

Cornerstone United Methodist Church

1411 Rim Road Fayetteville North Carolina 28311 868-5686

From the Pen of Pastor Ben

Welcome to a 30-day spiritual adventure as we seek the presence of Christ together!

Several weeks ago the Holy Spirit prompted me to lead our congregation into a greater awareness of the real presence of Jesus Christ in our worship service. As we encounter the risen Christ in our services heartfelt, Spirit-filled worship will be the natural response.

Think about it: What would you do if the risen Lord appeared to us visibly and physically as he did to the disciples gathered in the Upper Room? How would you respond? I know what I would do. I would fall down before him and kiss his pierced feet and pour out my love to him! I wouldn't think about myself in that moment, except to be keenly aware of how unworthy I was to be in His presence. And yet, I would be so grateful that he had received me and loved me. I would never want to let go of him. (I'd be like Mary in the garden that resurrection morning when Jesus said to her: Do not keep holding on to me.) Through that encounter with the risen Christ we are brought fully into the presence of the Triune God. That's the adventure I believe that God is calling us to this month.

I believe I was specifically prompted to employ a particular means of grace to enable us to come fully into the presence of the Lord in this way. The Lord laid it on my heart that during August we needed to practice "constant Communion." That is, we need to receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion as frequently as possible. That means that during the month of August we will receive the Eucharist every Sunday morning. I don't know what God is going to do through this adventure, but I know that something powerful will happen to us. I can't wait to hear the testimonies of the way you encountered God when we get to the end of August!

Nevertheless, for many of us this will be unusual – maybe even uncomfortable. So beyond merely telling you that this is the direction I believe I have received from the Holy Spirit, let me offer the following reasons why this practice will propel us into the very presence of the living God.

First of all we need to be reminded that the early church celebrated the Lord's Supper every time they met for worship (Acts 2:42). Moreover, the central act of the Sunday service immediately became celebration of Eucharist (Acts 20:7). These New Testament believers recognized that Communion was an experience of being united to Christ in a uniquely powerful way (1 Corinthians 10:16; 11:17-26). Thus frequent Communion is the Biblical norm for Christian believers!

Furthermore, at the beginning of the Methodist Revival members of the movement received the Sacrament every week. It was only when Methodism began to spread so rapidly in the American colonies that Communion began to be celebrated less frequently. Why? Because there were more local churches than there were ordained ministers to administer the Sacrament. The circuit rider often only came around once every quarter. (In 1784 there were only 12 ordained circuit riders who had to cover the entire 13 original States as well as the territories!)

Since that time many believers have come to think that Communion is "less meaningful" if celebrated more than once a month. I usually reply that breathing becomes more meaningful if you hold your breath for several minutes, but I don't recommend that practice! You see, we take the Lord's Supper not because it is

Nursery News

Thank you to all the wonderful members who have so generously given the gift of their time in the nursery during the busy summer months. What a powerful witness!

In order to give all the upcoming nursery warriors plenty of notice in case of any conflicts with dates, I have already scheduled workers through the month of October. I hope this will be helpful. Also, please remember that service in the nursery includes Sunday School (9:45 am) AND Worship Service, unless otherwise noted.

August

- 5 Regalado
- 12 Robitaille
- 19 Blake
- 26 Wiggs

September

- 2 Jean Upchurch
- 9 Fox
- 16 Hamerly
- 23 Todd
- 30 Irizarry (Sunday School)

/ Townsend (Worship)

October

- 7 Sharon Upchurch
- 14 Harro
- 21 Fancher (Sunday School) / Kocher (Worship)
- 28 M. Gordner (Sunday School) / K. Gordner (Worship)

Thank You So Very Much!

Kim Gordner

Follow Up Schedule

Here is the follow-up list for August....

- August 1 Mini Regalado
- August 12 Richard Upchurch
- August 19 Rebecca Townsend
- August 26 Kelly Irizarry

If you have any questions about your week please call Mini Regalado.

