

BELL TOWER NEWS

College Hill Presbyterian Church – JUNE 2025

513.541.5676 | 5742 Hamilton Ave. | Cincinnati, OH 45224 | chpc.org

SUMMER
time

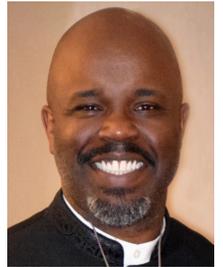
and the livin' is easy

The song may go "Summertime and the livin' is easy..." but at College Hill Presbyterian Church and in the College Hill Community, there is a lot going on! Jesus is always seeking to express God's love to others through his followers, the Church. In addition, people are vacationing, visiting and adding to the fun. This issue of the *Bell Tower News* is filled with pictures, and requests for prayer support and help. Look for the online links to the CHPC.org website for more information, registrations, reservations, and ways to meet new people here in the neighborhood and around the world. Join in! This could be your BEST SUMMER EVER!

CHPC's current preaching series is based on the book *Practicing The Way: Be With Jesus. Become Like Him. Do As He Did*, by John Mark Comer. This article addresses the firm foundation for churches and individuals: Who do you say I am?

A FIRM FOUNDATION

BY LORENZO R. SMALL, Lead Pastor
Battle Creek MI Presbyterian Church.



Now, when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do men say that the Son of man is?" And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." He said to them, "BUT WHO DO YOU SAY THAT I AM?" Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jona! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the powers of hell shall not prevail against it.—Matthew 16:13-18a

First, It Was Not Coincidental that Jesus Asked This Question In Caesarea Philippi.

In Jesus's day, Caesarea Philippi was a significant and bustling city located at the foot of Mount Hermon. It was known for its religious and cultural diversity. Originally a center for the worship of the Greek god Pan, the city was home to a variety of temples. . . .and shrines dedicated to various deities reflecting a mix of pagan traditions. Caesarea Philippi would not have been an easy place to claim allegiance to the true God, the God of our Lord Jesus the Christ. And it certainly would not have been friendly to individuals claiming Jesus as Lord.

I can only imagine the temptation in such a place to temper the message of Christ. There would have been temptations

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 4)



THE 2025 HONDURAS TEAM (L-R): JILL COUNCIL (NOT GOING, SLP TRAINER), KELLEY FORESMAN, ELIZABETH MOCK, PAT DOLLARD, DAN & REBECCA OTT, COLIN SORENSEN (SLP INTERN/UC STUDENT), TEKOA SMITH (TURNING POINT MINISTRY), CLAIRE SNYDER, JENNY SASSON (SLP EMPLOYEE), KEVIN SASSON (NOT GOING, SLP EXEC. DIRECTOR), SAMUEL MOCK (CHPC ASST. PASTOR). ABSENT: ALLEN RAINEY, SUSAN JOHNSON, AND TIM SORENSON

MANY SONLIGHT POWER TRIPS BEGIN WITH AN INVITATION:

“You don’t have to be an electrical engineer. You don’t have to know DC from AC or an inverter from a charge controller. Bring your heart for service and willingness to learn. We’ll train you on the basics and help you join a mission team or organize one of your own. Many SonLight Power (SLP) trips are ideal for practically all skills and abilities. Whether you’re interested in helping build a new solar power system to equip people in need, or participating in children’s ministry activities, there’s a spot for you. SonLight Power trips impact the lives of those served in profound, lasting ways. They also impact the lives of those who serve.”

JUNE 7-14, a Team sponsored through the CHPC’s Mission Out-

reach and lead by Assistant Pastor Samuel Mock will travel to Juticalpa, Honduras in Central America, (SEE MAPS) about 1700 miles by air and car. There the American team will partner with SLP’s Honduras team to transform lives with love and solar power.

CHPCer Allen Rainey envisioned this solar ministry concept in 2002. His vision has become an international reality! For excellent information, go to www.sonlightpower.org (don’t miss the archives).

