



The Heartline

Covenant Presbyterian Church "Loving God by Serving Others"
1001 NW 98th Street, Gainesville, FL 32606-5503
Church Office: (352) 332-0400 covenantpresb580@bellsouth.net
FAX: (352) 332-5802 covenantpresbyterianchurch.org



"Where Hearts are Warmed"

November 2011



[Click titles or page numbers to see articles]

The Next CommUnity Dinner and the Hanging of the Christmas Green




We have been "getting the word out" for over a month that the last CommUnity Dinner of the year will be an *evening meal!* Mark your calendars for Sunday, November 20th, at 6:30 PM! We will follow the dinner with the annual "Hanging of the Christmas Green," which prepares our church for the Advent Season. We will put up and decorate the Chrismon Tree and hang all of the Advent purple linens and decorations. This is a wonderful fellowship time for everyone. As an added treat, we will have the "young people" baking and serving cookies. Please use the sign up sheet in the kitchen to commit to a potluck dish.

Pastor's Letter	2
Advent Preparations....	4
Wyldlife	5
Directories	5
Choir	5
Bible Study	5
Stewardship	6
Worship Thanks	6
Officer Training	6
Meditation Trail.....	7
Note from Shepp	7
Calendar	8



PASTOR'S CORNER

I write this meditation the day before my mastectomy. I have read and re-read the selection below [from The Imitation of Christ: In Four Books, by Thomas à Kempis] over the past week, and it has given me great pause for reflection on the part I play in the life of the Church, the Body of Christ, which we are all called from birth to cherish. Remember, my dear ones: T'was grace that led me safe [embraced by God's Love] thus far, and grace will lead me home!

In His Name, many blessings – 

“Grace: To Begin that Which Is Good”

O Lord, my God, You have made me in Your own image and likeness; grant me this grace which You have shown me to be so great and so necessary for my salvation: to overcome my corrupt nature, which drags me down to sin and the loss of my soul.

In my flesh, I see the law of sin opposing the law of my mind, leading me into bondage so that I incline more toward giving in to my sensual inclinations, nor am I able to resist these passions unless Your holy grace comes to my aid, infusing its fervor into my heart.

In order to overcome nature, I need Your grace in great abundance, for this nature of ours is ever prone to evil even from its youth. For it was defiled by sin through the first human, and all the penalty of that stain has descended upon all mankind.

O, to think that the very nature You have made so good and upright is now captured for sin and corruption to the extent that its purely natural inclinations always draw us toward evil and base desire! And the little strength and inclination to good still remaining are as a small spark of fire hidden among the ashes. This is our natural reason, which – though surrounded by much darkness – is still able to discern good from evil and the true from the false. Yet it is unable to carry out all it approves, nor does it possess the full light of truth or its former wholesome affections.

Hence, it is, O my God, that inwardly in my soul I take delight in Your law and in Your teaching: for I know what You command is good, just, and holy, both for the reproof of all evil and the

[\[Continued on page 3\]](#)

[\[To Table of Contents\]](#)

[PASTOR'S CORNER, from page 2]

avoidance of all sin. Yet, when I prefer to obey my senses rather than my reason, I serve the law of sin.

From this it follows that though I will to do good, because of my weakness I fail to accomplish it. Thus I often make good resolutions, but because grace is lacking to me, in my weakness I often turn back and yield to the slightest resistance.

I know the way of perfection and can see clearly what I ought to do. But weighed down by the burden of my corruption, I do not rise to heights of greater perfection.

Dear Lord, how absolutely necessary is Your grace for me, not only to begin that which is good, but to persevere with it and to accomplish it. Without You, I can do nothing, but when Your grace strengthens me, I can do all things.

O grace, without which our own merits are worthless and the gifts of nature valueless, truly it is from heaven that this comes to us! There are no arts, beauty, strength, or riches, no ability or eloquence – none of these can help me, Lord, unless accompanied by Your grace. After all, nature's gifts are common to all people, both good and bad. But grace – or Your love – is given only to the elect, and those who are so marked are made worthy to attain the kingdom of heaven.

So excellent is this grace that no other gift – whether it be prophecy, the working of miracles,

or the highest and most sublime contemplation – is worth anything without it. Not even faith and hope or any other virtues are acceptable to You without charity and grace.

O blessed grace, that makes the poor in spirit rich in virtue, and makes they who are endowed with worldly goods humble of heart, come and descend into my soul and fill me with Your consolation, lest my soul faint because of its own weariness and dryness!

I beseech You, O Lord, that I may find favor in Your sight, for this favor of Your grace is sufficient for me, even though I lack those gifts which nature desires. I will have nothing to fear from trials and tribulations so long as Your grace is with me. It is my strength, my counsel, and my help, more powerful than all my enemies, and wiser than all the worldly-wise.

