



The eNewsletter

March 2, 2017

A publication of Covenant Presbyterian Church, 8451 East Brainerd Road, Chattanooga, Tennessee 37421
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From the Pen of the Senior Associate Pastor...

Looking Ahead...

- March 4**
Men's Breakfast
- March 5**
Morning Worship
Sunday School
Congregational Meeting
- 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
- March 11**
Women's Ministry Seminar
Daylight Savings Begins
- March 12**
Morning Worship
Sunday School
Missions Committee Meeting
GUBA
- March 13**
Ladies' Monday Night
Bible Study - Titus
- March 15**
Wednesday Night Supper
Wednesday Night Activities
Session Meeting
- March 16**
Ladies' Thursday Bible Study
Memorial Hospital Lunch
Clothes Swap
- March 19**
Morning Worship
Sunday School
Diaconate Meeting
Instrumental Ensemble
Rehearsal
- March 21**
Mothers' Encouragement
Group
- March 22**
Wednesday Night Supper
Wednesday Night Activities

Boo and I were recently in Florida visiting family and friends. While in Fort Myers, a community where we lived for fourteen years, we dined one evening with three other couples. These folk were all long-time, well-known, and very dear acquaintances. Everything was just right... the food, the company, the recollections, the humor, the conversation.

We all enjoy such gatherings when we invite into our homes those whose companionship is treasured, those with whom we have easy and welcomed connections.

The man in the parable of the great banquet (Luke 14) is no different. There the story is told of an affluent master of ceremonies who had invited a large number of people like himself to dinner. The list was likely distinguished. The guests were no doubt as prosperous socially as they were financially. The invitations had long been sent out and accepted. Places were now set. The table was lavishly prepared. All was ready. Accordingly, this prominent man sent his servant to bring in the guests. But, none would come.

Scholars characterize the culture of Jesus's day as an "honor/shame" society, where one's quality of life was directly affected by the amount of honor or shame socially attributed to him or her. The public eye was paramount. Every interaction either furthered or diminished one's standing in the estimation of the society.

So, in this parable, the master of the banquet had just been deliberately and publicly shamed. The excuses were transparently dishonest. He was treated with the force of contempt. Hearers of this parable would have been anxious to hear how this man would attempt to reclaim his honor. But scandalously, in fact, the master of the feast did not attempt to reverse his public shame. He embraced it!

Turning to the servant, the owner of the house appointed the servant with a new task: "Go out quickly to the streets and

lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and crippled and blind and lame." Returning, the servant reported, "Sir, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room." So the owner of the house responded again, "Go out to the highways and hedges and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled."

The servant is told to do what he must to compel the masses to come, liberating the blind, the lame, and the excluded with an invitation to dine with none other than the master. It is a staggering portrayal of a God who is shamed by the rejection of his people, and yet continues to respond with lavish grace and an earnest invitation into his presence. The owner of the house has opened wide the doors. The feast is ready - and still there is room.

The longing to belong in the right circles is a desire that touches us all. Even so, one only has to watch a group of kids on the playground to see how easily our desire to belong is corrupted by our need to exclude. The inner circle is not inner if there are no outsiders. But in this story, and against conventional propriety, God shatters these lines of demarcation and stratification. The Father forever challenges the notion that His house will be filled only with the rich, the righteous, those without shame.

The banquet is ready and the master's call is to fill his house with the lost, with the rejected, with those who seem out-of-place. The invitation Jesus extends is encompassing enough to find those along any road, any lane, and any isolated place. Whether we find ourselves outside of the circle because we have rejected Him or at the table communing with His guests, it is a thought to digest: the kingdom of God is like a great banquet. God desires to nourish His people. The feast is ready and still there is room.

~Pastor Mullinax



What's Happening?

Nursery Schedule February 26

Worship

Infants

Brenda King
& Rebecca Gernhard

Crawlers

Tim & Bonnie Schoap

Toddlers

Jerry King
& David Gernhard

Floater

Ezra Harris

Check-In Desk

Maggie Middleton

Sunday School

Infants

Diane Lazor
& Lisa Grant

Crawlers

Emily & Cami Calloway

Toddlers

Craig & Susan Miller

February Coordinator:

Catherine Pippin

MEN'S BREAKFAST

The Men's Ministry invites men of all ages to their monthly Men's Breakfast on Saturday, March 4, at 8:30 a.m. in Schum Fellowship Hall. Bill Higgins is speaking on *About My Life Excluding the Witch*. Nursery provided.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

There is a Congregational Meeting scheduled on Sunday, March 5, following the Morning Worship Service. The purpose of this meeting is to name the Session as the Pulpit Committee for our Senior Pastor search. There will also be information regarding a nomination process for the Search Committee, the same process used in May 2014.

WOMEN'S MINISTRY SEMINAR

CPC Ladies, you are invited to our Spring Seminar, *Rooted and Grounded*, on Saturday, March 11, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in Schum Fellowship Hall. Cost is \$5. Please register in the Church Lobby. Nursery provided, please bring a lunch for your child(ren).

LADIES' SUNDAY SCHOOL

The Ladies' Sunday School Class, taught by Marla Neal, is beginning a study on *Gideon*, by Priscilla Schirer, this Sunday, March 5. This class meets in classroom E-106, which is across from the Parlor.

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

DIRECTORY UPDATES

Please make the following update to your CPC Membership Directory.

Render & Linda Caines (no landline)

Cell (husband)..... 423.503.0281
Cell (wife)..... 423.504.5377

NEW MEMBERS

Please make the following additions to your CPC Membership Directory.

Nathan & Elisabetta Cook

Joshua, Josiah, and Jonan
20 Nightshade Lane
Ringgold GA 30736
Home 706.952.1287
Email..... nbcook2000@msn.com

Levi & Corie Crawford

Russell, Rourke*
1008 Park Lake Road
Rossville GA 30741
Cell (husband)..... 256.499.5190
Cell (wife)..... 256.649.0092
Email (husband).....
.....l_crawford@hotmail.com
Email (wife)..... proverb3130@live.com

Tom & Casie Runkle

Liam*, Ethan*
7081 Ely Ford Place
Hixson TN 37343
Cell (husband)..... 423.987.7982
Cell (wife)..... 423.987.8489
Email (husband)..... t2run4@gmail.com
Email (wife)..... casierunkle@gmail.com

Matthew Beatty

Matthew is the 13-year old son of Paul & Carol Beatty.

THANK YOU

Thank you so much for loving me so well during the last several weeks since I fractured my shoulder. Your calls, cards, visits, meals, prayers, rides, acts of service, and support have really ministered to me and to Wil. I truly do feel like I am most blessed. God is graciously answering your prayers and my recovery is going well. Thank you so much for being my beloved family of God! I love you, Judy Foster.