

PRAY

COMMUNING WITH GOD

“The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective” (James 5:16). It is our privilege as Christians to commune with God through prayer. We invite you to participate in one or more of these opportunities this season:

Opportunities:

DRIVE-THRU PRAYER: Our neighbors have the opportunity to bring prayer requests to our prayer team in the Covenant parking lot on weekdays from 7 to 9 a.m. New dates TBA.

WEDNESDAY MORNING PRAYER SERVICE: This brief, lay-led service is held weekly at 7 a.m. in FE 100. Rich in liturgical, silent and spontaneous prayer, the service follows the format for morning prayer from our Book of Common Worship.

PRAYER LABYRINTH: Located in the southeast corner of the church parking lot, the labyrinth is a sacred space available to anyone, anytime for meditation and prayer.

PRAYING THE PSALMS: We invite you to encounter God deeply during Lent through Covenant’s Praying the Psalms Lenten devotional. Be sure and pick up your copy! Read it online at covenant.org/praying-the-psalms.com

INTERCESSORY PRAYER: Every Sunday at each service, a member of the intercessory prayer team prays for all involved: those attending and leading, and the pastor. You can sign up to pray at a maximum of four services per year. Contact Dave Ferguson at (512) 418-8691.

STUDY

RENEWING OUR MINDS

“Be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God” (Romans 12:2). The word disciple comes from the Greek word meaning “*learner*.” We learn in many ways; one of the most important is the regular study of scripture in pursuit of the truth. We invite you to join others to continue your journey as a learner:

Opportunities:

MEN IN THE WORD: Men’s Bible study meets on Thursdays at 6 a.m. in FE 200. Contact hskaggsmd@gmail.com for more information.

DOWNTOWN MEN’S BIBLE STUDY: This Bible study meets Wednesdays at 11:30 a.m., at Max’s Wine Dive, 207 San Jacinto Blvd., Suite 200. Contact mcrawley@covenant.org for more information or to make a reservation.

LAMPLIGHTERS: Women’s Bible study meets on Wednesdays at 10 a.m. in FE 200 (and in various locations and times) September through April. More information: lamplightersbiblestudy.com.

SUNDAY MORNING LEARNING COMMUNITIES: A variety of learning opportunities are available to adults on Sundays at 9:30 a.m., including Bible study, book discussions and conversations at the intersection of faith and culture. See covenant.org/sundaymorning.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN (PW): PW is part of a national group that offers learning, serving and fellowship opportunities through Bible studies, mission projects, special events and trips. Visit covenant.org/women.

SHARE

SHARING IN CHRIST

“For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them” (Matthew 18:20). As followers of Christ, we can count on His promise to be present with us when we are gathered together. We invite you to pursue an authentic relationship with God and others in the context of Christian community here at Covenant.

Opportunities:

COVENANT GROUPS: Small, intentional groups designed to support and encourage spiritual friendship. Groups decide on meeting time and place. Curriculum and support provided. Groups kick off annually during Lent, but you can join anytime by contacting ksedberry@covenant.org.

EXPLORE MEMBERSHIP: Explore Membership classes offer the chance to meet new people, learn more about Covenant and explore the possibility of becoming a member. The next class will be offered Wednesdays, April 19 and 26, from 6-8 p.m. Contact askaggs@covenant.org.

MOMS (MOTHERS OF MOPPETS) GROUP: New, expecting and experienced moms gather for informative presentations to share parenting ideas and provide general support to each other. First and third Monday of each month from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. in SA 114. Contact Katie McFarlane, kates46@msn.com.

MOM'S LUNCH BUNCH: Mondays, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m., in FE 107, about four times a year. Group meets over lunch to give moms (especially those who work outside the home) the opportunity for fellowship, sharing and learning. Contact Amy Johnson, aanort@yahoo.com.

GIVE

RESPONDING TO GOD

“Just as each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of the varied grace of God” (1 Peter 4:10). Find a complete list of opportunities at covenant.org/volunteer.

MOVIN' AND GROOVIN': Deliver furniture and household goods to families exiting homelessness. Contact Paul Mowry, paulmowry@att.net.

STREET YOUTH MINISTRY: Donate clothing, hold a sock or blanket drive, prepare breakfast or sandwiches, join a Bible study or prayer walk. Contact Terry Cole, terry.cole@gmail.com.

AUSTIN VOICES FOR EDUCATION AND YOUTH: Webb Early College Prep Academy Family Resource Center accepts donations of gift cards, bus passes, food and clothing. Help with St. John community and school events, office work, food pantry, mentor and tutor youth. Contact Julie Weeks, jweeks@austinvoices.org.

TEXAS REACH OUT MINISTRIES: Provides support and transitional housing for those who are homeless after extended prison stays. Mentor, lead Bible studies and sponsor clients. Contact Nelson Mann, nmann@austin.rr.com.

REDEEMED MINISTRIES: Help women who are victims of sex trafficking. Assist with prayer and outreach teams, jail ministry and more. Contact Karen Maxwell, karen.maxwell12@gmail.com.

MANOS DE CRISTO: Provides services to the working poor, immigrants and homeless. Volunteer at the food pantry, clothes closet, ESL, computer classes and more. Contact Cheryl Banks at csebesta@austin.rr.com.

REFUGEE WELCOME MINISTRY: Help families from around the world function in their new environment: provide transportation, job skills mentoring and other tasks. Contact Ann Brown, abrown210@icloud.com.

Praying the Psalms: A Lenten Devotional

Why do we pray? Do we pray to rehearse our anxieties out loud to God? Do we pray to change God or to change ourselves? Consider this: Through prayer we put on the mind of Christ. In other words, prayer is meant to draw us out of ourselves and our narrow vision of the world to see ourselves, our community and our world as God does.

The people of God have always used the psalms to pray. Even Jesus prayed using the psalms, drawing on them more than any other book from the Old Testament. In the psalms, we hear a collective human voice stretched over a long period of time that speaks of life as we experience it still today; a gift that brings forth immense joy and gratitude that is sometimes under threat or in periods of difficult transition.

Praying the psalms gives us the language to express grief, anxiety, frustration and pain. The psalms also give us hope because they witness to a God who is at work pouring out mercy, patiently redeeming sinners and making all things new. When we pray the psalms, we add our voice to the voices of those throughout history who have sought out communion with God in times of joy, despair and threat, and have had their hearts and minds transformed by doing so.

Covenant's Lenten devotional, *Praying the Psalms*, is available in print and online. We invite all to pick one up in the narthex or at covenant.org/lentdevo.

Praying the Psalms

The publication includes the guide below, providing suggestions on how to pray the psalms. While this can certainly be applied to the psalms within the devotional, it is a useful tool that can be used read the psalms anytime, anywhere.

A guide for reading the psalms:

1. Spend a moment in silence, preparing to listen for God's Word to you through the psalm.
2. Read the psalm through for basic comprehension. Consider if the psalmist is expressing grief, anxiety, gratitude or hope.
3. Read the psalm out loud, paying attention to words or phrases that stand out to you. What is there for you in this psalm that can help you pray for others and yourself?
4. Paraphrase the psalm. Write down the meaning or theme of the psalm in your own words.
5. Attach your prayer to the psalm. What is there in the psalm that you can pray? Write a brief prayer that you can pray throughout the day.