The *Bell Tower News* asked this year’s team to share two things:

- 1.) WHAT ARE YOU EXCITED ABOUT?
- 2.) HOW CAN READERS PRAY FOR YOU ALL?

Here are the Team’s replies:

I AM EXCITED ABOUT...

Allen Rainey—as Founder of SonLight Power (SLP) 25 years

ago, Allen is excited to be a part of another CHPC team serving in Honduras. He says, “Karla, my new wife of 7 months, will be with us. My prayer is that God will use us for His glory, and that Karla will be blessed by experiencing to what I have dedicated my life. I know most of the Honduran and American team members. May the Lord bless their faithfulness to serve my second home and country. I am also excited that Jenny Sasson will be our spiritual leader and head of the *Fiesta Team*.”



Pat Dollard—the opportunity to help bring light to dark places. My prayer request is for my body to hold up on the bumpy roads.

Kelley Foresman—seeing God work in and through us and in and (CONTINUED)

I AM EXCITED ABOUT... (CONTINUED FROM THE PREVIOUS PAGE)

Foresman—through the people of Honduras with whom we serve and interact. Pray that we would be in tune with and have eyes to see the work that God is already doing in the hearts of those we serve and also for our health and safety as we travel.

Elizabeth Mock—seeing how God moves in our team and the people of Honduras. Pray that everyone stays healthy and safe.

Samuel Mock—having a chance to go back and serve the wonderful people of Honduras. I spent the trip last fall on the solar panel team. This time I'll be on the fiesta team so I can experience a new way of serving and building relationships. Pray for the health and safety of our team. Pray God would do miraculous works in and through us and that God's name would be glorified.

Dan Ott—seeing a different part of the world where life is lived differently from what I am used to and to serve next to new and old friends. Pray for health, travel logistics, and Christ's love to be felt throughout our time away!

Rebecca Ott—getting to see SLP's mission come to life by experiencing an installation and a Fiesta firsthand. I am also happy to be giving back to a country that has been important in my profession. Pray that, as a team, we would be in tune with the Holy Spirit and be guided by his leading and that many hearts, including ours, would be changed.

Colin Sorensen (SLP INTERN/ U.C. STUDENT)—going to a brand new place and be around a way of living I have never experienced—it will

be cool and eye opening to be with people who do not have electricity, which I so often take for granted. Pray that all goes smoothly on the installations and that the systems last a long time.

Tekoa Jackson (TURNING POINT MINISTRY)—being able to serve the people of Honduras, be a positive impact on someone's life, and share the love of Jesus Christ. I am looking forward to learning about the people, their culture and environment, plus working with the U.S. team alongside the Honduras team. May God develop a more humble and grateful spirit within me due to this experience. Pray for our safety as we travel and enable us to enjoy ourselves and find joy as we develop new relationships. I'm praying that the Honduran people will encounter Jesus Christ through us and their lives will be radically changed. I'm personally looking forward to learning something new that I can take with me, moving forward in my life.

Jenny Sasson (SONLIGHT POWER STAFF)—being with the people of Honduras and sharing with them the Light of Christ. I want to learn new things through them. Pray for my kids and husband (Kevin Sasson, Sonlight Power's Executive Director) as I am away from home, serving in Honduras. My

children are Abby, Sophia, and Naomi. Please pray for the U.S. and Honduran teams as well as the communities we will be serving for unity, safety, fun, and hope in Jesus.

Susan Johnson (NOT PICTURED)—this opportunity God has allowed me to participate in. I can't wait to see how he uses me and grows me during this trip. Pray that God watch over our team while we travel and during our time in Honduras.

Tim Sorensen (NOT PICTURED)—serving God with you all. For me, the trip is a mix of family, old friends, ministry partners, and new friends. It is an exciting mix! And we will be in a place that is likely to stretch my understanding of what life is like, what it means to be a flourishing human, and different ways to follow Christ. Pray that we serve the communities well.

