

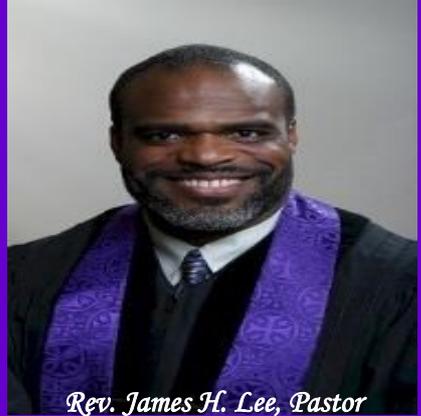
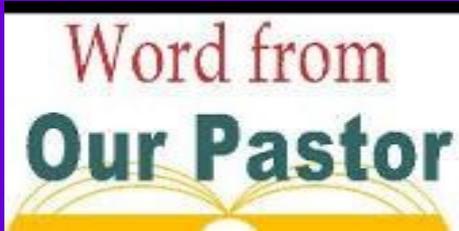
April 15, 2016



NCFA CONNE~~X~~ION!

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Being Real, Relevant, and Racially Diverse!



Rev. James H. Lee, Pastor

Dear NCFA Family and Friends

As we prepare for Sunday's Gospel lesson, where Jesus is the Good Shepherd, I am grateful that you have recognized me as your pastor or undershepherd of God.

After worship last Sunday, not only did several of you exercise spiritual maturity, you heeded my voice and did not react during an unanticipated, uncomfortable situation. Sunday morning worship is our worship of God; our edifying of Saints on the journey; our preparation for service in our communities; and our opportunities to disciple others and to be discipled. When I began the sermon last week, I said "the proof is in the pudding" but had no idea of the challenge that was coming later, and I'd just like to say to those present that you did great. Dr. King would say that the evidence of our character rings true when we are under fire.

I want to encourage you to sign up for the "Preferred Path" course at Grace Presbyterian Church on April 30. Please do not let cost prohibit you from signing up. This is a perfect opportunity provided to us by Mission Presbytery, the Preferred Path ministry task force, Karl Slaikeu, and Grace Presbyterian Church in Round Rock.

Rev. Lydia Hernandez will be preaching at our early worship service this Sunday (8:30am), and I will be preaching at the 10:15 service.

After worship we will meet with Rev. Ilene Dunn, our representative from the Committee on Ministry. This will be an opportunity for our Session to talk about the good work we have done and the work yet to come as a result of our stewardship and work with New Beginnings. It will also be an opportunity for us to speak with Ilene about concerns lifted up prior to our meetings in December 2014 and recent events as of last Sunday, April 10. Please feel free to send any concerns that you have to me and our Clerk of Session, Kathy Smith.

Please know that you are invited to participate in the Diabetes Class that Caly Fernández is teaching on Thursday evenings.

On the 24th our Youth Choir will be leading us in a song for worship. After worship, we will put together a fresh supply of We Care Kits.

We have a lot on our plate, and God's grace is indeed sufficient. Remember *Philippians 4:4-8* which reminds us to pray and to focus on things that are praiseworthy:

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵ Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. ⁶ Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. ⁸ Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think

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Mission Presbytery



The Preferred Path[®]
Ministry



You are invited to participate in the next Preferred Path Core Course officering at Grace Presbyterian Church, where the Rev. Nancy Reeves is the pastor.

Preferred Path Core Course

This course provides an introduction to collaboration and conflict resolution in light of biblical principles, and provides practical experience with tools for communicating, building consensus and resolving conflict between individuals and groups.

Cost: \$32 and includes lunch. Registration will be paid upon arrival. Go to the following link to register.

<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040c45a8a82fa75-preferred1>

Date: 04/30/2016 (Sat.)

