



# The eNewsletter

August 25, 2016

A publication of Covenant Presbyterian Church, 8451 East Brainerd Road, Chattanooga, Tennessee 37421  
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## Looking Ahead...

### August 26

Mother's Encouragement  
Group: Imagination Station

### August 28

Morning Worship  
Sunday School  
Ladies Kick-Off  
Youth Leadership Team

### August 31

Wednesday Night Supper  
Wednesday Night Activities

### September 4

Lord's Supper Celebrated  
Sunday School  
Instrumental Ensemble  
Rehearsal

### September 5

Office Closed - Labor Day

### September 6

Women's Council Meeting

### September 7

Wednesday Night Supper  
Wednesday Night Activities  
Session Meeting

### September 8

Ladies Thursday Bible Study  
Ladies Movie Night

### September 9

PCA Women's Retreat Begins

### September 11

Morning Worship  
Sunday School  
Missions Committee Meeting  
MS/HS Youth Hiking

### September 13

Mother's Encouragement  
Group

### September 14

Wednesday Night Supper  
Wednesday Night Activities

### September 15

Memorial Hospital Lunch  
Ladies Thursday Bible Study

### September 17

Men's Breakfast

### September 18

Morning Worship  
Sunday School  
Diaconate Meeting  
Youth Leadership Team

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

About 8 years ago I sat across a table from a young man who told me, in all earnestness, that he could not, as a matter of moral conscience, follow the God of Scripture. What was most troubling to me was that he did not doubt the existence of God, rather he doubted the goodness of God. The issue that slowly pushed him to this point was the troubling nature of evil in this life; the heartache, tragedy, and, worst of all, the travesties perpetrated on the weak and undeserving. It was clear to him evil was real. And if evil was real and God was real, it seemed somebody had some explaining to do.

This is exactly what philosopher David Hume wanted answered in his famous presentation of the problem of evil. Hume writes, "Is He willing to prevent evil, but not able? Then is He impotent. Is He able, but not willing? Then is He malevolent. Is He both able and willing? Whence then is evil?" Hume wants to know how God can be both all-good and all-powerful and yet evil exists. If God is all powerful, then surely He could prevent it. But, apparently, He does not. If God does not prevent evil, then how can we call Him an all good God? If God wants to prevent all evil but cannot, then how can we call Him all powerful? Philosophically speaking, this is a troubling argument. Experientially speaking, it is more troubling still.

Those who have experienced the type of evils in life that don't make their way into polite conversation know this better than anyone. "How could God?" It is a real question that boils up in humanity when seemingly senseless and ruthless brutality is witnessed or experienced. For Elie Weisel, it was the gruesome incarnations of evil that he witnessed during the Holocaust which, when all was said and done, *murdered* his God. Evil is real. The pain and damage it inflicts on the lives of men is real. And for some, it destroys their faith in God.

It is a problem we as Christians must face. It is inescapable if you take both the Bible and real life seriously. Playing Pollyanna's *glad game* won't make the hard questions go away. So how do we answer? We must answer as the Bible answers, saying no more and no less. The Bible clearly tells us that God is in control of everything without exception. The Bible also tells us that God is good and that all His ways are right. The Bible tells us that evil

exists and that God, while ordaining everything, never sins. To our human understanding those things cannot all be true. If God ordains everything, including the bad things, how can God not be guilty of wrongdoing?

I will use our recent sermon on Joseph as an example. Joseph's brothers committed evil against him. Yet, at the end of the story, Joseph confesses, "you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good" (Genesis 50.20). We see here two realities. One, his brother's deeds were truly evil. Two, God, who ordains all the ways of men, was using their evil actions for a good end. Biblically speaking, David Hume's syllogism has a logical resolution. God is all powerful. God is completely good. Evil exists. Therefore, the all good, all powerful God, must have a good end and intention for the evil that exists.

That might sound a bit cold and sterile so let's put flesh on it. The flesh of God Himself. It is in the action of God incarnate that the problem of evil is both presented and resolved. The most heinous action in human history was when sinful men crucified the Lord of glory. Men of evil intent framed an innocent and murdered Him in a tortuous manner. This innocent also happened to be their Maker. Evil of all evils stands before us in the Godforsaken God of the cross. Was this God's plan? We all gladly acknowledge that it was. In the cross, we see God ordaining an event that is clearly evil and yet we call it good. We do this because with the revelation of God and the larger view of history we see the intention of God was blessing, even in the midst of tragedy. In fact, the blessing came because of the tragedy.

