



The eNewsletter

December 7, 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...

December 8

Ladies' Christmas Dinner

December 9

Men's Breakfast
Middle School Youth
Christmas Party

December 10

Morning Worship
Sunday School
Youth Praise Team Rehearsal
Children's Christmas Program

December 13

Ladies' Wednesday Morning
Bible Study
Wednesday Night Dinner
Wednesday Night Activities
Covenant Corps Christmas
Party
Session Meeting

December 16

High School Youth Christmas
Party

December 17

Morning Worship
Sunday School
Youth Praise Team Rehearsal

December 19

Mother's Encouragement
Group

December 20

Caroling & Dessert

December 21

Memorial Hospital Lunch

December 23

Youth Service Project

December 24

Morning Worship
Lessons & Carols

December 25

Office Closed - Christmas

December 26

Office Closed - Christmas

December 31

Morning Worship
Sunday School

January 1

Office Closed - New Years

Who likes waiting? Not many of us could raise their hands sincerely. Waiting is not easy. In our day of cyber-speed, waiting for anything longer than minutes can seem like an eternity. In my youth I remember the days, when the seemingly endless fall season turned the corner towards Christmas Day, and how difficult it was for me and my brothers to wait to open our presents. We had such a hard time waiting that we often would coax our parents into allowing us to open, at least, one present on Christmas Eve. We just couldn't wait any longer, and our poor parents couldn't abide another day of our whining and begging.

For Christians, the season of Advent begins a season of waiting. It marks the beginning of the liturgical church year and asks for expectant waiting of those who anticipate the coming of Christ, the King. Each new Advent season stirs expectations as Christians wait. How will the coming Lord be experienced this Advent season? Yet, perhaps more importantly, the season asks those who wait to reflect on the manner of waiting. Waiting, by its very nature, is demanding for even the most patient person. Like children who clamor to open their presents because they cannot wait any longer, we often wait impatiently, or despair as the season of waiting seems to be endless.

Waiting for God is difficult; the Scriptures tell of a whole history of Israel in waiting; waiting in the wilderness to enter the Promised Land, waiting for a king, waiting in exile for return to the land of Israel, and waiting for God to deliver them from all their oppressors. The psalmists elaborate this cry and give voice to all who cry out waiting: "How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever? "

Imagine, then, how their hearts stirred with expectation when a glimmer of promise arose. Isaiah cried out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up and every mountain and hill made low;... (then) the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together." (Isaiah 40.3-5). Yet, generations came and went and the years ebbed and flowed with no sign of the One promised. Israel went into exile, and the voice of the prophets became silent. Would there be a way in the wilderness? Could a smooth path be cut through the desert? Or would God leave the people as exiles in the wastelands? No, Christ did come!

But, now, for two millennia since that time, generations have seen Advent seasons come and go, each year igniting hope and expectation as Christians anticipate Christ's return. As can happen, we can diminish in hope and heart in waiting. We can grow tired and weary, and we can, like skeptics of old ask, "Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation" (2 Peter 3.4). The trial in the exile of waiting involves clinging to hope, of not growing faint, of grasping-on rather than giving up. For those who would wait upon the Lord will renew their strength.

The Advent season calls all who would watch and wait to expect the Lord's return ultimately, but also to look for the ways in which His presence comes to strengthen and uphold all who traverse every season of Advent waiting.

~Pastor Mullinax



What's Happening?

Nursery Schedule December 10

Front Desk
Kim Collins

Worship

Infants
Diana Bowers
& Joyce Trask

Crawlers
Emily & Cami Calloway

Toddlers
Nathan & Alayna Bowers

Sunday School

Infants
Donna Schreiner
& Lucy Cleveland

Crawlers
Sandy VanderGriend
& Heather Morrison

Toddlers
Gerald Schreiner
& John Southworth

WOMEN'S MINISTRY CHRISTMAS DINNER

We are looking forward to seeing all the CPC ladies and guests that registered for the Women's Ministry Christmas Dinner on Friday, December 8, at 6:30 p.m.

MEN'S BREAKFAST

The Men's Ministry invites men of all ages to their monthly Men's Breakfast on Saturday, December 9, at 8:30 a.m. Elder Ernie Brown is speaking on *God-given Journeys*. Nursery provided for children 36 months and younger.

CHILDREN'S CHOIR CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Come enjoy the children's hard work and presentation of *Christmas Hang Ups* on Sunday, December 10, at 6:00 p.m.

YOUTH CHRISTMAS PARTIES

Middle School Youth are invited to a Christmas Party including pizza and games, on Saturday, December 9, 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. in the Youth Suite. Please bring a dessert to share.

High School Youth are invited to a Progressive Dinner Christmas Party on Saturday, December 16. Bring a \$5 white elephant gift. Please meet in the church parking lot at 5:45 p.m. for initial instructions.

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.

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.

THANKSGIVING POUNDING

Thanks for the generosity and compassion of our covenant family, we were able to abundantly provide for fourteen families in our church and community this season, to the praise and honor of God.

THANK YOU

What a wonder-filled and worshipful evening this past Sunday! Exploring the truth, mystery, and impact of Jesus Christ being born fully God and fully man, through Scripture, commentary, song, instrumentalists and the Sanctuary Choir, was edifying and enriching. A special thank you to our Director of Music Ministries, Jeremy Gaines, and all the gifted participants. Soli Deo Gloria.

WOMEN'S MINISTRY RETREAT

The CPC Women's Ministry Retreat is February 23-25. Registration deadline is THIS SUNDAY, December 10. Cost is \$85 for a 2-person room or \$140 for 1-person room (\$50 deposit due with registration).

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. Our last 2017 supper is December 13.

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

OFFICE CLOSED

The church office is closed the following days for Christmas:

Monday, December 25 - Closed

Tuesday, December 26 - Closed

Please note: no eNewsletter December 28 or January 4.

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 2017.

BUDGET REPORT

Thru December 3:

Budget: \$1,502,106

Actual: \$1,263,270

Shortfall: \$238,836

Needed by December 31 to make budget: \$361,457