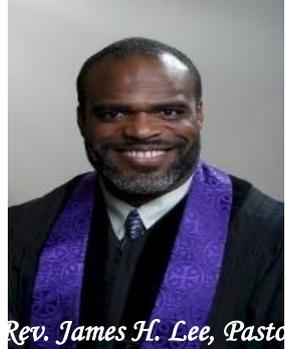
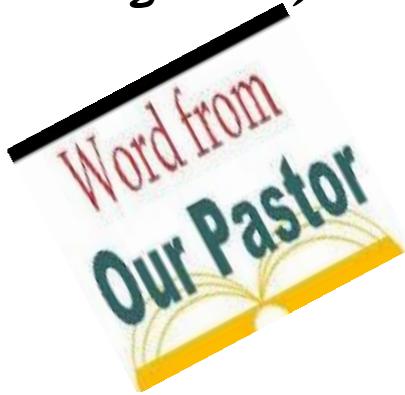


November 28, 2014



NCFA CONNEXION!

Being Real, Relevant, and Racially



Rev. James H. Lee, Pastor

Dear NCFA Family and Friends:

We have been on a whirlwind of a month between mission trips to Sudan, Chiapas, and Cuba; our Stewardship Campaign, and the nominating of new church officers. Like Dorothy, I clicked my boots and said, "There's no place like home"—but neither home nor I are the same.

We were blessed to have Rev. Bill Harris and Seminarian John Harrison preach during my absence, and on Sunday, Deacon Carol Saddington stood in the gap and preached for her beloved husband as he recovered from an illness.

Thankfully, , our all-church retreat went well at MO-Ranch under the leadership of Elder Mary Mojica and Sunday morning preaching by Rev. Ellis Oglesby. Our Caregivers' course completed its final class Thursday, November 19th. ROOOR, with its Workers2Work ministry, celebrated its Annual Stakeholders' Dinner last Friday at the Ronald McDonald House. After worship on Sunday, we celebrated our churchwide Thanksgiving Dinner and Fellowship; and thankfully, we were able to bless a number of families in need for their Thanksgiving celebration this week.

Prior to leaving for Cuba, we had a congregational meeting where we confirmed our new officers. I look forward to training them so that they are ready for examination in December and ordination/installation during our 6th Anniversary Celebration on January 18th.

We continue to give thanks to God as we press through the remainder of 2014 and plan for 2015. The pledges for 2015 have come in, and we are nearing the necessary funding for 2015. Although we are \$22,740.00 short of our goal, we had an increase of \$6,620.00 in pledges since last Sunday. I also give thanks to all of you who have given of your time, talents, and finances so that this ministry can continue to exist. It is amazing when you see people from near, far, other churches, and denominations sow into you. There are moments when I celebrate you as the Aaron and Ur holding my hands, while other times I celebrate you, our members, and Session at work so that I on behalf of NCFA can experience victories in the Valley, Chiapas, the community, Cuba, Austin Seminary, MO-Ranch, Austin Club House, Presbyterian Multicultural Network, etc.

Exodus 17:11-13:

11 Whenever Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed; and whenever he lowered his hand, Amalek prevailed. 12 But Moses' hands grew weary; so they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it. Aaron and Hur held up his hands, one on one side, and the other on the other side; so his hands were steady until the sun set. 13 And Joshua defeated Amalek and his people with the sword.

Friends, please place these items on your calendar and in your prayers:

- November 30th: 1st Sunday of Advent; Hanging of the Greens Service; Session Meeting
- December 14th: Christmas Fellowship and Dinner
- December 21st: Presbyterian Players' Play during Worship; Session Meeting
- December 24th: Christmas Eve service from 6:30-7:30
- December 28th: Congregational Meeting to affirm new leaders, review the approved 2015 Budget, and approve my Terms of Call
- January 18th: Church's 6th Anniversary; Ordination/Installation of Church Officers;
- January 18th: NCFA and University PC joint MLK Service at 3pm at NCFA
- Finally, in honor of the Longhorns being bowl eligible, and out of gratitude to Mission Presbytery, I leave you with a picture of Ruben, Kay, and me at the Seminario Evangelico de Teologia in Cuba. More pictures will be on the website showcasing our Team: Ruben Armendariz, Caly Fernandez, Jack Kern, Kay McCloskey, Mike Murphey, Lore', Osmani, and "the Chief" Edelberto Valdez



