

# COVENANT CHRONICLE

## A NEWSLETTER FOR COVENANT CHURCH PCA OF FAYETTEVILLE, ARKANSAS

### Pastor's Note

Dr. Paul Sagan



We are in the midst of a cultural shift in America that is unprecedented in our entire history. Recent court decisions about same sex marriage, and decisions of the old mainline churches to sanction the practice as well, make it abundantly clear that we have lost the moral compass that once guided our nation. We should not be surprised, nor should we despair. The apostle Paul wrote of a similar situation to the pagan culture in ancient Rome in his epistle to the Romans:

For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things. Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen. For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that

*Continued on Page 2*

### Issue 27, July 2014

#### Cover:



Pastor's Note 1

#### Inside:



Creativity Workshop 2



General Assembly 3



Music Ministry News 5

*Our purpose is to glorify God by  
loving Him and loving people.*

*Pastor's Notes (Continued From Page 1)*

are contrary to nature; and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error. And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done. (Rom 1:21-28 ESV)

The early church did not shrink back when faced with the prevailing cultural tide of sexual immorality, rather they chose to live the Christian life with courage and boldness and to offer the good news of God's love to sinners like themselves. Paul boldly preached the truth about sexual purity to the church and urged the church to not surrender to the prevailing morays of the day:

Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice

homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God. (1Co 6:9-11 ESV)

I want to ask all members of Covenant Church to hold to the Gospel truth with even greater vigor and to not compromise or despair in the face of the rising tide of sexual immorality of all kinds demanding institutional acceptance. Not in self-righteous hatred and disgust, but with love and grace, let us proclaim the truth of the gospel with greater boldness. Also, let us pray for opportunities around us with our neighbors, family members, and friends to share the good news of Jesus' death and resurrection, and His ongoing power to change lives. Our primary witness to the watching world is our love and commitment to Christ and to one another. Jesus said before His death and resurrection, "By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." (John 13:35 ESV) Let us continually by God's grace to fulfill our purpose to love God and to love people.

---

## Creativity Workshop

When you see a new idea or creative solution to a problem, are you one of those who say, "Why didn't I think of that? Do you wish you were more creative?"

If you answered "Yes" to one of these questions, you should attend the CREATIVITY WORKSHOP led by Lee Mekkes at 6:45 PM on Tuesday, July 29.

Topics included in this workshop area:

- How creative are you?
- Creativity in the Bible
- Creativity in the church
- Creativity in us
- Why we are not creative
- How we can be more creative

You may not think of yourself as creative, and you may even have been told you are not the "creative type". This does not mean you can take "10 easy lessons" and become a creative genius. But knowing the principles of creative thinking is a big step toward developing your creative potential.

The church can always use a little more creative thinking--people with new ideas that will promote the Kingdom of God.

Registration for this workshop will facilitate the printing of enough copies of the workshop notes for each participant. To register, simply sign up on the clipboard at the back of the auditorium, or call the church office.

# General Assembly

Dr. John Redwine

The 42<sup>nd</sup> annual General Assembly of the PCA was held in Houston, Texas from June 16 through 20, 2014. Covenant Church sent four representatives. Pastor Paul Sagan, Reverend Stephen Atkinson, Captain Lee House, and Dr. John Redwine joined over 1000 representatives, called Commissioners, from the US, as well as other guests from around the world.

The General Assembly is the largest annual gathering of the denomination. Church leaders from across the country gather to discuss matters important to the life of the church, make decisions that affect the whole denomination and the progress of the gospel. This includes:

- Transacting ecclesiastical (church) business,
- Deciding significant theological issues,
- Reviewing work of the denomination's ministries,
- Receiving training through seminars,
- Connecting with resources in the exhibit hall,
- Networking and fellowship during food functions, and
- Preparing for the future.

Both the Nominating Committee report and the Review of Presbytery Records committee report went quickly with little discussion or debate.

The PCA Christian Education and Publications Committee (CEP) changed its name to the Committee on Discipleship Ministries (CDM) and revamped its internet web site which can be found at <http://www.ppacep.org>.

This year the Ad Interim Committee on the Insider Movements made three recommendations after its report was recommitted last year

following much floor debate both last year and at this GA. The recommendations that were approved were:

- That "A Call to Faithful Witness, Part Two: Theology, Gospel Mission, and Insider Movements" serve as a Partial Report (part two of two parts).
- That the 42nd General Assembly make available and recommend for study "A Call to Faithful Witness, Part Two: Theology, Gospel Missions, and Insider Movements" to its presbyteries, sessions, and missions committees.
- That the 42nd General Assembly dismiss the Ad Interim Study Committee on Insider Movements with thanks.