Time: 8:30am - 4:30pm CDT

Location: 1705 Gattis School Road, Round Rock, TX
(Grace Presbyterian Church)

Mission Presbytery

Special Events

!Convencion! - April 24, 2016

Plan now to attend the Convencion to be held Sunday, April 24 at Iglesia Getsemani, San Benito! This festive event begins at 9:00 AM and continues until 1:00 PM. Worship will be at 11:00 AM, TE Jesse Gonzalez will preach.

Church Anniversaries. April 24, 2016

Celebrating 70 Years! — [Grace Presbyterian Church,](#)

[San Antonio,](#) invites you to help celebrate their 70th Anniversary of Ministry on Sunday, April 24, 2016.

Celebrating 140 years! — [First Presbyterian Church, Giddings,](#) invites you to help celebrate their 70th Anniversary of Ministry on Sunday, April 24, 2016.

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**Thinking with Christ's Mind
Loving with Christ's Heart
Serving with Christ's Hands**

Featured below are just some of the areas within NCF where your time, talents, or treasures are currently encouraged:

*** MISSION & EVANGELISM ***

(1) We Care Kits – An ongoing outreach of our church to provide a kind acknowledgment to our brothers and sisters begging on street corners that we do indeed care. We are collecting small-sized toiletries (to fit in quart-size zip-lock bags) such as *soap, toothpaste, toothbrush, comb, wrapped hard candy, 8-oz. water bottles, granola bars, and white crew socks.*

Contact: Caly, calyflower2020@yahoo.com

(2) Mobile Loaves & Fishes – Volunteer on our 1st-Friday-of-each month truck run to help provide meals to our city's homeless folks. Try it once!

Contacts: [Bonnie, lewser@gmail.com](mailto:Bonnie.lewser@gmail.com); [Jeff, saddington@gmail.com](mailto:Jeff.saddington@gmail.com)

*** CHILDREN & YOUTH ***

8 weeks to go!

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL'S "SURF SHACK" – June 13-17

Sunday, June 12th = the kickstart Beach Party Picnic.

Sunday, June 19th = a VBS/Father's Day celebration during our worship service will culminate the week!

Specific needs include:

- (1) Teachers and helpers are needed in the Nursery and Church School.
- (2) Building props and preparing crafts will begin soon.
- (3) Volunteers willing to support a fantastic VBS experience are happily encouraged to join the C&Y team.

Contacts: Elder Danita Nelson, ainad787@gmail.com;

Elder Randy Mojica, mothachozen@gmail.com

*** CARING AND SHARING ***

Can you occasionally help bring a member to church, just one way? One time or multiple times would be welcome.

Contacts: Deacon Scott Phillips, scotteric@gmail.com;

Carol Saddington, saddington@gmail.com

*** WORSHIP TEAM ***

Extra hands and voices needed at this time:

1. Set out the Communion elements, or wash the chalices afterwards?

Contact: Nancy Harris, mousiemama51@yahoo.com

2. Ushering

Contact: Elder Matthew Aldas, matthewaldas@icloud.com

3. Audio-Visual Help "If Bonnie can do it, so can you!" -BKL

Contact: Elder Robert Booth, rpbooth66@gmail.com

4. Worship Preparation

Can you spare an hour once a month?

Contact: Tim Lenz, running4mexfood@aol.com

5. Music

Come sing with the Psalm 150 Praise Team; 9:45am rehearsals.

Contacts:

Rev. Bill Harris, revbill66@gmail.com

Deacon Jimmy Bohn, jimmy_bohn@hotmail.com

6. After-Worship – It's the little things that are a big help! Ask!

Contact: Elder Matthew, matthewaldas@icloud.com

7. Early Service - 8:30am in the Fellowship Hall - Ask how you can help.

Contact: Rev. Trish, geotriholland@yahoo.com

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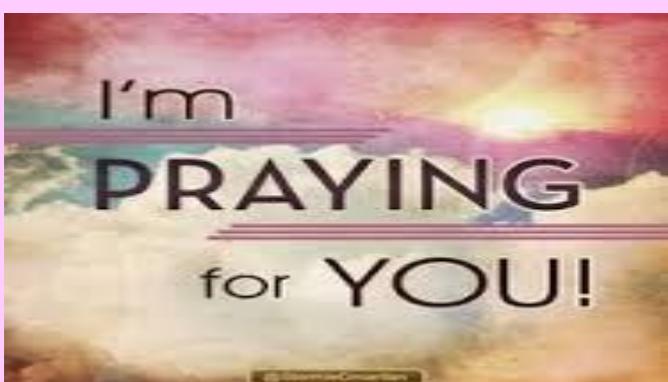
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“Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. (Matthew 11:28)

