

Walking in Fellowship...with One Another

In November's article, I highlighted a small book by the puritan John Owen where he discusses the "rules of direction for the walking of the saints in fellowship, according to the order of the gospel." In other words, it's a book about our life together as the people of God. For Owen, much like the apostle Paul, the central truth that most clearly defines our relationship to one another is the gospel of Jesus Christ. The gospel forms the center of our identity, mission, and message.

But what does a gospel-centered church look like? Well, in typical puritan fashion, Owen gives a fifteen-point answer! My translation of Owen is in italics with his Scripture proofs in parenthesis.

"Rule 1. Affectionate, sincere love in all things, without dissimulation [deception] towards one another, like that which Christ bare to his church" *Love each other, as Christ has loved you. After all, love is the fountain of all duties towards God and man* (see Jn. 13:34-35; 15:12; Rom. 8:8; 12:10; Eph. 5:2; 1 Thess. 3:12; 4:9; 1 Pet. 1:22; 1 Jn. 4:21).

"Rule 2. Continual prayer for the prosperous state of the church, in God's protection towards it." *Pray for the peace, purity, protection, and prosperity of the church* (see Ps. 122:6; Isa. 62:6-7; Acts 12:5; Rom. 1:9; Eph. 6:18; Phil. 1:4-5; Col. 4:12).

"Rule 3. Earnest striving and contending, in all lawful ways, by doing and suffering, for the purity of the ordinances, honour, liberty, and privileges of the congregation, being jointly assistant against opposers and common adversaries." *Doggedly encourage one another to support the worship and work of the church, and lovingly exhort each other in matters of faith and practice, even when that means rebuking a brother or sister in Christ who is tangled in a web of sin or wandering down a path of false teaching* (see Gal. 5:1, 13; Heb. 12:3-4; 1 Jn. 3:16; Jude 3).

"Rule 4. Sedulous care and endeavouring for the preservation of unity." *Dissent within the body of Christ not only disrupts our worship but it also damages our witness. Unity however strengthens worship, discipleship, fellowship, and evangelism. As the ol' hymn goes, blessed be the tie that binds* (see Acts 4:32; Rom. 14:19; 15:5; 1 Cor. 1:10; 6:5-7; 2 Cor. 8:11; Eph. 4:3-4; Phil. 2:1-3).

"Rule 5. Separation from the world and men of the world, with all ways of false worship, until we be apparently a people dwelling alone, not reckoned among the nations." *Light and darkness don't mix. Flee sin; pursue righteousness. Daily!* (See Ps. 1; Num. 23:9; Jn. 15:19; 2 Cor. 6:14-18; Eph. 5:8, 11; 1 Tim. 6:11; 2 Tim. 3:5)

