

Covenant Presbyterian Church Newsletter

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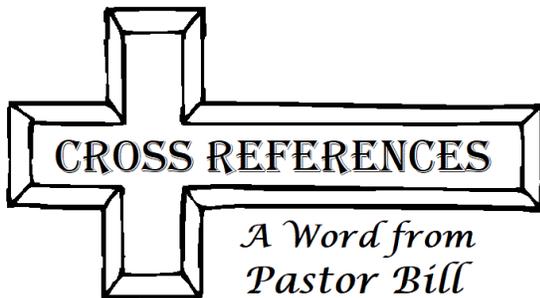
A Christ centered covenant community;

Loving God,

Loving people,

Making disciples

September 2018



Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing." And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, "To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever."

– **Revelation 5:11-13**

The word **LITURGY** comes from the Greek word used in the Bible usually translated "service to God" or "worship." The sense of the word is those worship rituals performed and the activities of the people of God (the Laity) in the church service.

Literally, **LITURGY** means "the work of the people." It is fairly easy to see this in the root words of "liturgy" in the Greek language. **LEITOS** means "people." **ERGON** means "work" (compare this word with the English word "energy"). In combination, we get "**leos + urgia**," the "work of the laity" or the "work of the people" in the service of God, which is worship.

So, we see from the very use of this word that in the Christian church worship is the responsibility and activity of everyone in the church. We are ALL the people of God – the laity. And we are all responsible for liturgy – the service of the people of God in worship. Even those whom the church has designated Clergy, who function as worship leaders, are in reality part of the laity. Worship leadership implies there are worship participants being led, but does not indicate a qualitative distinction between the leaders and the participants. Nor does it mean that the non-clergy are not responsible for actively participating in the service.

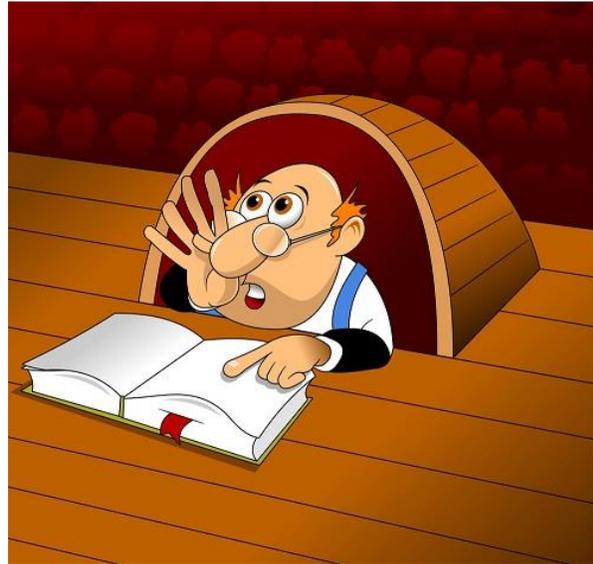
This equality of the people of God and the shared responsibility for the acts of worship in the service of God are affirmed in the Reformed conviction and Biblical doctrine of the “priesthood of all believers.” The Presbyterian tradition encourages the active participation by the widest variety and fullest number of people in the service of worship.

One thing we should not forget. Whenever we worship, no matter what rite we are performing – from reading the Word, to praying, or singing a hymn, or listening to the sermon – we are doing liturgy. The bulletin itself is a tool to guide us together through our work in the service of God as we worship. Consider the following:

The Prompter

What goes on between the speaker and the hearer in a genuine edifying discourse? It is so on the stage, as you know well enough, that someone sits and prompts by whispers; [he is hidden;] he is the inconspicuous one; he is and wishes to be overlooked. But then there is another, he strides out prominently, he draws every eye to himself. For that reason, he has been given his name, that is: actor. He impersonates a distinct individual. In the skillful sense of this illusionary art, each word becomes true when embodied in him, true through him—and yet he is told what he shall say by the hidden one that sits and whispers. No one is so foolish as to regard the prompter as more important than the actor.

