

The Covenant Newsletter



April 2011

Covenant Presbyterian Church
471 Parkway Avenue
Trenton, New Jersey 08618
609.989.8282
www.CovenantChurchTrenton.org

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Covenant Online. . .

If you haven't checked out our website lately, click on www.CovenantChurchTrenton.org to see what you have been missing. Here's a sampling of what you'll find:

- ▶ Just in! Photos of the March retreat!
- ▶ Our new Ministry of Health.
- ▶ Info about the spiritual book club.
- ▶ Info about our new ID card program.
- ▶ Letters from and news about our missionaries.
- ▶ Late-breaking church news.
- ▶ Downloadable copies of various documents and forms.
- ▶ Photos of past church events.
- ▶ Links to many other websites of interest.
- ▶ Links to several versions of the Bible, the Book of Confessions and The Upper Room.
- ▶ Prayers and inspirational poems.
- ▶ Photos of recently baptized babies.

Minister's Message

*"The mission of Covenant Presbyterian Church is to **encourage** a diverse worship family that is representative of our past and embraces our future."*



Here are some fine questions to ponder during Lent: How can we strive for excellence in our discipleship? How can we achieve excellence in our worshiping of God? How can we embrace excellence in our education and hospitality?

Excellence is a powerful word. It implies something that is obtained by striving; it is an extremely high ideal. Excellence is not a finite goal. It is an attitude that is continuous and has no end. It is a way of life; a pathway for seeking, obtaining, and, after failing, trying again. The word reflects that we are called to exercise our gifts and talents in a proper way of the highest quality. Excellence makes me think about playing an instrument well; it's the old proverb at work, "practice makes perfect."

Excellence takes hard work and intentionality.

For the last couple of months, I have been exploring one of the five E's of Encouragement. The E's are derived from the word Encourage as it is used in our mission statement: We at Covenant "*encourage a diverse worship family.*" The apostle Paul says: "Therefore *encourage* one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing." (1 Thessalonians 5:11)

In previous newsletters, I have discussed the words Evangelism (February) and Education (March). This month, in this season of Lent, we focus on Excellence. (The remaining E's are Excitement and Enjoyment.)

In this season of Lent, we can pray over areas in our life where we can improve in our worship and love of God, neighbor and self. Lent is an outstanding time to pray over excellence in our lives, because as Christians we ought to enter this period looking for a permanent new way to live. We are asked to address the structural issues in our lives, in our church life, in our community. We are encouraged to have something die that will never come back as it was, but will be resurrected completely transformed. Lent steers us to spiritual practices not for forty days only, but to a permanent change to excellence. Lent is a life-changing journey.

In this challenging season I invite you and us as church to pray over the question: If for God we only want the best, what can I, and we, improve in our lives, in our worship, in our serving and loving neighbor, as ourselves? Where is more excellence required in us finding God in and around us?

In God's love and forgiveness, it does not matter if we fall short, as long as we give our best.

God Bless,

Jan Willem

The Rev. Jan Willem van der Werff

How to Reach the Pastor

If you have a pastoral concern, or want to talk to the pastor, the Rev. Jan Willem van der Werff, please call 609.989.8282 or e-mail him at jwvanderwerff@comcast.net (Monday is his day off.)



Session Notes

At its March 15 meeting, the Session:

- ▶ Heard seminarian Hailey Braden Lynch describe the NEXT leadership conference in Indianapolis which she attended on February 28 and March 1. The conference was an ongoing conversation about the future of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, with discussions of the declining membership in many churches, where the average age of congregation members is now 67.
- ▶ Heard that Linda and Paul Cossaboon have transferred their membership to Morrisville Presbyterian Church.
- ▶ Learned from treasurer Mickey Reilly that the Faith and Growth Fund has reached \$5,586.
- ▶ Heard that David and Ann Tregurtha have agreed to support the cost of the string quartet for the April 10 performance of the Schubert Mass in G as a memorial to Catherine Providence, Ann's sister, who died last fall.
- ▶ Heard that Dave Pollison will chair the Finance Committee.
- ▶ Heard that the 2011 Big Tent, with the theme "Grow Christ's Church Deep and Wide," will take place June 30 to July 2 in Indianapolis, and that funds are available to help participants meet expenses.
- ▶ Heard that the Retreat was attended by 40 to 50 people, with more than 30 staying overnight.
- ▶ Heard that BQ Basement Systems would be hired to correct the flooding of the basement nursery area used by Capital Health Children's Center at a cost of \$8,000.
- ▶ Heard that the congregation of Ewing Presbyterian Church has been invited to the Covenant picnic and that Covenant members will be invited to Ewing's picnic on July 23.
- ▶ Heard that Vacation Bible School will be held July 18—July 22.
- ▶ Heard that the Covenant van will be decorated with the Vacation Bible School Green Theme for use in the Ewing Township July 4 parade.



As was done in the last three years during Lent, this year again we encourage you to prepare an updated version of this Funeral/Memorial worship service outline and submit it to the Church Office.

**IN LOVING MEMORY
OF**

DATE OF BIRTH _____

*A.M. OR *P.M. (*CHECK*) SERVICE

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND RESPONSIVE GREETING:

L= LEADER C= CONGREGATION

L: GRACIOUS IS OUR GOD AND RIGHTEOUS;
OUR GOD IS FULL OF COMPASSION.

C: **I WILL WALK IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD
IN THE LAND OF THE LIVING.**

L: I WILL FULFILL MY VOWS TO GOD
IN THE PRESENCE OF ALL GOD'S PEOPLE.

C: **PRECIOUS IN THE SIGHT OF GOD
IS THE DEATH OF THOSE WHO DIE IN FAITHFULNESS.**

PRAYER

* **HYMN**

READINGS:

READING OF SCRIPTURES:

MEDITATION AND

WORDS OF REMEMBRANCE

PSALM 23 (UNISON) YES/NO

***HYMN (OPTIONAL)**

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

*Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day, our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we
forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us
from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory
forever. Amen.*

***COMMENDATION**

***HYMN**

***BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE

(* PLEASE STAND IF YOU ARE ABLE)

MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS MAY BE MADE IN NAME TO:



Spiritual Growth

Lenten Bible Study

All are welcome to join us during the Bible Study hour (9:30 a.m. Sunday in the Lounge) for a special Lenten series focused on various miracle stories in the Gospels. We are exploring together the miraculous and not-so-miraculous ways in which God works in the world, our lives, and our community, as we move closer to the miracle of Easter Sunday. Please join us!

Wednesday, April 13, 7 p.m.

The Book Study group will continue to discuss the book, *An Altar in the World*, by Barbara Brown Taylor. Bring a friend!

(For more information on this group, see CovenantChurchTrenton.org.)

Sunday, April 17, 7:45 a.m.

The men of Covenant will meet in the Drake Room for breakfast and discussion. All men are invited to come and bring a friend.



Tuesday, April 19, 1 p.m.

The women's Bible study group will meet in the lounge.

The group is discussing ***"Journey Through Revelation, Apocalyptic Hope for Today."***

In recent years, an enormous prophecy industry has marketed frightening images

and interpretations of the book of Revelation, leaving many Christians intimidated by this amazing, often misunderstood book. Although brimming with mysterious symbolism, Revelation ultimately is a book of hope that sustains those who are oppressed.

The nine lessons of *Journeys Through Revelation* lead us to a renewed creation in which God comes to live with us on earth. This hope-filled vision speaks to us in the midst of the urgent cries of our day. Bring a friend with you!

Wednesday, April 20, 7 p.m.

Covenant's women's group, the Circle of Sisters, will meet in the lounge. The topic for April is "What's blooming in you?"

Call a week in advance to inquire about babysitting arrangements.

Wednesday, April 27, 7 p.m.

The Book Study group will continue to read and discuss ***An Altar in the World***. Come and enjoy an interesting discussion of this important book. Bring a friend!