**MAY THE TEAM FULLY REFLECT
THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD
—JESUS!**



FUND RAISER FOR SONLIGHT POWER
Brinks Brewing Co, 5905 Hamilton Ave., 45224
Thurs., June 19, 5:30-10 PM 10% of sales for SLP.



A FIRM FOUNDATION

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

to find ways to harmonize Christ's claim with the claims of all the other gods. In a place like this, I imagine the majority would have been okay with generalized god-talk. But they would not have been as comfortable with talk about Jesus. Yet it was in the place of competing gods and religious decadence that Jesus raises this critical question—as if to say to his disciples, “Who will it be and what will it be? Will it be them or me? What they say or what I say?”

And make no mistake about it, Jesus is still posing this question, and we are constantly answering by the choices we make as individuals and collectively as a church.

And when our answers lead anyone to any conclusion about Jesus other

than him being the Christ, the Son of the Living God, we answer wrongly. Who do you say that I am? Do our answers, our theology, our allegiances, our activity lead us and others to conclude that we answer like Peter and in doing so are established upon a firm foundation? Brothers and sisters, we are not far removed from the setting of Caesarea Philippi.

“Now Moses was faithful in all God's house as a servant, to testify to the things that were to be spoken later, but Christ is faithful over God's house as a son. And we are his house, if indeed we hold fast our confidence and our boasting in our hope” (Heb 3:5-6). “But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love

you had at first. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent” (Rev. 2:4-5).

Second, To Be the Church We Must Be Sure in Our Profession of Faith

I want each of us to seriously consider our view of Jesus and what informs and/or has shaped that view, whether it is Scripture or some other source.

The rock that Jesus assures Peter that his church will be built upon is Peter's profession that JESUS is the Christ, the Son of the Living God. This remains the rock! We may not be sure about many things scripturally, but we must be sure about who Jesus is. We cannot and we must not waver on this point.

Though down through the history of man, some

saw him as a lunatic, some a charlatan, some nothing more than a good man, some a good moral example, and others not real at all, we know him to be the Christ, the Son of the living God. We know him to be the lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world. We know him to be the one who died on a hill called Calvary. We know him to be the one who rose on the third day. We know him to be the one who has ascended into heaven and is seated on the right hand of God the Father Almighty. We know him to be the way, the truth, and the life. We know him to be the one who one day will return in all his glory for

How others see Jesus should have zero bearing upon our profession of faith..

his church. And we know these things to be true not because we say so, but because scripture declares it as so and by God's Holy Spirit, we know scripture to be true.

To be the church, we must be sure, we must be resolute, in our profession of faith for only then do we find ourselves established upon a firm foundation. Brothers and sisters, Jesus is asking us, “Who do you say that I am?” (Matt. 16:13). “You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am” (John 13:13). “You know that when you were pagans you were led astray to mute idols, however you were led. Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says ‘Jesus is accursed!’ and no one can say ‘Jesus is Lord’ except in the Holy Spirit” (1 Cor 12:2-3).

Third, The Church Is Not Dying. It Never Will Die Nor Can It. Buildings may close. Ministries may struggle to thrive. Resources may dwindle, but the church of our Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ is alive and well and will remain so. Let us never confuse what we build to be that which Christ, alone, has built. “And on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” Confusion may abound, but the church will stand. Divisions may grow wider, but the church will stand. Pastors may fall and congregations may shrink, but the church will stand. Bad theology and doctrine may abound, but the church will still stand. It's influence in the public square may wane, but the church will stand.

Nor can it for it is built upon

a firm foundation. The question we are left with is this, “Are WE on the firm foundation?” In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

No the church is not dying. It never will.

© USED BY PERMISSION. THIS ARTICLE IS FROM A SERMON PREACHED BY REV. LORENZO R. SMALL. THE FULL TEXT IS AVAILABLE AT www.theologymatters.com/articles/ [December 2, 2024].



GET HIGH ON THE HILL!

Happenings in College Hill and how you can be involved.

