



# The eNewsletter

December 15, 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 Elder John Wykoff...*

### **Looking Ahead...**

#### **December 18**

Morning Worship  
Sunday School  
Sanctuary Choir Christmas  
Program  
CPC Reception

#### **December 20**

Mothers' Encouragement  
Group

#### **December 21**

Caroling & Desserts

#### **December 23**

Church Office Closed -  
Christmas

#### **December 24**

Lessons & Carols

#### **December 25**

Morning Worship

#### **December 26**

Church Office Closed -  
Christmas

#### **December 30**

Church Office Closed - New  
Years Eve

#### **January 1**

Morning Worship  
Sunday School

#### **January 2**

Church Office Closed - New  
Years

#### **January 4**

Wednesday Night Supper  
Wednesday Night Activities  
Session Meeting

#### **January 5**

Ladies' Thursday Bible Study

#### **January 8**

Morning Worship  
Officer Installation  
Sunday School  
Missions Committee Meeting  
Wilson Wedding Reception

#### **January 9**

Ladies' Monday Night Titus  
Bible Study  
Ladies' Monday Night Job  
Bible Study

*The Little Drummer Boy*, I used to think, is a song for children only. The simplicity of the diction, the overt onomatopoeia ("pa-rum-pum-pum-pum") the personification of animals ("the ox and lamb kept time") - all are trademarks of children's songs. Yet something has awakened a renewed delight in me for this little nativity ballad. I find in the image of a small boy beating his toy drum with utmost sincerity a symbol, an icon of Christian Vocation.

*"Come!" They told me,  
"Our newborn King to see.  
Our finest gifts we bring  
To lay before the King  
So to honor Him when we come."*

Worldly vocation begins with introspection and ends with authentication. The beginning and end is found within oneself. But the end of Christian calling is Christ's honor, and the beginning is the great *Venite!* Christian calling is external. Introspection is not absent, however. In response to the summons, Christians do look within themselves to learn what they can lay before the King, but they know that even their finest gifts were never really theirs in the first place. So their introspection is turned outside in: the question is, what has God equipped me with? Authentication is also part of Christian calling. But Christians do not seek self-validation. It is the King's smiling approval, saying, "Well done! Yes, yes, well done!"

*I have no gift to bring  
To lay before the King.*

I take it to be a matter of settled doctrine and solid philosophy that

none of us possesses anything of which God is in want. How do you serve Him who is all-sufficient? How do you glorify Him whose glory fill the heavens? In short, what gifts can we give the one born in Bethlehem?

*I played my drum for Him.  
I played my best for Him.*

Here is the heart of Christian calling. We take what God has equipped us with, and we use it for all it's worth, *for Him*. "Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord, and not for men" (Colossians 3.23). Laziness, apathy, self-consciousness, and cynicism are poisonous to calling. The antidote is again external. We do not reach deeper within ourselves - that's where the laziness and all the rest come from. We look to the object of our service. We look to God. "I have set the Lord always before me" (Psalm 16.8). Like the boy, we pick up our sticks, tighten our straps, throw our head back, and *beat that drum* with all we've got. "Whatsoever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might." (Ecclesiastes 9.10)

*Then He smiled at me.*

The smile of the King, pleased with our work, is surely all the authentication our hearts desire. But God does more than smile. He takes such delight in us little drummers that He sings His own glad song over us (Zephaniah 3.17). "Well done! Yes, yes. Well done!" But from the first to the last it was God who did it.

~John Wykoff



## What's Happening?

### Nursery Schedule December 18

#### Worship

##### Infants

Esther McEachern  
& Sandi Schreiner

##### Creepers

Kristin, Will,  
& Abby Sotelo

##### Toddlers

Catherine  
& Charlotte Pippin

##### Floater

John Pippin

### Sunday School

##### Infants

Jim & Connie Hildebrand

##### Creepers

Heather Morrison  
& Julia Gracy

##### Toddlers

Craig & Susan Miller

### December Coordinator:

Rebekah Gernhard

### SANCTUARY CHOIR CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

*Good Tidings of Great Joy*, a concert centering upon the message of hope, peace, love, and joy the Incarnate brings to the world, is Sunday, December 18, at 6:00 p.m.

### CPC RECEPTION

The entire church family is invited to a reception, on December 18, following the Sanctuary Choir Christmas Program. This will be a time of fellowship, as well as a chance to say goodbye to the Pirschel family.

If you are able to bring Christmas cookies for this reception, please let Mary Caudle or Gretchen Brown know.

### CAROLING AND DESSERTS

The entire church family is welcome to join together at the church on Wednesday, December 21, at 5:30 p.m. We will break up into small groups to go caroling in various neighborhoods and at local retirement homes. Bring a dessert to share with everyone as we will meet back at the church for desserts and hot drinks after caroling.

### CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

Come celebrate the birth of our Savior on Christmas Eve, December 24, at 5:30 p.m. with a service of Lessons and Carols.

### WEDDING RECEPTION

Everyone is invited to a wedding reception in honor of Mark and Marie (Daly) Wilson on Sunday, January 8, 2017, from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. in Schum Fellowship Hall. They are excited to see everyone. Mark and Marie are registered at Target, Macy's, and Bed, Bath, & Beyond, but gifts are not necessary. If you are interested in helping, please contact Joyce Trask or Judy Foster.

### MEN'S RETREAT

The 2017 CPC Men's Retreat, for men college age and older, is January 20-21 at Johnson Woods Retreat Center. This will be a retreat like no other, *Man-To-Man*. Please register at the Welcome Center or contact Joe Fisher or Doug McEachern for more information. Cost is donations only.

### CHRISTMAS CARD STAMPS

Please remember to save those Christmas card stamps. Deposit them in the mailbox by Pastor Mullinax's office. These used stamps are processed and re-sold with all proceeds going to finance Sunday School curriculum in Latin America.

### YEAR END CONTRIBUTIONS

All end-of-the-year contributions need to be in the church office or postmarked no later than December 31 to be counted as tax-deductible contributions for 2016.

### OFFICE CLOSED

The church office is closed the following days:

Friday, December 23 - Christmas Eve  
Monday, December 26 - Christmas  
Friday, December 30 - New Year's Eve  
Monday, January 2 - New Year's Day

### NO ENEWSLETTER

No eNewsletter will be sent the following days:

Thursday, December 22 - Christmas Eve  
Thursday, December 29 - New Year's Eve

### BIRTHDAY/ANNIVERSARY CALENDAR

The January calendar is available for pickup at the Welcome Center.

### THANK YOU

Thanks to all who helped with Operation Christmas Child this year! You bought items, packed boxes, gave supplies, came to the packing party, loaded the van, delivered to drop off location, wrote checks, and prayed over the boxes. As a result of all of this, 168 precious children will receive a gift of love and hear the gospel. We will let you know when we find out what country our boxes went to. Thanks!

### BUDGET REPORT

Thru December 11:

Budget:	\$1,513,672
Actual:	\$1,290,790
Shortfall:	\$222,882