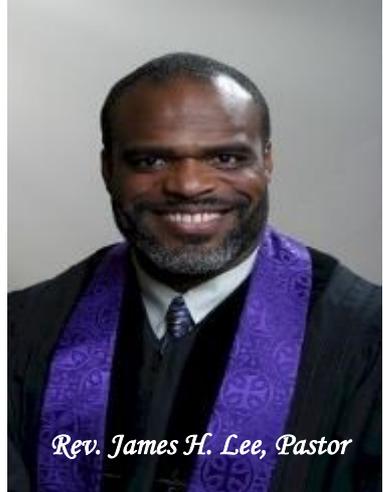
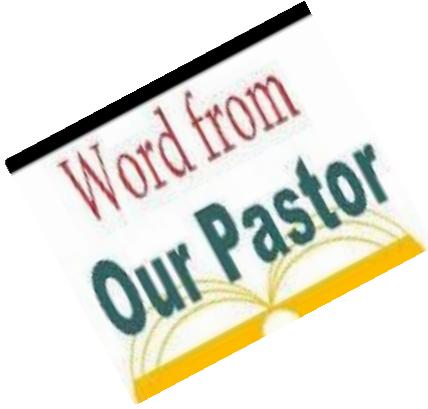
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November 28, 2014



NCFA CONNEXION!

Being Real, Relevant, and Racially



Rev. James H. Lee, Pastor

CONTINUED

Philippians 1:4-6

⁴In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy ⁵because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, ⁶being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus

I have been torn whether to speak or not to speak regarding the incidents in Ferguson. The blessed challenge of being a diverse church is our diversity of thought, theology, politics, etc. What is important for me right now is our capacity to hear each other's voices and see things from each other's perspective.

Secondly, it is important for me that we remember 1 Corinthians 12:25-26 from the Message (MSG): ²⁵⁻²⁶*The way God designed our bodies is a model for understanding our lives together as a church: every part dependent on every other part, the parts we mention and the parts we don't, the parts we see and the parts we don't. If one part hurts, every other part is involved in the hurt, and in the healing. If one part flourishes, every other part enters into the exuberance.*

Below, please find a prayer provided to us by the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, which has been providing pastoral support to the church leadership in the community, at the request of the Presbytery of Giddings-Lovejoy.

A prayer following the grand jury decision in Ferguson, Missouri, November 2014

God our Shelter, hold us under the shelter of your wings as we bow before you in grief and pain for the brokenness of our world.

Some years we wonder why the Advent texts that prepare us for your Coming One begin with judgment, not with hope.

Not this year. This year, we struggle with juries and justice and judgment--

What is right? What is wrong? What is fair?

What can we do, with such fear and anger and longing,

that can bind us together, rather than further tear apart the fabric of our common life?

We are all too aware of our flawed humanity, and we need the hope of Advent:

the hope that once again, as long ago, You may show up among us

in our cities, our neighbors, and ourselves--

in the midst of civic unrest and social disorder,

around joyful family tables at Thanksgiving,

in the angry streets: oh, show up in our midst!

A Stranger without privilege or place: Emmanuel, God with us.

We pray for our neighbors in Ferguson, in this hard season of judgment--

for each of them is a child made in your image.

We pray for ourselves, that this hurt will not fade from our minds

before our hearts are broken open with Your passion for mercy, justice, and love.

Restore our hope, our heart,

our sense of the possibility of holiness in your creation.

Fill us, your wounded, willing people, with

the expectation of the coming of the Prince of Peace,

the hope that we might nurture the healing of the nations,

and the willingness to bear the Christ-light, even in these Advent days of shadow,

that the peaceable kingdom for which our ancestors yearned and prayed

might one day, some day soon, dawn among us.

Pastor James H. Lee

STEWARDSHIP UPDATE 2015

If you have not turned in your pledge cards for 2015, please do so!

Total pledges to date: 36

Total amount to date: \$200,460.00

Goal: \$223,200.00

November 28, 2014



NCFA CONNEXION!

Being Real, Relevant, and Racially Diverse!

