

MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR

2011

October



COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Covenant Courier

Now what?

That's the question on everyone's mind these days. Where do we go from here? What happens on the 10th of October? How do we go about getting a new pastor?

The other question that people are probably asking is, *how long is this going to take, and is there any way we can speed things up?*

First things first. In the next couple of weeks the Worship Committee will be busy lining up some great folks to bring you God's Word on Sunday for the next couple of months. *COUPLE OF MONTHS?!* you are saying to yourselves. Does it take that long to find an Interim Pastor?? No, it doesn't, unless you want to take the time to be sure that you have the right interim. Some interims specialize in conflict "clean up," some are great at helping a floundering church discern the direction God is leading them in, others love nothing better than to help an already strong church become even stronger when they are without full-time pastoral leadership. That will be the Session's first task – to decide what the "work" of Covenant's interim time will be, and who the best person is to lead you through it.

And then you all will elect a Pastor Nominating Committee (get used to seeing the letters PNC a lot!) and the real work begins. Again, you want just the right person to come and be your next pastor, so be patient. This will take time, maybe a year.

So...the Worship Committee has a job to do, the Session has work to do, the PNC will have a big job to do....what about you? What's your job? Just sit and wait? Actually, you've got the biggest job of all.

1. Stay involved. There is always the temptation to look at this as "down time," a time when you can slack off and not much will be going on at church. **WRONG!** The ministries of Covenant do not stop just because your pastor has left. You all carry out the ministries of the church, not your paid staff. God is still here each and every Sunday to receive your praise and prayers, and to speak the Word to you. Your faith still needs to be nurtured in Sunday School and Bible studies. You and your brothers and sisters in Christ still need to nurture each other in fellowship, perhaps now more than ever.
2. Continue to give. Again, the temptation is always great to think that since you aren't paying a full-time pastor, you don't have to give as much. And, again, **WRONG!** First of all, your giving is a grateful and faithful response to all that God has done for you, not your fair share of the church's budget. If you continue to receive generously from the hand of God, you should continue to give generously. And, frankly, the church's financial needs will actually be increasing with the coming of a new pastor, not decreasing. Keep it up!
3. Pray. Maybe this should have been listed first. Pray for Covenant, for your elders as they lead you, for the PNC, and for the person that God is calling to be your next pastor.

I will say this as often and in as many ways as I can in the next couple of weeks before my last day – Covenant is a very strong, very healthy church, with amazing leaders and vibrant ministries. I leave here with no worries about how you will fare in the months ahead, and with nothing but envy for your next pastor. I love you all, and as I said in my letter, I look forward to watching God's work in your midst in the future.

With love,
Sharon

MUSIC LEADERSHIP SELECTED

The Music Search Committee is happy to announce we have a new Music Director, Melodye Sparks; and a new Accompanist/Organist, Jennifer Marshall. Both these women have strong music backgrounds, and are committed to music as a ministry.

Melodye Sparks, Music Director

Melodye, an East Tennessee native, has recently returned to Johnson City from Pawleys Island, SC, where she served as Director of Music/Organist at Pawleys Island Presbyterian Church. Melodye's husband, Gary Sparks, is a retired Media Specialist. Gary and Melodye are excited to be back in Tennessee and are looking forward to serving God at Covenant Presbyterian Church!

Jennifer Marshall, Accompanist/Organist

Jenni is from Newberry, SC, and serves as the Collaborative Pianist for the ETSU Music Department. Her husband, Dr. Zach Marshall, also works at ETSU as a visiting Professor of Music (voice). Jenni will be graduating this December from the University of South Carolina with a D.M.A. in Organ Performance. Zach and Jenni are excited about living in East Tennessee and making new friends at Covenant Presbyterian Church!

Please be sure to introduce yourself and welcome them to the Covenant family!

Everyone who has an interest in praising God through music is encouraged to join with the choir on Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. **No previous experience is necessary.** All you need is a desire to learn, share, and enjoy music. We're starting an exciting time in the development of the Music Program at Covenant.

