



Holy Happenings

March 2010

PALM SUNDAY PICNIC AND EASTER EGG HUNT

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Join us Sunday March 28 for our annual Palm Sunday Picnic and Easter Egg Hunt immediately following the 11:00 worship service. Lunch of hamburgers, hot dogs and all the fixings will be provided by the United Methodist Men to benefit their scholarship fund for graduating seniors. For more information see page 3.

Church Work Days

Join your friends on March 27th and April 3rd and help spruce up the grounds in preparation for Easter. Because of the deep freeze this winter, we have much replanting to do. March 27th will be reserved for planting of shrubs and flowers and April 3rd will be a day of touch up painting and minor repairs. Plan to join us on one or both of these dates. A light breakfast will be served both Saturdays beginning at 8:00am.



Holy Week Services

Maundy Thursday
April 1
7:00pm

Good Friday
April 2
7:00pm

Easter Sunday
April 4
8:00, 9:30, 11:00am

Please join us during this season in the life of the church!



Rev. Jay Jackson
Senior Pastor

Welcome
to our
new
members

Keith,
Sarah,
and Kalah
Smith

Jeff,
Mindy
and
Maylee
Meloni

Iris Kay

A New Season...

No one in their right mind seeks out tragedy. We should not look for trouble capriciously. Struggle and turmoil are not on anyone's top ten list of things to embrace. Never the less, they are realities of life. We experience tragedy, difficulty, and struggle in differing measures and in unexpected, unwelcome ways and times in our lives. Whether it is the reality of broken relationships or tragic loss, the inevitability of relational challenges or job issues, or some other form or manifestation of difficulty, we experience these situations in the course of life.

Lately, the tragedy of the earthquake in Haiti, the continued floundering of the economy, untimely death, the pressure cooker of the workplace, the expectations of achievement in the classroom, and the frustration of relationships that are not healthy have inundated our world and our local community with many forms of difficulty and struggle.

This past month, we have experienced an unseasonably long and hard experience of winter. This deep chill has caused all of us to long for the warmth of spring. Whether it is the chill of the weather or the difficulty of life, we long for the warmth of a new season of life. In the midst of the devastating difficulties of life we have recently experienced or witnessed, I have also seen an amazing light beaming in the midst of the darkness. In the chill of hardship, I have profoundly experienced and witnessed the warmth of the love and grace of God in Jesus Christ transforming struggle and difficulty into strength and peace for the faithful who look to God in the midst of their troubles. I have seen the light of Christ reflected in the testimony of countless, faithful witness to the power of God at work through the people of God bringing light into the darkness of despair that many have experienced of late. In that reality, I am humbled and left in continued awe of the power of God's love in Jesus Christ anew.

If you are experiencing the chill of a dark season of life, I pray you will warm your heart in the holy presence of God at work in the life of Holy Covenant UMC. If you are wandering aimlessly alone in the forest of sorrows that are part of the reality of life, I hope you will turn to the greater reality of that which is greater than all of our sorrows...the transformational power of our Lord and Savior.

Lent is a season of transformational journey toward the cross where God most profoundly demonstrated God's love and power in the face of human tragedy. May that journey lead us to a new season of hope and promise in the reality of resurrection.

SPRING CLEANING

This season inspires us to break out of our winter rhythms: to spend more time outdoors, to pull weeds, to plant new flowers, to go for walks, and to do some spring cleaning. Every year, I am amazed that my home office fills with junk—even after my serious efforts to do spring and summer cleanings. It becomes the place where I store the things that I don't know what to do with, the things that I'm too busy or too tired to address in a timely matter, and the things that I hope to avoid (i.e. taxes). The time is here to clean it out again. (Sigh.)