- ⇒ Praise the Lord for answered prayer! Lara is recovering well from a miserable head cold.
- ⇒ Lift up Cathy A.’s Aunt Pat for healing and strength as she recovers from abdominal surgery last week. She is expected to be in the hospital for a couple of weeks.
- ⇒ Traveling mercies as Jerry travels home to Kansas to begin “new life after seminary.”
- ⇒ Lift up Christine, Matthew, and all seminarians preparing for their May graduation.
- ⇒ Prayers for family members with addictions and other mental health issues. Lift up a young woman who can’t accept her bipolar diagnosis, refusing therapy and medication yet self-medicating. Praise for all who have struggled to achieve the rewarding goal of sobriety and healthy lifestyles.
- ⇒ Praise for the sermon and a favorite Scripture reading (John 21:1-19)—and the powerful message when Peter did not stay in his shame—as we often do—but ran towards redemption.
- ⇒ Praise for notice of a welcome tax refund!
- ⇒ Lift up a beloved family member for healing from cancer surgery.



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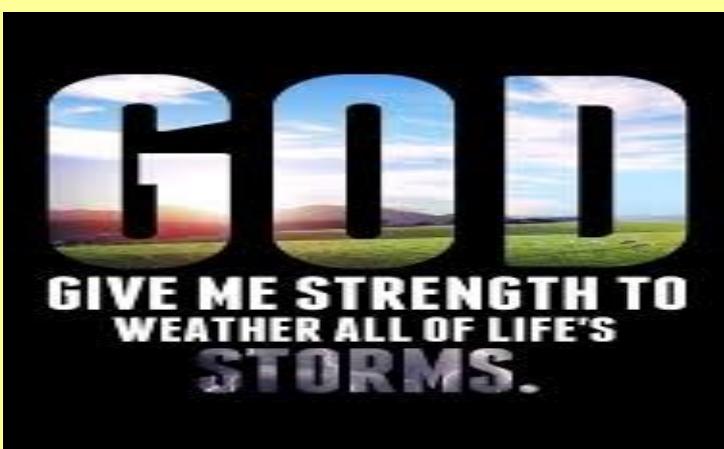
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- ⇒ Prayers of affirmation and joy that the Lord has called Azar to join our church family.
- ⇒ Lift up Aquanetta Hicks, whose father passed away, for comfort and traveling mercies. Thanksgiving for the forethought to have affairs in order so that her mother's needs will be met.
- ⇒ Prayers for Erica as she continues to learn how to live without her daughter.
- ⇒ Prayers for a friend who is battling heart, lung, and family issues.
- ⇒ Praise and thanksgiving for our youth, including Jacob, Angel, Jayvin, and Christian as they help with our worship services.
- ⇒ Praise for the extraordinary acrobatic talents and successes of Angel and Christian in recent competitions.
- ⇒ Lift up New Covenant Fellowship to the Throne of Heaven and also Pastor Lee to the Throne of Heaven for his health and many decades for him to preach and to touch and shepherd God's children.

*Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me;
for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.
For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." (Matthew 11:29-30)*



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**N
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SUNDAY MORNINGS

NCFA Sunday Schedule

8:30am - Worship Service
1507 Wilshire Blvd.

10:15am - Worship Service
1507 Wilshire Blvd.
9am Adult Sunday School
10am Fellowship
10:45am - Children's Church



NCEFA SUNDAY WORSHIP AT 8:30am -- Wilshire Blvd.

