

# Church Creek Presbyterian

CHARLESTON, SC

“Looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith.”

## Fall-Winter 2024 Newsletter

### *The Dividends and Drawbacks of Small Groups*



The term “small group” (or its many variations) can mean different things to different people. Some envision small groups to be places where believers share meals with one another and serve together, while others understand them to be places of discipleship, spiritual growth, and communal support. Understanding the nature of small groups is essential to understanding the potential dividends and drawbacks in the life of a local church. Recognizing the dividends and drawbacks will help a congregation navigate the purpose of small groups and its members’ involvement in them.

In his book, *Outgrowing the Ingrown Church*, Jack Miller set out *four* basic small group models—the

*growth* model, the *healing* model, the *worker* (i.e., service) model, and the *missionary* model. The *growth* model views a small group as existing primarily for the spiritual growth of the members; the *healing* model is a place of transparency, support, and care for the members; the *worker* model is a place where service is encouraged and carried out by the members of the group; and the *missionary* model is a place to fuel evangelism among members of the group. Miller pointed out the strengths and weaknesses of each of these models as they stand on their own. He then argued for something of a synthesizing of the various beneficial aspects of all four models. Whatever else may be said, this much we can be sure of: There will always be dividends and drawbacks to whatever approach a church takes with regard to small groups. Here are several dividends and drawbacks to small groups that we should keep in mind as we introduce them to the life of our congregation:

- ❖ **Small Groups should encourage greater commitment to the Lord’s Day gatherings in the life of a church.** A small group should serve as a springboard to propel the members to be committed to Sunday school and morning and evening worship. Small group facilitators should be encouraging the group wisely, lovingly and regularly to fulfill their vows to regularly attend Lord’s Day services. If the small group is functioning as it should, the members should be seeking to carry out the “one another” passages of the New Testament. We meet together in order to “exhort one another daily” and not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together (Heb. 10:24). When members begin to slide away from regular worship, members of the small group of which they are a part should reach out and see how they can best to encourage them in a gentle and loving way.

Of course, letting your small group become a replacement for corporate worship is an all too common problem in churches. People can get excited about getting together with their small group, but not about coming together to worship the Lord with all His people on the Lord’s Day. Scripture requires us to worship together on the Lord’s Day (Heb. 10:24), not to meet in midweek small groups. I have met many individuals who attend other churches who have said to me, “Our small group is really our church.” The facilitators and members of a small group should seek to discourage this potential drawback when they see it beginning to occur in the lives of members of the group.

- ❖ **Small Groups should encourage close spiritual friendships.** People only have so much time in a week and can only sustain so many close friendships in their lives. Small groups encourage people in the church to form close friendships with each other, to pray for one another, to serve one another in our daily needs and to build each other

up on a week to week basis. Having many people in a larger setting can foster surface conversations and relationships. Small groups can be a catalyst to forming deeper relationships among members of the congregation. One danger related to the forming of friendships in a small group is that it may begin to devolve into a clique. One very real danger of small groups is that they can become cliques that exist in the gathered assembly on the Lord's Day. This is especially likely to happen if the members of the small group are of a similar age demographic or stage of life. Living in close community with one another on a week-in and week-out basis can hinder people from pressing outward to fellowship with the other members of the body on Sunday and throughout the week. We must guard against allowing this to happen. Helping the members of a small group be self-aware of this danger is imperative.

Additionally, a small group can become arenas for harmful schism and division. They can become a place that fosters complaining, gossip, slander and even divisive factions. This is a heart issue; but it can more easily multiply in smaller settings where a problematic individual thinks that he or she will be able to sway others to join them in their discontentment. If they succeed, the damage can be irreparable. Small group facilitators and members should be warned about such a danger. The Scriptures teach us that one of the seven things that the Lord hates is "one who sows discord among brethren" (Proverbs 6:19).

- ❖ **Small Groups should encourage prayer in the life of the church.** Legion are the number of men who I hear bemoan the fact that the weekly prayer meeting is the least frequented meeting in the life of the church. If a local church builds the practice of prayer into every small group, the majority of the people in the church will be praying together on an ongoing basis. Small group facilitators should be trained to lead a time of prayer with the members of the group. I have found that people are more comfortable praying out loud in a small group setting than they are in a larger corporate gathering. Additionally, small groups can be a setting in which members may be more apt to share prayer requests that they might be hesitant to share in a larger setting.
- ❖ **Small Groups should encourage indiscriminate care for others in the church.** In a church larger than 100-120 members, knowledge of the needs of the congregants on the whole becomes increasingly difficult. The larger the church, the easier it is for relationships to form with people who are similar in age and interest. Small groups that are arranged by geographical locations can help put members of a church together who might not otherwise get to know and deeply care for one another. Small groups can help the members of the church keep each other informed as to the prayer needs and material needs of members of the church. It is far easier to keep up with the needs of the members of a church through small groups.

