



The eNewsletter

December 3, 2015

A publication of Covenant Presbyterian Church, 8451 East Brainerd Road, Chattanooga, Tennessee 37421
423.899.5377 www.covenantchattanooga.org

From the Pen of the Senior Pastor...

Looking Ahead...

December 5

Men's Breakfast

December 6

Lord's Supper Celebrated
Congregational Meeting
Sunday School
Children's Choir Program

December 7

Ladies' Monday Night Bible Study

December 9

Wednesday Night Supper
Wednesday Night Activities
Covenant Corps *Superfly* Party
Youth *Superfly* Christmas Party
Session Meeting

December 10

Ladies' Thursday Bible Study

December 11

Women's Christmas Dinner

December 12

Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

December 13

Morning Worship
Sunday School
Missions Committee
Diaconate Meeting
Adult Choir Program

December 15

Mother's Encouragement Group

December 16

Caroling & Dessert

December 17

Ladies' Thursday Bible Study
Memorial Hospital Lunch

December 18

Ladies' Friday Bible Study

December 20

Morning Worship
Sunday School
Membership Sunday

December 24

Church Office Closed -
Christmas Eve
Lessons & Carols

December 25

Church Office Closed -
Christmas

We are a people defined by our history. Christianity maintains that what Jesus did for us in the past defines both our present and our future. If there is no resurrection in the past, our faith is useless. The same could be said for the incarnation, the crucifixion, or the ascension. Much like the Exodus for Israel; without these historical events we would not be a people at all.

Because of this, the church has seen fit to mark time by the major events of Christ's redemptive work. These past events make us who we are in the present. The history we recall is not just the story of Jesus but our story as well. So much so, Paul could say, "I have been crucified with Christ." He could tell the church, "you died and your life is hidden with Christ in God." Teaching like this only makes sense if the personal history of Christ has somehow enveloped and eclipsed our personal story. Through faith, His birth, life, death and resurrection are now our life story and what previously defined us, defines us no longer.

Historically, Advent, which means arrival, was a time to consider the coming of the Lord. Before celebrating the first coming of our Lord at Christmas, the church remembered the promise that the One who formerly came in humility would come again in power and glory. The traditional themes of Advent have been the second coming, repentance, renewal and patient waiting. In light of the promised return, the church used this season for reflection, repentance, and rededication to wait with vigilance for our Lord's return. The texts used in the early weeks are often prophetic, and the characters involved are often confrontational; men like Isaiah, Malachi, John the Baptist, and Jesus Himself. Their message will show why the God-Man's coming is necessary; man's situation is so dire, that God, literally, steps into the story.

Many in our time still celebrate the Advent season, but often times remove some of the shock intended. I can get an Advent calendar at Starbucks. Unfortunately, all the grittiness of Advent has been replaced with

chocolates and inspirational sayings. Don't misunderstand, chocolate is awesome, but Advent done well gives us the Baptist in camel's hair calling from the wilderness, not chocolates and warm cocoa as we get around a wreath stripped of meaning.

Advent offers, in direct confrontation with our cultural spirit, a different rhythm of life. We are already inundated with an endless stream of ads, catalogues and events that make time for reflection hard to come by. Advent's call to take personal inventory has been replaced by a time to find what deals the seller has in inventory. We all nod here and agree that this is *not the reason for the season*, but without a strategy to actually confront the flood of consumerism, we will simply be carried away with it (and not just in December). Doing nothing won't help!

So what do we do? Advent is a deliberately targeted renewing of our minds in the midst of the frenzy. Through focusing on the Scriptural themes above, Advent confronts areas of our own unbelief and exhorts us not to get caught off-guard. It exposes, as false the idea that man can fix himself and his world, and states plainly that the problems we face will require God in flesh to step into history again.

People living in real brokenness, need real answers. The culture has offered us her holiday solutions for what ails us. And yet, even after all the presents are unwrapped and our debt has increased, I suspect most people still haven't found what they are looking for. While I believe our Christmas celebration should be as joy filled and (children take note) gift filled as possible, the way we celebrate must be different in substance. Who more than Christians should understand the profundity of gift giving? But to understand the hilarity of God's gift, we must see how needy and underserving the recipients. Advent serves us in this way and reminds us of the ongoing nature of our need so that when the day of celebration arrives it will feel like a good party should.

