

A LAMPSTAND

FOR MOUNT AIRY

COVENANT REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

PASTOR SCOTT WILLET

MAY 2024

The Value of Sunday School

The history of Sunday School goes back to 1780, originally an attempt by godly, evangelical churchman in England to provide a basic education for poor and often otherwise uneducated children. The first half of the 19th century brought great popularity to the Sunday School movement and the phenomena spread to the United States as well. Over time, Sunday School became a foundational activity within the ministry of local churches and denominations, and came to focus upon Christian education for both children and adults. For most of us, while Sunday School remains optional in comparison to the biblical duty of regular worship with the church body, it nonetheless has become a significant part of church life and ministry. In the life of most churches, ours included, it is a time to learn and to study (typically, the Bible) in more of a classroom context than the declaration of a sermon in corporate worship. Within our history at Covenant, Sunday School has always occupied that important place. Not as important as worship, but still... important. Useful. Profitable.

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)

With that brief introduction, I want to let you know of a significant change in our adult Sunday School class. Elder Mike Shields has taught that class for many years now, committing himself to teaching books of the Bible from week to week, year after year. I'm not sure even he could name all the books he has taught over the passing of so much time. He has asked to be relieved of that responsibility and, beginning May 19, the Session has agreed for me to teach the adult Sunday School class. The Session has also agreed to my suggestion to teach a class on church history, rather than a specific book of the Bible. I expect that class will last about one year. Since the Session hasn't made any further plans, I am always glad for your thoughts and suggestions about future classes.

I have never been an avid student of history; I was quite ignorant of church history in particular when I entered

Schedule of Preaching and Teaching

May 19

AM	<i>Genesis 24:50-66</i>
PM	<i>Matthew 13:31-35,44-46</i>
SS	<i>Ch. 1: Away with the King</i>

May 26

AM	<i>Genesis 25:1-18</i>
PM	<i>Matthew 13:47-58</i>
SS	<i>Ch. 2: Wineskins Old and New</i>

June 2

AM	<i>Genesis 25:19-34</i>
PM	<i>Matthew 14:1-21</i>
SS	<i>Ch. 3: Only Worthless People</i>

June 9

AM	<i>Genesis 26:1-17, 26-35</i>
PM	<i>Matthew 14:22-36</i>
SS	<i>Ch. 4: If the Tiber Floods</i>

June 16

AM	<i>Genesis 26:18-25</i>
PM	<i>Matthew 15:1-20</i>
SS	<i>Ch. 5: Arguing about the Event</i>

June 23

AM	<i>Genesis 27:1-29</i>
PM	<i>Matthew 15:21-39</i>
SS	<i>Ch. 6: The Rule of Books</i>

June 30

AM	<i>Genesis 27:30-46</i>
PM	<i>Matthew 16:1-12</i>
SS	<i>Ch. 7: School for Sinners</i>

seminary. Thus, those few classes I took those years were extremely interesting for me—so much new information, so much good context for understanding the church itself, so much increased awareness of God’s providence in bringing to pass His will in the church even when that included the foibles and often sinful failures of man. In other words, I have always found the study of church history to be edifying. It is a subject well worth our attention for many good reasons, not the least of which is in the understanding of the state of the church today.

Having said that, I want to invite all of you to attend Sunday School. I realize there are good and legitimate reasons (medical and otherwise) for some who expend all their available energy and strength with attendance at public worship, but for all who are able to come, I would stress the benefit of it as I urge you to attend as often as you are able. It has been an obvious and observable reality in recent years that our Sunday School attendance has dwindled significantly, and while I continue to recognize that, for some, there are legitimate reasons, I might also conclude, in general terms, that that trend might reflect something of an insufficient desire to learn. Perhaps, for some, priorities could be profitably adjusted. However, I want to stimulate and motivate more than I want to chastise or rebuke. I want to stimulate the desire to grow in understanding the truth of God’s word and further, with the new adult class, benefitting from the awareness of God’s providence in the ministry of the church from the days of our Lord Jesus. In other words, please come to Sunday School!

Please bring your children also! In addition to the adult class, we have classes organized for children of all ages. Our church is not unusual in the important place which Sunday School classes have with regard to the biblical instruction and Christian education of our covenant children.

