

Covenant Call

July 2022 Newsletter

Belonging Brought to Life By Denise Haley, Elder

Over the past month, “belonging” has been shown to us in many different ways.

We have belonged together as we shared joys. College graduates Alexander Manibusan, Alex Moreno, and Chad Bosse have achieved academic success in their undergraduate and master’s degree programs, and we celebrate with them. Cub Scout Max Gonzalez “crossed over” from Cub Scouts to Boy Scouts and is now in our new Scout Troop 537, and we celebrate with him and all the Gonzalez family. We also celebrate all the boys, girls, and their families involved in scouting here at the church, and that we have been the chartering organization for more than 40 years. Enjoying a breezy evening at the San Antonio Missions game on May 31st that was organized by our Young Adults was a fun way for us to belong together.

We have belonged together as we shared grief. We have been devastated by the mass shooting in Uvalde on May 24th and so much suffering and unspeakable pain. We have had losses within our Covenant family. Rev. Dr. David Roach, beloved retired pastor who with his wife Sharon was new to our community, passed away on May 30th after having a heart attack and other complications. Sean Brower, beloved son of Helen McDaniel who had been an active part of our community when he was younger, struggled with mental health issues and died on June 4th. We continue to pray for peace, comfort and healing for Sharon and Helen and their families, the Pilgrim Presbyterian community, and for countless people we don’t know who are grieving loss.

We have belonged together in many other ways. Worship on Sundays, in person or on Facebook Live, connects us. Sunday School and Mission Focus Sundays and our 2nd Wednesday evening study of 1st Corinthians (this month on July 13th) offer opportunities for us to connect and feel that sense of belonging. An Independence Day celebration on July 3rd and a Back to School event in August will give us even more opportunities to gather together and help strengthen that sense of belonging.

What about the people in our community who are not able to attend Sunday worship or participate in events, people who do attend and don’t feel all that connected or much of a sense of belonging, or people who feel as connected as they would like to be, regardless of their presence at church or events? There are many opportunities for us as a caring, welcoming community to help everyone feel connected and that they belong – cards, calls,

visits, home communion, welcoming and introducing at church, and keeping people informed through this newsletter, church email news, our website, and the Prayer Chain are some of the ways we do that.

The most important thing, though, is that we remember that we belong to God, and that’s the sense of belonging we can be sure of, always. We can all share that message with people we know and meet. And, as always, you’re always welcome and encouraged to get in touch with any session member if you have questions or suggestions. We’d love to hear from you.



Class of 2025 Elders and Trustee Nomination Form

Seeking God's Servant Leaders - *The Nominating Committee requests your recommendations and input as it seeks to identify the men and women God has called and prepared to serve as leaders of our congregation.*

ELDERS - are charged with the responsibility of governance and spiritual direction within the church. They oversee and provide leadership in areas such as: Worship, Mission, Evangelism, Fellowship, Christian Education, Personnel, Communications, Building & Grounds, Congregational Care, Finance and Stewardship.

TRUSTEES - serve as stewards of the physical facilities of our church. They oversee legal needs of our congregation.

Please help the committee by giving specific reasons for recommending your candidate(s) such as: evidence of their love and commitment to Jesus Christ and his church, specific examples of service in the church, special gifts and talents or experience. We encourage you to recommend yourself if you feel called to serve.

Name of Nominee: _____

I nominate this person for service as an: Elder Trustee

What specific strengths/gifts will this person bring to this position?

Name of Nominee: _____

I nominate this person for service as an: Elder Trustee

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The Nominating Committee, consisting of Ruling Elders Denise Haley, Demarius Douthit and Norma Jean Demmer, Trustee Jay Pitcher, and Congregation-at-Large members Pam Klinzing, Bill Lucks, and Shirley Poteet, will begin its work in the coming weeks to call four Ruling Elders and one Trustee for the Class of 2025. Get in touch with any member of the Nominating Committee or complete the form above and return it to the church office. You can also email the church office directly at office@covenantcares.org.



Family Movie Night!

