

WHY THE CHURCH?

Those searching for a church should ask the question, “Why the church? What is a church for?” Is it a place to go for entertainment? or a place to go for certain traditional rituals? Is it a place to go for “Bingo Night” or a bake sale? Is it just for socializing? Or maybe the keeping of a family tradition? Motives are many and varied.

But are these the criteria by which we should evaluate a church? Isn’t it time to discard the frivolous in religion and seek the basics as set forth in God’s word, the Bible?

The commission given the church by our Lord is not complex: *“Go teach all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you”* (Matt. 28:20). What is the church for? To present to the world the gospel (good news) of Christ, baptize believers, and to nurture them in the word of God. Paul, speaking to the elders of the church at Ephesus, said, *“I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all them which are sanctified”* (Acts 20:32). That’s what a church is for, and that’s what we endeavor to do at the Arthur Church of Christ. Nothing fancy—just the plain, old-fashioned gospel of Christ preached, the word of God taught, prayer, congregational acapella singing, voluntary giving, and the observance of the Lord’s Supper in memory of Jesus Christ each Lord’s Day.

Put simply, the universal church is composed of all scripturally baptized believers in Christ the world over, and congregationally, such believers who are united in Christ, heeding and being nurtured in His word. Being spiritually members of the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:2), we must look to Him as our Head ((Colossians 1:18). It is as Paul admonished: *“”Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of (by the authority of) the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him”* (Colossians 3:17).

–Ron