



CHRIST CHURCH PRESS

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

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April 2016

The Pastor's Selection

Birthdays

- 04 Lanier Adams
Paul Volpitto
- 07 Mark Walters
- 10 Grace Goodell
John Norkus
- 12 Richard Frain
- 13 Lee Self
- 15 Martha Folley
Kimberly Rackley
- 16 Nancy Parks
- 19 Mel Jewett
- 21 Erin Lammie
- 24 Ora Parish
- 25 Peggy McMillan
Ben Robeson
- 26 Margaret Doss
- 27 Margaret Johnson
- 30 Rick Hammond



A spiritual gift
is given to each
of us so we can
help each other.

Your Single Most Important Habit

— David Mathis, *Desiring God*

The final frontier of biological research is still the enigmatic human brain. And at the cutting edge of recent study has been this phenomenon we call “habits.” One important finding has been what researchers and popularizers call “keystone habits” – simple, but catalytic new routines that inspire other fresh patterns of behavior.

Take, for example, the habit of drinking more water daily. A little intentionality here might lead to making better food choices, and may even help inspire exercise. For some, quitting smoking is a keystone habit that starts a domino effect of good lifestyle changes. For others, simply forming the habit of putting on running shoes in the morning leads to walking for exercise, then light jogging, and eventually to becoming a full-fledged regular runner.

Find the right keystone, and you could unleash a string of good habits in your life.

Keystone for Christians?

While I cannot commend one keystone habit that will make the difference for every believer, I do want to speak up on behalf of one weekly habit that is utterly essential to any healthy, life-giving, joy-producing Christian walk: corporate worship. And it is all too often neglected, or taken very lightly, in our day of disembodiment and in our proclivity for being noncommittal. In fact, I do not think it is too strong to call corporate worship the single most important habit of the Christian life.

We may think it’s a new temptation today to play fast and loose with corporate worship, but the book of Hebrews gives another impression. Actually, speaking of habits, Hebrews 10:24-25 is the only use of the word “habit” in our English translations of the New Testament.

“Let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near,” (Hebrews 10:24-25).

By clearly delineating a bad habit that we must not develop – “neglecting to meet together” – Hebrews is also making clear what good habit we should cultivate, and feed: meeting together. Today’s temptation to underestimate the importance of the weekly assembly is as old as the church itself. And yet, the great irony is that the habit of meeting together with Christ’s people to worship Him is utterly crucial for the Christian life.

Anniversaries

- 04 Baylee & Jim Avery
- 05 Ruth & Richard Frain
- 30 ... Jennifer & Charles Kimbrell
Cathy & Ken Moody

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The Pastor's Selection *(continued)*

But why? What is it about corporate worship that would lead us to think so highly of this as a habit to make – and to suspect for some that this may indeed be the keystone habit they desperately need for life-change?

Why Corporate Worship Is Critical

The reason corporate worship may be the single most important Christian habit, and our greatest weapon in the fight for joy, is because like no other single habit, corporate worship combines all three essential principles of God's ongoing supply of grace for the Christian life: hearing His voice (in His word), having His ear (in prayer), and belonging to His body (in the fellowship of the church).

In corporate worship, we hear from God, in the pastor's call to worship, in the reading of Scripture, in the faithful preaching of the gospel, in the words of institution at the Table, in the commission to be lights in the world. In corporate worship, we respond to God in prayer, in confession, in singing, in thanksgiving, in recitation, in petitions, in taking the elements in faith. And in corporate worship, we do it all together.

God didn't make us to live and worship as solitary individuals. Personal Bible meditation and prayer are glorious gifts and essential, not to be neglected or taken for granted. And they are appointed by God as rhythms for personal communion with Him that thrive only in the context of regular communal communion with Him.

Make It a Habit

Settle it now. Make it a habit. Corporate worship is too important to revisit each weekend and wrestle, Will I go this weekend, or sit this one out? If you leave it open-ended, as so many do, excuse after excuse will keep you from the storehouses of grace God loves to open in corporate worship. Over time your soul will become dry and shallow because of it. Neglecting to meet together will soon sow and nourish seeds of unbelief in your soul.

