

Service for the Public Worship of God

21st Sunday in Ordinary Time ~ August 23, 2009
Ten O'clock, A.M.

Pastor: Rev. Dr. James E. Swanson

Guest Organist: Kathy Kemerer

Liturgist: Leanne Heaton

OUR SERVICE OF WORSHIP BEGINS WITH THE MUSIC OF THE ORGAN

THE PRELUDE Trio Sonata II, "Vivace" J. S. Bach

*THE RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Shout joyfully to the Lord, all the earth!
Serve the Lord with gladness;

People: Come before Him with joyful singing.

Leader: Know that the LORD is God;

People: It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves;
We are His people and the sheep of His pasture.

Leader: Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise.

People: The Lord is good!
God's lovingkindness is everlasting,
and His faithfulness to all generations.

*THE HYMN 359 More Love to Thee, O Christ MORE LOVE TO THEE

THE PSALM OF THE DAY Psalm 84: 1-12 (Pew Bible p. 521)

THE INVITATION TO CONFESSION

THE LITANY OF PUBLIC CONFESSION

Leader: Creator God, creating still – we come before you, confessing our sin. You know us well, for you have created us.

People: You created us to obey and to be faithful; to respect creation; to stand with those who are poor; to break the chains of oppression; and to live together in peace with all the peoples of the earth.

Leader: But we have sinned, and fallen short of your commands.

People: We divide the human family, violate your image in others and in ourselves, exploit our neighbors and resist opportunities for reconciliation and repair of relationships we have fractured. Forgive us, O God!

Leader: Wars rage around us, anger and violence spread too readily, and our marketplace is infested with greed and exploitation. Forgive us, O God!

People: We care too deeply for our own pleasure and comfort, for money and for things. We care too little for people and limit our love for you... and yet, you love us still! Forgive us, God of grace; for this we pray in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and our Savior.

A TIME FOR SILENT CONFESSION

THE ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Pastor: Though we be lost in sin, God never abandons us to desolation.

People: God so loved the world that he sent his only Son:
not to condemn the world,
but so the world through him might be saved!

Pastor: In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us.
We are not alone!
Friends, believe the good news of the gospel:

People: In Jesus, the Christ, we are forgiven!

*THE GLORIA PATRI 579

GLORIA PATRI

*THE AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

The Belhar Confession, Article 2

We believe in one holy, universal Christian church, the communion of saints called from the entire human family.

We believe that Christ's work of reconciliation is made manifest in the church as the community of believers who have been reconciled with God and with one another;

We believe that unity is, therefore, both a gift and an obligation for the church of Jesus Christ;

That through the working of God's Spirit, it is a binding force, yet simultaneously a reality which must be earnestly pursued and sought: one which the people of God must continually be built up to attain;

We believe that this unity must become visible so that the world may believe that separation, enmity and hatred between people and groups is sin which Christ has already conquered, and accordingly, that anything which threatens this unity may have no place in the church and must be resisted;

We believe in the triune God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who gathers, protects and cares for the church through Word and Spirit.

This, God has done since the beginning of the world and will do to the end. Amen.

*THE GREETINGS OF PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP

A TIME WITH THE CHILDREN

THE SHARING OF JOYS, CONCERNS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE OLD TESTAMENT READING 1 Kings 8: 10-11, 22-30 (Pew Bible p. 304)

Liturgist: This is the word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God

THE EPISTLE READING Ephesians 6: 10-20 (Pew Bible p. 184)

Liturgist: Here ends the reading of the Epistle.

All: Praise be to you, O Lord.

*THE GOSPEL READING John 6: 56-69 (Pew Bible p. 94)

Pastor: The gospel of our Lord.

All: Glory to you, O Christ.

*THE CONGREGATIONAL CANTICLE - Hymn 321, vs. SONG 13

Holy Spirit, truth divine, Dawn upon this soul of mine;
Word of God and inward light, Wake my spirit, clear my sight.

THE SERMON "NON-SENSE FAITH" Dr. Swanson

THE PASTORAL PRAYER & THE LORD'S PRAYER (using debts and debtors)

THE PRESENTATION OF TITHES, OFFERINGS & GIFTS

SPECIAL OFFERTORY MUSIC Nicaea Healey Willan

*THE DOXOLOGY

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,
Praise Him all creatures here below,
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*THE UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Use us, O God of miracles, and the offerings we have
brought, to bring life and health and hope to your world.
Make us generous and faithful stewards of your mysteries,
as we share the bounty which you have granted unto us;
through Christ we pray. Amen.

*THE CLOSING HYMN 404 Precious Lord, Take My Hand PRECIOUS LORD

*THE BENEDICTION

*THE CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE - Hymn #599 Jacques Berthier

Jesus, remember me, when You come into Your kingdom.
Jesus, remember me, when You come into Your kingdom.

