



# COVENANT

## Bible-Presbyterian Church

*Preaching Christ for His Glory and His Kingdom*

### Order of Worship — 1 January 2017

**Theme for the Year: "What Would Jesus Say About Your Church?" (Rev 3:22)**

Prelude *The Lord Is in His Holy Temple*

Call to Worship

\*Opening Hymn 520 - *Another Year Is Dawning*

\*Invocation & †*Gloria Patri*

Scripture Reading 1 Peter 2:1-12

The Lord's Supper

Hymn 314 - *I Am Thine, O Lord*

Hymn TP 118:17-29

Tithes & Offering

\*\*†*Doxology* & Offertory Prayer

Scripture Reading Acts 4:1-12

Hymn 268 - *How Firm a Foundation*

Confession of Faith & Pastoral Prayer

Sermon "Opposition Is Bound to Happen"

\*Closing Hymn 378 - *Stand Up for Jesus*

\*Benediction & *Threefold Amen*

Silent Prayer & Postlude

Announcements

*\*Congregation standing*

†Glory be to the Father, and to the Son;  
And to the Holy Ghost;  
As it was in the beginning,  
Is now and ever shall be:  
World without end. Amen.

††Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise him, all creatures here below;  
Praise him above, ye heavenly host;  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.  
Amen.

Covenant Bible-Presbyterian Church meets every Sunday at 10:00 am  
at 47 Davis Road, Attadale, Western Australia

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## A Happily Contented New Year

### "Happy New Year"

During this time of the year, we often say "Happy New Year." It comes off our tongues quite glibly. It is second nature to us.

The checkout clerks in the supermarkets will give you your change and say, "Have a Happy New Year." You reply back, "Have a great one."

A great what? A great 2017.

### *Losses in 2016*

This is especially so when this past year, 2016, hasn't been especially great for many people. It depends whom you speak to, of course.

For a great host of people, Brexit was the worst thing that could happen to the United Kingdom. For others, it was the best decision toward national sovereignty.

For a great host of people, Trump becoming president signaled the start of a dangerous and quasi-fascist administration. For others, it was the means to make America great again.

2016, for popular culture, was a very bad year - it saw the deaths of a significant number of pop icons. Every generation was affected.

Young people mourned at the noxious news that Alan Rickman had died. 40 somethings mourned the death of star Carrie Fisher.

And those in their twilight years felt the sudden downpour of their own mortality with the passing of Debbie Reynolds.

2016, for job security, was also very bad. Many faced and face job losses; and others have already lost their jobs. Here in WA, the bane of the mining industry has affected other industries.

So perhaps there is a bit more hope and aspiration when we utter "Happy New Year" at this turn of the year. But many still may fear what 2017 will bring.

### "Fear Not"

But as we know, God frequently says in his word, "Fear not." In fact, he says it over 80 times.

And the reason he says it is because despite the circumstances around us, we can be happy.

And we all know that happiness is not based on happy circumstances.

After all, Jesus said that those who are the happiest are those who are poor in spirit and those who mourn.

### *Contentment Must Be Learned*

But this happiness - this contentment - must be learned. It is not automatic. It is gained over time.

Paul said in Philippians 4:11 - "*for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.*"

Paul had learned it. Why did he have to learn it? Because contentment doesn't come naturally to us.

If it doesn't come naturally to us, why couldn't God simply gift it to us? God doesn't gift it to us because contentment cannot be gained that way.

And learning contentment is a mark of Christian growth.

For that matter, why doesn't God simply make us mature and grow us up from spiritual immaturity to spiritual maturity in an instant? That is not God's way.

God's aim is not to make us happy; it is to make us holy. And when we struggle against the flesh to be holy, we will find true happiness.

In order for a baby to grow up, part of the growing process is to be weaned. To be weaned is to have something removed from your life which you thought you needed.

And God is daily weaning us from the things of the world so that we would know we need only him.

## *Contentment Is Not Rooted in the World*

Why are we not contented?

We are not happy in our jobs, because our happiness is based on job satisfaction. We may not be happy in church, because our happiness is based on how perfect the church is. We may not be happy in our family, because our husband/wife/father/mother/children/sibling is not loving enough.

We are not contented because we are never satisfied. Instead of being weaned from the world, we are wedded to it.

Paul said in Philippians 4:12 - *"I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need."*

Paul does not mean that poverty is better than prosperity. Both can be good or bad. But it is true that prosperity leads us quicker into destruction than poverty.

Jesus said in Mathew 19 - *"It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."* Paul said in 1 Timothy 6 - *"But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts."*

## *Contentment Is Rooted in Christ*

God has ordained our lives - every advancement and every set back. Psalm 139:16 tells us that God saw us before

we were born, and all our days were ordained even before we lived them.

Because God loves us and is in control of every day of our lives, our contentment should be rooted in him. These advancements and set backs are in his will for us.

That's why Paul could learn to be content - whatever the circumstances and situation. He knew that nothing happened by chance.

God has also given us strength to do his will - whether in advancement or set back. Philippians 4:13 - *"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."*

Christ strengthens us to face the challenges in life. Paul managed to live above his circumstances. He disciplined his heart to surrender to God.

He embraced his circumstances and not merely accepted them. This is because to Paul, the Christ who ordained his life was enough to sustain his life through these times of ordained trials.