African American Seder

Covenant members are invited to join the Beloved Community at their African American Seder at 5:30 p.m. Thursday, April 21 in Fellowship Hall, just before the Maundy Thursday Tenabrae Service.

Beloved Community continues the tradition of the people of God who stop to remember all that the Lord has done for us and our people with the African American Seder.

Join us and celebrate our Lord and all that he has done for you. Sign up today by calling Rae at 609.989.8282 or e-mail her at 471covenantrae@comcast.net We will need a count to prepare enough food for everyone!



Ukrainian Egg Decorating Class

Learn this beautiful art with Cindy Moskow on Saturday, April 16, from 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. \$7 will cover the cost of materials. If you have your stylus and wax from previous years, the cost is free.

Please bring a light lunch or snack, a taper candle holder and a small to medium size rag.

Registration is a must since class size is limited.

Children aged 8 and older may attend if accompanied by a parent.

New Officers

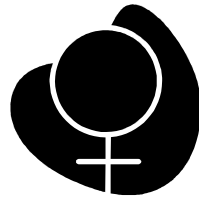
Recently ordained and installed as Covenant's officers for 2011 were: Tina Lamb, Jeffrey Lippincott, Regina Schnerr, Jane Schwilk, Robert Trevor, Joseph Vigilante and Sharon Young, elders; and Linda Anthony, Sandra Austin, Michael Clear, Tom Crum, Betsy Diggs, Denise Holubowski, Joyce Jaeger, Lee Metzgar and Karen Pennypacker, deacons.



Palm Sunday Brunch

April 17 during coffee hour

Tickets are now available during coffee hour for our April 17 Palm Sunday Brunch, immediately following the worship service. They are \$5 per adult and \$3 per child ages 6-12. Children 5 and under are free. If you would like to help with the brunch and can provide either a breakfast casserole, quiche, etc. or a green salad, you will be given two adult tickets to the brunch. Please sign up today!



Annual Women's Worship Service

ALL Covenant women are invited to be a part of this year's Women's Service on Sunday, May 8. If you are interested in helping to create the service, contact one of the following members of the Adult Education Commission: Lorraine Metzger, Karen Pennypacker, Jane Politi, JoAnn Trevor or Alice Wardlow.

A Service of Prayer for Healing and Wholeness

Sunday, April 10 at 6pm

This service is a time for quiet meditation, reflection, prayer, and anointing with oil. Together we will focus our worship and deepen our faith through prayer. Our souls are often too "busy" to hear the voice of God calling out to them, and our service is meant to quiet the soul. There will be spoken prayers and silence. Relax in God's presence and use this time for contemplation, listening, and speaking to God. Join us and bring a friend!





Youth Corner



As usual, the youth group has been vibrant and busy!

We ended February with a bang at our Lock-In event, where almost 20 members enjoyed games, movies and one big slumber party in Covenant's Lounge. We had a very successful parent's meeting that weekend, at which the youth leaders and parents shared ideas and came up with some great ways to enhance our communication. We now have our very own Google Calendar so parents can see what's coming up in youth group.

We spent the following weeks discussing songs and topics that seemed to really hit home. We listened to a popular song, "Hey There Delilah," and compared it with the biblical story of Samson and Delilah. I was surprised to find that most of our youth had never heard this passage, and how excited they were to talk about it. They really have a great grasp on trust and relationships. The following week we discussed the song "Dive" and had another great talk about trust and taking "leaps of faith."

In past weeks we've also shared our views on bullying. We're hearing from our youth that there's a great deal of bullying going on in area middle and high schools. They're talking about things they've witnessed, things they've been bullied about, and how they try to step in and stop bullying from happening. The youth group members take this very seriously. I ask you all to please keep our youth in your prayers, that they may stand strong in the face of bullying, and that God will be with them each day as they experience the good and the bad of being a teen in today's world.

On a more fun note, we have some big “leaps of faith” coming our way. We’ll be going rock climbing to close out March, and the Senior Highs will get to spend the weekend at Johnsonburg April 1-3, where the topic will be “The Power of Prayer.” I know we’re going to have a great time and learn a lot!

