

THE COVENANT CONNECTION

Volume XVII No. 5
November 30, 2011

Covenant United Methodist Church

Covenant and People to People Present...

European Discovery:
A young teen's adventure...

Sunday, December 4th
3:30pm at Covenant

Please join Aric Williams
as he talks about his trip to
Europe last summer.

His presentation will include
a power point and
items on display.

Everyone is welcome!

Book Review Group

Dec. 13th, 9:30am

Shanghai Girls

by Lisa See

Jackie Richardson Hostess/Reviewer

Jan. 10th, 9:30am

Room

by Emma Donoghue

Cheryl Vaughan/Reviewer
Diane Thomas/Hostess

Feb. 14th, 9:30

A Dog's Purpose

by W. Bruce Cameron
Barb Miscoi/Reviewer

New members are welcome any time. For more information please call Jeannie Peer, 466-4623.

Christmas at Covenant

Christmas Eve Services on Saturday, December 24

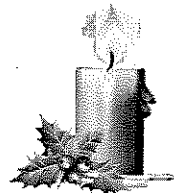
5:00pm: Family Service featuring the Covenant Kids and Youth in **Bedtime Christmas**, a play of Christmas stories. This service is an hour long with refreshments to follow. Child-care will be provided.

8:00pm: Candlelight Service filled with music, meaning and memories. The service will last about an hour. Childcare will be provided.

11:00pm: Candlelight and Communion Service. This service is quiet and contemplative, preparing our hearts to receive the mysterious and miraculous gift of God's Son.

Christmas Day on Sunday December 25

We will celebrate Christmas at 5pm. This is a service of songs, stories, and fellowship to rejoice over Jesus' birthday.



Tree of Sharing

The holiday season is upon us, the time to share OUR blessings with others.

This year, we are sponsoring families from Family Promise (formerly Interfaith Hospitality), and families from our own congregation who could use our support this Christmas.

Our traditional tree of sharing is set up in the narthex with tags listing items needed for each family member.

Please remove a tag from the tree and sign it out on the corresponding sheet.

Be sure to return your **WRAPPED** gifts with the tag attached --- **No later than December 18.**

Sister Church Coffee/Chocolate Sale

Sunday, December 4

Coffee & Chocolate are always welcome gifts for Christmas. Help support our mission work in El Salvador. Purchase affordable and gift wrapped items from our offerings of organic, fair trade coffee, chocolate, hot cocoa, and extra virgin olive oil.

All products are from Equal Exchange, which has earned an "A" rating from the "Better World Shopping Guide".



Christmas Wreath Pick Up

If you ordered a New Hope Christmas Wreath, they will be available to pick up on Dec. 4th after morning worship or before the SNL service and after the morning service on Dec. 11.



Staff Christmas love offering

We have a tradition at Covenant of giving a Christmas love offering to our pastor and staff in recognition of the wonderful service they provide throughout the year.



Please feel invited to participate and show your appreciation to our pastor and staff by placing a monetary gift in the offering plate during the next few weeks. Please note on your gift that it is for the 'Pastor & Staff Love Offering'.

We request that you give your monetary gifts through the Sunday Offering, or through the church office no later than December 19th.

Thank you for your support of our wonderful pastor and staff.

Staff Parish Relations Committee:

Barbara Beaton, Diana DeFelice, Mahlon Dirks, Jacquie Hilpert-Belzman, Bob Iller, Gordon Miscoi, Paul Stone & Beth Viren

Faith Formation Opportunity

Marty and Jayce Keeling intend to offer an experiential study of the book The Heart of Christianity beginning in January. This study will be presented as a Faith Formation group, and will last for 12 weeks. The group will meet every week, in a home or at church, depending on numbers. Sessions will last approximately 2 hours. We strongly encourage regular attendance.



We are using an excellent guide created by Tim Scorer, and we're excited about the format since it fosters individual in-depth reflection as well as sharing in the group. At each meeting there will be a time for connection, meaningful ritual, and blessing. Each person taking the class will need to have a copy of The Heart of Christianity by Marcus Borg. We will be reading one chapter each week. If you place an order with us, we will purchase the books and have them ready for you.

We need to hear from you if you would like to be part of this group. Please email at raziam@gmail.com or phone us at 466-1027. Once we have a sense of the number participating we will discern, with your input, time and place. It appears quite likely that we will be meeting on Wednesday evenings.

PARENT'S NIGHT OUT

When: Saturday, Dec. 10th from 6-9pm

Where: Covenant UMC

Who: 2-12 year olds

How much? FREE. We will accept donations toward the youth program.



Do you need a date night or a few hours to Christmas shop without your kids? The Covenant Youth Group under leadership of Youth Director Bethany Pyle, and Mrs. Canavan will be providing activities for your children on December 10 from 6-9pm. Take advantage of this rare opportunity to spoil yourself during the rush of the holidays, while your kids have a terrific time playing in our safe environment while you are out.

Please sign up! We would like to get an estimate so we can plan accordingly.