The streetscape of "The Avenue" of College Hill is changing. It's a walkable designated *Entertainment Zone*. There are new businesses, restaurants, and lots of special events and evenings of free music. Buildings like the Hollywood Theater are being renewed. Pray for and support these groups making a big difference in the community.

- **CHCURC** is a volunteer organization with oversight for the Hamilton Avenue corridor development. For details go online to chcurc.org.

- **College Hill Forum** keeps residents up to date on changes in the community, relations with police/fire and public safety, new businesses, upcoming fun event, etc. It also advocates for C.H. needs with the County and City. Meetings are at 7 PM on the 4th Tuesday of each month at the CH Recreation Center on 5545 Belmont Ave. Anyone is welcome to attend.

- **CH Gardeners** meets the first Tuesday of the month at 7 PM in The Parlor of College Hill Presbyterian. Help beautify the community and get help with your own garden. email collegehillgardeners@gmail.com.

WHEN YOUR AVOCATION BECOMES GOD'S MISSION

JOE ROBINSON - It began as a hobby to improve his strength, personal discipline, and character. Then God nudged him to pass on his skill in Karate—Korean Tang Soo Karate, to be exact. As a Grand Master 7th degree, he is more than qualified to equip men and women, teens and adults in this martial art.

Joe began teaching karate at CHPC in November 1999. He called his group "Strike Force." Now, he trains on Mondays and Thursdays, 6:30-8 PM. His students use the Jesus University ballet practice space below the Sanctuary.

Pictured are Joe (black sash), Daniel Williams (red sash), and Landon Norman (wearing black). Daniel is being prepared for a major skill evaluation the evening of June 23rd, a test for a 1st degree Black belt. Pray for Daniel to do well. For more information email: jrobinson1865@yahoo.com



SERIOUS PUPPY LOVE

AMY HUDOBA says: "I was recently certified for the Animal Assisted Crisis Response (AACR) Team through Pet Partners Int'l, Seattle, WA. This involved intense study and testing on my part. "Chipper," my Bedlington Terrier, was already a registered pet therapy dog. He didn't have to do anything additional.

Our debut was to visit the Hamilton County Communications Center on Hamilton Ave. to visit with the Dispatchers who were recently impacted by the tragic death of Hamilton County Deputy, Larry Henderson. "Our job" is to provide comfort to those affected by natural, human-caused, or technological disasters. AACR does

not take the place of professional interventions, but we offers support in the immediate wake of a crisis through listening, empathy, and sharing the unconditional love of therapy dogs." *This is a major commitment by Amy & Chipper.* PRAY FOR THEM!

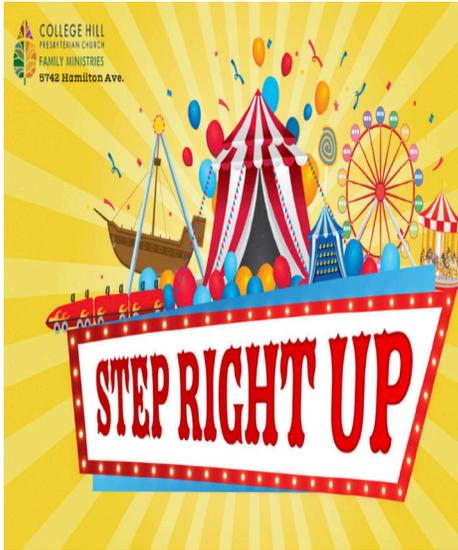


Chipper and Amy's debut providing comfort in crisis.

Bell Tower News article deadline is JUNE 15th

Submit an article or photo of an event. Request more information? Contact the BTN Editor, Sam Stare 513-382-5902 or email starecvg@aol.com

SUMMER FUN AT CHPC



CHPC Connections Camp 2025

June 23-27, 9 AM-12:30 PM

Campers: K to GRADE 6

Apprentice camp staff

7th to GRADE 12

ADULTS TO HELP ARE NEEDED.

