

Covenant Call

May 2021 Newsletter

WELCOME BACK TOGETHER! By Pastor Dan Milford

The time has come to put “congregate” back into “congregation!” Over the last 14 months we have been creative and resilient, finding new ways to gather in worship and Bible study through Facebook Live and Zoom and using old ways to stay connected through phone calls, emails, cards, and meeting outdoors. We have learned new ways to receive and process contributions, learned about online survey tools, discovered we can have communion in our own homes for the duration of the pandemic, held joint worship services with Epiphany, supported the growth of our Cub Scout Pack, and found that we could persevere. But we really miss being together as a community!

The session has been watching the rollout of the vaccine and the low infection rates in San Antonio over the last two months and has determined that we believe the time to begin gathering again as a community in more ways will be on Saturday, May 29 with a kick-off Fifth Saturday Event.

We are so grateful for all the ways you have maintained faithfulness and care for one another through the last year and for your steady and unswerving support of our life as a community even when we couldn't be together. That serves as a powerful witness and a deep encouragement.

As we begin building a sense of togetherness again, I encourage you to see the articles that share some of the upcoming opportunities this Memorial Day weekend. Outdoor work projects will begin at 9:00 a.m. to do plantings along the East side of Mission Hall and to care for our



vegetable and prayer gardens. Our Men's Bible Study is also helping us create compassion bags to share with those who we encounter that are homeless. A devotional time and gathering for lunch will follow, beginning at 11:00 a.m. under the big oak tree.

On Sunday, we will have a Mission Emphasis focus during the Sunday School hour hearing from SJRC, which “cares for children and families who have been affected by trauma, abuse and neglect, and have been removed from their homes by the Department of Family and Protective Services [and seeks to be] their safe haven and [to] offer help and hope to begin the journey of healing.” We welcome you to join us in person in Mission Hall for the presentation or online via Facebook Live. You'll find more details about these events on the next page.

So, if you haven't already done so, we encourage you to get vaccinated and join us as we celebrate doing more together in person beginning May 29!

WELCOME

Back Together Weekend Events May 29th & 30th

Fifth Saturday Work Day

Our next Fifth Saturday event will occur on Saturday, May 29th from 9:00 to 11:00 am. Our primary focus will be on planting some additional shrubs adjacent to Mission Hall and the church offices and on working in the Prayer Garden and Vegetable Garden. We also want to broaden opportunities for service, fellowship, and evangelism. In addition to the landscaping activities, the Men's Bible Study also invites the congregation to assist in assembling our traditional "Compassion Kits". Afterwards, we will be inviting the congregation to gather for a picnic. Please mark your calendars to attend and invite some friends to join us for part or all of the activities. It promises to be a day of productive service, an opportunity for some fresh air and exercise, and a time for fun and fellowship.

We will have two additional Fifth Saturday workdays in 2021 following our May event. These will be on July 31 and October 30. Stay tuned!

Picnic in the Park(ing lot)

When: Saturday May 29th, 11am - 1pm

Who: Everyone! (church, community, whomever wants to join us)

Where: Under the shade of the Oak tree behind church (by the Prayer Garden)

What: Join us for a picnic in the parking lot after our Fifth Saturday workday! Bring a chair and your favorite lunch and we will have some individually packaged snacks and drinks to grab. We will join in a time of fellowship and a short devotional in the shade of the Oak tree by the Prayer Garden. We hope you can join us for the work day earlier in the morning as well!

Mission Emphasis Sunday

We hope you'll join us Sunday morning, May 30, at 9:00 a.m. for our Missions Emphasis Sunday. To conclude Covenant's observance of mental health month, Beautiful Minds Coalition is partnering with the Mission Committee to welcome Ms. Nevetta King to speak about the widespread problem of child abuse. Ms. King is the Faith Based Coordinator for SJRC Texas, formerly known as St. Jude's Ranch for Children. As their website states, this organization "cares for children and families who have been affected by trauma, abuse and neglect, and have been removed from their homes by the Department of Family and Protective Services. We are their safe haven and offer help and hope to begin the journey of healing. Our Mission is to offer healing and hope to children and families affected by abuse, abandonment or neglect. Our Vision is that abused and neglected children will be empowered to grow up to be happy, productive and caring adults."