NCF A SUNDAY MORNINGS

NCFA Sunday Schedule

8:15am - Worship Service
Waller Creek Chapel
41st St. and Red River

10:15am - Worship Service
1507 Wilshire Blvd.
9am Adult Sunday School
10am Fellowship

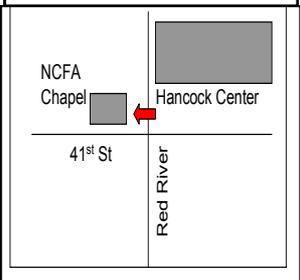
10:45am - Children's Church

**NCFA SUNDAY WORSHIP AT 8:15am --
Waller Chapel**

Come rise and shine with us
at our **8:15am** chapel service
where we glorify God
through the Word, Prayer, Hymns,
and Communion.

41st and Red River, entrance gate on 41st.

In the words of Phillips, Craig & Dean,
"Come, just as you, to worship."
All are welcome to this traditional,
intimate style of worshipping our Lord.



NCFA Waller Creek Chapel — Upcoming Preachers

November 30 - Danita Nelson

**NCFA SUNDAY WORSHIP AT
10:15am**

We would love to have you and your family
come share in the **CELEBRATION OF
THE GOOD NEWS!**

We are worshipping in the Fellowship Hall of
Genesis Presbyterian Church on the Wil-
shire Campus starting at 10:15 a.m.



Real Church... 

Real People... 

Real Simple... 

New Covenant Fellowship of Austin PC(U.S.A.) is a racially diverse community informed by the Bible, empowered by the Holy Spirit, and motivated to share God's love with all. In response to God's love, we are called to equip disciples to faithfully serve, to encourage seekers to joyfully commit, and to implore all to worship our Lord, as we love our neighbors, grow in grace, and live by faith.

November 28, 2014



NCFA CONNEXION!

Being Real, Relevant, and Racially Diverse!

“A Goat in Sheep’s Clothing”

Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24; Matthew 25:31-46

Rev. Jeffrey B. Saddington, M.Div.
New Covenant Fellowship of Austin,
Waller Creek Chapel and Wilshire Blvd. Campus
Christ the King Sunday – November 23, 2014

[Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24](#)

¹¹For thus says the Lord GOD: I myself will search for my sheep, and will seek them out. ¹²As shepherds seek out their flocks when they are among their scattered sheep, so I will seek out my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places to which they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. ¹³I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land; and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the watercourses, and in all the inhabited parts of the land. ¹⁴I will feed them with good pasture, and the mountain heights of Israel shall be their pasture; there they shall lie down in good grazing land, and they shall feed on rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. ¹⁵I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I will make them lie down, says the Lord GOD. ¹⁶I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them with justice. ²⁰Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD to them: I myself will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep. ²¹Because you pushed with flank and shoulder, and butted at all the weak animals with your horns until you scattered them far and wide, ²²I will save my flock, and they shall no longer be ravaged; and I will judge between sheep and sheep. ²³I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them: he shall feed them and be their shepherd. ²⁴And I, the LORD, will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them; I, the LORD, have spoken.”

[Matthew 25:31-46](#)

³¹“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. ³²All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, ³³and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. ³⁴Then the king will say to those at his right hand, ‘Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; ³⁵for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’ ³⁷Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? ³⁸And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? ³⁹And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?’ ⁴⁰And the king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.’ ⁴¹Then he will say to those at his left hand, ‘You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; ⁴²for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, ⁴³I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’ ⁴⁴Then they also will answer, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?’ ⁴⁵Then he will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’ ⁴⁶And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

I will begin by wishing you all a “Happy New Year!” Am I rushing the seasons, like stores and malls always do? Not so, as today is actually the last day of the church year. Next Sunday begins 4 weeks of the season of Advent, which is always the beginning of a new church year. Advent means “the coming,” a time of expectant waiting for the one who has already come, the Christ child. Through Advent, we celebrate moving from the complete darkness of this world into the Light of Christ that changed the world forever 2,000 years ago with the birth of Jesus.

But let’s not rush it! Today is Christ the King Sunday. Since awaiting and celebrating Christ’s birth last Christmas, we have suffered with him in his journey toward Jerusalem, and the cross through Lent in March, and his passion and death during Holy Week in April. We rejoiced on Easter Sunday at his Resurrection. That morning when Pastor James proclaimed, “He is Risen!” we shouted back, “He is Risen, indeed!” In June we celebrated the gift of the Holy Spirit in Pentecost, and now we come to this last Sunday of our church year where we declare in total boldness that Christ is our Lord and King, ruler of all, now and forever. Amen!