Your grace is the teacher of truth and discipline; it brings light to the heart and solace in affliction; it banishes sorrow, dispels fear, nourishes our devotion, and moves us to tears of repentance. What am I without it but a withered tree, a bit of dry timber to be cast into the fire?

Grant, therefore, O Lord, that Your grace always go before me, be ever at my back, keeping me ever intent upon good works to be done, through Jesus Christ, You Son and my Lord. Amen.

The Hanging of the Christmas Green, ACT II

We are in our third year of hanging *fresh garland* in the narthex and in the Sanctuary. We will be making and hanging the garland separately from the November 20th CommUnity Dinner event. By doing this part after Thanksgiving, we can get plenty of greens to make the garland from the Christmas tree vendors. We will need lots of helpers, as we will be making over 120 feet of fresh garland. Please plan to come to the church on Saturday, November 26th, at 9 AM. One of the best garland makers in the world is here at Covenant. Jan Nuetzel is a great teacher and extremely patient!



Food Baskets and St. Francis House

It is time to collect food for the dinner served to the homeless at St. Francis House on Christmas Day. The food baskets in the narthex will be used to collect stuffing mix, canned sweet potatoes, canned green beans, canned corn, canned cranberry sauce, chicken broth, etc. Please take a few minutes to set some items aside and put them somewhere that will help you remember to get them to the church.



Covenant Cut Ups Still Have Lots to Do

We have more chrismons and costumes to make. Our last scheduled workshop will be on Saturday, November 12th, from 9 AM to noon in the Fellowship Hall. We need this to be our biggest and best event ever! If you haven't attended before, please plan to come! We want this to be the *grand finale* for 2011!

Do You Have Your Shoeboxes Ready?

If you have no idea what this question is about, then it is time for you to visit the display in the narthex. Covenant has established a *goal of 50 boxes* for Operation Christmas Child. The deadline to have the boxes at the church is *Sunday, November 13th*. We need every family to assemble at least one box to meet the goal. It is so much fun and will surely get you into the spirit of Christmas.

If you have any questions, please speak to either Pat Walker or Dianne Felts, who are serving as this year's Co-Chairs.

Poinsettias Go On Sale

The newly formed Chancel Guild will be sponsoring this year's poinsettia sales. Watch your bulletin for information on cost and availability.

Wyldlife and the Great Feast

The leaders of Wyldlife are planning a Great Thanksgiving Feast on Monday, November 21st, at Covenant, and they are asking for our help. We will be feeding around fifty middle school students and about twenty of their leaders. They will have their regular club meeting at 7 PM while we set up the feast so that they can eat around 8 PM. We will need turkey, sweet potatoes, mashed potatoes, mac and cheese, fruit salad, rolls, pies and cake. If you are interested in preparing a dish, please call the church office no later than Wednesday, November 16th. This is a really great opportunity for us to get involved in this very special youth ministry.



Pictorial Directory Info

If you have not already contacted the church office to correct your family's information in the church directory, please do it this month. We will be publishing an updated directory in January and want to include all of the corrections. Also, even more important, if your family was not available for a picture and you now want to have one included, please let the office know and we'll reopen the "Covenant Studio."

Choir Practices for Rest of Year

To have their voices finely tuned, the Choir is meeting on alternate Thursdays at 5:30 PM. The practice dates for the rest of the year are: November 3rd, November 17th, December 1st, and December 15th. Special music is planned for some of the Advent Sundays and for the Shepherds Service. We welcome "new voices," so if you have an interest, please talk to Brittany Roughton.

Bible Study Schedule

The Tuesday Bible Study meets each week at 6 PM. Currently the class is studying the Book of Acts. Each session covers two chapters, with this study scheduled to go through January. The group welcomes visitors and new members! It is really easy to join at any point in the study. The group will not meet on November 8th, November 22nd, or December 20th due to the holidays and other conflicts. If you haven't found a "small group home," please consider the Tuesday Bible Study.



Pony Express Stewardship Campaign

Have you heard from your Trail Boss? By now, Mac, Pearly, Calamity Jane, or Wild Bill should have let you know your Run Route. Each of the Run Routes will eat together on Sunday, November 6th, and plan strategies for getting the saddlebag transferred in the shortest amount of time. We're planning a delicious BBQ dinner; please get your RSVP's into the Trail Bosses so that we have a good number for the caterer!



Presbytery Hosts Officer Training Event

St. Augustine Presbytery is hosting its third annual Officer Training Event on Friday, November 4th, and Saturday, November 5th. Several members of Covenant's Session will be attending. It is open to all at a cost of \$35 per person. This year's event offers choices of two topics — New Form of Government or How Your Church Family Works. If you have an interest in attending and need help in getting registered, please call the church office.

Worship and Music Committee Says Thanks!

It is impossible to show enough appreciation to the countless helpers that Worship and Music needs each and every week. The Herringtons have done an outstanding job throughout the summer as Ushers/Greeters. They have stepped in to cover for the Spanglers, who spend their summers in Fancy Gap, Virginia. Larry and Beth are so easy to work with and are outstanding "first faces" for Covenant.

