

Subject: New From St. Francis Episcopal Church
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S⁺ Francis



September 10, 2014

What's A Covenant?

*Love The Lord your God
with all your heart and
with all your soul and
with all your strength and
with all your might;
and love our neighbor as yourself.
Luke 10: 27*

Covenant

A covenant is a relationship between a powerful group and one or more less powerful groups. The powerful group supplies everything for the entire relationship to prosper. The less powerful groups bring all they have into the relationship. The whole relationship forms a new group that never existed before. That's the way it is with us and God. God will invite us into a relationship and provide everything we need to prosper in that new relationship.

One Implication

There are many implications to being in a covenant with God. It is the foundation of our relationship with God. One implication is our obedience flows from this covenant. Most people think that obedience to God is something we have to perform on our own power. If we do not obey for any reason we are in a lot of trouble. However, when we receive our identity from God, one of the provisions of the covenant, we also receive the power to live in a manner consistent with our identity. That is obedience. How have you seen God provide that kind of power in your own life?

One Application

The values we share at St. Francis flow out of the covenant God has made with us. We find the summary of the Law quoted above to be a great starting point for living out the values that come from that covenant. The core values are included at the end of this newsletter. Let me know if you have any thoughts about the values we have adopted. Email me at vicar@stfrancisva.org.

Coming Attractions

Wednesday, September 10, 2014 Vestry meeting 6:00pm

Sunday, September 14, 2014 worship followed by pot luck 10:00am

Wednesday, September 17, 2014 mid week worship

Sunday, September 21, 2014 worship at 10:00am

Wednesday, September 24, 2014 performance by the Aspire Dance Academy 7:30pm

Saturday, September 27, 2014 work day beginning at 9:00am.

Bishop Gulik will be with us on Sunday, October 12, 2014 at 10:00am. He will preside at worship, preach, and confirm and receive our new members.

More Mid-Week. First and Third Wednesdays continue with a new discussion series led by Carol Maher: More With Jesus In Matthew. Here is the schedule:

September 17, 2014 Matthew 9:9-13
 October 1, 2014 Matthew 10:1-10
 October 15, 2014 Matthew 12:1-14
 November 5, 2014 Matthew 14:25-32

We will us the same discussion questions we have been using this summer:

1. What does this story say about people?
2. What does this story say about Jesus?
3. What does this story say about you?
4. Who needs to hear this story?

Centerville Circle of Prayer

For Sun Trust Bank, that the customer base would grow, the economy would increase, and households in our area would be able to finance the dreams God has given to them.

Diocese of Virginia

Congregations and clergy of Our Redeemer, Aldie; Emmanuel, Middleburg; St. Paul's-on-the-Hill, Winchester; Christ Church, Winchester; Christ Church Gordonsville; and St. Thomas's, Orange.

Metropolitan Richmond

For schools and educational institutions in Metropolitan Richmond: For all public schools; for students, teacher and support personnel, including cafeteria workers, building and grounds staff, and school bus drivers; for all private and religious schools, pre-schools and daycare centers, and for children in home schools.

Core Values of St. Francis Episcopal Church

Love The Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind; and love your neighbor as yourself. Luke 10:27

Our work in the Kingdom of God rests on our life in the Covenant of God.

Our relationship with God stems from God's love for us extended through His covenant with us enabling us to love Him, and God's power within us as He gives us capacity to extend His kingdom by loving our neighbor as ourselves. When we are fully engaging with God our Father our relationships at St. Francis consist of these core values:

Covenant With God

Our covenant with God is expressed in this part of the Summary of the Law:

"Love The Lord your God with all of your heart, all of your soul and all your strength and all our mind . . ." Luke 10:27

Worship

We worship together in a way that is engaging, joyful, rich, positive and reflects our heart language (vernacular).

The elements of the Episcopal tradition are practiced in a casual, open, no-pressure atmosphere.

Lively, contemporary worship music is mixed with updated arrangements of traditional hymns in a joyful, accessible way so that all are involved in worship.

Sermons and other elements of our programming reflect and encourage our call to follow Jesus in our daily lives.

Kingdom of God

Our work in the kingdom of God is expressed in this portion of the Summary of the Law:

". . . Love Your neighbor as yourself." Luke 10:27

Presence

We engage with the presence of God throughout the community and within the fellowship joining in with God's mission wherever we find Him in the power of the Holy Spirit.

People of all generations have a safe and friendly place to engage with God and learn and grow together.

There are opportunities for everyone to engage with and follow Jesus.

Service

We value the assets, gifts, and strengths of all through serving both the surrounding community and the family of St. Francis encouraging those strengths and meeting needs that empower the release of their development through community building, volunteerism, and charity.

There is the building of assets, gifts, and strengths in the neighborhoods of our communities.

There is collaboration with other churches and agencies in the area for service.

There is compassionate outreach to those in need in our communities and the greater community around the world.

There is ongoing community transformation as we join in with the

mission of God.

Christian Invitation

We are a fellowship of families on mission inviting our community into the family of God.

There is no such thing as an outsider

All are welcomed and valued.

We invite and embrace people of different backgrounds, different racial/ethnic heritage, and different faith traditions. Whether life-long Christians or spiritual seekers, wherever people are in their journeys, we invite them to travel along with us to learn and grow into a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ.

Discipleship

We pursue discipleship in which we grow in the character and lifestyle of Jesus.

We are continually formed by the words of Jesus in the Great Commission, "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations . . ." Matthew 28:19

We serve God through the expansion of God's family which includes both the church and the wider community

We grow together in a way that we keep the administrative maintenance of our ministries low and the relational encouragement and accountability high.

We grow together in faith and love, nurturing deep relationships with God and one another, discovering spiritual gifts and passions.

We value fellowship that builds us up and sends us out as families on mission.

Groups of all sizes meet for worship, prayer, fellowship, and outreach.

Grace and Peace,

John Maher

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