Today when I want to find out how to drive somewhere, I use Google Maps or a GPS. I type in an address like “1507 Wilshire Blvd.,” and it rapidly goes right to it. But the map zeros in so close that unless I see a road around it that I recognize, I still cannot understand where New Covenant Fellowship really is or how to get there. I have to sort of “back away” from the Google map and go up to a higher level until I can see the big picture of just where I am and where I want to be.

Understanding today’s text about the sheep and goats is similar in this way. To really understand what is going on in the story about the sheep and goats, we need more information about the *Gospel of Matthew* and how this writer is telling Jesus’ story. So let’s “back away” a little from the sheep and goats just a bit to see *Matthew’s* bigger picture.

November 28, 2014



NCFA CONNEXION!

Being Real, Relevant, and Racially Diverse!

“A Goat in Sheep’s Clothing”

Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24; Matthew 25:31-46

Rev. Jeffrey B. Saddington, M.Div.
New Covenant Fellowship of Austin,
Waller Creek Chapel and Wilshire Blvd. Campus
Christ the King Sunday – November 23, 2014

But first, a spoiler alert! I must admit to you that about 20 years ago this passage changed my life. I read this text and reread it many times. I prayed over how I should respond to it; and it seemed very clear, abundantly clear, what was expected of me. This text lists six needs of the poor, the outcasts, and the marginalized. It became crystal clear to me that I was to feed the hungry, provide drink and clothing, welcome the outcast, visit the sick and those in prison. I eventually became committed to try to do a few of these things, but I was inadequate then and remain inadequate today to live up to these expectations of Jesus.

Let’s now look at the bigger picture in *Matthew* and other parts of the Bible to understand better how to interpret sheep and goats. Everything in the *Gospel of Matthew* has been leading up to the teaching of Jesus found in *Matthew Chapters 24 and 25*. These lessons are the last teaching that Jesus does before the cross, so we can be sure that this information Jesus lays out for his disciples is most critical.

Matthew 24 begins with a description of the second coming of Jesus. Jesus then proceeds to tell 3 stories before this one about the sheep and the goats—3 parables about being ready and doing what is necessary for the Master’s return. The Master in these stories essentially returns without warning, and those not ready or not doing what they should have been doing are punished severely. These are rough lessons in judgment, leaving no wiggle room for excuses.

The first of these stories is the parable of the unfaithful slave who did not fulfill his responsibilities of overseeing the household while the Master was away. It points believers to be faithful to the Master’s wishes, doing what should be done because the Master will return without notice.

In the second parable, Jesus tells about 10 bridesmaids, 5 who foolishly did not bring enough oil to keep their lamps burning until the master came, again without notice. It teaches us about preparedness in waiting for the return of Christ.

The last parable is about the lazy servant who had responsibilities and assets that were not invested or used wisely while the Master was away. This story instructs that believers must properly serve with what we have been given, as each are blessed by different skills, gifts, and opportunities.

Taken together, these 3 stories are really Advent stories, aren’t they? They are about waiting for the Master to come a second time to bring the final kingdom into the world. The season of Advent that begins next week has us waiting for the first incarnation of Christ, the baby Jesus. Our text today is all about a sort of “second Advent,” the second coming of Christ to usher in the end days.

This brings us to the sheep and goats, which uses severe judgment language about whether people have served the least among us, and therefore Christ, with what they had been given.

The Son of Man in this story tells both the sheep and goats that when they did or did not minister to other people, they were really doing or not doing ministry to the Son of Man. Did you notice that those who did what the Son of Man needed were surprised that they really did these things for him? *Verse 37: When did we minister to you?* Did you also notice that those who did not minister to what the Son of Man needed were also surprised that they did not serve him? *Verse 44: When did we not minister to you?* Everyone was surprised that those in need of food, drink, clothing, and hospitality were really on Jesus’ team. That is worth repeating. *Everyone was surprised* that those in need of food, drink, clothing, and hospitality were really on Jesus’ team—and had either been served, been ministered to, or not. The least of these were not just on Jesus’ team, they were the super-stars on Jesus’ team. They mattered the most.

