

# Diversity, equity, and Inclusion

Long before the United States ever existed. Long before the imperial power that sent persecuted Christians to what the West calls the “new world,” rose. Fifteen hundred years before the proliferation of confessions, statements of faith, and the endless dividing of the body of Christ there was delivered to us in the form of God in the flesh, the only true teaching about diversity, equity, and inclusion.



Sean NIESTRATH  
Faith-based columnist  
Guest Columnist

We read about it in the gospels. The rest of the New Testament, mostly in the form of letters, fleshes out for us the implications of Jesus’ teaching. The teaching is there, and it challenges us all the time. The problem is that we are all such abysmal students. It is not for lack of trying. Nor is it a lack of sincerity. I need more imagination and the ability to hold seemingly contradictory thoughts at the same time. I need to be less concerned about defending the holiness of God (he is quite capable of that) and more concerned about breaking down the barriers that keep people apart and at each other. I wonder how different the United States would be if, at any time in the South before 1960, most white ministers would have had the courage and imagination to reach out a hand of fellowship to their black brothers and sisters. Some of whom may well have been blood related. I wonder what the world would be like if Christians woke up in Germany on Nov. 10, 1938, and said, “enough.” Keep in mind that many did at great cost. The history of Christianity is, on balance, good. There are hospitals, orphanages, busi-

nesses, humanitarian projects, schools, universities and myriad other non-profits that benefit all of us more than we know – whether you are a believer or not. But that does not give permission to ignore those things that have been done in the name of the church that have caused harm. I believe that the church is the greatest example of diversity, equity, and inclusion ever. Even with all the mess we continue to make, which no doubt grieves the Spirit of God, it is still true. I do not get to determine who my spiritual brothers and sisters are any more than my physical ones. Even if I say they’re not, it is not for me to say. We are challenged on two fronts which I will put into one sentence. Everyone is accepted provided we all understand that God, through Christ, is in charge. If we simply say that everyone is accepted without understanding God is in charge, there can be no transformation and learning the difference between right and wrong. If we say that only those who agree with my doctrinal tenants are accepted, I have put up unnecessary barriers and perhaps even put myself in the place of God. Idolatry can come at us from any direction. The apostle Paul said in Galatians 3:28, “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” What he says in Colossians speaks powerfully to our world today, “Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old nature with its prac-

tices and have put on the new nature, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. Here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all, and in all. Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, and patience, forbearing one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful.” (Col. 3:9-15). What a gift we have been given to have such instruction that demands imagination and courage in a world that is so thoroughly engulfed in the traditions of men that we have trouble teasing out the truth. I long for a world in which there will be no need for protest or using the law to bully others. For this to work, we must stop being gatekeepers. Which is the most tempting ditch for me. We must recognize who is in charge. This will not stop vigorous discussion, but it might stop us from hurting each other so much. I was recently at a conference in which one of the speakers, who had struggled with the recent division in the Methodist Church said, “I just couldn’t go with (the other group), I tried but just couldn’t get there. I do hope I can have the grace to assume that they are serving God and reaching people I cannot, and they will have the same grace for me.” Dr. Sean Niestrath is a minister in Madisonville, Ky. He holds a doctoral degree in ministry. You may contact him at sean.niestrath@outlook.com.

## agriculture

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## legal notice

I, Melissa Guill, Clerk of Crittenden County District Court Marion, Ky. do certify that the following has filed notice of Final Settlement: Kalysta Jones of 121 W. Central Ave., Marion, Ky. 42064, executrix of Janet S. Brower, deceased, whose address was 121 W. Central Ave., Marion, Ky. 42064. The foregoing settlement is to be heard at the regular session of Crittenden District Court on March 26, 2025. All persons having exceptions to said settlements are to file same at once. (1t-09-c)

Notice is hereby given that on March 5, 2025, Jeremy Spaulding of 3450 Blue Ridge Drive, West Paducah, Ky. 42086 was appointed executor of Daniel Baker Potts, Sr., deceased, whose

address was 6288 U.S. Hwy. 60 West, Marion, Ky. 42064. Victoria Seng, agent for service of process. All persons having claims against said estate are hereby notified to present the same properly proven as required by law to the agent for process on or before the 5th day of September, 2025 and all claims not so proven and presented by that date shall be forever barred. All persons indebted to the estate of the above-named decedent, will please call and settle said debts immediately. Crittenden District Court Melissa Guill, Clerk (1t-09-c)

Notice is hereby given that on March 5, 2025 Bonita Crowell of 717 Chapel Hill Rd., Marion, Ky. 42064 was appointed administratrix of Maura Lynn Corley, deceased, whose address was 717 Chapel Hill Rd., Marion, Ky. 42064. Robert Frazer, 200 S. Main St., Marion, Ky. 42064, attorney. All persons having claims against said estate are hereby notified to present

the same properly proven as required by law to the administratrix before the 5th day of September, 2025 and all claims not so proven and presented by that date shall be forever barred. All persons indebted to the estate of the above-named decedent, will please call and settle said debts immediately. Crittenden District Court Melissa Guill, Clerk (1t-09-c)

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We ask that bids be dropped off at Boyd Funeral Directors during normal business hours or may be emailed to andy@boydfuneraldirectors.com. Salem Cemetery has the right to reject any and all bids.

