

Contacts: Changing The VBS Culture *by Rob Whitacre*

As part of HTHSOE training, we encourage local congregations to shut down all works that cannot be tied to evangelism until they can be reworked into a soul winning/saving mission. The church is not a country club or civic group. We have One Mission, and all must be tied to it (Matthew 28:18-20). Vacation Bible School should be viewed as an opportunity to win souls. VBS can be evangelistic, but it would take a major overhaul for most congregations. Sadly, some VBS classes have more vacation time than Bible classes and more play time than school. They have drifted far away from a soul-centered work. Here are a few suggestions to help make VBS evangelistic.

- Make sure the material is not generically themed with watered-down messages. In short, if you could hear the message at a denominational group, it would not differentiate the Church of Christ from these man-made bodies. We will never be able to outperform or outproduce more fanfare than our religious neighbors. Even if we could, what would be the benefit? (I recommend looking at the material produced by Family Bible Publications or Apologetics Press.
- Our lessons must be Christ-centered (Acts 8:4-5, 12). This takes a lot of work since many publishers produce watered-down teaching to boost sales. Subjects like obedience, Bible faith, the church/ kingdom, worship, salvation, repentance, baptism, judgment, heaven/hell should be included. Using Old Testament accounts can illustrate these themes, but the “story” without the message is vain.
- Advertise and promote this event as no other. VBS can generate contacts as no other event during the year. Post large banners to draw attention, use HTH to announce and invite every local family by mail, and knock on doors to build awareness.
- Invite, Invite, Invite! Ask the members to invite neighbors, children’s friends, and family members to attend VBS. It should be a community outreach mission, not just a fun time for children.
- Make sure to have an adult class to reach non-Christians. Themed classes on the home, parenting, moral issues, and apologetics are attractive to parents of all religious backgrounds. The adult class does not have to mirror the children’s classes. Think outside the box. Be creative.
- Step one is to develop contacts. VBS is a contact magnet! Now is the time to use your “visitor’s bags” and fully implement your strategy to obtain contact information. Ensure all non-Christian families are greeted. Member families should be selected to look for visitors, sit with them, and extend meal invitations. Allowing visitors to walk into our assembly and leave without getting contact information is inexcusable.
- Contact visitors within 72 hours after VBS concludes. Take a picture of each student and use this reason for your visit. Deliver the picture to their home, including a gift to test the soil.

These are just a few ideas to help you focus VBS on the Mission! It is a lot of work to change congregational culture, but VBS is a great place to make many contacts. Remember, contacts lead to prospects, and prospects lead to Bible studies. Keep your eye on the target, and never give up.

Brushy church of Christ
774 Hwy 48 South
Centerville TN 37033



The Brushy Beacon

“Open up Your Heart & Door in 2024”

April 7, 2024

Schedule of Services

| | |
|------------------------|-------|
| Sunday Bible Study | 9:00 |
| Sunday Morning Service | 10:00 |
| Sunday Evening Service | 6:00 |
| Wednesday Bible Study | 7:00 |

The church of Christ at Brushy

| Elders | Deacons |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Ricky Atkinson | Paul Johnston Terry Banks |
| James Atkinson | Kevin Johnston Justin Atkinson |
| Tony Duncan | Caleb Truett |
| Preacher: Kevin Johnston | |

Psalm 111 – His Presence *by Dan Jenkins*

I am not sure about all the details of the assembly that the psalmist mentions in Psalm 111, but I do know that a great blessing awaits us in how the assembly applies to our lives. The psalmist said, “Praise the Lord! I will praise the Lord with my whole heart, in the assembly of the upright and in the congregation.” He calls that assembly, “the congregation.”

There is an assembly, a congregation, we know that is part of Christianity. Who does not know these words? “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some...” ([Heb. 10:25](#)). This is the church, and this assembly is when she gathers to worship. If the psalmist rejoiced at the opportunity to be part of the congregation when it assembled, how much more should we!