Jesus is teaching at the very end of his earthly reign that his priority is the poor, the outcast, the homeless, and the downtrodden—not the rich, the comfortable, the self-absorbed, the ones in power who make the rules, the ones who think they have filled their investment portfolios through their own work and estate planning. Everyone in this story was surprised that their salvation depended on how they treated the least of these among us.

Jesus is teaching at the very end of his earthly reign that his priority is the poor, the outcast, the homeless, and the downtrodden—not the rich, the comfortable, the self-absorbed, the ones in power who make the rules, the ones who think they have filled their investment portfolios through their own work and estate planning. Everyone in this story was surprised that their salvation depended on how they treated the least of these among us.

Are you also surprised that you do not see any mention of grace, faith, forgiveness, or repentance in this last judgment? No, here we find that life’s final exam question is “What did you do for the least of these, since they represent ME?” So where does this “amazing grace” we sing about come into the picture? And do we respond to these judgment words in fear, or do we look to our faith to help us “fear not?,” as we are reminded repeatedly in our Bibles?

Let’s look at the bigger picture. In the birth story of Jesus in *Matthew 1:23*, we are introduced to the one who the prophet foretold is coming through a virgin birth who will be called “Immanuel,” meaning “*God is with us.*” And then, going to the very last sentence of *Matthew (28:20)*, Christ tells his disciples, “*And remember, I will be with you to the end of the age.*”

This promise at the very beginning of *Matthew* and again at the very end tells us clearly that God will be with us, no matter what. This is a promise that we can rely upon and embrace throughout our lives, no matter what happens to us in our life and faith journey.

November 28, 2014



NCFA CONNEXION!

Being Real, Relevant, and Racially Diverse!

“A Goat in Sheep’s Clothing”

Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24; Matthew 25:31-46

Rev. Jeffrey B. Saddington, M.Div.
New Covenant Fellowship of Austin,
Waller Creek Chapel and Wilshire Blvd. Campus

In *John 3:16-18a*, we read some of the most well-loved words in the Bible: ¹⁶*“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.”* ¹⁷*“Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.”* ¹⁸*“Those who believe in him are not condemned:”*.

And in 1 John 1: 9-2:2, ⁹*If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* ¹⁰*If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.* ²*My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.*

Okay, so #1: We will be judged by how we serve the least among us. #2: We have a God who will be with us always to the end of the age. #3: Our God provides a savior to atone for the sins we commit yesterday, today, and tomorrow, allowing us to not perish but have eternal life. #4: We need to ask for forgiveness for the things we do and for the things we fail to do that do not jive with Jesus.

We are reminded, and aren’t we lucky that we have an awesome God, who clearly tells us what God expects, and then provides a way through pure grace to be a God of second, third, and fourth chances. And when we come to our Lord in repentance, like we just did together a few minutes ago in the Prayer of Confession, how on earth can we be forgiven for our endless, hopeless messes? God uses a divine White Erase board that really works. *Whoosh! Gone!* Our sins are forgiven through God’s grace and mercy! It’s still all about grace!

But let’s not lose the point of this scripture. We are to serve others with our time, talents, and treasure. We are to serve the least among us, regardless of who they are, what they look like, or where they have come from.

Yet even when I try to serve others, even on a really good day, I am really just a “goat in sheep’s clothing,” a phrase by an author, preacher, and teacher I like named Paul Scott Wilson. I think that is a good description of me. I certainly know that I cannot do all of these things Jesus requires no matter how hard I try. I am a goat in sheep’s clothing for sure. So what can you and I do to follow what Jesus is expecting of us, knowing that we have a gracious and merciful God who is always with us, always loving us even when all we do is not pleasing in God’s sight?

There are so many ways to serve right here in our own community. I will name a few, and you will know many others.