An accompanying danger to this care dynamic is that a small group can be used as therapy sessions for self-focused individuals. If an individual longs to be part of a small group for "healing" purposes, this can easily become a negative thing for that individual and all involved. People can monopolize a small group by constantly venting their problems and complaints. There are always those who take great comfort in continually talking about their problems while never really pursuing change. Though small groups should be places of transparency and healing, they can also become counseling centers in an unhealthy and damaging way.

- ❖ **Small Groups should encourage outreach and service in the church and the community.** Because there are less voices in a small group, there can often be more unification and easier mobilization for outreach and service. Miller explained that "small groups are ideal for outreach. They form natural teams for evangelism if they are properly prepared and understand how to do this work." Additionally, small groups can be good places to bring unbelieving co-workers, neighbors, and friends—especially if there is a meal and Gospel-centered teaching.

There is, however, a drawback to a small group focusing on outreach and service in that the members may start to neglect the spiritual disciplines of prayer, reading God's word, and regularly attending gathered worship on the Lord's Day. Without caring for the spiritual needs of our souls, we run the risk of becoming anxious and frustrated in our service (Luke 10:38-42). This puts us in a place where we are of no real spiritual benefit to others.

As we add small groups to the life of our congregation, please commit to praying together that we will experience the *dividends* of gathering together in these groups, and that the Lord will protect our congregation from the *drawbacks* of such groups. It is our sincere expectation that these will help foster the spiritual growth, health, service, and mission of the members of our church.

# Upcoming Events

**Small Group Launch Cookout (Friday, September 13 @ 5-8PM)** – We are planning on grilling burgers and hotdogs on the church property for a church-wide small group launch cookout. This event will also be a time for us to talk about the details related to launching small groups in October. We plan on having games to play outside (e.g., cornhole, bocce ball, spike ball, etc.). If you are planning to attend, please RSVP with Caleb Willingham at [caleb@church-creek.org](mailto:caleb@church-creek.org). We will also send out an email signup link via CCPLife.

**Men's Breakfast and Study** - The men of CCP meet on select Saturday mornings from 8-9:30AM in the Fellowship Hall for a Men's Breakfast and Bible Study. The men will meet on October 19 and November 16. They will break for the month of December. They are currently working through Dr. Bob Godfrey's Ligonier teaching series on the book of Revelation. Men are welcome to jump into these studies at any time, whether they have attended in the past or not.

**Women's Fall Bible Study** – The women's morning (9:30AM) and evening (6:30PM) bible studies will begin meeting *every other* Wednesday in the Fellowship Hall starting on September 11. They will be studying *Habakkuk: Learning to Live By Faith* by Lydia Brownback.

**New Members/Inquirers Class (Saturday, September 21 @ 9AM-12PM)** – Pastor Batzig will be leading a new members/inquirers class for all who are wanting to join the church or are interested in learning more about our congregation. If you are interested in coming to this meeting, please email Claire Gottshalk at [office@church-creek.org](mailto:office@church-creek.org).

**Women's Pickleball & Potluck (Saturday, October 5 @ 2-5PM)** – The women of CCP are invited to Robin Cooper's home for a time of fellowship, snacks, pickleball, and tennis. If you are interested in attending, please email Lindsay Wiles at [lindsaywiles@yahoo.com](mailto:lindsaywiles@yahoo.com).

**Service Sunday Fellowship Meal (Sunday, October 20)** - Please join us after the Morning Worship Service for a fellowship meal and a time to hear about opportunities for members to serve at CCP.

**Service Training Saturday (Saturday, October 26 @ 9-10:30AM)** - Please join us in the Fellowship Hall for a morning of service training for all of our volunteers and ministry team members. Please set this date aside if you currently participate in, or would like to participate in, service ministry at CCP.

**Joint Evening Worship Service (Sunday, October 27 @ 5:30pm)** - We will have a joint Evening Service with other area PCA churches at Redeemer Presbyterian Church (43 Wentworth Street). A dessert reception will follow immediately after the service. If you have any questions about directions or parking, please email Claire at [office@church-creek.org](mailto:office@church-creek.org)

**Women's Christmas Cookie Exchange (December 7 @ 10AM)** – The women of CCP life are invited for a cookie exchange in the Fellowship Hall. More details to follow!

**Christmas Eve Service (Tuesday, December 24 @ 5:30PM)** – Please join us for a Christmas Eve Service at Church Creek PCA. This service will be in the place of the Lessons & Carols Service that we have held in the past. This service is a special time to celebrate the incarnation of the Son of God. We encourage all members to invite family, friends, neighbors, and co-workers to this event. It is our prayer that this service will be a blessing to the congregation and community at large.