Happy spring, everyone!

Jessica Jaeger
Youth Minister

April Youth Group Schedule

This month, we’ll meet at Covenant.

- April 1—3** Senior High retreat at Johnsonburg
(No Junior High meeting April 3.)
- April 10** Regular Meeting
(Bring a song to share.)
- April 17** Frisbee Golf 4—7 p.m.
- April 24** Happy Easter!
(No Youth Group)





Personal Notes

Dear Friends,

Thank you for the prayers, cards, flowers and concern you showed me during my recent surgery. I felt very loved and held by my Church Family and by God.

Deep peace!

Jane Politi

Dear Covenant Family and Friends:

Thank you so much for your thoughts and prayers as Bob was looking for employment. We are quite sure that your prayers helped him find a position. In gratitude and love,

The Trevors, JoAnn & Bob

To Covenant:

The Covenant Health Ministry members thank you for a donation of \$100. This donation will be given to the American Red Cross Association. We thank all those who gave and all those who desired to give.

The Covenant Health Ministry

Our Covenant Family:

We would like to thank you for all your kind thoughts, words, cards, phone calls and e-mails during our recent health problems and losses in our family. You have made us both feel so welcome.

Thank you.

Sincerely, *Harriette & Rufus Williams*



It's an Easter Party for HomeFront Kids!

*Wednesday April 6 from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. at Katzenbach School
on Sullivan Way in Trenton*

On Wednesday, April 6, at Katzenbach School on Sullivan Way from 5:30 to 7:00p.m., there will be a church-wide party focusing on children. Bring family and friends to this exciting party.

We're calling ALL age members of our church who want to help with this Easter Party we're planning for the HomeFront Kids and their moms. If you can't make it that day, you can help by donating Easter candy, plastic eggs, snacks, drinks, decorations or paper goods.



By the Sea, By the Sea, By the Beautiful Sea!

Saturday, May 14, at noon in Fellowship Hall

Become a table hostess for this year's fundraiser *Tea By the Sea*, scheduled for Saturday, May 14, at noon. Options to be a hostess this year are:

1) We will provide tablecloth, centerpiece, chinaware cups and saucers for eight (or paperware); you will provide tea pot. 2) You may bring your own china and accessories needed for your table as was done at last year's tea. Hostess duties include selling tickets for your table, providing one homemade dessert for our Venetian Dessert Table, and being the hostess to your table guests. (*A simple list of duties will be provided to you.*) Cost of regular ticket is \$20, but hostess ticket is reduced to \$10. Please contact Lorraine Metzgar, Jane Schwilk, Karin Zasoski, Joan Hodak or Cindy Moskow if you are willing to host a table and be part of a great afternoon of fun and fellowship!



Angels' Wings Collection

The Youth of Covenant are collecting items for *Angels' Wings*, a residential emergency respite care community home for children newborn to age 12. *Angels' Wings* is the only program of its kind in New Jersey.

It offers a home-like, loving environment for the children 24 hours, 7 days a week. It is a unique, creative, compassionate program that embraces children, keeps siblings together, and helps them transition into their next placement. Their wish list: bed slippers and robes for "grandparents," baby blankets, toothbrushes and toothpaste, diapers and wipes, girls' underwear and "onesies." Please drop off items on Sundays at the boxes located at the front and rear of the Sanctuary, or you may drop them off at the church office during the week from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

We Get You to the Church On Time!

Do you want to attend church on Sundays but have no transportation? Please call the church office or the scheduled driver and arrangements will be made for you to be brought to church and then taken home. Below is the schedule for April and May van drivers.



April 3	Dave	May 1	Jeff
April 10	Joyce	May 8	Dave
April 17	Mickey	May 15	Joyce
April 24	Mickey	May 22	Mickey
		May 29	Jeff

Serving at TASK

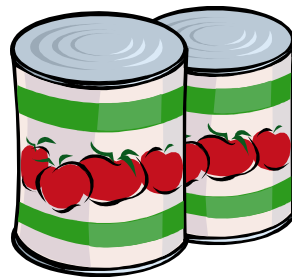
Thursday, April 28 at 2:45 pm

The **Trenton Area Soup Kitchen** volunteers will be serving dinner on Thursday, April 28.