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EMMAUS BAPTIST CHURCH

315 Emmaus Church Rd., Salem, Ky.  
Rodney Phelps, Pastor  
(270) 704-2400  
emmausbaptistsalem@outlook.com  
Follow us on Facebook

St. William Catholic Church

Sunday Mass 11 a.m.  
Father Jojo Joseph  
860 S. Main St. Marion, Ky.  
(270) 965-2477

Mexico Baptist Church

Minister of Music Mike Crabtree  
Pastor: Morgan Smith  
Sunday Worship Services: 10 a.m., 7 p.m.  
Sunday Bible Study: 9 a.m.  
Sunday Discipleship Training: 6 p.m.  
Wednesday Worship Service: 7 p.m.  
175 Mexico Rd.  
(270) 965-4059  
MexicoBaptist.org

DEER CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

Sunday Bible Study: 10 a.m.  
Sunday Worship: 11 a.m. & 6 p.m.  
Wednesday Bible Study: 7 p.m.  
Approx. 5 miles from the intersection of Hwy. 60 & Hwy. 297  
Phone: (270) 965-2220  
"Whatever It Takes"  
Bro. Jamie Baker

Emmanuel Baptist Church

108 Hillcrest Dr., Marion | (270) 965-4623  
Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.  
Sunday Worship: 10:45 a.m., 6 p.m.  
Wednesday Adult Bible Study, Children and Youth Activities: 6 p.m.  
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Tolu Methodist Church

Pastor: David Brown  
We invite you to be our guest  
Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.

Barnett Chapel General Baptist

Sunday School: 10 a.m.  
Sunday Worship: 11 a.m.  
Sunday Night Service: 6 p.m.  
Barnett Chapel Rd., Marion, Ky.  
Barnett Chapel... where everyone is welcome.

Freedom General Baptist Church

Pastor: Ross Atwell  
87 Freedom Church Rd., Marion  
(about 1 mi. from Marion off Ky. 91)  
CHURCH TIMES:  
Sunday School 10 a.m. Sunday Evening 6 p.m.  
Sunday Worship 11 a.m. Wed. Bible Study 6 p.m.

Marion Baptist Church

College & Depot streets, Marion • (270) 965-5232  
Pastor: Bro. Aaron Brown • Children's & Youth Pastor: Bro. Shawn Huleman  
SUNDAY MORNING SERVICES: 9 a.m. & 11 a.m., ONLINE 11 a.m., SUNDAY SCHOOL: 10:05 a.m.  
WEDNESDAY: BIBLE STUDY/PRAYER 6 p.m., AWANA FOR CHILDREN & YOUTH GROUPS 6 p.m.  
CHOIR PRACTICE: 6:45 p.m., PRAISE TEAM: 7:30 p.m.

Crooked Creek Baptist Church

261 Crooked Creek Church Rd.,  
P.O. Box 442, Marion, Ky. • (270) 704-0914  
Sunday School: 10 a.m.  
Sunday Worship: 11 a.m.  
Pastor, Hank Cayce "Come and Worship with Us"

Crayne Community Church

Crayne Cemetery Road, Crayne, Ky.  
Bro. James Driver, Interim Pastor  
Sunday Worship 9 a.m.

FIRST CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

224 W. Bellville St., Marion, Ky.  
Sunday School 9:45 a.m.  
Sunday Worship 10:45 a.m.  
David LeNeave, Pastor

growing in grace

2 Peter 3:18  
PLEASANT GROVE General Baptist Church  
Located on Ky. 723, 4 miles north of Salem  
Sunday School 10 a.m. | Sunday Worship 11 a.m., 6 p.m. | Wed. 7 p.m.

Marion Church of God

334 Fords Ferry Road, Marion, Ky.  
Morning Service 11 a.m.  
Sun. Evening 6 p.m. • Wed. Evening 6 p.m.  
"Where salvation makes you a member."

Marion Church of Christ

546 West Elm Street • (270) 965-9450  
Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m.  
- The end of your search for a friendly church -

PINEY FORK CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Speaker: Greg Rushing  
CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
A new beginning, going forward and looking to the future  
Ky. 506 | Marion, Ky.  
SUNDAY School 10 a.m.  
Worship 11 a.m.  
Bible study 6 p.m.

Sugar Grove Cumberland Presbyterian

585 Sugar Grove Church Rd., Marion, Ky.  
Reverend Greg Cain 270-245-4013  
Sun. School: 10 a.m. | Sun. Worship: 11 a.m. & 6 p.m.  
Wed. Bible Study: 7 p.m.

Marion Methodist Church

We love intensely, believe deeply, and pray zealously  
SUN: Sun. School 9:30 a.m.  
Worship 10:45 p.m.  
South College St.

Frances Community Church

Bro. Butch Gray  
Worship service:..... 11 a.m.  
Children's Church ages 3 & up ... 11 a.m.  
"The little church with a big heart"

Hurricane Church

Hurricane Church Rd. off Ky. 135 West  
Pastor: Bro. Danny Hinchee  
Sun. School, 10 a.m. • Worship, 11 a.m.  
Sun. Evening services, 6 p.m.  
Wed. Evening services, 7 p.m.

Unity General Baptist Church

4691 Mott City Rd. • Marion, Ky.  
Bro. David Perrymann, Pastor  
Sunday School 10 a.m.  
Sunday Worship 11 a.m.