

Monday, October 12 - Read John 15:5 Most of the world’s religions offer the same formula for success: do the right things in the right way and you’ll be rewarded. But as each devout follower soon learns, the burden of carrying that pressure on our own is just too heavy. Because on our own, we’re never good enough. We can’t produce the right things or be the right person. So if success in our religion is resting on our ability to accomplish it, we’re all going to fail. But then there’s Jesus. And He offers the opposite solution. “I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.” Every measure of success in our whole faith rests in this promise. Jesus is the source. He produces the fruit. Everything good comes through Him. Our only job is to stay connected so His life-giving Spirit can work through us. If you’ve been running yourself ragged trying to be the ideal Christian, using your own strength and energy to be good enough, find comfort in Jesus’ instructions. Remain in Him, and let Him produce the fruit in your life! What are you trying to accomplish in your own strength? Is the fruit of that effort authentic and lasting? What fruit have you seen Christ produce through you? Is it different? Do you resist the idea that apart from Jesus you can do nothing? What might happen if you accepted that idea as truth? Do you feel set free, or do you panic at the loss of control? Consider why that might be. How can you connect to the true vine, Jesus Christ? Whether it’s through journaling, worship, meditating on His Word, or other methods, find a way to genuinely connect with your Lord today!

Tuesday, October 13 - Read John 15:1-4 There’s a hard reality to being a branch: Either you’re being pruned to be even more fruitful, or you’re being cut off. Pruning does not feel nice. It isn’t pleasant to have all the old, dead parts scraped out and removed, or to have perfectly good and healthy parts of us removed to make room for other parts to grow better. It might even feel unnecessary or unfair. But God is a good gardener. He knows exactly what we need to thrive in Him. And He loves us too much to leave us overrun with the weeds and thorns of sin. As painful as the pruning process can be, it’s far better to be pruned while in the true Vine, Jesus, than it is to be cast away from Him. And there’s hope in the process, too. Just like we cannot bear fruit on our own, we cannot remove the unhealthy pieces alone either. It is not your responsibility to become less angry, less prideful, less doubting, or less selfish on your own. It’s your job to remain connected to the Vine. It might be difficult to trust that God the Gardener cares about your growth while you’re in a season of pruning. But afterward, when you can see the fruit being produced through you, you’ll be able to recognize the sin and hindrances that were strangling your progress. When you trust God, who knows just what He’s doing, and remain connected to Christ, you’ll grow the fruit of His Spirit that He created you to bear. Are you in a season of pruning? What sins do you see God cleaning out from you? Why do you think it hurts to lose those things? Have you attempted to purge yourself of the sin and worries that so easily entangle you? How do you think it’s different when you try to do that on your own strength and when you rely on God to accomplish His work in you? Have people in your life been too critical or unfair? Does that shape how you view God’s role in your growth? How can you remain in the Vine even when you’re in a season of painful changes?

Wednesday, October 14 - Read John 15:6-8 Sticks cannot be trees. If a branch decides it is tired of existing as an extension of the vine and sets off on its own, it does not become another vine. It becomes firewood. Jesus’ warning in these verses is not harsh or dramatic; it’s the truth. Jesus loved His disciples too much to let them believe that there was any kind of sustainable future apart from Him. God did not create us to be gods. He created us to reflect that He is God. Any other purpose is as empty as dry kindling. But these verses don’t just come with a warning; they contain a promise. Jesus wanted His disciples to know that when they’re connected to Him, their prayers will be different. If a stick on the ground asks the vine above to give it fruit, the effort is empty and futile. If a healthy branch connected to the vine asks to be given fruit, it’s to the glory of the vine to produce fruit abundantly. Jesus wasn’t promising the disciples that He’d be their magic genie, granting whatever wish popped into their mind. He was reminding them—and us—that transformation happens through connection. The more ingrained in His presence we become, the more our desire to bring Him glory will increase, and the more fruit He will produce through us. The message is clear: apart from Jesus, we’re nothing. With Him, we experience the life we were created to live—as bearers of His fruit! Are you disconnected from the source of all life, growth, and hope? Repent and turn to God, who eagerly waits to give you abundant life. How have your prayers changed as you’ve grown closer to Christ? Are you boldly and confidently asking Him to produce fruit in your life for His glory? Spend some time today reflecting on the fruit the Holy Spirit produces in the lives of those connected to Him. Do you see evidence of this fruit in your life? Consider why or why not that might be, and ask God to transform you through connection with Him.