Come rise and shine with us
at our 8:30am service
where we glorify God
through the Word, Prayer, Hymns,
and Communion.

1507 Wilshire Blvd.

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

NCEFA 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 Wilshire Campus starting at 10:15 a.m.



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.

JOIN US IN THE CELEBRATION OF THE GOOD NEWS

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- 1st Matthew Castilleja
- 2nd Justin Wallace
- 4th Gemma Munoz
- 6th Jhaliah J'nae Edwards
Alida Tallman
- 11th Kayla Zajicek
- 13th Abigail Iris Longino
- 15th J.T. Longino
Abraham Agbottah
- 16th Kofi Vida-Torku
- 18th Aquanetta Hicks
- 22nd Wonho Shin
- 24th Lucy Oglesby
- 25th Angel Mojica
Lydia Marion
- 27th Saul Cortez

Session Members

- *Rev. James Lee
Pastor/Moderator
- *Elder Kathy Smith
Clerk of Session
- *Rev. Oliver Smith
Administration & Personnel
- *Elder Bill Harris
Buildings & Grounds
- *Elder Randy Mojica
Children and Youth
- *Elder Ben Hooks
Discipleship & Men's/
Women's Ministry
- *Elder Mary Jo Mojica
Finance & Stewardship
- *Elder Robert Booth
Congregational Life/
Lay Ministry
- *Elder Vernon Bailey
Missions/Evangelism
- *Elder Matthew Aldas
Worship & Membership

Deacons

- Kathryn Aldas
- Ashley Phillips
- Scott Phillips
- Carol Saddington, Chair
- Cathy Trifiro
- Roxann Vallejo

April 2016

- 17th 4th Sunday after Easter
8:30am Early Worship at Wilshire
Rev. Lydia Hernandez, preaching
9-10am Adult Sunday School
9:45m Psalm 150 Praise
Team Rehearsal
10:15am Worship at Wilshire Blvd.
Pastor James Lee, preaching
Sunday School Ages 3-5
(Rm. 1); Grades 1-5 (Rm. 7)
Special Called Session Mtg
- 19th 6:30pm Men's Ministry Dinner,
7pm Study
- 20th 6:30pm Fellowship Dinner
7:00pm Worship Service
- 21st 6:30pm-Diabetes Class
- 24th 5th Sunday after Easter
8:30am Early Worship at Wilshire
Rev. Trish Holland, preaching
9-10am Adult Sunday School
9:45m Psalm 150 Praise
Team Rehearsal
10:15am Worship at Wilshire Blvd.
Pastor James Lee, preaching
Sunday School Ages 3-5
(Rm. 1); Grades 1-5 (Rm. 7)

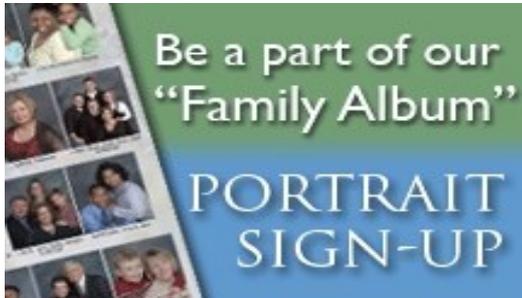
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NEW COVENANT FELLOWSHIP PICTURE DIRECTORY

Please come and be recognized as part of the New Covenant Fellowship Church Family by having your photograph taken any Sunday before or after worship by appointment with Oliver.

Signup sheet on back table each Sunday or contact Oliver at mmoesmith@aol.com

Free Appointments

Free-Will Offering for Portrait Packages



NEW COVENANT FELLOWSHIP OF AUSTIN **DIABETES EMPOWERMENT EDUCATION**

MARCH 31, 2016 THRU MAY 5, 2016

6:30 – 8 PM

APRIL 28TH AND MAY 5TH CLASSES WILL BE HELD ON CAMPUS, EXACT LOCATION TO BE ANNOUNCED AT A LATER DATE.

