

February 2015

Presbyterian Church of the Covenant



COVENANT

Inclusive, Open-Minded and Home for Your Soul.

Services, Musicians,
WNFS, Office Hours



February Sermon
Series, Feb. Study Time



Scarves 4 Warmth



The Covenant Compendium

Honoring Our Diversity

After many years in the Presbyterian Church it is clear to me that diversity is a given; when two or more gather there is always rich variety. Do we try to hide our diversity for fear that our differences will divide us, or do we honor and learn from it? The overwhelming majority of churches, in my view, feel a need to hide their diversity. In public gatherings they display a *groupthink* where there is little disagreement on issues that are difficult, sharing the most difficult issues only within a circle of like-minded people.

Covenant has sought to be a church that wishes to honor and learn from our diversity, believing that genuine disagreement on very important subjects is natural and healthy. However, it is one thing to **talk** about honoring our diversity and quite another to **act** on this value.

At Covenant we are fortunate to hold certain values in common. As a progressively-minded people we affirm the compassion necessary to bring about genuine equality for all people, as well as a new relationship with our planet that will protect its future sustainability. In addition, we believe in an inclusive spirit that welcomes all people into our fellowship, as well as authentic regard for the many spiritual paths that have been shaped by humanity. Finally, we affirm a pilgrim mindset that values the asking of questions instead of assuming doctrinal certainty. These are powerful values over which there is strong consensus.

On the other hand, there are real differences that mark us as a people of faith. The most significant is that we are a Presbyterian Church, for which we make no apology. However, it is also true that we have happily welcomed some members who find themselves challenged by some ideas that have been very important to Presbyterians. One key idea might be stated this way, *"We have found a path to God in the life and teachings of Jesus."* In saying this through the ages, Presbyterians join with other Christians in affirming our search for the spirit of God and by giving unique honor to the person of Jesus. Again, we have gladly welcomed members who are not sure how to think about God, but this does not diminish in any way our quest for the Spirit of God.

Such diverse convictions are common in today's church. What is different at Covenant is that we have made an effort to affirm this natural diversity and to honor it by genuinely embracing one another in the conviction that each person has something to teach us. It is not a threat to our existence that some people are less clear about some values which are cherished by the whole. We have no interest in working to get everyone thinking the same way.

It would be a gross understatement to say that this diversity is easy going. Our leadership (the Session) stands with the **whole church** saying that we are not conflicted about the presence of God, and in looking uniquely to the life and teachings of Jesus in this spiritual journey. We are not conflicted about being Christian – though our definition of being a follower of Jesus is quite different from many traditional definitions. Our leaders pledge to weave this search for God into the total mission of Covenant. Still, we neither expect nor need conformity within our congregation.

The ongoing challenge before us is to learn how to both embrace this core value of learning from the person of Jesus as we all journey unto the Spirit of God, and to welcome those others in our midst who wish to be a part of the Presbyterian Church even though they are uncertain about some of this "faith stuff". The challenge requires mutual respect from all of us; there is nothing that needs to be "fixed". This is who we are. Now can we honor and learn from each other?

Sunday Morning Schedule

9:00 Gathering of Sojourners, Sanctuary
10:00 Fellowship time, in the Fellowship Hall
10:30 Study/Group Time, various locations
Way of the Child - readers, rooms 206-207; non-readers, room 202.
11:15 Progressive Worship, Sanctuary
Nursery 9:00 - 12:00, room 101

Important Dates ...