Decide now, and begin putting it as a pattern into your life, not to revisit the decision each weekend, and not to bow out on community group (or whatever other regular corporate gatherings are vital in the structure of your local church) because of lame, myopic excuses. Of course, unusual circumstances will arise, when you're out of town, or at the hospital with a new baby, or something else manifestly restricting. But the sad truth is we are far too prone to give ourselves a pass on meeting together, when we really should have made it a habit ahead of time, entertaining only the rarest of exceptions.

And just to be sure, the reason to make corporate worship a habit is not to check the box on perfect attendance, and not because corporate worship alone is enough to fully power the Christian life, and not because mere attendance in worship will save your soul. This is not a call for legalistic going-through-the-motions. The hope is not just to show up and be a shell.

Rather, this is a summons to harness the power of habit to rescue our souls from empty excuses that keep us from spiritual riches and increasing joy. Negligence and chronic minimizing of the importance of corporate worship reveal something unhealthy and scary in our souls. Let's resist it with fresh resolve.

For our deep and enduring joy, there is simply no replacement for corporate worship.

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

Vacation Bible School Planning Meeting

"The Baffling Beginnings"

June 13 — 17 • Daily from 9 a.m. until noon

Our first VBS Planning Meetings for 2016 will be held on Saturday, April 23. Letters will be sent to each team member giving their time and place. We still need your help to fill vacant positions. Please prayerfully consider joining this endeavor to reach area children with the Gospel of Christ and to enhance our covenant children's relationship with the Father. Feel free to contact me at either 803-278-1176 or via runningdeal@gmail.com.

"And calling to Him a child, He put him in the midst of them and said, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever receives one such child in My name receives Me" (Matthew 18:2-5).



Augusta
Care Pregnancy Center

Walk For Life

May 7 • 9th Street Plaza River Walk

Registration at 9:00 a.m.

Walk at 9:30 a.m.

Contact Linda Jones for more information:

706-231-3758/warrenjones0101@comcast.net

Ministry through Music

April 4 through 15, I will have the honor to travel with the CenturyMen to Cuba! CenturyMen, a nationally auditioned male chorus of ministers of music (www.thecenturymen.com) will be presenting sacred concerts around the country also leading worship and music workshops in local Christian churches. The Cuban people have very little in the way of resources for their lives and work. So, CenturyMen, including myself, are planning to leave our suitcases with most of our clothes and whatever else we bring with us. I am planning to bring strings and some equipment for string instruments as well as literature on and for planning of Christian corporate worship. If you would like to help provide funds for some of these items, please contact me at music@christchurchpres.org or 706-210-9090.

*Praise the LORD! Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! His faithful love endures forever.
Psalm 106:1 (NLT)*

Stan Pylant, *Director of Music*

WOCC

On Saturday, March 19, about twenty five Women of Christ Church enjoyed a food and fellowship retreat in Appling. The Ladies heard two presentations to raise awareness of the scourge of human trafficking. Our own Jenny Townsend presented a slide show of her experiences last year in Cambodia, Thailand and Kenya. Jenny shared about the humanitarian organization Women at Risk International, a Christian agency seeking to locate, protect and empower victims who have been forced into slavery (www.warinternational.org). We had a beautiful WAR International jewelry show and our ladies purchased jewelry made by rescued women around the world. The proceeds provide safe houses for victims.

LuAnn Shipp spoke to us on behalf of iCare4 (icare4thevoiceless.org), a local Christian organization providing shelter and other services for victims of trafficking, as well as their children. Alarming, human trafficking is a 28 billion dollar industry with Augusta being geographically part of a huge network of this trade.

The WOCC are actively pursuing ways to be involved in these organizations and others such as our local Care Pregnancy Center so that we too may be the hands and feet of Jesus to women in desperate need. To close the retreat, Sheila Self prepared a homily reminding us of the importance the Lord places on care for the poor and poor in spirit. We have work to do; let us serve Him well as we care for the least of these.