The psalmist described the assembly as the made up, those who were the upright. Peter describes our assembly as being “living stones,” who are part of “a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God.” But, he does not stop with these words in describing those righteous ones who are in that assembly. He says, “You are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people” ([1 Pet. 2:5, 9](#)). These are those who assemble to praise the Lord.

Consider what a blessing it is to assemble with God’s chosen ones. Consider what happens every time I am part of that congregation of priests who serve Him.

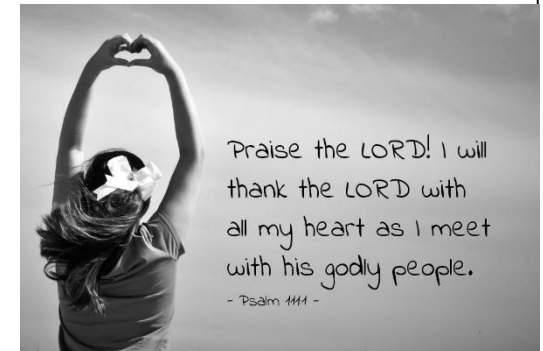
These upright ones sing to me, and I sing to them as we join our voices in praising the Lord. The unseen guest in the midst of that assembly is Jesus ([Heb. 2:12](#)).

These upright ones listen, as I listen to the Lord speak in that assembly. He was the visible teacher in the Sermon on the Mount, but He is the invisible Teacher in the assembly, as we study the exact same words in our worship of Him.

These upright ones join me in prayers in that assembly. We pray together in His name because wherever two or three pray together, He is our unseen guest ([Matt. 18:20](#)).

These upright ones share the memorial feast remembering Him. We have communion in the body and the blood of that unseen guest. He promised He would be present and share it with us ([Matt. 26:29](#)).

He is present every week, I hope you are!



Family News & Notes

Welcome Visitors! We are thankful you are here and want to give you a warm welcome!

Friends & Family Day We will have our Friends and Family Day on Sunday, April 14, with Matt Miller speaking. We will have a potluck meal and 1 P.M. early evening worship service. Please be planning, preparing, praying, and inviting your friends and family to come and attend! The following are his topics for the day:

- 9 a.m. Bible Class ~ "I am the Bread of Life"
- 10 a.m. Morning Worship ~ "I am the Light of the World"
- 1 P.M. Evening Worship ~ "I am the Good Shepherd"



Brushy Fishing & Picnic We will be going to Bill McDonald's Lake on Beaverdam for some fishing fun on Sunday, April 28. We will eat at 5 P.M. and have our evening worship service at 6 P.M. at the Lake. You can come and fish anytime before 5 or after the evening worship service. More details will follow soon on the menu.

All Ladies ~ Mark Your Calendars... We will have a Ladies Day on March 1, 2025, with Laura Jenkins. She is a counselor at the Mount Juliet church of Christ. There are surveys for ladies to fill out about interest in this day. Please fill it out and leave it in the paper tray on the table it the back.

The Education Committee... will need to meet following evening worhsip service on Sunday, April 21, to discuss the Summer Series. We will meet in the Ladies Classroom.

Directory Updates It is time for a new directory. If you are not in our current directory or have updated information, please give any new or updated phone numbers, addresses, birthdays, and anniversaries to Jacinda Porter. Also, let her know if you would like to have your picture or an updated picture taken. Once she has your information, she will decide on a date to take the pictures.

Our Deepest Sympathies to... the family of Flora Mae Melton. She is the mother of Greg (Felicia) Yates. Felicia is the daughter of Glenda Tanner. She passed away yesterday.

...the family of Nathan Wasnuck. He was 16 months old and passed after a tragic accident in Florida. He is the grandson of a cousin of Ed & Terri Perkins. His funeral will be in Michigan on Thursday.

A Happy Birthday to... Crystal Brown... April 11 Brad Porter...April 15

A Happy Anniversary to... Ricky & Jo Atkinson...April 14 ~ Celebrating 52 Years!

Contact Cards Know someone who is ready for a Bible Study, has a benevolent need, dealing with a sickness, lost a loved one, or celebrating a life event? Consider submitting this person's name to receive compassion cards or to have this benevolent need fulfilled. When you have someone on your list that is ready to receive compassion cards or needs our help, fill out a contact card and put it in the box. Both are on the evangelism table. Together we can help bring others to Christ!