Ms. King also notes, "We believe that children can never have too many people to love them, we believe in strong families, and we believe in the ability to change the lives of children and families by the help of Holy Spirit & God's grace. To learn more about us visit our website at www.sjrctexas.org."

All will be able to participate in this event either by attending in person in Mission Hall or by connecting to our Facebook Live stream.



Spring Study: Qualities of Discipleship

In May, Covenant's Weekly Bible Study Groups will be wrapping up their exploration of the various characteristics of discipleship with the study, "Qualities of Discipleship: A Lenten Study" by Marianne Blickenstaff.

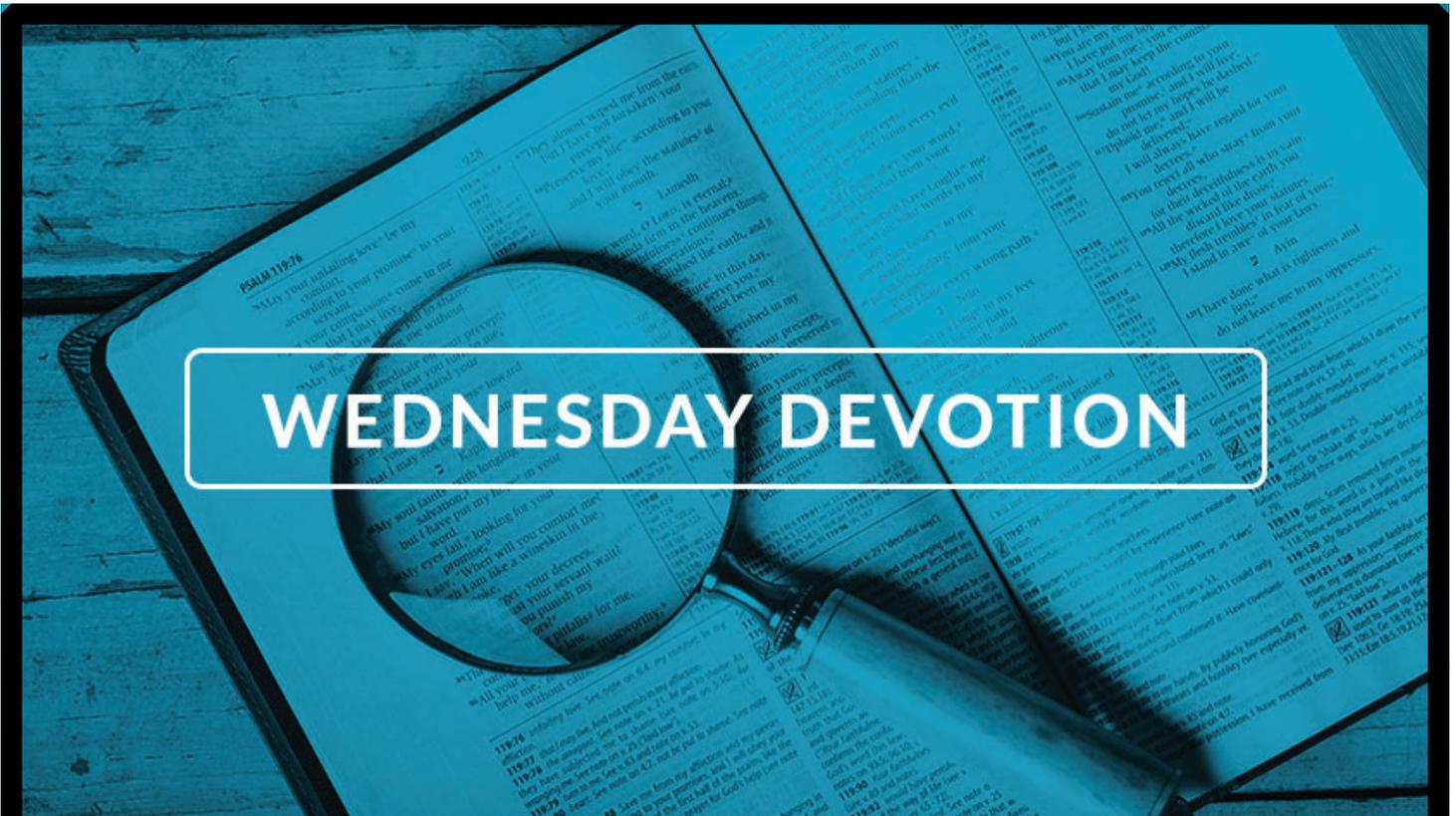
This six-session study explores various discipleship traits including: perseverance; learning and devotion; the faith to take risks; the ability to work with others; and humility. Each week will challenge adult participants to ponder the characteristics of those who follow Jesus and to look for ways the qualities can be included and strengthened in their own faith journeys.

