



# CHRIST CHURCH PRESS

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

Volume 12, Issue 7

July 2017

## Birthdays

- 03 .....Mara Ramon-Gutierrez
- 05 ..... Sandra Brown
- 06 .....Linda Fleming  
Betty Gene Lovingood
- 10.....John Self  
Tracy Steed
- 11.....Joe Dey
- 12.....Jenny Townsend
- 13..... Kelly Caruso
- 14..... Elizabeth Seward
- 15 .....Billy Hatcher  
Derrick Smits, Jr.
- 18..... Margaret Fields
- 21..... Warren Jones  
Dale McPherson
- 23 ..... Sheryl Alba
- 30 .....John Dunsmore

## Is it Possible?

Scripture reminds us that given what is offered to us on the world stage, a doorkeeper in the house of the Lord is the superior choice (Psalm 84:10). We live in a world of streets, interstate highways, back roads, and alleys. These lead to destinations of various sorts, accomplishments, goals and doors open or closed to us.

Every Sunday we travel familiar paths leading us to the welcoming vista of our beautiful church campus and the open doors of our lovely sanctuary. We are met by greeters who welcome us, ushers who guide us, teachers who instruct us, musicians who prepare us, preachers who admonish us, brothers and sisters who encourage us. We wrestle with hymn books (two, in fact), our Bibles (smart phones for those not technically challenged), the worship folder, the "green" book, our tithe and offering envelope, various response slips, volunteer forms, coats, sweaters, umbrellas, an occasional hearing device, and our children and grandchildren. If someone has "our" seat, it will take several moments to readjust and settle into foreign territory, our new "neighborhood" in the sanctuary: we may need to maneuver to avoid the sun's glare, to see the pulpit, and to secure a good view of "who's who" in the pew.

The music begins, leaders enter, the congregants settle down, latecomers scurry down the aisles and worship begins...or does it? As unthinkable as it is, more than a few have given up on true worship and sadly plod through the sacred gathering as if it were an irrelevant exercise, a wearisome habit, a duty during which "dues" will be paid. However, not to worry. On to this lifeless scene come well-intentioned strategists who promise to help us make worship more relevant, more vibrant, and certainly more painless. Vocations have actually developed, tasked with leading us toward "enhanced worship," "seeker-sensitive paradigms," "infused spiritual expressions," and "street-familiar worship opportunities." (I didn't make these terms up!)

While it is absolutely essential to connect ourselves and others to actual culturally-ingrained responses to Kingdom truth, we must also be aware of the tendency of our flesh to seek gratification and recognition in what is increasingly becoming a needs-oriented rather than a God-focused worshipping community of faith. Platform personalities, performance-based liturgies, worship choreography and self-affirming devotionals are not consistent with Jesus' worship instructions to aspire to honor God "in spirit and in truth" (John 4:23).

A magnificent cathedral with glorious architectural features and powerful organ, a storefront with folding chairs and an out-of-tune piano, a jungle hut with no climate control and handmade musical instruments, an available backyard with accompanying traffic noise, a prison chapel with rustling chains and slamming doors, under a tarp in Iraq amid sounds of battle, a common room in the local hospital, wheelchairs, antiseptic odors and deep pain part of the service...no matter under what circumstances and in what environment, we worship biblically when our minds are fully engaged, our wills are open to the next heavenly directive, and our hearts are deeply woven into the fabric of Christ's character.

When God's people bring these gifts to church, worship, and then service become truly relevant. When genuine mind-will-heart effort is offered to God everything changes. This kind of worship calls us to encounter the greatness of our God, to face our real selves, and reminds us of all our reasons to repent. This kind of worship restrains our self-centeredness and gives us courage to go back into the world as it is.

Jerome Hines, noted opera personality of an earlier time, often told the story about a doorman of a New York theatre. For seventeen years he guarded a Broadway theatre but never once entered to see a performance.

(continued on page 2)

## Anniversaries

- 05 .....Sheila & Lee Self
- 11.....Joanna & Tony Miller
- 16..... Helen & Wade Caldwell
- 21.....Natalie & Ora Parish
- 25 ..... Ilona & McDonald Law
- 26 ..... Tracy & Brent Steed

## Independence Day Celebration

July 2<sup>nd</sup> after evening worship

- ♦ Finger Food & Ice Cream
- ♦ Patriotic Music
- ♦ Fun Inflatable Activities

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# Independence Day: Our Christian Heritage

## The Birth of a Nation

For 230 years, America has been blessed as the longest ongoing Constitutional Republic in the history of the world. These blessings are not accidental, they are blessings of God. This is evident as we look at the turmoil in other nations and contrast that to the stability we see in America. Preserving American liberty depends first upon our understanding of the foundations on which this great country was built, and then it depends on preserving the principles on which it was founded.

