

Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church of Newberry

Shut In of the Month

Eliza Parr

1701 Main Street, Newberry, SC 29108

October 2020

Update from the Session

Below is a summary of the actions taken by the Session in September:

1. The August Financial Report was received as information.
2. The August Session minutes were approved.
3. The shepherding concerns of the congregation were shared and discussed.
4. The October Communion and Fellowship Meal were moved to the 11th.
5. The use of The ARP Psalter with Bible Songs will be studied as a possible update to the Bible Songs in the worship service.
6. Wine will be available as an option along with grape juice for the Lord's Supper. (See article in the newsletter, "The Fruit of the Vine")
7. The Petty family were received as new members via transfer of letter.
8. The October stated meeting is scheduled for the 21st.

If you have any questions, please talk with an elder.



PRAYER CHAIN

If you have a prayer request, please email, text, or call **Marc Faulkenberry** or **Pastor Seth**, and it will be distributed via email.

Prayer List

David Bunn (milt.); Mark McGuffee, Pat Harmon, Tony Fulmer, Vernetha Renwick, Eliza Parr, Glenda & Richard Lominick, James Hill.

Ministry Schedule

Sunday

9:45 am

Sunday School

10:55 am

Worship

Wednesday

6:15 pm

Youth

6:30 pm

Bible Study/
Prayer

SERVICE

LIVE-STREAM

The Sunday morning worship service is being live-streamed, 10:52 AM, on the church's Facebook page, www.facebook.com/newberryarp. There is a **Worship Guide** on our website, www.newberryarp.org, which includes all the material needed to follow along.

GENERAL SYNOD

Oct. 22-23

First Presbyterian
Church (ARP)
Columbia, SC

FINANCIAL DATA as of September 30, 2020

Budget Receipts \$

Budget Needs \$ 125,740.86

We appreciate everyone mailing their tithe and offerings to the church. We give thanks to the Lord for His faithfulness expressed through your continual giving and support!!!

The Fruit of the Vine

At our September stated Session meeting, the elders unanimously approved the use of wine as an option for Communion. This decision was rooted in the teaching of Scripture (as well as our Standards) and our desire to be faithful to it. In this brief article, I want to outline the Session's rationale for making this decision.

Before 1869, when an American Methodist minister, Thomas Bramwell Welch, developed what he called, "unfermented wine" by applying Louis Pasteur's pasteurization process to grape juice (preventing the natural fermentation process), Communion was universally served with wine in American and throughout world history. To a great extent, it was the issue of prohibition in the US that moved many churches in America (especially Methodist and Baptist) to use grape juice even though wine was permitted by law for Communion. Ironically, the church's use of grape juice was a cultural accommodation that did not have absolute biblical warrant. What many American churches have adopted for over a 100 years is a relatively new practice in church history.

In studying this topic more closely, we will address some key questions related to wine and the Bible.

Is the consumption of wine sinful?

Neither the Scriptures nor church history supports the idea that wine (and other form of alcohol) is, in and of itself, sinful. Of the nearly 250 references to alcohol in Scripture, the majority are actually positive (about 150 are explicitly positive, around 60 are neutral, and 40 are negative). In summary, the general teaching of Scripture is that wine is a gift from God, while drunkenness is a sin. Wine (and other forms of alcohol) is considered a blessing from God (**Ps 104:14-15**) to be used for our joy and His glory (**1 Cor 10:31**). As with any gift (food/gluttony, money/greed, health/fear, sex/adultery, etc.), alcohol can certainly be abused (as it is so often in society), but the fact that a blessing of God can be and is abused should not lead us to deny or abandon its proper, God-given use altogether. So, while drunkenness is certainly sinful (not heeding the clear warnings of Scripture), moderate drinking in and of itself is definitely not, especially when consumed in accordance with the teaching of Scripture.

What is the rationale for using wine in Communion?

Faithfully partaking in the Lord's Supper is not only an act of the will but an act of obedience. As worshipper of Christ, our participation in Communion is a response to His command to **do this in remembrance of Him (Lk 22:19)**. Interestingly, the three synoptic Gospels use the words **cup** and **fruit of the vine** instead of **wine** (Greek *oinos*) in recording Jesus' institution of the Lord's Supper. So what did these words mean in a 1st-century Jewish context? Was there any uncertainty to that audience as to what these terms meant?