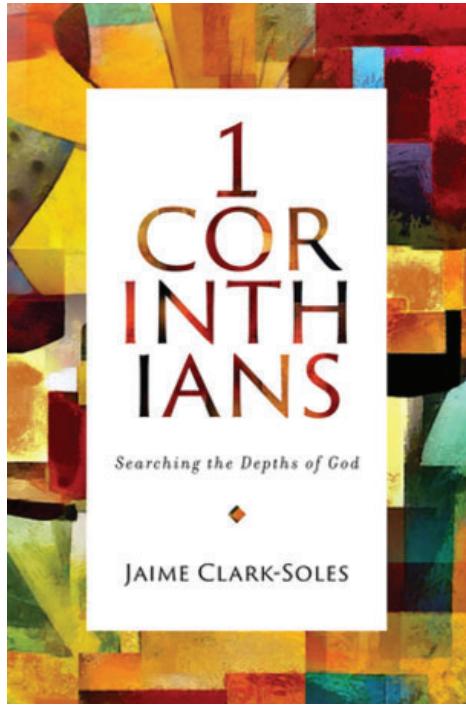
Minions (PG)

July 16th

Showtime @ 5:30pm (Doors open at 5:00pm)

“Uh oh.”

Families are invited to Mission Hall to follow Stuart, Kevin, and Bob as they help their fellow Minions in their quest to find a new leader. Minions (2015 – rated PG) is an animated comedy tracing the adventures and origins of the Minions. We invited families to bring their bananas and googly eyes to watch this movie together in Mission Hall on Saturday, July 16th. Please feel free to bring your own snacks. Covenant will provide popcorn, water, and lemonade. We hope you will join us!



POTLUCK & STUDY

2nd Wednesday of each month beginning in June

Doors open at 5:45pm for dinner

Please join us in Mission Hall for a once-a-month Wednesday evening beginning with a potluck dinner. We will study and discuss 1 Corinthians, the story of the first Christian community told by Paul.

We will use the text and video series *1 Corinthians: Searching the Depths of God* by Jaime Clark-Soles.

First Corinthians is one of the most gripping books in the Bible. In this letter, Paul, the complicated, layered apostle, writes to the people trying a wild new social experiment known as a Christian community. Not unlike the church today, this community dealt with factions, sexual immorality, gender issues, money issues, theological questions, lawsuits, problems in worship, and problems in leadership.

In *1 Corinthians: Searching the Depths of God*, Jaime Clark-Soles explores these topics and the awe inspiring, breathtaking world of the first-century church. Examining the teachings of Paul, she addresses church history, the logic of the cross, spiritual gifts, death, afterlife and the resurrection, human sexuality, and the joys and challenges of living in community. Participants will learn to look at 1 Corinthians from a variety of viewpoints and apply its lessons to their own faith.

Summer Weekly Small Group Bible Studies

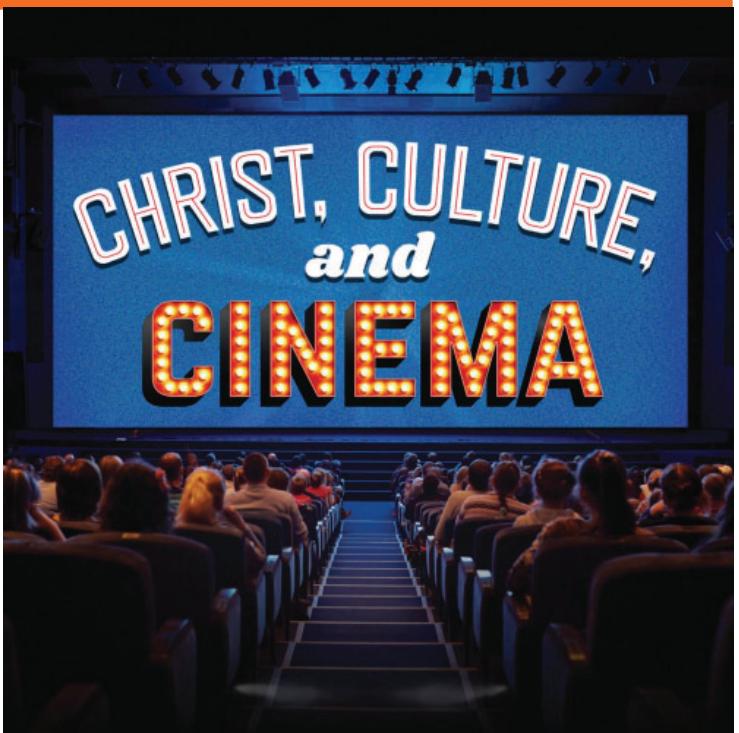
Christ, Culture, and Cinema: How Faith and Films Intersect

