

CORNERSTONE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



Service of Celebration and Gospel Renewal

The Sundays of Pentecost—Ordinary Time

15 August 2021

Pastoral Notes

Dear Cornerstone Family,

Every other week or so, I will hear a report about how disagreements concerning COVID-19 have seeded deep division within the leadership or membership of some church. How officers are resigning from positions and scores of members are leaving because a certain decision was made, or a certain approach was adopted of which they disagreed.

Anytime I hear of a branch of Christ's church "by schism rent asunder," as the hymn writer puts it, I am grieved. It's a reminder that things are not yet as they ought to be. That the reality of "one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism" (Ephesians 4:5) that is the foundation of the church is not yet a perfected reality within the life of the church. That we still have a long way to go before our unity in Jesus Christ is brought to perfection in glory.

But when I hear reports of church division, grief is not my only emotion. Believe it or not, I am deeply thankful. Not for the divisions, of course, but for the grace of unity God has given to Cornerstone in the ten years of our existence. It has been nothing short of remarkable.

Yes, we have our family squabbles from time to time, but that's to be expected. We wouldn't be a family if that weren't the case. But the measure of Christ-centered unity we've enjoyed over the years is astounding and rare. I pray we never take it for granted. Further, I pray we never grow slack in following Paul's instruction, "to eagerly maintain the unity of the Spirit in the body of peace" (Ephesians 4:3), for unity is easily lost.

Certainly, our unity has been tested in the past eighteen months more than any other time in our tenyear history, and God has certainly exposed areas where unity needs strengthening. Surely we can all acknowledge ways we've fallen short of the standard of unity God wants for His people.

As a test of this, ask yourself, when the subject of masks or vaccines comes up, are you listening only to see whether someone agrees with you? Do you find your felt sense of unity with brothers and sisters in Christ comes more from agreement about the virus, politics, or media than the gospel? Do you find yourself becoming dismissive or defensive against brothers and sisters who take a different position than you? Have you gossiped about those who, in your opinion, just don't get it?

These are heart searching questions. They are designed to expose the way we let agreement or disagreement on worldly matters and controversies take precedence over the perfect and eternal unity that is *already ours* in Jesus Christ. Division can creep in subtly and quickly erode years of unity. We must be on guard against it, always remembering our heavenly kinship is what brought us together, and it alone will keep us together. Forever.

Your servant,

Nate

Worship is a response to the love of God that brings us out of darkness into his light. The rhythm and flow of the service reflects this present reality as God calls his people and reveals himself, forgives their sins, teaches them from his Word, the Bible, feeds them, and then sends them out to live what they have learned.

This is the pattern of his love in redeeming and saving his people.

Prelude, Announcements, and Preparation

GOD CALLS HIS PEOPLE AND REVEALS HIMSELF

God calls His people to worship and come before Him. The Creator of all things reveals Himself through His Word and calls us into His presence.

Introit—Psalm 100: All Earth With Joy



Text: Psalm 100; Music: LOBE DEN HERREN, Stralsund Gesangbuch, 1665, Arr, in Praxis Pietatis Melica, 1668

Call to Worship—Based on Psalm 48

Pastor: Great is the LORD and greatly to be praised in the city of our God!

All: His holy mountain, beautiful in elevation,

is the joy of all the earth,

Pastor: Within her citadels God has made himself known as a fortress.

All: We praise you for your steadfast love and holy name.

Pastor: Consider the works of his righteous hand

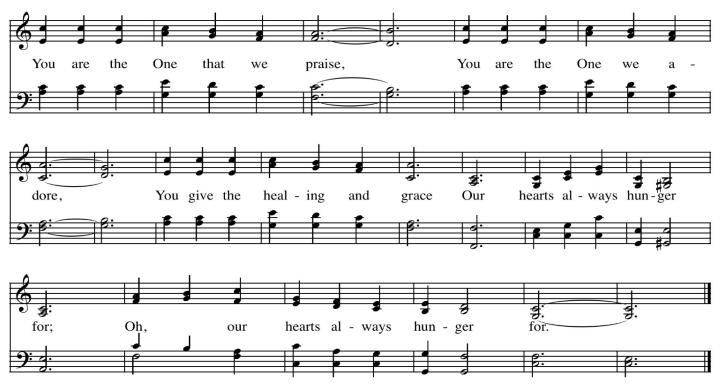
And tell the next generation,

All: That this is God, our God forever and ever.