Trail Life Trek

In February, the three Woodlands Trail patrols experienced their own Hit-the-Trail for this month. The Fox Patrol (K-1) visited the Ninety Six National Historic Site and learned about the Revolutionary War in South Carolina. The Hawk Patrol (2-3 grade) attended the Battle of Aiken and learned about life during the Civil War from re-enactors, blacksmiths and even chaplains. The Mountain Lion Patrol (4-5 grade) spent a day working on their archery skills. We ended the month with several of our parents sharing some of their hobbies with all the boys.

The next few months will see us more outdoors with the arrival of spring: March will be our spring hike at Lake Springs on Clark's Hill Lake; April will include a camp out at Leitner Lake on Fort Gordon; and in May we will enjoy a bicycle rodeo.

Monday, March 14, was Trail Life USA and American Heritage Girls Day at the Georgia Capitol. Trail Life USA (TLUSA) Trailmen and American Heritage Girls came from across Georgia to attend their first "Day at the Capitol." More than 250 Trail Life USA members and American Heritage Girls met Governor Nathan Deal, Attorney General Sam Olens, Secretary of State Brian Kemp and Commissioner of the Department of National Resources Mark Williams as well as members of the legislature. Also welcoming the Trailmen and American Heritage Girls was TLUSA Executive Board Member Stuart Michelson and TLUSA National Director of Field Operations Rob Green who explained, "Trail Life USA is a Christian adventure, character and leadership program for young men. The K-12 program centers on outdoor experiences that build a young man's skills and allow him to grow on a personal level as a role model and leader for his peers. Living the trail life is a journey established on timeless values derived from the Bible." Georgia is one of 49 states to charter Trail Life USA Troops (over 23,000 members) since beginning in January 2014.



Boys can join the TrailLife troop at any time during the year. So if you know a boy of elementary school age who would be interested, visit one of our meetings on Monday nights at 7:00 p.m. in Covenant Hall, or contact Troopmaster, John Norkus (706-860-4311, thenorkusfamily@comcast.net). Also, if you are interested in helping the troop, we have needs for both program and administrative/committee support. Contact Barry Smith, Troop Committee Chairman (barry@bardwith.net), if interested in assisting in the troop operations.

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Address Service Requested



April

Each Sunday's Schedule: 9:45 a.m. Sunday School • 11:00 a.m. Worship • 6:00 p.m. Worship

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	
					1	2	
					6:30 a.m. Men's Prayer		
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
5:00 p.m. Prayer Meeting 7:30 p.m. Student Gathering			No Midweek Activities		6:30 a.m. Men's Prayer 7:00 p.m. Student Movie Night		
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
5:00 p.m. Prayer Meeting	7:00 p.m. Session Meeting 7:00 p.m. Trail Life	10:00 a.m. Ladies Daytime Bible Study 7:00 p.m. Diaconate Meeting	Midweek Schedule: 5:45 p.m. Dinner Begins 6:30 p.m. Student Gathering 6:45 p.m. Choir Prayer 7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal 7:00 p.m. Midweek Prayer 8:15 p.m. Brass Ensemble	6:45 p.m. Women's Bible Study	6:30 a.m. Men's Prayer		
17	18	19		20	21	22	23
4:30 p.m. AYC Rehearsal 5:00 p.m. Prayer Meeting 7:30 p.m. Student Gathering	7:00 p.m. Trail Life	7:00 p.m. Adult Bible Study, Evans		7:00 p.m. Adult Bible Study, Augusta	6:30 a.m. Men's Prayer	VBS Leadership Team Meetings	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
4:30 p.m. AYC Rehearsal 5:00 p.m. Prayer Meeting	7:00 p.m. Trail Life	10:00 a.m. Ladies Daytime Bible Study	6:45 p.m. Women's Bible Study	6:30 a.m. Men's Prayer			