



The eNewsletter

February 16, 2017

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 Associate Pastor...

Looking Ahead...

February 19

Morning Worship
Sunday School
Instrumental Ensemble
Rehearsal

February 21

Mothers' Encouragement
Group

February 22

Wednesday Night Supper
Wednesday Night Activities

February 23

Ladies' Thursday Bible Study

February 24

Girls Night Out

February 25

HS Youth Game Night

February 26

Morning Worship
Sunday School

March 1

Wednesday Night Supper
Wednesday Night Activities
Session Meeting

March 2

Ladies' Thursday Bible Study

March 4

Men's Breakfast

March 5

Morning Worship
Sunday School

March 6

Ladies' Monday Night
Bible Study - Job

March 7

Mothers' Encouragement
Group
Women's Council Meeting

March 8

Wednesday Night Supper
Youth Leadership Team
Wednesday Night Activities

March 9

Ladies' Thursday Bible Study

As a young Sunday School student, one of my favorite bible stories was the epic encounter on Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18). There, Elijah faces off against 450 prophets of Baal in a contest pitting the God of Israel against the Canaanite god Baal. Which deity would answer the prayers of the respective prophets to consume the altar sacrifice?

This is an incident filled with dramatic tension and awesome displays of power. The Lord answers Elijah with fire from heaven that not only consumes the sacrifice, but also licks up every last drop of water on the saturated offering and in the surrounding trenches. The story ends with the destruction of the prophets of Baal and the peoples' declaration that the LORD is God.

I still love this story, but not for the same reasons I loved it as a youngster. Instead, I love what seems to be an anti-climactic postscript to the story. Despite seeing the glory and power of God on display in such convincing fashion, and winning a great victory, Elijah falls into a depression. Threatened by Queen Jezebel, he runs for his life into the wilderness. There, under a lone broom tree, he prays for God to take his life.

What a surprising turn of events! How could Elijah feel this way? After all, didn't he just see God mightily answer his prayer? We might expect God to reprimand Elijah for feeling defeated, for his lack of faith, for his despair. And yet, the narrative offers no exhortation or chastening. Instead, an angelic messenger ministers to Elijah, urging him to take nourishment prepared for him. Indeed, the angel comes again and feeds Elijah a second time urging him to "Arise and eat, for the journey is too great for you." (1 Kings 19:7b)

Given God's fiery display from heaven in the encounter with the prophets of Baal, we might expect another dramatic display from God. And indeed, as Elijah waits on Mount Horeb, the Mount of God, he experiences a strong wind, a mighty earthquake, and then a consuming fire; but with each of these

cataclysms the narrator repeats a refrain: *The LORD was not in the wind, or the earthquake or the fire.* Instead, the LORD comes to Elijah in a *gentle* whisper. God meets Elijah at the very place of his despair, not with reproach, not with a kick in the behind, but with grace as gentle as a soft breeze.

Like Elijah, there are days when we feel at the height of heights, assured of all answers, and victorious in our daily battles. But there are also days when we need permission to feel badly, when despair seems our only companion and the challenges of life conspire against us. It is deeply encouraging to see that even in this place, God draws near with gentleness.

The gentleness of God on display in Elijah's dark depression is the same God sung about in Psalm 139:7-12 "Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there! If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me and your right hand shall hold me. If I say, 'Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light about me be night,' even the darkness is not dark to you, and the night is bright as the day, for darkness is as light to you."

What comforting news that God is not only available to us when we feel good, but makes His dwelling with us even in the darkness of despair. We often feel in our distress that we simply have to avoid the problem, to quit feeling badly. But, in fact, what is happening is that even in sorrow, even in our despair we have the hope that we are still being drawn by the gracious arms of God into closer communion. Someone has said that what God wants is not so much our victories, but our life in the wilderness. As the story of Elijah bears witness, even in our wilderness God will prepare a meal, provide shelter, and speak gently into our fears.

~Pastor Mullinax



What's Happening?

Nursery Schedule February 19

Worship

Infants

Esther McEachern
& Crystal Middleton

Crawlers

Holly & Ava Lehmann

Toddlers

Brian & Liam Lehmann

Floater

Maggie Middleton

Sunday School

Infants

Alayne Griffin
& Ann Walker

Crawlers

Kate Lambeth

Toddlers

Vangie Wykoff
& Catherine Coffey

February Coordinator:

Catherine Pippin

PASTOR'S CLASS

Pastor Caines is teaching the Pastor's Class the next two weeks, February 19 and February 26. He is teaching on the sacraments.

GIRLS NIGHT OUT

Ladies of CPC, you are invited to a night out of fellowship and dessert at The Hot Chocolatier (on Market Street) on Friday, February 24, at 7:00 p.m. Please contact Colleen Murphy at 423.463.5885 or violingirl86@gmail.com for more information or possible carpool options.

YOUTH GAME NIGHT

High School Youth, please come enjoy an evening of fellowship, food, and games in our newly remodeled Youth Suite. We are playing on Saturday, February 25, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Pizza will be served. Please bring a snack to share.

SUNDAY SCHOOL SWAP

Please note that starting Sunday, February 19, the Calvin & Hobbs Sunday School Class (taught by Jonathan Calloway) is meeting in the Choir Room and the Solomon's Porch Sunday School Class (taught by Ken Henry) is meeting in Schum Fellowship Hall.

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.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT MENU*

February 22	Coq Au Vin
March 1	Cajun Pasta
March 8	Chicken Tikka Masala
March 15	Corned Beef and Potatoes
March 22	Baked Potato Bar
March 29	Stromboli

*Menu subject to change as needed

DIRECTORY UPDATES

Please make the following update to your CPC Membership Directory.

Colleen Murphy

18 Delores Dr, Ft Oglethorpe GA 30742

MARRIAGE RETREAT

The Marriage Retreat is scheduled for April 21-23 at the Oak Haven Resort. The speakers, Ed and Margaret Killen, who are marriage counselors from St. Louis, MO, will be discussing *Love and Marriage: Cultivating Deeper Connection and Intimacy*. Registration required. Cost: \$215, a \$50 deposit required with registration by February 19.

YOUTH SUMMER CAMPS

We have registered our CPC Youth for two summer camps. Both camps are hosted at Covenant College and space is limited. To reserve your spot, you must fill out a form (forms available on Youth Suite bulletin board and in the box outside the Youth Office) and pay a \$50 deposit. All registrations must be turned in to Gretchen Brown.

The Edge, camp for 6th to 8th graders, is June 19-23, and the cost is \$285. *Generate*, the camp for 9th to 12th graders, is July 17-21, and the cost is \$309. For more information contact Gretchen Brown or Tracy Horton.

BALLET

Andrea Gray is offering an *Introduction to Ballet and Creative Movement Class* for ages 3 years old to kindergarten, from March 15 through April 26. Class meets on Wednesdays from 4:45 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. in the Ladies' Sunday School Classroom. Cost is \$50. Sign-up deadline is March 8. Space is limited. Contact Diana Perrel for more information and/or to sign up at dianaperrel@gmail.com.