# Fall/Winter 2024 Adult Sunday School



The Adult Sunday School class is currently working through a Sunday School series titled, “Fruitful”—an expositional series through the Beatitudes and the Fruit of the Spirit. The class begins at 9:15AM in the Fellowship Hall. Please find a schedule of the various topics in this series below:

September 1 – The Merciful (Beatitudes)

September 8 – The Pure in Heart (Beatitudes)

September 15 – The Peacemakers (Beatitudes)

September 22 – Those Who are Persecuted (Beatitudes)

September 29 – Love (Fruit of the Spirit)

October 6 – Joy (Fruit of the Spirit)

October 13 - Peace (Fruit of the Spirit)

October 20 – Patience (Fruit of the Spirit)

October 27 – Kindness (Fruit of the Spirit)

November 3 - Goodness (Fruit of the Spirit)

November 10 – Faithfulness (Fruit of the Spirit)

November 17 – Gentleness (Fruit of the Spirit)

November 24 - Self-Control (Fruit of the Spirit)

# Ministry Committees

## **Audio/Video**

The Audio/Video Committee works to provide high-quality audio and video during our worship services, Sunday School, and other events, as well as live-streaming and recording. This year, the A/V Committee has overseen significant improvements to our A/V setup in the Fellowship Hall, with the installation of an entirely new audio and speaker system, recording software, video camera, and streaming capabilities.

The A/V Committee needs volunteers who are technologically inclined and who have an ear for sound. If you are interested in serving on the A/V team, please contact Josh Stone at [stone282@gmail.com](mailto:stone282@gmail.com).

## **Children's Ministry Team**

The Children's Ministry Team continues to shepherd the hearts of CCP kids. We have a K4/K5 class and an elementary class of grades 1-5. We have consistently had 11-12 students in the elementary class and 4 in the preschool class. We implemented memorizing larger passages of Scripture this spring, and the kids learned Philippians 4:4-9. We used sign language, activity pages, and posters to facilitate their memorization. We are excited to come together again in fellowship and in growing our relationship with God and His church. Please sign your child in on their first day and provide contact information for staying up to date on upcoming activities.

There are many opportunities to serve with our children's ministry. Members can volunteer to teach children's Sunday School classes, can help to plan or host family events, and can provide ideas and supplies for crafts and activities. Please pray that the Lord would draw our children to himself and would use our children's ministry to point them to Christ. If you are interested in serving in our children's ministry, please contact Heidi Roope at [ccpkids@church-creek.org](mailto:ccpkids@church-creek.org).

## **Congregational Care Team**

The Congregational Care Team works to arrange meals for those who have been hospitalized or who are otherwise in need of care. The team works alongside the diaconate to identify and provide for those who are undergoing extraordinary circumstances. The team also procures floral arrangements for funerals or other memorial services involving a member of the church. Church Creek members can serve the Congregational Care Team by signing up for meal trains or by notifying the deacons if someone is in need of meals or other care.

## **Food & Fellowship Committee**

The Food & Fellowship Committee works to facilitate unity and community among the people of Church Creek by organizing fellowship meals, planning church-wide events, and providing other means by which members and guests can interact with one another and build relationships. This year, the Food/Fellowship Committee hosted the Vision Banquet—an annual fellowship meal to celebrate the Lord's faithfulness and to review the plans for the year ahead. They also hosted a fellowship meal in April.

The Food & Fellowship Committee is planning an ice cream social in the early fall and a fellowship meal in the late fall. They are also finding new venues for us to use for events as our congregation grows and are developing ideas for further fellowship events.

## **Greeters Team**

The Greeters Team seeks to provide a warm welcome for visitors and members to worship on Sunday mornings and evenings. Team members especially seek to connect with visitors, letting them know about our church, learning about their background, and directing them toward ways they can get connected at Church Creek. The

Greeters are invaluable in promoting an atmosphere of fellowship and unity in the church, and they set the first impression for visitors.

The Greeters Team can always use more friendly faces, especially for Sunday evenings. If you are interested in joining the team, please contact Lindsay Wiles at [lindsaywiles@yahoo.com](mailto:lindsaywiles@yahoo.com).

### **Lord's Supper Team**

The Lord's Supper Team has the great honor and privilege of preparing the Lord's Supper for worship, through which Christ feeds his people. The team is responsible for setting up the table on Lord's Supper Sundays, for preparing and arranging the elements, and for ensuring that our supplies do not run out. As the congregation grows, the Lord's Supper Team has also been preparing for the distribution of the elements in the overflow room. If you would like to serve on the Lord's Supper Team, please contact Cris Dickason at [cdickason1126@comcast.net](mailto:cdickason1126@comcast.net).

