



the
Visionary

THE DILEMMAS OF
 PARENTING & GRANDPARENTING

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The Dilemmas of (Grand)Parenting

Pastor Carl Robbins

Sandy and I began *parenting* in 1984, and so we are veterans and have seen the mercies of God poured out on our feeble, inconsistent efforts. But, we are relative newcomers to the practice of *grandparenting*. The Lord has been so kind to bless Sandy and I with grandsons and granddaughters: Brayden Robbins (8, in Tupelo, MS), Jack Robbins (almost 3, in Rock Hill, SC), Emmie Ruth Robbins (almost 2, in Tupelo, MS), Lainey Janice Robbins (almost 1, in Rock Hill, SC) and now Maggie Grace Robbins (in Tupelo, MS) , and more to follow!

As we have made the transition from one task to another, a few principles have guided us:

1. Godly grandparents make it a priority to intentionally pass on their Christian Faith to Grandchildren

There is NOTHING more important to the Christian parent than their children and grandchildren firmly walking in faith in Christ. That's why the Apostle John says (3 John 4):

"I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth".

We KNOW the godly influence of parents and grandparents IS a means God is pleased to use in the conversion and maturing of our children- just look at the model of Timothy in 2 Timothy 1:5:

"I call to remembrance the genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded is in you also."

The Psalmist agreed and said:

"One generation shall praise Your works to another, and shall declare Your mighty acts" (Psalm 145:4).

Christian grandparents can take great hope in the covenant promises like Deuteronomy 7:9:

"know that the LORD your God, He is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a

thousand generations" and Psalm 103:17 *"the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting On those who fear Him, And His righteousness to children's children."*

2. Godly grandparents persevere in prayer

Whether it is your children or grand-children, you should pray for their salvation and growth in grace. You should intercede for their integrity, their humility, their moral purity. It is a necessity that you pray for their love of all the means of grace: the whole Lord's Day, reading the Word & prayer. Pray for them to grow in their contentment, the wise use of their tongue, their zeal, their faithfulness. Pray for their future spouse!

3. Godly grandparents refuse to undermine the parenting of their children

By the mercy of God all our children are believers and have all taken vows at their children's baptism, to raise their children (our grandchildren) in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Will we differ on some of the details of parenting? Sure. But, they are the responsible agents (before God) for these children. And so, if they have a standard that is not a matter of biblical law, but one of Christian liberty (i.e. bedtimes, diet, clothing choices, use of media, etc.) Sandy and I need to affirm THEIR practices and not speak ill of them.

4. Godly grandparents know the folly of giving unsolicited advice

Here is where so many Christian parents go wrong! They do not understand what is involved in *"leaving and cleaving"* (Genesis 2:24). Your children are grown and gone and raising their own children. If they want counsel on parenting

they will ask for it. But if you give advice-unsolicited—you are (perhaps unconsciously) trying to re-assert the role you had when they lived under your roof. But they have left and are cleaving to their spouse. And I have NEVER seen adult children who appreciate unsolicited counsel from their parents!

So, Grandparents-If you are tempted to say something to your children about their parenting, go into your prayer closet and say it to the Lord instead (i.e. intercede for them)!

5. Godly grandparents are committed to encouragement and help

Most grandparents, if they are empty nesters, have more disposable time and income, and so can (if they will!) help by caring for the grandkids (when mom and dad need a break). Grandparents should also assist by encouraging and cheering on their children and grandchildren, not discouraging. Ask yourself a question—do your children wince when they see you coming because they are about to get critiqued OR do they look forward to your visit, knowing you will build them up in the faith and their gospel duties?

Pastor Carl Robbins
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Youth Events

- ⇒ June 4 - Grad Lunch
- ⇒ June 19-23 - VBS Service Week
- ⇒ June 23 - Post VBS Fellowship/
Volleyball Match
- ⇒ July 3-7, 2017 - RYM Florida #1
- ⇒ July 17-21 - Ridge Haven Junior
High

Other events coming soon, dates TBD

- ⇒ Wednesday night joint fellowship
with Grace Baptist Church (RYM
traveling companions on the bus)
- ⇒ Upcoming Hymn Sing/Fellowship
Night
- ⇒ Additional fellowship and volley-
ball. More details will follow

Discipline in the Early Years

Pastor Dan Dodds

The Lord has blessed Christy and I with four covenant children for which we are eternally thankful. Each has his/her own personality and individual characteristics that require wisdom when it comes to discipline, but there are certain fundamentals with which we must begin in a discussion of this sort. And of course, all instruction must be based on Scripture so we begin there. What does God's Word teach us?

Children are Sinners

This is a very important presupposition. If you believe your child is innocent or basically good you will raise a perpetual (and complaining) 'victim.' But the Bible is clear that *Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child...* **Proverbs 22:15**. (Note as well **Jeremiah 17:9** "*The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it?*") A child's heart is always bent toward sin and this must be addressed.