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COMING EVENTS

February 4-6
Senior High Snow Camp

February 5 & 19
Congregational Prayer

February 6 & 25
P31 Girls

February 11
Women's Prayer Breakfast

February 12
Congregational Meeting

February 16
Theology Talk

February 24 -26
Jr. High Snow Camp

LOOKING AHEAD

March 16 & 17
Women's Conference

*There is no
Holy One like
the LORD,
there is no
ROCK
like our God.*



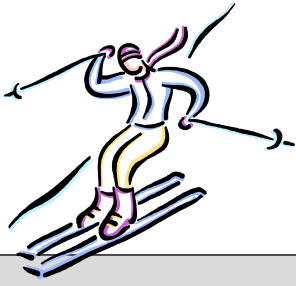
1 Samuel 2:2

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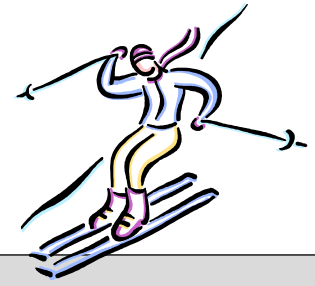
- “Rule 6. Frequent spiritual communication for edification, according to gifts received.” *Don't forsake the assembly of believers, both formally on the Lord's Day (morning and evening!) and even informally throughout the week* (see Mal. 3:16; Job 2:11; Acts 18:26; 1 Cor. 12:7; Eph. 4:29; 5:4; Col. 4:6; 1 Thess. 5:11; Heb. 3:13; 10:24-25; Jude 20).
- “Rule 7. Mutually to bear with each other's infirmities, weakness, tenderness, failings, in meekness, patience, pity, and with assistance.” *We need each other to slog through the muck of life for the glory of God* (see Eph. 4:32; Matt. 18:21-22; Mrk. 11:25-26; Rom. 14:13; 15:1-2; 1 Cor. 13:4-7; Gal. 6:1; Col. 3:12-14).
- “Rule 8. Tender and affectionate participation with one another in their several states and conditions—bearing each other's burdens.” *As we journey from this world to the next, we endure highs and lows together* (see Gal. 6:2; Heb. 13:3; 1 Cor. 12:25-26; 2 Cor. 11:29; Jam. 1:27; Matt. 25:35-40; 2 Tim. 1:16-17; Acts 20:35).
- “Rule 9. Free contribution and communication of temporal things to them that are poor indeed, suitable to their necessities, wants, and afflictions.” *We are to care for one another's spiritual...and physical needs* (see 1 Jn. 3:17-18; 1 Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 9:5-7; Rom. 12:13; Gal. 6:10; 1 Tim. 6:17-19; Heb. 13:16; Lev. 25:35; Matt. 25:34-40).
- “Rule 10. To mark diligently and avoid carefully all causes and causers of division; especially to shun seducers, false teachers, and broachers of heresies and errors, contrary to the form of wholesome words.” *Beware of wolves in sheep's clothing* (see Rom. 16:17-18; Matt. 24:4-5, 23-25; 1 Tim. 6:3-5; 2 Tim. 2:16-17; Titus 3:9-11; 1 Jn. 2:18-19; 4:1; 2 Jn. 10, 11; Acts. 20:29-31; Rev. 2:14-16).
- “Rule 11. Cheerfully to undergo the lot and portion of the whole church, in prosperity and affliction, and not to draw back upon any occasion whatever.” *Many today change churches like they change cars; they get a new one as soon as something breaks! Commit yourself to a people and a place, and stick with that church, even if you think it is a bit of a clunker* (see Matt. 13:20-21; Heb. 10: 23-25, 32-39; 2 Tim. 4:10, 16).
- “Rule 12. In church affairs to make no difference of persons, but to condescend to the meanest persons and services for the use of the brethren.” *Prejudice segregates between the haves and the have-nots, but grace is no respecter of persons. Grace not prejudice must govern our actions* (see Jam. 2:1-6; Matt. 20:26-27; Rom. 12:16; Jn. 13:12-16).
- “Rule 13. If any be in distress, persecution, or affliction, the whole church is to be humbled, and to be earnest in prayer in their behalf.” *The church is to be the “voice of the martyrs”* (see Acts 12:5, 7, 12; Rom. 12:15; 1 Cor. 12:26-27; 2 Thess. 3:1-2).
- “Rule 14. Vigilant watchfulness over each other's conversation, attended with mutual admonition in case of disorderly walking, with rendering an account to the church if the party offending be not prevailed with.” *Church discipline is vital for church health* (see Matt. 18:15-17; 1 Thess. 5:14; Heb. 3:12-13; 10:24-25; 12:13-16; Lev. 19:17; 2 Thess. 3:15; Rom. 15:14; Jam. 5:19-20; Prov. 29:1).
- “Rule 15. Exemplary walking in all holiness and godliness of conversation, to the glory of the gospel, edification of the church, and conviction of them which are without.” *The goal of the local church is the proclamation of the gospel for the building up of the saints, the salvation of the lost, and the glory of God* (see Ps. 24:3-4; Matt. 5:16, 20; 2 Cor. 7:1; 2 Tim. 2:19; Titus 2:11-14; Eph. 4:21-23; 5:15-16; 1 Pet. 3:1-2; Heb. 12:14).

