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the Community

in Maywood

• ISSUE 5 • September/October • 2008 •

Ministry according to the power at work within us

Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Becoming Maywoodians. During the first week of August, we took our first vacation in about two years. Three days in Wisconsin provided a nice respite from the pressures of “home,” but it also helped us to realize that Maywood had finally begun to feel like home to us. We looked forward to getting back

Depending on who you talk to, there are only two groups of Maywood resident: the ones who proactively contribute to the welfare of the community and everyone else. We desire to be a part of that first group, so we seek out their members, and we believe that God also leads us to them.

Our mutual concerns for certain issues serve as platforms for sharing the true motives for our involvement – that is the radiance of Christ and his people. Likewise, our volunteerism and activism are bridges for dialoguing with people who would otherwise be difficult to access naturally. Our involvement within the existing social infrastructure –community development, education, social services, neighborhood clubs, politics, etc. – is only a pretext for engaging people with Jesus. Pray for how God will use us as he thrusts us into the world, yet exhorts us to be “not of this world.”

The Good Neighbor Platform at Work. Recently, we were out in the neighborhood with a visiting mission team from Fort Wayne, Indiana. While picking up refuse in the streets, neighbors acknowledged their appreciation of us. A few even pointed out the irony that people from another state were here in Maywood doing what residents would not do for themselves. What a great platform for extolling the love of Christ – the reason we serve the community!

Later, we came across a storm damaged home, so we dropped everything and offered our aid to Ms. Emdy. She repeatedly explained that she had no means to pay us, but obviously it wasn’t her money we were after; rather, her praise of Jesus. Funny thing: when all was said and done, Ms. Emdy (who earlier claimed that she had no money) wanted to know to whom she could make out her donation check! The best part is that we continue to receive words of praise from other neighbors who had apparently been looking on that day. Of course, we also direct their praise to where it really belongs – to Him!

As more “community activists” are becoming aware of our presence and our ministry, we are being invited to participate in more of their causes. We’ve been exploring them and will need to make some decisions about those groups whose work best compliment and share our kingdom intentions. Moreover, we desire to bring our valuable spiritual assets to the table to promote and shore up the efforts already underway. Pray for heavenly wisdom and discernment.

On that note, we have become involved in the Maywood Fine Arts Association. On top of our appreciation for the fine arts, we are attracted to this non-profit “community ministry” because the founders/directors are Christians, and their ministry primarily serves Maywood’s children, but secondarily intends to strengthen families. The MFAA is in the middle of their annual fund drive, and I would like to see them receive support from an unexpected source – the Advocates of the Community in Maywood. Would you be up for making a pledge or any size from \$5 and up? Simply email us today with “**MFFA Pledge**” in the subject line and then note the amount of your pledge in the body of the email. We’ll submit checks on your behalf for now, and have you send checks as soon as you get a chance. In an era when many believe that the Church only wants their money, I believe that this is a great opportunity for the Church to tangibly “give” to the community.

What’s Coming? Our ongoing work with kids through BBC has revealed that a good number of them either rarely attend or don’t regularly attend Sunday morning services. In response to this obvious need, we are preparing to launch **Kid’s Church** in October. With all the difficulties we have faced in assembling adults in our neighborhood, perhaps God will use **Kid’s Church** to present a non-threatening worship environment for “kids” of all ages. PLEASE PRAY WITH US concerning this new strategy to reach and invite more neighbors into **the Community!**

In the coming weeks, we will be aggressively pursuing some important leads at at least two college campuses in order to start college ministries. What’s different about our intentions? We are ultimately attempting to plant college churches. Shhh! It’s a secret, so don’t tell. However, please pray earnestly and boldly that **The Community@(insert college name)** will be a glorious reality.

Check out the new look of **RadiantBride.org!** We’ve also added some additional features such as a “**Baby Shower**” page. It’s probably not what you think. Also, take a look at our photos. **Radiantbride.org** is the place to go for the latest news, story details, prayer requests, and more.

This is the tip of the iceberg. Keep up with us at **RadiantBride.org**.

Prayer & Praises @ theCommunity

Be informed about our needs and current activities by visiting www.radiantbride.org. Click on “community prayer,” and present our requests before to God. What we’re attempting is impossible by the power and will of man. The state of the existing community has already proven that! We require the supernatural power of God to be manifest all around us! Also, please drop us a note and tell us that you’re praying for us, and we’ll keep telling you how God is answering!

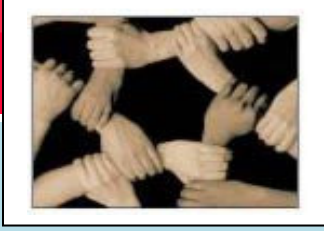
Please send all e-mail to John and Gloria Yi at pastorjohn@radiantbride.org

Send all mail to our new address: **The Community in Maywood, 157 South 17th Avenue, Maywood, IL 60153.**

Phone Numbers: (Home-Office) 708-450-5033; (Mobile) 312-608-0349

Also, for those who are sending contributions, please make them payable to “the Community in Maywood.”

COMMUNITY ADVOCATES



the **Community** is possible by the advocacy of conscientious Kingdom-minded Christians brought together under Jesus, the Christ, God, Head, and Bridegroom. To Him belongs all blessing, glory, wisdom, thanks, honor, power, and might (Rev. 7:12).