Discipline is the Means of Addressing Sin

The second half of **Proverbs 22:15** reads "*The rod of correction will drive it far from him.*" So the Bible teaches that some corporeal correction is appropriate and effective for addressing the sin bound up in the heart of the child.

Discipline is Not Pleasant

Ok, let's admit it. No one likes discipline – not the child OR the parent who is administering it. **Hebrews 12:11** reads "*Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful.*" This is why so many tend to avoid it. But we have to keep our eye on the long term benefits to the child and to us (see below) if we are going to be motivated to persevere in it.

Discipline is Not Punishment

Proverbs 29:15 reads: "*The rod and rebuke give wisdom...*" Discipline's goal is to bring your child wisdom when accompanied by instruction. It is to teach the child "This behavior/attitude will bring you greater pain, later in life. This small sting I give you now is to remind you of that."

Lack of Discipline is Not Loving

Too often people believe that any corporeal discipline is too harsh or will 'scar' the child in some way. They believe that the best approach is to 'love' them and softly correct their bad behavior (of course, I would guess that many who believe this do not have children!). But **Proverbs 13:24** teaches that "*He who spares his rod hates his son...*" Note the strong words here: to withhold correction is to *hate* your child.

Discipline Now Brings Fruit Later

Proverbs 23:13 reminds us "*Do not withhold correction from a child, For if you beat him with a rod, he will not die. ¹⁴ You shall beat him with a rod, And deliver his soul from hell.*" Deliver him from hell? That should get our attention. This is no small issue. We also read that there is a 'part b' to **Hebrews 12:11** (quoted above) "*nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.*" But not only does discipline benefit the child, it also benefits the parents. Note **Proverbs 29:17** "*Correct your son, and he will give you rest; Yes, he will give delight to your soul.*"

Discipline Should Not Be Done in Anger or Excessively

A parent should not discipline a child for behavior that the parent is engaging in while

disciplining! "STOP LOSING YOUR TEMPER!!" is not an effective discipline technique. Paul teaches in **Ephesians 6:4** "And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath..." Knowing the right amount of discipline to administer is one of the skills each parent must master. Excessive force (causing bruising etc.) is just that, excessive. You are trying to connect their current behavior with pain – and it doesn't take much to do so.

Discipline Should Always Include Instruction

Proverbs 22:6 reminds us to "Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it." We also learn from Paul **Ephesians 6:4** "And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord." The word 'training' here includes instruction and education.

Discipline Is Not Always Spanking

As children mature you will find additional means that are effective in bringing instruction. Withholding a treasured item or removing some favorite toy/event for a time can be helpful. Knowing your child and what motivates him/her is a crucial component here.

Other 'Random' Thoughts

- ◆ The early years of parenting are heavily focused on character building including self-control, respectful behavior, appropriate attitudes. As Pastor Robbins has stated multiple times from the pulpit – our goal is immediate, complete, cheerful obedience. Some kids take longer to learn than others, but parents need to persevere with them regardless.
- ◆ Do not train your kids ONLY in a context of discipline. It is a regular routine of life. The dinner (and breakfast and lunch if possible) table is ripe territory for training – verse memorization as a family, catechism

practice, Bible reading etc. Family worship is a must for believing parents.

- ◆ If you want your children to learn teachableness, respect for authority, love of learning, humility and how to ask for forgiveness, you will need to model it to them. If you have wronged them you have a wonderful chance to demonstrate humility by asking forgiveness.
- ◆ A maturing child will need more and more leeway to practice what he or she has learned – to be given a chance to apply the lessons in the real world of friends and situations. To 'overprotect' them does not do them favors; it leads to isolation, fear and immaturity. As you raise them you must demonstrate trust in the Lord's watchcare and providence by allowing them to exercise and practice their skills.
- ◆ Do not panic when your children say something that shocks you, or they repeat something that they heard at school or on the playground that is inappropriate. Carefully explain what the Lord says about it and use the opportunity to give them confidence that they can bring anything to you without fear of a blowup.
- ◆ Enjoy them while you can; they are an amazing blessing from the Lord.

Pastor Dan Dodds
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Parenting Teens: Play the Long Game

Pastor Scotty Anderson

The teenage years are momentous. To be sure, big things are happening, the stakes ratchet up, time ticks down, the nearness to what we hope is responsible adulthood imposes itself into many a parenting thought. Honestly...it's scary. Bad examples abound (our own teen years included). Godly parents who desperately want to spare their children the fears, indignities, sufferings, and sins of their own teenage experience have ample motivation to do these years well.

It's rarely said, but the parenting of teenagers has potential to be the most delightful of all the parenting stages. These are complicated and confused times in part because teenagers appear to be adults in appearance and in many of their competencies, but in other places they are reliably inconsistent, confused and immature. And that's where the fun is. There is a wisdom shaped vacuum longing to be filled and this is where some of the best conversations will take place. Sometimes teenagers will be very resistant and sometimes they will plead with you to help them sort through their life. But whatever their mindset, they need you to engage, to lean in, to draw out and speak into their lives.