The Greek word for cup, *poterion*, is so closely connected to wine that the most trusted Greek lexicon (*BDAG*) includes a parenthetical remark that *poterion* is used "in Greek literature mostly for drinking wine." Moreover, this word is linked to wine throughout the *LXX*, the Greek translation of the OT.

- For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup with foaming wine, well mixed and he pours out from it, and all the wicked of the earth shall drain it down to the dregs. (**Ps 75:8**)
- Babylon was a golden cup in the Lord's hand, making all the earth drunken; the nations drank of her wine; therefore the nations went mad. (**Jer 51:7**)
- Thus the Lord, the God of Israel, said to me: "Take from my hand this cup of the wine of wrath, and make all the nations to whom I send you drink it." (**Jer 25:15**)
- Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom, you who dwell in the land of Uz; but to you also the cup shall pass; you shall become drunk and strip yourself bare. (**Lam 4:21**)

- “You shall drink your sister’s cup that is deep and large; you shall be laughed at and held in derision, for it contains much; you will be filled with drunkenness and sorrow. A cup of horror and desolation...” (**Ez 23:31-34**)

It is evident from these Scriptures (and others) that for the 1st-century reader the word cup was a metonymy (a figure of speech in which a word is used to represent a larger concept) for wine. Thus Jesus is not referring to the cup itself but the contents of the cup. So specifically, what would have been the contents of that cup within the context of a Passover meal? Without a doubt, it would have been wine (based on historical documents related to 1st-century Passover and the fact that neither refrigeration nor pasteurization had been invented yet, so it would have been impossible to prevent grape juice from fermenting into wine).

In Greek the phrase, the fruit of the vine, consists of two nouns, *genematos* and *ampletou*. Interestingly, the more common Greek noun for fruit, *karpos*, is replaced by *genematos*, which literally means “yield” or “produce.” This word is often associated not just with any product or fruit in general, but wine in particular. According to the *BDAG*, this word is often used specifically of “wine, as the product of the vine.” The word *ampletou* also is not a reference to any vine in general but a grapevine in particular. (**Jam 3:12** “can a fig tree, my brothers, bear olives, or a grapevine produce figs?”) Therefore, it is logical to conclude that this phrase does not refer to any and every fruit of any and every vine but to a particular product of a particular vine, and in the context of 1st-century Israel that would have been wine.

Jesus’ institution (**Mt 26:29**) states **this** fruit of the vine. This is not just any fruit of any vine but an explicit reference to the specific contents in His particular cup. The word for vine is most commonly associated with a grapevine throughout Scripture and is often used in contexts where wine is specified.

- Binding his foal to the vine and his donkey’s colt to the choice vine, he has washed his garments in wine and his vesture in the blood of grapes. (**Gen 49:11**)
- And the trees said to the vine, ‘You come and reign over us.’ But the vine said to them, ‘Shall I leave my wine that cheers God and men and go hold sway over the trees?’ (**Jud 9:12–13**; also **13:14**)
- planted it with choice vines; he built a watchtower in the midst of it, and hewed out a wine vat in it; and he looked for it to yield grapes, but it yielded wild grapes. (**Isa 5:2**; also **24:7–9**)
- “Put in your sickle and gather the clusters from the vine of the earth, for its grapes are ripe.” So the angel swung his sickle across the earth and gathered the grape harvest of the earth and threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. (**Rev 14:18-19**)

Therefore, a 1st-century resident familiar with the OT recognized the phrase **fruit of the vine** as the product of grapevine, that is wine. Moreover, when Jesus instituted the Lord’s Supper, he did so during a Passover meal which included the drinking of four cups of wine. His cup was undoubtedly filled with wine. Even though wine is not explicitly mentioned in the passages, it is abundantly clear that wine was implied. The cup that Jesus used and the fruit of the vine that He referenced in the Lord’s Supper were not any cup of fruit juice but fermented wine. Such an understanding for Jesus and any other 1st-century Judean would not have raised concerns about the sinfulness of consuming wine as many evangelicals do today. Jesus without apology or qualifications instituted the use of wine for Communion.