Thursday, October 15 - Read John 15:9-13 *Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.* This should be our definition of love. Not “what makes me feel good.” Not “what makes me feel valued or special.” But “Can I lay down my life for this person?” Since Jesus willingly gave up His life on the cross, it’s easy to read this passage and only think love means dying for someone. It sure can mean that. But there are many ways we can die for someone without giving up our lives. Greater love can be listening to another person share a story over coffee without constantly interrupting with your own thoughts. Greater love can be adopting a child who will not know true love without a Christ-like family. Greater love can be living on a small percentage of your income and giving away most of it to missionaries and those in need. This kind of love requires something bigger than ourselves. It requires us to know God’s love and let it flow through us to others. Left to ourselves, we drift back to love focused on us. Love becomes about how everyone else should serve us. Jesus gives us the kind of love that says, “How can I serve you?” How loved by Jesus do you feel? Take a few moments and reflect on what Jesus has done for you. Allow yourself to recognize His love. What holds you back from serving someone else? Pick one person this week and let Jesus’ love flow through you to them. Deny something you want and do something meaningful for them.

Friday, October 16 - Read John 15:14-17 Being chosen or recognized for a special task makes us feel fulfilled and gives us confidence. We may say to ourselves, “Finally, someone sees what I’m capable of! My boss believes in me and he trusts me to get this done.” The disciples heard Jesus affirm them as His friends in these verses. Out of that relationship, there was new life and purpose. They didn’t need to live out of guilt, fear, or shame because Jesus was their friend. They didn’t need to fight for positions of power or accomplishments because they were secure in their friendship with Jesus! Jesus recognizes us for more than what we can accomplish. He recognizes us for who we are. We are his friends. Jesus chose us to have a close relationship with. He saw you across the playground and said, “I want to be your friend.” A friendship with Jesus gives the fulfillment and confidence we are looking for. Being chosen by Jesus means He believes in you wherever you go. Jesus believes you can make a difference in your neighborhood. Jesus believes you can make a difference at your job. Jesus believes you can make a difference with your friends and family. How’s your friendship with Jesus? Take a few minutes to write how you would describe that relationship. Enjoy your relationship with Jesus. Ask Him how He wants to spend time with you. Maybe it’s reading more scripture, telling Him about your day, or going on a walk. Pray to Jesus that His presence would be noticeable everywhere you go. Ask for Jesus to deepen your friendship with Him so that the world can see Jesus in you.

For a complete study guide, visit covenantdothan.org/messages/archive/where-do-we-go-from-here/.

THE COVENANT HAPPENINGS

WORSHIP AT COVENANT

Sundays

10.11.20

CovKids

- 8:15 AM | Traditional Service
Sanctuary
- 9:45 AM | Contemporary Service
Sanctuary
- 11:00 AM | Contemporary Service
Christian Life Center Gym

Wednesdays

6:00 PM | 1st Wednesday
Sanctuary

Bible Study
Sanctuary

CovStudents

- Sundays at 8:15, 9:45 & 11:00 am
Nursery & Toddlers - Nursery Hall
2 year olds - Preschool - The Treehouse
K - 2nd Grade - Children’s Worship Center
3rd - 5th Grade - Fellowship Hall
- Wednesdays at 5:30 pm
Nursery & Toddlers - Nursery Hall
2 year olds - Preschool - The Treehouse
K - 5th Grade - Children’s Worship Center
- Sundays at 5 pm
6th-12th Grade - CLC Gym
- Wednesdays
6th-8th Grade - 5:30-6:15 pm
9th-12th Grade - 7:00-7:45 pm

Online Campus

No matter where you are on Sundays, you can join us for worship on our Online Campus. Visit our online campus at covenantdothan.org/locations/ online for more information.

Livestream: covenantdothan.online.church
Facebook Live: facebook.com/covumcdothan
YouTube: Search Covenant Dothan UMC

Welcome!

We are excited to welcome you back on campus for all worship services! Our online campus will continue as usual. Activities are available for children and students.

Visit us online for worship:
Livestream: covenantdothan.online.church
Facebook Live: facebook.com/covumcdothan
YouTube: Search Covenant Dothan UMC

October Sermon Series

Where Do We Go From Here? Jesus began a disruptive sermon with the calming words, “Do not let your heart be troubled.” Despite the world changing a lot in the past few months, we know where we are going because we are following Jesus. Join us in October as we learn more about staying on our mission to be a Christ follower.