There's no prescription on to how to parent every teenager. Each is different with his or her own personality, gifts, talents, temptations, and foibles. Neither fear-based nor rules-based parenting can expect to be fruitful. Christ must be king and the only lawgiver (think the absolute demands of purity, speech, Sabbath) and within the framework of His law parents must work hard to understand what is wise, useful, and needful for the long term. Work to know your own children and guide them based on their context, propensities, responsibility, companions, and opportunities. This is incredibly discomfoting for many who want a formula but you have to understand you're not making

sausage, you're fostering mature adulthood. This means that options like school choice, working part time, getting a driver's license, ear piercing, makeup, fashion, dating, music, sports, and the like will vary dramatically among faithful, believing families. And that makes it critical for you to communicate that, as a parent, you are unapologetic about unfairness. Everyone will not be treated the same and you're okay with that. You're son may not be ready to drive for a few more years. Your daughter might be allowed to get a second ear piercing. You might decide that you like the idea of your child dating in high school because you want to foster good disciplines and realistic expectations before college. Your child might need to work more than play sports. These are not indifferent matters, they are vitally important and have a huge amount at stake with each, but wisdom says each teenager may land in a different place.

Because of that, let me narrow (somewhat) where teenagers need the most input. Consider carefully these three big categories that should occupy your time, utilize your resources, consume your energy, make up your instruction, and fill up your prayers.

"Therefore we also pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness and the work of faith with power, that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ." - 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12

Vocation - The first concept (a personal mantra of mine) is the concept of vocation or calling. If you've heard me talk about this I really mean *callings* that belong to every Christian: as a believer, as a family member, a church member, a

community member, and as a Christian worker. In the teenage years you need to exploit opportunities to make them realize their non-negotiable commitments in these areas:

- ◆ *Faith* - Communing membership is vital to their owning and being able to express their faith, independent of their parents. But don't rest in that alone. Continue to cultivate a deepening conviction over, and understanding of, their sin and need for Christ. Look for an increasingly self-directed communion with God: personal devotions and bible study, consistent prayer habits, worship engagement, sermon response, and even sharing with others.
- ◆ *Family* - Continue to encourage their place in the family. This is done by maintaining household responsibilities, engagement in family life, service and commitment to their siblings, and also drawing their friends into relationship with you as parents and as a family unit. You want to create a climate where your children are comfortable with their family and see themselves as part of the unit even as they grow in independence and freedom.
- ◆ *Fellowship* - The church has to be made to be a vital community for them as well. Plug into the basics of ministry such as Catekids but then progressing into the youth education and events as well. Parental fears can cause kids to fail to connect to the people they are most called to connect to: fellow church members. Withdrawing in this period sends the message that you need to be suspicious of the church's ministries and members. That's the exact wrong direction. And don't just think laterally with peers, think vertically in terms of connections with older saints and

servicing with young children as well. Church life can be messy at times but if you and your children can't work through problems in this context, what can you expect with the rest of the world? They need the body and the body needs them (1 Cor 12).

- ◆ *Friends* - The world also needs them. They have a call to increasingly become salt and light in a culture of darkness. Over the years I've heard so many parents say, "Wouldn't it be great if we just got together in some out of the way place where we could just bring up our kids in a safe community." Yes. I see the appeal. But there are no utopias this side of glory. We carry our sin wherever we go. And this attitude also misses the kingdom seeking (Mt 6:33) we're to do within the world. When you read your NT you get a high emphasis on church life but not to the extent of escaping life in the world. Teenagers need to find opportunities among believers and unbelievers. They need to be able to separate without necessarily fleeing. More below.
- ◆ *Function* - Parents need to dig in with their teenagers to help them understand what they are made to do, what work are they equipped for and called to. This means honestly assessing and encouraging them in what they are suited to and especially in how they may best serve their fellow man while providing for themselves and the family God would give them. This means helping and encouraging young women in their calling within the home while not naively keeping them from usefulness to the world (Pr 31). For young men, steer them away from illegitimate and fruitless employments

(Continued on page 8)

and toward that which has dignity and does good. In all of this they need to accept that they may be ill-equipped by natural ability and circumstances for some ventures and that they and others are better served by doing what is needful over chasing a dream. Young children don't need their dreams squashed, but older children might. And as much as ever they need to learn flexibility. Jobs become obsolete every day, but those who work hard and well with others rarely lack opportunity (Ps 37:35).