Our seminary intern, John Harrison, with the approval of the Deacons, is overseeing the beginning of a Food Pantry that will help many who need food here in our community and in our own congregation. I understand that 1 in 5 children in Travis County has insufficient food, or does not know when or where the next meal will come. That is a situation that each of us should be ashamed about, but it will take massive human energy, resourcefulness, and courage, along with the Holy Spirit to change this situation permanently for our children and adults who are hungry. If you need this ministry or want to help John with starting this new ministry here, please talk with him. *Jesus said that this work matters.*

Three weeks ago, Doug Caroom, Bonnie Lew, her 7-year-old son Jacob, and I served 75 meals to the homeless and hungry through Mobile Loaves and Fishes all over Austin. Jacob’s main job was handing out juice boxes to anyone who would take them. He was sweet, earnest, and kind to everyone whether they had ragged clothes or not, whether they had a scraggly beard or were clean shaven. And in return, all of the people Jacob served treated him with perfect kindness, respect, and smiles. It was a wonderful evening, with seven of us driving a truck full of food that the make-ready team devotedly provided, until there was no more food left. If any wish to be a part of that ministry, serving people on the street, please say so. *Jesus said that this work matters.*

Caly Fernandez is going to hold another event soon at this church to build “We Care Kits” that look just like this one that Bonnie makes at home. They contain a few critical things such as clean, dry socks for people on street corners. When I hand these out, it also provides an opportunity to speak a blessing to each of these men and women, and to look them in the eye when I say “God loves you.” It takes a little bit of courage to do this, but frankly, not much. Thanks to all those who have pledged support or bought components for building these kits. And thanks to Caly for her leadership in mission work. If you wish to help organize this, please talk to her. *Jesus said that this work matters.*

Rev. Ellis Oglesby has started a ministry called Workers2Work that provides very used cars to people who have a job but no access to transportation. He lends them these cars for free until they can afford their own wheels, and for that privilege they have to begin saving money, take a Dave Ramsey Financial Peace course, and attend one spiritual event each month. The Session of New Covenant has approved working on a test family through this church. If you are interested in helping this ministry in some way, please see him or Scott Phillips. Jesus did not drive a car, but *he cared for people who are like those served by this ministry.*

John Harrison has spent a year of his coursework at seminary serving those incarcerated at a local jail by visiting them, and helping us to hear the voices of those whose lives end in our prisons with the death penalty. It takes great courage to do this work. I admire and support him and encourage any who would like to join that work visiting those in prison to talk with him about how it might be started here at New Covenant. *Jesus said that this work matters.*

November 28, 2014



NCFA CONNEXION!

Being Real, Relevant, and Racially Diverse!

“A Goat in Sheep’s Clothing”

Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24; Matthew 25:31-46

Rev. Jeffrey B. Saddington, M.Div.
New Covenant Fellowship of Austin,
Waller Creek Chapel and Wilshire Blvd. Campus

I keep saying that it takes courage for us to do these things. You may have seen the article in the *Statesman* on November 6 about arrests in Ft. Lauderdale where local ordinances have been passed to outlaw feeding the hungry in public places. Authorities in a number of cities believe that the homeless and hungry situation is out of control, so now it is illegal in some places to do basically what Mobile Loaves and Fishes does 7 nights a week on the streets of Austin. This article reported the arrest of a 90-year-old man and 2 priests who each face 60 days in jail and a \$500 fine. The 90-year-old was told by officers to “drop that plate right now,” as if he was holding a weapon! It is not the officers’ fault when laws are passed that they are required to enforce. The very next day, this 90-year-old hero was back preparing meals to deliver to the hungry in spite of the threat of jail. Yes, it takes courage to truly serve the least among us, doesn’t it?

But when we choose to serve like this, Jesus said that we are really serving Christ. Of course we will be imperfect at it. Serving one homeless man and then ignoring the one on the next corner, as if we do not see that he or she is a human in need also, moves us from “Sheep” to “Goat” in a matter of a few blocks of driving. These issues of human need are so large, and we are individually so small. Yet our God is larger than all of our needs and will eventually bring about a New Jerusalem without warning where there will be no more crying, no more pain, and no more tears. Christ is asking us to join in that work here and now on earth, with the help of the Holy Spirit, whenever and wherever we have the capacity to do it. Our role is to serve others and be prepared for the coming Kingdom, for we know neither the day nor the hour, said Jesus.

When we try to serve and fail, when we are goats who occasionally try to be sheep, we can be comforted in the knowledge that our forgiving and all-powerful God sent the only real Sheep, the Lamb of God, to wash away all of our sins.