The mystery of the cross is the only answer to the problem of evil. It is an answer because it shows that while man's intentions are evil, God's intentions are good even when evil actions are involved. Even more, it is an answer because it shows us the same God who is charged with misconduct because evil exists in this world, is the sort of God who took on flesh to endure the worst evil had to offer in order to put it to death forever. While we may not be able to fully comprehend this God, we can fully trust Him in the midst of the mystery of evil.

~Pastor Pirschel



## What's Happening?

### Nursery Schedule August 28

#### Worship

##### Infants

Jay & Susan Helton

##### Creepers

Will & Melissa Horton  
& Andrea Waldecker

##### Toddlers

Mindy Horton  
& Katherine Fisher

##### Floater

Macie Horton

### Sunday School

##### Infants

Cayce Weekley  
& Anna Yonkofski

##### Creepers

Amy Maclellan  
& Lucy Cleveland

##### Toddlers

Anna Steere  
& Rachel Miller

### August Coordinator:

Gretchen Brown

### CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

A Congregation Meeting has been called by the Session, on September 11, following the Morning Worship Service. The purpose of this meeting is:

- 1) Officer Nomination Suspension for 2016.
- 2) Approval of the finance method for the Nursery Expansion.

### LADIES FALL KICK-OFF

Ladies, on Sunday, August 28, the CPC Women's Ministry is hosting a Fall Kick-Off gathering in the Parlor during the Sunday School hour. Please drop by before, during, or after Sunday School to enjoy some refreshments and fellowship while hearing about the studies as well as events planned for the coming year.

### COVENANT CORPS

SLIDE back into Covenant Corps (for children ages 3 years old through 5<sup>th</sup> grade) on August 31, from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Enjoy fun water games, including a giant slip 'n slide and sprinklers, during Covenant Corps' first session. Bring a towel and a change of dry clothes.

### WEDNESDAY NIGHT PROVERBS STUDY

Pastor Caines and Elder Kent Brown begin teaching a class on Proverbs, Wednesday Nights, starting August 31, in the Perseverers Classroom.

### 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 August, the following Shepherding Groups have clean-up duty: K. Brown, J. Brown, M. Griggs, J. Hildebrand, M. Lander, E. Mullinax, and T. Wright.

### WEDNESDAY NIGHT MENU

August 31	Thai Red Curry (mild) Cheesy Pork and Rice for kids
Sept 7	Baked Potato Bar
Sept 14	Italian Stromboli
Sept 21	Taco Salad
Sept 28	Creamy Penne Pasta

### MOTHER'S ENCOURAGEMENT GROUP

The Mother's Encouragement Group (MEG) is having a playdate at Imagination Station on Friday, August 26, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

The first meeting of MEG is September 13, at 10:00 a.m. in the Parlor. Starting in October, MEG will meet the first and third Tuesday of each month, at 10:00 a.m. Please contact Beth Griggs with any questions at [bwgriggs@comcast.net](mailto:bwgriggs@comcast.net).

### BIRTHDAY/ANNIVERSARY CALENDAR

The September Birthday/Anniversary Calendar is available for pickup at the Welcome Center.

### LADIES' THURSDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

Ladies' Thursday Morning Bible Study resumes September 8, at 10:00 a.m. Bev Mealor is teaching again, continuing the study on Genesis. Books are \$9. Nursery is provided. Please contact Bev Mealor for more information at 423.505.4048.

### HIKING CLOUDLAND CANYON

Youth and their families are invited to hike Cloudland Canyon together on September 11. Bring your lunch and drinks, and be ready to leave the CPC parking lot at 12:30 p.m.

### PRISON MINISTRY

Are you interested in joining other CPC men in a rewarding one-on-one mentoring ministry at Walker State Prison? The next training/orientation session takes place at Grace Presbyterian Church (Dalton) on Saturday, September 3, 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Please contact Rich Denking, Tim Owerms, or Nathan Bowers for more details.

### GIRLS NIGHT OUT MOVIE NIGHT

Girls Night Out Movie Night is Thursday, September 8, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at Boo Mullinax's home to watch *The War Room*.

### CHOICES BANQUET

Choices' Annual Fundraising Banquet is Thursday, September 8, at the Chattanooga Convention Center. For more details, please visit [www.choiceschattanooga.org](http://www.choiceschattanooga.org).

### BETHANY CHRISTIAN SERVICES

Bethany's Annual Banquet is Tuesday, October 4, at Calvary Chapel. For more details visit [www.bethany.org/chattanooga](http://www.bethany.org/chattanooga).