**NCFA – FELLOWSHIP HALL
1507 WILSHIRE BLVD., AUSTIN - 78722**

**INSTRUCTOR:
CALY FERNANDEZ, CHWI/CERTIFIED DIABETES INSTRUCTOR**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:
CALY FERNANDEZ AT CALYFLOWER2020@YAHOO.COM**

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Café Justo

Café Justo is a coffee grower cooperative based in Salvador Urbina, Chiapas, Mexico. They market a pure, organic coffee which is grown, harvested and marketed in the spirit of justice. Our goal is to provide incentives for people to remain on their family lands.

Orders will be arranged through NCFA's Evangelism Committee. Please see Caly Fernández to place an order. Coffee is available in 1 and 5 pound bags. The cost of a 1 pound bag is **\$10.00** and a 5 pound bag is **\$ 40.00**. Dark roast, medium roast and decaf are available in ground or whole beans. Coffee will be delivered biweekly to NCFA.

Contact Caly to make your purchase today!
(512)228-4712



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Being Real, Relevant, and Racially Diverse!

“Love in Action”

John 21:1-19

Pastor James H. Lee

**New Covenant Fellowship of Austin
April 10, 2016– 3rd Sunday in Easter**

John 21:1-19 After these things Jesus showed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias; and he showed himself in this way. ²Gathered there together were Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples. ³Simon Peter said to them, “I am going fishing.” They said to him, “We will go with you.” They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing. ⁴Just after daybreak, Jesus stood on the beach; but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. ⁵Jesus said to them, “Children, you have no fish, have you?” They answered him, “No.” ⁶He said to them, “Cast the net to the right side of the boat, and you will find some.” So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in because there were so many fish. ⁷That disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, “It is the Lord!” When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on some clothes, for he was naked, and jumped into the sea. ⁸But the other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, only about a hundred yards off. ⁹When they had gone ashore, they saw a charcoal fire there, with fish on it, and bread. ¹⁰Jesus said to them, “Bring some of the fish that you have just caught.” ¹¹So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, a hundred fifty-three of them; and though there were so many, the net was not torn. ¹²Jesus said to them, “Come and have breakfast.” Now none of the disciples dared to ask him, “Who are you?” because they knew it was the Lord. ¹³Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. ¹⁴This was now the third time that Jesus appeared to the disciples after he was raised from the dead. ¹⁵When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my lambs.” ¹⁶A second time he said to him, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Tend my sheep.” ¹⁷He said to him the third time, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, “Do you love me?” And he said to him, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep. ¹⁸Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go.” ¹⁹(He said this to indicate the kind of death by which he would glorify God.) After this he said to him, “Follow me.”

Today’s sermon title is “Love in Action.”

Familiarity / Fishermen:

I know that some of us are used to hearing that “the proof is in the pudding,” and a lot of times we get in trouble amongst the genders because how we express love isn’t always the way we need love. I’ve heard some guys who are a little grumpy say, “But you *know* I love you.” Well, how would I know that? “I go to work and bring the paycheck home; I’m here, and I do some cleaning up, and I do some things over there....” And then she’ll look to him, like “Of course I love you,” and then she’ll share all the things that she does. And yet, if it’s not what you’re looking for, it seems to be invalid. What I’ve been calling people to do is to recognize two things:

- (1) Recognize love that is expressed by people we love as they offer it.
- (2) Know ourselves well enough to know how we need to be loved, and then to express it so that there’s a blessing amongst us.

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**New Covenant Fellowship of Austin
April 10, 2016– 3rd Sunday in Easter**

That can happen. I’ve got some homeboys that I love, and they know when we get together, that’s what I need, and I know what they need, don’t even have to tell it, don’t even have to open our mouths. And yet somebody else would go crazy and say, “They’re not talking. . . .” But it’s just like that. When we hear the text, there are so many ways in which we say, “We know what’s going to happen, James. We’ve read the story. . . . We’ve heard the story.” But there’s still a way in which in this life we need to know that love is more than just an emotion, that it is more than just a feeling, that it is love in action, and it does something special.