Today’s scripture teaches that Christ wants to turn our faith into action on his behalf, not as works-earning salvation, but to show others a view of the Kingdom through an honest love of Christ. We



Scripture Passages for 1st Sunday in Advent

(From the Revised Common Lectionary)

November 30 2014

Isaiah 64:1-9
Psalms 80:1-7, 17-19

1 Corinthians 1:3-9

NCFA CONNEXION!

Being Real, Relevant, and Racially Diverse!

PRAYER AND PRAISE



- ⇒ Praise for the amazing MO-Ranch Family Retreat and its leadership.
- ⇒ Thanksgiving for the safe return of Pastor Lee and Caly from Cuba, for the hospitality received, for all the people they met, and for their safe return. Prayers for Pastor Dahlia as she discerns God's call.
- ⇒ Lift up Marilyn and her family as they grieve Corey's death.
- ⇒ Praise for a family's opportunity to follow Jesus's call to be a blessing by taking in a homeless friend for several weeks; prayers that this friend may know God's love.
- ⇒ Lift up a lonely friend of Lydia's and the opportunity for Caly's skills to be of potential help to her.
- ⇒ Praise for the blessing of Vernon being a wonderful husband, and prayers of celebration for his birthday tomorrow.
- ⇒ Prayers for two friends of John's, a couple going through serious health issues possibly including early onset dementia.
- ⇒ Lift up the Bohn family as they celebrate the life of Jimmy's grandmother who entered the Church Triumphant last weekend at the age of 94. Prayers that Jimmy and Kimberly may witness their faith and hope to nonbelieving relatives.
- ⇒ Thanksgiving for the much-needed rain in this area. Prayers for the families who have lost loved ones during the heavy snows and flooding that are wreaking havoc in western New York.
- ⇒ Prayers for safe travels for all who are gathering for Thanksgiving in our city, state, country, and even around the world, including:
 - Caly driving to South Texas to be with her mother and family;
 - John and Michelle driving to Tennessee to be with his family;
 - Jeff, Carol, and Jessica driving to Carrollton to be with Debbie, Zach, and his family;
 - The Caroom family gathering in Austin, joyfully including Cyrus;
 - Special thanksgiving for Rhonda and Bob's youngest daughter coming to visit from Colorado.
- ⇒ Prayers for peace, happiness, and joy for all in this holiday season.
- ⇒ Praise that Patricia is home safely from Sudan and:
 - Thanksgiving for her opportunity to travel beside two Tanzanian nurses on their way to Sierra Leone to volunteer their assistance with Ebola patients.
 - Thanksgiving for her good health and that of the pastor she worked with while camping the entire trip.
 - Thanksgiving for opportunities to challenge the prevalent, misguided perceptions of protection that folks have while wearing symbols of witchcraft, and praise for those who bravely remove them and place their faith in the Lord instead.
 - Thanksgiving for the new Toposa believers who accompany her into new villages that have not yet heard the Good News.
 - Praise for the joy that comes from worshiping through singing and dancing.
 - Thanksgiving for our prayers through her journey.
- ⇒ Joyful praise for Doug and Patricia's son Cyrus's continued recovery through 3 months of rehab after his 11-day coma, for his opportunity to refresh his surgeon skills on a cadaver recently, and for his ability to join his parents for Thanksgiving.
- ⇒ Prayers for Jenny's friend Heather, a young mother in Colorado with 4 young daughters who is struggling with Stage 4 lung cancer.
- ⇒ Praise God for the action taken on immigration by President Obama to bring many out of the shadows, fear, and insecurity to a place of recognition and regained dignity. Lift up those who will not be pleased because they will not be able to apply for this reprieve. We are reminded through this process that the Scriptures encourage us to "Welcome the stranger."
- ⇒ Thanksgiving for Peter M.'s opportunity to worship with us. Prayers for building up his church and congregation.
- ⇒ Thanksgiving for Carol being able to proclaim the Word through Jeff's sermon in worship after his headcold worsened Saturday evening. With his temperature returned to normal, prayers for his continued recovery.
- ⇒ Praise for Michelle's opportunity to travel from St. Louis and be with us at both services.
- ⇒ Prayers for safety, calm, and continued dialog—not silence—in Ferguson while issues of race, violence, and mistrust continue to weigh heavily on our nation.

NCFA CONNEXION!