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meaningful but because we genuinely feed upon the real presence of Jesus Christ in this meal. His presence sustains us through our pilgrimage here on earth. Many of us would find victory over besetting sins and evil habits if we would receive this gift more frequently. Just as with prayer, Bible study, small group fellowship, and weekly worship, we practice Holy Communion because it is a means of grace established by our Lord himself and necessary to Christian maturity.

Included in this newsletter is an article by leading Methodist evangelical Steve Harper. I encourage you to read this piece as it will answer some of the common questions Christians have about Holy Communion. Also, at any time during this month you have questions about Communion, or have had an experience you would like to share please don't hesitate to call me.

In August I think we will all come to know the truth of Psalm 34:8, "Taste and see that the Lord is good!"

Pastor Ben

Here's a link for Wesley's sermon "On the Duty of Constant Communion". It goes with the theme for August.
<http://gbgm-umc.org/UMhistory/Wesley/sermons/serm-101.stm>

Webmaster Email Address

This is just to let you know that I have changed my email address. Please do not use wheelrunner@earthlink.net any longer.

My new email address is wheelrunner@nc.rr.com. Thanks. Can't wait to hear from you!

Thanks, Douglas Dalton

Fall Planting!

We are members of the ARC (DisAbility Resource Center) here in Fayetteville. The ARC performs a variety of functions for children and adults with disabilities, particularly social support groups, educational programs, and respite care.

The ARC is currently holding its annual fundraiser. Smart Start, which usually contributes the majority of the ARC's budget, has not yet committed funds for this year's fiscal budget. Even if/when Smart Start comes through with a financial commitment, this program is always in need of funds to continue their valuable services.

Would you or someone you know be interested in helping the ARC by purchasing some beautiful, easy-to-grow Dutch bulbs? I have a colorful brochure which shows the radiant flower varieties, as well as when they bloom and how tall they grow. (November and December are the best months to plant and bulbs can be stored in a brown paper bag on the lower shelf of the refrigerator until then.)

Bulbs start at \$10 for 3, 5, 10, 20, or 25 bulbs, depending on selected variety. There is also a 50-bulb Dutch Treat collection for \$15.

Breck's provides a lifetime guarantee: If, for any reason, you're not completely satisfied with any bulb upon receipt, after planting, or once it grows and blooms, just contact Breck's anytime - no time limit! - for as long as you garden. No need to return any item. They'll be happy to send a replacement.

I must submit orders with payment to the ARC by September 1. Please let me know if you are interested in these beautiful flowers to help a wonderful cause.

*With thanks,
Barb Hall*

DEPENDS ON THE HANDS

A basketball in my hands is worth about \$19; a basketball in Michael Jordan's hands is worth about \$33 million. It depends whose hands it's in.

A baseball in my hands is worth about \$6; a baseball in Mark McGuire's hands is worth \$19 million. It depends whose hands it's in.

A tennis racket is useless in my hands; a tennis racket in Pete Sampras' hands is a Wimbledon Championship. It depends whose hands it's in.

A rod in my hands will keep away a small, wild animal; a rod in Moses' hands will part the mighty sea. It depends whose hands it's in.

A sling shot in my hands is a kid's toy; a sling shot in David's hands is a mighty weapon. It depends whose hands it's in.

Two fish and five loaves of bread in my hands is a couple of fish sandwiches. Two fish and five loaves of bread in God's hands will feed thousands. It depends whose hands they're in.

Nails in my hands might produce a birdhouse; nails in Jesus Christ's hands will produce salvation for the entire world. It depends whose hands they're in.

So put your concerns, your worries, your fears, your hopes, your dreams, your families and your relationships in God's hands because... It depends whose hands they're in.