Feb. 1: Communion, 11:15 Worship Service
Feb. 4 & 18: Sojourners' Coordinating Comm. Mtg., 5:00 pm, Marty's Room
Feb. 7: Church Workday 9am - 12
Feb. 9: Session Mtg., 6pm, Marty's Room
Feb. 10: Sierra Club, 7:00 pm, Fellowship Hall
Feb. 11 & 25: Men's Coffee Group, see page 2
Feb. 15th: Session Retreat, 12:15pm - 6:30
Feb. 16: Presidents' Day
Feb. 23: CHNA Mtg., 7:00 pm, Fellowship Hall
Feb. 24: IRC Bag Lunches, 9:00 am, Kitchen, Fellowship Hall

9:00 Musicians

- Feb. 1: Scott Manring
- Feb. 8: Walt Lott
- Feb. 15: Carol Rausch
- Feb. 22: John Salmon

9:00 Facilitator

For the month of February:
David Johnson

FEBRUARY



11:15 Music

February 2015: Walt & Choir

Ushers

- Feb. 1: Frank Starling, Celia Starling
- Feb. 8: Saralyn Griffith, Nancy Schaefer
- Feb. 15: Lem Cox, Frank Starling
- Feb. 22: Nancy Schaefer, Barry Barber
- Communion: Feb. 1: Barry Barber, Lem Cox

Church Office Hours:

Chris East	Mondays	10-3	Lou East	Tuesdays	12-5	Kate Baird
	Wednesdays	10-6		Wednesdays	1-6	Monday – Friday, 9 –1
	Fridays	1-5		Thursdays	12-5	
	Sundays	1-5		Sundays	1-5	

And Every Week ...

- Sunday:** Meditation, 4-6pm, Parlor
- Tuesday:** Pilates, 5:30-6:30pm, Fellowship Hall \$10/session
- Wednesday:** WNFS, 6pm, Fellowship Hall; Choir practice, 7pm, Sanctuary
- Thursday:** Yoga, 5:30-6:30pm, Fellowship Hall** \$10/session



WEDNESDAY NIGHTS... Our WNFS potlucks begin at 6:00 pm; after-dinner programs at 7:00 pm. This month, celebrate Valentine's Day with chocolate desserts; share that special brownie recipe. Turtle brownies, mint chocolate chip, cheesecake brownies, gluten-free brownies! And for goodness' sake, somebody bring some milk! Don't forget to bring something to actually eat before diving into those luscious brownies.



Feb. 1st: Communion Sunday, during the 11:15am Worship Service



Feb. 1st: Super Bowl Sunday, may the best team win (with properly-inflated footballs). Go Patriots! Go Seahawks!

Feb 2nd: Groundhog Day, will Punxatawney Phil see his shadow? We sure hope so!



Feb 6th: National Wear Red Day to support the campaign for women's heart health education and support

Feb 7th: Work Day, 9:00am to 12:00pm. See the sign-up sheet in the Fellowship Hall. No experience needed, willing spirits a must! Scrub a floor, groom a flower bed.



Feb. 11: Men's Coffee Group, 9:30am, at Earth Fare. Come enjoy the fellowship (ok, the coffee and goodies, too).

Feb 14th: Happy Valentine's Day! Send some love into the world.



Feb 16th: Presidents' Day! Federal & state Holiday



Feb 17th: Mardi Gras, let the good times roll!



Feb 18th Ash Wed.



Feb 19th: Happy Chinese New Year, the Year of the Goat



Feb. 24th: IRC Lunches, 9:00 am - 12:00 pm, Kitchen & Fellowship Hall. Volunteers needed to help make sandwiches & assemble bag lunches for those among us experiencing homelessness.

Feb. 28 Men's Coffee Group, 9:30am, in the PCoC Fellowship Hall. Coffee, fellowship, directed discussions and more!



Can you guess how many hearts appear in the newsletter? Email pccoc2010@gmail.com with your guess. First correct guess wins a prize!

February Sermons & Speakers

- Gathering of Sojourners:**
- Feb. 1 Lem Cox, “Why I’ve been a Covenant Member for Over 50 Years”
 - Feb. 8 Rachel Niketopoulos, “Embodied Deep Listening”
 - Feb. 15 Sue Stinson, “Breathing, Moving, & Paying Attention: The Inner & Outer Journey”
 - Feb. 22 Lou East, “Heart to Heart”

