

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Weekly Budget Offering Required:
\$5,834.76

Online thru September 27— \$761.40

Budget offering through September 27

Budget Offering: \$31,359.41

Designated: \$2,551.00

Total Offering: \$33,910.41

MEETINGS IN OCTOBER:

- Deacon Meeting— Thursday,
October 15 @ 6:00 PM
- Finance Team Meeting—Sunday,
October 18 @ 4:00 PM
- Cabinet Meeting—Sunday, October 18
@ 4:30 PM
- Quarterly Business Meeting—Sunday, October
25—6 PM

FACEBOOK UPDATES!

**You may catch updates and info about
Bellview on our Facebook page daily and
weekly... just search
@bellviewbaptistpaducah and
like our page.**

Periodical
POSTAGE PAID
Paducah, KY
42003

THE BELLVIEW VISION
(USPS 991660)
PUBLISHED MONTHLY
Bellview Baptist Church, Inc.
4875 Old Mayfield Road
Paducah, KY 42003-9074

ADDRESS SERVICE
REQUESTED

OUR CHURCH STAFF

Pastor Bob Whitter
(859) 962-0080

Sandy Leidecker,
Administrative Assistant
(270) 210-6960

SERVICE TIMES:

Sunday Bible Study - 9 AM
Sunday Worship Service - 10 AM
Sunday Evening Service - 6 PM
Wednesday Night Service &
Children's Activities - 6:30 PM



Where It's All About Jesus

Volume 55 October 2026 Volume # 10

www.bellviewbaptist.com



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bellview Baptist Church

FOOD PANTRY

Saturday, October 17 @ 9 AM

4875 OLD MAYFIELD ROAD, PADUCAH, KY

Tuesday, October 13 @ 6 PM

**Women's Ministry
Cookout**

**At the Home of Pete Lambert
6280 Old Mayfield Road**



MESSAGE FROM PASTOR BOB

What Makes an Effective Prayer

Prayer is one of the greatest privileges God has given His people. Through prayer, we come before the Creator of heaven and earth, bring our needs and burdens to Him, confess our sins, intercede for others, give thanks, and seek His will. Yet Scripture teaches us that effective prayer is not simply a matter of saying the right words or asking loudly enough. Effective prayer begins with knowing God, trusting His Word, and approaching Him through Jesus Christ.

The Bible gives us a clear pattern for prayer. When the disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray, He responded by giving them what we commonly call the Lord's Prayer. Jesus began, "Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name" (Matthew 6:9).

Those opening words teach us something essential: effective prayer begins with the right view of God.

Prayer Begins With God

Our prayers are not primarily about getting God to give us what we want. Prayer is first about recognizing who God is. He is our Father, but He is also holy. He is loving, but He is also sovereign. He hears His children, yet He is never obligated to conform His will to ours. Jesus taught us to pray, "Your kingdom come. Your will be done" (Matthew 6:10).

That is a radically different approach from treating prayer as a spiritual wish list. We certainly should bring our requests to God. Scripture commands us to do so. But our requests should be submitted to His wisdom and His purposes.

The Baptist Faith and Message says understanding of Scripture emphasizes that the Bible is God's trustworthy revelation and the supreme standard for faith and Christian living. Therefore, our prayers should be shaped by Scripture rather than by our feelings alone. The more we know God's Word, the more clearly we understand what pleases Him.

Effective Prayer Is Offered Through Faith

Prayer requires faith. Hebrews 11:6 reminds us that "without faith it is impossible to please Him". We pray because we believe God exists, that He hears us, and that He is able to accomplish His purposes.

James gives us a powerful description of effective prayer: "The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much" (James 5:16).

This does not mean that God answers prayer because we somehow become spiritually impressive. Our righteousness ultimately rests in Christ. The believer comes before God because Jesus Christ has opened the way for us to approach the Father.

That is why prayer is fundamentally Christ-centered. Jesus is not merely an example of someone who prayed; He is our Savior and mediator. Because of Christ, believers can approach God with confidence rather than fear and condemnation.

Effective Prayer Includes Confession

Sin can hinder our fellowship with God. Effective prayer therefore includes honest confession.

David understood this when he prayed for God's mercy and cleansing after his sin. Psalm 66:18 states, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, The Lord will not hear." Confession is more than admitting that we have made mistakes. Biblical confession means agreeing

MESSAGE FROM PASTOR BOB

with God about our sin and turning from it. First John 1:9 gives believers this wonderful promise: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

A praying Christian should regularly examine his or her heart. We should ask: Is there sin I am protecting? Is there bitterness I refuse to surrender? Is there someone I need to forgive? Is there something God has commanded that I am refusing to obey?

Prayer is not intended to conceal our hearts from God. He already knows us completely. Prayer gives us the opportunity to come honestly before Him and receive His cleansing grace.

Effective Prayer Is Persistent

Jesus also taught His disciples to pray persistently. Persistence does not mean that we must repeat ourselves because God is reluctant to listen. Rather, persistence demonstrates that we continue to trust God even when the answer has not yet come.

