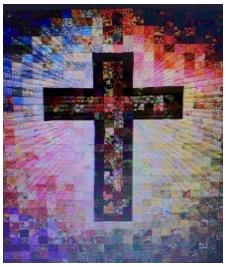


The Center Chronicles

November 2026





Deb and I have returned from our Sabbatical trip to Scotland and it was an amazing and awe-inspiring experience. I will be sharing stories from our journey over the next few weeks as we do a Sermon Series with a short study on Joshua. We drove a car on the wrong side of the road on the wrong side of the car, we cruised the Lochness in search of the Loch ness monster, we hiked the treeless Highlands, and the forested midlands of Scotland, and we worshiped in three different church settings from St George's Chapel at Windsor Castle (15th century), Bourock Church in Glasgow (19th century) to St. Giles Cathedral (12th century) in Edinburgh. We visited historic castles, closed old coastal copper mines, and palaces where the Royals stay even today. We enjoyed fish and chips, salmon, and Haggis. We saw the Crown Jewels of England and Scotland along with over twenty wood carved full scale horses dating back to the 1500's, wearing the armor of specific kings with their armor displayed beside the armor carved horses. We drove through Scotland whose entire energy grid is sustained by massive wind turbine farms and walked the hallowed battle grounds of Culloden. We heard and saw people from across the world visiting the same God made landscape, the manmade castles and palaces, and highland cows and sheep that we were seeing. Over the course of two full weeks, we drove over 1700 miles filling up on fuel that was $1.80 pounds ($2) per liter (4.5 liters = gallon- $8.50 per gallon). We were grateful for our car's 10-gallon tank in a car where I felt like I drove from the back seat 😊.

It was an incredible experience and yet, Deb and I came to the same conclusion when we landed back in Atlanta and arrived back home. We are grateful for our home, our family, and the privilege to share in ministry with our church family at Center. Though the mountains of East Tennessee differ from the highlands of Scotland, it was the same God who created them and the God who gave breath and set aside the lives of those like William the Conqueror, William Wallace, and Reformer John Knox also is the God who created us and set us apart for God's purpose in this day. As pointed out by the prophet Jeremiah in Jeremiah 29: 11 where it is written, **"For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."** As God in God's providence worked in the history of Scotland to bring the Gospel of Christ to the people through monks, kings and queens and a reformer, God continues to do the same through you and me. Though it is nice to travel to other places and witness how God is at work beyond these mountains, such travels allow us to give thanks for how God uses us to "enjoy God and glorify Him" with our lives. You might not become someone as famous as Mary, queen of Scots or King James VI (I in England), but in the

eyes of God, your life is just as important, if not more important because God calls you to minister to people the royals never met. I hope this will be a season during November that God will remind you of the plans God has for your life....

Blessings,
Jon





The Lord's Supper will be celebrated November 1.

We will be celebrating the Lord's Supper by intinction which means all believers are invited to come to the altar to break bread and dip it in a cup of juice. Both elements represent the Body of Christ broken for us and the blood of Christ which was shed for us. We have been practicing this form of communion since Covid in 2021.



Children's Bell Choir meets every other Wednesday.

Children's bell choir has decided to meet every other Wednesday for practice which goes from 5:30- 6:30pm. This month, they will meet on November 11 and 25th.



Schulmerich hand bells for Kids and Adults

The children are doing an amazing job learning to read their musical notes and their sense of rhythm and timing. One thing that has also become noticeable is how adult parents are learning to play as well. Therefore, I propose to Session to plant musical seeds so that Center Church can invest in a set of brass handbells. A used set (two octaves) can cost up to $7000. The set pictured here is one octave that can be purchased for $2800. We will explore our fund-raising options and will hopefully begin a "hand bell drive" sometime in the future.



Christmas Choir Practice has started

Sandi has picked the music. This year, we will sing the Lillenas choir arrangement, **Emmanuel, God's Greatest Gift.** All those who want to sing, we invite you to join us in preparing for this year's Christmas Cantata. We meet on Wednesday nights at 6:30pm in the Sanctuary.



Trunk or Treat will happen on Sunday November 1 at 3-6pm

This year, we close out the Halloween season with a Trunk or Treat event on Sunday November 1 from 3-6pm. Decorate your cars, dress up and bring candy for the kids. We will meet at the church pavilion across from the church.