"For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith." - Romans 12:3

Confidence & Humility - The second concept to give attention to is self-esteem. Wait! Don't freak out! I mean that in the original sense of the term, "to estimate," and definitely *NOT* "to think highly of." One of the major transitions that takes place in the teen years is self-awareness. Boys and girls discover the mirror. Muscle flexing, primping, pimples, posting selfies, fashion, image, experimenting with walking, dance moves...these preoccupations border on and surpasses ridicule. But these also represent a newly discovered self. They also indicate that deep change with relation to parents: the discovery that child and parent are not one. Hence the mirror and the nagging question: "Who am I?" Teenagers in this period need to be reminded that they are not completely independent of you but are growing in that direction. As they do, they need to learn how to think about themselves in right ways (Rom 12:3) because their self-perception can often be wildly inaccurate, being both too high and too low. You have to inject reality into their world. You have to

refocus them on character over persona. You have to affirm that you will always love them and believe in their ability to do good in the world. But you may also need to remind them that they are not as good as they might think. They have to be called out on deception and dishonesty, on laziness, task avoidance, judgmentalism, mistreatment of others, selfishness, shallowness, and worldliness. They need to be affirmed in hard work and effort even if the results are not what they had hoped. But more critical is that they understand that they are not as *important* as they think. An insecure child might not as likely strut around or post-selfies, but a woe-is-me attitude is its own form of pride. It's not mere self-awareness but self-preoccupation that distracts from particular vocations and the general call for believers to do good (Matt 5:16, 2 Cor 9:13, 1 Pet 2:12). Teens also benefit from knowing their history, that they are not the first to experience trials, to have been made a laughing stock, to experience betrayal, and to be rejected (Isa 53:3, 1 Pet 2:4). They need to gain an appreciation of what they are capable of and can grow into. This happens with trials and experience and perseverance and also with a parent's gentle honesty. Some people can sing and some can't. A momma's love does not improve a voice to anyone but herself. But virtually anyone can work hard, be a good friend, and practice Godly disciplines. Those are skills that should be affirmed and highly esteemed. Help them learn: what they are capable of, how to minimize weaknesses, and how to work toward a greater usefulness. This sort of external focus goes a long way toward fixing internal problems.

"He who walks with wise men will be wise, But the companion of fools will be destroyed" - Proverbs 13:20

Relationships - Finally, the significance of relationships cannot be underestimated during the teen years. Children, like their parents, are

social beings. They are, being made in the image of God, designed to relate to others. Parental fears should not deny that fact of creation or aspect of their children. Developing extra-familial friends is an enormous part of their growth into maturity. But friendships are not an indifferent matter. Parents ought to be intimately involved in the lives of their kids to the degree that they know the character and personality of their children's friends. You ought to know your kids' friends well enough that their friends know you and your personality. This will only happen if you deliberately introduce yourself into these relationships. Engage them in conversation. Have them in your home. Pester your children for specifics in their friends' lives. I'm always amazed what kids are oblivious about in their friends: Are their parents married? How long have they lived in Greenville? Where do they go to church? They need your prompting to think about those things. You also want to learn about their thoughts of members of the opposite sex. Who would they consider marriageable? Why? And you want to do a lot of relationship coaching: Separating from fools, reconciling with brothers, nurturing friendships, loving the stranger and difficult people, etc. Some parents think only in terms of protection and separation; a posture too narrow to be ultimately helpful for kingdom living. Separation is clearly a godly option for certain situations (2 Cor 6:14-18) but reconciling (Php 2:2, 4:2) and making peace (Proverbs 16:7, Rom 14:19) are as well. It would be a shame and disservice to a child to let them grow up and leave your home having learned fear and separation as the only response to difficult people and situations.

Parenting teens are the opportunity years. Whereas the focus of the preteen years and younger was immediate, complete, and joyful obedience, the teen years are the time for gradual, controlled, and processed exposure and introduction to the adult world. Let me emphasize: Protection is for young children;

processing, for teenagers. Ask yourself where wisdom is: that your child's first experience with work, dating, unbelievers, independence, drinking, political thought, merrymaking or whatever, comes after they have left your home, or before? To be clear, this is not an encouragement or a condoning of worldliness or sin, but it is encouragement that teenagers develop an understanding of the adult world while they can be instructed and shepherded so that what they do is done in all purity and godliness with the guidance of those who love them most. Teenagers lack wisdom. They fail to ask important questions. They are naive. And because of this they desperately need you to engage with them as they are entering into the adult world. They need you to ask hard questions, to explore, to provide accountability, to review events and circumstances and words and actions and motives and implications and consequences (Pr 20:5). They still need discipline and they need discipline in the context of maturity with mature consequences. And that's why parents need wisdom as well. The simplicity of the sweet days of dolls and legos can be mourned but it also has to be abandoned. Pretending isn't suitable for young adults (much less older adults). The teen years are about learning to live in the real world God has ordered for them. That means parents have much more work to do.