God loved us so much that God would release himself of divinity and become a living soul, become Christ to live for our sake. God loved us enough so that we might be redeemed, that we might be forgiven, that we might be adopted, that we might be claimed. But somewhere between reading it, hearing it, knowing it, intuitively or cognitively, sometimes in here (your heart) you can question that love because life can hit you, and you can go through some circumstances and you say “I know it, but I’m just not experiencing it.”

Peter’s with his friends, and they do what is familiar. Have you ever done something familiar when it seems your whole world has been rocked and you don’t what to do, but you do know there’s one thing that you like to do or there’s one thing that can get you through? He went for the familiar and told his brothers, “Hey, I’m going fishing.” And you know what they said, “That’s a good thing, and I’m going too.” Something about going fishing, something about doing those things that are so familiar to us. Words don’t get in the way; nothing gets in the way. You just go and then you’re doin’ things, you’re sayin’ things that bring about a healing to the body, even when you don’t produce anything. You did what? You spent 5 hours on a boat, on a dock, and threw the fish back in the water?? That doesn’t make sense! Familiarity. They followed what was familiar to them.

Now sometimes following the familiar can get us stuck in a rut. But there are other times it can be the one thing that can get us unstuck from a rut. Am I talking out of both sides of my mouth? Yes, in some ways it’s the one thing that gets us past something, and other times we’re so used to being in it that it’s hard for us to get out of the boat.

Well, why would they need to do something familiar in the first place? The one they had hoped in was killed before them, was buried, was resurrected; but they hadn’t had the encounter that they needed, so they went back to what was familiar.

I want us to think about “What are those things that allow us to find comfort when it seems that everything in this world around us is crazy?” Those familiar places, those familiar things that we do. I’m finding myself enjoying my rose garden. Every now and then, I go and pick a rose and put it in a vase. Just sit and notice a new bloom, and it’s whew! I walked around, almost made me late for church, and saw a pink one coming—I hadn’t even seen it! Familiar. . . .



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April 10, 2016– 3rd Sunday in Easter**

Fellowship—on the boat and with Jesus:

As I was growing up, we would hear the word “koinonia”—fellowship, a wonderful thing. And then I heard an old preacher who said, “That’s just like fellows on the ship.” And when there are fellows on a ship, there’s a party going on! There’s something about being in fellowship with one another that ministers to you when you need it the most. And I will tell you, there are times when we don’t *want* to be in fellowship. Sometimes we don’t want to be in fellowship because we want to stay in the rut—just want to live in this thing, let it marinate a little bit. I’ve had a pity party or two, don’t want to go out there. Sometimes we don’t want to be in fellowship because we’re introverts and we already gave all our energy elsewhere, and another party seems like another job....

Then there’s the fellowship that just brings you out, opens your eyes, ministers to you in a special way. I’ve been working with the Austin Clubhouse, and it’s been helpful for me to understand mental illness in a different way. It is said that one out of five people are battling mental illness. Don’t raise your hands, but that’s about six of us in the house today are battling! I say that because if you get caught up in shame and guilt, you will isolate. You won’t get the help you need to bring you out. And at the Austin Clubhouse we make sure that’s a safe place for folks to go so they don’t isolate. When you isolate, you don’t medicate. When you isolate, you don’t go to your job. When you isolate, you think the whole world is against you. When you isolate, you see your mistake, and instead of it being just a little mistake, you think it’s HUGE, and everybody knows, and everybody can see. It’s worse than the “Scarlet Letter” on your chest, or if you remember “Peanuts,” it’s worse than having the cloud over your head, following you wherever you go.

