



Covenant Presbyterian Church

607 E. 3rd St. Long Beach, CA 90802 - www.CovenantLB.org - (562) 437-0958

Dear Covenant Family,

Typically, the February Pastors' Letter features the Pastors' Report found in the Annual Report. So if this article sounds familiar, then you have read the Annual Report ☺.

Annual reports always raise questions...often questions for which it is difficult to obtain accurate answers! This year we are in particular pondering two questions: 1) How are we doing as a church and 2) Where are we going as a church?

How are we doing?

Membership numbers are very slightly on the rise. The Adult Sunday School has grown significantly in number and depth of sharing. Small groups are growing in open-heartedness, honesty and genuineness in mutual caring and supportiveness. Yet, it is harder than it used to be to fill certain lay ministry positions.

Sunday worship attendance numbers are slightly on the rise, and many sense that new and very positive things are by the Holy Spirit happening within folks during worship and afterwards from worship. Yet, it is harder than it used to be to get people out for special services, especially evening services.

Donations from all giving sources and other receipts of funds were slightly above the levels budgeted for the year, and we were financially able to sustain our church's mission in its various dimensions. Yet, it is very hard, given the multiplicity of complex factors, to project the church's income going forward.

Overall, however, some things about how we are doing are very clear:

- ♥ Covenant remains "a home away from home" for many people – a place where they feel valued and loved, and often helped by people who sincerely care about them.
- ♥ Covenant remains a launch pad from which significant services blessing the community at-large blast off.
- ♥ Covenant remains a place where God is glorified, the Bible is preached and taught, and individuals are raised who have a heart to reach out to others, to befriend them and to introduce them to the good news of Jesus – the best possible news!

Where are we going?

We are very aware that many of the old ways of "doing" church no longer work well in a rapidly changing world.

We are also very aware that it is not clear what new ways would work any better.

So, claiming the promise of Isaiah 30:18 that "blessed are all those who wait for [the Lord]", we are waiting on the Lord to give us the manna of His leading, one day at a time, day after day.

To wait on the Lord is not to grow passive and inactive. In trial-and-error experimentation, we have tried some new things and done some old things with some innovative adaptations.

Some of our experimentation is producing some good results!

We tweaked the time of worship and Sunday School to lengthen the time of fellowship between the two. As a result, increased friendship building and mutually supportive encouragement are occurring.

IN-PERSON & VIRTUAL WORSHIP

Our weekly in-person Sunday service is held each Sunday at 9:57 a.m. in the Sanctuary. The service is also streamed live on *YouTube*: **Covenant Presbyterian Church Long Beach CA** and our website: **www.CovenantLB.org** at 9:57 a.m. on Sundays.

All services remain available throughout the week and in our video libraries.

February 2nd	February 9th	February 16th	February 23rd
Matthew 13:1-23 “Soul Soil, Part 1”	Matthew 13:1-23 “Soul Soil, Part 2”	Matthew 13:24-30 “The Messed Up Community That Cleans Up Some Messes”	Matthew 13:31-33 “More than Meets the Eye”

SUNDAY SCHOOL (Hybrid: On-site & On-line)

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL (11:15 a.m.)

Adults are invited to attend Sunday School and study *The Second Letter of Paul to the Corinthians*, under the leadership of Elder Mark Wiley. The class meets in the Meeting Room for those in-person, and for those on-line through *Google Meet*. To join on-line: please visit **Meet.Google.com** and use the meeting code: **goeumjnwgg** or call from your phone **1-209-781-9485**, entering this PIN: **443 527 177#**.

YOUTH SUNDAY SCHOOL (11:15 a.m.)

Sunday School for 6th thru 12th graders meets in the Art Room for those attending in-person, and for those on-line through *Google Meet*.

Email ALangworthy@CovenantLB.org for virtual joining information.

CHILDREN’S SUNDAY SCHOOL (11:15 a.m.)

Sunday School for children thru 5th grade meets in the “Center” for those attending in-person, and for those on-line through *Google Meet*.

Email ALangworthy@CovenantLB.org for virtual joining information.

WEEKLY STUDIES

Mondays - In-depth Bible Study

This on-line study meets at 7:00 p.m. to study *1 Kings*.

Pastor Adele and Pastor Rob jointly lead this study through the Bible.



To join this study,

Online: Visit **Meet.Google.com** & Join by using meeting code: **ohcydfgcm**
By phone: Dial **1-415-662-0116** & Enter this PIN: **903 321 793#**

Tuesdays - Book Club

The on-line Book Club meets at 6:30 p.m. to discuss *20 Hot Potatoes Christians Are Afraid to Touch* by Tony Campolo.

If you would like to be contacted about this group,



please reach out to Elder Mark Wiley or Pastor Rob.

To join this study,

Online: Visit **Meet.Google.com** & Join by using meeting code: **duhmbnqku**
By phone: Dial **1-225-503-0091** &

Thursdays - Bible Study

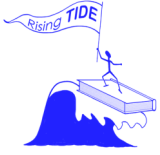
This Bible Study meets on-line and over the phone at 4:30 p.m. It is presently studying the *Gospel of Matthew* (led by Pastor Rob).