DIVORCE Care

More than likely, you may have experienced yourself or you know of someone who has experienced the painful experience of divorce. Steve Grissom was a person who went through those pains and desperately searched for support systems outside of church that could help him work through the struggles of feeling like a failure as a family man and father. He faced incredible financial challenges along with anger and forgiveness issues. He needed help to understand how to deal with loneliness and lost friendships because of the divorce. But he could not find exactly what he needed. So, God used his skills to create the Divorce Care support ministry. As mentioned on their web page, Divorce Care is a **"13-week, video-based support group where you'll find practical guidance for managing difficult emotions, making wise decisions, and taking meaningful steps toward hope and healing."**

Since there is no Divorce Care program in Monroe County, a member of Center Church feels God is leading to establish a support program at the church for our community. Over the past 10 weeks and for the next three weeks, we will complete preparations to hopefully offer this program for individuals who have experienced the pains of divorce so that they can experience healing and hope in their lives. Each participant will receive a workbook to help them address

matters they might be facing in their now divorced lives. The first support group meeting will happen in December, and the course will begin in January. The pastor will lead the first sessions and will equip others who can continue to the program in the future.

168th Stated Presbytery Meeting
Tuesday, November 10, 2026
at First Presbyterian Church, Knoxville
10:00am



Thanksgiving Dinner
Sunday, November 22, 2026
Following worship

Christmas Gift Choice

This year, Center Church is offering an opportunity to create a shoe box gift for Samaritan's Purse or create a gift for the young men at the Micah Project in Honduras. The due date for all Gifts will be Sunday November 22. All monetary gifts can given to Regina who will in turn, forward them according to where they are designated.



5th Sunday Bike Ride, November 29

With the year coming to an end, I am inviting all bikers to ride after church on Sunday, November 29 (weather permitting) and leave after worship for an afternoon ride. I look forward to seeing everyone.



Session Meeting
Thursday, November 19,2026 @ 6pm

The Elders will be meeting for their monthly meeting. They will be focusing on the 2027 budget and begin the process of nominating new church officers for both deacons and Elders.

For you who are members of Center Presbyterian Church, we ask that you begin a time of discernment and prayer because only God knows who the next church leaders will be and it might be you. A church Officer (Elder or Deacon) usually serves a three-year term and after three years, has the choice to rotate off or return for three more years. A church officer can only serve 6 years before rotating off for at least one year.

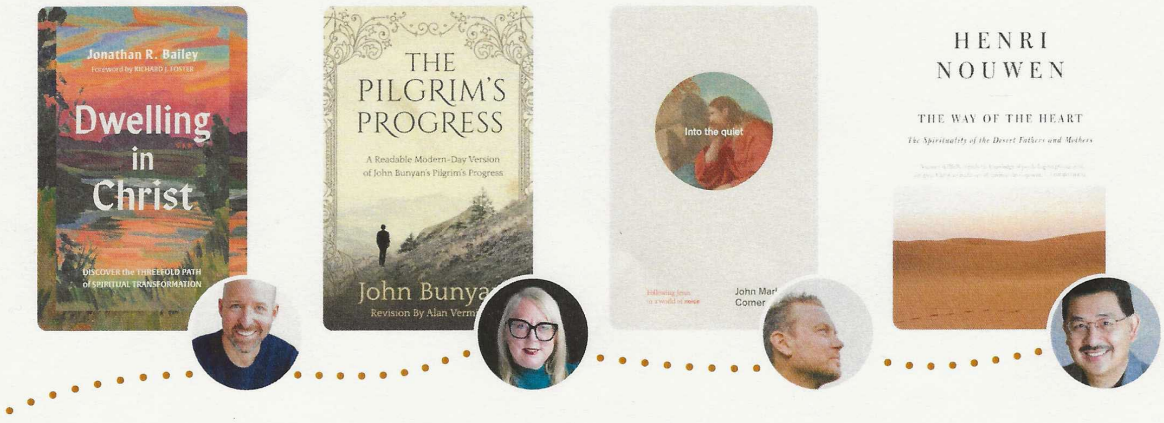
If a member of Nominating Committee asks you to consider answering God's call to serve in the next class of church leaders, before answering, please pray and ask for God's confirmation.



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