Despite having a large number of overtures, over half of the 52 proposals dealt with child abuse and protecting our children, and they were consolidated into Overture 6, Child Protection in the PCA, which was approved as follows:

Therefore, be it resolved that we exhort all church leaders to become informed and to take an active stance toward preventing child sexual abuse in the church by screening staff and volunteers, training them in child protection, and actively maintaining child protection policies pertaining to our obligations to love our children and protect their rightful interests as God's image-bearers from the devastating actions of abusers (Matthew 18:5-6; WLC 129-130); and Be it further resolved that we remind all churches that the heinous crime of child sexual abuse must be reported to duly

*Continued on Page 4*

**General Assembly** *(Continued From Page 3)*

appointed, God-ordained civil authorities, and that we must cooperate with those authorities as they “bear the sword” to punish those who do evil “in such an effectual manner as that no person be suffered . . . to offer any indignity, violence, abuse, or injury to any other person whatsoever” (Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-14; WCF 23.3); and Be it further resolved that we urge all church leaders to use their influence for the protection of children, by any and all godly means, including preaching and teaching against the heinous sin of child sexual abuse, warning anyone with knowledge of these sins to “take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them” (Ephesians 5:11), and by supporting victims who often suffer in silence and shame without the vocal and compassionate support of the church; and Be it further resolved that we direct the Permanent Committees and Agencies of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America to review their policies, procedures and practices in the area of child protection, including their response to child sexual abuse disclosures, their faithfulness in reporting child sexual abuse to duly appointed God-ordained civil authorities, their care for survivors of child sexual abuse, and their future plans to help educate the PCA on child sexual abuse, and report back to the 43rd 10 General Assembly; and Be it finally resolved that the 42nd General Assembly urge all members of the PCA to renew our allegiance to our Lord Jesus by loving our children as he loves our children, “for to such belongs the Kingdom of God” (Mark 10:14).

The most controversial overture generating the most debate was Overture 43, Expression of Support for Sanctity of Life and Marriage, which was answered in the negative (not approved) by the Overture Committee. After considerable debate, a substitute motion constituting a minority report was affirmed by a small majority. It read:

Be it resolved that the Presbyterian Church in America expresses its gratitude to the Lord for sustaining by His grace ministers of the gospel, chaplains, and Christians serving in the public sphere who are experiencing ostracism, penalties, and persecution for taking a Biblically faithful stand for the sanctity of human life and declining to participate in the cultural redefinition of marriage; and Be it further resolved that the General Assembly pause and offer prayer to the Lord on behalf of such ministers of the gospel, chaplains, and Christians.

A report on the remaining overtures may be found on the PCA web site. The General Assembly adjourned Thursday afternoon, June 19. The 43<sup>rd</sup> PCA General Assembly will be held in June 2015 in Chattanooga, TN.

### **Missions Point to Ponder**

*Why should anyone hear the gospel twice before everyone hears it once?*

*--Anonymous*

# Music Ministry News

Lee Mekkes

With 33 volunteer singers already enrolled to participate in the “part-time” church choir ministry, the Worship Committee has announced a tentative choir schedule that will begin in the fall of this year.

The “first call” for the choir to assemble will likely be very early in October, for preparation of music for a worship service later that month. Rehearsals are planned for the three consecutive Wednesday evenings prior to that Sunday worship service. The first series of rehearsals will also include music for an Advent Sunday morning in December--the second “call to action”. The exact dates will be announced after review and coordination with the church worship schedule.

A third scheduled event for choir ministry will be the 2015 Mission Conference in February. The

Easter Sunday morning worship, in April, is the fourth choir event planned.

The exact dates of the rehearsals and Sundays of choir ministry will be announced at a later date. Choir members are urged to clear their schedules so they can **all** participate in these planned choir ministry events.

A choir is an excellent example of “synergy”, because the rehearsal time required decreases at a greater rate than the rate of choir size increases. In simple terms, the larger the choir, the faster new music is learned.

There are still several singers who have yet to respond to the choir participation invitation. This could further increase the size of the choir. Additional singers are always welcome to join the choir for any of the scheduled choir ministry events.

## CONTACTS

### SESSION

442-5267 Paul S. Sagan  
 750-4982 Jeff Chewning  
 521-1333 Richard Chewning  
 750-4127 Pete Golden  
 524-1873 Lee House  
 570-862-9256 Dow Pursley  
 871-1981 John Redwine  
 918-778-3338 Beryl Wilkie

381-1178 Doug Nystrom,  
 Assistant Pastor

366-4229 Ken Hargis,  
 Executive Pastor

### DEACONS

283-1433 Tanner Blair  
 575-0022 Jim Dooley  
 287-8131 Mike Golden  
 619-7689 Mark Jamison  
 287-7009 David Rice  
 587-8651 Phillip Rouse  
 521-2850 Dennis Smith  
 751-3391 Larry Tomlinson

225-4269 Stephen Atkinson,  
 Assistant Pastor And  
 Christian Witness to Israel  
 (N America Inc.)  
[www.cwi.org.uk](http://www.cwi.org.uk)  
[sgt.atkinson@gmail.com](mailto:sgt.atkinson@gmail.com)  
 Home Address &  
 CWI Office  
 6401 S 50th St  
 Rogers, AR 72758