



# The eNewsletter

January 14, 2016

A publication of Covenant Presbyterian Church, 8451 East Brainerd Road, Chattanooga, Tennessee 37421  
423.899.5377 [www.covenantchattanooga.org](http://www.covenantchattanooga.org)

## From the Pen of the Senior Pastor...

### Looking Ahead...

#### January 15

Ladies' Friday Bible Study

#### January 17

Morning Worship  
Sunday School  
Membership Sunday  
Diaconate Meeting  
Handbell Ensemble  
SNL

#### January 19

Mother's Encouragement  
Group

#### January 20

Wednesday Night Supper  
Parent U  
Wednesday Night Activities  
Session Meeting

#### January 21

Ladies' Thursday Bible Study  
Memorial Hospital Lunch

#### January 22

Men's Retreat

#### January 23

Men's Retreat

#### January 24

Morning Worship  
Sunday School

#### January 27

Wednesday Night Supper  
Wednesday Night Activities

#### January 28

Ladies' Thursday Bible Study

#### January 30

Youth Bowling Party  
Martinez Wedding Reception

#### January 31

Morning Worship  
Sunday School  
Church Wide Prayer Meeting

#### February 1

Ladies' Monday Night Bible  
Study

#### February 2

Mother's Encouragement  
Group  
Women's Council Meeting

It does not take long to realize that at Covenant we take worship seriously. From the aesthetics of the building, to the form of the service, it is clear we seek to maintain a certain reverence. In fact, no small number of you are here for that very reason. The lack of reverence found in some American worship has become the norm to such an extent, that Hank from the cartoon *King of the Hill* is forced to say of it, "Can't you see you're not making Christianity better, you're just making rock 'n roll worse". Anyone who is not able to poke a bit of fun at some of what passes for worship just isn't looking hard enough and, in many cases, having a laugh is good and right so to do.

There is a potential danger in this though. The danger is that we mistakenly begin taking ourselves too seriously in the process. There is no hope in battling the childish by running roughshod over the childlike. There is no salvation in fighting the good fight against the jester by posing as an undertaker. The only thing more impish than the person who cannot perceive what things should be taken seriously, is the one who takes everything too seriously. Or worse still, the one who takes himself supremely serious. In fact, our worship is designed to help us battle this very temptation.

Nothing makes my heart swell more than when I stand with the congregation of the righteous, resolute, and rigid and declare that I do, in fact, believe in *God the Father Almighty*. I still get misty at times when I hear the benediction proclaimed over God's people or the Gloria sung with the vigor of those hoping to add just a little more volume to the angelic choir. I find the ministers robe majestic and the words of pardon sweeter than the honeycomb. My hope is that we would all find these things overwhelmingly attractive. But I do not want it to be because we are so much more serious than the folks *over there*. Rather, I pray it will be because we know

how dirty, how frail, how broken we really are. It should give us great joy to be invited into something so much more regal and stately than our biological heritage deserves.

Think about it. Some of us yelled at the kids on the way to service, yet God invited us into the congregation of the just and gave us words to speak that are not our own; just as He gave us a righteousness that is not our own. Some of us struggled all week wondering if we are worthwhile, and God calls you into His presence and names in ways that far exceed your own self-perception. The beauty of corporate worship is that it gives us the blessed permission to forget ourselves. While worship itself is serious, one of its greatest benefits is the freedom it grants us to stop taking ourselves, and our natural bent to erect and protect our own kingdom, seriously. It does this by exposing who we actually are, while at the same time, reminding us that in spite of that our lives are hidden in Christ.

Therefore, when you look out and see some childishness in current Christendom, go ahead and laugh a bit. But as your laughing, remember you aren't laughing at them, you are laughing with them. By God's grace we may have left some of the silliness behind, but before we get too smug, we must remember that there remains plenty in us that is downright laughable. We admit as much in the confession of sin every week. Thanks be to God that we are also reminded through the gospel preached and eaten, that Christ is sufficient to cover the worst of us. I pray our worship continues to make us a group that takes seriously a God this holy and merciful; while also making us a group of people who believe what the gospel says about us sufficiently to know that we need not take ourselves too seriously.

