



Where Faith
Comes To Life

August 31, 2017
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Baptist Church of the Covenant

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THE CROSSROADS

VEGETABLES AND WATER, PLEASE

There is an Old Testament story about some young Jewish males who were taken into King Nebuchadnezzar's court to be primed for governmental service. These young men were chosen from the Jewish exiles, so they were men taken out of servitude, and were then plucked down right in the powerful center of the source of their displacement into a foreign country and resulting cultural anxiety and feelings of vengeance. Oh, they were wined and dined to be won over. It was as if there existed endless amounts of money from foundation grants to spend on these young men! All were being won over by the powerful, except for Daniel. Daniel chose to eat only vegetables and drink only water. Why? Because he was a man of faith and his faith did not allow for indulgence in anxiety or retaliation. In the end, it was Daniel who stood out. In fact, the King stated that he was ten times better than all the rest.

Now a diet of vegetables and water is nothing exceptional. They are mainstays at best, but these basics are what the body needs to be whole and healthy. So, I am wondering if Baptist Church of the Covenant is a "vegetables and water only" kind of church...sticking to our faith in days of cultural anxiety and vengeance...or are we giving in to the anxiety of the world and its bend towards retaliation?

Imagine, if you will, that our church has been set down in the middle of an anxious culture, just like Daniel when he was taken to Babylon. It is not so hard to imagine after watching the evening news of hurricanes and riots, presidential tweets and health care debates. With a culture reacting under threat, what if the church were like Daniel: steady, unwavering, sticking to the healthy stuff of faith experienced in community, such as prayer study and worship, and not giving in to the self-indulgent fear of the culture?

Imagine, if you will, that our church has been set down in the middle of a culture of violence, just like Daniel. It is not so hard to imagine after hearing the divisive rhetoric of white supremacists and neo-Nazi groups, of those filled with hate for gays, lesbians and trans. With a culture reacting under threat, what if the church were like Daniel: steady, unwavering, sticking to the healthy stuff of faith like practicing kindness, forgiving those who persecute us and living in harmony?

Imagine, if you will, that our church has been set down in the middle of a culture where kings overpower groups of people in order to place them into servitude without regard for their religion or their cultural uniqueness. It is not so hard to imagine after all. With a culture reacting under threat, what if the church were like Daniel: steady, unwavering, sticking to the healthy stuff of recognizing the spark of the divine in each one, even our "enemies"?

As the people who follow Jesus, we are called to live with a realism that does not include despair, anxiety, or retaliation. Maintaining a steady diet of "vegetables and water," is it possible for this church to stand out from all the rest because of its mainstay practices of grace, forgiveness, thoughtfulness, and hospitality? May it be so, Lord. Ten times over, may it be so.

With thanksgiving for the opportunity to be strengthened by vegetables and water in a culture of anxiety, I am

Sincerely yours,

Sarah

WORSHIP ANNOUNCEMENTS

Regular activities will be held at Baptist Church of the Covenant on Sunday, September 3.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT FELLOWSHIP

- Sept. 6 "Calling and Vocation," Pastor Sarah
- Sept. 13 2018 Budget Proposal
- Sept. 20 "Calling and Vocation," Pastor Sarah
- Sept. 27 Skills for Christian Living
- Oct. 4 Skills for Christian Living



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

CANDLE KEEPERS

Looking for an opportunity to volunteer your creativity to BCOC? Consider signing up to decorate the Peace Candle for Sunday Worship!

Dennis Hodtwalker is the coordinator. Contact him at dhodtwalker.dh@gmail.com.

SKILLS FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING SEPTEMBER 27, OCTOBER 4 & 11

On Wednesday nights, annually, classes are offered to help members hone a specific Christian skill for the living of faith. This year we are pleased to offer five classes on September 27, October 4 and 11. Featured teachers and classes are as follows: Debbie Sumrall, "Nonviolent Response to Conflict"; Eva Kendrick, "Understanding Gender and Sexual identity"; Vicki Rayford, "Planning for the Holidays"; John Mitchell, "Bible Study on James"; Karen Smith, "Making Personal Finger Labyrinths". Please select **ONE** class for all three weeks.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH

WELCOME KATHERINE MULLEN: MUSIC INTERN



Katherine Mullen is starting in September as BCOC's Music Intern! Katherine is from Baton Rouge, LA and has previously worked as the Music Intern at Broadmoor Baptist Church. She was a member of LSU's A Cappella Choir and Chamber Singers, and most recently, was a worship leader for Passport Camps. Katherine's primary responsibilities will be working with the Youth Choir by selecting music, recruiting singers, leading Youth Choir when they participate in worship. Katherine will also assist with Handbells and sing with the Adult Choir.