Gwen Hunter, Worship Committee Chair

GOOD SAMARITAN OFFERING

Food for Life: Neighbor Helping Neighbor - 2011



In 2010, Good Samaritan Ministries prepared 800 baskets and another 175 fully prepared meals for needy families for Thanksgiving. This year, their goal is 1,000 baskets and 200 prepared meals. So, for the next two months, instead of our regular monthly offering, our goal will be to collect 400 boxes of macaroni & cheese and 400 cans of sweet potatoes to help Good Samaritan provide these meals. Just bring your donation to church by Sunday, October 30th, so that Good Sam will have time to prepare the baskets and meals for those in need. They will appreciate it very much.

FROM THE STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

“SAINT’S ALIVE - LIVING GENEROUSLY”

October will be Stewardship period for 2011. We will be celebrating our faith with the theme of *Saint's Alive – Living Generously*. As faithful members of God's kingdom, it will be good to focus on our reasons for giving of our time, talents and resources as we move ahead in this challenging time for Covenant. This theme is based on and over several weeks we will focus on one verse at a time. Dedication Sunday will be November 6. Watch for more info to come.

Now concerning the collection for the saints: you should follow the directions I gave to the churches of Galatia. On the first day of every week, each of you is to put aside and save whatever extra you earn, so that collections need not be taken when I come. And when I arrive, I will send any whom you approve with letters to take your gift to Jerusalem. If it seems advisable that I should go also, they will accompany me. (1 Corinthians 16:1-4)

MIDDLER RETREAT - NOVEMBER 18TH - 20TH

What to expect? Expect a fun and fast paced weekend full of energetic games, exciting music, and relevant messages. Expect to make new friends and reconnect with old friends. Expect God to meet us at the camp once again, and challenge us to live differently. See Lynnea Hunter or visit www.holstonyouth.org for more details!



Baby Shower
October 2, 2:00 p.m.



Ladies, you are cordially invited to a Baby Shower
in anticipation of Ashley Paxton & Adam Miller's
(son of Sharon & David) baby son expected sometime in December.
Please join us in the church Library on Sunday, October 2, at 2:00 p.m.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?... No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:35, 37-39)

This is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance (and for this we labor and strive), that we have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, and especially of those who believe. Command and teach these things. Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity. (1 Timothy 4:9-12)

ONE GROUP, ONE NIGHT, ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES!

I want to say a quick "Thank you!" to all of you who, as parents, grandparents, guardians, mentors and friends make sure your kids get to participate in Wednesday Night Live! The friendships, mentor-ships and life lessons that can come from this program are priceless. Thanks for allowing your children to be a part of our church family, and thanks for allowing me the opportunity to lead them! Even if you've never even heard of Wednesday Night Live, by participating in our congregation you help support this large, vital ministry.

I want to take just a minute to let you know what the youth group will be doing this year. This group of 6th–12th graders will be covering a lot of territory in WNL. We'll be looking at both Romans 8:35-39 and 1 Timothy 4:9-12 (see the top of this letter) and discussing how these two passages help to frame our understanding of our responsibilities and privileges as young members of the church; and not just Covenant Presbyterian Church, but the Church Universal.

We'll also spend some time getting to know our neighbors, both literally and figuratively. Some time will be spent studying other faith traditions and how we, as Christians, respond to and live with the people—our neighbors—who practice Judaism, Islam or Catholicism, to name a few. These different traditions will be examined with the idea that they are very much a functioning part of the world we live in. As Christians, we are called to "be in the world, but not of the world" and we need to know who's in the world with us.

WNL also acts as a large jumping-off-point for many other youth activities—i.e. Youth Sunday, mission trips, Montreat, etc.—and anyone who comes to WNL who wants to continue to be a part of the youth "scene" at Covenant will be more than welcome. There will be a fair share of smaller mission and ministry opportunities, as well as just good old-fashioned fellowship with fun and games. All will be done with, by and for the glory of God.

As with any ministry in the church, there are plenty of opportunities for service, as well. I'm looking specifically for someone to help me with the big group time and high school classes on Wednesday nights, so if you have a spare hour or two starting at 5:30(-ish), please let me know! Remember: God doesn't call the qualified, he qualifies the called. If you have any questions or comments about the youth program, don't hesitate to contact me 828.266.1917 or youth@covenantpres.org. I look forward to a great year!