Our cultural Spring Cleaning coincides with the clearing season inspired by our Christian faith: Lent. As we continue through the season of Lent, we are given space to clear away the messes that keep us from seeing God. In her book, *A Clearing Season*, Sarah Parsons writes about the work of moving through the messy wilderness of our lives. She suggests adopting a Lenten discipline that clears a little bit of the wilderness away, so that we can be more faithful to God. She writes,

"The wilderness can overwhelm, so try not to clear the entire place at once, turning the whole wilderness into a giant garden. Instead, start with one small patch and trust that the little space where God comes through will create enough openness for now and will extend into greater openness later."

This is a wise word for us this month. Let this gradual clearing bring renewal and relief for us, as we long for resurrection joy.



Rev. Stephanie Lind
Assoc. Pastor



Palm Sunday Celebration



We will be remembering and celebrating Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem, on Palm Sunday, March 28. The celebration will begin with the traditional processional into the sanctuary by all children who choose to participate. If you are interested meet Ms Amy and Ms Barbara in the narthex prior to either the 8:30 service or the 11:00 service.

Hosanna, loud hosanna, the little children sang!

Covenant Kids Choir will be singing at the 11:00 service

Save the date for Vacation Bible School Monday, June 21- Friday June 25

Palm Sunday Picnic and Easter Egg Hunt

Following the 11:00 service we will have our annual Palm Sunday Easter Egg Hunt and Picnic. The United Methodist Men will serve hamburgers and hot dogs. Everyone is asked to bring a dessert to share as well as

lawn chairs or blankets for the picnic. Children participating in the egg hunt are asked to bring 12 filled plastic eggs.

Activities are planned for kids and adults of all ages.

Registration begins March 28.



CDC News

We've completed our registration for the 2010-2011 school year. There are still a few spots available, so if you know someone looking for a preschool, have them give us a call!

Mark your calendars for Thursday, April 15th. That's the date for our annual fundraising dinner for the CDC. We'll have a catered dinner and HUGE silent auction. Our volunteers are already working on plans for this wonderful night. At this time we are accepting donations of sports tickets/items, gift certificates, etc... for our silent auction. To donate items call Lori Bode at the CDC office (281-579-8687). Everyone in the church is welcome and encouraged to attend this wonderful event!

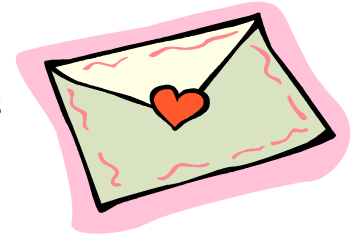
The CDC children always enjoy watching the trail riders go by. Yee Haw!



Mission in Action

Valentines for the Military

Many thanks to Amy, Barbara and the Children's Sunday School classes for making nearly 75 valentine cards for the military. Cards were sent to Afghanistan, Korea as well as the US. I'm sure that our soldiers were thrilled as they experienced the love of Christ, sent by our children.



Relay for Life - April 9-10

Holy Covenant Teams are now forming for the American Cancer Societies, Relay for Life. Stop by Covenant Walk or contact Suzie at suziecarter1983@yahoo.com, at 832-766-0314 to see how you can join a team and/or honor a survivor or remember a loved one with a luminaria candle to be lit during the opening ceremony. The relay is open to all so we encourage you to join a team, help fight for the cause and represent Holy Covenant while doing so. **If you are registering a Holy Covenant Team, please use the prefix HCUMC just before your team name so that we will all be grouped together.** For those of you wanting to join in but don't have a team, feel free to join HCUMC-SOLO team. For additional information visit relayforlife.org/katytx.

Hurricane Ike Recovery

On March 20, we will be taking a day trip out to the gulf area to rebuild the lives of those who are still in need nearly a year and a half later after the hurricane. For more information or to sign up, stop by Covenant Walk or contact Orv Wiens at WiensOJ@yahoo.com. (No experience necessary!). Many thanks to our team of volunteers and to our lunch bunch crew who made our February trip a success.

Katy Christian Ministry GALA - Friday, April 23, 2010

KCM's major fundraising event will take place on Friday, April 23, at the Second Baptist Church. Come join the festivity as we hear from Tom Delay. For more information on seat, table, or other sponsorships, as well as for information on the many services that KCM offers, visit www.KTCM.org or contact Twilla Oman or Nancy Krahel.

