



The eNewsletter

March 9, 2017

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

March 11

Women's Ministry Seminar
Daylight Savings Begins

March 12

Morning Worship
Sunday School
Missions Committee Meeting
Chattanooga's Bach Choir
Mendelssohn's *Elijah*
GUBA

March 13

Ladies' Monday Night
Bible Study - Titus

March 15

Wednesday Night Supper
Youth Leadership Team
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
Songs Old and New:
Service of Signing

March 21

Mothers' Encouragement
Group

March 22

Wednesday Night Supper
Wednesday Night Activities

March 23

Ladies' Thursday Bible Study

March 26

Morning Worship
Sunday School

March 29

Wednesday Night Supper
Wednesday Night Activities

March 30

Ladies' Thursday Bible Study

April 1

Men's Breakfast

April 2

Morning Worship
Sunday School

From the Pen of Elder John Wykoff...

It has been about a year since our congregation began the practice of singing together during the distribution of the elements of the Lord's supper. A third of us is delighted by the new custom. Another third is content to go along, but wonders what it's all about. And a third of us finds it to be a downright nuisance. But everyone, it seems, would welcome an explanation. That's what this article is for - to offer an explanation. I want to give reasons for why we sing at the table.

Although it is an unaccustomed practice for many of us here, singing at Communion is not everywhere strange or novel. Witness, for example, the large number of hymns that have been composed specifically for that purpose. Our own hymnal, *The Trinity Hymnal*, has eleven hymns for Communion. They are listed in the contents page under the heading "The Lord's Supper." (There are several more elsewhere in the hymnal that are simply miscategorized.) The first is the great sixth-century hymn whose title couldn't put it more frankly: *At the Lamb's High Feast We Sing* (#420). The Lutheran Hymnal has twelve communion hymns. The Methodist Hymnal has nineteen. And the Episcopal hymnal (*The Hymnal 1982*) has no fewer than forty-seven communion hymns (and one hundred additional examples of service music for communion). Charles Wesley alone wrote at least one hundred and sixty Lord's Supper hymns. The communion hymns in all these hymnals were written at various times in various places in the Church's life. Set aside, for the moment, arguments about the ancient Jewish custom of singing psalms at the Passover meal, it is rather clear that in the Christian church singing has been associated with the feast of the Lord's table for some time.

Of the communion hymns from our own Presbyterian tradition, one of the best comes from the outstanding Edinburgh churchman Horatius Bonar (whose book *God's Way of Holiness* is a treasure). His communion hymn, *Here O My Lord I See Thee Face to Face* (*Trinity Hymnal* #378) is masterful. Anyone who wants to know more about what communion *does* for us, how God communicates Himself to us through the tangible signs of bread and wine, ought to contemplate this rich hymn: "...Here would I touch and handle things unseen..." It is in this hymn that Bonar gives us one of the loveliest short descriptions of communion. He calls it "the hour of banquet and of song." *The Hour of Banquet and of Song...* How different that expression seems compared to the scene of communion in some services, where the

prevailing impression is bareness, not a banquet; and silence, not a song.

For most of my life the silent partaking of communion was quite customary, and therefore quite difficult to alter. I was always used to a very private and personal manner of taking communion. All heads were bowed. All eyes were closed. Distractions were kept to a minimum. The room may have been full of people, but each was partaking privately. My body may have been next to another, but I may as well have been alone. For my thoughts and contemplations were entirely my own. I was "walking in the garden alone" with my Savior. And I loved this personal and private meditation. Precious were those moments during the distribution when I would contemplate the cost of my salvation and my unworthiness. Little did I realize that this turning inward and shutting out those in the pew around me was the very opposite of the meaning of "communion." I knew my communion with the Savior; I forgot my communion with the saints. I recognized my sin. I recognized my salvation. I failed to recognize the Body.