Each of our groups are open groups, meaning anyone can join at any time. (Please note that we offer one Women's Bible Study, one Men's Bible Study, and one Young Adult Bible Study. All other groups are open to adult men and women of all ages.)

We would love to have you engage in this study with us!

**To participate in one of the Weekly Bible Study Groups, please join us via Zoom.
If you have any questions, please reach out to Chad Bosse (chad@covenantcares.org).**

- Tuesday afternoon (1:00 p.m.)—Cathy Monkman:
Meeting ID: 933 2043 7735, Password: 881541
- Tuesday evening (7:00 p.m.)—Dan Milford & Martha Wright:
Meeting ID: 876 4294 3211, Password: 696769
- Young Adult Bible Study - Tuesday evening (7:15 p.m.)—Chad Bosse:
Meeting ID: 961 6414 3935, Password: covenant
- Women's Wednesday Morning Bible Study (10:00 a.m.)—Demarius Douthit:
Meeting ID: 956 2656 8717, Password: 672332
- Thursday evening (7:00 p.m.)—Sharon Fowler:
Meeting ID: 933 6556 7445, Password: 495046
- Men's Saturday Morning Bible Study (7:30 a.m.)— Jay Pitcher & Al Kissling:
Meeting ID: 998 7565 1984, Password: 659935



WEDNESDAY DEVOTION

Each week, the Christian Education Team posts a short devotion on our Facebook Page. We invite you to view them each week and consider “sharing” or “liking” them. Our hope is that these devotions will be a helpful addition to your week.

We invite you to see all of our weekly content by visiting Covenant’s Facebook Page which can be found at this address: <https://www.facebook.com/covenant.satx>.



2021 Graduates! Graduation Recognition is May 30th!

College and high school graduates will be recognized at the 10:30am worship on Sunday, May 30th.

On Graduation Sunday in May, we'll be showing a special slideshow of pictures of these 2021 graduates during worship.

We're asking for 12-14 pictures of our High School Graduates and 3-5 pictures of our College Graduates to be sent to Chad Bosse (chad@covenantcares.org) or put on a Flash Drive and place them in Chad's office box.

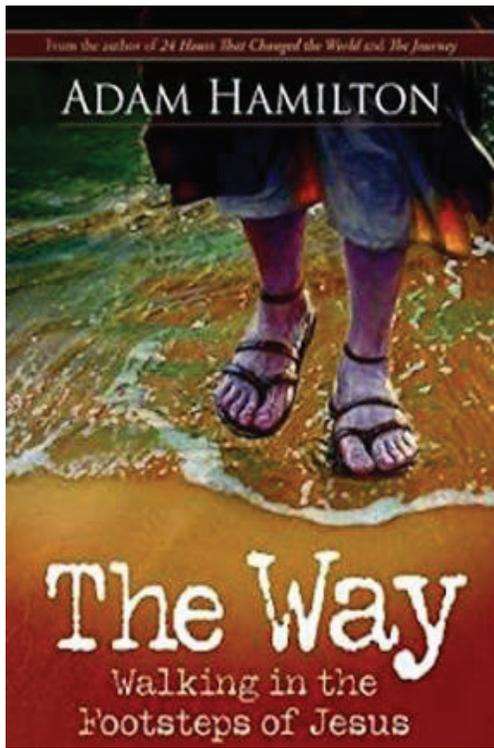
If you have not been able to send your pictures to Chad Bosse (chad@covenantcares.org) quite yet, and wish to have them as part of that slide show in recognition of your graduation, please contact Chad Bosse as soon as you are able!