Refugee Ministry

On February 6th, the Nu Covenant Sunday school class, along with some friends from Cornerstone, spent the day playing soccer and other games with our friends from the Refugee Ministry. We ate lunch together outdoors, and played until we could play no more. This ministry will continue to be sustained by the leadership of the Nu Covenant Sunday School Class. The class is in the process of learning about the greatest needs of the refugee community, so that they can find a way to help meet some of these needs with the power of Christ.

BLOOD DRIVE: Holy Covenant will be hosting a blood drive on Sunday, March 14th from 8:30am to 1:00pm in Covenant Hall. To schedule an appointment, visit www.giveblood.org and login to Digital Donor, entering sponsor code 4787; or you may contact Danny Sijansky at (281) 347-5453.

A rousing soccer game with our new friends!



HCUMC YOUTH

MID WINTER 2010: Holy Covenant sent a group of 15 youth and 4 adults to Lakeview last month to learn how being DIFFERENT is important to our faith...and you can see we DEFINITELY have a "different" sort of group!



YOUTH CALENDAR

March 3: WNL 6:30-8:00

March 10: WNL 6:30-8:00

March 17: NO YOUTH SPRING BREAK

March 24: WNL 6:30-8:00

****WNL meets upstairs in the Youth Lounge**

March 7: Combined MYF 5:00-7:00

March 14: NO YOUTH SPRING BREAK

March 21: MYF Outing (TBD)

March 28: Combined MYF 5:00-7:00

****MYF meets in Covenant Hall unless otherwise noted**

MISSION TRIP FORMS: MTOP (June 4-13, contact J. Doehring), UM ARMY (July 18-24, \$275), Big House (July 8-11, \$125) are now available on the Deeply Rooted Bulletin Board. Camp forms and prices coming soon!! Non-refundable deposits are half of the total price for each trip.

Spotlight on Ministry: Fellowship Team



Mardi Gras fun!

Mark your calendars for September 18-19th! Holy Covenant will be celebrating 25 years of ministry and mission to the Katy community. Activities are planned for Saturday evening as well as a special worship service and lunch on Sunday. Whether you're a 20 year member or a new member you won't want to miss out on this historic celebration.

While the Inviting and Equipping Team focuses on getting people in the door, the work of the Fellowship Team gives them a good reason to keep coming back. Through the efforts of the fellowship team, the Holy Covenant family has opportunities to come together outside of worship and enjoy time with one another.

While some of the events have elements of service or discipleship associated with them, the main focus is to provide time together that develops relationships and promotes fun. Seasonal events, like the recent Mardi Gras Pancake Supper, are opportunities for team members to plan and participate in occasional events. More routine activities include the planning for Wednesday Night Live dinners. Both types of gatherings offer participants the ability to engage others and form friendships that enhance our Christian walk.

The Fellowship Ministry Team plans or supports many of the church wide events at Holy Covenant. Outdoor movie nights, summer picnics, fellowship dinners, and holiday celebrations are only part of what they do. The team also coordinates with several of the subsidiary groups (Young at Heart, UMM, UMW, Recreation team) in order to maximize gatherings while serving a greater number people and interests.

Looking at the role of this vital ministry, it becomes evident; "Members need fellowship and Fellowship needs members". If you would like to become involved with this great group of servants, contact LeAnn Jackson (281.347.2471) or Sandra Houghton (281.693.6195) for more information.

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.

CanCare Luncheon

CanCare is proud to announce that Barbara Padilla, *America's Got Talent* Finalist, will be their special guest for the **16th Annual National Cancer Survivors Day Luncheon**, where they will celebrate 20 years of offering hope to cancer patients and their families. Barbara is a Hodgkin's lymphoma survivor. The date is May 27, 2010 at the Westin Galleria Hotel from 11:30am to 1:15pm. For more information and tickets, contact amy@cancare.org, or phone 713-461-0028.



