



The eNewsletter

March 8, 2018

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

Looking Ahead...

March 9

High School Lock-In

March 10

Children's Ministry Teacher
Training
Daylight Savings -
Turn Clocks Forward

March 11

Morning Worship
Sunday School
Youth Praise Team Rehearsal
PM Worship Service
Middle School Youth Group
High School Youth Group

March 12

Ladies' Monday Morning
Bible Study
Ladies' Monday Night *Faith*
Bible Study

March 14

Wednesday Night Activities

March 15

Ladies' Thursday Morning
Bible Study
Memorial Hospital Lunch

March 16

MS Girls Sleepover

March 18

Morning Worship
Sunday School
Mauroner Bridal Shower
Youth Praise Team Practice
Middle School Youth Group
High School Youth Group

March 19

Ladies' Monday Morning
Bible Study

March 20

Mother's Encouragement
Group
WM Swap Kinship

March 21

Wednesday Morning Bible
Study
Wednesday Night Activities
Session Meeting

March 22

Ladies' Thursday Morning
Bible Study

This month of March we have entered the Christian season of Lent. For many of us, Lent is associated with very liturgical church calendars, specifically the Roman Catholic Church. However, Lent is celebrated by many denominations, including many churches in the PCA. It is helpful when we consider that Lent is a time of anticipation for Easter. In this anticipation we are remembering and examining what it means to be in the wilderness.

Think for a moment about the wilderness. You may be dwelling on images like the desert or a wasteland, but it can also be something more. The wilderness is not simply a physical place, but it is also something we experience. It is when we feel desolation around us; it is a place of longing in our hearts. Sometimes it is when we feel callous towards others. At other times, it is when a tragedy strikes. It is a place when we feel crushed by feelings of loneliness and depression, or worry and anxiety. We know when we have entered into it when we realize that life is not supposed to be this way. When we see the weariness of life, we are in the midst of the wilderness.

Let's face the truth: the wilderness is unpleasant, and no one wants to be there, but we all experience it from time to time. Pain and sorrow can be so difficult that we often look for the quickest way to escape. Yet there are times when we are so overwhelmed that we believe that we have become trapped. If we don't feel trapped, then we may feel numb, unable to move. The shock of experiencing tragedy can leave us like a car engine stuck in neutral - raging and roaring but getting us nowhere.

These feelings are compounded by our world which tells us that pain and suffering must be avoided. Many of us can feel lonely in our wilderness when our friends and family dismiss our experiences. They may be sympathetic, but many people

don't know how to respond to our sorrows and loss. This adds to our weariness.

Yet hope remains. Our response to these periods in the wilderness can reveal our hearts. Sometimes these reactions are unhealthy; we may try to ignore or lessen our problems. We may run from our problems. We may even form harmful patterns in our lives. Real health can feel like a distance memory, and discouragement can consume us. The wilderness is not a place for hopelessness, however; it is the place where God meets us. Our personal peace begins with trusting the Lord that He sovereignly strips us of our pretensions to foster hearts of dependence, faith, and worship.

Thinking back to Lent, this is a season of wilderness, but it is also a season of exploration. This is a time to explore our hearts, our values, our hopes, and faith. Even in times of great weariness, we gain something - we gain reflection and wisdom. As we learn to accept our weaknesses, we then learn to trust in His strength. Through these limitations we gain perspective.

Beyond our experience, Lent is also about the Lord's commitment to the wilderness - His exploration of our desolation. As we examine our hearts and accept our identities, we will also find a God who is familiar with our sufferings and acquainted with our griefs. In His tender presence we find satisfaction in our darkest of places. As we learn to accept our sorrows, reflect upon our experiences, and wait within the wilderness, then He will meet and grow us. I would like to encourage you in this season of Lent to dwell upon the faithful presence of the Lord who experiences the darkness with us. "Even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is bright as the day, for darkness is as light with you." (Psalm 139:12)

~Pastor Bennett



What's Happening?

Nursery Schedule March 11

Front Desk

Sandy VanderGriend

Worship

Infants

Emily & Cami Calloway

Crawlers

Tammy & Lexi Bacon

Toddlers

Mandy & Tyler Bacon

Sunday School

Infants

Jonathan & Kansas Bradley

Crawlers

Sarah Wade

& Eva Herberich

Toddlers

Fiona & Betsy Wade

GIFT CARD BRIDAL SHOWER

A gift card bridal shower in honor of Lily Moncrief (bride-elect of Cliff Mauroner) is Sunday, March 18, from 4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. in the Perseverers Classroom. Cliff and Lily would appreciate gift cards from any of the following: Amazon, Target, Williams-Sonoma, Anthropologie, Bed, Bath, & Beyond.

PM WORSHIP SERVICE

Please plan to join us on Sunday, March 11 for our first monthly Sunday Evening Service. These services will be the second Sunday of each month with a time of praise and worship from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. in Schum Fellowship Hall, followed by break-out discussion groups with various elders from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. On March 11, Adam Sanders and Dan Steere will be leading a group discussion in the Frederick Room on *Family Worship*, and Jeremy Gaines will be leading a group discussion in the Perseverers Classroom on *Singing in Worship*. Nursery is provided for children up to age three.

MEMORIAL HOSPITAL MINISTRY

Our church has the privilege of being a part of a luncheon ministry at Memorial Hospital. Next Thursday, March 15, 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.

TURN CLOCKS FORWARD

Daylight Savings begins! Don't forget to turn your clocks forward on Saturday night. Spring forward, Fall back!

SPRING CLEANING

As you begin to clean out your closets, please remember we collect any gently used or new shoes for the homeless. Please place them in the *Soles for Souls* box outside Pastor Bennett's office.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

If you are currently involved in our Children's Ministry during Sunday School or during Covenant Kids on Wednesday nights, please join us on Saturday, March 10, 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. in Schum Fellowship Hall for some fun, creative tips for teaching children by age levels. If you are interested in being a part of the Children's Ministry Team, we would love for you to join us for a fun morning of delicious food, fellowship, and great training.

SEDER DINNER

CPC is celebrating a Seder Dinner in Schum Fellowship Hall. To accommodate the expected, in-house attendance, this year's Seder is being served both Wednesday, March 28 at 6:30 p.m. and Maundy Thursday, March 29 at 6:30 p.m. Registration forms are available in the Lobby and will be available in Sunday's bulletin.

EASTER LILIES

If you would like to help decorate the sanctuary for Easter, while honoring or remembering a friend or loved one, you may order an Easter lily for \$17.50. Order forms are available in the Lobby and need to be turned in to Carol by Wednesday, March 14. You may pick up your lily following the Easter service.

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

March 14	Mexican Lasagna
March 21	Fettuccine Alfredo