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New Members & Baptisms



Wendy Mauritz

Membership Vows

February 19, 2017

Jon & Erin Chilton

Membership Vows

February 19, 2017

With children:

Reynolds, Mary, Josiah & Catherine



tized, Covenant Children

Tabitha Armstrong

Sacrament of Baptism

March 26, 2017

Covenant child of
Philip & Lauren Armstrong



Sarah Pitts

Sacrament of Baptism

April 2, 2017

Covenant child of
Michael & Lisa Pitts

What They're Reading

Recommended Reading from the Pastoral Staff

Pastor Robbins

You know that I am an unrepentant book junkie and a voracious reader. But this is a set like no other. It has consumed my reading time for months on end.

I am talking about Chad Van Dixhoorn's long-awaited work: *The Minutes and Papers of the Westminster Assembly*.

Five volumes, and by far the most expensive set of books in my library, and worth every penny! These tomes have taken their place on my standard reference shelf. The Westminster Assembly (1643-53) brought together over 100 of the leading theologians and biblical scholars of England, Ireland and Scotland. They were tasked with producing a series of documents which would be the public theology of a national church for the British Empire. These documents were to include a confession of faith, several catechisms, a directory of public worship and other ecclesiastical documents. Ever since the Assembly the Westminster Confession has been the stated confession of all Presbyterian churches around the globe. Van Dixhoorn's volumes include the hour-by-hour discussions of each doctrine, a good understanding of all the men who served as commissioners, their daily activities and much more.

I just spoke to Chad at the Twin Lakes Fellowship and he let the cat out of the bag—there is another volume forthcoming soon, that will cover the discussions not documented in the first 5 volumes!

Pastor Dodds

The Whole Christ, Sinclair Ferguson. Great book for understanding what it means to be 'in Christ' as well as the implications for the role of 'law' in the Christian life.

Counseling Hard Cases, Lambert. Great book for observing how biblical counseling works. The first chapter on the Sufficiency of Scripture for biblical counseling is worth the price of the book. The subsequent chapters that illustrate what it looks like are very worthwhile.

Letting Go, Rugged Love for Wayward Souls, Harvey. Somewhat of a modern version of Tough Love. Good material.

Undeniable, Douglas Axe. New book from the ID (Intelligent Design) people showing how everyone seeks an explanation for order and design – that is, until it is trained out of them!

The Light Princess, Gordon MacDonald. Fun reading. Strange stories but an interesting writer.

David Livingstone Africa's Trailblazer, Janet and Geoff Bengé. Have you heard of the hoopla app? Wonderful!! If you have a library card you put in your number and have instant access to books, movies and DVD's. This was an audio book I downloaded for a recent trip to Chattanooga. It was a five hour biography – perfect!

Love and Respect, Eggerichs. One of the better (only?) books that addresses the issue of unconditional respect. Hope that whets your appetite for Scotty's J-Term class coming up.

Finally Free, Lambert. Book on how to deal with pornography (or really, any addictive sin). Refreshingly free from psychobabble and statistics and stocked full of Scripture and practical advice I have not seen in other similar books.

Pastor Anderson

Conscience: What It Is, How to Train It, and Loving Those Who Differ by Andrew Naselli and J.D. Crowley. *Conscience* is a very simple and well written guide to understanding the biblical view of that internal aspect of men that assesses right and wrong. While weak on a few issues the book

possesses the genius of simplicity and applicability. Most helpful is the chapter on relating to fellow Christians when your consciences are differently oriented and the most interesting chapter is application related to missions. You'll understand yourself better and how to train your own conscience better by reading this.

If you want another book of helpful tactics and you're a married man, get *The Dude's Guide to Marriage: Ten Skills Every Husband Must Develop to Love His Wife Well* by Darrin & Amie Patrick. It's also simple and straightforward and while it's not as profound as *Love & Respect* (Eggerichs) it's a really good teacher especially if you'd benefit from "how-to" specifics of loving your wife.

Finally, I suppose you could call it fun reading. (since I'm a new dog person) I read *How Dogs Love Us: A Neuroscientist and His Adopted Dog Decode the Canine Brain* by Gregory Berns. The author is a thoroughgoing atheist, scientific naturalist, so I'm not recommending it, but it was intriguing to find out what an MRI brain scan of a dog reveals. In short, there's a reason people like dogs and dogs like people. Dogs have high social intelligence (higher than a lot of people) and tend to be really skilled at going along to get along, especially with humans. They exercise a lot of empathy. I think that's pretty cool and a little rebuke: surely a Christian can excel a dog in empathy.



Practical tip:

Where do you get the finest books for the best price? At the WRPC Library, or on the web at www.heritagebooks.org

Missions Report: The Lord is Building His Church!

Joe Harris, Missions Committee Chair

Here at Woodruff Road, we have a long history of helping to plant and support new churches, both here in the US and abroad in many countries. Our main emphasis is to support church plants and church planting pastors who are starting new Reformed, Presbyterian churches, or even those reviving stagnant older churches by bringing Gospel renewal and the Reformed faith to these older congregations.

