

Christ Covenant Blog - A Ministry Opportunity

Last week we highlighted our new church website and our reasons behind creating a new one and how you can be involved with it. You can check it out at www.christcovenantsc.org This week we're thinking about why a blog is an important aspect of our church's website and presence online.

At Christ Covenant Church, part of our vision statement is to participate in a movement of the gospel that will bring personal conversion and renewal, community formation, and generous lives serving others through humble cultural engagement. One way that we are about to begin humbly engaging culture with the gospel message is through blog posts on our website—and we need the help of everyone in our church family.

Every week, the church will publish a post on our website and share it on our Facebook page. These articles are outreach opportunities—opportunities to get not only our church name in front of new people, but also the gospel message. When we write these articles, we have (at least) three groups of people that we are trying to reach:

- ❖ Committed Christians in our own church and in other churches
- ❖ “Cultural Christians”
- ❖ Non-believers

To reach these different groups with the gospel message, each post will target one of these groups specifically. For example:

- ❖ Theology, history, and practical articles will target committed Christians
- ❖ Articles explaining how the gospel affects all of life will target “cultural Christians”
- ❖ Arguments for the existence of God, the truth of miracles, and other common objections to Christianity will target non-believers

This simple (and by no means exhaustive) outline allows us to meet people where they are at in their faith experience and offer content that is relevant to them.

So we have a plan to produce content. How will these articles be found by people in these groups? That is where we need our church family to be active participants in this aspect of our mission.

The blog posts are an opportunity for you to reach out to your friends with the gospel with the simple press of a button. When the Christ Covenant Church Facebook page posts about a new article, there are three things you can do to help us reach people: 1) like and comment on the Facebook post, 2) share the Facebook post, and 3) send the link to the article out to friends via email or text.

Starting a church blog has great potential as a ministry tool, but we need the support of everyone in the congregation for this to work effectively. Think of the blog as an easy way for you to engage in the mission of Christ Covenant Church by taking the gospel to your friends online.

Orthodoxy: The Church

New City Catechism Q.48: What is the church?

Answer: God chooses and preserves for himself a community elected for eternal life and united by faith, who love, follow, learn from, and worship God together. God sends out this community to proclaim the gospel and prefigure Christ's kingdom by the quality of their life together and their love for one another.

But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth. - 2 Thessalonians 2:13

Christianity is not a collectivist religion because a group of people need belonging. Christianity is not an individualist religion because a person needs something to believe in and a moral life with purpose. Christianity is the religion of God's community. The community God chooses and the community God chooses to work in and through is the church who live by faith in Jesus Christ.

People choose a religious or secular life for belief, behavior, and belonging. People choose churches for the same reasons. But God chooses, gives birth to, and forms a community he delights in for an eternal relationship with himself and one another. He calls her his church.

When God created man he said, "It is not good that the man should be alone." (Gen.2:18), so, he created woman. When God deluged the earth with water he preserved a family (Gen.6-9). When God promised his salvation through the seed of Abraham he told him that the beneficiaries of his salvation would be a family more numerous than the stars in the skies (Gen.15:5). When the Hebrew people suffered in Egypt he gave exodus to the multitude (Ex.12). When Jesus prepared to accomplish God's salvation through his death and resurrection he prayed that the Father would make those he was saving one (Jn.17:20-21). When the apostle talks about the Spirit continuing the Son's redemptive work in a diverse world he says that we have access to the Father as one (Eph.2:18). When God consummates his work uniting all his redeemed to dwell in the new heavens and earth there will be a multitude from every tribe, tongue, and nation as one (Rev.21:1-4). God's creative, redemptive, and consummate purposes and works communal because the Triune God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, are one.

God chooses his church from among all the peoples of the earth (Rev.7:9). He foreloved his church so that he might delight in her for all eternity (Rom.8:29-30). This church on earth is united by faith in Jesus Christ and is growing together into his likeness as she abides in him and his word (Eph.2:11-22). The church grows together in Christ as she is identified together in him learning to follow all that HE commands (Mt.28:19-20). This community, identified together in Christ, is a worshiping community (Rom.12:1-2; 1Cor.10:31). And as the church is bound together in the love of Christ as a worshiping community, they are a sent community. The church is a community of love for one another (59 times in the New Testament), so that the good news she proclaims in words and deeds is authenticated to a world divided by broken relationships with God, themselves, others and the world their living.

Yet, the church is not God's community because a group of people chose community in an individualized culture. God's church is a community because God chose a people who would live by faith in Jesus Christ. Therefore, Jesus Christ is the foundation stone and the capstone of his community, the church. As a church we must lift up and exalt Christ, not community. As Christ is exalted in the hearts of God's people his church is formed as the community of those alive in Christ. When Christ is exalted in his church then he will be continually discovered and rediscovered becoming a dynamic in the lives of his community. His church will be formed into the community of relationship with God, one another, and the world through loving, generous, and courageous words and deeds. The fractured world needs the church as the community of Jesus Christ.

Praying for Our Missionaries - David and Erin Pervis

David grew up in Georgia, and as a child placed his faith in Christ. He received his B.S. in chemical engineering at Auburn University and later received CELTA certification for English language teaching. While participating in evangelism teams in Eastern Europe, he sensed God's call to missionary service there. Erin, also from Georgia, came to know the Lord in middle school. She graduated from Duke University with a degree in Middle East studies and later earned a master's degree in teaching English as a second language. In 1984 she joined Arab World Ministries and worked among Arab Muslims in England, France, and the Middle East before marrying David in 1996.

From 1999 to 2012, David and Erin served on the MTW church-planting team in Sofia, Bulgaria, establishing a multifaceted English program as an avenue for evangelism and assisting a Bulgarian church planter. From 2012 to 2017, they served on the MTW church-planting team in Kyiv, Ukraine, teaching ESL, leading evangelistic English clubs for two church plants, and discipling new believers. As of 2018, they are a part of the MTW church-planting team in Athens, Greece, using English instruction as a means for evangelism among Greeks and refugees from the Middle East and Asia.