



## Mark's Mark...

## The Danger of Having A Head Elder

God has designed the church to have elders, a group of qualified men who will oversee a congregation. His desire is that a local congregation has more than one man who leads the church. The New Testament is clear concerning the plurality of an eldership in a local congregation. Notice these examples: elders in Jerusalem (Acts 11:30), elders of the church (James 5:14), Paul and Barnabas appointed elders in each church (Acts 14:23), The Ephesian church had elders (Acts 20:17), elders oversee the affairs of the church (1 Timothy 5:17), appoint elders in every town (Titus 1:5), to the elders of the church (Philippians 1:1). Early non-inspired Christian writings such as the Didache (15.1) (100 AD), 1 Clement (42.4, 44.3) (100 AD), and the Shepherd of Hermes (vis. 8.3) (150 AD) point out that God's plan is for a local congregation to have multiple elders. Each of the men who serve as elders do so as a team who is equal who serve under the leadership of the head of the church, Jesus Christ, 1 Peter 5:3-4.

Church history shows us the danger of having one elder who dominates the others in the eldership. Early in the Second Century after Christ, Ignatius from Antioch in Syria created a system that placed one man as the head of every local church. Ignatius faced deep concerns about false teachers and their impact on the doctrine and unity of the local churches. For this reason he assumed the role as head elder (he called himself a bishop) in order to fight these false doctrines. In the next generation, these men who ruled as sole bishops over congregations began to spread their influence over other local, weaker congregations in order to protect them as well. Soon all the churches of the region were dominated by the bishops (ruling men) of Syria of Antioch, Jerusalem, Alexandria, and later Constantinople. While the rule of one man over a congregation or series of congregations was against the Scriptures, it still was done for what they thought were good motives: doctrinal purity, strong personalities and efficiency in church government. But the one leader model soon led to apostasy and sinful pride in men as they jockeyed for power over one another. In just a few generations, the church became unrecognizable.

The biblical doctrine of eldership plurality and the lesson of the dangers of one man leadership in church history lead us to some practical applications today in the Lord's Church. The first lesson is that while the doctrine of a plurality of elders is inefficient, it is necessary. In most congregations where there is a "head elder" in churches of Christ, it is because that man believes it takes too long for the group to decide or that they do not know as much as the one man does. But an eldership that works together has the advantage of the greater wisdom and experience of everyone in the group. It is important that elders be able to work together and that they have the humility, faith, and patience to depend on others in their work of overseeing the church. A second application is that an elder's authority is to be exercised through the eldership and not individually. While elders are to be shown respect for their office individually (Hebrews 13:7, 17), their authority over church matters is as a group. Great care needs to be taken so that each elder recognizes they are to be in submission to the other elders. The oversight of the church is a responsibility given to the elders as a group and not as an individual. A third application is that great care needs to be taken by each of us to follow what the Scriptures teach concerning church leadership. Many denominations have left the eldership concept and have instead followed a business model (CEO with a board of trustees) or Roman government model (an emperor with a Senate to advise on actions) to lead the church. God's design is that a local congregation has shepherds who care for the flock and lead the congregation as a group. May God help us to always put aside our opinions and follow his plan!

**Our Vision:** *Striving to be the Hands of Jesus*

**Our Values:** *Worship, Spiritual Growth, Edification, Christian Living, Outreach, Benevolence*

## PRAYERS

Dorothy Bean is in Lake Way Room 123 for rehabilitation.

Jeaneen Crocker will be having tests done.

Bethany Jones will have tests done Tuesday, February 23.

Sharla Henson is still undergoing treatment.

Please remember Darleen & Wayne Styers in your prayers.

Continue to remember: **Gerald, Dorothy & Sandy Bean, Glen Burse, Shella Mae Collins, Sue Cope, Jeaneen Crocker, Elaine Corner, Wilma Darnell, Kevin Farley, Sharla Henson, Regina Hines, Pat Jarrett, April Jones, Flo Jones, Gerald Jones, David Knight, Cindy Lowe, Ashley Lyles, Sylvia McCarty, Fred Miller, Rowena Northcott, Florence Robertson, Joelette Ross, Pam Ross, and Betty Stevenson.**

### Elders

Doug Lyles	703-9971
Sonny Rommelman	527-8956
Lonnie Woodruff	703-8161
Bob York	354-6891

### Ministers

Mark Ray 270-703-1134  
[bentonspreacher@gmail.com](mailto:bentonspreacher@gmail.com)

Travis Terrell 270-703-1332  
[sundropyouth@yahoo.com](mailto:sundropyouth@yahoo.com)