REMIX

TRUNK OR TREAT 2017

Volunteer to **MIX** up some new ideas for Trunk or Treat this year! We need a group of folks who will recruit Trunks, recruit volunteers for other tasks, and help create a fantastic Trunk or Treat event this year.

If you're interested in serving on this short-term planning team with [Taylor Bell](#) and [Valerie Burton](#), please let them know.

BCOCY(outh)

Sunday evenings look like this:

- 5:00 Youth Music with Katherine Mullen
- 6:00 Snack Supper provided by youth parents - Sign up to provide a meal through [Sign Up Genius](#) created by Leigha McLendon.
- 6:25 Games and Bible Study - Marnie and Valerie are leading a series that explores four passages where youth might be tempted to think they've heard all there is to hear, but we will be asking some questions that dig a little deeper to see if there are some things we may have missed beneath the surface. We dismiss by 7:30pm.

Wednesday evenings look like this:

- 6:15 - Youth meet in room 210 to hear a book read aloud and discuss the characters and ideas relative to our week. This is our time to Weekly Wonder how we can bring more kindness and compassion into the world. We are reading the book, *Wonder*, by R.J. Palacio, that has been made into a major motion picture that will be released later this fall. No reading is required outside of the group. When we finish this book, we will move on to another.
- 7:00

UPCOMING EVENTS

THE PSALMS AND PRAYER

SEPTEMBER 7, 10:30 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

Beginning next week, LaMon Brown will be teaching a 10-week class entitled "The Psalms and Prayer: How Psalms May Improve Your Prayer Life." The class will look at the Psalms to discover different paths for a fuller prayer life and some by-ways best left untraveled. The class will meet on Thursdays from 10:30 to 11:30 in Room 203.

LABOR DAY BEACH RETREAT

Click [HERE](#) to see room assignments for the weekend. Or visit www.bcoc.net/looking-ahead.



CHURCH BUSINESS

WEEKS OF AUGUST 20 AND 27

General Fund \$12,150.57

Building Fund \$370.00

General Fund Gifts needed each week to meet the 2017

Budget: \$13,791.00

The indebtedness of the church is \$536,570.29

MANY OF YOU HAVE BEEN ASKING "WHAT CAN WE DO TO HELP THOSE IMPACTED BY HURRICANE HARVEY?"

Alabama CBF has a [list](#) of things we can do:

Pray – Pray for Houston, Harris County, families, and first responders.

Give – Consider giving to the CBF Hurricane Disaster Relief Fund (click [HERE](#) if you wish to give)

Organize – Consider becoming part of short-term disaster relief groups and long-term rebuilding efforts.

Think: Long-term – Keep in mind that recovery takes years. Consider supporting efforts that focus on rehabilitation and the resiliency of communities.

There are several ways for Covenant members to get involved.

1. The United Methodist Church has a Disaster Response Warehouse in Decatur, AL and are looking for volunteers to help sort supplies. BCOC is looking to form a team to help in September. Email [Taylor Bell](#) if interested (For more information visit their [website](#)).
2. If you are interested in the possibility of traveling to East Texas to participate in rebuilding efforts, email [Taylor Bell](#).
3. AL.com has produced a list of all Hurricane Harvey relief efforts in Alabama. Click [HERE](#) to learn more.

OFFICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

STAFF EVALUATIONS

The staff committee is working on evaluations for our staff members for October 2016 – September 2017. Our newest hires will not be included in this process as they have not yet served a year. Below you will find a link to the performance appraisal for Pastor Sarah, Valerie, Dan, and Jimmy. Please take some time to complete these appraisals.

Thank you, Delane Tew

Please take this opportunity to participate by filling out the Google form [HERE](#) or visiting goo.gl/t9VBaX

**WE WILL BE
CLOSED
LABOR DAY**

Sarah Shelton will be on call Monday, September 4.

TAKE WHAT YOU NEED

FOR SEPTEMBER: Travel-size Kleenex and hand sanitizer

September Birthdays

Julia Peterson 9/1	Sonya Lane 9/6	Jason Hall 9/10
Bill Smith 9/2	Denise Gardner 9/6	Lisa Whitman 9/10
John McElroy 9/2	9/6	B J Melton 9/10
Davis Mann 9/2	Marcella Dale 9/9	Errol Norris 9/11
Kathy Snyder 9/2	Trey Adams 9/9	Dianne Daniels 9/12
Jennifer Rahn 9/4	Ronald Williams 9/9	
Harvey Love 9/5		



PRAYER CONCERNS



Bob Powell, Cottdale Christian Church, Cottdale, AL
Shalom Baptist Church Corita Blanco Boca de Mariel, Cuba

Elizabeth Lott, St. Charles Avenue Baptist Church, New Orleans, LA

with sympathy

Sympathy is expressed to Mike, Suzanne, Summer, and Micah Martin in the death of Suzanne's father, Jim Stigler. There will be a memorial service at Vestavia Hills Baptist later in September. Also to Marcella Dale in the death of her aunt, Juanita Christian.