Here are the details for the adult class. We will be using the textbook *Church History in Plain Language*, by Bruce Shelley. The title expresses the strength of the book and the reason I have chosen it. It is written to be easily understood. In the big picture, church history is divided into 9 parts. In more detail, there are 48 relatively short chapters. Copies of the textbook are available for your individual and family use and you will benefit from reading ahead each week in preparation. (Again, to emphasize—short chapters, around 10 pages each, in “plain language.”) However, I intend to teach in such a way that you will still benefit from the studies if you choose not to get or to read the textbook. There won’t be tests or quizzes or any pressure—just an eagerness to stimulate the desire for you to learn more of the history of God’s people and, in doing so, to understand more of the life of the church itself. We will meet from 10 to 10:45 each Sunday morning. I will Livestream and record the class each week on our website so that you can still come even if you know there will be weeks when that will not be possible.

Please come! Please bring your children. Please encourage one another to come. Come with an eagerness to learn more of God’s word and His good providence in the life and work of the church.

Yours with a pastor’s heart,

A Personal Note

I appreciate the many who have prayed with much concern for my hip replacement surgery. A cyst in my back was removed several weeks ago, and while only a minor issue itself (which I have experienced in the past as well), it got infected in the healing process. Once that has completely healed (hopefully only another week!), my orthopedic surgeon will schedule the hip replacement (hopefully within a month). When that happens, I expect to be rather limited in activity for at least two weeks, and look forward to getting back fully on my feet in the weeks that follow. I’m hopeful that will only mean two Sundays when I am unable to be in the pulpit.

Women's Fellowship

Next Event

Monday, May 13

2:00 - 4:00 PM

Afternoon Tea

At Debby Blackburn's home

*Please contact Charlotte Johnson
for additional details*

Men's Reading Group

Each Friday, 9:00 AM

at the church

studying the book *The Glorious Body of Christ*
by R.B. Kuiper

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

Wednesday Night Bible Study

Everyone is invited and encouraged to come to our weekly Bible study
each Wednesday evening at 7 pm.

We are studying the *Westminster Shorter Catechism*.

Meeting at the home of Marvin and Susan Kaye, 419 Spring St., Mount Airy

Help!

If anyone is experienced and able to work with WordPress,
and willing to help keep our church website fresh and updated,
please speak to Pastor Willet.

Also, if anyone is willing and able to keep our church FaceBook
page current and up to date,
please speak to Pastor Willet

Treasurer's Report

Monthly Income

January	\$10,626.00
February	\$11,181.00
March	\$14,691.02
April	\$6,408.09
Year to Date	\$42,906.11

Monthly Expenses

January	\$11,842.77
February	\$13,877.02
March	\$14,054.88
April	\$17,539.70
Year to Date	\$57,314.36

Income minus Expenses

January	(\$1,216.77)
February	(\$2,696.02)
March	\$636.14
April	(\$11,131.61)
Year to Date	(\$14,408.25)

Monthly Average Income

\$10,726.53

Monthly Average Expenses

\$14,328.59

Monthly Budget

\$15,000.00

Deacons Fund Offering

We receive an offering designated for the Deacons Fund following the Lord's Supper on the first Sunday of every month.

The Deacons Fund (currently administered by the Elders) is used to meet specific financial requests of those in need, with a priority given to members of the church but with a willingness also to help those outside the church. (Galatians 6:10) This monthly offering will give everyone who wishes to do so the opportunity to contribute to this fund. Please give generously as you are able, as we care for one another in love.

Live Stream and our Website

Please be aware that a LiveStream is available for all our Sunday morning and afternoon worship services, adult Sunday School and our Wednesday Bible study, for those who are unable to attend in person. The website address is: www.mtairyopc.org

The Live Stream is available as a single click on the home page, or directly: <https://mtairyopc.org/live-stream/>

Recent sermons are available as a single click on the home page, and a full archive of all sermons and worship services is available as a click on the Live Stream page, or directly: <https://mtairyopc.org/sermon-archive/>

Session Meetings

The Session meets approximately every six weeks, at the conference room of the Vigilant Cyber Systems, 1326 N. Main Street in Mount Airy. Our next meeting is scheduled for Saturday, May 18, at 10:00 am.