



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"

September 2012

Healthy Congregations Meetings

Our next Healthy Congregations workshop will be on September 15th. Here are some thoughts as we near this next step in our healing.

Have you ever studied Romans? In an introduction to the Book of Romans, Max Lucado writes: "We are all on the wrong plane. All of us, [the author of Romans] says, Gentile and Jew. Every person has taken a wrong turn and we need help." In this profound epistle, Paul explores all the wrong options – pleasure and pride – and takes us to the only correct one – Christ Jesus. According to Paul, we are saved by grace (undeserved, unearned favor), through faith (complete trust) in Jesus and his work.

The letter concludes with practical instruction for a growing church, including thoughts on spiritual gifts, genuine love, and good citizenship, providing brilliant instruction for dealing with everything from church division to difficult brethren.

Romans is a life-changing letter for people who are willing to admit they are sinners. For those who admit they are on the wrong plane,



[Click titles or page numbers to see articles]

| | |
|------------------------|----|
| Pastor's Letter | 2 |
| Women | 3 |
| Veterans | 3 |
| Advent Plans | 3 |
| Committees | 4 |
| Surveys | 9 |
| Meditation Trail | 10 |

[Continued on page 3]



It's been a while since I've gone through a hurricane. In fact, I was much younger and staying in Jacksonville when a category-1 hit. Of course, living in the San Jose area, we didn't get anything more than lots of wind and rain.

Mother always had her large cupboard stocked with canned goods, Sterno and a fondue stand. She had an old-fashioned hurricane lamp and a nice supply of oil for it. And its wick was always trimmed and ready. Kind of like the faithful, vigilant virgins preparing for the wedding banquet of the wealthy bridegroom!

That's what we're called to be: vigilant to any ideas for the church community that have possibilities for the growth of the Spirit to hover more closely upon us.

Is the Holy Spirit nudging at your elbow with an idea that keeps returning? Hey! Take it to one of the Ruling Elders on Council, or find out when a committee meets and carry it to them. Get your idea and a good proposal for it written out so that you'll be prepared for questions, because people get excited and curious about new ideas. And some of us feel threatened, also, about how a committee will present this to the Council.

What creative plans can the committee come up with to bring people in the church together to support your idea? And, don't forget to examine yourself, asking the question, "What's my motive for being a part of this? Am I willing to support this venture spiritually, encouraging people who have considered such an idea, also?"

Well, we've escaped the rains. And I've spent far too much money on getting supplies together for power outages, lack of food in the grocery stores, and all the stuff that I can imagine coming with the winds and rain from such a storm. But, how am I vigilant for God's Hand over my life – my life mentally, physically, emotionally, and spiritually? Do I recognize God saying "Yes," "No," "Go ahead and be pro-active on this," – or, "It's time to be still, wait and know that I am going to work this according to My Plan, My Grand Good Purpose?"

So, it's back to the heat, back to air conditioning, back to focusing on what God has given me in the present to ask for Grace for – remembering, "My Grace is sufficient for you," in dealing with life on life's terms, day-by-day.

With Grace to uphold you in your every need – and to sustain you when you try out those new ideas!!

Many Blessings,

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

[HEALTHY CONGREGATIONS, from page 1]

Max continues that this letter provides the correct itinerary. Read it and take note. The flight home is the one you don't want to miss.

The same can be said for our sessions on Healthy Congregations, presented by the Crisis Response Team (CRT). In these sessions, the CRT gives us guidance to live in the faith and follow God's teachings. Come to share your faith and find solutions:

| | | |
|-----------------------|------------|-----------------|
| Sept 15 th | 9-11:15 AM | Fellowship Hall |
| Oct 13 th | 9-11:15 AM | Fellowship Hall |

In Paul's letter to the Romans, we find a recurring theme on our minds: How will we treat our neighbors? How will we love those who share our beliefs and those who don't? How will we speak and live out the gospel within the church and to the world? This letter invites us to return to God's Word often for encouragement, direction, and challenge. It drives us to appreciate all that God has done for us. The more we learn to love God, the better we are equipped to love our neighbor.



Calling All Volunteer Hanging of the Greens – Saturday, Dec 1st, 9 AM

We will provide donuts and coffee; the laughter and fun are up to you. We are looking forward to decorating the church in anticipation of the Advent Season!

Women of the Church, Unite!

We are meeting regularly for lunch every other Thursday. The next Fellowship is September 6th at 12 noon at Moe's at the K-Mart Plaza on Newberry Road. Please join us ... no registration needed. Just show up and enjoy the company. Let's just call us "*The Fun Bunch for Lunch!*"

Veterans' Day Celebration!

We need your help! To provide a complete Veterans' Celebration, we need to tell veterans' stories. We would like to display stories about you or your family members who have served our country. Please prepare and bring a short (½-sheet of paper) story on Sunday, November 11th. We will display them in Narthex to share with everyone. If you have pictures, please bring them to add to the display. Contact Kay Ebbs for more information.



