

FAQ

Origin:

- Why “JMac?”
 - Because John MacArthur is well-known, using one of his unofficial nicknames helps identify the church’s beliefs and practices. Not only am I nearly identical in belief with him but I also graduated from the seminary where he is president (TMS). Using “jmac” helps identify what this church will be, knowing there are people out there who seek such a church.
- Is this church plant an official John MacArthur or Master’s Seminary church plant?
 - No. Since I am an elder at Collierville Bible Church, this plant has a relational connection to CBC, though it will be fully independent.
- Will Collierville Bible Church be supporting this church plant with money or people?
 - Money? No. People? Maybe. I am not looking for CBC to intentionally send any people to start this plant; but, if anyone desires to come along, that’s great.

Logistics:

- What will the name of the church be?
 - I don’t know.
- Where and when will we meet?
 - I don’t know. I’ve been looking at possible locations for a while.

How we do church:

- Preaching, what will that be like?
 - It will be straight from the Bible, i.e. expositional, verse by verse, with occasional topical sermons from Scripture.
 - I will be using a pulpit and notes. Extreme extemporaneous (w/o notes) preaching tends to lead the preacher to share his thoughts not God’s. My intent will always be to explain the Bible and I need notes to do that well. Tersely put, I’m a Bible teacher not an entertainer. Great preaching is accurate preaching. For the believer, educational preaching is entertaining. Read the Emmaus story of Luke 24:13-35, and give verse 32 a second look.

- Preaching will normally be 25-45 minutes.
- Music, what will that be like?
 - It will hopefully have lots of variety in style and form: solos, quartets, men's and women's choirs, etc. We will certainly employ a significant number of hymns. The important issue is whether God is as honored as He could be. Some recent biblically-solid songs are great; however, music from theologically-questionable sources will be specifically avoided. The intent of singing facts to God to give Him joy is far more important than giving ourselves "feels" (emotionalism).
- Will there be childcare?
 - I hope so. Hopefully, God will provide all kinds of assistance through those drawn to this body of believers.
- Will there be Sunday school?
 - Hopefully. When? I'm not sure. Details about everything need to be worked out.
- Can women serve as pastors?
 - No. Both the responsibility and authority rest on qualified men to teach in the Church.
- Will there be elders or pastors?
 - Yes. And those are just two different terms for the same office. The church will be elder-led with a plurality of elders as soon as possible. Shepherds lead sheep, not the other way around.
- Will this church have deacons and deaconesses?
 - Yes. Those from some backgrounds may see deaconesses as being "liberal." However, the position of deacon or deaconess is one of service not authority. This is especially true in an elder-led church. Deacons and deaconesses should simply be recognized for their service to their churches. This is the exact practice of MacArthur's Grace Community Church, which is definitely not a liberal church.
- Is church membership important?
 - Yes. It identifies the flock for which these shepherds are responsible, etc.
- Is church discipline important?
 - Yes. It encourages both repentance and restoration of relationships. And it helps protect the name of Christ from scandals.

- Who would probably be most happy at this church?
 - Those who are eager for themselves and their family to learn the Bible.
 - Those who are comfortable knowing good doctrine is divisive. See John 17:17.
 - Those who are prepared to potentially hear criticism of a favorite Christian leader whose teaching is not biblical.
 - Those who do not believe in miraculous gifts.
 - Those who want to serve Christ's Church, i.e. other believers.
 - Those who have a missionary's church-planting heart but need to stay in the Memphis area.
 - Those who want a pastor (shepherd) to watch over them. See James 3:1.
 - Those who accept the fact that no church can be perfect for everyone.

Social Activism:

- Do you support "Social Justice" issues?
 - No. Social Justice beliefs like critical race theory, intersectionality, feminism, heterosexism, cissexism, socialism, and similar ideas complicate the gospel, ignore real biblical justice, and are actually deconstructing a society which, up until now, has been friendly to Christianity.
- Is the Church's mission to redeem the culture?
 - No. I am not a proponent of Social Gospel, Liberation Theology, Dominion Theology, etc. Our hope for truth and justice is in Christ's return.
- Should Christians be politically and socially active?
 - Yes. We, along with our fellow-Americans, have a great inheritance of freedoms from our forefathers which is under heavy attack today. We'd be foolish to squander our freedoms, including our ability to speak openly.

Truth and Love Issues:

- Are you charismatic?
 - No. I deny claims of tongues, healings, mystical leadings and impulses, direct communication by God, along with modern-day prophets and apostles. Claiming things which aren't true is anything but godly.

- Are you calvinistic?
 - Yes. The Doctrines of Grace are an excellent summary of salvation truth.
- If you're calvinistic, do you believe in "free will?"
 - No. Men are spiritually dead. This makes them unable to understand the gospel and, therefore, unable to choose Christ without the Holy Spirit's regenerating work. See 1 Cor. 2:14.
 - Yes. Men of course have a natural ability to make everyday choices.
- Do you believe in Evolution or Theistic Evolution?
 - No. The Bible is crystal clear that all of creation took place in six literal days. Also, having death before sin is biblically impossible.
- Do you support gay "marriage" and other moral issues like transgenderism?
 - No. Those are sins. They attack and deface God's design.
- Has the Church (Christianity) replaced Israel?
 - No. God will keep the promises He made to Israel.
- Will you baptize babies?
 - No. We will practice believer's baptism.
- Should Christians share the gospel as opportunities arise and try to make opportunities?
 - Yes. Absolutely.
- Should Christians be characterized not only by love of truth but also a love of each other and even a love for the lost people around us?
 - Yes. See Gal. 6:10. Helping others has always been a characteristic of Christians.
- Will the leadership foster friendliness, kindness, thoughtfulness, and a practice of the "one-anothers" found in the Bible?
 - Yes. Absolutely.