Over the last several years, we have prayerfully and financially supported two new church plants that have been close to our hearts, Redeemer PCA in Sylva, NC and Christ Church PCA in Charleston, SC. Both churches, through the grace of our Lord, have seen tremendous growth and maturity over the last couple of years. They have been so blessed that each church is now fully particularized, and is no longer in need of our financial support. We rejoice that the Lord has used our efforts to build His Church in these two cities.

Yet, as we rejoice in these two church planting successes, we must continue to pray for them and for their pastors and ordained leadership. We also must pray for new church planting opportunities, and I am glad to report that we have immediately started to support a new church plant here in the Greenville area, Emmanuel Upstate Mission Church.

Emmanuel Upstate PCA is a reformed church plant that embraces the multi-ethnicity of the Greenville area, and wishes to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with brothers and sisters of different ethnic origins while pursuing integration within the community. Sunday services and fellowship meetings will be bilingual (English-Spanish), and will offer a Reformed liturgy with a multi-ethnic style. As Emmanuel grew out of the Hispanic ministry at

Mitchell Road PCA, Pastor William Castro (a GPTS graduate) has been called as Pastor of this church plant.

This is an exciting church plant, and we are joyful that the Lord has blessed us with this opportunity to partner with them as they seek to build His church by crossing ethnic lines and by penetrating the cultural barriers in our community. Please be in prayer for Pastor Castro, for the leadership of this church, and for the provisional Session that will provide oversight. Also, prayerfully consider how you may support them financially or with your time. Emmanuel is seeking a part time pastoral/administrative assistant, and this would be a good way to contribute your time and skills in support of the church plant. If you are interested in this position, please contact the WRPC church office.

Please visit emmanuelupstate.org for more information.



Women in the Church

Linda Wade, WIC President

The women of WRPC have been busy in pursuit of not just doing, but doing good things.

On April 1st, the Ladies Conference was held at Spaulding Farm Club House. The WIC Conference Committee consisting of Brenda McConkey, Diana Bekins, Sandy Graham, Jean Johnson, Suzanne Patterson, Monique Skellenger and Lynda Speakman, did a marvelous job orchestrating a lovely experience starting with the floral decorations, the Continental breakfast, the catered lunch, and fabulous door prizes. We had special music provided by Megan Conner, Danielle Roberts, and Isabella Skellenger. They set the stage for a time of intimate and sweet fellowship.

The topic of this year's conference was "Women on the Frontlines of Life." Our speaker this year was our very own Mr. Jim Hufstetler. He opened the scriptures, teaching us to "Fight the Good Fight" from I Timothy 6: 12. He instructed us that the Christian life is a fight, but that it is a **good fight**. The only way that we can do this is through a life of faith. We have to put on the whole armor of God daily that we may withstand the wiles of the Devil. We must do this daily, starting when we arise from our slumber and be good soldiers obeying God's commands and being prepared for whatever comes our way. One practical application of this is we are to fight the good fight of faith in our vocations. In whatever stage of life we find ourselves, we are to work as unto the Lord and be prepared for those difficult things that are thrown into our lives by using the armor given to us, so that we may withstand, and having done all, to stand.

The Ladies Tea is on May 13th from 10:30-12:00 noon. Ladies, this is your opportunity to put on your finery and bring out your lovely china! If you would like to hostess a table let me know.

There will be a sign-up in the narthex to let us know who is coming. Also, there will also be a sign-up sheet for refreshments. There will not be a charge for this fun event, but we will need to have you sign-up by May 7th to make this memorable event.

May the peace of Christ abide in you.

WRPC Council:

Linda Lee Wade, President

Betty Smith, Vice-President

Penny Carlson, Secretary

Melissa Sicko, Treasurer

Tonya Scott, Historian

Let the Redeemed of the Lord, Say So! Psalm 54:10

A Personal Testimony from Shannon Hughes



I was born and raised in Spartanburg, SC. I attended a small Baptist church with my parents and sisters. My Mother made sure we attended on a regular basis, for which I am very thankful. I was baptized as a preteen in this same Baptist church, Bethany Baptist, along with my twin sister, Shawn. My Grandparents attended this church as well and were influential in my life. I am grateful that the Lord called me to Himself while I was still a young child even though I was not always the most faithful follower through my high school and college years.

While I was a sophomore in high school my parents made the decision to divorce. While I look back at this time, I am thankful that the Lord was gracious to me to surround me with godly leaders in my life. I was on the Spartanburg High School cross country and track teams. This, and my school work, took a great deal of my time and energy so that I wasn't consumed by what was going on in my home life. My high school coach was a father figure to me throughout high school, college, and even today. I also had godly Grandfathers who were wonderful examples of what a husband and father should be.