<http://www.NicksHumor.net>

John Wesley's Thoughts On Communion: Devotional Life in the Wesleyan Tradition

by Steve Harper

Wesley believed the Lord's Supper to be "literally indispensable in the Christian life." Unfortunately, not all of Wesley's followers today feel the same. There is a tremendous need to renew this holy sacrament in our lives and in the church. Wesley asked these theological questions about the importance of the Lord's Supper: What is the Lord's Supper? and What are we participating in when we kneel to receive the juice and bread?

To Wesley, Holy Communion is a memorial meal. When we eat the bread and drink from the cup, we remember the act of redemption wrought on our behalf by Christ. Juice and bread are symbols of the New Covenant established by Jesus and are reminders that this covenant is still in effect.

When Jesus said, "Do this in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19 RSV), he was using remembrance in the Hebrew sense of recalling an event so thoroughly that it comes alive in the present. This is the sense in which Wesley considered the Lord's Supper a memorial meal. We should remember Christ and our experience of him with such devotion and attention that we relive and renew our experience with him in the present!

The Lord Supper is a pledge of future glory. The sacrament is a promise of the future that awaits the Christian in heaven. Our participation in Holy Communion on earth is a reminder that we will one day feast at the heavenly banquet. In this regard, Wesley saw our reception of the elements as a form of contact with the great cloud of witnesses who have preceded us. The Lord's Supper is a meeting place between the church visible and the church triumphant.

Both these dimensions of the Lord's Supper make it a true celebration.

Looking back, we focus on Christ's redemptive work with such passion that we experience his saving grace anew in

our lives. Looking forward, we catch a glimpse of the perfect and eternal life that awaits us when this life is over. Our present reception is made alive by what has been and what will be!

Wesley believed that Christ is truly present each time we receive the Lord's Supper. The idea of Christ actually being present is challenging.

Wesley followed the position of Anglicanism — Christ chooses to come wherever the Lord's Supper is being celebrated. He does not come through the elements, but rather through the Spirit. But he is really there!

This being so, it is easy to see why the Lord's Supper was such a powerful sacrament for Wesley. Wherever Christ is present, anything can happen. And while Holy Communion is primarily a sacrament to strengthen believers, Wesley also believed it could be an occasion when people were deeply convicted, maybe even converted. He placed no limits on the sacrament's power because he placed no limits on what Christ can do

Methodists have always practiced open communion. The communion table is Christ's table. The invitation to partake is not reserved for believers, but for any who "truly and earnestly repent of sin. . . ." Outler is again correct when he notes, "It is always God's grace, it is never at man's disposal." [Note: Wesley DID, however, keep with orthodox Christian practice by limiting communion to only those persons who had received baptism. But as we all know, not all the baptized believe! — Pastor Ben]

Wesley's put great emphasis on preparing to receive the Lord's Supper, and his openness is rooted in his understanding of grace. Because grace is offered in the sacrament, it can accomplish whatever God desires for the one who receives it. All this is through Christ who comes to us whenever and wherever we celebrate the Lord's Supper.

Communion brings with it certain

practical questions and concerns. One of the chief problems has to do with "eating and drinking in an unworthy manner" (1 Cor. 11:27). Misunderstanding this phrase has caused people to refrain from receiving the Lord's Supper. Consequently, Holy Communion is not an integral part of their spiritual formation.

Wesley believed that the problem resulted from a gross misreading of Paul's teaching. Whenever anyone said, "I should not receive communion because I am unworthy," Wesley responded by saying the matter of unworthiness was not related to the person directly, but rather to the manner of reception.

Who is ever worthy? The sacrament is precisely for the unworthy, and that is all of us! We are all sinners saved by grace. We approach Holy Communion as a means of grace, because it is grace that we need.

Second, Wesley believed that Paul answered the question. Unworthiness had to do with taking the sacrament in a rude and disorderly way, so that one person was left hungry and someone else became drunk. Partaking unworthily meant doing so in ways that fostered exclusiveness and disunity among the people of God. The problem of unworthiness resides in the way the sacrament is conducted, not in the character of those who partake.

