Celebrating 170 Years of Ministry

July/August 2023

Centerville Presbyterian Church
Share Life
Equip Disciples
Engage Community

The Bell

170th Anniversary Celebration & Young Life Camp Reunion

July 15 | 5:00 - 8:00

BBQ  Root Beer Floats  Photo Booth
Western Hoedown with Square Dancing and Live Music!
Come Dressed in Western Wear!
You Don’t Want to Miss This!
Bring Your Friends!

Tickets $20

Sign Up Sundays or online by July 10.
The Gift That Keeps on Giving!
Sam Knottnerus, Senior Pastor

When people ask me about our church, I like to say that we are a church plant... that is 170 years old! I love that the pastor who founded our church found ways to mobilize the church of God to do the work of God! To commemorate our birthday as a Church we are focusing on bringing new spiritual birthdays to those who have not yet responded to the life-giving news of Jesus. New birth always generates new joy, whether it’s a little baby, or a new baby Christian, who is excited about their newfound faith!

I hope you will regularly pray for the children, young people and their families that God wants to reach through us, whether in our church programming on campus or outreach partnering with Young Life in our community. I also hope you have picked up your ticket for the July 15th Hoe Down party to celebrate our birthday by honoring and encouraging the Young Life students who went to camp in June.

So how do we get ready to reach the next generation? Let me share with you a powerful quote I heard at our General Assembly where our national family of 650 churches gathered in June: “How would the kingdom of heaven be different if God answered all of your prayers from the past three weeks?” Perhaps you are as convicted as I was when I heard that challenge because I began thinking about how many people in my life need Jesus. Our prayers change what will happen today and tomorrow. So who are you praying for today that may come to know new life in Christ tomorrow?

Growing up in my home, there was artwork on the wall that reminded me daily of the great truths of God’s word. One of my favorites said, “Only one life, it will soon be past. Only what is done for Christ will last.” There are only a few things in this world that are eternal... God’s word, and people. So let’s keep investing in the eternal.

Next time you see me, please share with me who you are praying for! I would love to cheer you on!

Because Jesus made us family,

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Friday, July 7 at 4:00 pm
Dusterberry Way and Peralta Blvd.

Join the City of Fremont as we celebrate the Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for the newly constructed Dusterberry Neighborhood Park. Come be a part of this exciting event in our neighborhood and enjoy some FREE ice cream (limited quantity).

Parking is limited but you may park at CPC and walk a block to get there. Learn more here.
The Mission Statement of the EPC is: "The EPC exists to carry out the Great Commission of Jesus as a denomination of Presbyterian, Reformed, Evangelical, and Missional congregations."

Empathetic listening - People feel loved when you listen.

Engagement in the neighborhood - get to know the people around you!

Bear with one another. Don’t withdraw relationally if the person is not interested. Stay in relationship with them and pray for them, and trust God to do the rest.

Practice a faithful consistent presence in your relationships - show up!

You may know that our church is part of a denomination known as the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC). The EPC General Assembly (GA) was held June 20–22, 2023 in Cherry Hills, Colorado. It was attended by approximately 900 people from EPC churches from around the US. The focus of GA this year was to communicate the vision and direction we are heading as a denomination post-COVID. Our national leaders unpacked the mission of the EPC - to fulfill the Great Commission given to us by Jesus.

- The Mission Statement of the EPC is: “The EPC exists to carry out the Great Commission of Jesus as a denomination of Presbyterian, Reformed, Evangelical, and Missional congregations.”

This Mission Statement draws from the Great Commission given by Jesus in Scripture. Matthew 28: 18–20 says: Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on Earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

The two key components of the Great Commission are evangelism and discipleship. If we as Christians ignore the Great Commission we are being disobedient to God. We must embrace a culture of evangelism because we are commanded to do so by Jesus in Scripture as Christians. We do this by getting to know the neighborhoods in our communities and the people in them. Building relationships with the people around us is a key way we can share the Gospel with others.

**EVANGELISM**

Evangelism is sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with people in our lives. It’s not just inviting people to church. Here are some ways we are encouraged to do evangelism as followers of Jesus:

- Empathetic listening - People feel loved when you listen.
- Engagement in the neighborhood - get to know the people around you!
- Bear with one another. Don’t withdraw relationally if the person is not interested. Stay in relationship with them and pray for them, and trust God to do the rest.
- Practice a faithful consistent presence in your relationships - show up!