Now forget this light talk about art. Alas, in regard to things spiritual, the foolishness of many is this, that they in the secular sense look upon the speaker as an actor, and the listeners as theatergoers who are to pass judgment upon the artist. But the speaker is not the actor – not in the remotest sense. No, the speaker is the prompter. There are no mere theatergoers present, for each listener will be looking into his own heart. The stage is eternity, and the listener, if he is the true listener (and if he is not, he is at fault) stands before God during the talk. The prompter whispers to the actor what he, is to say, but the actor’s repetition of it is the main concern – is the solemn charm of the art. The speaker whispers the word to the listeners. But the main concern is earnestness: that the listeners by themselves, with themselves, and to themselves, in the silence before God, may speak with the help of this address.



The address is not given for the speaker’s sake, in order that men may praise or blame him. The listener’s repetition of it is what is aimed at. If the speaker has the responsibility for what he whispers, then the listener has an equally great responsibility not to fail short in his task. In the theater, the play is staged before an audience who are called theatergoers; but at the devotional address, God himself is present. In the most earnest sense, God is the critical theatergoer, who looks on to see how the lines are spoken and how they are listened to: hence here the customary audience is wanting. The speaker is then the prompter, and the listener stands openly before God. The listener ... is the actor, who in all truth acts before God.

— Søren Kierkegaard, *Purity of Heart*, pp. 180-81 (SV XII14-15); reprinted in *Parables of Kierkegaard*, Thomas C. Oden, ed.

So, it can be seen that worship is not something that is done for us, nor is its purpose what we “get out of it.” Rather, it is what we do, what we bring to it for the sake of the Audience, who is God. We actively participate in the drama of salvation, telling the story in our rituals (like the Lord’s Supper) and repetitions from God’s Word (responsive readings, texts, and the sermon). The service is both our collective participation in the telling of the story and also what we take away from that participation when we go out into the world to continue to live the story as Christians to the glory of God and our enjoyment of Him both now and forever.

Pastor Bill

FROM THE CLERK

Session was excited to hear that Pastor Bill has been officially received into our Hope Presbytery (Arizona’s very own new Presbytery this year.) Plans are being made for the leaders of our Hope Presbytery to come to Casa Grande on Saturday, November 10, and officially install Pastor Bill as Pastor of Covenant Presbyterian Church of Casa Grande. The plan is to have it in the late afternoon so the other ministers can be here and of course, in our tradition, have a potluck dinner afterwards!

The worship team is always looking for suggestions to enhance our worship. Please talk to, text, or email Mary Moore if you have a favorite song you think our congregation could sing or know someone (maybe you?) who would like to do some special music for us. Our current group of singers, Richard Taylor, Charlie Leniger, Suzette Lemieux, and Linda Smith work really hard each week to learn new music to lead us with. You can suggest a song to them also. We love to hear the enthusiastic congregational voices as we all lift up our praises to the Lord. As part of our Oktoberfest celebration on October 7 we will move our worship service to Dave White Park for an outdoor service. Bring friends!

Your Mission Team and the Session have designated our 5th Sunday benevolent offerings to go to the Home of Hope in September. Your generous July 5th Sunday benevolent offering made it possible to give another \$1500.00 to Seeds of Hope.

Wasn’t it heartwarming to watch our youth bravely get up in front of our church and renew the Sampson and Delilah story for us? Thanks, kids and adults who made that all happen. We are so fortunate to be able to have Sunday School on Sunday mornings and Youth Group on many Sunday evenings. And education isn’t just for our youth either; we’ve been having great lessons for adults after worship on Sunday mornings.

Last December and January we accepted 41 people as Covenant Partners in our little church. We think it's time to see if we have more people who are ready to explore joining as Covenant Partners (used to be called members) in Covenant Church. Let Pastor Bill know if you are interested. And to our young people who may not be old enough to be Covenant Partners, if you are ready to declare your faith and acceptance of Jesus Christ as your Savior and desire to be baptized, please let Pastor Bill know that too.

Saturday, September 15 will be the next meeting of ECO's Hope Presbytery. Pastor Bill, available Elders and anyone else interested will be attending this meeting at Mountain View Presbyterian Church in Scottsdale. Let Pastor Bill or Clerk Mary Moore know if you'd like to go. By September 8, we have to let Presbytery know how many are coming and make lunch reservations. The cost of lunch is \$8.00.