In 1990, I entered The Citadel as a freshman cadet which, in itself, was an interesting endeavor. Throughout my time at The Citadel, I was far from being a faithful servant of Christ. I did not attend a church regularly and focused on the things of this world. I was on the track and cross country teams, was busy with school work and used these things as an excuse to stray from the Lord. While my time at The Citadel was coming to a close, I felt an emptiness that I knew only the Lord could fill with His presence. After graduation, I moved back to Spartanburg, SC and started trying to find a church home. After much

searching, I joined First Presbyterian Church in Spartanburg.

In 2002, I met my wife, Heather. We married in 2005 and still attended First Presbyterian Church in Spartanburg. Looking back at this time spent in Spartanburg, we realize that we attended this church but we were not growing spiritually. We moved to Simpsonville in 2006 and started looking for a new church home. We came to Woodruff Road and, by the grace of God, joined in 2007 (after almost three rounds of the intro to WRPC class!). I truly started understanding God's Word and all of the biblical truths I had heard all my life. I have so far to go, but I know that I have become a much more mature Christian from my time here at WRPC. We are so thankful for the godly teaching that we receive, but also the true fellowship we have with our brothers and sisters in Christ. In 2008, God blessed us with our daughter Campbell and in 2011 He saw fit to bless us again with our son Caleb. I am so thankful that they are growing up hearing sound doctrine at WRPC. What a blessing!

As I look back over my life, I am thankful that God never forsakes His children as He has promised. What a gracious Father we serve.

"Be strong and of good courage, do not fear nor be afraid of them; for the Lord your God, He is the One who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you."

Deuteronomy 31:6

Minutes of the Session

Your elders met for monthly meetings and for called meetings to receive new members and met jointly with the Diaconate in March. In addition to our monthly meetings, we visited and shepherded members of WRPC, led the congregation in prayer, participated in Session and Presbytery committee meetings, and taught Sunday School classes. We are committed to serving you and building God's kingdom here at WRPC. We ask you to pray for the Lord and King of the Church to raise up more ruling elders to be nominated this December and elected in 2018.

Administration

Received regular reports from the Treasurer on church finances. Approved the FY 2017 budget, with expenditures of \$1,199,855 and anticipated general fund revenues of \$1,200,000. Approved the wedding of Alexander Skellenger and Kendra Kortie for February 3, 2017. Approved the payment of expenses for Steve Richman to attend the 45th General Assembly as a commissioner from his home church in Ohio. Approved the following policy: "Instrumentalists and vocalists performing for WRPC on the Lord's Day will not receive paid compensation from WRPC or any other source except a regular pianist and/or organist who are employees of WRPC and substitutes for piano and/or organ for regular worship and special worship services on the Lord's Day. When a substitute must be secured, the Music Committee will give priority to the use of an unpaid volunteer member of WRPC over a paid substitute. Exceptions must be approved by the Session." Began long range planning to address capacity issues in the current sanctuary. Conducted annual reviews of the pastor and each assistant pastor. Approved the placement of a permanent sign by GCA on the front side of the property. Adopted a resolution of thanks to RE Joe Lambert for his service.

Christian Education

Approved TE Dodds' continued leadership of Good News Club and renewal of the ministry for the 2017-18 school year.

Presbytery and General Assembly

Elected RE Marcinak, RE Johnson, and EE Bill Mayfield as commissioners to the winter meeting of

Calvary Presbytery. Received a report on the winter meeting of Calvary Presbytery. Approved a request to host Calvary Presbytery's winter meeting in January, 2018. Passed two overtures to presbytery, requesting presbytery to overture General Assembly to discharge the Ad Interim Committee on Women's Ministry and to end long range planning functions of the Cooperative Ministries Committee. Elected RE Johnson, RE Marcinak, and RE Scott as commissioners to the 45th General Assembly; all pastors will also attend. Elected RE Johnson, RE Harris, and RE Scott as commissioners to the spring meeting of Calvary Presbytery.

Missions

Approved a special offering for the Peru mission to bring relief from severe flooding.

Men's/Women's Ministry

Approved Lori Sealy and Megan Hill, respectively, as speakers at the 2018 and 2019 WIC conferences. Approved non-budgeted spending of \$1500 for the Men's Retreat at Ridge Haven.

Membership

Received Mrs. Barbara Holmes as a communing member by transfer of letter from Christ the King PCA, Seminole, Florida. Received Miss Wendy Mauritz as a communing member by transfer of letter from Covenant Community OPC, Taylors, SC. Dismissed Mr. and Mrs. Ben Wade to Hilton Head PCA, Hilton Head, SC. Received Mr. and Mrs. Zack Groff, along with non-communing children Abigail, Judah, and Zoe, by transfer of letter from Crossroads Community PCA, Upper Darby, PA. Removed Andrew Lee Barry from the roll after receiving communication that he has joined with Second Presbyterian Church, Memphis, TN, another branch of the visible church. Dismissed Mr. and Mrs. Ed Murdock to Trinity PCA, Spartanburg.