Committee News

The committees of Covenant have been active this past month. Here are some highlights:

Administration and Personnel (meets 3rd Sunday following worship): Janis Bomar, Chair

- Administrative Manual Annual review: Budget and Finance responsibilities approved by Council
- Performance reviews are underway for Pastor Laura and Brittany Roughton. The committee is soliciting feedback from members of the congregation.
- New website for Covenant is being debugged.
- Added calendar and birthdays/anniversaries to Newsletter
- Three ad for part-time Administrative Assistant got over twenty applications; narrowed the list to four for interview
- Approved education leave for Pastor Laura -- October 14-17 in St. Louis – Ceara Ebbs will be in the pulpit.
- --Nov 1-4 for Presbyterian Cursillo in Silver Springs, FL – Worship & Music seeking Elder to fill pulpit.
- Approved addition of a sick-leave policy to Terms of Call for Pastor Laura; Council approved the policy, to be effective immediately and continuing through end of this year.
- Request from a non-member to rent church for private wedding January 4th, 2013.

Budget & Finance: John Peters, Chair

Continuing to review bank deposits and statements and to oversee spending by committees and for office expenses.

Building and Grounds (meets 1st Sunday following worship) : John Carver, Chair

- Kitchen will be painted Sep 9th following service. This is an open invitation to all members – bring or wear your painting clothes to church.
- Jim Traer arranging for a handrail to choir area of chancel
- Crown Castle lease extension almost complete



[\[Continued on page 5\]](#)

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

Worship and Music (meets 4th Sunday following worship): Kay Ebbs, Chair

- Harbor Chase worship service on Aug 19th had the additional benefit of Communion. Thanks to Pastor Laura, John Tucker and Larry Herrington for the Communion program; and special thanks to Beth Herrington for attending and assisting in set-up.
- Youth are participating in worship service activities the 2nd Sunday of the month. Thanks to all for their service and spirit.
- Liturgist for September will be Ceara Ebbs
- Sound system has a blown channel and broken microphone - Will be checking warranties to see if they can cover costs to fix.
- November 11th – special service to honor veterans planned.



- Hanging of the Greens will be held December 1st (Saturday) at 9 AM. Volunteers needed to help decorate.
- Advent season planned and families chosen to be “Lighters of the Candles.” Kay Ebbs to be contacting families for dates of requested service



- Christmas Eve services being planned now
 - Live Nativity 6:15 PM
 - Outside service 7:00 PM
 - Inside service 8:15 PM
- Survey on Worship & Music to be inserted in Sep 9th bulletin to be completed and placed in collection plate. Please review combined CNW/W&M survey so you are prepared to complete the bulletin insert by Sep 16th.

Stewardship Committee: Susan Nimmo, Chair

Stewardship Elder will meet with interested parties and put out a call to the congregation for volunteers to serve. During this year’s campaign, Susan looks forward to something new and different, and rejoices in anticipation of God’s miracle to His devoted Covenant congregation.

[Continued on page 6]

[To Table of Contents]

Outreach & Evangelism

- Contact made with Harley Walker to see if he would partner with CPC in planning and implementation of Christmas Dinner at St. Francis House.
 - We need one or two volunteers from CPC to work with Harley on preparation and implementation.
 - Interested parties to contact Janis Bomar



- Initiated quilt project as fund raiser for Fisher House with Larry Herrington and Kathryn Russell
- 25th Anniversary Quilt received from Jan Neutzel for hanging in the Narthex. Susan Nimmo to arrange for the hanging of the quilt – *We must say that it is gorgeous!*

Member Care

- Pastor and Elders are visiting members and former members as needed, in person or by telephone: Dianne Felts, Lois Swinford, Pauline Wise, Kaite Nighthorse, Cliff Olesen, Doris Cintron, Judy Newell, Jan Neutzel, Faith Clark, Kathryn Russell, and Madge Roodenburg have all been a focus this past month.

- Cards are being placed in on the ledge in Fellowship Hall each Sunday for members to sign. What a wonderful gift – getting a card with the wishes of several congregation members!



Nominating Committee (meets as needed throughout the year): Susan Nimmo, Chair

- Continuing to work on filling two current open Council positions.
- Planning to fill Ruling Elder positions that will be vacated by members of Class of 2012.

[Continued on page 7]

[To Table of Contents]

Christian Nurture and Education: Susan Nimmo, Chair

- Healthy Congregations program presented by Pastors Charlie and Alysun. All are invited to –
 Sep 15th 9-11:15 AM in Fellowship Hall
 Oct 13th 9-11:15 AM in Fellowship Hall
- Officer Training at Camp Montgomery Nov 9-10. The training will include session on Healthy Congregations
- High School Youth Retreat at Camp Montgomery October 2nd
- Survey on CNE, combined survey with Worship & Music, to be reviewed prior to Sep 9th and completed by Sep 16th to place in the collection plate.

