

## Education Hour

### ***Children's Education:***

**Pre-K - 2nd Grade**- We are studying stories from the Bible through creative activities and crafts using the Seasons of the Spirit curriculum. This class will meet in the Library (to the left of the Workroom.)

**3rd Grade - 5th Grade** - We are using The Seasons of the Spirit curriculum, music, and art projects to examine the stories of the Bible through the lectionary. This class will meet in the Classroom (to the right of the Workroom.)

**Youth Education:** We continue with the problem of suffering by exploring "J.B." by Archibald MacLeish and the book of Job. The class will meet on the third floor of the Meeks House (across Caroline Street from the church).

### ***Adult Education:***

**Bible Discussion:** Rick Caswell will lead Bible study in the Meeks House. The focus scripture is Luke 3:15-17, 21-22.

**In The Sanctuary:** The next two weeks we will explore the ecology, economy, theology and ethics of our food production system and of eating locally produced foods. Margie Latham and Tim Wegner will present and facilitate our discussion which will be based on personal experience and the books *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle* by Barbara Kingsolver and *In Defense of Food* by Michael Pollan. Meanwhile, here's some food for thought: "You are what you eat eats." "Eat food. Not too much. Mostly plants."

**Parents Forum** - Sunday, January 17th Parents Forum will discuss "See Baby Discriminate." This article appeared in Newsweek and can be read at: <http://www.newsweek.com/id/214989>. Parents Forum meets every 3rd Sunday during Education Hour in Laura's office in Meeks House.

## Calendar

Sunday 1/10	8:15 a.m.	Worship
	9:15 a.m.	Coffee & Fellowship
	9:30 a.m.	Education
	10:30 a.m.	Coffee & Fellowship
	11:00 a.m.	Worship
	12:00 p.m.	New Committee Chair Orientation
Tuesday 1/12	6:30 p.m.	Yoga
Wednesday 1/13	10:00 a.m.	Garden Workday
	7:00 p.m.	Deacons Meeting
Thursday 1/14	7:15 p.m.	Choir Rehearsal

## Helpful Information

**Childcare** Childcare is provided in the nursery beginning at 8:45 a.m.

**Communication Cards** If you're a visitor with us, please fill out a blue Communication Card and drop it in the Offering basket.

**Covenant Membership** Membership in Covenant Church is open to all persons who affirm the loving presence of God, the life and teachings of Jesus, and the revealed Spirit throughout the ages. Those interested in learning more about Covenant are encouraged to express that interest to one of the Ministers or the Worship Leader. Any person desiring membership first becomes an inquirer and is asked to attend an orientation class designed to acquaint inquirers with the church and its beliefs. After a period of eight weeks, the inquirer may indicate a desire to become a member.

**Celebrations and Concerns** If you would like to share a celebration or concern with the Covenant community, please post it on the announcements board in the Narthex or e-mail it to [prayer@covenanthouston.org](mailto:prayer@covenanthouston.org).

**Covenant Newsletter** There is a weekly Newsletter available online at [www.covenanthouston.org](http://www.covenanthouston.org). To have this Newsletter e-mailed to you, please send an e-mail request to [office@covenanthouston.org](mailto:office@covenanthouston.org).

**Covenant Recycles** If you do not wish to keep your bulletin this Sunday, please recycle it by placing it on the stand located in the Narthex on your way out.

Covenant Church affirms the sanctity, dignity, and equality of human beings and the value of all life in the universe. We welcome persons of all racial and ethnic heritages, all sexual orientations, and all faith perspectives to our Christian community. We stand for each individual's right to worship God and to respond to God's call to ministry in her or his own understanding of God's all-encompassing love.

We value a holistic approach to faith and seek to worship in ways that are intellectually credible, emotionally stimulating, spiritually engaging and contemporarily relevant.

We value music and art and ritual to express what we cannot ever fully say.

We value participation so that we might hear many approaches to our shared faith.

Covenant Church  
an ecumenical liberal baptist  
congregation

Members of Covenant  
Ministers

Jeremy Rutledge  
Minister

Laura Mayo  
Associate Minister

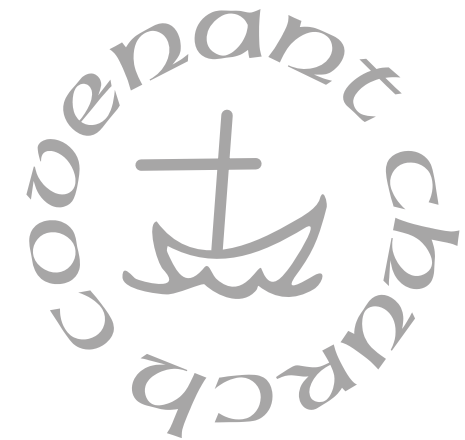
Fran Avera  
Minister of Music

Carl McAliley  
Organist

Pat Long  
Office Administrator

Hanh-Nhi Ngo  
Office Administrator

Covenant Church  
4949 Caroline  
Houston, TX 77004  
713.668.8830



## *A Service of Worship for 10 January 2010*

Ordination of Lynn McLean, Joe Milano  
and Barbara Voit as Deacons

*Walk joyfully on the earth  
and respond to that of God  
in every human being.*