In the personal, private manner of taking communion our thoughts may be very pious, but the piety is misplaced. There must be in our lives a place of deep, inward contemplation - but the Communion Table is not that place. There must be in our lives a time for silence and solitude - but "the Hour of Banquet and of Song" is not that time. There must be in our lives an occasion to be alone with the Lord - but the Fellowship Meal is not that occasion.

Our denomination strictly forbids private communion. And rightly so! "Private communion" is a contradiction in terms. Whatever communion is - and it is a great many things - it is not private. It is public proclamation. It is a joining of ourselves one to another and altogether to Christ. By withdrawing from those around us, closing our eyes to our brothers, closing our ears to our sisters, and turning inward, we would be forgetting that the Lord's Supper is a fellowship feast. It is a family meal, and we need to recognize the family, the Body of Christ.

We sing together in communion precisely because it knits our hearts and minds together as Christ feeds us. It keeps us from being a room full of separates. We make our voices one. We make our thoughts one. We are one in Christ and one with each other. It is the consummation of worship. It is the great union. It is *communion*.

~John Wykoff



What's Happening?

Nursery Schedule March 12

Worship

Infants

Joyce Trask
& Judy Foster

Crawlers

John & Becky Pearce

Toddlers

Mandi & Drew Johnson

Floater

Logan Johnson

Check-In Desk

TBD

Sunday School

Infants

Lynda Brown
& Grace Morrison

Crawlers

Sherry & Rachel Baierl

Toddlers

Ernie Brown
& Isaiah Harris

February Coordinator:

Tammy Higgins

GUBA

The next High School and Middle School GUBA meeting is Sunday, March 12, at 6:00 p.m. in Schum Fellowship Hall. Parents and families are welcome. Please bring a dessert to share.

MEMORIAL HOSPITAL MINISTRY

Our church has the privilege of being a part of a luncheon ministry at Memorial Hospital. Next Thursday, March 16, we'll provide lunch to families in the surgery waiting room. If you are able to contribute sandwiches, chips, snack cakes, or fruit, please call or email the church office.

CLOTHES SWAP

The CPC Clothes Swap is Thursday evening, March 16, from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. in Schum Fellowship Hall. If you have any questions, please contact Sarah Wade at sarahwade@catt.com.

LADIES' SUNDAY SCHOOL

The Ladies' Sunday School Class, taught by Marla Neal, is beginning a study on *Gideon*, by Priscilla Schirer. This class meets in classroom E-106.

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.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT MENU*

March 15	Baked Potato Bar
March 22	TBD
March 29	Chicken Tikka Masala

*Menu subject to change as needed

ATTENTION

On Wednesday nights, please do not take food throughout the building.

DIRECTORY UPDATES

Please make the following updates to your CPC Membership Directory.

Adam & Millie Sanders

1307 Frederick Drive
Chattanooga TN 37412

Gerald & Donna Schreiner

Email.....geraldschreiner1935@gmail.com

PASTORAL SEARCH

COMMITTEE NOMINATIONS

The nomination forms for the Pastoral Search Committee are available in the Lobby and in the bulletins over the next two weeks. Return completed forms by Sunday, March 19, in the offering plate, a designated box in the Lobby, or to Tom Schreiner (Clerk of the Session) or Gretchen Brown (Executive Assistant to the Pastor). A Congregational Meeting to vote for nominations will be Sunday, April 9.

SONGS OLD AND NEW

Join us on Sunday, March 19, at 6:00 p.m. for a time of reflecting on old songs and hymns while learning new ones, making us more dynamic worshippers.

MEMBERSHIP

If you are interested in becoming a member of CPC, please contact the church office by phone or email to set up an appointment.

THE EDGE SUMMER CAMP

For the Middle School signed up for *The Edge*, please make sure your payments for camp are current. The next payment is due March 15. Please contact Gretchen Brown at 423.899.5377 with any questions.

ADDRESS CHANGE

Please keep us informed of any address, phone, or email changes. We are about to print new directories and we desire to be as current as possible. You may email changes to cpcoffice@covenantchattanooga.org.