One method of evangelism is a tool called “The Three Circles.” The Three Circles method is explained in the book “Turning Everyday Conversations into Gospel Conversations” by Jimmy Scroggins and Steve Wright. There is also a fantastic app that can be downloaded to your mobile device. Go to your app store on your phone and search for “Life on Mission” (it’s free) to download the app. Once the app is downloaded, you will see a very simple interface where you view the different steps of The Three Circles along with a short explanation of each step. The Three Circles ultimately communicates a simple version of the Gospel message of Jesus, and is a great visual way to explain what being a Christian is all about to your non-Christian friends and neighbors.

**DISCIPLESHIP**

Discipleship and evangelism are inseparable: Disciples evangelize! Jesus personally trained the disciples to grow in their faith and to spread the good news of the Gospel. Here are the 5 steps Jesus used for discipleship:

1. He selected appropriate/key people to disciple personally (the 12)
2. He trained and teach them relationally in a small group
3. He took them with Him to do ministry. (Jesus had the disciples go everywhere with Him at first)
4. He had them take increasing responsibility for themselves. (He sent them out 2 by 2 to evangelize)
5. He preached and taught in large group settings

Ultimately, discipleship is about multiplication: making disciples who go out and make disciples. Making disciples is not something reserved for pastors or missionaries: ALL Christians are called to a life of discipleship. The EPC seeks to be more than just a denomination: we desire to be a disciple-making movement winning and training people for Jesus around the globe. When we embody this lifestyle of discipleship, we disciple others so that they can then go out and disciple others themselves. This is the process of multiplication that can empower us to spread the good news of Jesus in our community and in the world.

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In conclusion, we are incredibly excited to be a part of the EPC and to see where God takes us as a church and as a denomination in the coming years. We pray that God helps form all of us as the Centerville family to be evangelists and disciple-makers, as Jesus calls us to do in the Great Commission. We challenge each of you reading this to ask yourself these two questions:

- **Who has God placed in my life so that I can share the good news of Jesus with them?**
- **How can I embrace discipleship in my own life, either by seeking discipleship from someone spiritually wiser than me, or by discipling a fellow Christian who needs to grow in their walk with Jesus?**

Respectfully submitted by;
Pat Lum (Ruling Elder) and Ryan Bogert (Congregational Life Director)

PICTURED: Attenders at GA pray over a list of unreached people groups. These groups live in an area where they do not have access to Scripture or to Christians, and have never heard the good news of Jesus. There are over 3 billion unreached people around the globe. The EPC World Outreach team commissions and sends missionaries all around the world to evangelize to these people so they may know the love of Jesus. *Faces hidden for anonymity and safety of missionaries*

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**Sending Kids off to Young Life Camp...**

...and kids having a great time at camp!
June 2023 Session Update by Elder Patricia Lum

Pastor Sam opened in prayer and read 1 Corinthians 10:31-33, “So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. Don’t give offence to Jews or Gentiles or the Church of God. I, too, try to please everyone in everything I do. I don’t just do what is best for me; I do what is best for others so that many can be saved.” And 1 Corinthians 11:1, “And you should imitate me, just as I imitate Christ.” He asked, “Are we doing this? How do we bring others into the glory of God?”

Staff/Team reports:

**Josh**, our NextGen Director, has been with us now just over a month. He has been working hard with Molly Anderson on CPC’s family ministries to make it a fun place for families.
- The iPad check in for Children and Middle school children will resume for the safety of all our children.
- He has been getting to know the parents and has also been working closely with Brian Robinson from Young Life along with the students and volunteers. He was a volunteer at Young Life Camp in late June.
- Josh attended a meeting with the Afghan Christian Church about the kids camp they will hold in our gym July 17-20. It will be in English and open to any CPC kid that wants to attend. The Afghan Church will be will be providing volunteers but if any CPC attender would like to volunteer, check with the church office to get more information. More information is also in this Bell.