Our group, which is now four to six people, can be expanded to eight. So if you are interested, please let us know. Young people are also welcome; you must be 13 or older.

We meet in the church parking lot at 2:45 p.m. and Dave Kulp drives us in the van from there to the soup kitchen and back. We get back around 5:30.

If it would be more convenient for you to drive to TASK and meet us there, you don't have to go on the van. Just let us know you are coming.



Food for Friends

Sunday, April 24

Our **Food for Friends** collection on Easter Sunday will go to the food pantry at **Habitat for Humanity**. Don't forget to buy one non-perishable item for the food collection every time you go to the grocery store! If you would prefer to make a monetary gift, write a check to Habitat for Humanity, put it in an envelope marked "Food for Friends," and place it in the collection plate. (Food pantries are always happy to receive money.)

If you will not be in church that Sunday and would like to contribute grocery items, leave your groceries at the church office marked "Food for Friends," and we'll see that they are included in the collection.

From Our Mission Partners



(Below is an excerpt from a thank-you letter that George Self, Mission and Outreach Commission chair, received from the Princeton University Community Action Program in which students, for a week, work in the city during the day for various programs like Habitat for Humanity, Crisis Ministry, etc. and “live” at Covenant at night. This was their third year at Covenant.)

Dear Mr. Self:

Greetings from the students and staff of the Student Volunteers Council! We are enclosing a small donation to the Covenant Presbyterian Church in sincere appreciation for providing housing for our Princeton University Community Action last year.

We will certainly be in contact with you to discuss the possibility of returning in September.

Sincerely,

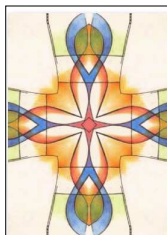
David Brown, Director



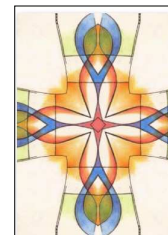
April Birthdays

1	Casper Bowman-Pagan	16	Marjorie Burtis
	David Kulp	20	Terry Birchenough
	Jimmy Schaffer		Richard Volz, Sr.
4	Amber Rose Beck		Harriette Williams
5	James Freeman		Amanda Zasoski
8	Sherrri Washington	21	Jane Schwilk
9	George Self	22	Patty Smythe
10	Richard Ryan	23	Fred Dembrowski
	Estella Steinouer	24	Christopher Cavalucci
11	Adrienne Raichel		Sarah Devoy
13	Clara Carlese		Susan Jurczynski
	Sandy Fernandez	26	Millie Soffel
14	Jane Smith	28	Agnes Forsyth
15	Beth Bice		Rae Ann Ulrich
		30	Pearl Adams
			Karen Zasoski

*Deadline for the May newsletter is **Thursday, April 21**. Submissions received after the deadline will not get into the newsletter. Submissions may be dropped off, mailed or e-mailed to the church office.*



Holy Week at Covenant



*Holy Week at Covenant
will begin April 17*
with a **Palm Sunday** service
in the Sanctuary
shared by Covenant Presbyterian
and Beloved Community.

This will be followed by the annual
Palm Sunday brunch in Fellowship Hall.

Maundy Thursday events on April 21
will open with
Beloved Community's African American Seder
in Fellowship Hall at 5:30 pm.
Covenant and Beloved Community
will hold a joint
Tenebrae and Communion Service
in the Sanctuary at 7 p.m.

Good Friday, April 22,
join us as we participate in a Blues and Gospel Service
at 12:15 p.m. at The Lawrenceville Presbyterian Church,
2688 Main Street (Route 206).

Easter Sunday, April 24,
An Easter celebration in the sanctuary at 10:30 am
with music by the choirs and a brass ensemble.

The Covenant Newsletter

Pastor: Rev. Jan Willem van der Werff
Parish Associate: Rev. Dr. Nancy H. Schluter
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