by Jeffrey Skopak

Movies have influenced American culture for years: from the release of Star Wars in 1977, to cult classics such as The Princess Bride. Entire universes have been made from movies, like the Marvel Universe, and they live on in the hearts of those who loved them. But how do even the most secular looking movies intersect not only with the culture, but with Christianity? How can some of the most loved movies of the 21st century circle back to teach about the faith and show Christ?

This Summer, Covenant's Small Groups will explore several different movies using Jeffrey Skopak's study which examines how movies reflect today's culture. Groups will study seven different movies-Gladiator, Toy Story, Hidden Figures, Captain America: The First Avenger, Judy, A Star is Born, and The Princess Bride-to see how the three C's work together in the world (Christ, Culture, & Cinema), and how movies can help us understand where Christ's love needs to go.

Covenant has several different Small Group Bible Studies that meet. Each group will set its own schedule for meeting this Summer. If you are interested in participating in this study, please reach out to Chad Bosse (chad@covenantcares.org) and he'll be happy to get you in touch with one of the groups that meet!



THE SIMPLEST WAY TO CHANGE THE WORLD

BIBLICAL HOSPITALITY
AS A WAY OF LIFE

NEW! Adult Sunday School *Simplest Way to Change the World Paul* by Dustin Willis & Brandon Clements

Emmaus Classroom @ 9:00am
Begins July 24th

How to make disciples using hospitality.

Deep down, every Christian wants to make a difference. But for many of us, the years come and go and we never do. The good news is: *change can be as simple as opening your front door.*

The Simplest Way to Change the World is about biblical hospitality and its power for the gospel. Since people will sooner enter a living room than a church, hospitality is a natural and effective way to build relationships for Christ. You'll learn:

- How the home can be a hub for community
- How hospitality leads to joy, purpose, and belonging
- How it grows families to love the things of God
- How it's not about being the perfect host
- How to be hospitable regardless of your living space

Hospitality is a beautiful legacy of the church, and a great way to make disciples. As you open your life up to others, you share in the very character of God and experience His joy. And you get to witness lives change—including your own.

Participants can purchase *The Simplest Way to Change the World* by Dustin Willis and Brandon Clements from their favorite bookseller. The class will take a closer look at the concepts in the text, and share ways in which we all can use our gift of hospitality to affect our world.

We invite you to join us on Sunday mornings—either on our campus in the Emmaus Classroom or online via Zoom for this unique study! Zoom information can be found on our webpage:

<https://www.covenantcares.org/sunday-school/>



Support Covenant Community Garden

The gardeners of Covenant would like to Challenge you to use some of your time to improve the Gardens of Covenant.

Here's a great way to lend your aid. Become a WaterSaver Rewards Member, participate in WaterSaver Rewards events which earn reward dollars that you can donate to the work in these gardens.

Read the information below to get the lowdown on the SAWS program. If you'd like more information speak with Carrie Pitcher, Martha Wright, or Martha Hernandez.

Thank you for considering this easy opportunity to learn something new and aid the gardens of Covenant.

WaterSaver Rewards

With WaterSaver Rewards, it pays to be a WaterSaver — literally!

How It Works

STEP 1: Become a Rewards Member
SAWS customers, sign up to be a WaterSaver Rewards member online GardenStyleSA.com/rewards.

STEP 2: Get Involved

Visit the GardenStyleSA.com calendar and look for WaterSaver Rewards events and programs.

STEP 3: Enjoy Rewards

Attend qualified events and sign in with your Rewards number to get credit towards coupons. Coupons will be automatically emailed to you when you've earned 3, 5, and 7 points.

Three points

Earns you a \$30 coupon to be used at participating local retailers toward a variety of water conserving materials including:

- Plants
- Mulch
- Rain barrels
- Birdbaths and bird feeders
- Compost
- Other landscaping supplies

Five points

Earns a \$50 coupon toward the purchase of the above items from participating local retailers.

Seven points

Earns you a \$70 coupon to be used at participating local retailers toward these water-saving garden materials. Fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides and rocks are not eligible items. Rewards points will be awarded within two weeks. Rewards coupons expire 180 days after issue.

WHICH WAY, LORD?

Exploring Your Life's Purpose in the Journeys of Paul



**NEW! Adult Sunday School
Emmaus Classroom @ 9:00am
Begins June 5th - July 17**

As Christians, we hunger to know and live out God's purposes for our lives. But how do we know for certain that our choices are moving us in the right direction?

Through many detours, adversity, and time spent thinking about his life, Paul completely reoriented his understanding of faith and God's purpose for his life. God placed Paul in a community that shared God's love with him, and Paul underwent several years of training in preparation for his ministry.

Discover how to discern and follow God's leading, explore ways God can use you and your life experience, respond to God's signals, endure hardships and doubts, and persevere with hope and faith. Rediscover the truths that you are wonderfully made, created for purpose, and equipped to live a life of significance. Join us in traveling together to find your purpose.

We invite you to join us on Sunday mornings—either on our campus in the Emmaus Classroom or online via Zoom for this unique study! Zoom information can be found on our webpage:

<https://www.covenantcares.org/sunday-school/>



Children's Sunday School Growing in Grace & Gratitude Sundays @ 9:00am

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.

This summer, we explore what is NEW! With the rush of a mighty wind and flames igniting the spirits of the followers of Jesus, life was breathed into a NEW church. We'll learn about NEW disciples and how they worked to spread the message to everyone that Jesus provides NEW life.

Our Children's Sunday School class will meet online via Zoom as well as in-person in our Esperanza classroom. Parents can access the Zoom link and password by contacting Chad Bosse (chad@covenantcares.org). We hope your child will join us on Sunday mornings!



Shame and Guilt: One is Healthy; One is Destructive. Which is Which

"Shame is a soul eating emotion." – C.G. Jung

He is 45 years old and still hears his teacher's voice saying "Sean Michael, you are worthless. You should be ashamed. You will never be worth anything" when he makes a mistake or argues with his wife. He had been shamed so often growing up that it is the "default setting" in his head when he was not perfect. It immobilizes him. His shoulders sag. He looks at the floor and hopes people will not notice him. He feels nauseous. What he is experiencing is shame, a debilitating feeling that renders him powerless. It is not the same as guilt, though he thinks it is the same. So, what is the difference? And. Why does it matter?

Definition - Brené Brown, Ph.D., LMSW, describes shame as “the intensely painful feeling or experience of believing we are flawed and therefore **unworthy of love and belonging**.”

Characteristics - Denial and a desire for concealment are part of the phenomenology of shame itself.

- People feeling shame often report a desire to flee from the situation, to “sink into the floor” and disappear.
- We shield ourselves from shame with things like substance use or acting out with angry/ violent behavior.
- Shame interferes with intimacy, family, community and relationships by causing us to:
 - Move away from others by hiding, withdrawing, keeping secrets, and silencing ourselves. Isolation.
 - Move towards others by seeking to please- being overly compliant/ subservient
 - Move against others to gain power over them; being aggressive.

Domestic Violence and Shame- When challenged by his common law wife about his lack of ability to keep fulltime employment and provide for the family, he lashed out at her. It tapped into his childhood memories of “never being good enough” for his demanding, single mother who expected him to take care of the house at age 6. He reported that he got the same upset stomach when “my

wife attacks me as when my mother did.” He replayed his mother’s favorite line, “You are never going to amount to anything; you are worthless.” in his head. He often yelled, “Get off my back. If it weren’t for your nagging, I could focus on getting a job. You are worthless.” The violence made him feel better for a while because it drove his wife away. The pain of being criticized by a “significant other” was temporarily reduced.