Fellowship (meets 2nd Sunday following worship): Debbi Alessi & Ceara Ebbs, Co-chairs

- CommUnity Dinner – September 2nd.
 Blackened chicken, tossed salad, rice, broccoli casserole, squash casserole, rolls, dessert by Prue Tucker
- Planning – reinstitution of Philadelphia dinners
- Building & Grounds is handling the painting of the kitchen
- Cleaning of closets in Fellowship Hall will be coordinated with the painting of the kitchen. If you are not a painter, you must be an organizer and can help with inventory.
- Building & Grounds is also working on removal of the current plywood cover and installation of folding shutters for the pass-through from kitchen to Fellowship Hall.
- Fall dates to be coordinated with Worship & Music, along with Youth:
 - Liaison – Ceara Ebbs
 - Hanging of the Greens
 - Garage sale(s) with Youth
 - Anyone wanting to purge your home of items as a part of Fall housecleaning, please consider use of the church, with proceeds going to the Youth. We will do all the work for you. Contact Debbi Alessi or Ceara Ebbs for more information.



Youth Advisor, Ceara Ebbs

- Movie Nights completed. Anyone who missed one of the movies can borrow from the church for viewing in your own home. Some discs may be out on loan, but contact the church office to obtain the DVDs of Flywheel, Courageous, Fireproof, or Facing the Giants.
- Rounding up youth to attend Universal Christian Youth Concert “Rock the House” at Universal Studios in Orlando on September 7th and 8th. Scholarships are available for youth to attend. The cost is \$50 per person for one day or \$90 per person for two days.
- Next meeting Sep 9th

Commissioner to the Presbytery of St. Augustine: John Peters

- The New Social Creed Policy – summary of position held by the PCUS
 - The Presbyterian church USA was the first member denomination of the National Council of Churches to approve the *Social Creed for the 21st Century*.
 - Among key tenets of this Creed was the belief that all people were equal in the eyes of God, regardless of how they were seen by society.
 - The Creed calls for the establishment of access for all to clean air and water, as well as healthy food.
 - For the complete document related to this issue, please see www.pcusa.org/acswp and find *A Social Creed for the Twenty-First Century*.
- John Peters and Janis Bomar have submitted their interest in serving on Committees of the Presbytery of St. Augustine

Next Council meeting: Sep 24th at 6:30 PM in the Library. Anyone from the congregation may attend a Council meeting with permission of the Pastor or the Clerk of Council. There are guidelines to be followed, which will be shared with you on request and are posted on the bulletin board in Fellowship Hall.

Surveys

Please review the following surveys and be prepared to complete on either Sep 9th or Sep 16th and place in the offering plate. On these particular Sundays, the survey will be an insert in your bulletin. If you are unable to attend either service, please contact the church office and a survey form will be mailed to you to complete and mail back in. Your feedback is important in our planning for a growing and healthy congregation. We cannot do it without your feedback and information that addresses your specific needs.

CNE portion of survey

The Christian nurture and education of the members of Covenant are of paramount importance to the church.

We are a church that “Loves God by Serving Others,” but we must also serve our own needs to do this.

Each of us walks our personal spiritual paths always toward Jesus and enlightenment.

Members of Covenant rejoice together in worship, fellowship, and even through life’s hardships.

We are nurtured by the word of God, songs of praise, by each other, and especially through prayer.

Education comes through reading the Bible, listening to the Word, and living life, until by the grace of God we come to understanding.

Please list 1-2 ways Covenant is providing for your Christian nurture and education.

Please list 1-2 ways Covenant could better serve your Christian nurture or education.

[\[Continued on page 10\]](#)

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

Worship & Music portion of survey

The Worship & Music Committee would like to ask you what your preferences are for service times and participation in Sunday school. Please circle your preferences or write out your comments.

YES Would you like Sunday service to remain
NO at 10 AM?

YES Would you like Sunday service to start
NO later than 10 AM?

YES Would you like Sunday service to start
NO earlier than 10 AM?

YES Do you have a time you would prefer
NO Sunday service to start?

Comments:

YES Would you like Sunday school to be before
NO Sunday service?

YES Would you like Sunday school to be after
NO Sunday service?

YES Would you attend Sunday school of the time
NO were more convenient for you?

YES Would you prefer a Bible study versus a
NO Sunday school? If so what day and time
would you prefer?

Comments:

Meditation Trail - Update

by Mike Hein, ASLC

As summer draws to an end and temperatures begin to cool off (?), this would be a great time to walk the trail if you haven't recently. There are still lots of plants blooming for you to see. The peacock ginger, orchid pansy, and pinecone lily plants should continue blooming through September. However, you will have to wait until October before the "pine cones" on the lilies start to turn red. The firespike plant (*Odontonema strictum*) near the large live oak and meditation benches area should be blooming by mid-September, with spikes of red flowers. The *Aechmea* 'Lyman Smith' bromeliads with pink flower stalks and small blue flowers at the far end of the loop and near the meditation area will be blooming this month. Also the burgundy-colored bromeliads (*Aechmea* 'Burgundy') near the cabbage palm tree should be blooming. Now that I have recovered from my surgery, I hope to see you on the trail – or feel free to ask to go along as I walk it!

2012 Session
Rev Laura Joost-Kuhn, Moderator

| | |
|--------------|-------------------|
| Debbi Alessi | Janis Bomar |
| John Carver | Ceara Ebbs |
| Kay Ebbs | Susan Nimmo |
| John Peters | Clerk John Tucker |

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
September 25, 2012.

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