

The Brighton Light

BRIGHTON ARP CHURCH

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“A House of Prayer”

I recently attended a conference near Atlanta, Georgia. As part of the registration, everyone received a free book entitled *On Reforming Worship*. It was a collection of addresses from previous years at the conference. The last essay in the book was written by my good friend Dr. Mark Ross and was entitled, “Prayer: One Special Part of Religious Worship.”

Dr. Ross begins by noting that prayer receives more attention in the Westminster Confession of Faith than other aspects (or elements) of worship. God, in His holy word, has given to us several ways we are called to worship Him (such as the reading and preaching of the word, the singing of psalms, receiving the sacraments of baptism and the Lord’s Supper, etc.). However, prayer is called a “special part of religious worship” which is “by God required of all men” (WCF 21:3). Dr. Ross notes, “It is nonetheless striking to read that in their summary statement of what the Bible has to say about worship, prayer gets such focused attention and such special treatment.” It is not that preaching and reading the Bible are not special or important (those are emphasized elsewhere); but it is important to note that prayer gets so much attention.

Think about how easy it is to fly through prayer, either in our own private lives or in a worship service. At one point, Dr. Ross writes:

I enjoy asking folks to imagine that we’re people who know nothing about Christianity at all. If we were those people outside who may curiously wander into our churches and participate in our worship, what would they conclude is the main thing that’s going on, if they were later to be asked, “What’s the one special thing that Christian worship does?”

The point is that most people would probably not answer that question with prayer, because prayer is something that receives little time and attention in many worship services.

Yet, prayer is vital to the Christian life and to Christian worship. John Calvin calls prayer the chief virtue and exercise of the Christian faith. In other words, if we are really Christian believers, and if we want to demonstrate that we are Christian believers, then we will be a people of prayer, and our churches will be known as houses of prayer (see Isaiah 56:7). Have churches in our day been guilty of turning our houses of prayer into “robber’s dens” instead (see Matthew 21:13)? Dr. Ross adds:

Where is religion most purely conceived? What is the purest expression of religion? Is it not prayer? Is that not really the finest expression of religion in its purity, because in prayer we come before a sovereign God dependent in every way. In prayer, we bow before Him as the One who is majestic. We come respectfully before God. We come in dependence. We come seeking from Him all that we need.

Upcoming Events

THE DEACON OF THE MONTH is Nick Goulder. If you have any requests for the deacons, please contact Nick at 901-451-3206.

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:

- **November 7:** Hog dogs and chips
- **November 14:** Thanksgiving
- **November 21:** (None)
- **November 28:** Lasagna and Garlic Bread

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

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD: We will be collecting shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child through the Sunday School classes this year. Collection date is November 11th. See Anna Phillips for more information.

IT'S THAT TIME OF THE YEAR AGAIN!:

The Brighton Men's Ministry is selling smoked meats. They will be cooked and ready for pick up on Tuesday, November 20th. The proceeds go to help needy families in the community. See Richard Moore to place your order. The prices are as follows:

Turkey: \$25
Turkey Tenderloin: \$20
Pork Tenderloin: \$20
BBQ Bologna: \$22
Boston Butt: \$35

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.