He will guide us forever

Hymn of Praise-Wonderful, Merciful Savior





CCLI #11121087 © 1989 Word Music. Text: Dawn Rodgers & Eric Wyse; Music: VINE RIDGE, Dawn Rodgers, 1989.

New Testament Reading—I Corinthians 13

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. ²And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. ³If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.

⁴Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant ⁵ or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; ⁶ it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. ⁷Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

⁸Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. ⁹For we know in part and we prophesy in part, ¹⁰but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away. ¹¹When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways. ¹²For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.

¹³So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

Elder: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

GOD CALLS HIS PEOPLE TO CONFESSION, REPENTANCE & RECONCILIATION

The People of God respond to His Word by confessing their sins, repenting of their sinful ways, and seeking God's favor through the reconciling work of Jesus, the Son of God.

Sung Response—Search Me, O God



Text: J. Edwin Orr, 1936; Music: Gregory Wilbur, 2018. © 2018 Greyfriars Press, Used by Permission.

Congregational Prayer of Confession—I John 3:11-23

Pastor: Lord, we come confessing. We confess that we have not rightly loved You, nor have we rightly loved one another.

All: Though this is the message that we have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another, we have not.

Pastor: Instead, we have often been like Cain, who slew his brother.

All: For we know that whoever does not love abides in death and everyone who hates his brother is like a murderer.

Pastor: Yet, by this we know love: that Christ laid down His life for us.

All: And so we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters.

Pastor: Let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.

All: By this we shall know that we are of the truth and thus reassure our heart before You.

Pastor: For this is Your commandment: that we believe in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

All: And that we love one another, just as You have loved us.

Silent Prayers of Confession

Assurance of Pardon—I John 3:I-2, I6

Behold what manner of love the Father has given unto us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when He appears we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him as He is. By this we know love, that He laid down His life for us.

Hymn of Praise—Awake My Zeal, Awake My Love



Text: Vs 1-4, Isaac Watts, 1707; Music: TALLIS CANON, Thomas Tallis, 1560.

The Reading of the Word—Mark 12:28-34

²⁸ And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, asked him, "Which commandment is the most important of all?" ²⁹ Jesus answered, "The most important is, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. ³⁰ And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' ³¹ The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." ³² And the scribe said to him, "You are right, Teacher. You have truly said that he is one, and there is no other besides him. ³³ And to love him with all the heart and with all the understanding and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself, is much more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices." ³⁴ And when Jesus saw that he answered wisely, he said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." And after that no one dared to ask him any more questions.

Leader: The grass withers, the flower fades;

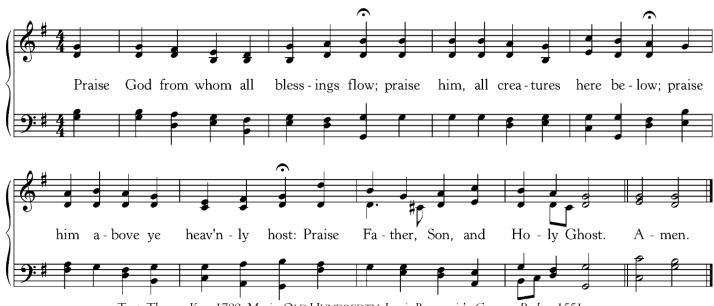
All: But the Word of our God will stand forever.

Sermon—Follow Me: The Gospel of Mark, pt 43

The Great Commandment and the Good News

—Ben Griffith, Pastor

Sung Response—Doxology



Text: Thomas Ken, 1709; Music: OLD HUNDREDTH, Louis Bourgeois's Genevan Psalter, 1551.

Profession of Faith—The Apostles' Creed

We believe in God, the Father Almighty, the Creator of heaven and earth,

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,

who was conceived of the Holy Spirit,

born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,

was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell. On the third day He rose again from the dead.