Adult Study

The Way: Walking in the Footsteps of Jesus
by Adam Hamilton

Sunday Mornings @ 9:00am

Organized and led by:
Sharon Fowler and Chad Bosse



Travel with Adam Hamilton as he retraces the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. This Sunday morning Adult Study will feature fascinating video from Adam's personal travels to the Holy Land which gives you a "first-person" experience of the settings in which Jesus lived and served. This series includes Adam's biblical wisdom and historical knowledge to help provide

thoughtful and insightful commentary on the Scriptures that will be explored.

***Please note there will be no Sunday School on May 9th due to Mother's Day**

****Please note that there will be a Mission Sunday presentation on May 30th**

May 2nd - "Calming the Storm" (The Sea of Galilee)

May 16th - "Sinners, Outcasts, and the Poor" (Samaria)

May 23rd - "The Final Week" (Jerusalem)

We invite you to join us for this study during the Lenten season on Sunday mornings at 9:00am. To join us via Zoom, please use the following information:

<https://zoom.us/j/91235912696?pwd=MUlvU1JtZW1BWGlncWZlcXpqSTBpdz09>

Meeting ID: 912 3591 2696 Password: 723266



Children's Sunday School - Growing in Grace & Gratitude

Sundays @ 9:00am

***There will be no Sunday School on May 9th due to Mother's Day**

Covenant's Children's Sunday School class features the curriculum, "Growing in Grace & Gratitude", which helps transform the lives of children and those who love them, shaped by grace and gratitude. Each session shares a Bible story that reveals God's grace for us. Through fun, age-appropriate activities, and prayer, children will celebrate the meaning of this grace in their lives as they encounter a living God.

During the month of May, we'll continue to focus on how Jesus' story continues with his disciples after the Resurrection. We'll return to some stories in Mark where Jesus teaches about how to follow God's law of love by providing for hungry people on the Sabbath, healing a little girl, and showing us what it means to serve one another. These stories will help us see how we are being formed, along with the original disciples, in a life of faithful following. We hope your child will join us on Sunday mornings! For the Zoom link and password, please contact chad@covenantcares.org

Beautiful Minds Coalition



Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 NIV Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work; If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up!

“... but pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up” This is more than a literal scenario of helping a friend who has fallen. The ways in which any of us can stumble or fall are innumerable. We know that life’s ups and downs and twists and turns can easily disrupt the inertia that is keeping us on track and send us careening into a dark place. Having friends or a support group of any kind may make the difference between getting back on track or spiraling into a dark place.

May is Mental Health Month, a time for working to reduce the stigma of mental illness and for spreading information about how to find help. This month we will also make note of the role of support groups as a resource for helping deal with life’s struggles such as mental illness, substance abuse, codependency, and family violence including child abuse and domestic violence. What help is available? What does it look like to help too much?

NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) sponsors many types of support groups and classes. Pre-Covid, these groups met in locations throughout San Antonio. Currently many groups are online. The groups share a common member component, such as family-to-family or peer-to-peer. Support groups offer the benefit of speaking with others who have shared life experiences and have insight and encouragement to offer. Contact NAMI-San Antonio at 210-734-3349.

Support groups are a vital part of follow-up care after someone completes a substance abuse rehabilitation program. Narcotics Anonymous (210-434-0665) and Alcoholics Anonymous (210-821-6325) have numerous meeting sites and times, both virtual and in person. These groups offer a sponsor to walk with members beginning their sobriety and offer life-long support in a non-judgmental setting.

A complication in the family and relationships of a mentally ill or substance-abusing person is a condition known as codependency. Codependency exists when a person is controlled or manipulated by another who is, or becomes, affected with a pathological dependence on meeting the needs of another person. The codependent person may see their actions as helpful or may even be afraid to not act. This relationship is unhealthy for the codependent, who often ignores their own needs, and may delay treatment for the mentally ill person or addict. Group therapy exists for codependency and support groups are also important. To locate a group, contact CoDependents Anonymous at 888-444-2359 or go to their website <https://coda.org/find-a-meeting/>.

Many of life’s tragic stories have their roots in mental illness, unrecognized, unacknowledged, untreated or self-treated by a substance that makes life worse for the user or someone else. Domestic violence and child abuse can be part of the chaos when mental health problems or substance abuse exist in a home. Domestic abuse victims should call 911 in emergencies. They can also call 211 (United Way) or the Battered Women’s Shelter (210-733-8810) for help and referrals. These and other resources can offer help with an exit plan.

