



July 6, 2018

**New Worship Time  
for Montreat Presbyterian Church  
Beginning Sunday, August 12  
10:00 A.M.**

In response to much input from our congregation and community, the session has prayerfully and unanimously voted **to move our Sunday morning worship services to 10:00 A.M. beginning August 12 when we return to Upper Anderson.** This decision has come about after years of discussions, formal and informal, within various committees of the church and in close partnership with the Montreat Conference Center, whose support has been crucial to this discernment.

Over the past 18 months, as changing needs within our congregation have been brought to our attention, the conversation has reached what we interpret as a tipping point. Numbers of faithful worshipers are reporting that they can no longer physically make it to a 9:00 A.M. worship service. We also receive a steady stream of input from people who support or are sympathetic with our church but who, for whatever reasons, are unable to attend, or are simply not geared for attending, a 9:00 or even a 9:30 A.M. service when later, local options are available.

We are also cognizant of those who wish to participate in Sunday worship, but for whom an 11:00 service interrupts the flow of the day, and we hear the Bible's call to value our days and make the most of the time.

With any change in worship patterns, there is relief as well as some pain. We have been checking in with several who have enjoyed the 9:00 start time as it enables them to worship with other congregations. Even some of those folks have been asking for this change for years. Others have indicated a loyalty to our congregation's worship, no matter what the hour may be.

We realize that others may be less enthusiastic. The potential that this decision may cause them some pain is not taken lightly by the members of the session. [Pastor's note: In the years that I have enjoyed the opportunity to visit our sister congregations after our own worship on Sunday mornings, I have almost always entered their worship spaces well into the service, respectfully slipping in during a hymn or passing of the peace. Never have I been aware of any irritation or animosity directed my way--quite the opposite in all cases. Our friends at Black Mountain Presbyterian Church and Christ Community Church have never been anything less than gracious and welcoming to this occasional latecomer.]

**It is our hope and belief that this adaptation will allow all congregants an easier path to worship** while increasing accessibility and enabling even more people to come and see what God is doing in Montreat Presbyterian Church.

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