Upcoming Events

*Sunday, April 14 ~ Friends and Family Day with Matt Miller

*Sunday, April 28 ~ Fishing, Picnic, & Evening Worship at Bill's Lake on Beaverdam

For the Record

| | | | |
|----------------------------|----|-------------------------------|----|
| Sunday Morning Bible Class | 45 | Sunday Morning Worship | 86 |
| Sunday Evening Worship | 29 | Wednesday Evening Bible Study | 31 |
| Contribution | | \$2198 | |

Pray for Those Sick Among Us...

Carl Bryant is in the Life Care Center in Centerville.

Nancy Bryant continues to wait for an appointment to see a cardiologist.

Paul Johnston will have an outpatient procedure on April 15.

Shirley Mayberry is improving and feeling better.

Beverly Phillips daughter of Jim and Louise, is feeling better as she heals with a broken shoulder.

Dana McCaleb mother of Anna Freeman, hopes to come home on Monday.

Becky Gatewood mother of Emily Atkinson, radiation has shrunk 2 spots/waiting for other test results.

John Baldwin friend of Dean and Cecily, is at home and recovering well.

Marilyn Horner is recovering after having surgery for colon cancer.

Malachi Colvett nephew of Nancy Bryant, has Eosinophilic syndrome/is treatable /will make a full recovery

Continuing Prayer Requests

Dealing with Cancer - Aaron Bell, Roger Pace, Lynn Pigue, Megan Inman, Debbie Pierce, Ricky Chandler, Ron Pafford, Robbie Pinkerton, Ruth Sanders, April Colvett, Wilma Elkins, Glen Herrington, Shannon Irwin

Special Requests - Scottie Simmons, William Kirby, Deborah Brazil, Ryan Horton, Claud & Glenda Teet, Jeff Lynn, Ronnie Howell, Paul Schneider, James & Helen Bryant, Elsie Ray Webb

Pray for Those in Nursing Homes

Dickson Nursing Home... Larry Donaldson

Community Living Center in Murfreesboro... Fred Bowman

Ongoing Prayer Reminders

- All in the military and civil workers overseas and their families right.
- All those Preaching and teaching the Good News all over the world.
- Our Government Leaders – Local, State, and National (1 Timothy 2:1-2).
- Our Elders and Deacons who oversee, care for, serve, and feed us spiritually. (Hebrews 13:7)

Can't Make It on Your Day? No Problem! Talk to your team leader and see about attending on another team's day. We want to make this work for you, it is no problem to trade around if it is needed. Just let your team leaders know ahead of time. The first month went great! Let's make April even greater!

| TEAM 1 – April 7 | TEAM 2 – April 14 | TEAM 3 – April 21 | TEAM 4 – April 28 |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Leader: Tony & Cathy | Leader: Caleb & Paige | Leader: Justin & Emily | Leader: Terry & Debbie |
| Jim, Louise, Beverly | Ella & Mabry | Tate | Carl, Ann, Mason |
| Ronnie & Patsy | Ricky & Jo | James & Kim A. | David & Jeannine |
| Dean, Cecily, Dustin | Hannah, Teague, Candace | Patricia | Joanne |
| Jim & Pamela | Hunter, Faith, Cayce | Keith & Nancy | Shirley & Darby |
| Cindy, Crystal, Laynie | Kevin, Amy, & Boys | James & Helen | Kim |
| Lois & Mark | Ralph, Ande, Dillin | Glenda | Trenton, Anna, Charlie |
| Brad, Jacinda, Leland | Braxton, Madison, | Maelynn | Anita |
| Emma, Lynlee, | Houstyn, Oaklynn | David & Crystal | Clara |
| Ansleigh, Everleigh | Paul & Evelyn | Rodney, Tessa, & Boys | David Love |
| | Ed & Terri | Annis | Eric, Amanda, Sierra |
| | | Tammy & CJ | Jackson & Walker |

