

A LAMPSTAND FOR MOUNT AIRY

COVENANT REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

PASTOR SCOTT WILLET

OCTOBER 2018

A Prophetic Voice

I made a mistake. Just months after I was ordained, the country was caught up in a lengthy, bitter debate about the nomination of a new justice for the Supreme Court. His name was Robert Bork. The year was 1987. Ronald Reagan was still president, and the evangelical church of the day was filled with an optimistic sense that the great hope of our country was a political party. Abortion had only been “legal” for 14 years, and the overwhelming sense was that that great national crisis would be solved, and ended, with the appointment of just one more new justice to the Supreme Court.

My mistake was interjecting partisan politics into my public prayer and preaching. The issue wasn't just that everyone in the church might not agree with the official platform of the Republican Party (they didn't...), but that the gospel itself is not rightly represented as a point of political partisanship. Preaching the gospel is something far different than a political stump speech, and biblical application, based on sound exposition, is not rightly reduced to mere political action. Much more careful thought is needed.

Ever aware now of the grave danger of that mistake of intermingling the gospel with political partisanship, it is my responsibility as a preacher of the Word of God to remind you and proclaim to you that your hope is in the Lord. That's

not just a cliché. Your hope is not in a man, nor any group of men (people) assembled together for political purposes. Surely the history of the last 31 years (since Robert Bork) has taught us that any hope founded upon a political party is a false hope. Any expectation that the desired outcome in our society of the increase of godliness and righteousness, as God defines those things, will result from an act of legislation, an executive order, or a judicial decision is a false expectation. Indeed, to state the obvious, God must change the heart. Our hope, therefore, is in revival. Again, no simplistic cliché intended. Our hope is in the power of God, power made evident in the written word, which is why we give such an emphasis to the preaching of that Word. Our hope is in the work of God to change the heart of fallen, sinful human beings, so that rather than loving their sin they come to love their God. Our hope is in the sure and certain confidence, with Job, that “in my flesh I shall see God.” (Job 19:26) In other words, ultimately, our hope is not in this world at all, this world so filled with trouble. Rather, it is in the confidence Job so clearly expressed, “For I know that my Redeemer lives, And He shall stand at last on the earth.” (Job 19:25)

Welcome!

To our visitors,
we welcome you to
Covenant Reformed
Presbyterian Church.

Visitors, please take a copy of
the burgundy colored

Welcome!

folder located on the foyer
table next to the bulletins.

Please fill out a visitor's card
and either give it to an usher
or put it in the offering plate.

“But now God has set the members,
each one of them, in the body
just as He pleased.”
(1 Cor. 12:18 NKJV)

So what do we do? What do we do when we observe the dismal effects of political partisanship so vividly displayed in our day in the process of approving another justice to the Supreme Court? Surely it can rightly be observed—the depth to which our leaders and rulers have sunk in the miserable and unfortunate pursuit of political advantage even to the careless and intentional destruction of the reputation and honor of anyone who either stands in their way or can be utilized for their own agenda. Even more discouragingly, we now have occasion to note how those dissatisfied with some particular political or social event believe that it is their right to advocate violence, to pursue anarchy. To harm and to abuse those with whom they disagree, even to the threat of bodily injury or death.

That's where we have come these 31 years of my ministry and adult life. That's where we have gone. To a place totally lacking in civility. A place with a total disregard for the honor we should graciously give to others as fellow human beings.

So what do we do? I would suggest three things, for myself as a minister of the gospel and for every believer who seeks to honor God. First, cling to the hope of the gospel. Cling to the gospel as your hope, realizing that there is no other. Thus, when I preach, though I may (and will) address issues of public policy or significance which are addressed by the Word of God, I will seek not to co-mingle that which is best described as a partisan political agenda with that which is rightly the subject of the proclamation of the Word of God.