*THE TIME OF SILENCE

*THE CHARGE AND DISMISSAL

Pastor: Go now, as God's beloved people,
redeemed by grace, set free from sin,
nurtured in God's Spirit,
and made new in the Word we have shared.

Go now, as disciples of our Lord, Jesus,
carrying the good news of liberty and salvation
into corners of this world
where darkness and despair hold sway.
Be salt and light! Go in peace! Serve the Lord!

People: Thanks be to God!

*THE POSTLUDE

Now Thank We All Our God

J. S. Bach
arr. V. Fox

* THOSE WHO ARE ABLE, PLEASE STAND

YOU WERE GREETED TODAY by Betty Anderson.

MEMBERS / COMMUNITY FRIENDS ARE CORDIALLY INVITED
to join us for lunch and a special program Planning for Ourselves, Our
Family and Our Church in the Assembly Room following this morning's
worship service. Fellowship & Outreach Committee is hosting the lunch.

Welcome! Grace and Peace to All!

We are delighted to have you with us if you are visiting today!
Please indicate your attendance by signing one of the cards in the
pew rack, and kindly place it in the offering plate when passed.

OUR GUEST ORGANIST:

We welcome Kathy Kemerer as our guest organist for this
morning's worship service. Kathy is an organ and piano
teacher. She was a finalist in the 1979 A.G.O. Regional
Competition and the Gruenstein Memorial Women's
Competition. She has a B.M. from Westminster College.



FYI
• FOR YOUR INFORMATION •

Leadership Training Seminar

For Elders of Covenant & Saint Andrews
Presbyterian Churches

Saturday, August 29, 2009 @ Covenant Church
9:00 am to 2:00 pm

Led by Rev. Dr. James E. Swanson and Rev. Merry Hope Meloy

September 13, 2009

“ WELCOME BACK SUNDAY ”

Worship Time will return to 11:00 AM beginning Sunday, September 13th.



**Return
to
Regular
Worship
Hours**

September 13th is “Welcome Back Sunday” and a very special guest will be on hand to meet with the Seekers Class

(resuming again at 9:30 am, following the summer hiatus) and to preach at the 11:00 am service.

The name of the guest?

(Hint: he had his 500th birthday last month on July 10th)

... Why, John Calvin, of course!

(a.k.a. our good friend, Paul Weirman)

REGISTRATION: Youth Sunday School

Covenant Choir returns to sing in worship

Continental Style Breakfast ~ 9:00 a.m. (provided)

Welcome Back Luncheon ~ 12:05 p.m.

Members (Last Name): A - L (bring dessert) / M - Z (bring a salad)
Rolls, butter and beverages provided.



Choir Rehearsals Resume September 10th

The first choir rehearsal of the new church year will be held on Thursday, September 10th. The Covenant Choir will sing in worship during the 11 a.m. service on Welcome Back Sunday, September 13th.

We are always glad to welcome new choir members; so, if you are interested—don't be shy! You are invited to attend the September 10th rehearsal or any Thursday rehearsal. Please contact Beverly Antis, Choir Director at 724-991-8240, or any choir member for more information.

In The Life of Our Church

Prayer Concerns:

Dawn Kostelansky At home recovering from surgery

Joys: Ellie Walchesky Recuperating from successful knee surgery, now at Concordia, Rm. 2417, 134 Marwood Rd., Cabot, PA 16023 for rehabilitation

For Continued Prayer: Minnie Anderson; Rev. Wayne Bell; Julie & Bud Bruno; Marion Campbell; Marian Curran; JoAnn Honneffer (Danny Swanson's caregiver); Joan Moore; Eleanor Ritts; Gladys Strobel; John Towns; Bill and MaryLou Wilson

Birthdays this Week:

Allison Reese - August 25 Kyleigh Victoria Rommel - August 26
Brice Scott Rommel - August 25 Frank Bruno - August 27

John & Mary Reefer
Married August 23, 1975
Celebrating their 34th Wedding Anniversary (Today)



Births:

Jaymin William Wood, born August 13, 2009: Jaymin is the son of Cassie (Butler) and Joshua Wood; grandson of Carl Grant Butler (who passed away August 24, 2008); great-grandson of Elizabeth "Betty" Butler and great-nephew of Tom Butler. At birth Jaymin weighed 7 lbs., 8 oz. and measured 22 inches long. Betty Butler says with the birth of her fourth great-grandchild Jaymin each one of her son Carl's four children have a child to carry on his legacy, giving Betty much comfort and pride.

"Noisy Offering of Loose Change" Next Sunday, August 30th. Bring your change with you to worship and "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord!"

A Letter from Mandi



Dear Church Family:

Where do I start? I am so amazed how wonderful all of you have been to me over the years. I don't think I could find a more generous group of people anywhere else. All my life, my family has struggled just to get by. I know I have to find ways to get things done on my own, and I don't think I would have without every single one of you.