Barbara Padilla

Fun, Food, Fellowship and a “Ton” of Opportunities for It All!



Step inside the sunken hull of a 17th century galleon, explore the lush environment of the world’s tropical rainforests, tour the marsh and bayous of the Louisiana Gulf Coast ... and if that’s not enough, take a look at blacktip, whitetip, sandtiger and zebra sharks and satisfy your curiosity (if you have any!) about these incredible creatures! How? Join “Young at Heart” for a guided tour of the Downtown Aquarium in Houston and we’ll top off the day with lunch at their seafood restaurant before heading home! Interested? Call Sandra Houghton to reserve your spot. Our tour will be on Saturday, March 6 and the cost is only \$7.50 per person plus your choice of luncheon fare.

If that trip doesn’t fit your schedule, jot down this date: April 7. That’s when Young at Heart will be the guests of Katy ISD at the Miller Career Center. We will be having lunch at “The Bistro” and touring Miller to discover this unique educational facility, right here in our community! Watch the church bulletin for more details.

And there’s more! March’s pot luck luncheon will be at 11:30AM on March 17 in Covenant Hall. AND...we will welcome Spring with a special picnic and day in the park on Wednesday, April 21. We have reserved the covered pavillion in Harris County Katy Park (located at Morton Road and Katy-Hockley Cutoff) for the day!...Menu details, etc., will be available soon, but be prepared to enjoy lunch, and hang around for the games and fellowship to follow!



Young at Heart prepares to see and hear a collection of Rogers and Hart show tunes, presented at the College of the Mainland Theatre in Texas City.

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



Stepping Forward in Faith Update

It’s hard to believe that it’s been a year since the First Fruits offering of the Stepping Forward in Faith campaign. Over this past year, Holy Covenant has made great strides toward reducing the debt on our buildings.

Last March, we began with a \$3.56 million dollar debt and as of February 28th, the debt has been reduced to \$2.71 million dollars. Holy Covenant members and friends have contributed over \$721,000 toward the Stepping Forward in Faith campaign. That combined with our normal monthly mortgage payment has significantly reduced our debt for 2010.

Thank you for your continued support of Holy Covenant United Methodist Church and the Stepping Forward in Faith campaign. If you are new the church and would like information on Stepping Forward in Faith, please contact Lori Benjamin in the church office.

Stepping Forward in Faith Pledges: \$1,531,211

Received to date: \$721,358

Loan Balance as of March 28, 2010: \$2,710,063

Holy Covenant United Methodist Church

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office@holycov.org
www.holycov.org

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 celebrate the Love of God!

Prayers & Praises



WE PRAISE GOD! Birth of Cora Noelle Smith to Jason & Treva Smith, grandparents are Brent & Twilla Oman; birth of Cameron Thomas Fraser to Doug & Christina Fraser, grandparents Lindsay & Kathy Fraser; birth of Nola Grace Sanders to Brian & Hope Sanders, grandparents Don & Melissa Sanders; for the adult baptisms of Sarah Smith and Melinda Meloni.

WE OFFER PRAYERS OF CONDOLENCE Claudia Bratton's aunt, Norma Jean Starnes, Christy Stovall's brother and Jan Steele's son, Eddie Franco, Janet Hulen's grandfather and Onita Whitaker's father-in-law, Murrell Whitaker, Karen Murray's father, Billie Schuler's sister, Marcee Benoit's father, Raymond Hardy, Al & Jean Chernosky's son, and Wilma Heckelsberg's grandson, Aaron Chernosky.

How we praise you for honoring the prayers we constantly lift to you on behalf of those around us. We don't always have the answers. We know tests and challenges don't dictate your plans for the future. You are in charge! When we bring our concerns to you, dear Father, you never, never fail us. You are the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Thank you for helping us to keep trusting you to lead us along your paths and for being near to us all the time and in all circumstances.

Psalm 62:8: Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge.