



CHRIST CHURCH PRESS

The Monthly Newsletter of Christ Church, Presbyterian
4201 Southern Pines Drive, Evans, Georgia, 30809

Volume 11, Issue 8

August 2015

The Pastor's Selection

Birthdays

- 01..... Peach Bailey
Rachel Walters
- 03 Charles Bowen
- 06 Diane Norkus
- 08 Jason Clark
Yvonne Clark
- 14..... Anne Alston
Lena Dyer
Charlotte Jewett
- 16..... Ilona Law
- 17..... Joanne Pierce
- 20 Ken McPherson
- 22 Charles Caruso
Laci Foster
Carole Romero
- 23 Whit Foster
- 24..... Rachel Goodell
- 26 Pat Lewis
- 27..... Earlene Brown
Stathia Hammond
- 29 Jane Millward
- 30 Barbara Walters
- 31..... Lukas Edwards

Anniversaries

- 02 Gloria & John Gill
- 04 Fran & Mark Nabholz
- 09 Diane & John Norkus
- 15 Sandra & Oliver Brown
Billie & Jim McPherson
- 31..... Kira & Barry Smith

City On a Hill: A Kingdom of Priests

— Kelly M. Kapic, *Tabletalk Magazine*

In February, a terrible beheading of twenty-one Egyptian Christians took place. They were executed because they were identified as “the people of the cross.” We are reminded of the possibility of martyrdom and the reality that this side of glory we are “sojourners and exiles” (1 Peter 2:11).

Consequently, Christians often find themselves in a most difficult position. We are called to love our neighbors – even our neighbors who might better be described as our enemies (Matt. 5:43-45). And we are not to return evil for evil (Rom. 12:17; 1 Thess. 5:15; 1 Peter 3:9). While most believers do not face the imminent threat of death, testifying to Christ is often far from easy. How, then, are we to live faithfully amid challenging circumstances and among difficult people?

As sons and daughters of the One who is both the eternal King and High Priest, we have assurance that we will never be forgotten or abandoned. We do not need to be absorbed with self-preservation or self-promotion; we are free to live lives shaped by mercy and love for others. To appreciate this vision, we must understand that we are chosen as a people to be a *blessing*, and we carry out that work in a *priestly* manner.

CHOSEN TO BE A BLESSING

Peter gives his readers some powerful encouragement: “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light” (1 Peter 2:9). Peter here draws from a long and cherished tradition that is woven throughout the Old Testament.

When God called Abraham, He made it clear that from this man a great nation would arise. What is striking about the idea of election in this context is that the goal was gracious *inclusion* rather than hard-hearted *exclusion*. God chose Abraham and his offspring to serve as His representatives in the world. In this way, they functioned like a city on a hill, where others would be drawn to the light of the creator Lord. God’s people are never to forget that they are blessed in order to be a blessing (Gen. 12:1-2). That is at the heart of the biblical movement of election. But Peter reminds us that election and priesthood are meant to go together.

FAITHFUL PRIESTS

Peter appears to draw from Exodus 19:6, when we read of the promise that “you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.” Israel and specific people set apart to be ordained priests, but the promise was that all of God’s people would serve in some priestly ways.

As Peter draws on the great Old Testament promises to God’s people, he makes it clear that all who now have faith in Christ are part of this “chosen race” that

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The Pastor's Selction

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is "a royal priesthood, a holy nation." We are the true heirs of Abraham. Barriers between Jew and Gentile are meant to be demolished. What unites this people is not their ethnicity or culture, but their worship of Jesus. Even amid their serious diversity they become one in Christ. As those who are connected to the Great High Priest, His people now carry out His work of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:18-19). All believers carry out two vital ministries as part of the royal priesthood.