But then, secondly, as Christian citizens, citizens of an earthly country who are also followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, you have occasion to go out into this world as salt and light wherever God gives you opportunity. For some, that will mean specific political activity, even to the point of seeking elected office. That could mean supporting certain political candidates and opposing others. It might mean an active presence in the public square, or at least a responsibility to fulfill the civic duty of voting. More broadly, it must mean a commitment to a life of integrity and honor, a life that bears witness to the truth and righteousness of God in a way that mere words cannot. And it must mean a devotion to that sort of heart-felt obedience that pleases the Lord, that which God defines as good: "He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the Lord require of you But to do justly, To love mercy, And to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6:8)

Thirdly, and my real point in this article, is that we must retain a prophetic voice in this world and culture in which we now live. That is an aspect of being salt and light, to be sure. But it is more specific. We need a prophetic voice, not in the inspired, inerrant way of the writers of Scriptures, but a voice that speaks up as a representative for God in this world, speaking his Word to a world that is increasingly ignorant of it.

So as I preach the Word of God from week to week, surely there are matters that come to our attention that have direct implication for current events, and for the current state of our culture. God is not silent, not to the nations nor to our civil governments. Thus, with our prophetic voice, we identify sin. Even as we preach the hope of forgiveness, we call for repentance. We stand our ground when biblical principle requires, even to our hurt. As we show forth the godliness of righteousness in our lives.

That prophetic voice also requires careful thinking. It requires much humility. Integrity mixed with courage—and patience. It requires a discerning mind to know the difference between a prophetic voice and political pandering and rhetoric for its own sake. A prophetic voice cries out in the wilderness, "Make straight the way of the Lord." (John 1:23) We need those voices today, more than ever, for our hope is not in a political party, nor in the particular makeup of our Supreme Court, or in the outcome of elections. Our hope is in the Lord.



<i>Schedule of Preaching & Teaching</i>	
<u>October 7</u>	
Adult SS	<i>At Tricarico (Home Missions report)</i>
AM	<i>At Tricarico Preaching</i>
PM	<i>At Tricarico Preaching</i>
<u>October 14</u>	
Adult SS	<i>Pastor Willet</i>
AM	<i>John 17:6-19</i>
PM	<i>Leviticus 23</i>
<u>October 21</u>	
Adult SS	<i>Presbytery Report</i>
AM	<i>John 17:20-26</i>
PM	<i>Leviticus 24</i>
<u>October 28</u>	
Adult SS	<i>1 Corinthians (Mike Shields)</i>
AM	<i>John 18:1-14</i>
PM	<i>Leviticus 25,27</i>
<u>November 4</u>	
Adult SS	<i>1 Corinthians (Mike Shields)</i>
AM	<i>John 18:15-27</i>
PM	<i>Leviticus 26</i>

Treasurer's Report		
<u>Monthly Income</u>	<u>Monthly Expenses</u>	<u>Income minus Expenses</u>
August \$10,213.35	August \$14,175.09	August -\$3,961.74
YTD \$74,508.84	YTD \$89,068.34	YTD -\$14,559.50
<u>Monthly Average Income</u>	<u>Monthly Average Expenses</u>	
\$9,313.61	\$11,133.54	

A Note from Pastor Calvin Keller

Brothers and Sisters,

I wanted to give you all an update on our situation here. This morning [9/23], the congregation of Cornerstone did vote to concur with my request to dissolve the pastoral relationship here so that I can take up the call to come to Winston-Salem. The session will be requesting that my last Sunday here at Cornerstone be November 11. This is part of the request coming to presbytery from Cornerstone. So, Lord willing, the presbytery will put the call into my hands and declare the pulpit in Chattanooga vacant after November 11.

Connie and I are excited about what the Lord is doing. We continue to pray for you all and that the Lord will be pleased to grow His church. We want to see him doing his work and receiving the glory.

Please pray for the Lord's blessing on the congregation here as they begin the process of putting together a pulpit search committee.

Pray for Connie and I as we begin to search for a house in Winston-Salem and as we get our house here in Chattanooga ready to sell.

In the Fellowship of Christ our Lord,

Calvin

Wednesday Night Bible Study

Everyone is invited to our weekly Bible study each Wednesday evening at 7 pm, focusing on the book of Hebrews. We meet at the home of Marvin and Susan Kaye, 419 Spring St.