**Ryan** reported that the 6 week life group trial was a great success and he received overwhelmingly positive feedback from the groups. He has visited all the new life groups.
- Deacons Retreat was May 6th and he led training on how to talk to people going through grief.
- May 21 was the “Grief & Faith Lunch” after which he sent out follow up emails to see if the attendees would be interested in a Grief Share class.
- He is reaching out to some of the younger members of the church to find a time for the Growing Young team to start meeting.
- Pray for him as he studies for his ordination exam in mid-July.

**Tammy** gave a facilities update.
- We have received the permit for the digital sign, and it should be installed sometime in July.
- Mike Cook was on Zoom and gave an update on the bids for replacing the roof and HVAC units on the gym roof.
- The City of Fremont approved the contractor for the walk-in refrigerator/freezer for Free Dining.
- Dish Wireless is interested in renting space on our site and rather than putting it on the roof, install a “TREE” or Flagpole antenna in a far corner of our parking lot.
- The Church Surplus Giveaway went very well.

**Sam** is working on the sermon series *Honoring the Past, Embracing the Future* using the book of Ruth for the series.
- When the Young Life rooms are ready he would like to involve the church in a prayer walk through the rooms.
- On July 9th there will be a Centerville Free Dining celebration to honor all the hard working volunteers. Be sure to thank them.
- Sam talked about Elder Development and “Teaching, Training, Mentoring, and Experience” in way of discipleship on following Jesus.
- The Elders and Staff received an assignment based on SEE (Share Life, Equip Disciples, Engage Community) by evaluating each of our ministries based on this.

Session Closed in Prayer
Christmas in July!

Many of you donated towards the 2021 Christmas Offering for a new digital marquee sign for the front of the property. This sign will give us an opportunity to share with the community the programs CPC offers. After many delays and bumps in the road in the process, the City has approved our sign location and we are finally breaking ground! We praise God—the sign will be installed in the middle of July! Thank you for your patience and generous support.

The Great Church Surplus Giveaway

Saturday, June 3, was a beautiful spring day for cleaning out, sharing blessings with our neighbors, and making room at the church for all the new things the Lord has planned for Centerville! Throughout the month of May, an army of church volunteers and dedicated staff went to great lengths to prayerfully consider all the stuff the church has acquired over the years. With great gladness in our hearts, we were able to give away lots of items we no longer needed to the community and the congregation. New treasures were discovered by young and old as the community descended on our gym. They were greeted with smiles, hot coffee, and prayers. Special thank you to Tim & Tammy Bergquist, Tammy Sawyer, Scott Sawyer and Jim Burke who worked many hours to coordinate, encourage, and carry items to the gym floor; and to all the volunteers who helped set up, bring snacks, assist the community, clean up, and take left over items to donation sites.

This was truly a whole church effort.
On June 24, 26 men attended the Men’s “Celebrating Father” Breakfast in the Centerville Free Dining Room. The aim of the Men’s Ministry is to fulfill the church’s mission statement to Share Life, Equip Disciples, and Engage Community. After Ryan counted down a Top Ten List of Breakfast Dad Jokes (e.g., “What does an Phone eat for breakfast? Siri-al.”), the men enjoyed a pancake breakfast and conversation that included what their dad’s occupation was and memories or stories about their dad or being a dad.

Leonard Babyak led the group through Ephesians 6:1-9, a passage that instructs on how children and parents and servants and masters should relate in light of their relationship to the Lord. Men at each table summarized what the passage said to them and ask what the passage says about God and about people. The men were also asked what they would need to change if the passage is from God, and with whom can the men share this passage. The questions were intentionally written to be inclusive for people who may not have a Christian background.

Gift cards were awarded to the man with the most children (Winner: Henry Brown) and the one man who answered correctly one of the dad joke questions (Winner: George Emmett). Additional gift cards were raffled. Ryan closed with a devotional on loneliness and vulnerability based on Psalm 119:76, “Now let your unfailing love comfort me, just as you promised me, your servant.” Sixty percent of men are lonely. The devotional encouraged men to embrace vulnerability and offer it to our merciful, kind God. Jesus modeled vulnerability. He washed His disciples’ feet. He assumed the role of a servant (John 13:3–5). He is asking men to invite Him to heal their souls and walk with Him. Ryan closed by inviting the men who are searching for relationships to join one of the church’s life groups.