First, in our priestly role, *all Christians are to live sacrificially for others*. We are people of the cross. Jesus laid down His life for sinners in desperate need of grace and love. As imitators of the crucified Lord, we now offer ourselves to Christ through sacrificial acts of love done [on] behalf of our neighbors, even the neighbors who consider us their enemies. We can be truly "honorable" through our works of grace and mercy, hoping that these very people may one day "glorify God on the day of visitation" (1 Peter 2:12). We do not make atonement for others, but through our lives, we point them to the Lamb of God who alone can bring reconciliation between a holy God and sinful humanity (v. 21).

Second, we are faithful in our priestly role as *we offer intercession on behalf of others*. Paul makes a similar point when he urges Timothy to offer "supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings" for "all people, for kings and all who are in high positions" (1 Tim. 2:1-2a). Part of living as the chosen people and a holy nation is that we are set apart to be instruments of God's grace and reconciliation in this world. And this begins with prayers. We pray not just for those we love, nor even just for God's people, but for the world, including dangerous emperors (1 Peter 2:16-17). How do we love our neighbor? We intercede for them, asking for the light of God's mercy to overcome the looming darkness. Jesus did this even as He hung on the cross (Luke 23:34). You and I cannot change or save our neighbor, but the triune God can.

Jesus is the perfect Mediator who makes intercession on our behalf, offering Himself as the perfect and final sacrifice so that we might enjoy peace with God. We who have received mercy (1 Peter 2:10) are now His chosen vessels to be instruments of His grace and love to the world. This is what it means to live as part of the royal priesthood.

From Ligonier Ministries and R. C. Sproul. © *Tabletalk* magazine. Website: www.ligonier.org/tabletalk. Email: tabletalk@ligonier.org. Toll free: 1-800-435-4343.

Children's Chatter: Let's Talk About...

Promotion Sunday: September 13th

Last year a new Sunday school curriculum was introduced for kindergarten through twelfth grade. We are in our second year and many positive outcomes have been observed.

A new Sunday school class will begin for our four-year-old children. The Preschool class will meet in the small room of Covenant Hall and will be using the *Show Me Jesus* curriculum for preschoolers. This will be an interim step between nursery and kindergarten and will prepare them for the more challenging curriculum in kindergarten.

All parents should have received a letter asking for updated information concerning birthdates, age and grade level. Letters will be mailed to you soon regarding the placement of children and naming of teachers.

Nursery Volunteers

There are still many openings for workers in our nurseries; especially the Toddler Nursery. Please give prayerful consideration to stepping forward to meet this urgent need. Helen Caldwell is the Schedule Coordinator. Please contact Helen to volunteer: hcaldwell@georgiabankandtrust.com.

Choir Chords

The family of Mark Nabholz and the Pylant family moved to the Augusta area around the same time. Soon thereafter Mark and I became good friends sharing our love for God's church and for music. As we've journeyed these 22 years, we both have had and shared our ups and downs in ministry. We loaned and borrowed music from our respective churches and shared many ideas. I am excited Mark has a wonderful opportunity in Mississippi, at a "Baptist" school, though I hate to see him leave the area. And it is with great anticipation that Kirsten, my wife, and I look forward to joining you at Christ Church, "Presbyterian" in ministry, education, fellowship, missions, and, most of all, in worship.

Interested in sharing your musical gifts? Contact me, I would love to hear from you. Now is a great time to join the choir as we begin rehearsing music for worship and for special upcoming celebrations. Children's Choirs will begin soon. The Augusta Youth Chorale will be auditioning during the month of August. For a time, I will also be doing much listening: to church leadership, music leadership, choir members and to you. So, contact me if you have something to share about the music ministry.

It is an honor and I count it as a privilege to join our pastor, Rev. Josiah Jones, and each of you at Christ Church, Presbyterian. The Apostle Paul's final words to the Corinthians are good words for all of us: "Be joyful. Grow to maturity. Encourage each other. Live in harmony and peace. Then the God of love and peace will be with you" (2 Cor. 13:11, NLT).