But the fellowship is powerful. They’re on the boat, they’ve been fishing, and Jesus cries out, “Hey, children, have you all caught any fish?” Now, who is he calling a child? They’re like, “No.” So they cast the net on the other side, the right side, and they caught some fish. But it wasn’t just good enough to say, “Hey, you cast it on the other side and caught some fish, congratulations! And thank you so very much for listening to me and following my directions so that you might be blessed.” Jesus could have done that, and the story would be over with, couldn’t it? But that wasn’t enough for Jesus. He wanted to fellowship. So he calls out for them to have a little meal; but before he can do that, one of the fellows in the ship said, “That must be the Master; that must be him!” And Peter put on some clothes and went into the water to head for shore. Isn’t that something, when you’re with your crew, they don’t care how you look...but they’re glad to be with you, and you’re glad to be with them—they have blemishes, zits, dirty faces, whatever, because we’re in fellowship! And so Peter runs to Jesus.

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April 10, 2016– 3rd Sunday in Easter**

And then as they've come together, Jesus asks them to bring the fish from the net, and Peter goes back to haul it in. But it's like, "Why would you ask me to get fish if you already have fish?" "This fellowship is about you knowing it ain't about what you have and what you bring to the table. It's about what I have provided for you and what I'm about to provide for you." And I also love when you think about that fish net and all the fish, that it says there were 153, not to just get definitive about it, but it said it had all types of fish in the net. And when the Lord casts the net for us, all types of folks get to be in the net. The awesome thing about it is the net doesn't break, and we're secured, and nothing can separate us from the love of God. They have the fellowship of the bread and the fish, and Jesus begins to ask a different question.

He asks Peter, "Do you love me more than these?" Peter says, "Well, yeah." Jesus says, "Feed my sheep." Then Jesus asks him another time, "Do you love me?" "Yes, you know I love you." "Well, tend to my sheep." He asked him the last time, and Peter got a little upset; as a matter of fact, he was hurt. "You already know I do." "Well, feed my sheep."

I love that when you're in that zone, in that fellowship with your crew, you can ask some tough questions. Jesus had to ask the tough question because their fellowship had been interrupted, and it wasn't just interrupted by what took place with Pilate, and death, and burial, and now resurrection...It was interrupted by one who said, "No, you're not going out like that, and by the way, I'm gonna be with you to the end." And the Lord had to say not just to him but to anyone who would hear, "This is not of God." "Satan, I rebuke you. Get behind me." And then he tells Peter, "Before the cock crows three times you will deny me." How many times have you denied the Lord? "I don't know, I don't think I need to say this now"; "I don't think I need to do that now"; "You know, I have to give Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God." Some people say, "We are such good undercover Christians that most folks don't know we are." Not anyone in the room, but sometimes we do a good job trying to fit in with the in-crowd.

But Jesus needed to reconcile and restore Peter, and he does it publicly. In the same way when he told him what he was going to do publicly, he restores him publicly. The old school used to say, "You reprimand in private, then you bless in public," and that's what he did. He brought him, he restored him in public, and it's a powerful thing. And the way he did it was important because it was similar to the way he called him the first time. They were fishing, he tells them to cast the net, and they cast the net. But when Peter responded the first time, he was like, "Yo, dude, get away from me because I'm not holy and you are." But this time because of the intimacy of the relationship, he was broken, but then he was blessed. "Well, how would you know he was blessed, James?" Later on you'll get to read in *Acts* on the Day of Pentecost when that restored Peter preaches a word and is not ashamed of Jesus, and as a matter of fact was able to interpret so a few people might know that the promise was fulfilled and made possible.

April 15, 2016



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Being Real, Relevant, and Racially Diverse!

“Love in Action”

John 21:1-19

Pastor James H. Lee

**New Covenant Fellowship of Austin
April 10, 2016– 3rd Sunday in Easter**

Follow me: Initial invitation and call

He says, “Follow me.” Are we going to follow after the things that Christ did? “Follow me.” Follow me means go to people where they are, don’t just wait for them to come to where you are. Were they at the synagogue or were they at the sea? And where was Jesus? “Follow me.”