We are commanded to partake of the Lord's Supper. Jesus said, "Do this in remembrance of me."

Wesley said that Christians desire to obey all the commandments of God. Participation in the Lord's Supper is a step of obedience, not a sign of moral perfection. This does not necessarily give us permission to receive communion every single time or under any conceivable circumstance. There may be times when the Spirit reveals that we are living in willful unrepentance. How-

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ever, we should never allow a false or unscriptural sense of unworthiness to keep us in our seats. The Lord's Supper is designed for those of us who know how much we need God!

We have all had the experience of leaving the communion experience feeling that we had not adequately prepared. Sometimes the way the ritual is conducted makes us feel as if we have had a "herd" experience more than a graced one. The matter of preparation is important, lest we miss the real presence of Christ and his gifts to us.

Proper preparation begins with a repentant heart. If we have that, we connect with the opening words of the invitation: "You who do truly and earnestly repent of your sins. . ." This is the pivot on which a decision to partake or abstain ought to be made. No matter what we have thought, said, or done, the table of the Lord is open to us if we are "heartily sorry for these our misdoings."

Wesley began to prepare for the Lord's Supper during Thursday evening devotions. He used all the devotional periods from then until Sunday morning to make further preparation.

This allowed sufficient time for the communicant to get in touch with his or her heart. Published manuals existed in Wesley's day to assist a person in doing that. Furthermore, the worship of both Anglican and Methodist traditions allowed for time in the service for people to cultivate this kind of an attitude. In our day, we should find ways to prepare ourselves, that we might come to God openly and humbly.

Follow Wesley's pattern by beginning on Thursday evening to prepare for proper reception. Use your devotional periods on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday morning to continue the preparation. On Sunday, consider going into the sanctuary earlier than usual to bring your preparation to maximum openness to God and to the grace offered you in the

Lord's Supper.

Frequency of Communion

The rubric for the "Order of Communion" in the Book of Common Prayer (1662) stated that "in cathedral and collegiate churches and colleges, where there are many priests and deacons, they shall all receive the Communion with the priest every Sunday at the least. By Wesley's day, this instruction was largely ignored, so that most people received communion only twice a year, others quarterly, and a few monthly. As the frequency of the sacrament declined, so also did its significance in the church and in the lives of its members.

Wesley wrote that "no man can have any pretense to Christian piety, who does not receive it (not once a month, but) as often as he can." Wesley said he averaged taking communion once every four or five days. He urged "frequent" communion, rooting such reception in a spirit of "constant" communion that keeps one's heart perpetually before God. When Methodism became a denomination in North America, he exhorted the clergy to celebrate the Lord's Supper every Sunday.

Wesley's historic perspective presents us with a contemporary challenge. We have to admit that many churches fail to offer frequent communion, much less weekly communion. The failure to do so is sometimes based in reasons Wesley would never condone, such as an anticipated drop in attendance on Sundays when communion is served. Regardless of the actual frequency of offering, the Lord's Supper is a means of grace. As such, we do not want to deprive people of the opportunity to draw near to God in this way. If we must find new and creative ways to make the Lord's Supper available, then let us do so. Holy Communion is at the heart of devotional life in the Wesleyan tradition.

SENIOR HIGH YOUTH HAPPENINGS

Although summer is here, June and July have been busy months for Cornerstone Youth. Hats off to the following senior high youth members who helped feed the Cornerstone flock during night one of VBS: Rebekah Sharpe, Katie Wiggs, Sean Wiggs, Michael Bailey, Janelle Huffmann, JR Huffmann, Breezi Miller, Chris Owens, and friends Emery and Nick. The sandwich line was a polar expedition success....down to the homemade ice cream sandwiches.

Many thanks to the teens who donated their freetime during the week of VBS. The program wouldn't have been a success without your leadership.