United in Christ,

Pastor John





February



2012

Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday

<p>First Reformed PCA 12900 Frankstown Road Pittsburgh, PA 15235 412-793-7117 frpcpittsburgh@aol.com</p>			<p>1 9:30 a.m. WIC Bible Study 3:45 p.m. Truth Troop 6:00 p.m. CE Meeting 7:00 p.m. Youth Group</p>	<p>2 7:00 p.m. WIC Bible Study</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4 Senior High Snow Camp Ligonier Camp & Conf. Center Feb. 3-5</p>
<p>5 AM Service Rev. John Tweeddale <i>Lord's Supper</i> 5:15-5:45 PM Time of Prayer PM Service Rev. Jim Spitzel</p>	<p>6 6:30 p.m. P31 Girls</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>8 3:45 p.m. Truth Troop 7:00 p.m. Youth Group</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>11 8:00-9:30 a.m. Women's Prayer Breakfast 8:30 a.m. Men's Prayer and Study</p>
<p>12 AM Service Rev. John Tweeddale <i>Congregational Mtg.</i> 1:30 p.m. Seneca Sunday PM Service Rev. Jim Spitzel</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14 6:30 p.m. Plum Covenant Group <i>February</i></p>	<p>15 9:30 a.m. WIC Bible Study 3:45 p.m. Truth Troop 7:00 p.m. Youth Group</p>	<p>16 7:00 p.m. Theology Talk 7:00 p.m. WIC Bible Study</p>		<p>18</p>
<p>19 AM Service Rev. John Tweeddale 5:15-5:45 PM Time of Prayer PM Service Rev. Jim Spitzel</p>		<p>21 7:00 p.m. Session Meeting</p>	<p>22 3:45 p.m. Truth Troop 7:00 p.m. Youth Group</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25 8:30 a.m. Men's Prayer and Study 9:30 a.m. P31 Girls Middle School Snow Camp Ligonier Camp & Conf. Center Feb. 24-26</p>
<p>26 AM Service Rev. John Tweeddale PM Service Rev. John Tweeddale Time of Fellowship</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28 7:30 p.m. WIC Prayer</p>	<p>29 3:45 p.m. Truth Troop 7:00 p.m. Youth Group</p>	<p>Each Sunday: 9:30 a.m. Sunday School for all ages 10:45 a.m. Morning Worship 5:00 a.m. Promises 6:00 p.m. Evening Worship</p>		

Mission News Spiritual Life Department of MTW

Some of the Faith Promise missionaries we have been supporting have moved to departments of MTW instead of serving in a particular country. These departments provide ministry and financial support services for our missionaries including training and development, family support and spiritual counseling. **Bruce and Susan Young** now serve under the Spiritual Life Department. This department is responsible for the long-term nurture, care, and development of missionaries. The goal is resilient, strong and effective missionaries who are grounded in God's grace so that they become joyful agents of God's grace to the world. Some ministries provided by Spiritual Life to support and equip our missionaries are:

Living in Grace Conference teaches the foundation of grace that undergirds life and ministry. (This is also offered to churches. FRPC used it in a Sunday school class)

Pastoral Associate Couples provide pastoral care for missionaries while on the field. (Bill and Susan Smith served as care for the field of France.)

MTW Psychologists offer crisis intervention, counseling and referral. (Nancy Williams was strengthened by this help last HMA.)

Area Retreats are a time for missionaries to refresh their spirits and energize their vision with excellent preaching, helpful seminars, and good fellowship. (Rotates each year to a different area.)

Re-entry Conference helps the missionary to process what God has done over the previous term and to adjust to life in the United States.

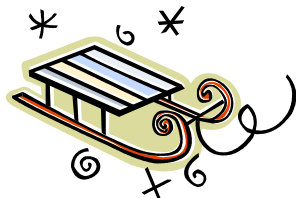
Summer Conference provides a break from the strenuous schedule of HMA for Scripture study, rest, and fellowship with family and other missionaries.

The Spiritual Life Department helps MTW place prepared missionaries and continue to support them on the field.

February Birthdays



3	Sarah Jane Dering	23	David Conrad
4	Caleb Sabella Joshua Sabella	25	Jacob Crawford Nathanael Dutton
7	Michael Lintelman Ed Stephens	27	Ken Boyer Luke Mattson Dillon Boyer
8	Denise Dalbey Judy Lawyer Shauna Renda Maree Vizino	28	Cullen Boyer
12	Ann Magnuson Jessica Roseum		
14	Tyler Campbell Randy Lintelman Elaine Koh		
15	Christopher Miller		
19	Fran Campbell		
21	Dan Roseum Josiah Koh		



News of Our Church Family



Edie Alexandra Work, born Dec. 5 to Stephenie and David Work

Alba Noemi Skopp, born Dec. 16 to Rebekah and Jason Skopp

Harriet Elizabeth Schwarz, born Jan. 9, 2012 to Mary and Jay Schwarz, formerly of Pittsburgh .