ONLINE REGISTRATION OPEN NOW

CHPC.ORG/CAMP/



3C's Summer Camp 2025

July 28-31, 9:30 AM-12:00 PM

Age: 2.5 to 9 yrs. Held at 3Cs Nursery School at College Hill Presb. Church. Cost: \$70/first child, \$10 discount for each additional sibling. All children must have emergency information on file before attending the camp.

FULL PAYMENT IS DUE AT
REGISTRATION.

CHPC.ORG/3CS-CAMP/

Thursday Impact Days June 5 to August 7

CHPC's Family Ministries has formed a strategic summer partnership with two neighborhood organizations: *Cherish Your Children Childcare Center* (across the street from CHPC in the CH Plaza), and the *College Hill Public Library* on North Bend Road.

Each week the CHCP outreach series will provide family-friendly, faith-infused activities—interactive lessons, games, prayer stations, parent conversations, and more—designed to introduce spiritual habits and build relationships with local families and children who may not yet be connected to a church.



CHERISH YOUR CHILDREN CHILDCARE



COLLEGE HILL PUBLIC LIBRARY



Children & Teen Day Lessons

10-11 AM; 11 AM-12 PM; 12-1 PM

at North Hills Swim Club

WEEK #1: June 23-27

WEEK #2: July 14-18

WEEK #3: July 28-August 1

MINIMUM AGE IS 5 YEARS OLD.

Adult and Evening Lessons

6:00-7:15 PM

at Twin Towers' Connection Pool

Week A: July 7-11

Week B: July 21-25

Cost: \$80/week for one-on-one American Red Cross swim lessons. Limited scholarships are available.

CHPC.ORG/SWIM/

FROM THE DESK of MINDY NAGEL

C.H. Business Assoc.
President, Business
owner in College Hill,
and CHPCer.



CHCUCR and the CH Business Association are working to plan upcoming events for our College Hill businesses to show their appreciation for everything our business owners bring to our community.

We may not know about our neighbors' businesses that we don't see every day, particularly those running a business out of their home without the visibility of a brick and mortar location in the business district. So, please help us. We have a simple survey available. We would love to send you the online link to it. Or we can email the link directly to a business owner you know. Just email:

info@collegehillbusiness.com

Ask for the Business Survey Link



Annual Spring Volunteer Event



JUNE 14, 8-12 PM

Use your home repair skills to provide crucial, preventative maintenance tasks for low-income older adults and people with disabilities in our community.

Join or Lead a CHPC Team. Info-Apply at chpc.org/rep

WHIZ KIDS TUTORING

The school year 2024-2025 finished with a bang! The theme of the final month at Whiz Kids was *Full Bloom*, where students learned four different stories detailing the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This spiritual development time was followed by our regularly scheduled tutoring in which adults taught, connected with, and mentored the grade-school students. As a final sendoff to celebrate an amazing year, we hosted an End-of-Year Dinner (including



BY CHRISTY ROEDIGER

Whatever you do [no matter what it is] in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus [and in dependence on Him], giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Colossians 3:17 (Amplified Bible)

There are more things to do than I can possibly do – maybe it's like that for you, too. I hear about a group or an effort or an opportunity and I think, "Gee, I'd like to do that" or "I might be good at that." I find that there is NO shortage of opportunities for how I can spend my time and energy.

The greater challenge for me is when to say YES and when to say "No, thank you." It's not bad stuff I need to let go of, but stuff that isn't for me in this season of my life. It's way too easy to get myself over booked and then stressed and then sick when I over commit.

But when I say YES to what God has for me and am pacing myself by his leading, then there is a peace and a sense of being in the right place at the right time. Our world needs us to say YES to the opportunities that God opens for us – even those stretching experiences. Dive in and live!

Almighty God, open the doors for me to live and serve for your glory in Jesus. Give me your eyes and wisdom to know what is for me in this season and what is not. Give me the courage to say YES and the wisdom to say NO appropriately. I want to live with you as my audience of One. Be glorified in me in Jesus. Amen.

parents) with games, testimonies, and a Chick-fil-a dinner.