February Sermon Series, Worship Service: Those who have recited the Lord’s Prayer on numerous occasions may think of this prayer as relatively ‘plain’ or simple. It is anything but this. In fact, this simple prayer reflects a radical new orientation to life that is accented by the life and ministry of Jesus. Dominic Crossan says, “What if the Lord’s Prayer is neither a Jewish prayer for Jews nor yet a Christian prayer for Christians? What if it is a prayer from the heart of Judaism on the lips of Christianity for the conscience of the world? What if it is a radical manifesto and a hymn of hope for all humanity in language addressed to all the earth?” Beginning on Sunday, February 1st, Chris and Lou will begin an 8 part sermon series on the Lord’s Prayer. Their reflections will lean significantly on Crossan’s recent book entitled, “*The Greatest Prayer: Rediscovering the Revolutionary Message of the Lord’s Prayer*”. There will be a special effort to connect this powerful prayer with the most pressing social issues of our day.

Sunday Study Series/Groups for February/March

What, Where, and How? A study series for February and March

Covenant’s Spiritual Formation Committee is tasked with the job of identifying and putting together meaningful study opportunities for Covenant. By and large we feel good about the offerings within the past year. On the other hand, we are always interested to know more clearly how we can serve our community.

In this spirit, we will be leading a series with significant variety during the months of February and March (beginning on February 8th). There will be a single class meeting in the Church Parlor each Sunday, where we hope you will join us for lively discussion and an opportunity to better know one another. Each week will be focused on a specific topic, beginning with a presentation by the facilitator and followed by discussion.

- We have scheduled:
- February 8:** Morgan Glover to present on **CURRENT EVENTS**
 - February 15:** Mac Stroupe to present a **BOOK REVIEW**
 - February 22:** Jim McKenzie to present a **MOVIE REVIEW**
 - March 1:** Chris East to present a **REVIEW OF MORAL MONDAYS**

We encourage participants to bring their own ideas on critical current events, important books, stimulating movies, thoughts about the continuing Moral Monday events, and other topics that are selected. There will be four more Sunday presentations in March. Possible topics are **POETRY, MUSIC, ART, MEDITATION**, or ... If anyone is interested in presenting a broad topic in March for conversation, please contact Chris East (275-6403).

In addition, the **Table Talk** sharing group will continue to meet on Sunday mornings in the Fellowship Hall.

Sunday, February 22nd: IRC Special Offering:

The Session would like to take up a special donation to benefit the IRC’s efforts to shelter the homeless on Sunday, February 22nd during both services. The IRC has opened its doors on frigid nights to house the homeless, but doesn’t have a budget to do so. They have asked for donations to fund those nights. The donations go toward the supplies needed, the breakfasts provided, laundry supplies, etc. A list of the expenses IRC incurs and needs funded will be posted on the bulletin board outside the Fellowship Hall, on the bulletin board in the hallway, & on the back table in the Sanctuary. Please make checks out to PCOC!

IRC EMERGENCY SHELTER NEEDS:

- Adult Size Gloves
- Adult Size Hats
- Winter Coats (large sizes only)
- Lip Balm
- Washcloths
- Non-perishable Breakfast Items
- Coffee and Creamer

we are not accepting other donations at this time.
thank you for your understanding
www.gsodaycenter.org
#communityworks



Scarves 4 Warmth Project:

The First Scarves 4 Warmth Project on January 25th was a huge success, thanks to all the wonderful volunteers, whose creative hands and hearts turned the donated sweaters, etc. into beautiful, warm works of wearable art. Over 100 scarves were completed and donated throughout Greensboro to the homeless community. Special thanks to our PCOC youth, who prepared a delicious lunch for all, with homemade bread, cornbread, lentil soup and Pasta Fagioli. We hope to repeat this at least once more this winter.



News & Notes:

"We would like to express our deep appreciation for the love and support you have given us recently. The luncheon and reception were delicious and comforting, food for the body and food for the soul." Ann & Charlie Finch

PCOC Wiki Website

A **wiki** is a collaborative website. **NEEDED:** Wiki-wise PCOC member to help The Membership and Communications Committee set up a Wiki site. Please contact us if you can help! lora.farlow@gmail.com



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Check us out online!

www.athinkingchurch.org



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