- **With shame, "bad" behavior is not separate from a "bad" self.** In guilt the behavior is separated from the person’s identity.

The distinction between guilt and shame was recognized as far back as the Torah and Yom Kippur (1440 B.C.E.), Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks (1948-2020) states:

“Shame cannot be removed by forgiveness. The victim of our crime may have forgiven us, but we still feel defiled by the knowledge that our name has been disgraced, our reputation harmed, our standing damaged. We still feel the stigma, the dishonor, the degradation. That is why an immensely powerful and dramatic ceremony had to take place during which people could feel and symbolically see their sins carried away to the desert, to no-man’s-land. A similar ceremony took place when a leper was cleansed. The priest took two birds, killed one, and released the other to fly away across the open fields.¹¹ Again the act was one of cleansing, not atoning, and had to do with shame, not guilt.”

In modern literature, **shame and guilt are different in that** guilt generally refers to acts that the person thinks can be made right **while shame refers to character flaws that define the person.** Bad behavior equals a bad person in shame. Bad behavior that can be made right does not equal a bad person; it is guilt. The difference is important in that guilt generally has positive value because it leads to change. It is correlated with lower suicide rates and less depression and anxiety, and better relationships than shame.

- **When feeling guilt**, people are aware of their effects on others (e.g., how much a careless remark hurt a friend or how much they disappointed their parents).
- **When feeling shame**, people worry about how others evaluate them and what to expect in the future.
- “I’ll never be forgiven. I’ll never be good enough. I’ll never be good enough; I’ll never be able to live with _____.”

Pause for a moment and ask yourself, *Does God expect me to feel guilty about falling short of his expectations or does he expect shame? Does saying the truth in love imply the truth should result in feeling shame or guilt?*

Recognizing Shame

- Shame is felt when we anticipate being judged as lacking or inadequate in our intellect, appearance, or abilities.
- Shame is the visceral experience of being disconnected, shunned, and expelled from social connectedness.
- Shame activates the same brain regions activated during pain. It results in “queasiness” in the stomach.
- Threats of abandonment and death- are triggering events in shame and are stored as visceral, sensory, motor and emotional memories.
- Any situation that devalues the self and triggers shame can also trigger anger or rage- look behind anger.

Managing shame - In 5 Ways to Silence Shame, David Sack, M.D., wrote: Posted January 13, 2015

- Bring shame into the light.
 - Acknowledge shame and talk about the shaming events in the past with the trusted people in our lives, the ones who know we aren't perfect and love us anyway start reduces our fear of rejection and our sense of being unworthy.
- Untangle what we are feeling.
 - Distinguish between shame and guilt- Being “bad” means not being able to change. [Guilt, can motivate us to make reparations or follow a new path.](#)
 - Recognize that “humiliation” or “embarrassment” are often more accurate label. Pay attention to the things you say to yourself about yourself and your worth.
 - This point highlights the importance of listening with empathy. Empathy is about listening for the emotional load specific words carry for the specific individual. When we hear these words from others or when we hear ourselves say them, we need to pause and ask if we are using them the same as when we hear the word shame? It is probably a good idea to ask, “What do you hear when you hear the word “humiliate” or “embarrassed?”

To answer before listening - that is folly and shame.

~Proverbs 18:13

- Separate what we do from who we are.
 - Defining ourselves by our actions and how others judge us, puts the power of our happiness and self-worth in the hands of others.
 - When our whole identity isn't on the line, we are freer to change.
- Recognize triggers.
 - Triggers can vary between individuals and cultures, however, according to Brene Brown, Ph.D., LMSW, there are certain triggers that are more common in our society, than others, such as: powerlessness for men and unattractiveness for women.
- Explore connections.
 - Shame is, at its essence, a fear of disconnection from others.
 - By making non-judgmental connection with others, we may start to say to themselves, "This is human; I am human; others are human." Rather than withdrawing, appeasing or attacking others.
- Learn to forgive ourselves.
- So, does our God expect us to feel guilt or shame? Consider:
 - We are made in the image of God.
 - All have sinned and fallen short
 - Love your neighbor as yourself.
 - God so loved the world, that he gave his only son.
 - Does God think we are beyond repair?