Here at Centerville, we believe that we are a family. And what do families do? Families enjoy food together! So beginning on July 9th we are going to be having donuts and coffee on the patio every Sunday at 10am right outside the sanctuary. We hope this is a warm time of fellowship and a chance for us to sit down together and get to know one another as a church family. So please save the date and join us for a yummy treat starting July 9th!
At CenterKids we believe children are the church! We exist to partner with parents for formation of kids towards Jesus. **For us, Kids Church is more than childcare!** Through thoughtful curriculum and community we are inviting kids to become more like Jesus. We meet every Sunday except the first and fifth Sundays when we have Family Sunday. Then the families attend together and the kids are dismissed to worship in their class. Contact Josh Morgan with any questions. josh@cpcfremont.org

**Here is some of what we are teaching this summer!**

**July: Follow Jesus here, there and everywhere!**

**Basic Truth**
I can trust God no matter what.

**Monthly Verse**
"God's grace has saved you because of your faith in Christ. Your salvation doesn't come from anything you do. It is God's gift."
Ephesians 2:8, NIV

**Monthly Virtue**
Faith- Trusting in what you can't see because of what you can see

**Basic Truth**
I can trust God no matter what.

**Monthly Virtue**
Creativity- Using your imagination to do something new.

**Monthly Verse**
"We are God's Creation. He created us to belong to Christ Jesus. Now we can do good works. Long ago God prepared these works for us to do."
Ephesians 2:10, NIV

**August: Made to Create**
At CenterStudents we believe in partnering with parents to form students in the way of Jesus. Currently our Middle School Ministry meets every Sunday except the first and fifth Sunday of each month.

**We focus on Relational Connection, Gospel Centered Curriculum and Fun.**

For High School starting in September we will be meeting every Sunday from 5pm to 6pm, and attending YoungLife club together every Monday from 7pm to 9pm.

For any questions contact Josh Morgan by email: josh@cpcfremont.org

If you are a family with a middle schooler, or know of a family who has a middle schooler who is not yet connected, we would love to meet you and spend time getting to know your family! Reach out to Josh at josh@cpcfremont.org

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**Go Far, Go Together....**

Are you on a team to connect with one of our supported mission partners? You can easily connect by praying, emailing, texting, calling, visiting, meeting with when they are in the area, and meeting with them on Zoom. Please join a team and let them know that CPC cares about them. We want them to support Gospel proclamation around the world. To connect with one, [click here](#) or email pwalker@cpcfremont.
Mission historian and professor Andrew Walls wrote extensively about the concept of translation in the context of Christian history. He once said, “Incarnation is translation. When God in Christ became man, Divinity was translated into humanity, as though humanity were a receptor language. Here was a clear statement of what would otherwise be veiled in obscurity or uncertainty, the statement ‘This is what God is like.’”

As I’ve been working recently on the summer edition of Frontier Fellowship’s magazine, The Frontier Journal (featuring Bible translation), I’ve been ruminating on Walls’ insight. It helps me recall the numerous stories I’ve heard over the years about individuals and communities having access to a Bible in their own language for the first time. Joy overflows when one is finally able to learn what God is like and get to know Him in such a directly personal way!

I experienced one of these stories first hand several years ago when I was living in Seattle. I’d recently returned from a vision trip to the eastern border of Kenya, where new Kenyan friends were sharing the Good News of Jesus with Somali refugees. After returning home, I purchased a Somali Bible as a reminder to pray for these friends and for the Somali people.

Early one Sunday morning, shortly after my trip, I was in the parlor at Bethany Presbyterian Church in Seattle practicing with the worship ensemble. Out of the blue, a young man knocked on the exterior door. He’d seen the light on, heard the music and wondered if he could come in. Of course!

Xabiib shared that he was a refugee from Somalia. He had encountered Jesus in a dream and decided to follow Him. Because of this, he was estranged from his Muslim family and community, facing intense persecution. That particular Sunday morning he went for a walk, asking God to lead him to a place where he could fellowship with other Christians.