Hospitality

Summer is ending at least for most of the country. Our children are back in school and winter visitors will be returning soon. The next luncheon will be Sept. 9th after church service. Bring your favorite dish to share and stay to visit with each other.

Start planning for October's luncheon. We will be having it the first Sunday Oct 7th. We will meet at Dave White Park for both worship service and Oktoberfest. We have reserved the large pavilion for this event. Watch for more information on this event.

Worship, Food, Fun and Games

Women's Ministry

We had our first women's ministry meeting on Aug 20th and had 11 women attend. We had a great time tasting some recipes that will be in our 1st cookbook. As a reminder please e-mail your recipes to Linda Anderson at osornl@aol.com. Send as many of your favorite family recipes as you would like. Share a story why they are your favorites. All recipes should be submitted by Oct. 30th. Our goal is to have cookbooks ready for sale by Dec. 1st for \$10 each. Great Christmas gifts for your family. Please let us know how many you would like to order, we will need to know how many to print.

Reminder our next meeting will be on Sept. 17th from 6pm to 7pm at the church office. We will have guest speakers from the Valley Humane Society. We are asking you to bring donations of dog or cat food, pet toys, old towels, blankets and sheets that you may have lying around.

Looking for our group to grow and find ways to serve our church and community. Bringing women together in Christ for Encouragement, Service and Spiritual Growth.

Theology Matters

September 2018

The Trinity

Jesus said, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." Matthew 28:19

Those who become disciples are baptized in the triune name. There is one name, and one baptism; Father, Son, and Spirit are one God. Disciples are baptized "in" this name because they now belong to God, having been brought into a personal relationship with Him.

As a child growing up in and around the Church, I always heard about the Trinity but never stopped to think too much about it. God is 3-in 1. I had no problem with that, of course I had no idea what that really meant! I was told and that was that. However, as my faith started to become deeper, I wanted to understand.

The theologian B.B. Warfield, helped me as he put it simply: "when we have said these three things, then- that there is but one God, that the Father and the Son and the Spirit is each God, that the Father and the Son and the Spirit is each a distinct person- we have enunciated the doctrine of the Trinity in its completeness." This really summarizes what was revealed through the words and works of Jesus.

"The Father and the Son send the Spirit because from all eternity, the Spirit has proceeded from the Father and the Son.)

The Father and Son and Spirit are identical in essence but They differ with respect to Their personhood. They are not distinguished by different attributes, for They share the same attributes. Instead, They are distinguished by Their relation one to another. We confess that the Father is unbegotten and that the Son is eternally begotten of the Father (John 1:1-18). We also confess that the Holy Spirit eternally proceeds from the Father and the Son. After some

controversy and confusion, the above was stated and clarified in the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed which we will be reading each Communion Sunday.

Christian Ed

Deacons Corner

Covenant's September communion will be held Sunday September 2nd, we will be passing trays this month. Our monthly church luncheon will be on September 9th.

The deacons look forward to working with other groups within the church to help set up our Oktoberfest coming the first Sunday in October.

A word from Missions

We collect items each week for the FOOD BANK. Please remember to bring in canned and packaged goods. We thank you for your support.

Men's Fellowship

The men of the church meet at the church each Thursday at 11:30am. All men are welcome and you can bring a sack lunch if you like.

September Calendar

- 5 5:00pm, Deacon's Meeting
- 6 1:00pm, Worship Team
- 9 Monthly Luncheon after service
- 12 7:00am, Prayers around the flagpole at McCartney Ranch Elem.
- 16 6:30pm, Youth Group at the Kirkbride home
- 20 7:00pm, Session
- 30 6:30pm, Youth Group at the Kirkbride home

September Birthdays

- | | | | |
|----|-------------------|----|------------------|
| 6 | Jacie Childers | 27 | Luke Slaughter |
| 8 | Everett Greenwood | 27 | Merlen Slaughter |
| 12 | Jayla Childers | | |
| 15 | Hailey Anderson | | |
| 15 | Manny Ferro | | |
| 18 | Henry McLaughlin | | |
| 23 | Brayden Moore | | |

September Anniversaries

- 6 Gary & Linda Anderson