

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 right 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 left of the Workroom.)

Youth Education: We are beginning a study of Jesus using *Jesus and His Kingdom of Equals*. This book uses biblical scholarship and information from the Jesus Seminar to create portraits of Jesus. We will become more familiar with Jesus' context in history as well as his Jewish identity.

Adult Education:

Bible Discussion: In the Meeks House (1st floor), Bible Discussion will be led by Margie Latham. All are welcome.

In The Sanctuary: "Caregiving and Hospice." Caring for an aging parent or partner can be a confusing time in a person's life. Both this Sunday and next, Beverly Rodgers and Karen Thomas will provide guidance based on their professional experience in hospice and geriatric care.

Parents Forum - Parents Forum meets every 3rd Sunday during Education Hour in Laura's office in Meeks House. Join us Sunday, February 21 as we discuss cultural identity with Laura Mitchell: Have you often wondered about how to talk to your children about race, culture, and ethnicity? I have, too. Come join us as we ask our questions together. We can talk about how our children navigate through such topics as racial identity naming ourselves and claiming our culture.

Calendar

Sunday 2/21	8:15 a.m.	Worship
	9:15 a.m.	Coffee & Fellowship
	9:30 a.m.	Education
	9:30 a.m.	Inquirers' Class
	9:30 a.m.	Parents' Forum
	10:30 a.m.	Coffee & Fellowship
Tuesday 2/23	11:00 a.m.	Worship
	6:00 p.m.	Theology Book Group
Wednesday 2/24	6:30 p.m.	Yoga
	10:00 a.m.	Garden Workday
Thursday 2/25	7:00 p.m.	Deacons Meeting
	7:15 p.m.	Choir Rehearsal
Sunday 2/28	8:15 a.m.	Worship
	9:15 a.m.	Coffee & Fellowship
	9:30 a.m.	Education
	9:30 a.m.	Inquirers' Class
	10:30 a.m.	Coffee & Fellowship
	11:00 a.m.	Worship
	5:00 p.m.	Book Group

Inquirers' Class Starts Today

A class for visitors and those considering membership in Covenant will begin today at 9:30 a.m. during education hour. The eight weekly sessions will cover such topics as liberal Christianity, Baptist principles and history, and the history of Covenant as well as information about the structure and functioning of the church through the Church Council, the Diaconate, and the committees. Presenters include the ministers, committee chairs, and other members of the congregation. If you are interested in learning more about the church and its people, join Joe Milano in the Meeks House.

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

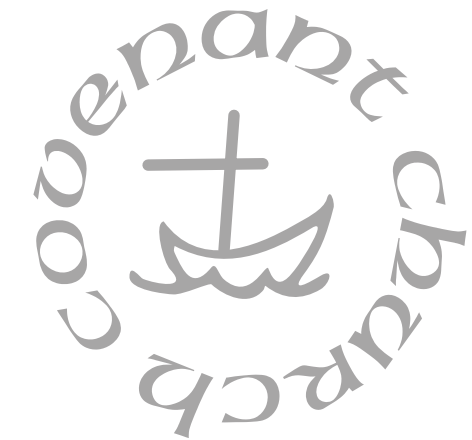
Laura Mayo
Associate Minister

Fran Avera
Minister of Music

Carl McAliley
Organist

Pat Long
Office Administrator

Hanh-Nhi Ngo
Office Administrator



A Service of Worship for The First Sunday in Lent 21 February 2010

*Ring the bells that still can ring
Forget your perfect offering
There is a crack in everything
That's how the light gets in.*

Leonard Cohen

Covenant Church
4949 Caroline
Houston, TX 77004
713.668.8830

please enter for worship in silence

* Prelude Marcel Dupré
“Now As We Journey, Aid Our Weak Endeavor”

Choral Introit (11:00) O Gott, du frommer Gott
“O God, Our Faithful God”

Call to Worship

*+ Processional Hymn 206: Vineyard Haven
“O Hear Our Cry, O Lord”

*+ Opening Sentences

In many cultures there is an ancient custom of giving a tenth of each year’s income to some holy use. For Christians, to observe the forty days of Lent is to do the same thing with roughly a tenth of each year’s days. After being baptized by John in the river Jordan, Jesus went off alone into the wilderness where he spent forty days asking himself the question what it meant to be Jesus. During Lent, Christians are supposed to ask one way or another what it means to be themselves.