Isaiah 50:7

But the Lord GOD helps me; therefore, I have not been disgraced; therefore, I have set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame.



Mission Focus Sunday - July 31st

The mission statement of Habitat for Humanity (H4H) is "Seeking to put God's love into action, Habitat for Humanity brings people together to build homes, communities and hope". When I sit down to write an article about the Presbyterian Cluster Habitat, I ask myself if I should continue to start with the H4H Mission Statement. The answer remains "yes" as revisiting the Mission Statement gives me (and I pray you) the opportunity to see if I still want to ally myself with this ministry. What I next consider is does H4H give me a place to put my Time, Talent and Treasure to work.

Please accept this invitation to **Mission Focus Sunday, July 31st, beginning at 9:00** am with a light breakfast. The Faith Relations representative, Becca Halbert will share details about the progress of the build at Rancho Carlota. I am confident you will hear familiar and new reasons to continue to support this ministry.

Save the Date - Holy Smoke, the Clusters' joint fundraiser is scheduled for Sunday, October 16th with dinner, raffle and program.

Giving Thanks - I will soon complete the payment of my 20 year no-interest loan, and this Habitat homeowner is reminded of Luke 17:15-16. *"One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him—and he was a Samaritan."* On my knees with hands raised in praise I sing ¡Gracias Señor!

If you would like to make a donation please make checks payable to: "Presbyterian Cluster Habitat", and mail to the church, or place in the offering plate. To clarify, only contributions made to the Presbyterian Cluster Habitat will go towards the Presbyterian Cluster build. Donations to Habitat for Humanity will be used by that wonderful ministry, but will not be applied to the Cluster's financial responsibility. ~~In Christ, Martha G. Flores



What is Presbyterian Pan American School?

Pan Am is a college preparatory school that educates and empowers high school students for leadership in the global community. The school, located in Kingsville, TX, is fully accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. It is supported by PCUSA and a recipient of One Great Hour of Sharing special offerings. The student body is made up of youth from all over the world – Rwanda, South Korea, Mexico, South America and the US.

Through this mix of cultures, students learn, work, worship and fellowship with one another. This unique high school experience prepares them to meet the challenges of our communities worldwide.

I began serving on the Board of Trustees this year. Pan Am is my high school alma mater – Class of '82! On May 22nd, I had the pleasure of attending the graduation ceremony for 24 Seniors. I was amazed at how much these young people were able to accomplish, especially after coming off of 2 years of the pandemic. Despite all they had to endure, they completed their course of studies successfully and were accepted into colleges and universities here in the US and in their own countries. Several students also participated in college dual credit classes with some completing as many as 27 credit hours that are transferable into Texas universities.

During the ceremony, the Seniors sang "On Eagles Wings" beautifully, and their Valedictorian delivered her speech in English, (perfect) Spanish, and her own language – Korean! After the ceremony, the graduates gathered in a circle in front of the school Chapel, and holding hands, they prayed one last time together – a beautiful tradition each graduating class honors every year.

If you would like to learn more about the school, or want to contribute to their Textbook Fund, please contact me, or anyone on the Missions Ministry team. ~Vicki Moreno

Day Trip to Landa Park Aquatic Complex!

Saturday, July 30th - 10:00am – 4:00pm

Landa Park Aquatic Complex
350 Aquatic Circle
New Braunfels, TX 78130

Young Adults, Youth, Children & Families are invited to join us for a fun day in the cool waters at Landa Park in New Braunfels. **This park features an Olympic Pool and a Zero Depth Pool (for the little ones).** In addition, the Springfed Pool is fed by the Comal Springs and stays at 72 degrees year round! Families love coming together to relax, swim, and picnic together!

Bring swim wear, towel, lawn chairs, snacks, a lunch, and your own drinks. Leave glass, Styrofoam, & personal grills at home.