### **Missions Committee**

The Missions Committee serves as the bridge between Church Creek and the various missionaries we support. The Committee corresponds with our missionaries, prays with and for them, and organizes opportunities for them to visit Church Creek or to update us on what the Lord is doing in their ministries. Members can serve the Missions Committee by learning about the missionaries we support, praying for them, opening their homes for missionary visits, and bringing new missionaries to the attention of the committee.

This year, the Committee was able to correspond with Octavius Delphis as he ministered in Haiti during the turmoil which escalated this spring, encouraging him through this difficult time. Additionally, Richard and Robin Cooper were able to visit the Fouchacons—church planters in the heart of Paris. The Foucachons were gearing up for the Olympics, preparing to minister to the thousands of people flooding the city for the event. The Coopers were also able to meet with Gethin Jones, a church planter in Lille, France.

### **Nursery Team**

The Nursery Team provides childcare for children ages 0-3 during Sunday School, morning and evening worship, and other church events. Their service allows parents to engage in worship with less distractions, and they provide an inviting place for children to play with one another. The Nursery Team is committed to the safety, protection, and well-being of our children. All nursery volunteers must pass a background check.

The Nursery Team is in need of more volunteers. If you are interested and willing to serve in the nursery please contact Brook Rhodes at [nursery@church-creek.org](mailto:nursery@church-creek.org).

### **Women's Ministry Committee**

Our Women's Ministry Committee seeks to disciple, care for, and equip the women of Church Creek through Bible studies, women's fellowship events, and other opportunities for connection and teaching. This year, the women have studied the books of Esther, Ruth, and 1 Peter, and they will begin studying the book of Habakkuk in the fall.



Please scan this QR Code to fill out our Service Opportunities form. We would love to know more about your gifts and the areas in which you would like to serve at CCP!

# Missionary Highlight



Last year, Church Creek PCA began supporting Aaron Halbert. Aaron is a graduate of Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson, MS. He and his wife, Rachel, live with their five children (Ford, Catherine, Ryley, Anne Waverly, and Whitley) in Tegucigalpa, Honduras—the capital city. Aaron is the first Reformed and Presbyterian church planter in the history of Honduras. They currently have over 120 people in attendance! We asked him to share a few of the ways that we can be partnering with them in prayer. Aaron writes,

“We are doing well and grateful for the Lord’s continual grace to us as a family and a church. As for prayer requests, I have listed some below:

- ❖ Pray for Josh and Elizabeth Johnson as they move to Honduras today. Josh will be doing church planting and they will be in language school for the next year.
- ❖ Pray for wisdom as we go into a season of nominations for elders and deacons and then training. Pray for grace and unity.
- ❖ Pray for Josue Pineda as he continues to study at PRTS in order to get his PhD.
- ❖ Pray for Daniel and Gracie Sluis as they raise support in order to join our team in order to start a campus ministry in the city.
- ❖ Pray for the preaching of the Word as I preach through Genesis in the morning and we are group preaching through Acts in the evening.
- ❖ Pray for continued unity in our church and our team as we think about future church plants.
- ❖ Pray for Rudy Ordóñez as he seeks to work on our publishing house.
- ❖ Pray that we would be holy
- ❖ Bless the Lord for our new members class that just finished up. We will be receiving about 10 new members.

# Church Creek Presbyterian Staff



**Nick Batzig**  
Senior Pastor  
[nick@church-creek.org](mailto:nick@church-creek.org)



**Caleb Willingham**  
Assistant Pastor  
[caleb@church-creek.org](mailto:caleb@church-creek.org)



**Claire Gottshalk**  
Church Administrator  
[office@church-creek.org](mailto:office@church-creek.org)



**Andrew Breytenbach**  
Church Treasurer  
[treasurer@church-creek.org](mailto:treasurer@church-creek.org)



**Brook Rhodes**  
Nursery Coordinator  
[nursery@church-creek.org](mailto:nursery@church-creek.org)



**Heidi Roope**  
Children's Ministry Coordinator  
[ccpkids@church-creek.org](mailto:ccpkids@church-creek.org)



**Jordan Frizzell**  
Facilities Manager  
[facilities@church-creek.org](mailto:facilities@church-creek.org)



**Josh Stone**  
Audio/Video Coordinator  
[josh282@gmail.com](mailto:josh282@gmail.com)



**Dr. Soohyun Yun**  
Morning Piano Accompanist  
[soohyun.yun97@gmail.com](mailto:soohyun.yun97@gmail.com)



**Joanne Janus**  
Evening Piano Accompanist  
[davejoanne2@comcast.net](mailto:davejoanne2@comcast.net)