If you had to bet everything you have on whether there is a God or whether there isn’t, which side would get your money and why?

When you look at your face in the mirror, what do you see in it that you most like and what do you see in it that you most deplore?

If you had only one last message to leave to the handful of people who are most important to you, what would it be in twenty-five words or less?

Of all the things you have done in your life, which is the one you would most like to undo? Which is the one that makes you happiest to remember?

Is there any person in the world, or any cause, that, if circumstances called for it, you would be willing to die for?

If this were the last day of your life, what would you do with it?

To hear yourself try to answer questions like these is to begin to hear something not only of who you are but of both what you are becoming and what you are failing to become. It can be a pretty depressing business all in all, but if sackcloth and ashes are at the start of it, something like Easter may be at the end.

Scripture Lesson Luke 4:1-13
These are our sacred stories.
Thanks be to God.

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

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.

Call to Confession

Silent Confession

Unison Confession

To You, Divine Creator:

We confess our readiness to celebrate what sets us apart, and our reticence to acknowledge what we share with others.

We admit our enjoyment of what makes us comfortable, and our fear of what might call us to change.

We own up to our attentiveness to the faults of others, and our avoidance of our own shortcomings.

We ask for the grace of forgiveness, and the courage to change. Amen.

Words of Assurance

Music (8:15) “Wilt Thou Forgive” John Donne/J.S. Bach

(11:00) “A Hymn to God” John Donne/John Ness Beck

*Wilt Thou forgive that sin where I begun, Which is my sin, though it were done before?
Wilt Thou forgive that sin through which I run And still do run, though still I do deplore?
When Thou hast done, Thou hast not done,
For I have more.*

*Wilt Thou forgive that sin which I have won Others to sin, and made my sin their door?
Wilt Thou forgive that sin which I did shun A year or two, but wallowed in a score?
When Thou hast done, Thou hast not done,
For I have more.*

*I have a sin of fear that when I’ve spun My last thread,
I shall perish on the shore;
Swear by Thyself, that at my death Thy Son Shall shine as he shines now and heretofore.
And having done that, Thou hast done, I fear no more.*

Time of Reflection

Proclamation: A Shadowy Summons

+ Hymn 321 “Holy Spirit, Truth Divine” Song 13

+ *Please stand if you are able*

Invitation

Pastoral Prayer

Offering Offertory: Jehan Alain
“Choral Dorien”

+ Prayer of Dedication

This season we dedicate ourselves to wrestling with our shadows conversing with our ‘other’ voices and meeting our inner adversaries that we might wrest from them a blessing for ourselves and our world.

+ 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

I cannot release the questions; with every step they multiply, and yet they carry a wisdom of their own.

God of mystery, help me to hold the questions, lead me to live them, bless me to bless them for disturbing my path.

+ Recessional Hymn 342 “By Gracious Powers” Intercessor

Words of Dismissal

Choral Benediction (11:00) O Gott, du frommer Gott
“O Grant Us Strength”

Postlude J. S. Bach
“All We Living Are But Mortal”

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 **Sarah Cravens**.

The Worship Leaders are **Stephen Milano** and **Wilson Miller**.

The Call to Worship is “I Feel Sorry for Jesus” from *You and Yours* by Naomi Shihab Nye.

The Opening Sentences are from *Whistling in the Dark* by Frederick Buechner.

Anne Christensen leads the Time for Children.

The Unison Confession is by **Jay Leach**.

The soloist at the early service is **Jim Avera**.

The Prayer of Dedication is by **Jeremy Rutledge**.

The Affirmation of Faith is from *Night Visions* by Jan L. Richardson.