

Christ Church Together

Worship Together

Romans 12-14 "The Christian Life in the Church & World"

**Sacrament of Communion
May 6**

Exodus "A People in Search of a Promise"

Life Together

Adult Life Group in May

May 13 "What is a Connectional Church?"

May 20 "Foundations for Church Re-Planting"

May 27 "What is a Missional Church?"

Fireflies Game Thursday May 3 meet @ Christ Church 6:15

Fellowship Dinner May 6 at Christ Church with CPC

Corporate Prayer Thursday May 17 6:00 PM at Christ Church

Ministry Together

Interested in helping us pursue our Ministry Together Goals for 2018? Send an email to jim@ccotc.org to be engaged in participation in ministry together .

Valuing & Practicing Gospel Renewal Prayer

Church re-planting requires a continual ground work of prayer. We are participating each month in corporate prayer (Thursday May 17th 6:00 PM at Christ Church), and we have a team of ladies from CC and CPC praying daily for gospel renewal in our church. However, God does not call only some in his church to pray while others work or watch. We come into the kingdom by prayer (Lk.18:13), and the fabric of our life in the kingdom is one of prayer (Mt.6:9). The church praying is how Jesus will find faith on the earth when he returns (Lk.18:8). Prayer is the place of the church's communion with God, and place of pleading for God to do his will. Gospel Renewal Praying (GRP) enables the church in her communion with God and praying the will of God.

GRP requires us to define and understand gospel renewal.. Tim Keller writes in the book, *Center Church*, "Gospel renewal is a life-changing recovery of the gospel. Personal gospel renewal means the gospel doctrines of sin and grace are actually experienced, not just known intellectually. This personal renewal includes an awareness and conviction of one's own sin and alienation from God and comes from seeing in ourselves deeper layers of self-justification, unbelief, and self-righteousness than we have ever seen before. There is a new, commensurate grasp of the wonder of forgiveness and grace as we shed these attitudes and practices and rest in Christ alone for salvation. Perhaps we have previously said that we were "resting in Christ's work, not our own work" for salvation, but when we experience gospel renewal, we have a new clarity about what this means in our mind and a new experience of actually doing it with our heart." GRP is asking God to bring a "life changing recovery of the gospel" to his church. We are asking God to bring this life changing recovery to individuals in the church and to the church corporately, as she functions as the body of Christ in the world.

GRP requires us knowing and recounting the gospel and it's effects in our praying. This kind of praying leads to communion with God through praise, thanksgiving, confession and repentance. We're not merely knowing the gospel intellectually, we are experiencing it in our hearts in fellowship with God. This leads us to pray for what God wants through the power of the gospel. A life changing recovery of the gospel is not the same as praying people will do what God requires. Man can seemingly do what God requires in moral effort, which produces self righteousness, a lack of need for gospel power, and contempt toward others. This intellectual knowledge of the gospel without the experience of the power of the gospel in our lives, humbling us before God and others, is what kills our churches. GRP enjoins us to pray in the certainty of who God is for his church in Christ and by his Spirit, and for what he wills to accomplish in Christ by his Spirit according to his Word. GRP is a receiving of his kingdom not a building of our own according to our desires.

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.

We would re-plant a church under a new name at 3100 Covenant Road. Our goal 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.

The following are 5 keys to effective church re-planting:

1. Recognize the desperation of the situation. When a church is in decline or dying the situation needs to be assessed and understood. We tend to avoid those realities, but we can't.
2. Recognize that God gives life by his Spirit as he uses his means of grace: Word, Prayer, Sacrament, Loving Life of His People. Re-planting a church does not rely on human achievement or ingenuity, but the power of God's Spirit through the gospel of Jesus Christ gifted to his church by his own means.
3. Recognize we are starting over. There needs to be a willingness to sever our ties to the past and begin again.
4. Recognize we have gifts to serve others in this effort. Replanting does not rely on the gifts of one man, but on the generosity of a critical mass. Replanting requires participants not spectators.
5. Recognize that God wants us to trust him with a trembling trust while we watch the salvation of God take place in our lives and others.

Q & A on a Church Merger

Q.: What are we actually voting on Sunday June 24th?

A.: Christ Church will voting to join the Presbyterian Church of America (PCA) denomination, in a merger with the congregation of Covenant Presbyterian Church to form a re-planted church under the new name _____ Church.

Q.: Why are we deciding on a new church name prior to the vote on the 24th? That feels like the decision has already been made before we vote.

A.: When the Session brings the motion for vote to the congregation on the 24th it is necessary that the new church name be included. We will be voting on joining the PCA as _____ Church, a merged congregation of two congregations. The wording of that newly formed church has to be in our formal language as we petition the PCA.

Q.: Are there doctrinal differences between Christ Church and the PCA?

A.: Christ Church (CC) has used the Westminster Confession of Faith (WCF) and By-Laws (written by it's founding Pastor) as it's doctrinal standards and governing standards. However, CC did not hold to Chapter 31 of the WCF as it relates to being a connected church to other churches because of CC's independence. Also, it took exception the WCF in regard to the modes used in Baptism. CC practiced immersion on some occasions in it's past. The WCF recognizes sprinkling or pouring as the common modes of Baptism used in a service of worship. IF CC joins the PCA she would no longer take exception to the WCF standards, and would adopt the PCA Book of Church Order as it governing standards.

Q.: If the vote is positive on June 24th would we move from our present facility to 3100 Covenant Road if we have not sold the property at 1824 Barnwell Street?

A.: Yes. The Session and Diaconate voted in the affirmative to move ahead if we have not sold the property. The move would happen sometime after August 9th. The Elders and Deacons from both churches are putting together a plan for that transition that will include representatives from both congregations and the use of the congregations gifts and resources.

Q.: Will we do work on the property at 3100 Covenant Road prior to moving?

A.: Yes. We will be asking representatives from both congregations to assess and prioritize the needs of the property. We will then estimate the costs of those improvements and seek to work toward those changes prior to moving. It is probable that we will worship together for a time at 1824 Barnwell Street while the improvements are being made.

Q.: Will we worship together after the 24th if we vote yes to join the PCA?

A.: Yes, in some measure, but not regularly until the Presbytery votes in August and the property matters are finalized.