Will 2017 be better? Will your family be better? Will church be more perfect? Will your job be more satisfying?

Being a bit facetious - who cares? Christ is there and has ordained it - and he cares! Whatever happens therefore, we can be content and we need not fear the future.

~ Pastor



## **Westminster Larger Catechism**

Q. 117. How is the Sabbath or Lord's Day to be sanctified?

A. The Sabbath or Lord's Day is to be sanctified by an holy resting all that day, not only from such works as are at all times sinful, but even from such worldly employments and recreations as are on other days lawful; and making it our delight to spend the whole time (except so much of it as is to be taken up in works of necessity and mercy,) in the public and private exercises of God's worship: and, to that end, we are to prepare our hearts, and with such foresight, diligence, and moderation, to dispose, and seasonably to dispatch our worldly business, that we may be the more free and fit for the duties of that day.

# Worship Service Roster

Service	This Week (1.1.17)	Next Week (8.1.17)
Speaker	Mark Chen	Peter Chng
Worship Leader	Mark Chen	Johnson Lim
Pianist	Edward Lim	Eugene Lim
Welcomers	John & Adeline Ng	Josephine Austin & Wendy Gong
Offering Stewards	Chris Budiman*, David Pang* Micah Chiang, David Lim	Vincent Chiu*, Steven Lim* Rex Sriharan, Ian Read
Usher	Meryl Woo	Jemima Ng, Jerome Ng
Kitchen Duties	Nancy Lim*, Val Withnell Jesslyn Leow, Florence Orchard	Carmel Sriharan*, Sally Tan Chris Budiman
<i>Prayer Meeting</i>	<i>6 January 2017</i>	<i>13 January 2017</i>
Facilitator	Mark Chen	Jimmy Orchard
Pianist	Nancy Lim	Jerome Ng

## Announcements

1. A warm welcome to all worshipers. May God richly bless you. Please stay behind after the service for fellowship and tea.
2. We are celebrating the Lord's Supper today. First time visitors wishing to partake the Lord's Supper should see an elder before the service.
3. Next week's messenger is Pastor Peter Chng. He will be speaking on the topic "Soldier On!" (Joshua 1:1-9).
4. Pastor will be away in India for an exploratory mission trip from 7-18 January.
5. Teens Camp (25-26 January 2017). Theme: "Dare to Follow Christ."
6. Junior Worship is in recess until 15 January 2017. Parents, please prepare your children to worship in the main service.
7. Daily Manna and Daily Manna Junior (Jan-Mar 2017) are available in the foyer.
8. Bible Conference 2017. Dates: 18-21 April 2017. Speaker: Dr Bob Jones III. Venue: Bayview Geopraphe Resort. Please register with Ken and Jackie Hong.

Appointments for the Week	Last Lord's Day Tithes & Offering, & Attendance
FRI 7:45 pm Prayer Meeting  SUN 9:00 am Sunday School  10:00 am Worship Service	<i>General Fund - \$2,471.20. Missions Fund - \$140.00. Building Fund - \$500.00 (#506 - \$500.00). Total Tithes &amp; Offering - \$3,111.20. Attendance - 120.</i>

Building Fund to Date	
Available Building Fund	\$80,198.93
Last Week's Collection	\$500.00
Total	\$80,698.93
<i>Outstanding Loan</i>	<i>- \$416,000.00</i>
<i>Amount Still Needed</i>	<i>\$335,301.07</i>
Building Fund Account:	Covenant Bible-Presbyterian Church
	(Westpac Bank, Applecross)
	BSB: 036-031 Acct: 316969
	SWIFT: WPACAU2S

Elders: **Mark Chen (Pastor)** 6114 4242, 0415 932 373. **Jimmy Orchard** 0413 274 407.  
 Deacons: **Ken Chong** 0402 553 313. **LH Chua** 0435 601 373. **Johnson Lim** 0402 145 682. **Jacob Woo** 0421 212 206.

## Opposition Is Bound to Happen

Acts 4:1-12

Many resolutions if kept will lead to good consequences. Many spiritual resolutions - such as being godlier or more obvious as a Christian - will lead to persecution. Many of us are very clever at blending in. We are only godly and Christian to a point where it is tolerated by others. But the gospel leads to salvation as well as persecution. Opposition will come to those truly godly.

1. Opposition Will Always Be Angry and Powerful
  - a. Who were those that opposed the apostles?
    - i. Priests
    - ii. Captain of the temple
    - iii. Sadducees
  - b. Why did they oppose the apostles?
    - i. Grieved at the teaching
    - ii. Afraid of losing power
  - c. What did they do to oppose the apostles?
    - i. Imprisoned
    - ii. Interrogated
2. We Must Continue to Witness Tenaciously
  - a. They were bold
  - b. They answered the charges
  - c. They exposed their guilt
  - d. They demolished their claim to power

Have we redefined our mission as Christians to be success in life, adequate service in church, and convenient witnessing for Christ? Where is the opposition that should come to those truly godly?

### Questions for Reflection:

1. What fear do you have of opposition that will come when you preach the gospel and live a godly life that speaks against ungodliness?
2. What opposition have you given when your "powers" have been opposed by others? Has it been contrary to the gospel? What does this say about you?
3. Do you agree that we have too much spiritual bandwidth left?