Between ensemble practice and the worship service, I chatted some more with Xabiib. Tears welling up in his eyes, he shared that a family member had recently discovered and destroyed his only copy of the Somali Bible, absolutely devastating him amidst the persecution and isolation he had already been experiencing. “I’m so sorry, Xabiib ... Are you able to wait here a few minutes? I think God has something for me to give you...”

I raced across the street to the studio apartment I was renting at the time, retrieved the Somali Bible from my bookshelf and quickly returned to the church. Finding Xabiib in the hallway, I held it out to him. More tears welled up, now in both of our eyes, as we realized that God was answering prayers neither one of us had vocalized before this moment.

Over the past two millennia, the story of God’s love through Scripture has been translated from the original Aramaic, Hebrew and Greek into languages the world over, and shared through oral traditions, written editions and even audio and sign language versions. Although 1.5 billion people today are still without access to the full Bible in their first language, it’s worth celebrating that nearly half of the world’s 7,300+ languages have at least some scripture translated.

Frontier Fellowship believes the Gospel is Good News for all people, and that everyone on earth deserves a chance to learn about and grow to love God within the context of their first culture and language. Join me in praying that more and more people will have a chance to experience, like Xabiib, the precious gift of knowing God through His Word!
Kids' Camp 2023

Afghan American Church is excited to partner again this summer with CPC to have a kids camp for kindergarten through 6th-grade children on July 17-20. All CPC children are welcome to attend. Last summer, there was a great turn out of volunteers from CPC, and we’d love to have you all again! Please email Hannah at AfghanAmericanChurch@gmail.com or stop by the CPC office for ways to serve.

Vision
To bless the families of our community, specifically Afghan and low-income families, by providing a fun and enriching program for their K-6th grade children, and to establish and build relationships with the parents and share the good news with their families.

Basic information

When: Monday, July 17 – Thursday, July 20 from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Who: K-6th grade children (the grade just completed)
Afghan American Church will be inviting Afghan families and families from the area surrounding CPC.
Estimated attendance: around 100 children

What: We are doing a school backpack drive to bless the Afghan community around the Bay Area.

Goal: We would like to create 1000 backpacks to bless approximately 250 Afghan families with the love and good news of Jesus.

How: We are looking for families, small groups, Sunday School classes and churches to pledge to fill backpacks for the Afghan community. We will buy the backpacks in bulk, and then we need you to help us fill them by donating a complete set of classroom supplies for each backpack you want to fill.

Email Hannah at AfghanAmericanChurch@gmail.com or see the CPC office to sign-up and get a supply list. We need the school supplies by August 4 for the Back-to-School event on August 5.

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Our Losses....Heaven's Gain

Elisa Guarducci ~ June 9
John Mena ~ June 12

Everyone who lives in me and believes in me will never ever die.
John 11:26
LADIES LUNCH
SATURDAY
August 12 11:30

Sign ups available on Church App starting July 16 or at Women's Ministry table in the patio starting July 23.

Come celebrate everything wonderful about the 70's whether you lived through it or just heard about it! Remember Disco, Being Hip and Flower Power? We're gonna talk about "Love" - Can You dig it? Dress in your 70's finest - bell bottoms, colorful prints, tie-dye etc.

Cost: $5.00

6 week book study Tuesdays, August 29 to October 3, 5:30 - 6:30PM.

Bring your Brown Bag and we'll provide refreshments. Will meet in Westminster Room and a zoom option will be offered.

You Were Made for This Moment - Courage for Today and Hope for Tomorrow
How the Story of Esther Inspires Us to Step Up and Stand Out for God

Join Max Lucado on a journey through the book of Esther as he reminds us that God need not be loud to be strong, he need not cast a shadow to be present...and he is active even when he appears distant.

This study was born in a hard season—a pandemic that locked down the world. Church doors closed. Students were stuck at home. Masks hid smiles. And as if this weren't enough, the ancient sin of racism and hatred seems to be trying to undo us. Many of us are left wondering if this season will ever pass.

To all these things, God has a six-letter word of encouragement: E-S-T-H-E-R. The book that bears her name was written to be read in hard seasons. It was crafted for those who feel outnumbered by foes, outmaneuvered by fate, and outdone by fear.