

The Brighton Light

BRIGHTON ARP CHURCH

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“An Embarrassment of Riches”

A new year is already upon us, whether we want it to be or not! It's 2019, and doesn't seem like it was that long ago that people were wringing their hands about Y2K, and the fear that all the computers would stop working when the year changed from 1999 to 2000. That was nearly 20 years ago!

Some people took special measures to prepare for Y2K, and there may have been some wisdom in that. The whole problem was overblown, of course, but being prepared for the future is not a bad thing, and we should take special care in handling the resources that God has given to us.

While our family was on vacation this past week, we visited a church near Savannah, Georgia. It was not an ARP Church, but it had many things in common with our church. It was part of one of our sister denominations (the PCA, or Presbyterian Church in America), they were about the same size as our congregation, and they even sang from the same red *Trinity Hymnal*. The pastor faithfully handled the Scriptures, but he preached from a passage that I don't think I've ever heard a sermon from before: Luke 16:1-8.

Luke 16:1-8 is Jesus' Parable of the Unrighteous Steward (or Dishonest Manager, as the ESV calls it). A rather unscrupulous and dishonest business manager is about to lose his job because of his questionable business practices. Faced with the prospect of unemployment, he decides to strike up deals with those who owe his master money. In the end, the dishonest manager is actually praised by his master for his shrewd actions in the situation.

What are we to make of this parable? It seems strange to see such a dishonest person treated as the “hero” of the story. But that's not what the parable is teaching us. Jesus is simply noting that in the world, shrewdness in business affairs is treated as a good thing. And sometimes those in the business world can be much shrewder than Christians.

The point of the sermon was that Christians should use their own resources (money and time) wisely and shrewdly for advancing the Kingdom of God. Buying an unbelieving friend a meal so that you can discuss the gospel with him, or helping to support an overseas missionary are examples of applying this teaching. But this could be carried even further. Are we being shrewd with the spiritual resources that God gives to us? We have personal copies of the Bible, enough free time to pray, automobiles to drive to church, and access to innumerable books and other resources to help us grow in the faith. Are we making shrewd use of this embarrassment of riches God has give to us? Or are we more like the manager at the beginning of the parable, who instead squanders what he has?

Of course, sometimes Christians in the business world are shrewd (and entirely honest at the same time). Chick-fil-A is now the 3rd largest fast food chain in the U.S. in terms of sales, and somehow they are able to do it only staying open six days a week (something the world would not consider to be shrewd or wise). But some things are more important than the profit line. Paul writes in Philippians 4:19, “God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.” We have the greatest and most precious and most valuable gift of all, for God has sent His Son Jesus Christ into this world. And He came to be more than a gift which we admire for a moment and then forget about rather quickly. He has died for our sins, and He has risen from the dead, and He reigns now as Lord. There is nothing more valuable than to know Jesus Christ as Savior. As we enter 2019, let us make

sure we make use of our own resources and share with others this good news of Jesus Christ.

Pastor Tim

Prayer List

Shut-ins: Martha Jean Goulder. Mary Francis Smith

Ill/Recovering:

Richard Billings – Cancer

Ty Bryan – Heart Issues

Beth Crum –Knee

Betty Gladney -- Lymphoma

Kenneth McCain – Health Issues

Jerry Molder – Health Issues

Mary Sam White – Health Issues

Glenda Wilson – Bone Cancer

Ina Yarbro – Health Issues

Lucille Bridges – Health issues

Ginger Carter – Cancer; Improving

Rose Eubank – Stroke

Zoan Landrum –Nursing Home in Ripley

Jack McDivitt -- Cancer

Bobby Rochell – Cancer

Sandy Williams (Huffman) – Cancer

Jimmy Wylie – Hip Surgery

Military: Tim Donahoo
Debra Hill

Rod Dooley
Austin Starnes

Matthew Heathman
Robert “Trip” Young III

Missionaries: Jim & Gala Coad

Rebekah Carson

Presbytery: The start of a new Camp Joy in the Memphis area in 2020; church plants in Murray (KY), Little Rock (AR), and Louisville (KY)

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

1	Beth Crum	17	Phillip Trotter
2	Linda Clarke	18	Adyson Joy Brubaker
3	Mary Pannell		Jeremy Bridges
7	Carol Templeton	19	Johnny Yarbro
	Pat McCain	23	Robert Cavin
10	Rachel Young	24	Edith Hanks
12	Kinney Bridges		Linda Bridges
13	Chelsea Larson	26	John Hugues
15	Grace Phillips	28	London Hill
16	Jeremy Herring	31	John Carlyle Ruffin
	Martha Jean Goulder		

WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

January 8 Mr. and Mrs. Nick Goulder

Upcoming Events

THE DEACON OF THE MONTH is Verlie Wells. If you have any requests for the deacons, please contact Verlie at 901-326-7545.

PRAYER/VISITATION: If anyone is sick, in need of prayer or a visit, please contact Milton Murphy at 901-476-2808.

OUTREACH TEAM: If you would like to participate in outreach or know of someone who needs a visit, please contact Milton Murphy.

WEDNESDAY SUPPER AT SIX MENU:

- **January 9:** Spaghetti, green beans, garlic bread
- **January 16:**
- **January 23:**
- **January 30:** Family Night

FOOD DONATIONS: The food pantry needs to be restocked. Any donations of items non-perishable items like soup, canned fruits and vegetables, pasta, etc., are appreciated.

SPECIAL THANKS: Mrs. Sarah Smith and Mrs. Mary Jean Goulder have both expressed their thanks to all those who helped with the special time of Christmas caroling on December 22 (including those who sang and those who helped with the treats).

SPECIAL THANKS: From the pastor to the congregation – thank you for your prayers, your support, and your friendship during the past two years as pastor at Brighton.

PANCAKES, YUMMY PANCAKES: The Men's Ministry will be hosting a pancake breakfast fund raiser on Saturday, January 26th. Please make plans to come out and support the Men's Ministry, and enjoy some yummy pancakes while you are at it (always in moderation, of course).

SPECIAL OFFERING: During the month of January, special baby bottles will be displayed in the church. These are for a special offering we are collecting for Confidential Care. Just place your spare change (or cash, or a check) in the bottle and the money will go to support this ministry. You can find out more about Confidential Care by visiting their website at www.confidentialcaremm.org

“BE IT RESOLVED, that the Northeast Presbytery of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, memorialize the General Synod of said church to designate the Sabbath nearest to January 22 of each year to be recognized as the “Sanctity of Human Life Sunday” in all churches of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, and that every minister of said church be asked to mark the day with appropriate Biblical messages in which the members of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church are exhorted to seek out and practice non-violent measures attempting to oppose abortion and to promote the sanctity of human life.” (Minutes of Synod, 1988)

New Website and Email address for the church:

Website: <http://www.brightonarp.org>

Email: baarp@att.net

If you have any ideas or suggestions for the church website, please contact Chris Gravley, webmaster, at 901-674-3851 or e-mail at chris_gravley@bellsouth.net