

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 continuing 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: Margie Latham will lead a discussion of a passage from one of the great prophetic books of the Bible. The focus scripture will be Isaiah 43:16-21.

In The Sanctuary: Covenant will celebrate Seder, the principal Passover meal for Jews, on Sunday, March 28, beginning at 5 pm in the Fellowship Hall of St. Stephen Episcopal Church, Alabama at Woodhead. To prepare for this event, the class in the Sanctuary, led by Martha Murphree, will discuss the symbolic foods, the role of children in the service, the four promises of God that we celebrate, and other elements of this Covenant tradition. Covenant's Seder is an affirmation of a shared faith and tradition with Judaism. It is especially a celebration of freedom from all forms of bondage and a discussion of ways to bring liberation and healing.

Parents Forum - Parents Forum will meet during Education Hour in Laura's office in Meeks House.

Calendar

Sunday 3/21	8:15 a.m.	Worship
	9:15 a.m.	Coffee & Fellowship
	9:30 a.m.	Education
		Inquirers Class
	10:30 a.m.	Coffee & Fellowship
Tuesday 3/23	11:00 a.m.	Worship
	12:15 p.m.	Retreat Planning
	6:00 p.m.	Theology Book Group
Wednesday 3/24	6:30 p.m.	Yoga
Thursday 3/25	10:00 a.m.	Garden Workday
Saturday 3/27	7:15 p.m.	Choir Rehearsal
	9:30 a.m.	Facilities Workday
Sunday 3/28	10:00 a.m.	Garden Workday
	8:15 a.m.	Worship
	9:15 a.m.	Coffee & Fellowship
	9:30 a.m.	Education
		Inquirers Class
	10:30 a.m.	Coffee & Fellowship
	11:00 a.m.	Worship
	5:00 p.m.	Seder Dinner

Inquirers Class Continues

A class for visitors and those considering membership in Covenant meets 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

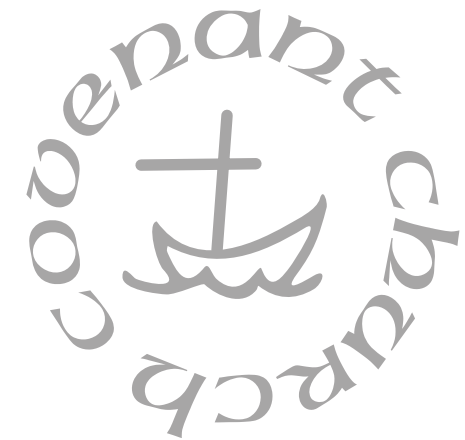
Laura Mayo
Associate Minister

Fran Avera
Minister of Music

Carl McAliley
Organist

Pat Long
Office Administrator

Hanh-Nhi Ngo
Office Administrator



*A Service of Worship
for the Fifth Sunday in Lent
21 March 2010*

Only that day dawns to which we are awake.

Henry David Thoreau

Covenant Church
4949 Caroline
Houston, TX 77004
713.668.8830

please enter for worship in silence

* Prelude Charles Callahan
 “Chorale Prelude on “Duke Street”

Choral Introit (11:00) Prospect
 “The Lone, Wild Bird”

Call to Worship

*+ Processional Hymn 340: Dickinson College
 “Eternal Light, Shine in My Heart”

+ Opening Prayer

**O God of Freedom,
 we are free to love because you are love.
 Free us from being hard to love,
 hard to forgive, hard to enjoy.
 Free us from sitting in the darkness of our despair
 rather than standing in the light of your confidence.
 Free us from grasping for the past
 so that we miss the present.
 Free us from grasping for the new
 before we learn to appreciate the old.
 Free us from the way we distort our faith
 and from the inconsistencies that mark our lives.
 Free us from the fear of change
 that we may fight for the changes that are needed.
 Free us from the dread of death
 that we may live eternal life now.
 O God of Freedom, free us to hope
 as we live in the hope expressed in Jesus, the Christ.
 Amen.**

Scripture Lesson John 12:20-33
 These are our sacred stories.
Thanks be to God.

A Time for Children

*+ Response: Jesus Loves Me

*Jesus loves me! This I know, For the Bible tells me so;
 Little ones to Him belong; They are weak, but He is strong.
 Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me!
 Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.*

Call to Confession

Silent Confession

Unison Confession

**During this past week, I took much for granted:
 the body’s health, the mind’s resilience, my strength of heart and will.
 These are among the countless gifts and blessings that are my
 daily portion.
 I pray that I may learn to give thanks for them, and never to take them
 for granted.**

**During this past week, I was sometimes thoughtful, sometimes
 self-centered.
 I pray that I may better meet the days to come,
 with growing consideration for those I love.**

**During this past week I thought little, or not at all
 of the deep harmony I seek within myself and others.
 I pray that here and now I may come to recognize that harmony as the
 Way of God.**

Words of Assurance

Music (8:15) Johann Christoph Bach
 Concerto in C minor, for viola

(11:00) David Fetler
 “In Peace and Joy I Now Depart”

Proclamation: Speaking of Death

+ Hymn 172 Resignation
 “My Shepherd Will Supply My Need”

Invitation

Pastoral Prayer

Offering
 Offertory: Marcel Dupré
 “Meditation”

+ Please stand if you are able

+ Prayer of Dedication

**O God,
 Giver of Life, Bearer of Pain, Maker of Love,
 you are able to accept in us what we cannot even acknowledge;
 you are able to name in us what we cannot bear to speak of;
 you are able to hold in your memory what we have tried to forget;
 you are able to hold out to us the glory that we cannot conceive of.
 Reconcile us through your cross to all that we have rejected in ourselves,
 that we may find no part of your creation to be alien or strange to us,
 and that we ourselves may be made whole,
 Through Jesus Christ, our lover and our friend.**

+ 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

**Nothing worth doing is completed in our lifetime;
 Therefore, we are saved by hope.
 Nothing true or beautiful or good
 makes complete sense in any immediate context of history;
 Therefore, we are saved by faith.
 Nothing we do, however virtuous, can be accomplished alone;
 Therefore, we are saved by love.**

+ Recessional Hymn 272 Roeder
 “God of the Sparrow”

Words of Dismissal

Choral Benediction (11:00) Prospect
 “The Ends of Earth Are in Thy Hand”

Postlude J. S. Bach
 “Jesus, Priceless Treasure”

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 **Virginia Wells**.
 The Worship Leaders are **Jay Hooker** and **Sam Miller**.
 The Call to Worship is “Jesus Walking” by Anne Sexton.
 The Opening Prayer is by **Janice Ramsey**.
 The Time for Children is led by **Chuck Fleming**.
 The Unison Confession is from *Gates of Prayer: The New Union Prayerbook* from the Central Conference of American Rabbis.
Josh Cowan plays the viola at the 8:15 service.
 The Prayer of Dedication is by Janet Morley.
 The Affirmation of Faith is by Reinhold Niebuhr.

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