Our June 9th Jr/Sr high canoe trip down the meandering Lumber River was quite an event. The long, tiring day of fun, food, floating, AND unfortunate swimming was a true lesson in perserverance. Thanks to all of you adults and youth members who made the day possible. A special thanks to

Bryan for organizing the event.

On June 17th, the senior high group met for an extended session at the Stewarts house where they enjoyed lots of fellowship time and a movie night.

During July, youth members completed their SHARE-A-BEAR service project as they delivered all the stuffed animals to the Fayetteville Police Department. Thanks to all of you who donated to the worthy cause.

The Senior High group continues to meet on Sunday nights from 6:00pm-8:00pm at the Stewart's home. As the summer comes to a close, the group is winding down a study of different world religions and why we are Christians in a world with so many options. If you are interested in attending or have questions, please contact Bryan and Terina Stewart at 426-4589.

August 2001 September

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Cornerstone Bible Study 7:00	2 Promise Keepers 7:00	3 Friday Night Bible Study 7:00	4
5 Cornerstone Pizza Sunday at Two Brothers!	6 Pastor's Day Off	7 Women's Bible Study	8 Cornerstone Bible Study 7:00	9 Promise Keepers 7:00	10 Friday Night Bible Study 7:00	11
12	13 Pastor's Day Off Church Council Meeting 7:00 pm	14 Women's Bible Study	15 Cornerstone Bible Study 7:00	16 Promise Keepers 7:00	17 Friday Night Bible Study 7:00	18
19	20 Pastor's Day Off	21 Women's Bible Study	22 Cornerstone Bible Study 7:00	23 Promise Keepers 7:00	24 Friday Night Bible Study 7:00	25
26	27 Pastor's Day Off	28 Women's Bible Study	29 Cornerstone Bible Study 7:00	30 Promise Keepers 7:00	31 Friday Night Bible Study 7:00	1
2 Cornerstone Pizza Sunday at Two Brothers!	3 Pastor's Day Off	4 Women's Bible Study	5 Cornerstone Bible Study 7:00	6 Promise Keepers 7:00	7 Friday Night Bible Study 7:00	8
9 CHARGE CONFERENCE 2:00 pm	10 Pastor's Day Off Church Council Meeting 7:00 pm	11 Women's Bible Study	12 Cornerstone Bible Study 7:00	13 Promise Keepers 7:00	14 Friday Night Bible Study 7:00	15

Notes: For more information on the above Bible studies, please call the Cornerstone office at 868-5686.

Weekday Worship

So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. 1 Corinthians 10:31(NIV)

God wants us to worship him. That's a given. But exactly how do we worship God?

Sometimes we struggle to answer that question. Often we go to church on Sunday to worship. There we pray and reflect and come away with a sense of God's presence in our lives.

Then what? What about the other six days in the week? How do we worship God when we're changing diapers, negotiating a contract, or taking the kids to soccer practice?

We can worship in those situations by seeking to do everything for the glory of God. In other words, we worship God when we allow our thoughts and actions to be used to reveal who Jesus is. We might not be able to share the gospel in every situation, but we can at least attempt to manifest the fruit of the Spirit and try to love our neighbor as ourselves.

If we see our whole lives as filled with opportunities to worship God, then we'll have a new sense of purpose. No longer will we think worship is only on Sunday or when we're having our quiet time. Worship will become an active thing,

an integral part of our everyday lives in the world

Because God is Spirit (John 4:24), our worship of him cannot be confined to a building. It must spill over into the entire world, impacting the lives of those around us with the life-changing message of God's love.

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Finding the Humor in Your Daily Life

One afternoon, my four-year-old niece Paige and my six-year-old daughter Ashley started an argument, which grew louder and louder. I was about to intervene when my daughter stormed down the stairs. "Mom," she yelled, "Jesus wants us to be the salt of the earth and Paige is being the pepper!"

*Cherish AnnMarie Ede — St. Clair Shores, Michigan
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