Shepherding Matters

Reassigned members of the Lambert group to be shepherded by the pastor and assistant pastors. The Session also spent time in prayer for the flock at its regular meetings and thanked God for his blessings on our members. In keeping with James 5, the Session met with Mary Green and Susan Reeves to pray with them in advance of their respective surgeries.

Pulpit Planner for May-June 2017

AM Sermons

- May 7** Pastor Robbins continues the exposition of 1 Timothy by preaching how to *"Withdraw from the Divisive Man"* from 1 Timothy 6:3-5
- May 14** *"Godliness with Contentment"* will be the subject of Pastor Robbins' exposition of 1 Timothy 6:6-10
- May 21** 1 Timothy 6:11-16 is in view as Pastor Robbins proclaims how to *"Fight the Good Fight of Faith"*
- May 28** Pastor Robbins preaches *"A Word to the Wealthy"* from 1 Timothy 6:17-19
- June 4** Pastor Robbins concludes the exposition of 1 Timothy by explaining *"How to Stray"* from 1 Timothy 6:20-21
- June 11** Special Communion Sermon by Pastor Robbins, then we will celebrate the Lord's Supper together.
- June 18** Pastor Anderson will be preaching on Ecclesiastes 3:1-15, *"The Limits of Time: Accepting the Seasons"*
- June 25** Pastor Robbins begins a series through 2 Timothy by preaching on *"Serving God with a Pure Conscience"* from 2 Timothy 1:1-4

PM Sermons

- May 7** Pastor Robbins continues in the series on love by examining *"The Love of Christ for the Believer"*
- May 14** More on love tonight *"The Believer's Responsive Love for Christ."* The Sacrament of Communion will be celebrated.
- May 21** *"The Christian's Love for Fellow Believers"* will be in our sights as Pastor Robbins continues our Spring mini-series
- May 28** Pastor Robbins continues to focus on love, as he examines *"The Love of Christian Husbands and Wives for Each Other"*
- June 4** *"The Love of Christian Parents for Their Children"* is in view as Pastor Robbins continues to mine the biblical teaching on love.
- June 11** Pastor Robbins concludes the series on love by looking at the most difficult type of love, *"The Christian's Love for their Enemy"*
- June 18** Pastoral Intern Steve Richman will be preaching on *"Compassionate Prayer"*
- June 25** Pastor Dodds preaches on Mark 13:1-13, *"Signs of the Times"*

Treasurer's Report

WRPC uses a fiscal year for budgeting purposes that runs April through March.

Our budgeted revenues and expenses for 2016/2017 were \$1,145,000 and we were better by \$47,000.

Some other important numbers to report is that our total cash on hand is \$323,000, which is 3 months of operating expenses. Also, our renovation loan balance is \$678,000. If you have any questions about our finances, just ask!

Below is the End of the Year financials for March 2017.

WOODRUFF ROAD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH					
March 2017 FINAL					
Accounts	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	YTD Budget Remaining	Fav / Unfav	Total Year Budget
Total Revenues	\$ 1,178,716	\$ 1,145,000	\$ (33,716)	Fav	\$ 1,145,000
Total PERSONNEL	\$ 572,228	\$ 568,851	\$ (5,473)	Unfav	\$ 568,851
Total IN HOUSE MINISTRIES	\$ 57,481	\$ 100,335	\$ 6,854	Fav	\$ 100,335
Total FACILITY AND OPERATIONS	\$ 259,411	\$ 266,085	\$ 6,674	Fav	\$ 266,085
Total MISSIONS	\$ 236,996	\$ 206,225	\$ 5,229	Fav	\$ 206,225
Total Expenses	\$ 1,126,115	\$ 1,141,496	\$ 13,285	Fav	\$ 1,141,496
Net Total	\$ 52,601	\$ 3,504	\$ (47,001)	Fav	\$ 3,504

The deacons have several ongoing and upcoming projects on our building and are always open to designated giving for these projects. Currently, the deacons, along with some help from GCA, are purchasing new playground equipment. Lord willing, this should be procured and installed before VBS! As always if you are looking to serve and want to find a place to plug in and help out with our facilities, ask a deacon, and we can point you in the right direction. Some of the ongoing projects and needed items are listed below:

- ◆ New playground Equipment
- ◆ Steeple Repair
- ◆ New choir chairs
- ◆ New floor cleaning machine

*“Children, obey your parents in the Lord,
for this is right. ‘Honor your father and
mother,’ which is the first commandment
with promise: ‘that it may be well with you
and you may live long on the earth.’*

*And you, fathers, do not provoke your
children to wrath, but bring them up in the
training and admonition of the Lord.”*

EPHESIANS 6:1-4



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The radio program *The Presbyterian Pulpit* airs at 9:00 AM every Sunday on 106.3 FM and 1330 or 950 AM.