



“Becoming what we already are ...”

Timothy D. Brewer

Faced with the probability of a long search to find a successor to Dr. Jumper, the church called an interim pastor, Perry Mobley of Florence, South Carolina. Dr. Mobley had participated in Dr. Jumper’s funeral and the words of comfort he had spoken to Dr. Jumper’s family came to characterize his year-long ministry at Central:

Sydney, for you and your children and all the members of your family, God has a special word for you today. It is this: he loves you. He understands the hurt and the ache of your heart. He comes to meet you in this very moment, to put his arms around you and hold you very close to himself, to give you all of his love, all of his peace, and all of his comfort, to heal your broken heart, to give you new life.

Because that is true, we hear the Lord speak to us in his word. First in Jeremiah, the twenty-ninth chapter: “I know the plans that I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans for welfare and not calamity, to give you a future and a hope...”

Dr. Mobley and his wife, Jeane, ministered to the congregation through September, 1993.



The Pastoral Search Committee had been at work since January, 1992. After an extensive process, the committee recommended that the congregation call Dr. Timothy Brewer as Central’s thirteenth pastor. The congregation agreed, and Dr. Brewer’s official pastorate began October 1, 1993.

Timothy D. Brewer was born in Colorado in 1958, the son of a Presbyterian minister. He graduated from Colorado State University in 1982



Dr. Timothy Brewer. For only the second time in nearly 150 years, the church called a pastor from outside the South.

and pursued theological studies at Princeton Seminary, Fuller Seminary (M. Div., 1986) and Eastern Baptist Seminary (D. Min., 1992). Following work as a youth pastor in California and missionary in the Philippines and Kenya, he served churches in Michigan and California.

As he began his ministry at Central, Dr. Brewer wrote of his vision for the church:

"Someone once described the real 'secret' of the Christian life as being the art of becoming that which we already are in Christ. In a nutshell, this is my vision for Central Presbyterian Church. As I have reflected upon what I would like to accomplish as Senior Pastor of the flock at Central, I can think of no greater calling than to shepherd God's flock in such a way as to help it become all that Christ has called it to be."

Discovering what God has called his church to be has been the challenge of each generation. As Central moves into a new century, with a new pastor, in a new denomination, it does so with the assurance that God, himself, changes not.



Seal of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church.

An Afterword:

Anniversaries are important times of celebration in our lives. They serve not only as milestones marking the road we have traveled, but also as signposts of the direction we have set for the future. This short history provides a glimpse into our own past, as well as a helpful lens through which we may look to the future of Central Church.

Indeed, we cannot look meaningfully toward the future until we first understand the past. The first month of the year is known as "January" for a reason. The name is derived from the two-headed god, Janus, of Greek mythology. According to the ancient Hellenistic legend, one of Janus' two great heads looked backwards, while the other gazed forward. As a result, the calendar reminds us that anniversaries, like the one we celebrate this year at Central, are times of both remembering the past and looking ahead to the future.

Perhaps it is apropos that a new pastorate should begin in the very year of this great celebration. Anniversaries, after all, are by definition dual celebrations: we are reminded by them of God's abundant mercies in the past, but we are also encouraged by these times of remembrance to look forward to God's continued faithfulness. The Scriptures remind us that God is the same yesterday, today and forever. Thus, the one thing that ties the past, present, and future together for the people of God is the everlasting promise of God's faithful provision in our lives. Through the eyes of faith, the future is no less certain than the past, for the God in whom we trust shall remain faithful through all the vicissitudes of life.

Finally, I find it fascinating that Central Presbyterian celebrates her 150th anniversary in the same year that Presbyterians worldwide remember the 350th anniversary of the Westminster Confession of Faith. This document, begun in July of 1644, is the definitive creedal statement that delineates what Presbyterians have believed throughout the centuries. Although Central has endured many changes over the years, changes in buildings, locations, ministers and even denominations, if there is one thing that binds all her members together, even across the vastly different stages of her life, surely it is the abiding sense of identity that she has always held as a Presbyterian church. Change is not something that comes easily for any of us. And surely, if we saw tremendous changes in Central's first 150 years, then the 21st century promises even more for the life of this church. Yet, insofar as we remain true to the biblical standards embodied in the Westminster Confession, we who comprise Central Church shall continue to build toward the future upon the moorings of our past.

In every generation, God's people must take up anew the task of building the church of Jesus Christ. This book has reminded me that we can look forward with eager anticipation to the future that God has for us. Let us give thanks not only for the work of God's faithful servants of previous generations, but let us also express heartfelt gratitude for the work that God shall continue to do in and through His people. For God continues to build His Church upon the same Cornerstone, which is none other than Jesus Christ himself.

*Timothy D. Brewer
April, 1994*

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