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Holy Happenings

July 2010

Celebrate With Us Sunday, July 4th!!



Lonestar Bluegrass Band

8:30 & 11:00 Worship Services

Indoor Picnic in Covenant Hall

12:00pm

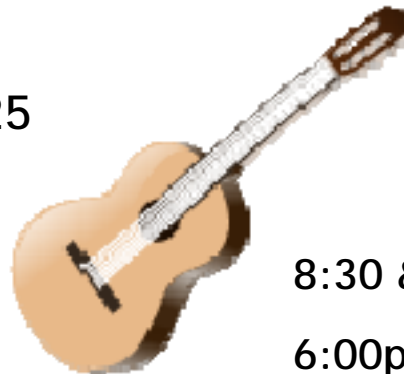
**Hot dogs provided; bring your favorite picnic item
and join us!**

**For more information, see
Page 3**



Rhett Butler

Sunday, July 25



8:30 & 11:00 Services

6:00pm Concert

See Page 3 for
more information!

A Time of Renewal



Rev. Jay Jackson
Senior Pastor

Welcome
to our
new
members

Ann
Adams

Vonyee
Miller

I confess, as I begin this article, that I am making a huge faux pas by seeking to communicate two different things in the same article. However, I feel that both are equally important for me to share with you this month.

First of all, I want to share with you a word about my upcoming sabbatical. After worship on July 18th, LeAnn and I will be leaving on two week trip together. She will then fly home to return to work as I continue for an additional two weeks alone. For this four week period, I will not be in communication with the congregation and will not be available in any pastoral capacity. During this sabbatical, Stephanie will be pastorally in charge of Holy Covenant. I assure you that you are in good hands. She will also have others assisting her during this time. I know that each of you will step up to provide her and the church with the support it needs to function effectively without my presence.

This sabbatical is very important for me and my continued ministry. As I begin my 5th year with you at Holy Covenant, I also begin my 15th year in pastoral ministry. Without boring you with the details, the responsibilities and ensuing energy drain on a pastor are enormous, particularly on someone like me who pushes the limits of his reservoir of energy. In 15 years, I have served churches while attending seminary full-time, moving four times, raising three children, experiencing the pain of a divorce, remarrying, and adding two step-children to my family. I am blessed to serve Holy Covenant, but have been advised by several mentors, friends, and trusted advisors that I need to take better care of myself and find some much needed refreshment for my continued ministry. This is not an extended vacation. It is a sabbatical. LeAnn and I will be spending some much needed time together and joining in a pastoral couples retreat to strengthen our marriage and our joint commitment to the work of ministry. I will then continue in some self-directed study and refreshment at another pastoral retreat center focused on spiritual renewal. I also plan to make a much needed stop to check in with my family in West Virginia, particularly to see my mother.

I hope that you will lift me and LeAnn in your prayers during this time of sabbatical. I also hope that you will be attentive to the ongoing work of the church in my absence. I look forward to returning on August 16th with a renewed vitality and passion for the ministry we share together here at Holy Covenant.

Secondly, as I take this sabbatical, I pray that you will reflect on your own call to renewal, refreshment, and reconnection with the ongoing work of Christ and call to ministry in this community. For a couple of weeks now, I have been asking folks to reflect and pray on three words. They are openness, faithfulness, and selflessness. My prayer for each of you, as well as for myself, is that we will awaken to a new sense of what those words mean for us in our ongoing ministry together for the cause of Jesus Christ. I pray those characteristics will be evident in our ministry decisions ahead.

I look forward to seeing you in the three exciting weeks ahead, as I look forward to my sabbatical and my refreshed return next month.

Grace and Peace,

Jay

UPDATE

Last month I asked for your prayers for Branches United Methodist Church in Florida City, Florida. In the early morning hours of Pentecost Sunday the sanctuary building burned down as a result of arson. From June 17th-21st, I went to visit Branches UMC, and its pastor (my friend), Rev. Audrey Warren. I was so blessed to serve alongside this community while I was there, and to worship with them on Sunday morning. Their mantra is simple, "God is Bigger." The pictures included show a glimpse of the community of Branches UMC singing their closing hymn beside their demolished Church. They sang, "God of this City" ... *Greater things have yet to come, Greater things are still to be done in this city.* These words touched me in a new way, speaking to the profound ministry that God empowers through the work of these faithful disciples. They preach forgiveness for the ones who set the church on fire. They preach hope for the ones who remain to worship in the blazing heat of South Florida.

While I was there, I learned of ways that we at Holy Covenant can be in ministry with them, offering support for Branches UMC during this time of living amidst the rubble. The beauty of the United Methodist connection is that rather than being in competition with one another, churches help churches. We realize that as the Church, we all have one hope: To share the Gospel with the world, and to make disciples for Jesus Christ, as we live lives of humble service. One opportunity for service will be in early 2011, as we are working to coordinate a group of people to help our brothers and sisters in Florida City. There is much we can offer, and much we can learn from this community. When I walked into Holy Covenant's sanctuary after worshipping outside at Branches, I felt a renewed sense of gratitude for this beautiful church home. It is from this place of gratitude that I invite you to serve with me. If you are interested in learning more about this opportunity to serve and to learn, please contact me at stephanie@holycov.org.