I would have never been able to participate in activities, such as going to Germany, without your support. I definitely would not have been able to purchase any of my books for school this year without you. I promise all of you your gifts have been put straight to my education.

I am going to miss working with the children so much. They have been wonderful to work with for the past 3 years. The entire congregation has been amazing to me. You've supported my arts, my education and my hobbies. You've all watched me grow, struggle and succeed. As I start my new chapter in my life, a part of me will still remain at Covenant.

You all have provided opportunities that I never thought I would see. I wish there was more I could give back to you all right now.

I will be home every weekend while I am attending school, but to work. I promise to visit when I am not working. Since every single one of you have been there for me, I am always available to be there when you need me. I'm still only a phone call away! I am so grateful and don't know how much more to prove it. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! I love you all, and thank you again!

Love, Mandi Gilliland

The Real John Calvin

By Christopher Elwood

(Excerpts from the cover story in Presbyterians Today, July/Aug 2009)

John Calvin has an image problem! Most Presbyterians probably have at least a vague sense that he was a formative voice shaping the theology that guides their church today. But the image of the man himself — his personal character — either tends to be a little blurry, or decidedly negative. When I speak to people in the church about this founder of Reformed theology, their opening questions and comments usually betray a degree of suspicion: “Didn’t he preach predestination?” “He burned heretics at the stake, right?” “He was pretty intolerant and wanted everyone to believe exactly as he did.”

Even among his followers, Calvin has not typically inspired great affection. Admiration, perhaps, but not devotion. The feeling is perhaps worse among the broader population. Radio personality Garrison Keillor describes Calvin as the creator of a “chilly theology.” Even a sympathetic biographer, the French historian Bernard Cottret, concedes that he “was not the sort of man you could take out for a drink.”

The seeds of this negative reputation were sown in Calvin’s own lifetime, in the 16th century. Though many of his contemporaries respected Calvin as a faithful interpreter of Scripture, a gifted writer and preacher, a genius of church organization and an able pastor, others attacked him for a variety of real and imagined faults.

Supporters of Calvin have appreciated his honesty and humanity. Calvin rejected, on principle, the notion that any of us has the truth of God neatly wrapped up in his or her own back pocket.

Opponents — and they were not in short supply during Calvin’s lifetime — sought to discredit him. He was (they said) dictatorial, arrogant, harshly intolerant of those who challenged his views; he portrayed God as a ruthless and vindictive monarch; and reflecting in his own behavior the model of this punitive God, he eagerly sought the death of one of his theological opponents, the anti-Trinitarian Michael Servetus.

Against all of the claims that Calvin was a monster, his defenders across the years have tended to fall back on the opinion that “He wasn’t as bad as all that.” When his first biographer, friend and successor Theodore Beza, took up the challenge, he prefaced his defense with a disclaimer: “I won’t make a man into an angel.” In other words, he conceded that Calvin was flesh and blood, a man with all-too-human flaws.

Such a view fits well with Calvin's own explorations of his character. Though not especially inclined to discuss his interior life in public, he did occasionally confess to others what he considered his main vice: the excessive "vehemence" of his emotions. We would say that he was "intensely passionate," which often alienated those not already on his side.

Beza, interestingly, in defending Calvin, never tried to deny his friend's fiery character and avoided presenting him as an otherworldly or disembodied saint. He was, like so many of us, a mixture of good and not-so-good qualities. What was most important, in Beza's view, was that in Calvin, God had found a most useful instrument for building up the church.

Who will make decisions for me if I am not able?
Can pre-planning a funeral make things easier for my family?
Is it really necessary to have a "Living Will" and a POA?
How can I be sure my wishes are honored?
How can I support my church after I'm gone?

Get **ANSWERS TO THESE QUESTIONS**
and more... at this special event **TODAY !**



Planning for Ourselves, Our Families & Our Church

Following Worship this Morning
Sunday, August 23, 2009

Those attending will enjoy a free Luncheon provided by our Fellowship Committee, then hear from & ask questions of Nancy Blewett, Karen Swanson & Pastor Jim Swanson, who will address: Medical Concerns & End-of-life issues, Wills & Estates and Funeral Planning



August 23, 2009

Holy God, your Word has called us,
To make plowshares from our swords,
Drop our weapons, end the battles,
Turn to you, our Sovereign Lord.
Prince of Peace, now grant your blessing
As we walk along your way.
Bring us back to your commandments
When our wayward feet do stray.

“Hymn for Peace” ~ Words by Rev. Elizabeth Wallace,
Pastor of Knox Presbyterian Church, Ellwood City
(Beaver-Butler Presbytery)

The Reverend Dr. James E. Swanson, Pastor

Home: 724-252-8383

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