What does wine symbolize in the Bible?

It does not take much of an imagination to see why Jesus used red wine (normally in Passover) to symbolize His blood (**Matt 26:28**). The dark red color of wine is similar to blood, thus Christ used this resemblance to communicate the symbol of the forgiveness of sins through the shedding of His blood. In this case, grape juice accomplishes the same goal.

However, wine when used in Communion **additionally** serves as a metaphor for joy, life, peace, and hope as seen throughout the Scripture.

- **Psa 104:15** says God made “...wine to gladden the heart of man...”
- Wine is linked to joy in **Psa 4:7**, “You have put more joy in my heart than they have when their grain and wine abound.”
- **Deut 14:26** associates drinking with worship, “and spend the money for whatever you desire—oxen or sheep or wine or strong drink, whatever your appetite craves. And you shall eat there before the LORD your God and rejoice, you and your household.” See also **Neh 8:10**
- **Prov 3:10** says that if we honor God with our wealth the reward is wine, for your “...barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine.”
- Not being able to drink wine is viewed as a form of divine judgment. **Deut 28:39** says “You shall plant vineyards and dress them, but you shall neither drink of the wine nor gather the grapes, for the worm shall eat them.”
- In **Isa 25:6**, the vision of the eschatological kingdom and God's redemptive feast involves not only good food, but also well-aged wine.

Moreover, wine is associated in Scripture with sorrow and lament which is certainly an aspect of our remembrance of the death of Christ. “Give strong drink to the one who is perishing, and wine to those in bitter distress; let them drink and forget their poverty and remember their misery no more.” (**Prov 31:6-7**)

Finally, wine is also used throughout Scripture to symbolize judgment. The cup is an expression of God’s wrath in the OT (see **Psa 75:8, Jer 25:15, Isa 51:17**). A vital aspect of Communion is the celebration that Jesus drank the cup of God’s wrath on our behalf to the full on the cross. So the cup from which we now drink is one of joy and celebration because Christ drank the cup of judgment.

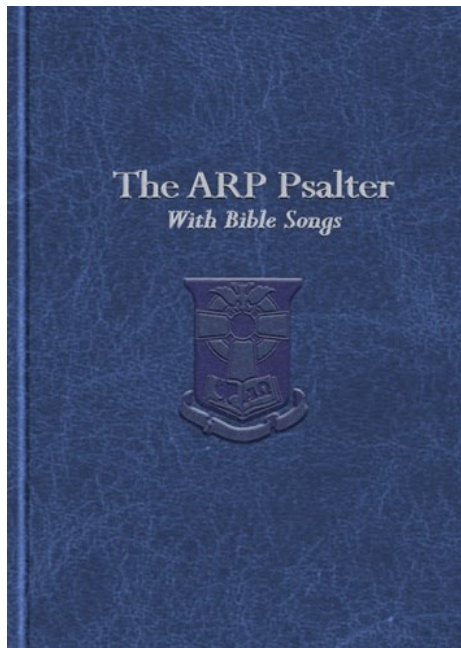
These other biblical symbols of wine reinforce the use of wine in that it points not only to the completed act of forgiveness in the shedding of Christ’s blood but also to the future consummation of glory that we await at the marriage supper of the Lamb (**Matt 26:29, cf. Rev. 19:9**).

In summary, the reasons for the use of wine in Communion are :

- Christ instituted the use of wine for the Lord’s Supper in Scripture.
- Wine has historical and biblical connections to Passover and other Old Testament feasts in which drinking was involved.
- Wine has been used in the Christian church throughout a vast majority of church history.
- Wine better symbolizes the nature of feasting and joy and is even explicitly referenced in that manner throughout Scripture.
- Wine points forward to our eschatological redemption and the marriage supper of the Lamb when we will drink wine with Christ.
- Wine symbolizes the judgment (cup of wrath) that Christ bore for us.