He ascended into Heaven

and now sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty,

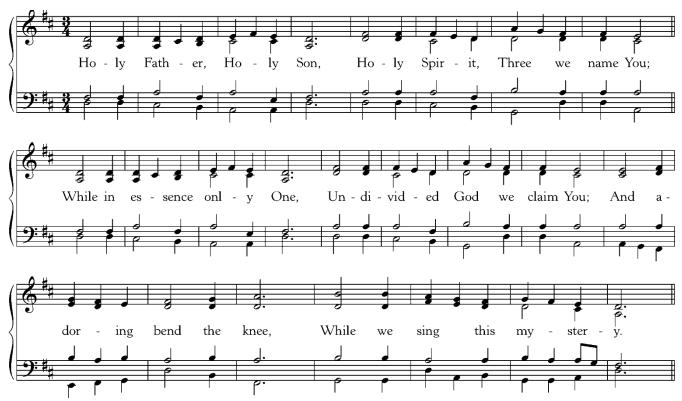
from whence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic* church,

The communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,

The resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Sung Response—Holy God We Praise Your Name, Vs 4



Text: Based on Te Deum, 4th c., Attr Ignace Franz, 1774; Music: GROSER GOTT, Katholisches Gesangbuch, 177

^{* &}quot;Catholic" refers to the universal church of God's people throughout all time and from all places

God offers to His people the gift of communion with Him through the grace of the sacrament and we respond in thanksgiving.

Words of Institution and the Lord's Table

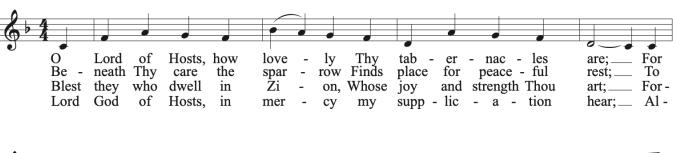
Guidelines for the Lord's Supper

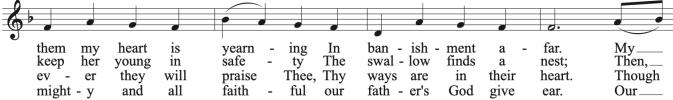
The Lord's Supper is the family meal for Christians. We invite all baptized Christians who are members of a congregation that proclaims the gospel, and who are at peace with God and with their neighbor, and who seek strength to live more faithfully for Christ to join us.

If you are not a Christian, or if you are not prepared to share in this meal, we encourage you to spend this time in prayer. You can find some sample prayers on the next page. We hope that this time is helpful to you as you consider your relationship with Jesus Christ and with His people, the church.

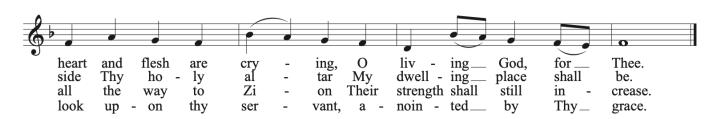
At Cornerstone, we come forward to receive communion. Proceed to the first table for the bread, and then on the second for wine/juice.

Psalm of the Month—Psalm 84: O Lord of Hosts









Text: The Psalter, 1912; Music: NCA, 2021 Used by Permission.

Hymn of Communion—Jesus, I Come



CCLI #11121087 Used by Permission. Text: William Sleeper; Music: Greg Thompson, 2000.

Prayers for Those Not Taking the Lord's Supper

If you are not able to partake in the Lord's Supper today, please use this time to meditate on one of the following prayers.

Prayer for Those Searching for Truth. Lord Jesus, you claim to be the way, the truth, and the life. Grant that I might be undaunted by the cost of following you as I consider the reasons for doing so. If what you claim is true, please guide me, teach me, and open me to the reality of who you are. Give me an understanding of you that is coherent, convincing, and that leads to the life you promise. Amen

Prayer of Belief. Lord Jesus Christ, I admit that I am weaker and more sinful than I ever dared admit, but through you I am more loved and accepted than I ever dared hope. I thank you for paying my debt on the cross, taking what I deserved in order to offer me complete forgiveness. Knowing that you have been raised from the dead, I turn from my sins and receive you as my Savior and Lord. Amen

Prayer of Commitment. Lord Jesus, you have called us to follow you in baptism and in a life of committed discipleship through membership in your church. Grant that I may take the necessary steps to be one with your people, and live in the fullness of your Spirit. Amen

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Intercession

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil.

For Thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen



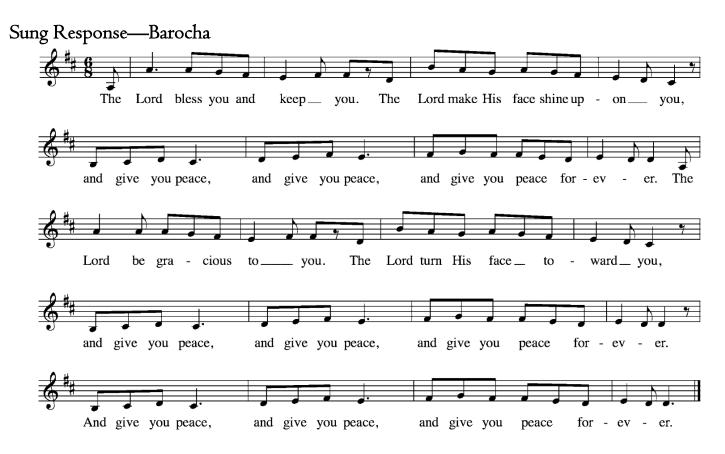


GOD SENDS HIS PEOPLE OUT TO BE LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

After calling His people into His presence, forgiving their sins, instructing them in His Word, and providing a foretaste of the marriage supper of the Lamb, God sends His people into the world to show His light in the darkness.

Benediction— I John 4:10-11

¹⁰ In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. ¹¹ Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. *Amen.*



CCLI #11121087 © 1989 Birdwing Music; Text and Music: Michael Card, 1989.

Focus on Church Ministry

Men's Book Study

Brothers, join with other men from Cornerstone in reading and discussing Carl Truman's *The Rise and Triumph of the Modern Self*. We will have our first meeting Tuesday, September 14 at 7:00 a.m. at Biscuit Love. Books are available on The Bookshelf. Register through the website or app.

Women's Fall Bible Studies

Cornerstone Women will study the books of Ruth and Esther this Fall beginning the week of September 13. There are still a few spots in the Monday evening group and the Thursday morning group. You can find more details and register on the website and app.

Elementary Sunday School Registration

Please visit the church website or app to register your children, ages three years through 6th grade, for the 2021-22 Sunday School year beginning September 12.

"Seasons of Life" at The Merc - Save the Date

Sisters, make plans to join us on the evening of September 30 at the Franklin Mercantile for our next "Seasons of Life." Registration coming soon.

Cornerstone Youth

The Youth Group is taking a short break over the next couple of weeks. We will resume Sunday School on September 12, and Wednesday night activities will pick back up on September 15.

Keep up with Cornerstone

We have a variety of ways to keep you informed about all that is going on in the life of our church—the weekly email, bulletin, Facebook, website, app and now Instagram! Follow us there @CornerstonePresFranklin. If you have questions or would like to receive the weekly email, contact martha@cstonepres.org.

Adult Sunday School

The Lay of the Land: Reflecting on the PCA and the 2021 General Assembly

This upcoming Sunday School class will teach you about the foundations and story of our denomination in light of the key business of this year's General Assembly. Special attention will be given to the study committee on sexuality and the issue of same sex attraction. You will walk away from this class with a better biblical understanding of the issues and in context of the PCA's history and distinctives. All adults are encouraged to attend beginning September 12.

Overflow Rooms

Masks are required in the overflow rooms during the 10:45 a.m. service.

Vespers

Wednesday night Vespers will begin September 15 and continue through November 17. More details to come!

- What was one big takeaway for you from this morning's message?
- How would you have answered the scribe's question in this passage? When you read the Old Testament, which commandment or commandments seem to weigh the heaviest or speak the loudest? Why?
- What do these two "great commandments" reveal about us (who need saving) and God (who does the saving)? How do they show us who God is and who we're made to be?
- Are these two "great commandments" more about God requiring us to do something or to be something? What's the difference? Which one is more difficult?
- Jesus's answer to the scribe implies that as correct as the scribe was, he was still missing something. Based on the sermon, what do you think it was? How easy is it for us to miss what the scribe was missing?
- How might this passage and the message from this morning stir you to love God and love others in fresh and specific ways this next week?

CORNERSTONE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Presbyterian Church in America

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Children's Director: Meredith Suits (865-250-3579) or elementary@cstonepres.org

Nursery Coordinator: Christy Shurden or nursery@cstonepres.org

Prayer Requests: prayer(a)cstonepres.org

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*On Sabbatical

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All Scripture quotations from the English Standard Version