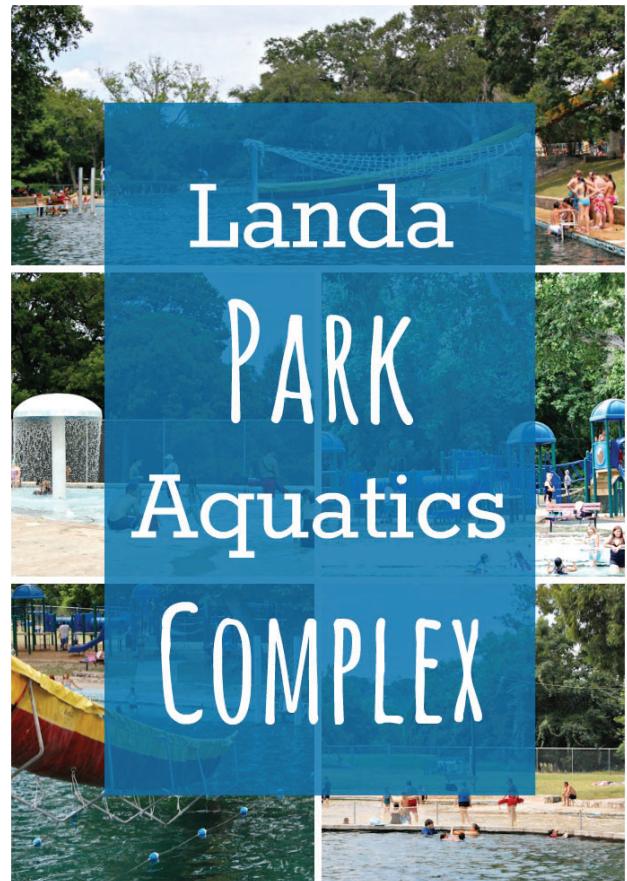
The YAY ministry team will set up a spot for Covenant to gather together. Come and go as you please! **But do let us know that your plan on attending by e-mailing Chad (chad@covenantcares.org) by July 23rd.**

Admission Prices:

Children (3-12) - \$7
Adults (13+) - \$8

Questions? Contact Chad (chad@covenantcares.org).

We hope you will join us!



*"Take me out to the ballgame,
Take me out to the crowd;
Buy me some peanuts and Cracker Jack,
I don't care if I never get back.
Let me root, root, root for the home team,
If they don't win, it's a shame.
For it's one, two, three strikes, you're out,
At the old ball game."*



San Antonio Missions Baseball Game Night

Tuesday, August 2nd, 7:05pm

Nelson W. Wolff Stadium

**Join us for a "homerun" of a time.
Contact Rebekah Hernandez or Denise Haley for more information.**

FAMILY WEEKEND

Covenant's Young Adult and Youth Ministry Team held a Family Weekend in which they transformed Mission Hall into a life-sized version of the game Candy Land! Families moved around the game to hear about the Parable of the Prodigal found in Luke 15 in a unique way. Many thanks to Martha Hernandez, Rebekah Hernandez, David Moser, and Martha Wright for their tremendous help in making this weekend memorable.



Maintenance and Technology Update

If you have not already seen our newly refurbished park benches outside the front narthex, please make sure to take a look. Don Clark generously provided his time and talents to make the benches look brand new. Please take a moment to let Don know what a beautiful job he did and to show your appreciation. If you see similar opportunities where you would like to apply your time and talent to help maintain or beautify our church, please contact Mike Flinn (Maintenance and Technology Elder).



We are particularly in need of someone with a technology bent who might be interested in learning to operate our sanctuary audiovisual system.

“Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there’ and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.” Matthew 17:20-21



SAVE
THE
DATE

Summer Family Events

July 16th – **Family Movie Night**

July 30th – **Landa Park Day**

August 21st – **Back to School Sunday**

Covenant Presbyterian Church
211 Roledo Drive
San Antonio, Texas 78213

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

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- **Website:** www.covenantcares.org - See recorded sermon videos, weekly devotionals, access to event calendar, and links to Zoom Bible Studies.
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- **Prayer Chain** – send an email to covenantprayerchain211@gmail.com