

# THE FLORAL HEIGHTS INFORMER

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**Floral Heights  
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**Mike Chancellor  
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## **Deacons:**

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**David Witherspoon**

## **Preacher:**

**John C. Robertson**

## **Thoughts about Fellowship Meals**

**Knollwood Messenger April 2007**

**By Micky Galloway**

Many have attempted to defend the practice of the churches that provide a place for the members to come together to eat a social meal. Some insist on calling these social meals *fellowship meals*. Thus, the place the church provides for such meals is a *fellowship hall* or a *fellowship wing* of the building. These defenders assume without evidence that it is the church's (collective) mission to make provision for its members to share a meal together. There is no evidence that the N. T. church ever came together *in the church building* (collectively cf. *1 Corinthians 11:18*) for the purpose of eating a common meal.

One attempt to justify this practice has been an appeal to the biblical references to *love feasts* in *2 Peter 2:13* and *Jude 12*. Other efforts have included locating the passages where the phrase "*breaking of bread*" occurs and insisting that these passages refer to a common meal, otherwise known as a *love feast*. In this study, we will consider the evidence regarding the *love feast*, as well as the various passages usually cited to prove that love feasts were part of the early church's public service.

Some have erroneously represented the issue as: "Is there New-Testament authority for Christians eating a common meal together in the church building or on church grounds?"

**THIS IS NOT THE ISSUE!** The issue is not, and never has been, simply eating in the church building or whether the early church ate where they met. The issue is: **WHAT WORK DID GOD GIVE THE CHURCH?** The correct question is: **"Do the Scriptures teach that it is the church's work to provide for common meals that are designed for social and/or recreational purposes?"**

This issue exists because of a basic difference in attitude toward Bible authority. **WHAT IS OUR SOURCE OF AUTHORITY**

## Local News:

**Welcome to all our visitors.** We pray that you will be edified by our service and that you will ask questions if things are not as you are accustomed to seeing. Please come back at your every opportunity.

### Directory Addition:

#### **Mandi Jo Suttle**

2709 Elmwood Ave.  
Wichita Falls, Tx. 76308  
940-642-4644

**Rita York** underwent a medical procedure this past Thursday and is doing well.

### Continue to pray for our shut-ins:

#### **Stella Davidson**

696-1030 (Home)

#### **Calvin York**

692-0489 (Home).

#### **Bessie Murphy**

4600 Taft Blvd, Apt. 538

**AM Sermon:** Church Organization

**PM Sermon:** Numbers 15

**FOR ANY PRACTICE?** The appeal, "*I don't see anything wrong with it.*" does not stand. The Scriptures represent God's authority through Christ and His apostles and prophets. The Holy Spirit revealed this authority in direct statements or commands, approved apostolic examples, and necessary inferences. Brethren concerned with Scriptural authority realize that the only justification for a church building is that it expedites the command to assemble for worship and teaching (*Hebrews 10:25*). Indeed, the building itself is nothing more than brick and mortar, but it is erroneous to conclude that it can be used for just any purpose. The local U.S. Post Office building is nothing but brick and mortar; however, you cannot use it to host a fourth-of-July barbeque for your friends. The Post Office building has a distinct purpose. Likewise, the only way to justify church kitchens and dining facilities is to show that they expedite one of the church's Scriptural functions or missions.

The *love feasts* mentioned in *Jude 12* seem to offer hope for those who are determined to practice such things. These also say that *Acts 2:42, 44, 46; 20:11* and *1 Corinthians 11:17-23* refer to fellowship meals. Such people expect us to accept for our faith and practice, not only what uninspired historians say, but also what they tell us historians say about the matter. Perhaps this is part of our problem. God doesn't want our faith to rest in uninspired history or uninspired men (*1 Corinthians 2:1-5*).

People cite denominational commentaries, religious encyclopedias, and other reference works to support the idea that early churches had common meals in connection with their assemblies. Some commentators agree that this was done in connection with the Lord's Supper. Some declare with certainty that the love feast was eaten **before** the Lord's Supper, while others are equally sure that it happened **afterward**. Yet, those who cite these *authorities* do **not** have their banquets **in connection with the Lord's Supper**. We must remember that these commentators base much of what they say on men's writings that describe second- and third-century practices. Realizing that the "*mystery of lawlessness*" was already working in the days of the apostles (*2 Thessalonians 2:7*), we must limit our practice to what Scripture itself authorizes. Peter said, "*If any man speaketh, (speaking) as it were oracles of God ...*" (cf. *1 Peter 4:11*).

**Continued in next week's bulletin**