Anyone with knowledge of child abuse should call 911 in an emergency. Urgent cases should be reported to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services at 800-252-5400. Use online reporting at <https://www.txabusehotline.org/> if you believe the situation can wait 2-3 days. There are many agencies which offer help for children who are removed from their homes. These agencies are always in need of donations and some have opportunities for volunteers. We will hear from one of these agencies, SJRC Texas (formerly known as St. Jude’s Ranch for Children), on May 30 when their representative comes to Covenant to speak at the invitation of the Missions Committee.

Some people are fortunate to have friends or family who will help connect them with resources and stand by them no matter what. Sadly, many of us do not have anyone to assist on what is likely to be the most difficult journey of their lives. Support from those who have walked your path may make the difference between success and continuing to struggle. One way we can all help is to encourage, call, drive, or whatever is needed to connect a friend or family member with a group to help them. If the first try doesn’t click, keep trying.



stewardship

Thank you for giving your Time, Talents & Treasures to Covenant Presbyterian Church!

When you give to Covenant, you are responding in gratitude to God and strengthening a body that acts in countless ways to make God's love known and felt in the lives of people who are part of this community, Greater San Antonio, and far beyond. Some ways Covenant helps share God's love include:

- **Comforting** those who grieve the loss of a loved one;
- **Forming disciples** who are motivated by God's love and forgiveness rather than fearful of punishment;
- Leading a national effort to help congregations engage in **mental health ministry**;
- **Offering worship** that is prayerful, moving, thoughtful, and relevant;
- Helping people of all ages **engage in mission and service** to others;
- **Creating community** that values all people, making a particular effort to welcome into community and leadership people who have traditionally been marginalized; and thereby
- **Sharing the light of God's welcoming, transformative love.**

**We hope you consider giving financially to support the life and ministry of the church.
Please consider contributing to each of the funds below.**

OPERATIONS FUND

Contributions to the Operations Fund support the budget. This includes educational ministries, worship & music, fellowship & congregational care, the operation/upkeep of the church facilities (including utilities, maintenance repairs, & building improvements), and staff salaries.

UNDESIGNATED MISSIONS FUND

Contributions to this fund will be allocated by the Missions Committee as needs and opportunities arise throughout the year. This will include gifts to local and global disasters in addition to ongoing support our mission partnerships of the church. Funds will also help support our church Food Pantry and Community Garden.

There are several easy ways to donate to the church:

ONLINE BILL PAY

We can work with you to set up an online bill pay schedule. You will set up a "Covenant Presbyterian Church" as the "payee" and you will schedule either one-time or recurring payments to the church. We are not currently processing direct account-to-account transactions; rather you will need to select the bank "mail to" option and a physical check will be mailed from your bank to the Covenant Office. Please contact Bethany Borak in the Church Office for more information on how to set up the account. Most banks do not charge for this service.

ZELLE APP

If you are able to use Zelle (an app that you download on your phone) for your giving to the church, it is a quick way to donate funds and have them deposited immediately. On Zelle, you can find us through our linked email: finance@covenantcares.org to be sure you get the right Covenant Presbyterian Church. In making your donation, when it asks "What's this for?" please enter "Operations," "Missions," or whatever designation that you wish it to go towards.

OFFERING PLATE or MAIL A CHECK TO THE CHURCH

Cash/Check offerings can be put in the offering plate as you leave church on Sunday mornings OR feel free to send checks to our church mailbox. We pick up the mail daily. Our mailing address is: Covenant Presbyterian Church, 211 Roletto Drive, San Antonio, TX 78213.

Covenant Presbyterian Church
211 Roletto Drive
San Antonio, Texas 78213

Website: www.covenantcares.org
Email: office@covenantcares.org
Phone: 210-342-5253

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GET CONNECTED

- **Church News by Email** – We send an email several times a month to inform members and friends on church news and events. Email **office@covenantcares.org** to have your email added to the list.
- **Website:** www.covenantcares.org - See recorded sermon videos, weekly devotionals, access to event calendar, and links to Zoom Bible Studies.
- **Watch Live Worship Services on Facebook**
<https://www.facebook.com/covenant.satx/>
- **Prayer Chain** – send an email to covenantprayerchain211@gmail.com