Peace,

Lynnea Hunter

Director of Youth Ministry

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Friendship (Afternoon) Circle

October 11, 2011 – 1:30 p.m.

Hostess: Carlyn Sue Hoffman

406 Green Valley Dr., J.C., 202-7281

Lesson Two Leader: Amy Hecht



Joy (Evening) Circle

October 25, 2011 – 7:00 p.m.

Contact: Anne Smith (929-1604)

Meeting will be at the church.

Lesson Two

YOUNG ADULT MONTHLY GATHERING—FRIDAY, OCT. 14...Lynnea Hunter

The Young Adults will be meeting Friday, October 14th, at 6:30 p.m. (location TBA, see future bulletins). As always, bring yourselves and your friends, and call Lynnea with any questions. See you there!



AFTER CHURCH LUNCH SUNDAY—OCTOBER 9

Join us in the Fellowship Hall after worship on October 9th. This month we will have a **Mexican Fiesta**—bring your favorite enchilada casserole, taco salad, or any other “south of the border” dish! If your dish needs to be kept warm or even heated at the last minute, someone will be in the kitchen by 9:30 a.m. to receive your dish and your instructions. We look forward to sharing this fellowship opportunity with you! If you have any questions, please contact Andrea Sutter or Lauri Zembower.



THIRD THURSDAY DINNER—OCTOBER 20

The Congregational Life Committee invites you to join your fellow Covenant members for our monthly Third Thursday dinner. Our next dinner is scheduled for September 15th at 6:30 at Jack’s City Grill. Kids are always welcome (and we can even arrange for them to have their own table if there's interest).

Please contact Lauri Zembower (620-3625 or broncofan524@yahoo.com) if you think you’ll be attending so we can get a count for the tables. Hope to see you there!

AFTER CHURCH COFFEE FELLOWSHIP

Do you have the gift of hospitality? Do you enjoy making people feel welcome?

Hosts are needed for our **After Church Coffee Fellowship!** If this is a way you would like to serve, please sign up in the Narthex.



ETSU CAMPUS HOUSE

The Campus House welcomes back students to ETSU and, with them, the weekly Wednesday lunch gatherings for fellowship and thought provoking topics of discussion. There has been a name change for this group in an effort to get more brothers and sisters in Christ to come and join in! Now known as the **Campus House Lunch & Colloquium** they are still meeting from 11:45-12:45. Encourage your friends to come see what it’s all about!

Upcoming topics:

- **Sept. 28** – Karen Childress: How a Community Runs a Farmers’ Market
- **Oct. 5** – Sam Jones: Is There a Chicken in Your Future?
- **Oct. 12** – Dick Nelson: Solar Panels: Green Epiphany or Smart Business?
- **Oct. 19** – Dr. Jerry Gehre: Gems, Rocks and Minerals
- **Nov. 23** – NO MEETING – Thanksgiving

SEPTEMBER SESSION HIGHLIGHTS...by Evelyn Kemp

- Revenue for August was \$14,475 and expenses were \$16,068. That leaves the church \$3,000 behind for the year. The mortgage balance is down to \$46,600.
- Margaret Sullenger's resignation from Session was accepted with regret.
- The playground renovation is nearly finished. Members are encouraged to welcome children who come to the church to use the playground. We are indebted to John Isaacs, the developer of the condo complex next to the church, for the assistance he provided in clearing and preparing the playground.
- WNL is collaborating with IHN to bring IHN children to the Wednesday night programs. Van drivers, hosts, kitchen helpers, and dinner partners are needed. Members are encouraged to drop in to have dinner with the kids any Wednesday evening at 6 PM.
- The Inquirer's class had the first meeting with six people present.
- Money collected at After Church Lunches beyond what is needed to fund the meal will be used to fund a community picnic for July 4, 2012.
- The next youth-led service will be October 30.
- There is a new brochure for Christian Education.
- Fall Clean-Up day is scheduled for Saturday, November 5, beginning at 7 AM.
- Melting Pot Team A needs a leader.
- This year's International Peacemaker will be coming from Iraq.
- Melodye Sparks and Jenni Marshall have auditioned for Music Director and Accompanist, respectively, and are being offered those positions.
- November 6th will be Stewardship Dedication Sunday.
- Chiming for the start of the service is being moved to the narthex so that everyone can hear.