Stan Pylant, *Director of Music*



Trail Life will start back up with regular meetings on Monday, August 17, at 7 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. This will be a special kickoff meeting to let parents know what Trail Life is all about at Christ Church. Invite your friends and neighbors to join us that night. If you need any further information, contact John Norkus, Troopmaster, (706-373-2173, thenorkusfamily@comcast.net).

Come join the fun!



Wreaths Across America



Community Service



Fishing Derby



Overnight Campout



Outdoor Skills



Missions Movement

Praying for Muslims

Wikipedia indicates that there are 1.8 billion Muslims in the world, nearly all of them live in north Africa and the near and middle east. Islam is one of the most resistant religions to the gospel, and most Islamic countries severely punish or execute converts to Christianity. Yet there are increasing reports of Muslims turning to faith in Christ. On its web site, Operation World gives the following observation about this movement:

The increase in the number of Muslim Background Believers (MBBs). The hatred and violence of Islamist extremists most likely contribute to many Muslims' disillusion and greater openness to the gospel. While there are pockets of particularly momentous change, the inflow of Muslims into the Kingdom of God is indeed happening through much of the Muslim world, albeit under the radar and on a modest level in many areas. Dreams and visions from the Lord, combined with encounters with Scripture and demonstrations of God's love, play a large role in many of these testimonies. Other major factors include specific and sustained intercession for the Muslim world, increased efforts to reach them, more sensitive cultural approaches and the widespread use of media - satellite television programmes, radio and film/video. The impact of the Internet in communicating the gospel, leading Muslims to faith in Jesus and discipling new believers cannot be overstated. <http://www.operationworld.org/region/asia/owtext.html>

Our most powerful weapon in the war for people's souls is intercession before the throne of God. "And by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation" Rev 5:9.

Missionary Prayer Focus

Please remember the missionaries below in your prayers throughout the month as they labor for the Lord, "Therefore, having this ministry by the mercy of God, we do not lose heart" (2 Corinthians 4:1).

Rick and Betty Aschmann, *Mission to the World (PCA), Bogota*

- Please pray as we arrive in Quito and make contacts and set up goals for our ministry to the Quichua Indians.
- Praise God that the children ended school well and we had the opportunity to train some people who are taking over the music in our church plant, *El Refugio*.

Heritage Academy, *Augusta, Georgia*

- Praise for the Church of the Good Shepherd sending 22 of our students to Camp Bob.
- Praise for Chick-fil-A providing scholarships to attend the local Camp Winshape.
- Praise for 30 of our students are enjoying the summer at Stevens Creek Community Church.

Jenny Townsend, *MTW (Mission to the World), Nairobi*

- Please pray for God to open the hearts and minds of all present to the truth of Christ.
- Pray that God be honored as women grow in grace and the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Christ Church Press

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August

Each Sunday's Schedule: 9:45 a.m. Sunday School • 11 a.m. Worship • 6 p.m. Worship

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
5 p.m. Prayer Meeting		7 p.m. Diaconate Meeting	6:30 Youth Gathering			7:45 a.m. Men's Prayer Breakfast
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
5 p.m. Prayer Meeting 6 p.m. Holy Communion 7:30 p.m. Youth Gathering	7 p.m. Session Meeting		6:30 Youth Gathering 7 p.m. Choir Rehearsal 8:15 p.m. Brass Ensemble		7 a.m. Men's Prayer Breakfast	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
5 p.m. Prayer Meeting	7 p.m. Trail Life		6:30 Youth Gathering 7 p.m. Choir Rehearsal 8:15 p.m. Brass Ensemble		7 a.m. Men's Prayer Breakfast	
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
5 p.m. Prayer Meeting 7:30 p.m. Youth Gathering	7 p.m. Trail Life		6:30 Youth Gathering 7 p.m. Choir Rehearsal 8:15 p.m. Brass Ensemble		7 a.m. Men's Prayer Breakfast	
30	31					
5 p.m. Prayer Meeting	7 p.m. Trail Life					