

# Christ Church Together

## Worship Together

Sunday 9:30 AM Worship

Romans 12 "The Christian Life Together"

Sunday 6:00 PM Worship

Exodus "A People in Search of a Promise"

## Life Together

Children, Student & Adult Life Groups following AM worship

Adult Life Group - "Our Worship Together - Music & Space"

Corporate Prayer Thursday  
April 12 6:00 PM at Covenant Presbyterian Church

Weekly Growth Groups meeting near your home

## Ministry Together

*If you are interested in helping us pursue our Ministry Together Goals for 2018 - Send an email to [jim@ccotc.org](mailto:jim@ccotc.org) indicating your desire to be engaged in participation in ministry in our city.*

## The Gospel & Our Worship, Life, & Ministry

The gospel is not everything but it affects everything. The gospel is what God does in Jesus to rescue his people from sin and death. It is by his grace in Jesus Christ that he affects our worship, life and ministry together.

The gospel fuels our worship together. Paul tells us to present our whole selves to God by the mercies of God (Rom.12:1). This is rational worship. God has given himself completely and totally to us in Jesus Christ. Therefore, it is reasonable that we worship him as his living rescued creatures. His mercy is glorified by our whole life of service. Those who drink deeply in the well of God's mercy revealed in Jesus Christ, worship together truly.

The gospel focuses our life together. The gospel reveals God's rescuing love. We are a people divided by differences. We live our days trying to recover our identity and belonging. We are out of accord with God, ourselves, others and the world where we live. All our efforts are short circuited by our self important, self centered, egocentric pursuits. But God comes by his gospel of grace and restores us in relationship. In Christ he cleanses us of sin, and brings us into community with himself, ourselves, his people and his kingdom. He rescues us to belong to him and his eternal kingdom in loving relationships.

The gospel forwards our ministry together. God actively came to earth to rescue the lost. He came in the person and work of Jesus to heal the sick, give sight to the blind, to bind up the broken, to make straight what was crooked, to raise up the poor, and to release the captive soul. The gospel is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes (Rom.1:16). The gospel continues it's forward march until all the nations know the shalom of God by his grace in Jesus Christ. The church is the earthly body of Christ joined to him for his forward march of ministry with word and deeds in the towns, cities, and to the ends of the earth, until his glory covers the earth.

A church that is part of a gospel movement is fueled, focused and moving forward in worship, life, and ministry together. This movement of the Spirit of God captures a church as he renews her continually by his gospel of grace. Pray with us daily for this gospel renewal in our Lord's church that we may see a gospel movement in our church and other churches.

## Church Re-Plant News

Christ Church is presently praying and discussing the possibility of joining the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA), and merging with Covenant Presbyterian Church.

This would mean that we would re-plant a church under a new name in the present facility of CPC in Forest Acres. Our aim in this effort would be to decrease the rate of dying churches, and be a part of God's movement of increasing the birth rate of new and revitalized churches.

Here are 5 signs indicating our readiness for such an effort:

1. We don't expect the new church to be a mini version of CC or CPC.
2. We don't see CC or CPC as a failure. Failure would be seeing the opportunities and doing nothing. We see one church as helping another.
3. We're ready to evaluate the process as God gives us the standard for evaluation - faithfulness to Scripture, mission of gospel love, justice and mercy, making disciples, church health & community impact.
4. We're ready for the long haul.
5. We value the people present in both congregations, while giving ourselves to God with an outward face to the community.

## The Value of a Connectional Church

Christ Church was founded in 2001 as an independent congregation. In 2017-18 The Elders of Christ Church announced a desire to see Christ Church become a part of a Reformed and Presbyterian denomination. It is helpful to consider why the leadership is pursuing this goal for the church by considering the value of being a connectional church.

The nature of the church is connectional. Throughout the New Testament the church is referred to as the body of Christ. Each person who repents and believes God's gospel is joined to Christ, and this unites believers together into the body of Christ. Therefore, the very nature of being a Christian and being a part of his church is to be connectional. There are no independent Christians. They are united to Christ and one another by his death and resurrection. The church's connectional nature is expressed when we gather for worship together stirring one another up to love and good works (Heb.10:24-25); Or, when we do life together encouraging one another everyday (Heb.3:13); Or, when we do ministry together using our various gifts (Rom.12:3-8). Connectionalism values what God joins together.

The early church modeled being connectional. In Acts 15 the leaders of the church gathered together to make a decision concerning ministry to the growing Gentile / Jewish church. Paul, Barnabas, Peter, James and others of the churches leadership representing different particular churches gathered in Jerusalem. They deliberated on whether they should force the Gentiles in their churches to follow the old covenant rite of circumcision. After they came to the conclusion they should not they sent a letter to all of the different churches informing them of the decision. The early church also modeled connectionalism in their generosity. Paul traveled among the churches that had been planted in Asia Minor taking up financial gifts to be taken to the suffering church in Jerusalem. God grew his connectional church in the first century.

The connectional church is accountable to particular doctrines taught to us in the Scriptures. A church is a formal gathering of God's people through and around the truth he reveals to his church by his Word. In this gathering we have one faith, one baptism, one God and Father over all, as we hold to sound doctrine. Doctrines are rules or standards of belief understood from God's Word. Being a part of a church that is connected through a denomination allows those churches to be held together under certain doctrines of the faith. This ensures that the pastors / teachers in these churches hold to the sound doctrines of the faith. The congregation can depend upon this accountability for their pastors as well as for their own faith and life. This accountability to doctrine is the basis for the accountability for her leaders and members.