

The Syracuse Regional Church of Christ Story Q & A

Dec 28, 2006

Introduction

In view of recent events within the International Churches of Christ (ICOC) it has become apparent that it is time that we, the members of the newly formed Syracuse Regional Church of Christ (SRCOC), tell our story, explain our reasons for leaving the Central New York Church of Christ (CNYCOC), and discuss the spiritual ramifications of this separation.

Why did a group of you leave the CNYCOC in 2006 to form a new church?

The short answer is that starting in 2006, 8 families and a few single members individually and independently decided not to support the new direction of leadership of the CNYCOC, realizing that the CNYCOC had decided to follow Kip McKean who was warned and eventually disfellowshipped by 84 ICOC elders and evangelists in November of 2005 for the reasons outlined in their letter. [{Brothers Statement to Kip McKean 11-12-2005}](#)

Our actions stem from our conviction that Kip McKean has refused to follow Matthew 18 and repent of his actions (Acts 26:20). This is not our judgment, but that of those in his peer group, who have confronted him in the past and have let the Word of God judge him. (John 12:47-48) (Hebrews 4:12) [{Brothers Letter to Kip McKean 10-14-2005}](#) and [{Discipleship Today Letter 12-01-2006}](#).

Isn't forming a new church just as divisive as what Kip McKean has been doing?

Kip McKean has declared the ICOC "dead", planted churches in direct judgment of and in opposition to other ICOC congregations, and actively invited ICOC members to leave and join his churches. In an attempt to pursue his noble ends, he has pursued division as his ignoble means. [{LA-ICOC Open Letter to the Church 10-17-2006}](#)

We are a group of disciples of Jesus who left the CNYCOC quietly and eventually came together because of our common convictions. We have not tried to pull anyone away from the CNYCOC, but instead have fought NOT to divide our former congregation. As proof of our efforts, we constantly run into members of the CNYCOC that are still, many months later, unaware of why we left. We can only be justly accused of being divisive if we are dividing the CNYCOC, which we are not.

So why did you leave, again?

Because the CNYCOC accepts the leadership, discipling, and influence of Kip McKean, stands in judgment of the unified family of the International Churches of Christ, and supports the Chicago International Christian Church with people and money. ***We left the CNYCOC to remain with the International Churches of Christ in their mission to evangelize the world.***

The timing of our exodus was caused by the leadership of the CNYCOC, as they demanded 100% support of their new direction by all members. As a result many decided to make the major decision to leave and follow the advice given by the former evangelist of the CNYCOC to "get our spiritual needs met elsewhere". Others left about the same time because they became aware of the division already present between the CNYCOC and ICOC churches, and chose to not follow Kip McKean and churches receiving his influence.

Are you saying that the CNYCOC is no longer affiliated with the ICOC?

The evangelist of the CNYCOC looks to Kip McKean for direction and discipling, not to other ICOC churches. The CNYCOC is named by Kip McKean as one of his “partners in the gospel,” [{Portland’s “Partners in the Gospel”}](#), directly affiliating them with the Portland Church of Christ.

To quote Kip McKean from the “Partners In the Gospel” article on the Portland Church web site, “For these reasons, after several agonizing days of prayer as well as counsel from the Portland elders and evangelists, my decision at this juncture is to start over with whoever is willing to help in building a worldwide movement for baptizing lost souls.” And also, “These congregations will now join the Portland family of churches in ...Syracuse, New York....”

We don’t intend to stand in judgment, since Jesus warns us not to (Matthew 7:1-2), but instead state this clearly as a matter of fact.

So is the Syracuse Regional Church of Christ is affiliated with the ICOC?

The leaders of the SRCOC have consistently sought advice and discipling from the elders and evangelists of other ICOC churches, namely the New York City Church of Christ and Boston Church of Christ. We agree completely with the ICOC Unity Proposal {link} and the beliefs and goals of the ICOC, and have signed the Unity Proposal in December 2006. ***We seek to continue the presence of a committed International Church of Christ in the Syracuse New York Region where members of other ICOC churches may enjoy fellowship again as brothers.***

Conclusion

We are excited about the formation and incorporation of our church and the re-building of an ICOC in Syracuse that is moving forward, having matured from the hard lessons of the past. God continues to move in this city, bringing many to study the bible and giving shelter to those who do not wish to be led by the influence of the disfellowshipped Kip McKean. (Proverbs 10:17) We are also excited as we re-unite with ministries in the Southern Tier, Watertown, and Utica bringing the “Syracuse Region” to Christ.

We look forward to the New Year as we mature in our faith and discipleship through discipling relationships, reach out to our community through service and evangelism, and continue to develop our growing ministries.

We are not a home for those who do not wish to seek God’s word in righteousness and faith, who do not seek to be peacemakers, or who wish to avoid repentance or discipling. Instead we welcome anyone who desires to save this lost world by drawing them into dynamic relationships with God like ours, giving God all glory and praise, Amen.

The SRCOC Leadership