Paul instructed believers to "pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17). Prayer is not merely an activity reserved for Sunday morning, Wednesday night, or times of crisis. It is meant to become a continual part of the Christian life.

We pray when we are joyful. We pray when we are hurting. We pray when we understand what God is doing, and we pray when we do not understand. We pray for our families, our church, our community, missionaries, those who are lost, and those who are suffering.

Persistence says, "Lord, I still trust You."

Effective Prayer Includes Thanksgiving

Philippians 4:6 gives us another essential characteristic of effective prayer: "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God."

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Pastor Bob’s Message...

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Pastor Bob’s Message

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Gratitude reminds us that the God who has carried us in the past is still worthy of our trust today.

Effective Prayer Seeks God's Will

Perhaps one of the clearest biblical descriptions of effective prayer is found in 1 John 5:14: “If we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.” This does not mean we should be afraid to tell God what we desire. Scripture encourages us to bring our requests openly and honestly. But mature prayer ultimately says, “Lord, your will be done.”

Jesus demonstrated this perfectly in the Garden of Gethsemane. Facing the cross, He prayed according to the Father’s will. His prayer was not an attempt to escape God’s purpose but an expression of complete submission to it. That is the heart of effective prayer.

A Church That Prays

What would happen if the people of Bellview Baptist Church became increasingly committed to biblical prayer?

We would not simply have more prayer meetings. We would become a people who depend more deeply upon God. We would pray for the lost with greater urgency. We would intercede for one another with greater faithfulness. We would confess sin more readily, give thanks more freely, and seek God’s will more earnestly. James reminds us that effective, fervent prayer accomplishes much. The power of prayer, however, is not found in the person praying. The power belongs to God.

So let us pray—not because we have mastered prayer, but because our heavenly Father invites us to come. Let us pray in faith, through Christ, according to Scripture, with confession, thanksgiving, persistence, and submission to God’s will.

May Bellview Baptist Church be known not merely as a church that talks about prayer, but as a church that prays. And may every prayer ultimately lead us to greater dependence upon the One to whom Jesus taught us to pray:

“Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name.” Amen. Notice that Paul does not tell us to ignore our concerns. Instead, he tells us to bring everything to God—and to do so with thanksgiving. Thanksgiving changes the posture of prayer. Instead of focusing only on what we lack, we remember what God has already done. We remember His faithfulness, His mercy, His provision, His salvation, and His promises. Gratitude reminds us that the God who has carried us in the past is still worthy of our trust today.

Pastor Bob

SPOTLIGHT

All Hallow’s Eve: Choosing Celebration Over Divination

By Pastor Bob Whitter, PhD

HOW DID HALLOWEEN GET HERE?

The history of Halloween is complicated. It did not simply appear one day in America. The Library of Congress describes Halloween as developing through a mixture of ancient Celtic customs, Christian observances, folklore, and later cultural traditions. The ancient Celtic festival commonly associated with its origins was Samhain, connected with the end of the harvest season and beliefs surrounding the dead. Later, November 1 became associated with All Saints’ Day, with October 31 becoming known as All Hallow’s Eve, or Halloween.

Over the centuries, many different customs became attached to the celebration. Some were harmless folk traditions. Others involved attempts to discover the future, especially matters of love, marriage, fortune, and the supernatural.

That is where we need to pay attention.

There is a difference between pretending to be a ghost for a costume party and actually attempting to communicate with the dead. There is a difference between telling a spooky story and trying to contact a spirit. There is a difference between playing a harmless game and practicing witchcraft, fortune-telling, tarot, séances, or other forms of divination.

Christians need to know the difference.

A MEMORY FROM MY CHILDHOOD

I remember something from when I was a child that I don’t see nearly as often today. I remember looking at the calendar around Halloween and seeing All Saints’ Day listed on November 1—the day after Halloween.

As a child, I probably did not understand everything about what All Saints’ Day meant, but I remember seeing it there on the calendar. It was simply part of the calendar and part of the way the days were marked.

Today, if you look at many of the calendars we use, you may not see All Saints’ Day listed at all. That may seem like a small change, but it reminds us how much our culture has changed over the years. We have become very familiar with Halloween, but we have become less familiar with the Christian history associated with All Hallow’s Eve and All Saints’ Day.

Perhaps that gives the church an opportunity to teach again.

The word hallow means holy or saintly. So when we say All Hallow’s Eve, we are talking about the evening before All Saints’ Day. For Christians, that gives us something much better to think about than darkness, witchcraft, or divination.

We can think about holiness.

We can think about God’s people.

We can think about the testimony of Christians who have gone before us.

And most importantly, we can think about Jesus Christ, who is the

SPOTLIGHT CONTINUES..

source of our salvation and the reason we have anything worth celebrating.

DIVINATION IS NOT A GAME

One of the problems of our modern culture is that we have learned to turn serious things into entertainment. Witchcraft can become a television show. Fortune-telling can become a game. Tarot cards can become a novelty. Ouija boards can be sold as toys. Ghosts and demons can become decorations. The supernatural can become entertainment. But just because the world puts something on a shelf in the toy department does not mean God has changed His mind about it.