On July 2, 1776, Congress voted to approve a complete separation from England. Two days later, the early draft of the Declaration of Independence was signed. Four days later, members of Congress took the document and read it out loud from the steps of Independence Hall, proclaiming it to the city of Philadelphia, and afterwards they rang the Liberty Bell. The inscription on the top of the bell is Leviticus 25:10, which reads, "Proclaim liberty throughout the land and to all the inhabitants thereof."



John Adams said, "The general principles on which the Fathers achieved independence were the general principles of Christianity." Probably the clearest identification of the spirit of the American Revolution was given by John in a letter to Abigail the day after Congress approved the Declaration. He wrote her two letters that day: One was short and jubilant that the Declaration had been approved; the other letter was much longer and gave serious consideration to what had been done that day. Adams could already foresee that their actions would be celebrated by future generations.

## A Different Holiday

Adams also noted: "This day will be the most memorable epic in the history of America. I am apt to believe that it will be celebrated by succeeding generations as the great anniversary festival." He felt the celebration should be in a manner that would commemorate the day as a "day of deliverance by solemn acts of devotion to God Almighty." John Adams believed that the Fourth of July should be a religious holiday. The two top holidays celebrated in this country are Christmas and the Fourth of July. According to John Quincy Adams, the two dates are connected. On the Fourth of July, the Founding Fathers simply took the precepts of Christ and His birth (Christmas) and incorporated those principles into civil government.

The Declaration of Independence was the birth certificate for this nation, but the men who signed it knew it could be their death warrant. The closing paragraph states, "And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor." The 56 Founding Fathers, 27 of whom were trained as ministers, took their pledge seriously. On the morning of the signing, there was silence and gloom as each man was called up to the table of the President of Congress to sign the document, knowing that it could mean their death by hanging.

Most wars have a motto. The motto of World War II was "Remember Pearl Harbor." The motto during the Texas war for independence was "Remember the Alamo." The spiritual emphasis, directed towards King George III who violated God's laws, gave rise to a motto during the American Revolution: "No King but King Jesus." The Founding Fathers passed the torch to us. It is our responsibility to not let it go out.

## Trail Life Trek

Boys from Trail Life USA Troop GA-2215 ventured to Camp Charles Aiken to participate in Camp EQUIP where they learned basic outdoor skills such as gear and site selection, fire building, outdoor cooking, first aid, knots and lashings, trip planning, and land navigation. They learned not only by instruction, but also by doing; using the patrol method of shared leadership to prepare and cook all their meals. Each day ended with a camp-wide campfire program with songs, skits, and a devotional message. The week was capped off on Friday with a hike that included a rope bridge crossing, a trebuchet building contest with water balloon launches, and a closing campfire flag retirement ceremony.

On June 16, the troop along with American Heritage Girls Troop 2345 attended an Augusta Greenjackets game (Greenjackets won 6-3 over the Asheville Tourists).



## Is it Possible?

(continued from page 1)

I am wondering, IS IT POSSIBLE for preachers and members of congregations to become that sort of doorkeeper in the house of the Lord? We can so easily focus on the incidental, the structure, the mechanical, the strategy, the fad, the crowd, the talent, the personalities...so much so, perhaps, that we miss the central theme of God's magnificence, the eternal living drama of salvation, the absolute awe of being His children.

For a short time we gather morning and evening...just specks on eternity's clock. In those brief services, as we pause for corporate worship, we are reminded that The Lord's Day may be echoed privately throughout the week. A meditation from Scripture, reading a Christian classic, humming a hymn, offering prayers of confession and repentance, praise and intercession... these are times of worship. These are moments when we allow God's Spirit an opportunity to bathe our hearts and minds with heaven's truth. These are times, corporately and privately, to encounter our Lord and experience holy silence, solitude, and the peaceful reordering of our lives.

— Rev. Richard Hammond

## Ministry thru Music

The **Augusta Youth Chorale's** eighth season has come to a close. Traveling to Michigan in early June was marvelous with their singing at 2 churches, 2 retirement communities, and an outdoor concert during a festival. Auditions for the ninth season will be held during August and rehearsals begin in September. Know someone who might enjoy new friends in a choral setting with wonderful opportunities to share their gifts with others? Have them visit our website for information, [www.augustayouthchorale.org](http://www.augustayouthchorale.org), or contact me at 706-210-9090 or via email to [music@christchurchpres.org](mailto:music@christchurchpres.org).