Peace,
Stephanie



Music Ministry News

The music ministry at Holy Covenant will be anything but dormant during the month of July - check out what all is going on!



Come celebrate the 4th of July with Holy Covenant and the Lonestar Bluegrass Band! On **Sunday, July 4th**, Texas' most award winning bluegrass band, Lonestar, will be in both the 8:30 and 11:00 services for some down home, toe tappin' fun. And then, following the 11:00 service, come join us in Covenant Hall for an indoor picnic and fellowship: we'll provide the hotdogs, you provide a side dish or dessert. And all the while, Lonestar Bluegrass Band will provide the best entertainment this side of I-10!

On **Sunday, July 18**, Covenant will be our featured guests in both the 8:30 and 11:00 services. They'll be playing lots of music, including old favorites, so don't miss it!

Finally, on **Sunday, July 25**, one of Texas' rising stars, Rhett Butler, will be with us. Rhett has more than just a famous name; he is quickly making a name for himself as one of the most talented guitar players around. Join us at the 8:30 and 11:00 services as he shares his gifts with us, and then come back at 6:00 for a special concert in Covenant Hall. The concert is free, and the love offering we take up will go 100% to Rhett's brother's ongoing cancer treatment fund. Great music and a great cause - you won't want to be anywhere else!

Spotlight on Ministry: Caring Team

PRAYER MINISTRY

During the past month the Prayer Ministry lifted up 21 prayers of Praise and Thanksgiving, 31 prayers of Health and Healing, 15 prayers of Guidance and Encouragement and 2 prayers of Comfort and Condolence.

While the Outreach Team focuses on serving those outside our church, the Caring Team is devoted to helping members within the Holy Covenant family. Like any family, members of the church have times of joy, sorrow, trials and triumphs that are better when shared with others.

This team is available in times of difficulty providing meals and visits to the sick and bereaved of the congregation. Team members have been known to baby sit or provide transportation when needed. And personal counseling from trained Stephen's Ministers is available to those in need of a listening and caring ear. The Caring Ministry is also available for those times of family celebration that we all enjoy. With a wedding or new birth, the team seeks ways to help families adjust to changes in life.

In the coming months, the Caring Ministry will focus on expanding its role in serving church members. Specifically, the team is looking for workers and leaders to establish a "Helping Hands" ministry to aid elderly and physically limited congregants with routine (and sometimes non-routine) chores and projects. Tasks that are routine for some people can be a real challenge or expense for others. By matching up the talents and abilities of some individuals with the needs of others, real opportunities for service can be met.

If you are interested in serving in any of the areas covered by the Caring Team, please contact Brenda Terry (281.347.9069), Bettie Rowell (281.347.0316) or the church office (281.579.1200). The Caring Team is aptly named. In serving members of the Holy Covenant family, caring is what they do.

This is part of an ongoing series that highlights the eight ministry teams that comprise the Council on Ministries at Holy Covenant. By increasing awareness of these teams and the work they do, we want to generate interest and move members to action within these groups. Please contact the ministry team leaders (or the church office) if you would like to be more involved.



Dear friends....

So often when asked to describe Holy Covenant, people respond with one word - family. Holy Covenant truly became my family during my illness. The out pouring of love that my family received was amazing. Meals were brought to the hospital, prayers were offered from around the globe, and words of encouragement were in abundance. I can't even begin to thank you enough. The Holy Covenant family is truly a blessing to me and my family and we love you all very much.

Love, Lori



What we've been up to...



Texas Youth Academy



Amber Estes and Tony Leonard will be participating in Texas Youth Academy as our Holy Covenant Youth Representatives. Texas Youth Academy is for high school sophomores and juniors with a desire to explore their faith and future. The leadership conference will be held July 5th—17th at Southwestern University in Georgetown, Texas. Way to go!

Youth Mission Trips

Big House July 8th—11th (Cameron, Texas)

UM Army July 18th—22nd (Tyler, Texas)

July Lunch Bunch Dates

July 8th—NO LUNCH BUNCH

July 15th—CiCi's Pizza on Fry Road

July 22nd—Taco Cabana

July 29th—Moo Yah

Save the Date:

August 22nd

MYF Back to School Concert

Mission in Action

Prayer Partners - Many thanks to all of you who supported our church summer missionaries with your prayers, daily notes and of course, the goodies. A special thanks to Sue Berger for all of her help assembling these packages.

KCM Red Apples - Stop by Covenant Walk on Sunday, July 11 & 18 to see how you can help supply a child with a back to school grade level package. For more information, contact Twilla Oman at twilla_oman@hotmail.com

KCM Annual Golf Tournament - Mark your calendars for this exciting event on **Monday, October 18**. See www.ktcm.org for sponsorship levels or for additional information. This is one of the two major yearly fundraisers that KCM has to support the many programs out in our community.