The elders recognize that for some this might be a new and possibly a difficult teaching to embrace. Therefore, we are not requiring anyone to act against his conscience. Our desire is to shepherd in love and patience, so we will continue to offer grape juice along with wine (placed on the outer ring of the tray) not to burden anyone’s conscience. Communion is an exceptional and glorious means of grace that the Lord has provided to His Church for her benefit. Let us by faith with the aid of all our senses embrace all that He intends to give to us through it. As we move forward in this biblical practice, may we always keep before us the Christ whom we are to worship and obey. It is He who calls us to worship in accordance with His Word.

On Behalf of the Session,
Pastor Seth



The ARP Psalter With Bible Songs

This psalter was published in 2011 by Crown & Covenant Publications. It is a cooperative project of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church and the Reformed Presbyterian Church. *The ARP Psalter* includes selections that represent all verses of the 150 psalms from *The Book of Psalms for Worship* and 55 favorite selections from *Bible Songs*. The singing of the Psalms is a Biblically-warranted practice which has long been an integral part of our heritage and is strongly encouraged. The Session is studying the use of this psalter in place of the current *Bible Songs*.



Communion Sunday Fellowship Meal

Following the worship service on **Oct. 11**, we will share a meal together. A **prepared box-lunch** of beef brisket, macaroni and cheese, green beans, and dessert will be served. If you plan to attend, please let us know, **newberryarp@gamil.com**, along with the number of individuals who will be present by Wednesday, **Oct. 7**.

SYMPATHY

The church family extends Christian sympathy to Doug Wicker and his family on the death of his father, Claude Wicker, on September 21.





Our theme Scripture for 2020: "And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky above, and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever." Daniel 12:3 (ESV)

ARP Women's Ministries is an organization which encourages, equips, and connects the community of ARP women to minister together for God's glory and purpose.

Our desire is that all women in the ARP Church will: Know Jesus Intimately, Love Jesus Faithfully, and Serve Jesus Fruitfully.

*The Morning Circle will meet on **Tuesday, October 6** at 10 AM in the Carson Room for Bible study, prayer, and fellowship. Marcia Cole will be leading the 2020 Bible study on Daniel. In preparation for the study please read Daniel 8, The Ram and the Goat.*

Are you free on the first Tuesday of the month? The Morning Circle is always open for new members or visitors, contact Julia Rikard for further information.



Fellowship, Study, and Prayer

Tuesdays 7 - 9 pm

Fellowship Hall

If you are interested in the study, please contact either
 Marci Cole, ty [REDACTED]
 Kristy Jennings, [REDACTED]

ALL LADIES ARE WELCOME!!!!



Manna House Food Pantry Dried Beans

The Manna House box is in the Main Street vestibule to
Receive non-perishable food donations.

Due to COVID-19 we have had to reduce our days of service to two (normally five) and are still having a difficult time getting volunteers to work. Most of the twenty-one churches that provide service have older volunteers who are unable to serve. If anyone has an hour on a Tuesday or Thursday and would be willing to volunteer, please contact Julia.



ADAM, BRITTANY, AND JOHN PAUL PETTY

[Redacted contact information]



World Witness is hosting another virtual event on **October 15**, "Shaping Futures," featuring our nursing school at our hospital in Pakistan. You will be fascinated to hear how the Lord is working in the hospital throughout Covid-19, the testimonies of Pakistani nursing students, and an update from the Director, Dr. Keith Ackerman. If you'd like to attend, please email Shelia Osborne at sheliao@worldwitness.org to receive a link when registration opens.



On Friday mornings, 6:45 AM, a group of men gather at Doug Wicker's home, [Redacted] for an encouraging time of food, fellowship, Bible Study, and prayer. Pastor Seth leads an interactive study of God's Word (currently 1 Peter). Email Doug to be added to the weekly reminder.

**MEN'S
BIBLE
STUDY**
FRIDAY MORNINGS

ARP Church of Newberry

1701 Main Street
Newberry, SC 29108

We're on the web
NewberryARP.org

Flowers for October

4 - Carol McRacken

11 - Communion

18 - Faye Hill

25 - Julia Rikard

Ushers for October

4 - Jason McCoy, Marc Faulkenberry

11 - Keith Avery, Andre Jennings

18 - Ben White, Herb Seigler

25 - Chip Porth, Michael Jennings