**Children's Choir** continues to rehearse during the summer under the direction of Kay Lovingood. During this time, no other group is rehearsing, though the Sanctuary Choir continues to sing Sunday mornings during worship.

*Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! His faithful love endures forever.*

1 Chronicles 16:34, NIV

Stan Pylant, Director of Music

## Vacation Bible School Praise Report

**The Case of the Puzzling Parables** was a huge success! God delivered 40+ children to Christ Church in June to hear about Jesus and learn of His parables during a fun, exciting week through Bible study, crafts, recreation, and song. On Friday, approximately 120 people enjoyed the Closing Program and picnic on the grounds to end the week. Again, thank you to everyone who helped in any way to fulfill God's will for this year's Vacation Bible School—you are a blessing!

*That you may tell the next generation that this is God, our God forever and ever, He will guide us forever.*

Psalm 48:13-14



## Missions Prayer Bands

Our missionaries need our regular prayers as we intercede to the throne of grace for their needs, support, and guidance by the Holy Spirit. Just take one missionary per day and set aside some time where you seek the Lord on their behalf.

As an example to us Jesus did pray almost constantly. He prayed for long periods of time and we are told from Scripture that He rose a great while before dawn and went up into a mountain to pray. Our Jesus, fully man and fully God, because He was entirely dependent upon His Father and as He lived as a man, prayer was essential to Him. So let us follow the example Jesus has left for us and pursue seeking the Lord in prayer on behalf of the missionaries we support as a church. The Lord God has ordained and decreed to do His work in this world through men and women through our prayers. May we follow the example of Jesus as we meet for prayer.

The next Missions Prayer Band will meet on Sunday, July 23, at 5:00 p.m. Please make every effort to spend time around the tables to pray for our missionaries.

## Community Service Update

May's Community Service Team visit to the Master's Table Soup Kitchen at Golden Harvest was enjoyed by all who attended. Thank you to Emily Adams and Julie Dey for coordinating this trip. Community Service Teams are on hold for the summer, but please feel free to contact a member of the Missions Committee should you want to plan a visit in the future.

Foster care was the ministry chosen to support during Vacation Bible School this year. Throughout the week, the children learned a little bit about how foster care works, and how they can love their neighbors by helping the children in their care. Donations of toiletries and diapers were requested, and children and their families generously gave two huge boxes full to be presented to our local DFCS offices. Many thanks to all who participated!



## Good News Club

The Lord blessed the Good News Club work at River Ridge Elementary School this year with an average of 40 to 50 participating throughout the year. Jane Bowen has coordinated this work for many years and will be stepping down for medical reasons. Please pray for a volunteer to lead this work next year and for additional helpers to volunteer.

The Coordinator meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 25, at 2:00 p.m. in the CEF office located at 4246 Washington Road in Evans. Anyone interested in filling the role of coordinator should attend this meeting.

The Good News Club training: Children's Ministry Conference, will be held on August 19 at the Westminster Presbyterian Church located at 4303 Wheeler Road in Augusta. The training will begin at 8:30 a.m. and end at 2:30 p.m. for new volunteers, and 12:45 p.m. for returning volunteers. The church will reimburse the cost of CEF training for all volunteers. Please contact Jane Bowen at 706-738-1816 if you are interested or would like additional information.

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## JULY

**Weekly Sunday 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	3	Independence Day 4	5	6	7	8
5:00 p.m. Prayer Meeting 7:15 p.m. Independence Day Celebration					6:30 a.m. Men's Prayer	
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
5:00 p.m. Prayer Meeting	6:30 p.m. Session Prayer & Meeting 7:00 p.m. Trail Life Navigator Patrol Meeting	7:00 p.m. Diaconate Meeting			6:30 a.m. Men's Prayer	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
5:00 p.m. Prayer Meeting	7:00 p.m. Trail Life Navigator Patrol Meeting				6:30 a.m. Men's Prayer	
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
5:00 p.m. Missions Prayer Bands	7:00 p.m. Trail Life Navigator Patrol Meeting				6:30 a.m. Men's Prayer	
30	31					
5:00 p.m. Prayer Meeting	7:00 p.m. Trail Life Navigator Patrol Meeting					