From your Pastor's Heart

-“Our Agapé Fund”

Hello Friends,

You wouldn't have had to read a newspaper or watch a television news program in the past few years to know that our economy has been sputtering. The housing market has been sluggish, and if you have tried to sell a home you are acutely aware of this fact. For anyone looking for meaningful employment (or employment of any kind), finding work has been a significant challenge. On top of all this, life happens. Particular families have had other types of challenges compound the above difficulties. There is plenty of challenging news out there, but it is not ALL bad news.

As we also know, there is an increased awareness of a spirit of generosity during the Advent and Christmas seasons. In worship on November 6th, we heard the story of the how the earliest disciples held all their property in common, for any to use as they needed (Acts 4 and 5). Following the sermon, in which I invited us to be careful of holding back in *any* way, several people approached me with a question. They were moved by the idea that those that had enough could share with those that didn't have enough, and all would be satisfied. One person told me, “I know there are people in our church and our community who are struggling, and yet we are doing fine... We have more than enough. Would it be possible for us to contribute to a fund that you could help oversee, so that people who need some financial help could receive it?” Out of several conversations like that, we have decided to begin the “Agapé Fund.” Agapé is the Greek word used in the New Testament to signify the kind of self-giving love demonstrated by God in Christ, as well as others who called themselves followers of Jesus. It is a love that is freely given and freely received.

If you are struggling financially right now, will you *please* contact me and let me know? Sometimes it is difficult, but I assure you that confidentiality will be kept. The economic challenges continue to impact more and more families and we want to help you in any way we can. If you feel called to contribute to this fund beyond your normal, sacrificial giving, please specify that your payment is for the Agapé Fund. I am so encouraged by the ways I see you living out your faith in the world. May we all continue to lift each other up, and may people come to know that you are one of Christ's followers when they see the ways you love one another.

I am honored to be your pastor this Advent season, and always.
Prayerfully,

Gregg

Pastor Gregg

In our Prayers

Bill & Rena Batt, Jim Thrapp,
Dave Wheat, Gordon Wilson.



Adult Education

Sunday, December 4, 2011

Room 13: 10:45 am

This week in adult education we embark on the second part of the series by John Dominic Crossan on the Life of Jesus. Jesus was born, a Jew, into the crossroads of a region that was continually invaded and oppressed by various armies and empires. This experience of oppression and defeat contributed to Jewish theology. The people of Israel developed a theology and an expectation that God would one day come and end their oppression, their enslavement, and the invasion of their homeland. Dr. Crossan will explore this tension and how Jewish theology reflected it. It was in the midst of this milieu that Jesus was born.

Dave Erb will be the facilitator for this week.

Kairos Outside of Eastern WA #1 at Covenant UMC! April 20-22, 2012

Servants Needed!!

Is God calling you to serve BOLDLY? If so, maybe Kairos is the ministry for you. Kairos Outside is a ministry that supports people who are affected by incarceration. If you think that this is a ministry for which you feel called to serve, please call Jen Sealey at 720-4365. There are many ways you can help. You can come and work the entire weekend, help for just a couple of hours for the weekend, or you can donate money for meal tickets. Please let Jen know how you might be willing to serve.

Charge Conference
Sunday, December 11th
at 1:00pm

**Potluck Lunch at 12:00pm. Bring
your favorite dish to share.**

Sunday Schedule

Worship9:30am
Sunday School for all ages10:45am
Sunday Night Live Service 5:00pm

Covenant Staff

PastorRev. Gregg Sealey
Church Secretary Karen King
Worship Arts/Children's Ministry Coordinator .. Sarah Marken
Pianist Laura Everett
Custodian..... Stan Gray
Assistant Custodian Kyle Smith
Youth Director..... Bethany Pyle
Nursery Supervisor..... Marcy Hansen
Preschool Director..... Angie Canavan

Office Hours:

Mon.-Fri 9:30am-3:00pm

"The Covenant Connection" is printed twice a month by Covenant United Methodist Church. **Deadline to turn in articles for the next newsletter is Tuesday, Dec. 13**

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Return Service Requested

Save the Date: There will be Life Group Link, on Wednesday, January 4th for those who are interested in joining a life group. The gathering will in the evening. More details will follow. Put the date on your calendar and plan to attend!



Have you "liked us" on Facebook?



If you are on the social media network, Facebook, look for Covenant United Methodist Church!

We post updates, including weekly scripture readings and the link to the audio sermon.

If you are away from home, but want to keep up on what's happening at church, this is a great way to stay in the loop!

2012 Upper Room Disciplines

Purchase your copy of the 2012 Upper Room *Disciplines* for \$10.

Cultivate your Relationship with God through daily prayer and meditation. The hectic pace of life, with so many things competing for our attention, can make it difficult for us to set aside time to spend with God. Just as weeds will soon overtake a garden, our spirits also suffer if we neglect them.

Purchase the 2012 Daily Devotional book, *Disciplines* from the church office.