DEACON OF THE WEEK: GAIL HILL, 205-410-1076

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 3 – COMMUNION

Beach Retreat, Panama City, FL
Helpers Pickup – Pat Hawley, Mary Helen & Joe Dixon
 8:30 a.m. – *Lobby Monitors* – Bob & Pam Patterson
 8:30 a.m. – 9:15 a.m. – *Alley Door Monitor* – Suzanne & Mike Martin
 9:00 a.m. – Morning Worship
Greeters, Ushers & Offering – Deacons
Worship Care – Carol Watson, Connie McCrory, Will Martin
 9:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m. – *Glass Lobby Greeters* – Brent Cotton & Tom Austin
 10:00 am. – *Coffee Fellowship* – Brent Cotton & Tom Austin, Frank McCrory
 10:30 a.m.. – Sunday School
 Combined Adults – Joyce Mitchel, Fellowship Hall
 Combined Elementary Children – Room 114
Offering Counters – Jenny Smith, Ronald Williams
Helpers Class – Esther Gardner
Building Lockup – David Hoefelman

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 4 – LABOR DAY

Beach Retreat, Panama City, FL
 Office Closed – Sarah Shelton, on call

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6

Check Signers – Ellen Dossett, David Henderson
 5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. – Adult & Preschool Dinner (FH), Handbells
 5:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. – Dinner – Children
 5:45 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. – Leadership Learning Academy
 6:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. – Children's' Choir
 6:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. – Mission Friends
 6:15 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. – Prayer, Announcements, Bible Study
 6:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. – Preschool Music
 6:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. – Children in Action
 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. – Adult Choir
Choir Lock-up – Morgan Ponder

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 7

10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. – "Psalms and Prayer," Room 203

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 9

9:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. – Saturday Morning Grocery Ministry
 John Hollis, Pat Hawley

DEACON OF THE WEEK: AMY WOODWARD, 205-876-5621

SUNDAY, SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 10

Helpers Pickup – Bill & Suzann Smith
 8:30 a.m. – *Lobby Monitors* – Robby King, David Litton
 8:30 a.m. – 9:15 a.m. – *Alley Door Monitors* – Melanie Lanier, Jeff Barton
 9:00 a.m. – Morning Worship
Greeters, Ushers & Offering – Monty Hogewood, Bob Duffy, Jean Thomason, Matthew & Karen Stinnett, , Paula Heifner
Worship Care – Carol Dean, Leigha McLendon, Katy Grace Bateman, Julie Burge
 9:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m. – *Glass Lobby Greeters* – Allan Burton
 10:00 a.m. – *Coffee Fellowship* – Bill & Faith Stockton
 10:30 a.m. – Sunday School
Offering Counters – Frank McCrory, Susan Richardson
Helpers Class – Esther Gardner
Building Lockup – David Hoefelman
 11:30 a.m. – Deacons
 1:00 p.m – COM
 5:00 p.m. – Youth Music
 6:00 p.m – 6:30 p.m – Snack Supper
 6:30 p.m – 7:30 p.m. – Youth Bible Study

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 11

9:30 a.m. – Staff Meeting
 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. – Overeaters Anonymous

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13

Check Signers – Ellen Dossett, David Henderson
 5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. – Adult & Preschool Dinner (FH), Handbells
 5:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. – Dinner – Children
 5:45 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. – Leadership Learning Academy
 6:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. – Children's' Choir
 6:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. – Mission Friends
 6:15 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. – Prayer, Announcements, Business Meeting
 6:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. – Preschool Music
 6:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. – Children in Action
 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. – Adult Choir
Choir Lock-up – Tim Liptak

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 14

10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. – "Psalms and Prayer," Room 203

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 16

9:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. – Saturday Morning Grocery Ministry
 Brian Berthiaume, Susan Jackson

Worship, September 3
 Communion Meditation by Sarah Shelton
Barefoot Vulnerability

First Reading	Exodus 3:1-15
Second Reading	Romans 12:9-21
Third Reading	Matthew 16:21-28

Worship, September 10
 Sermon by Sarah Shelton

First Reading	Exodus 12:1-14
Second Reading	Romans 13:8-14
Third Reading	Matthew 18:15-20