Financial Summary January 1 - December 31, 2011

Operating Account:	
Receipts	\$ 384,942
Disbursements	\$ 375,883
<i>Account Balances -</i>	
Operating Checking	\$ 20,375
Operating Saving	\$ 224,409
Benevolence Account:	
Income	\$ 121,047
Disbursements	\$ 117,306

Life-Giving Leadership

A TRAINING CONFERENCE FOR

ALL WOMEN IN THE CHURCH

March 16 & 17, 2012

We are excited to welcome back Karen Hodge, WIC National Trainer, for a conference that will encourage you to discover who God is and what he is calling you to be as women.

The conference will again be hosted by First Reformed Presbyterian Church, Penn Hills, and the only cost is \$10 for the lunch on Saturday. For more information, call FRPC at

412-793-7117.

Friday, March 16, 6:30 -9:30 p.m.

Saturday, March 17, 8:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

Congregational Prayer Starting on February 5

What makes for a healthy church? A big budget? A bustling building? A BBQ bonanza? Each of these things plays a vital role within the local church. It's hard to do ministry without them.

But none of them are absolutely essential for the existence of the church. As much as it pangs me to say it, a church can even exist without BBQ. But a church cannot exist without prayer.

The Bible is clear. We are to "pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:17). That command is given to individuals, families, *and* congregations. Like the church at Ephesus, we at FRPC are to "pray at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication...making supplication for all the saints" (Eph. 6:18-19).

In this light, **starting on February 5, we will meet bimonthly on the first and third Sunday from 5:15-5:45pm for a season of prayer before evening worship.** We will run with this timeslot on a trial basis until summer. But the main goal is to give us a concentrated period of time to pray with and for the saints of FRPC (not to mention something to do for parents with kids in Promises!).

I hope you will commit to making this concert of prayer a regular part of your Lord's Day observance. And as always, should you have specific prayer requests, please contact the church office or your ruling elder.

Pastor John (on behalf of the Session)

Help for the Haiti Team

Until February 19th, we will be collecting items for hygiene kits for the orphans and school children in Haiti. Our own Jay Bennett will be part of the team that will deliver the kits to the children in Haiti. The team will be traveling to Haiti in March.

If you would like to participate, you have several options. You can fill a gallon size Ziploc bag with the contents of one kit. The necessary items are posted throughout the church, in the bulletin, and at the Welcome Center.

The cost of a complete kit is about \$25. Another option is to make a \$25.00 donation for each kit you would like to provide. Checks should be made payable to New Covenant Church with "Haiti Hygiene Kits" marked on the memo line. You can mail your check to Carol Agate at New Covenant Church, 225 Grandview Avenue, Monroeville, PA 15146 or you can give it to Jay Bennett.

A third method of participation is to donate individual items from the list and place them in the duffle bag provided in the Welcome Center. These will be used to make up kits.

The Haiti Team is also looking for used, but serviceable suitcases or duffle bags **with wheels**. If you have one that you could donate to the project, they would be most appreciative. These will be left in Haiti. It will take quite a few of them to transport the 200 kits they plan to deliver. You can leave them in the Welcome Center or give them to Jay.

Lastly, please plan to pray for the team. Each one covets your prayers for this effort that is close to their hearts. Praying partners are important to each member of the team. Won't you join them in this way?

On behalf of the entire team, **THANK YOU!**

Senior High and Middle School



Snow Camp

Senior High Snow Camp

Feb. 3-5 At Ligonier Camp and
Conference Center
Derek Bates—Speaker

Middle School Snow Camp

Feb. 24-26
At Ligonier Camp and Conference Center
Rick Schroeder - Speaker

For information:
See Youth Leaders or Patrick Hardwig
Murrysville Community Church
Phone: (724) 327-8411
pat@murrysvillechurch.com



Presbyterian Family Week

Harvey Cedars Bible Conference
Long Beach Island, NJ
July 2-8 2012



Check it out: A week at the beach with meals included

Two great Conference Speakers:
Pastor Joe Novenson, Lookout Mountain
Presbyterian Church
Pastor John Yenchko, North Shore Community Church

*For more information see
Jim Spitzel or the Lintelman Family*

Congregational Meeting

Sunday, February 12
following morning worship



RPTS Conference

Reformation Society of Pittsburgh
"Prayer in the Church and Family", Dr. Don Whitney,
February 3 and 4, 2012, Christ Bible Church in
Cranberry Twp., PA. bhardwig@rpts.edu.