All Church Mission Day - Saturday, October 16. This day is being set aside as a HC- all church mission day; a mission day for all ages with nursery services provided. Our goal is to have everyone partake in a mission opportunity that day regardless of age. We are currently in the process of preplanning many mission opportunities and are now looking for individuals to lead these teams. Please contact Colleen Runty by email at clancyc@gmail.com or by phone at 281-989-6553 if you can take on a leadership role. No experience necessary! Come out and serve God by serving others. More details to come.

PREGNANCY HELP CENTER'S BABY BOTTLE BLESSING - Holy Covenant adopted 125 bottles this year. If you donated by personal check, your gift is tax deductible. If you still have a bottle, please bring it to the church soon. All bottles will be re-used in next year's campaign. Thank you Holy Covenant for continuing to provide for and pray for the PHC!

Opportunities to Serve

BINGO @ Grace Care Community Center -the first Sunday afternoon of the month. About 4 volunteers are needed to conduct one afternoon of fun! This is a perfect opportunity for a family event. For more information, contact Twilla Oman at twilla_oman@hotmail.com

Volunteer with Katy Christian Ministries (KCM). Volunteers are always needed in the resale store putting merchandise on the shelves, tidying up the area, cleaning, or pretty much a little of everything. For more information, Email Michelle.johns@ktcm.org and mention that you are from Holy Covenant, one of KCM's covenant churches.

Clip your coupons and put them in the envelope on the Outreach Bulletin Board (near the kitchen). These will be mailed to the families of those serving in our military. Thank you Kathy Hickman for your continued stewardship in this ministry.

Join the Outreach Team! We're currently seeking assistance for a coordination role for a Community-wide Thanksgiving Day Feast as well as someone with a passion for starting up a homeless ministry (or any other ministry). Contact Nancy Krahel at nkrahel@hotmail.com for more information.

**SAVE THE
DATE!!**

**SEPTEMBER
18-19, 2010**

**HCUMC'S
25TH
ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATION**

High Seas Expedition™



Thanks to all of our wonderful volunteers for making High Seas Expedition a huge success. Over 160 children and 60 plus youth and adults participated in a journey that helped them all explore the mighty love of God.

The fun does not end with Vacation Bible School, we have Terrific activities for the kids all summer long. Be sure to get a Terrific Summer Trip brochure and decide which activities you are interested in attending and return it to the children's ministries office .



Live Big Sunday School

July's B.I.G. Theme: Jesus teaches us with stories.

The children will be learning Bible truths through the use of the following parables: "The Sower", "The Two Houses", "The Mustard Seed" and the "The Lost Sheep".

July's B.I.G. Idea: "We believe that Jesus helps us know about God and understand how God wants us to live.

July's Bible Verse: "Let anyone with ears to hear listen!" Luke 8: 8

Having fun in KFC!!



Holy Covenant United Methodist Church

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Rev. Jay Jackson, Senior Pastor
Rev. Stephanie Lind, Associate Pastor

Meeting the Needs of People with the Power of Christ



Holy Covenant United Methodist Church provides a friendly, family environment for worship, Christian education, fellowship, and outreach. Guests and members alike often comment on the immediate, comfortable acceptance they feel at Holy Covenant, as well as the care and compassion that they find amongst our membership. Our congregation is known for its strong reliance upon prayer, upon the study of God's Word, and upon the transformational power of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Our mission at Holy Covenant is "Meeting the Needs of People with the Power of Christ." We believe that the true strength and nature of any church is to be a fellowship of adults, youth and children who use their talents and faith for the causes of Jesus Christ. We invite you to come and to join us as you claim your place in ministry, feed your soul, make Christian friends, and

DATES TO REMEMBER!

Okay...get out your calendar! Go ahead... We'll wait. Are you ready now? Okay...mark these dates: **Saturday, July 31st; Sunday, August 29th; Thursday, September 30th.**



Those are the dates for the Young at Heart trips during the third quarter of this year and you won't want to miss out because you didn't "reserve the date"!

Do you enjoy plays and musical theater? How about museum tours? Historical sites around the state? Good food? Finding out about programs and facilities right here in our own backyard like KISD's Miller Career and Technology Center? How about spending time with an active group who just enjoy being together at picnics, potluck luncheons, and other activities?

If any or all of those opportunities sound appealing to you, you need to know more about Young at Heart! Remember the old commercial "...Try it, you'll like it"! Details for the trips in July, August and September will be forthcoming in the very near future, so be watching for those announcements.

Speaking of potluck luncheons, come join us in Covenant Hall on the third Wednesday of each month at 11:30 AM, bring a dish to share and enjoy great food, good conversation and in some months, interesting, entertaining and informative speakers.

Come make new friends, renew old acquaintances and join the fun as we celebrate life together!