~Pastor Pirschel



## What's Happening?

### Nursery Schedule January 17

#### Worship

##### Infants

Esther McEachern  
& Lisa Grant

##### Creepers

Kristin Sotelo  
& Kate Lambeth

##### Toddlers

Jonah Harris  
& Elijah Harris

##### Floater

Isaiah Harris

#### Sunday School

##### Infants

Dusty & Rachel Kemp

##### Creepers

Sarah & Maggie Wade

##### Toddlers

John Southworth  
& Vangie Wykoff

#### January Coordinator:

Tammy Higgins

### WEDDING RECEPTION

Mr. and Mrs. Dustin Kemp have the pleasure of announcing the marriage of their daughter, Chloe Carter to Chris Martinez. Please join Mr. and Mrs. Martinez in the celebration of their marriage at the wedding reception on Saturday, January 30, at 6:00 p.m. in Schum Fellowship Hall.

### SUNDAY SCHOOL

Pastor Pirschel continues his combined Sunday School class, *A Conversation on Corporate Worship*, in the Sanctuary on January 17 and January 24. Refreshments are available in Schum Fellowship Hall, but please do not bring food into the Sanctuary.

### HANDBELL ENSEMBLE BEGINS AGAIN

If you are interested in making music, being a part of an ensemble, and giving your biceps and triceps a workout, your day is coming! Handbell Ensemble rehearsals will start this Sunday, January 17, at 4:30 p.m. We will rehearse twice a month, and welcome anyone Middle School age and up regardless of experience. To learn more and to show interest, contact Jeremy Gaines at [jgaines@covenantchattanooga.org](mailto:jgaines@covenantchattanooga.org).

### YOUTH BOWLING

All High School and Middle School Youth are invited to go bowling at Pinstrikes, for \$10, on Saturday, January 30, 12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.

### CHURCH WIDE PRAYER MEETING

Spend some time in prayer with your church family. On Sunday, January 31, come pray together in Schum Fellowship Hall from 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

### YOUTH SUPER BOWL PARTY

All High School and Middle School Youth are invited to Chris and Reba Gregory's home for a Super Bowl Party, February 7, 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

### PRAYER CALENDAR

The updated Prayer Calendar is available for pickup at the Welcome Center.

### MEN'S RETREAT

*Real men, doing real life, with real challenges, through a real God.* Men's Retreat is January 22-23, at Camp Vesper Point, with Pastor Pirschel as the speaker. Cost: \$65 per man, \$100 maximum per family, a great opportunity for families of men. Open to High School freshman and older. Includes two meals and snacks. Please register at the Men's Ministry table. This Sunday, January 17, is the last day to sign up.

### VALENTINE DINNER

The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Valentine Dinner and Cake Auction, benefitting the 2017 choir mission trip to Belarus, will be held Friday, February 5, at 6:30 p.m. This is a must-do social event in the life of the church. Please register, space is limited and fills up fast.

### WEDNESDAY NIGHT SUPPERS

Wednesday Night Suppers are served from 5:30 p.m. until 6:40 p.m. The suggested donation for adults is \$4 and \$2.50 for children ages 5 to 11. Children 4 and under eat for free, and the maximum family donation is \$15.

For the month of January, the following shepherding groups have clean-up duty: J. Gaines, J. Brown, M. Griggs, T. Wright, T. Lowe, and T. Gaither. We will contact you weekly by email to see if you are available to help.

### WEDNESDAY NIGHT MENU

January 20	Chili (red or white) and Cornbread
January 27	Stromboli
February 3	Jambalaya Pasta (Mac 'n Cheese for kids)
February 10	Breakfast
February 17	Baked Chicken and Cheesy Grits
February 24	Pork Enchiladas