Leviticus 19:31 says:

“Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them: I am the LORD your God.”

Isaiah 8:19 asks:

“And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards, that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God?”

Notice that last question: “should not a people seek unto their God?”

That is the real issue. When we are curious about the future, we should seek God. When we are afraid, we should seek God.

When we need direction, we should seek God. When we do not know what tomorrow holds, we should seek God. Why would we seek supernatural answers anywhere else when we have a heavenly Father who already knows tomorrow?

WE MUST BE CAREFUL ABOUT THE TRAP

The devil has always been good at taking something serious and making it look harmless. That is one of his oldest tricks. He does not always present evil with a warning label that says, “THIS IS EVIL—STAY AWAY!” Sometimes temptation comes dressed up as curiosity. *“Just try it.” “It is only a game.” “It doesn't really mean anything.” “Everybody else is doing it.” “You don't actually believe that stuff, do you?”*

That is how a trap works. A trap is designed so that the person does not recognize the danger until it is too late.

First, curiosity. Then participation. Then fascination. Then acceptance. And eventually, something that once seemed strange becomes normal.

That is why Christians must be careful.

Paul wrote in Ephesians 5:11:

“And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.”

We do not need to become fascinated with darkness in order to prove that we are not afraid of it. We do not have to participate in everything the culture celebrates. And we certainly should never allow our children to believe that something God has warned us about is acceptable simply because someone calls it entertainment.

BUT WHAT ABOUT ALL HALLOW’S EVE?

SPOTLIGHT CONTINUES...

There is another side to this discussion that we should not forget. The name Halloween comes from All Hallows’ Eve, meaning the evening before All Saints’ Day. The Christian observance of All Saints’ Day became associated with November 1, making October 31 the evening before it.

That brings me back to something I remember from childhood.

I can still remember seeing All Saints’ Day on the calendar the day after Halloween. Today, many calendars do not include it. We may have lost something important when we stopped seeing those reminders.

We may not be able to change every calendar, but we can certainly change what we teach our children.

We can teach them what the words mean.

We can teach them that holy things are worth remembering.

We can teach them that God’s people should be different from the world. And we can teach them that October 31 does not have to belong to darkness. Perhaps we ought to reclaim the opportunity to make October 31 about something much better.

Instead of celebrating darkness, celebrate the Light!

Instead of focusing on death, celebrate life!

Instead of divination, celebrate revelation!

Instead of consulting spirits, celebrate the Holy Spirit!

Instead of being fascinated by demons, celebrate Jesus Christ!

John 8:12 says:

“I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.”

What a wonderful truth for the church to remember!

LET’S CELEBRATE THE HARVEST

There is another wonderful opportunity that October gives us: the harvest. Look around us. The leaves are changing. The crops have been gathered. The gardens have produced their bounty.

The farmers have worked. Families are preparing for winter.

God has once again provided.

Psalms 100:4 says:

“Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.”

What if instead of making October 31 primarily about frightening people, we made it a night of thanksgiving? What if our churches celebrated the harvest? What if families gathered around a fire? What if children enjoyed games, hayrides, pumpkins, food, candy, and fellowship without introducing occult practices?

What if we used the evening to thank God for His provision?

What if we invited neighbors who might never walk through the doors of our church to come enjoy a safe and wholesome evening with Christian families? That is something worth celebrating!

CHRISTIANS SHOULD BE DIFFERENT Romans 12:2 reminds us:

“And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind...”

SPOTLIGHT CONTINUES...

We do not have to be strange just to be different.

But we should be different because Christ has changed us.

There are many things in our culture that Christians can enjoy. But when something crosses the line into practices that Scripture specifically condemns, we should have enough biblical conviction to say, “No, that is not for me.”

We can enjoy pumpkins without practicing witchcraft.

We can enjoy costumes without glorifying demons.

We can enjoy candy without celebrating darkness.

We can enjoy a harvest festival without practicing divination.

We can remember All Saints’ Day without adopting every tradition that has ever surrounded it.

And we can enjoy All Hallow’s Eve while pointing people toward the One who is truly holy. When the world is talking about darkness, the church can talk about Light. When the world is fascinated with the supernatural, we can talk about the power of God. When the world is looking for answers in divination, we can point people to the Word of God. When the world is afraid of death, we can proclaim the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

So, as October 31, approaches, let us teach our children well. Let us teach them that not everything called “fun” is good for us. Let us teach them what divination is and why God warns us against it.

But let us also teach them that Christians do not have to live in fear.

We have something better. We have Jesus.

We have the Word of God.

We have the Holy Spirit.

We have the fellowship of God’s people.

And we have countless reasons to give thanks. So this year, let’s turn our attention away from the darkness and toward the harvest.

Let’s celebrate God’s provision.

Let’s enjoy wholesome fellowship.

Let’s welcome our neighbors.

Let’s give thanks for another year of God’s blessings.

And most of all, let’s make sure that when October 31, comes around, Jesus Christ—not divination, not darkness, and not the devil—is the focus of our celebration.

After all, we don’t need to look into the darkness to find out what tomorrow holds. We know the One who holds tomorrow.

Pastor Bob