John Menoher is such a natural as liturgist, with an excellent speaking voice. We have really taken advantage of him as he assisted with a different minister every week during October. He has done a great job of "training" the visiting ministers and making them feel comfortable and welcome.

Thanks to all who have signed up for flowers during October. Interest was low during the summer, but October was filled with dedications. Fresh flowers make a big difference in the Sanctuary. We really appreciate your support of this program.

Meditation Trail - Thanks!

During this time of Thanksgiving, I want to say *thanks* to all who helped maintain the trail this year. Special thanks to the highly skilled mulch movers Jim Annis; Ken, John, Matthew, & Thomas Dudeck; Ed Eibe; Claude Hodgson; Alex & Chris Moss; John Carver; Dan Spangler; and Jim Traer for helping mulch the trail in February! A very special thanks to Peter Swanger for building the two new bridges in August for his Eagle Scout project. Many other members of Troop 432 and their parents helped, and both bridges were completed in one day!

By now most of the plants along the trail are done blooming for the year. The exceptions are the pine cone ginger's "cones" that will still be bright red and the Caesar weed (*Urena lobata*) that will be blooming the first half of the month with small (about 1" diameter) light pink flowers with red centers and veins. The firespike plant (*Odontonema strictum*) near the big live oak tree (*Quercus virginiana*) may still have spikes of red flowers on it this month. The rattlebox plants (*Crotalaria pallida*), with their yellow flowers turning into seed pods, and the lantana (multicolored flowers) may still be blooming near the CPC end of the trail.



Greetings from Merritt Island Presbyterian Church

I want to thank all the folks at Covenant for your prayers and wish you all the best as you continue your 26th year of ministry in West Gainesville. The 25th anniversary could not have been nicer. It was truly a celebration.

I have recently been called back to serve as pastor of the Merritt Island Church, where I had served over twenty years ago. The church is located across the street from our house. Sue is doing fine with my being home more often. Sarah and Travis are working on their masters degrees at FSU. Grant is full time in his senior year at UCF in Orlando.

We miss our Covenant family and keep you in our hearts and prayers,

Shepp Lawrence and gang

November 2011 Calendar

- | | | | |
|---------------|--|---------------|---|
| Tu, 1 | - Bible Study at 6
- Cub Pack Cmte at 7 | Th, 17 | - Agape Small Group at 4:30
- Choir at 5:30
- W & M Cmte at 6:30
- Cub Den at 6:30 |
| Th, 3 | - Choir at 5:30
- Cub Den at 6:30 | Su, 20 | - Worship at 10
- Fellowship at 11
- Sunday School at 11:30
- Harbor Chase Devotions at 2
- Hanging of the Green Meal at 6:30 |
| Su, 6 | - Worship at 10
- Fellowship at 11
- Sunday School at 11:30 | Mo, 21 | - Wyldlife at 5:30
- Session at 6 |
| Mo, 7 | - Wyldlife at 5:30 | Tu, 22 | - Bible Study at 6
- Heartline deadline |
| Th, 10 | - Outreach Cmte at 5:30
- Cub Den at 6:30
- Evangelism Cmte at 7 | Th, 20 | - Thanksgiving Day |
| Sa, 12 | - Cut-Ups workshop at 9 | Sa, 26 | - Garland Workshop at 9 |
| Su, 13 | - Worship at 10
- Fellowship at 11
- Sunday School at 11:30 | Su, 27 | - Worship at 10
- Fellowship at 11
- Sunday School at 11:30 |
| Mo, 14 | - Wyldlife at 5:30 | Mo, 28 | - Wyldlife at 5:30
- Prayer askers at 6:30 |
| Tu, 15 | - Bible Study at 6 | Tu, 29 | - Bible Study at 6 |

November Birthdays

- | | | | | | |
|----------|------------------|-----------|----------------|-----------|-----------------|
| 1 | - Pablo Cintron | 11 | - Bill Pokorny | 20 | - Pauline Wise |
| 5 | - Ophelia Carver | 17 | - Joyce Hoel | 22 | - Andrew Wise |
| 8 | - Peg Quigley | 18 | - Savanna Ebbs | 27 | - Ruth McKenzie |

November Anniversary

- 12 - John & Robbie Stevens

2011 Session
Rev Laura Joost-Kuhn, Moderator

Rory Baggs	John Carver
Doris Cintron	Tom Felts
Kaite Nighthorse	Lizz Pokorny
Robbie Stevens	Ron Thornton

The Heartline is published monthly. You may submit articles either handwritten, typed, or on disk (saved in text or Word format) and delivered to the church office.

Deadline for the next newsletter is
November 22, 2011.

If you have a question about submitting an article for *The Heartline*, please call John Tucker.