~Pastor Pirschel



What's Happening?

Nursery Schedule December 6

Worship

Infants

Rebekah Gernhard
& Kelly Orthner

Creepers

Holly & Ava Lehmann

Toddlers

Scott Orthner
& Brian Lehmann

Floater

Liam Lehmann

Sunday School

Infants

Jessica Greer
& Tara Rimondi

Creepers

Amy Creamer
& Catherine Coffey

Toddlers

Luther & Shirley Allin

December Coordinator:

Joyce Trask

PRAY FOR OUR COLLEGE STUDENTS

Remember our college students as you pray. Many of them are finishing their semesters and studying for exams. Then they will travel home for Christmas.

MEN'S BREAKFAST

The Men's Ministry invites men of all ages to their monthly breakfast on Saturday, December 5, at 8:30 a.m. The speaker is Dee Hobbs, speaking about *Why would I pray about that?* This is a great opportunity for you to bring a neighbor or someone who needs discipling. Nursery is provided.

ADVENT CALENDARS

The Advent Calendars for families with children (through 5th grade) are available for pickup at the Welcome Center.

CHILDREN'S CHOIR CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Come enjoy the children's hard work and presentation of *The Christmas Carol Special* this Sunday evening, December 6, at 6:00 p.m.

SANCTUARY CHOIR CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Post Tenebras Lux, From Darkness Into Light is presented Sunday evening, December 13, at 6:00 p.m. Come join together as we celebrate the birth of our Savior and King.

WOMEN'S MINISTRY CHRISTMAS DINNER

We are looking forward to seeing all CPC ladies and guests for a festive evening on Friday, December 11. The cost is \$10.00 for adults and \$5.00 for girls (8 years and under). Sunday is the last day to sign up, please come by the Women's Table in the lobby to register.

The WM Council is collecting baby items at the Christmas Dinner for *Choices*. They are in need of all baby items, but especially new or gently used cribs and baby diapers, size 2 and 3.

PRISON MINISTRY ORIENTATION

Are you interested in joining other CPC men in rewarding ministry work at Walker State Prison? The next training/orientation session takes place at First Presbyterian Church (Chattanooga) on Saturday, December 12, 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. For more details, contact Tim Owens or Rich Dekinger.

SNL

SNL is not meeting in the month of December and will resume January 10.

DIRECTORY UPDATES

Please make the following changes in your CPC Membership Directory:

Jesse & Lenny Pirschel

1112 Westwood Avenue, Chattanooga TN 27405

Linda Bennett

6220 Shallowford Rd, Apt 176,
Chattanooga TN 37421

Tim & Kristin Sotelo

Cell Phone (husband)423.637.1776

Cell Phone (wife)423.505.6099

Bruce Spencer

Emailsbsuga57@epbfi.com

NEW MEMBER

Frances Lowe

Frances is the wife of Tom Lowe

YOUTH CHRISTMAS PARTY

Trending Now and Route 68 are joining the Kids Ministry at *SuperFly*, December 9, from 6:45 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Cost is \$5 per person. Be sure to have a waiver signed by parents prior to attending or come early to fill out the form. No transportation provided.

COVENANT CORPS SUPERFLY PARTY

December 9 is our SUPERFLY party!!!! If your child/children said their required number of catechisms, we would love for you to bring them to *SuperFly* at 6:45 p.m. on Wednesday, December 9, so we can get all checked in and ready to jump by 7:00 p.m. The church will be paying for them to jump. Parents must fill out a *SuperFly* waiver form for each child and adult before they can jump. There are waiver forms available at the Welcome Center. Remember to bring the signed waiver form with your child to *SuperFly*! We will be jumping from 7:00 p.m. to 7:45 p.m. and then our entire group will be meeting in the *SuperFly* parent lounge area for an awards ceremony from 7:45 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. We look forward to celebrating all your children's hard work of memorization at *SuperFly* on **December 9, at 6:45p.m.**

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

With the help of many volunteers, we were able to deliver 166 shoebox gifts to the drop off location to minister God's love to many precious children. THANK YOU for everyone's support!

WEDNESDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY

Pastor Pirschel's Wednesday Night Bible Study has been postponed for December and will resume January 6.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT SUPPER

There is no Wednesday Night Supper next week, December 9, as originally planned. The next supper is scheduled for January 6.