### DEACONS

Scott Chambers	906-5944	Brent Lents	205-7566	Matt Ross	527-8705
<i>Widows</i>		<i>Visitors, Welcome &amp; Follow-up</i>		<i>Worship</i>	
Karon Crocker	527-7534	Aaron Lyles	559-4207	Byron Rudd	527-1533
<i>Office</i>		<i>5th Grade and Under</i>		<i>Sound</i>	
Kevin Farley	527-2409	Jared Morgan	577-8276	Phillip Rudd	527-3682
<i>Worship Assignments</i>		<i>Foreign Mission</i>		<i>WITB Radio</i>	
Chris Gunn	703-6112	Jason Perry	906-5354	Jerry Sells	527-1477
<i>Middle &amp; High School</i>		<i>Prison Ministry</i>		<i>Library &amp; Christian Scholarship</i>	
Randy Jackson	493-0220	Luke Phillips	703-7681	Paul Thurman	527-3773
<i>Widows</i>		<i>5th Grade and Under</i>		<i>Cemetery &amp; Church Finance</i>	
Jason Jones	703-0751	Scott Phillips	703-2227	Dennis Tucker	527-3948
<i>Kids First</i>		<i>Technology</i>		<i>Kitchen Supplies &amp; Furniture</i>	
Jeff Jones	527-3017	Gerald Rainey	703-0465	Don Walker	205-2096
<i>Children's Education</i>		<i>Outside Grounds</i>		<i>Special Events</i>	
Jim Kelley	703-1897			Cory Westerfield	437-3872
<i>Benevolent</i>				<i>After School</i>	

# NEWS

We are in the process of selecting new Elders for the Church. If you have someone you would like to recommend just give the man's name to one of the Elders.

Luke Janiec and Zach Martin will be going on a Mission trip to Guyana, South America this coming summer. In order to raise funds for this trip, the men would greatly appreciate helping with any odd jobs or yard work. Please contact Luke or Zack if you are interested in helping out.

On March 5<sup>th</sup> there will be a Mens Breakfast at 7:30am in the gym. If you are interested in attending, please see Mark Ray.

The Benton CoC Gospel Meeting will be held April 17<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> with Orpheus Heyward to speak! Invite your friends!

## On the Calendar

### Sunday, February 21:

9:00 Morning Worship  
 10:15 Bible Class  
 5:00 Evening Worship

### Monday, February 22:

6:00 Food Pantry

### Wednesday, February 24:

5:30 Mid-Week Potluck  
 6:30 Mid-Week Services

## Birthdays

February 21 Julia Caldwell  
 Jayson Janiec  
 Cody Lovett  
 February 22 Bill Lyles  
 Scott Phillips  
 February 23 Don Owens  
 February 24 Laney Beth Jones  
 February 25 Alyce Rudd  
 Janie Turner  
 February 26 Matt Ross  
 Carlen Whirley

## Care Crew - Feb. 22nd:

Mac & Cheese and Jelly  
**Please remember your pledge!**

## Bible Classes

### Sunday 10:00

Aud Gospel of John Mark Ray  
Rm 51 Modern Parenting Doug Lyles  
Rm 52 Colossians Bob York  
Rm 35 New Converts Sonny Rommelman

### Wednesday 6:45

Aud Genesis Mark Ray  
Rm 51 The Christian & Violence Jared Morgan & Jeff Jones  
Rm 52 The Life of David Sandra Stevenson

## Our Record

February 14, 2016

Sunday AM	223
Bible Study	N / A
Sunday PM	N / A
Contribution	\$6,857.73
YTD Actual	\$ N / A
YTD Budget	\$ N / A

*Our Theme For This Year Is*  
**Into the Word...Unto the World**

1. Pick up a copy of the "Go & Grow" list in the foyer and hang it somewhere you will always see it and be reminded of it. This is a way to encourage us to do good works.
2. As you do your bible reading this year, place a penny in the jar in the foyer for each chapter you read. This will help us see our progress in bible reading as a congregation.

**AM Service**

Welcome: Chris Gunn  
 Song Leader: Scott Phillips  
 Opening Prayer: Kendall Stevenson  
 Lord's Supper & Offering: Jason Perry  
 Lord's Supper:

Sean Janiec	Seth Janiec
Luke Janiec	Mitch Lovett
Jermi Redden	Mickey Mathis
Nathan Ray	Bryce Rudd

Scripture Reading: Bob York

***Matthew 6:16-18***

Sermon: Mark Ray

***"Prayer & Fasting"***

Shepherd's Benediction: Doug Lyles  
 Greeters: (North) Eddie & Lana Phillips  
 (Center) Billie & Etta Bourland  
 (South) Kevin & Beth Farley

Nursery Attendants: Ann Farley & Beth Farley

Unable to Serve Call: **Mitch Lovett**  
**270-293-1134**

**PM Service**

Shepherd's Welcome: Doug Lyles  
 Song Leader: Mike Darnell  
 Opening Prayer: Van Wood  
 Scripture Reading: Dan Jones

***Ephesians 4:1-7***

Sermon: Mark Ray

***Dealing with Conflict***

Lord's Supper: Collin Gunn  
 Closing Prayer: Dave Simmons  
 Unable to Serve Call: **Randy Jackson**  
**270-493-0220**

**Wednesday 02/24**

Welcome: Chris Gunn  
 Song Leader: J.D. Whirley  
 Speaker: Luke Janiec  
 Unable to Serve Call: **Mike Darnall**  
**270-703-5244**

Lord's Supper to Shut-Ins: Dennis Tucker & Jerry Sells  
 Bus: Bob Hines 994-4765  
 Sound: Jeff Smith  
 Security: Scott Brown

**CONTACT US:**

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**Elder in Charge:** Lonnie Woodruff

**Deacon in Charge:** Jason Jones