MEMORIAL GIFTS

GIVEN IN MEMORY OF:

ROGER HECHT

BY

Gary & Alexis Burkett

GIVEN IN MEMORY OF:

HILDA KRUEGER

(Marsha Mucha's mother)

BY

Bob & Nancy Hart

C.B. & Rose Willis

AUGUST TREASURER'S REPORT

Income to General Fund
August

Actual \$14,473.02

vs. Budgeted \$20,967.33

Expenses from General Fund
August

Actual \$16,067.95

vs. Budgeted \$20,967.33

Year to Date Income
General Fund

Actual \$157,524.62

vs. Budgeted \$167,738.67

Year to Date Expenses from
General Fund

Actual \$160,576.55

vs. Budgeted \$167,738.67

The 5-Cents a Meal Offering
for August was \$510.00.

Mortgage stands at \$46,617.81.



NEW IN THE LIBRARY

The Westminster Bible Companion.

A 22-volume set commentary for teachers and learners.

Given to the Library by an anonymous donor.

EQUAL EXCHANGE UPDATE

Did you know? As part of the Presbyterian Coffee Project, Equal Exchange donates 15 cents per pound to the PC(USA) Small Farmer Fund. In 2010 this donation totaled \$21,788. The Presbyterian Hunger Program disburses the funds to small farmer cooperatives in the form of grants for development projects.

Olive Oil anyone? Fair Trade is now selling Organic Extra Virgin Olive Oil from two farmer co-ops which are part of the Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committees, a non-profit, non-governmental organization in the West Bank. The rich green oil is made from Nabali olives that are cold pressed without any refining.

Fair trade sells the olive oil by the 12 bottle case; each 500ml bottle will cost \$11.50.

If you might purchase olive oil along with your coffee and chocolate, please let Eileen Madden or Tina know of your interest in trying this new product. Every kitchen needs good olive oil and these bottles make thoughtful gifts.

COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

603 Sunset Drive
Johnson City, TN 37604

Phone: 423-282-5324

Fax: 423-282-5346

<http://www.covenantpresjc.org>

E-mail: office@covenantpresjc.org

PEACEMAKING OFFERING:

“ Aharvest of justice is sown in peace” (James 3:18)

Peace has been defined as tranquility, a calm and quiet state, free from disturbances or noise. To live in peace, to be in a state of peace, takes on different meanings for all of us. There are, however, some basic elements that are necessary for all of us to live peacefully. Living peacefully includes the protection of individuals' integrity and human rights. For some of us, peace means access to education and the elimination of poverty, homelessness, injustice, and violence. For some, peace is the ability to openly express our opinions or to practice our religious beliefs without the fear of imprisonment or even death. In our homes, our communities, and our world, we are called to be makers of peace.

The Peacemaking Offering was created to support the efforts of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to live out a deeper commitment to peacemaking as part of our faithfulness to God. As Christians we are called to be agents of reconciliation for individuals, in families and communities, throughout the world, and with the whole of creation, building a culture of peace. In making a commitment to peacemaking, congregations work toward healing the brokenness in the world.

The Peacemaking Offering invites each congregation to find ways to promote peace within the congregation and within the community. For that reason, our church will retain 25 percent of the Offering we receive to be given to support Bob & Kristi Rice, missionaries to the Congo. Another 25 percent goes to our presbytery or synod, and the remaining 50 percent goes to the General Assembly for peacemaking involvement throughout the world.

Join us on October 2nd to celebrate World Communion Sunday and to commit ourselves to working for the unity of the church and the peace of Christ. Come ready to give generously to the Peacemaking Offering.

MISSION STATEMENT

Covenant Presbyterian Church exists to glorify and enjoy God. We live knowing that God calls us to be a place of love, support, hope and acceptance regardless of earthly labels; Jesus Christ commissions us to make disciples and passionately share our gifts with the world through prayer, teaching, and service; the Holy Spirit allows us to determine and carry out Christ's will for our lives and the life of our church, and empowers us to seek out and respond to the needs of our local and global community.