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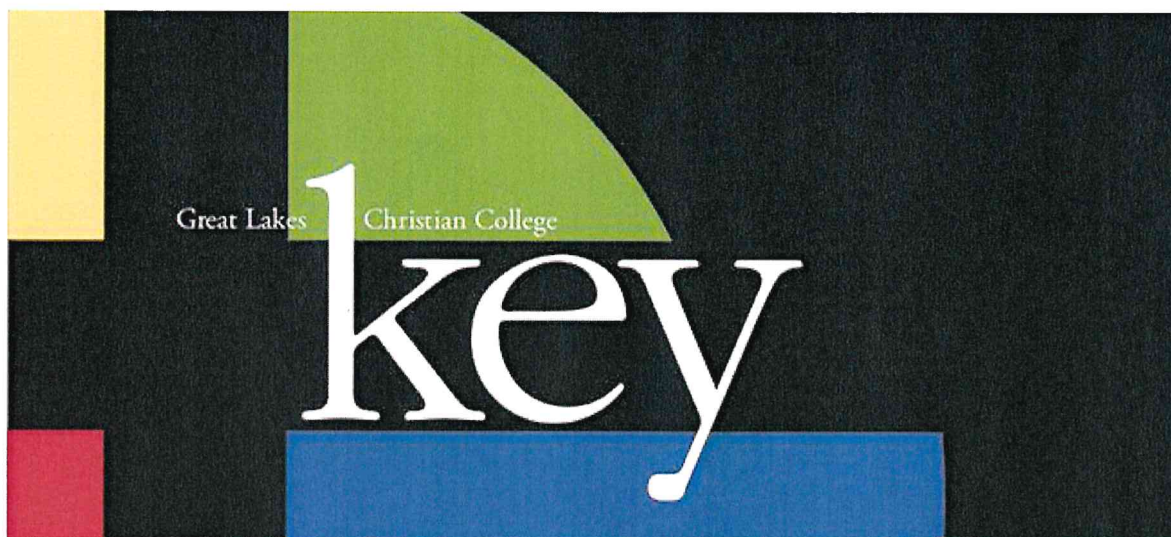
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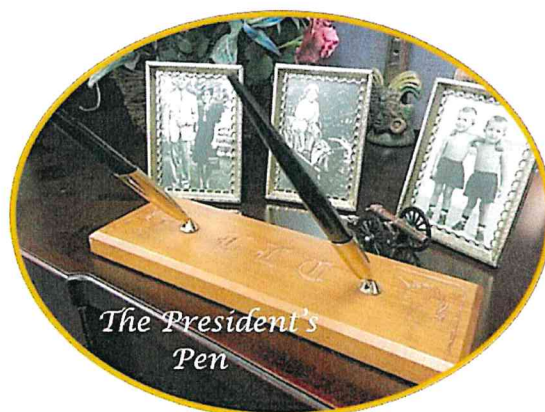
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Answering Jesus' Prayer for Unity
President Larry Carter

Recently, I was honored to be a part of our annual Restoration Movement Appreciation Week as I spoke on the topic, "The Didache and the Restoration Movement". I was

drawn to this topic because of a perceived need, once again, to focus on unity. The Didache, a first century book that details the common practices and principles of the early Christians, was the first church manual and emphasized community over individualism, unity over division, and a desire to be obedient to God's will over our own. One of the things that struck me about the early church was that they prayed three times a day. While the Didache doesn't specify the times, I imagine that the church prayed at an appointed time morning, noon, and evening. Those early Christians understood that their work, their fellowship, didn't end at the conclusion of their Sunday worship – they were to join together with their church family every day in prayer to see the work of God grow and prosper. And as specified, the Lord's Prayer was to be a part of their prayer.

The Didache urges those first Christians to pray in part, "Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy; may your kingdom come, may your will be done on earth as in heaven." How did these Christians view their responsibility to be an answer to that prayer – especially regarding making sure His will was done on earth as in heaven? What was His will? I think Jesus verbalized that will when He prayed (John 17), "... that all of them may be one, Father, just as You are in Me and I am in you...that they may be one as We are one – I in them and You in Me – so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that You sent Me and have loved them even as You have loved Me." Those early Christians understood that to be an answer to Jesus' prayer they had to be unified. They were not to let division enter their ranks if they wanted the world to believe in the message of Christ. They also were aware of what Jesus came to accomplish through the shedding of His blood. The Apostle Paul wrote in Ephesians 2:13-16, "But now in Christ you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ...His purpose was to create in Himself one new humanity." The blood of Jesus was shed so that He could create one new humanity. His blood was so precious, so powerful, that man-made divisions and barriers, even those built and then held in good conscience, were destroyed once and for all on the cross, which led Paul to write later, "Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace." Those early Christians wanted to be answer to Jesus' prayer and to honor the blood of Christ. So they put aside their differences, preferences, and opinions to be the church as God envisioned. They didn't want anything to take precedence over the prayer of Jesus or the blood of Jesus. What Jesus prayed and what he did on the cross loomed larger than the things that could separate them. Again, they wanted to be an answer to Jesus' prayer and to honor the blood of Christ.

When I think of the Restoration Movement, shouldn't we be focused on the same thing?

**Listen to President Carter's presentation on
"The Didache and the Restoration Movement."**

Restoration Appreciation Week, October 23, 2020



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Great Lakes Christian College



LARRY'S VIDEO UPDATE
ON HIS HEALTH

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT: There will be no Christmas on Campus Event this year.

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