George Fox

*please enter for worship in silence*

\* Prelude Paul Hindemith  
“Wach auf, mein Hort” (Sonata No. 3)

Call to Worship

\*+ Processional Hymn 285: Austrian Hymn  
“God, You Spin the Whirling Planets”

\* Opening Sentences  
**Amid all the noise of our lives,  
we take this moment to sit in silence—  
to give thanks for another day,  
to give thanks for all those in our lives  
who have brought us warmth and love,  
to give thanks for the gift of life.**

**Let us open ourselves, here, now,  
to the process of becoming more whole—  
of living more fully,  
of giving and forgiving more freely,  
of understanding more completely  
the meaning of our lives here on this earth.**

Scripture Lesson Luke 9:1-6

These are our sacred stories.  
**Thanks be to God.**

A Time for Children

\*+ Response: Mueller  
*Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask Thee to stay  
close by me forever and love me, I pray.  
Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care,  
and teach us to love Thee and help us to share.*

Ordination of Lynn McLean, Joe Milano and Barbara Voit as Deacons

Commissioning the 2010 Diaconate:

Leader: Today we call this group to be our spiritual leaders in the coming year. Let us say why we have called them.

**Community: Our call to each of you—Martha Murphree, Eric Avera, Suzanne Counts, Jeannette Dixon, Jme Guehring, Richard Huff, Lynn McLean, Joe Milano, David Ramsey, Beverly Rodgers, and Barbara Voit—is an affirmation of your gifts and an expression of our gratitude and respect for you. We do not call you to be different people. We call you because of who you are—generous with your gifts, aware of our needs.**

Leader: What do we ask of these spiritual leaders?

**Community: We ask you to guide us on our journey together: to be**

\* *Ushers will seat latecomers*  
+ *Please stand if you are able*

**a step or two ahead; to inspire us to recognize and share our own gifts; to encourage and comfort us when things go wrong and celebrate with us when things are right. While we expect you to do certain tasks, we also ask that you give free reign to your imagination, insight, compassion, and your capacity to love. In this spirit, together our community can deepen and grow.**

Leader: Do you—Martha, Eric, Suzanne, Jeannette, Jme, Richard, Lynn, Joe, David, Beverly, and Barbara—accept the call you have heard here today?

**Deacons: We do. We stand before you committed to exercise our gifts with courage and compassion.**

Leader: What do you ask of us?

**Deacons: We ask you to be courageous and compassionate; to challenge and stretch us. We ask you to join with us on this sacred journey of exploration and discovery.**

**All: Let us go forth together in love, sharing joys and sorrows, triumphs and tragedy, seeking God’s peace and justice both within and without.**

Call to Confession

Silent Confession

Unison Confession

**We are not angels but men and women of clay.  
All of us will be pulled off-center,  
we will be shaped by both disaster and delight.  
So we need to learn the art of returning home,  
returning to center, letting go of all that binds us  
too tightly to both fear and hope,  
letting go of our attachment to both doom and reward,  
letting go of all that leaves us wobbling.  
When we learn to return home in this way,  
we will return bearing gifts.**

Words of Assurance

Music (8:15) Bach  
Bourée I and II  
from Suite No. 3

(11:00) Leo Sowerby  
“I Will Lift Up Mine Eyes”

Proclamation

Hymn 522 Land of Rest  
“Lord, When I Came Into This Life”

+ *Please stand if you are able*

Invitation

Pastoral Prayer

Offering  
Offertory: Dan Locklair  
“Hallowed Be Thy Name” (Salem Sonata)

+ Prayer of Dedication

**Holy, living Spirit, breathe in us  
until your thoughts are our thoughts.  
Pray in us until your desires are our desires.  
Love in us until your work is our work.  
Play in us until your joy is our joy.  
Amen.**

+ Doxology Old Hundredth  
*Praise God from whom all blessings flow.  
Sing praise all creatures here below.  
Praise God above ye heavenly host.  
Praise Maker, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

Affirmation of Faith

**This hour is sacred because we make it so!  
By our presence with each other we renew our bonds.  
Let us join together in compassion and understanding  
to seek wisdom.  
Let us turn aside from transient cares and contemplate anew  
the enduring mystery that is life.  
Let us open ourselves to receive the gifts of love and peace.**

+ Recessional Hymn 132 Abbot’s Leigh  
“Come, Great God of All the Ages”

Words of Dismissal

Postlude Jean Langlais

## Worship

The Acolyte lights the candles at the beginning of worship and carries the light out at the conclusion of the service. The acolyte for the second service is **Byron Kress**.

The Worship Leaders are **Tim Wegner** and **Mac Wells**.

The Call to Worship is “Life is Always Unfinished Business” by Richard Gilbert.

The Opening Sentences are from Timothy Haley in *Rejoice Together: Prayers, Meditations, and Other Readings*, edited by Helen Pickett.

The Unison Confession is from *Learning to Fall: The Blessings of an Imperfect Life* by Philip Simmons.

**Josh Cowan** is the violist.

**Joyce Courtois** is the soloist in the anthem.

The Prayer of Dedication is from *The Well is Deep: Prayers to Draw Up Living Waters* by Virginia Rickeman.

The Affirmation of Faith is from Jim Wickman in *Rejoice Together*.