To join this study,

Online: Visit **Meet.Google.com** & Join by using meeting code: **ohcydfgcm**
By phone: Dial **1-415-662-0116** & Enter this PIN: **903 321 793#**

SPECIAL PROGRAMMING



RIISING TIDE @ MKEC **Programming for** **Children & Youth** **Mondays - Thursdays**

*Homework Help, Tutoring, Activities,
Science Experiments, The Arts, Recreation,
Mentoring and More*

12:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Pre-school & Elementary-aged Children

2:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Middle School & High School Youth

Go to www.RisingTIDEatMKEC.org

- to **sign up a new young person**, click on *New Participant Enrollment Form*
- to **sign up a returning student**, click on *Fall 2024 Participant Renewal*
- to **apply to be a tutor, mentor or general volunteer**, click on *Volunteering*

**Special Middle School & High School Programs
are held on Wednesdays**



Covenant's Annual Meeting of the Congregation will be held on Sunday, February 2nd, immediately following worship. It will be held in the Sanctuary and streamed live. Reports are now available. The Annual Report for Rising TIDE @ MKEC will be available for circulation following the MKEC Board Meeting on February 1st.

TACKLE



HUNGER

On Super Bowl Sunday (February 9th), join with youth from Covenant and across the nation to raise money to help tackle hunger. Make this **SOUPER BOWL** year a winner! Look for youth with soup pots as you leave worship who will be collecting financial and food donations, give thru Covenant's website, or mail a check to the church. Thanks for making a play to tackle hunger in Long Beach!

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Because we were still not seeing the resumption of the numbers of children and youth participating in Sunday activities that we had prior to the COVID lockdowns, but we were seeing such a resumption of numbers on weekdays, we added more Bible study opportunities to our after-school programming. As a result, a higher percentage of children and youth than ever before are on a weekly basis studying, and reflecting on, the Bible. We also began this year a mentoring program for youth, and that has expanded the amount of personal discipleship that is going on at Covenant.

We are availing of new technologies and resources to make the church more efficient and effective in its ministries. The church is saving time for "higher purposes" by becoming better organized in its procedures and protocols. We are streamlining processes. We also have been upgrading our property – for example, our AV and HVAC systems – to better serve the purposes of the Lord.

So, we work with an experimental spirit, watch with an eye peeled to discern the fruitfulness of our efforts, and wait on the Lord who "is good to those who wait for him" (Lamentations 3:25).

In the meantime, we relish every moment we have together living out our discipleship to Jesus as a family of faith.

How grateful we two are to serve this church as pastors for as many years as we have – and for however many years it is God's will that we continue.





God bless you,

Rob & Adele

SAVE THESE MARCH DATES: (More details to come)

- ◆ Ash Wednesday Worship on 3/4
- ◆ Rio Carnival Rising TIDE-Style Fundraising Dinner 3/28

DID YOU KNOW ... ?

- Plan to join members of your Covenant family for an afternoon at a local movie theater (and a light meal following) on February 23rd. Please note: details are typically announced the Thursday prior to the event. To be added to the contact list for **Movie Goers**, please contact Pastor Adele.
- **Cutters** are a group of adults who enjoy getting together monthly to break bread together over the breakfast or dinner table. In February, Cutters will be enjoying dinner at *Polly's* on Atlantic on Sunday, February 2nd at 5:00 p.m. To receive more information about *Cutters'* gatherings, see Mary Lou Fourtané or Pastor Adele.
- **Covenant Adult Choir** rehearses on Thursdays at 7:30 p.m. in the Choir Room. If you'd like to join, please contact Peter Bates for more details. 
- The **Order of Worship** for Sunday worship is located just above the video of the worship service on the website and is archived under "Worship - Sermon Archive", along with a text copy of the sermon. Hard copies of the sermons are found in the Narthex. They can also be mailed or emailed when requested.
- When the new weekly worship video is posted, the **previous week's video** can then be found in the video archives of the website under "Covenant's Videos" and on our *YouTube* channel: Covenant Presbyterian Church Long Beach CA.
- If you would like us to **join you in prayer**, you can contact one of the Pastors through the church office at (562) 437-0958, complete a prayer request card found in the Narthex or use this QR code. 
- **Flowers to beautify the Sanctuary** on a particular Sunday can be purchased for \$50.00. You can place an order in honor or in memory of someone, and either plan to take the flowers with you following worship or donate them to be shared with those in need of special cheer. You can place an order using the link that can be found at the end of the Order of Service on our website, filling out a form and chart found in the Narthex, or calling the church office. 
- **Hometouch** is a weekly publication that is mailed or emailed. (You choose in which form you receive it.) It provides updates about things happening around Covenant, as well as a devotion and an activity page.
- **E-touch** is a weekly publication that is emailed on Saturday evenings. It includes *Covenant* news and a biblical reflection on something newsworthy. These reflections are timely and thought-provoking.
- You can **request to receive copies** of the sermons, *Hometouch* and/or *E-touch* by contacting Adele at ALangworthy@CovenantLB.org.
- To explore joining a women's or men's **small group**, reach out to Pastor Adele or Pastor Rob.
- If you are interested in **volunteering** to help staff the office for a few hours one-day-a-week, please see Pastor Rob or Pastor Adele.
- **Covenant has an app** called *CovenantLB* that you can download on your favorite device.
- Our **social media presence** is on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter with the handle @CovenantLB. 



*Your giving sustains the ministries of this church. You may make an offering in worship on Sunday morning, or write a check and mail it to the church, or give on-line from the church website by clicking on the green button on the website's home page, **www.CovenantLB.org**, or by using this QR code:→*

