence we display in supporting our local church is proven by the fact that only the local church can deal with the unique configuration of challenges found in each separate locality. While we may chose to aid other Christian endeavors; our primary and greatest support should be to that church in which we as members find ourselves responsible in the sight of God.

Without a faithful congregation , a church will die. Join me in thanking God for all the faithful in your local congregation. Despite all the endless pressures to compromise and entertain there are yet many in our land who have not bowed the knee to Baal. May it ever be so.



### NOVEMBER CELEBRATIONS

#### HAPPY BIRTHDAY

**THERESIA KORVIN NOVEMBER 12**