October 10: Hebrews 13:20-25
October 17: Cancelled this week only
October 24: To be determined
October 31: Reformation Day Movie

Sunday School

Four Classes to be held each week:

Pre-Readers

Taught by Cindy Shields

Young Readers

Taught by Josiah DeGraaf

Youth

Taught primarily by Pastor Willet

A practical and personal study of the Westminster Confession intended for our covenant children as they learn to understand and embrace the Confession for themselves.

Adults

Taught by Ruling Elder Mike Shields
An expositional study of 1 Corinthians

Men's Reading Group

Each Friday, 8:00 AM
at the church
studying the book, *Knowing Scripture*, by R.C. Sproul

October 12: Chapter 4 (pp.105-113)
October 19: NO MEETING
October 26: Chapter 5 (pp.114-120)

All the men and young men of the church are invited for a time of study, prayer and fellowship.

Youth and Young Adult Bible Study

Thursdays 7 pm

(most weeks at the home of Mike and Cindy Shields)

Dinner at 7 pm

Bible study begins approximately 7:45 pm

Taught by Pastor Willet

Current Topic: The prophecy of *Habakkuk*

Everyone is invited to this discussion-based Bible study.

We will not meet the next two Thursday nights, October 11 and October 18.

Church Website

www.mtairyopc.org

Please visit our newly updated website!

Please note:

Weekly sermons are now posted on this website. (Sermon Audio is no longer active.)

Urgent church announcements (such as weather closings, etc.) will be posted on this site.

We plan to keep the site current and up to date, as an outreach to our community.

Please note any errors or make known any suggestions for improvements to Pastor Willet.

Session Actions

The Session met on September 14 and September 25.

The following were included in the work of the Session.

- Received a report from the pastor on his monthly labors and activities.
- Discussed various church members, determining our next contact with those not attending.
- Agreed this month to no change in the status of the church discipline (Suspension) for [a church member].
- Pronounced censure of Suspension upon [a church member].
- Discussed options for piano accompaniment on weeks when our regular accompanists are not available.
- Discussed Walk Thru the Bible outreach event.
- Discussed Buildings and Grounds needs.
- Received Monthly Treasurer's Report.
- Received Deacons' Report and approved monthly Diaconal Fund expenditures.
- Appoint Mark Mattson as Elder representative to the October presbytery meeting.
- Set the next meeting for October 26, 9:15 am.
- Seasons of prayer for the congregation.

*As an outreach to our community and a benefit to our own congregation,
the Session has scheduled...*

Walk Thru the Bible Old Testament Seminar

*\$10/person, \$25/family max
You can register for \$5 max/family with a scholarship
Lunch will be provided
Childcare will be provided.*

PLEASE REGISTER NOW!

*Online: www.mtairyopc.org/walk
You can pay by credit card, or mail a check*

THE DETAILS

What: *Walk through the Bible is a highly engaging, dynamic, and memorable event that helps you understand God's Word and make the connection between His story and yours. Lunch will be provided*

When: *Saturday, October 27th from 9am to 4pm*

Where: *Covenant Reformed Presbyterian Church 495 S. Franklin Rd.*

Why: *It will deepen your relationship with God and teach us about God's love, mercy, justice and plan of salvation in a way that will be easy to understand. You will gain memorization tools to equip you so that you can share it with friends anytime.*

How to register: *mtairyopc.org/walk or contact Susan Kaye at (336) 789-5542 Cost is \$10/person and @25/family*

Covenant Reformed Presbyterian Church

495 S. Franklin Rd.
Mount Airy, NC 27030
336-673-3176 (Church office)
770-880-2265 (Pastor's phone)

mtairyopc.org

Pastor Scott Willet: sswillet@mac.com

Sunday Services

Sunday School Classes
10:00 AM

Sunday Morning Worship Service
11:00 AM

Sunday Afternoon Worship Service
2:15 PM

Other Activities

Wed. Night Bible Study
7:00 PM
Meeting at the Kaye home, 419 Spring St.

Thursday Night Youth and Young Adult Bible Study
7:00 PM
Meeting at the Shields' home, 250 Apollo Dr.

Men's Reading Group
Friday 8:00 AM
Meeting at the church