Forgive folks before they ask for forgiveness. That’s what he did on the cross. “Forgive them, for they know not what they do.” I know I said that last week, and I’m gonna keep sayin’ it because we’re holding onto stuff we need to be releasing. “Follow him.” “Whichever of you is without sin cast the first stone.” Oooh. Brothers, sisters, where are your accusers? I don’t see them. Well, I don’t accuse you either. Go and sin no more. See, the Advocate, the Vindicator says, “I don’t accuse you. Go and sin no more.”

But I still sin. Yes, but he made a way for us, and because he made a way as he sits and intercedes for us, we get to confess. *1 John 1:9* says, ***“If you confess with your mouth, God is faithful and just to forgive us and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”*** I know this is old hat, guys, but we still need to remember it for the here and now and for the every day.

When I read this text, I was like *Oooh*, because I knew what it would mean is I would have to go through some stuff and do some forgiving. And the other side is I’d have to recognize some areas where the Lord is trying to say, “I’m trying to restore you, son, I’m trying to reconcile us in this area, son; will you allow me to?” So I’m inviting us: Allow Jesus to come in and redeem the area that seems like you can’t seem to get past it, to get over it. And it keeps lurking and lurking. And let him say, “Do you love me?” Yes. “Do you love me?” Yes. “Do you love me?” Yes. “Well, know that I love you and it’s taken care of, so release it and follow me.” Amen?

As I close out the sermon, the epistle reading for this week was from the *9th chapter of Acts*, and many of us know that chapter because it was where Paul had seen Stephen stoned and went on and started doing terrible things to those who were of the Way, and then the Lord says to him, ***“Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?”*** He also says, ***“It’s hard to kick against a prick.”*** A prick is a long stick with a pointed end that would be used with oxes, so that if you try to kick against it, the sharp end would come and get you. Guess what we do sometimes? We kick against the prick and go against what God wants us to do. Why? Because we want to stay stuck in the familiar. And he stayed there for a little while, and when he realized what was happening, he was to be led to a place, and God called a guy by the name of Ananias to come and minister to him. And Ananias was like, “Yo, Jesus, do you know who that guy is? He’s the guy that’s been killing everybody, and if he’s blind, let him stay that way because what sense does that make for me to minister to the guy who’s doing more harm to us than good?”

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But he does, and he goes to a street called “Straight” and he ministers to Saul, and the scales fell from his eyes. There are some scales that need to fall, and I pray that you will receive the ministry of the Holy Spirit and that the scales will fall from your eyes, and your heart, and your mind, that we would be free.

Lord, thank you for our time; thank you for your Word; thank you for your people; and thank you that you don't allow us to stay where we are. Thank you for calling us in what is familiar to us, and allowing us to go there so we can get away and be ready for you when you come to speak to us. Thank you for fellowships where we can get together and be with one another. You told us not to forsake the assembling of ourselves in churches so that we might be able to encourage each other. Thank you in our fellowships when you open our eyes and let us experience your grace, and your mercy, and your restoration. But thank you also, Lord, that you don't call us to keep eating and eating and eating, and receiving, receiving, receiving, that you call us to follow you and apply your principles so that others might experience all that you have for us. Please heal us, please remove the scales, and please allow us to be all that you called us to be. It's in Christ's name that we pray. Amen.



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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, Trail mix, or peanut butter and crackers
- Vienna sausage – 5 ounce size cans
- Water bottles – 8 ounce size

Hygiene/Personal Items:

- Travel Size Toothbrush & Toothpaste
- Travel size hand sanitizer or hotel size bar soap
- Men’s size small crew ankle length white or black socks

Quart size freezer bags

Please note: this is a smaller kit with fewer items.

All donated items should be placed in the donations box located on the back table by the AV equipment. If you have any questions, please email me: calyflower2020@yahoo.com or call me at (512) 228-4712.