Agency Advocacy

Chicago Metropolitan Baptist Association
Illinois Baptist State Association
Korean So. Baptist Churches Assoc. of Illinois
North American Mission Board
and its Nehemiah Project

Corporate Advocacy

AAC Consulting, Hoffman Estates, IL
Baptist Church of Schaumburg, IL
Binneri Presbyterian Church of Richardson, TX
Calvary Presbyterian Church of Wheeling, IL
Chicagoland Community Church of Chicago, IL
First Baptist Church of Anna, IL
First Baptist Church of Metropolis, IL
Immanuel Baptist Church of Chicago, IL
Lee Law Offices, Ltd., Chicago, IL

Individual Advocacy

the **Community** enjoys the support of many individuals who advocate for us here in Chicagoland. While most of our individual supporters are local, we are also blessed by the precious partnership of other individuals throughout North America.

For each and every one of these precious advocates, we thank and praise God. Not wanting to be one who jeopardizes these brothers and sisters of their full reward in the Kingdom, we will withhold their names. We trust that they each know of whom we speak, but more importantly that the Master knows of their generosity and hospitality towards His servants (Mat. 10:11-16).

THEOLOGICAL MUSINGS?

When I attended seminary, one of my favorite theology professors had us write weekly "ditties". Its purpose was to teach students to communicate a response to a rather broad theological question in a brief, yet dense ditty. Since that time, I have continued to periodically write/preach these sermonettes to myself. Well if you will humor me, I'll share them with you. Last time, the question was "Is the Trinity Necessary?" This month I will attempt to address the question,

WHAT DOES THE APPREHENSION OF THE TRINITY HAVE TO DO WITH BEING SPIRITUAL?

**Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find;
knock, and it will be opened to you. Matthew 7:7 (ESV)**

Through the prophet Jeremiah, the Lord declares, "You will seek me and find me when you search for me with all your heart." It should be of no surprise that the parallel sentiment is echoed by the Lord Jesus in Matthew 7:7. The God who is "found" in the Scripture's revelation of God's self is the trinitarian God. Perhaps the most spiritual thing one can do in light of God's self-revelation is to *respond* in the kind of worship which is not coerced or manipulated, but spontaneous – better yet, *natural*. This is not to say that worship should not be thoughtful, orderly, and intelligent. On the contrary, it is one's reflective and *reflexive* apprehension of God's truthful revelation that often produces the weightiest displays of one's honest worship and spirituality.

Consider Simon (not yet "Peter") who contemplates the miraculous catch of fish. It dawns on him who this Jesus might be; he falls down (Lk 5:1-11)! Simon's response reflects the revelation given to him. Note that in light of this profound revelation, he does not leap with excitement and blithely thrust himself at Jesus. The monotheistic Jew, Simon, immediately recognizes that he is a sinful man before the One who is infinitely and qualitatively different than him. Like Isaiah centuries before, Peter's appreciation of the circumstances causes him to come unglued. He recoils in a spiritual seizure! He cries out, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!"

It's pretty obvious that Simon did not apprehend the Chalcedonian definition of the Trinity at this point, but with what he did understand, he wilts before the Presence of God on that Galilean shore! Later, when the disciples are asked, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter alone confesses (and likely after some careful reflection), "You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God" (Mat 16:13-17). Jesus blesses Peter for seeing the Truth, but credits the Father for revealing the Truth.

Jesus' condemnation of the scribes for their blasphemy against the Holy Spirit completes the point (Mat 3:11-30). In Mark's synoptic, Jesus explains that even those who blaspheme the Son of Man can be forgiven, but not those who blaspheme the Holy Spirit. What do the scribes do that is so unforgivable? It is this: the scribes ought to recognize who Jesus is because they too see his miraculous signs. However, in case they missed the signs, the Holy Spirit certainly testifies to the heavenly pedigree of this carpenter's son. In essence, the Scribes call the Spirit's testimony a lie and pronounce that Jesus is in league with the Devil. They do not worship him; they do not bow before him. Instead, they determine in their hearts to defy the natural spiritual proclivity of the creation to surrender to its Creator, and they blaspheme the Son, and therefore His Father, and His Holy Spirit whose testimony is deemed a lie!

What does the Trinity have to do with the believer being spiritual? Everything! The Holy Spirit testifies that the Son proceeds out of the Father. Mere assent is but a shallow and disingenuous response. The only authentically spiritual response of those who apprehend this revelation is a radically transformed life that worships the Triune God!

ADVOCATE for the Community and the Church in Chicagoland

1. **Partner in Missional Service in Maywood** by prayerfully and courageously considering how God may be calling you to join Him in the work that He is already doing in Maywood and places like it. Make Maywood the place for your next short-term mission trip!
2. **Partner through Financial Support of the Community** which seeks Kingdom-minded Christians who understand that the missional strategy of **the Community** coupled with her depressed context makes self-sustainable ministry nearly impossible at the outset. Only through the generous support of advocates like you can the initial financial hurdles be overcome.
3. **Partner in Faithful Prayer** by asking God to enable us and **the Community** to leave the indelible mark of Christ's Kingdom in Maywood and raise up more authentic disciples and congregations who will authentically love God and relevantly love people. Please visit us at radiantbride.org and become familiar with our specific prayer requests.
4. **Partner through Advocacy** in your own local church by promoting relevant missionally-minded engagement strategies for domestic Kingdom ministry and new ministry activities which encourage authentic Christians to incarnationally penetrate the immediate and broader community of lost people with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Do stuff that invites the world's **appropriate** regard for the Bride and her Bridegroom.