

The Brighton Light

BRIGHTON ARP CHURCH

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A Truer Ministry

James 1:27 English Standard Version (ESV). *“Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.”*

It appears that for the foreseeable future our small church will, to a large degree, be assigned to a ministry to the elderly. Our congregation is aging, and the requirements for servicing the needs of the elderly are growing. At the same time it appears we have a vacuum of younger members who are able or willing to provide those ministries as they occur. It may seem to some that our church would grow much faster if we only concentrated on the more popular and exciting ministries that attract younger and more vibrant members. In fact, many of the churches in the area are experiencing rapid growth using just that strategy.

The problem with focusing on those ministries that are popular and exciting, that attract easy growth, is that such a policy ignores the true purpose of the church. Nowhere do the scriptures require the members of a church to grow it. Not through small groups, not through block parties, not through community outreach events, not through any means. In fact, the scriptures insist that the only true and lasting growth of the church is provided by Christ through the action of the Holy Spirit as He works through His people. *Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. Jn 14:6; So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. I Cor 3:7.* The Bible offers no strategy for growing a church beyond preaching, prayer and practicing the sacraments. In fact, the only groups of members who are specifically singled out for ministry by the church are “widows and orphans” Js. 1:27.

There is, of course, nothing inherently wrong with providing youth and young couples ministries. Such groups should be growing in their faith based on the instruction and examples provided by the more mature members of the church. Our church is very actively involved in just such activities, and rightly so. But part of that growth should include the less than exciting time spent in hospitals or nursing homes comforting and conversing with those generations who have so faithfully maintained the faith both passed to them and passed by them. As bodies and minds weaken and deteriorate they should not be discarded by Christians simply because they are no longer attractive and dynamic. In fact, according to the apostle James, a ministry that provides for the needs of such saints is the only observable evidence of pure religion in a church.

It is often a complaint of immature Christians that they don't seem to be getting anything out of church. This naïve complaint belies their ignorance of the plight of those who truly cannot get anything out of church because they are homebound and cannot attend the fellowship and worship of the church. Perhaps if those who are so

concerned with filling their own spiritual bellies would sacrifice a bit of their time to go and feed those who cannot come to be fed in the assembly, they would begin to grasp the true ministry of the church. Curiously, feeding others seems to be the best way to be filled up to overflowing in an ecclesiastical setting.

If it is true that our church has been chosen for a season of ministry to the elderly, then we should praise our Lord for selecting us for such a clearly scriptural task. There can be no doubt of the rewards to those who faithfully carry out the orders of the Master. *"Well done, good and faithful servant.; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your Lord."* (Matthew 25:21) And perhaps, through our faithfulness, we will see true growth in our church. All glory to Him. In His Service, Richard Moore.

Prayer List:

Bennett, Mary F – Shut in	McCain, Ken – Health Issues
Billings, Richard – (Denise’s Dad) Cancer	McCain, Kenny – Health Issues
Boswell, Charles - Cancer	Molder, Jerry – Health Issues
Boswell, Mike – Health issues	Pugh, Kaleb – (Laura Kiphart’s grandson)
Bridges, Lucille – Health Issues	Williams, Sandy – (Huffman family)Cancer
Bryant, Ty –Heart	Wilson, Glenda – Bone Cancer
Columbus, Norma – Health Issues, hospital	Winford, Sherry – Health issues
Goulder, Martha Jean – Shut In	Yarbro, Ina – Health issues
Rochell, Bobby – Cancer	Landrum, Zoan – Covington Care
McCain, Pat – Health Issues	
Rivercity Reformed Presbyterain Church – Church plant in Little Rock Arkansas	

Military

Donahoo, Tim	Starnes, Austin	Hill, Debra	Billings, Tyler
Dooley, Rod	Heathman, Matthew	Young III, Robert "Trip"	

Missionaries

Coad, Jim & Gala	Rebekah Carson	Brunson, Andrew
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JULY BIRTHDAYS

1 Julia Moore	19 Alton Woods
Martha Lou Wylie	Taylor Smith
2 Jimi Kaye Yarbro	22 Paige Dickey
3 Kaleb Pugh	Sean Curtis
5 Amy Donahoo	23 Amber Smith
Brad Templeton	25 Brian Crum
7 Ann Blackmon	Joy Hill
10 Owen Boswell	Marcie Little
13 Shelia Brubaker	26 Linda Boswell
15 Stephen Boswell	27 Jan Allen Pannell
17 Jeff Huffman	28 Mary Frances Smith
Makayla Boswell	Paul Shannon Boswell
18 Angelica Wells	30 Jennifer Lee
Verlie Wells, III	

WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

July 5	Mr. and Mrs. John R. Moore
July 11	Mr. and Mrs. Alton Woods
July 24	Mr. and Mrs. Larry Crum
July 28	Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Molder

NURSERY ATTENDANTS

July 1	Leslie Alsbrook
July 8	Molly Huffman
July 15	
July 22	Haley Alsbrook
July 29	Alton Woods

Upcoming Events

PLEASE NOTE: 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.

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

PLEASE NOTE If anyone is sick, in need of prayer or a visit, please contact Milton Murphy 901-476-2808.

PLEASE NOTE: The Session is developing a member outreach program. If you would like to participate in community outreach or know of someone who needs a pastoral visit, please contact Milton Murphy. We also need prayer warriors to enlist.

PLEASE NOTE: The Sunday Evening Service starts back this week. We will take a break from the current series on Judges, and the pastor will begin a new series going through the Westminster Confession of Faith. Join us Sunday at 6 p.m.

PLEASE NOTE: There will be a Wednesday Night Bible Study through the summer.

PLEASE NOTE There will be Family Night Suppers during the Summer. That's the fourth Wednesday of each month. 7/25, & 8/22.

PLEASE NOTE The Men's Ministry will be having a BBQ on July 3rd. Please see any Men's Ministry member for details.

Boston Butt - \$35	Pork Tenderloin - \$20
Turkey Tenderloin - \$20	BBQ Bologna - \$22.

Pickup time is 4 PM

PLEASE NOTE: The Community Cookout is Saturday July 7th from 4 – 8 PM. Rain date will be July 14th. Free food, Games and Fellowship. Getting to Know the Community. Invite & Spread the word throughout the community.

PLEASE NOTE MVP Camp dates are July 23-28. Keep this group in your prayers.

PLEASE NOTE: New Website and Email address for the church.

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

Email: baarp@att.net

PLEASE NOTE: There is a surplus of funds in the Hymnal Fund of \$560.00. The Diaconate would like to use these funds to help cover the cost of purchasing new Choir Robes. If anyone in the congregation has any questions, please see a Deacon. Thank you, Diaconate

PLEASE NOTE: This September, B.J. Maxwell will travel again with Catalyst Missions to Indonesia. After 4 years, the first class of graduates will complete final module of Pastor training. Visit bjmaxwell.com/Indonesia to help support this trip. Or, you can mail a check to Catalyst Missions, PO Box 449, Ellendale, TN 38029 noted "Maxwell Indonesia." See B.J. for any questions of further information.