HERE'S OUR "WHIZ KIDS FAMILY!"



PREACHING SERIES

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8)

June 29—Free in Christ Even Behind Bars John 8:36

So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

We will have the blessing of hearing from Rev. Shawn Wuske, Exec. Director of Transforming Jail Ministries of Cincinnati. In Boston, he directed a mentoring network, serving alongside his wife.



JESUS ANSWERED,

“I AM
THE WAY
AND
THE TRUTH
AND
THE LIFE.”

JOHN 14:6

PRACTICING THE WAY

BE WITH JESUS • BECOME LIKE JESUS • DO AS HE DID

REVS. DREW SMITH & SAMUEL MOCK

EASTERTIDE & PENTECOST PREACHING SERIES

Before those who followed Jesus were called Christians, they were called *followers of the Way*. This is because Jesus said, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” In this series we will focus on what it means to truly follow Jesus and how to cultivate a life centered on Jesus and the Kingdom of God.

June 1—Creating a Rule of Life

Romans 12 — **COMMUNION**

Paul, full of the Holy Spirit, calls us to renew our minds rather than being conformed to the world. The *renewing of our mind* is an active process that we must pursue to be transformed in Christ-likeness. Out of the renewal of the mind flows a life that models Jesus and his Kingdom’s priorities, not ours. Paul goes on to challenge us not to think more highly of ourselves than we ought and reminds us we are all one body in Christ. (How different from our perspective of self-concern and individualism in America.) In order to live out the gospel with one another and those who don’t know Christ, our minds need renewing. The Spirit considers what is best for Christ and his body....and makes it possible.

June 8—Creating a Rule of Life

John 15:1-17— **Pentecost Sunday**

Jesus calls us to a life of abiding in him. Abiding is a word that we

don’t often use, meaning the act of remaining, staying in, and following. Jesus tells us in this passage, as disciples, we are already clean because of him... and then he challenges us as disciples to remain in him. Simply put, God makes us clean and open to allowing him to shape our lives around him. We steward our relationship with him and remain clean, pure, and *abiding* in him. As we must actively pursue a life planned around Jesus and God’s kingdom, we grow in faithful stewardship of what he has given us and share with others the grace, love, and joy he freely gives to us.

June 15—Taking up your Cross

Matthew 16:13-28

These verses are clear— to follow Jesus is more than acknowledging who he is. Peter said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God,” but he tried to deter Jesus from following Father’s plan. Jesus rebuked Peter, and told his disciples what it means to follow him. It’s not a *declaration*, but a *decision*—to die to what we think is best for our lives and to pursue what Christ intends for us. Along the journey, we learn that our best life is found in wholly trusting him.

June 22—Practice Makes Perfect

We love to play the game, but practice is required to play it well. What are the steps you plan to take in order to practice the *Way of Jesus* so that you will live the way of Jesus in everyday life? What does it take?

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 7)



WHY CELEBRATE PENTECOST?

Modern Christians observe Pentecost as a holiday, not to commemorate the gift of the Law to Moses on Mt. Sinai 50 days after the Exodus, but to celebrate the “Birthday of the Church” when the Holy Spirit appeared in the Upper Room 50 days after Easter Sunday. The Trinity’s Holy Spirit has always been present—from Creation to Christ, and now within each follower of Christ.

In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit was given to men and women for a particular purpose. After Jesus ascended into heaven, his followers gathered together for the Feast of Harvest (Pentecost). The Holy Spirit “filled the whole house where they were sitting” (Acts 2:2). “All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them” (Acts 2:4). A crowd gathered. Peter declared the gospel of Christ and of repentance (Acts 2:14). 3000 believers were added to the Church (Acts 2:41).

The “baptism of the Holy Spirit” enables all believers to know and understand the mysteries of the Gospel, and to preach it to people of all nations and languages. The “Fruit” of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23) and “Gifts” (1 Cor. 12, Eph. 4) empower believers to reflect Christ in all that they do. This is why we gratefully celebrate!