Being Real, Relevant, and Racially



"Buildings & Grounds is in need of persons to help one or more days a month with light cleaning and set up for Sunday worship. This would typically be done on a Friday or Saturday and require between one and two hours of your time.

For details see Tim Lenz, Chairperson Buildings & Grounds."

YOUTH CHOIR HAS A FRIEND

The NCF Youth Choir will be singing a song with a peppy tune and meaningful words on Sunday, November 30th during the worship service. The song title is "I Have a Friend Who Loves Me." The song will be sung in both English and Spanish. During the month of November, thirteen young people practiced this song which they'll do acappella. Following the church service they will have their regular rehearsal time as they start on their song for December. Anyone from the age of 3 through 20 is welcome and invited to be in this Youth Choir.



Welcome to the World



Lee Isaac Shubitz
11/28/14 at 1:08am
7lbs 10oz, 21 1/4 inches



November 28, 2014



NCFA CONNE~~X~~ION!

Being Real, Relevant, and Racially



We Care Kits

“But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.” 1 Peter 3:15

We are currently accepting the following donations

Food/Drink Items:

- Granola Bars
- Peanut Butter Crackers
- Trail Mix
- 8 ounce size water bottles

Hygiene/Personal Items:

- Travel Size Toothbrush
- Travel Size Toothpaste
- Travel size soap or bodywash
- Travel size shampoo
- Pocket size Kleenex
- Pocket size comb (no pointed handle)
- Chapstick
- Adult white ankle crew socks – size large

All donated items should be placed in the donations box located in classroom 7. If you have any questions please email me:

calyflower2020@yahoo.com or call me at (512)228-4712.

NCFA Evangelism Committee and the Children and Youth Committee will schedule a date in November to put the kits together and kits will be dispersed after Sunday services in November.

November 28, 2014



NCFA CONNE**X**ION!

Being Real, Relevant, and Racially Diverse!



- 3rd Sam Okyere Mireku
- 5th Ellis Oglesby
- 8th Francisco Ramirez
- 9th Krystal Parsons
- 15th Patricia Nemir
- 18th Vi Lee
Koryn Irene Aldas
- 19th Charlie Phillips
- 21st Comfort Agbahu
Dylan Shubitz
- 24th Vernon Bailey
- 25th Isabella Grace Sullivan
- 25th Carol Saddington
- 28th Matthew Cox
Tamara Smith
- 30th Stephanie Lenz Sullivan



New Covenant Fellowship

- 3rd Doug and Kathy Smith
- 8th George and Grace Washington
- 17th John and Doreette Ayensu
- 30th Jeff and Carol Saddington

Session Members

- *Rev. James Lee
Pastor/Moderator
- *Elder Kathy Smith
Clerk of Session
- *Rev. Bill Harris
Administration & Personnel
- *Elder Tim Lenz
Buildings & Grounds
- *Elder Mary Jo Mojica
Congregational Life
- *Elder Randy Mojica
Children and Youth
- *Elder Cathy Angell
Discipleship
- *Elder Caly Fernandez
Evangelism
- *Elder Tracey Lenz
Finance & Stewardship
- *Elder Robert Booth
Lay Ministry
- *Elder George Washington IV
Men's Ministry
- *Elder Vernon Bailey
Missions
- *Elder Jane Mack
Women's Ministry
- *Elder Charles Robinson
Worship & Membership

Deacons

- Connie Jones, Chair
- Jimmy Bohn
- Ulysses Cox
- Katie Harris
- Naomi Jones
- Samuel Okyere Mireku
- Lucy Oglesby
- Kathy Smith
- Carol Saddington

**NOVEMBER,
DECEMBER
&
JANUARY**



- **November 30th:** 1st Sunday of Advent; Hanging of the Greens Service; Session Meeting
- **December 14th:** Christmas Fellowship and Dinner
- **December 21st:** Presbyterian Players' Play during Worship; Session Meeting
- **December 24th:** Christmas Eve service from 6:30-7:30
- **December 28th:** Congregational Meeting to affirm new leaders, review the approved 2015 Budget, and approve my Terms of Call
- **January 18th:** Church's 6th Anniversary; Ordination/Installation of Church Officers;
- **January 18th:** NCFA and University PC joint MLK Service at 3pm at NCFA