A Note From the Finance Office

We are called to be cheerful givers. Even in times of uncertainty, tithing is meant to be a joyful expression of thanks to God, not an obligation. It comes from a heart of worship that recognizes everything we have and give already belongs to the Lord. God wants us to give because it shows that we recognize He is truly the Lord of our lives.



“Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.” 2 Corinthians 9:7

We offer many easy options to give and we would love to share more about them with you. Contact Annette Lovrich at annette@covenantdothan.org or 334.944.6208 for more information on how to give with online, text to give and automatic draft options. Thank you for your continued support and generosity through this fall season.

CONTACT US

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THE COVENANT APP
Search & download
“Covenant UMC Dothan” on
any phone or tablet device.



Baptism

We believe baptism is an important step of obedience in our faith journey. It shows that we have personally trusted Jesus for our salvation, and just as Jesus was baptized on earth, we do this to follow his example. Your baptism symbolizes the new life you have found in Christ just as Jesus rose to life again. If you have questions about baptism or would like to be baptized, contact Rev. Kyle Gatlin at kyle@covenantdothan.org.

Celebrate Recovery

No *hurt* is beyond healing. No *habit* is beyond help. No *hang-up* is beyond hope. It takes courage to let others into our lives, but we were never meant to walk through life alone. Let us walk with you. We are excited to have resumed in person meetings on Thursdays at 6 pm in the Christian Life Center. Masks are required and social distancing will be in place. We will meet for large group worship as well as hear a lesson or testimony each week. Dinner will not be served at this time. Small groups will be based on need and make-up of groups returning. Childcare will be available by reservation only (masks will be required for children as well). Download the Church Center app on your phone to register your child.

Like our Celebrate Recovery Facebook page – search Covenant Celebrate Recovery – for up-to-date news & information.

Upcoming Opportunities to Serve

Harbor Serve Day Saturday, October 31 from 7:30-10 am – Our next Harbor serve day is quickly approaching. Here's how you can help:

- Prepare a breakfast casserole
- Provide pastries or fruit
- Help put together take-out boxes at The Harbor on Saturday morning beginning at 7:30 am (masked and safely distanced of course)
- Join the street ministry team on Saturday morning

Love Dothan Saturday, November 7 from 8 am-12 noon – You are invited to participate in "Love Your Neighborhood" – part of the City of Dothan's "Love Dothan" campaign. During this time we will be working in the Harmondale (also known as Lakeview) neighborhood. The coordination point will be Jerry Lee Faine Elementary School located at 1901 Stringer Street. Please bring your lawnmower, gloves, rake, shovel, weed eater, edger, or whatever tools you would like to work with so we can help our neighbors better care for their properties.

SARCOA Santa for Seniors 2020 SARCOA Area Agency on Aging will be doing their Santa for Seniors program differently this year. Rather than an open wish list, they will be providing specific items for the Senior Christmas boxes. Visit covenantdothan.org/connect/missions for the 2020 Request List. Donations can be dropped off on December 4 & 5 and December 12 between 9 am and 6 pm at the former National Guard Armory, 2755 Choctaw Street, Dothan. Volunteers are needed to wrap gift boxes and assemble cleaning buckets on Tuesday, November 17 from 8 am-12 noon and 1:30-4:30 pm at the armory.

Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child Packing a shoebox is a powerful way to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with children all over the world! Grab a shoe box from one of our displays on campus or visit covenantdothan.org/uncategorized/operation-christmas-child/ to fill a box virtually. Return your packed shoe box back to the church on or before November 15.

Volunteering at the OCC Processing Center Another fun way to be a part of this worldwide ministry is to volunteer at the OCC Processing Center in Atlanta. We will be taking a small team to Atlanta on December 8 to work the 10 am-4 pm (ET) shift. Be prepared for fast paced work and lots of standing! We will leave Dothan at 5 am and return around 8 pm. Please contact Barbi Nolan at 793.4440 if you would like to join us.

Door Hanger Paint Party

Ladies, join us for our fall paint party **Tuesday, October 20 at 6 pm** in the Fellowship Hall. You will have the option to create your own pumpkin or a Christmas design. The cost is \$35 per person. Email Wendy Hicks (wendy@covenantdothan.org) to make your reservation. Social distancing will be in place and we ask you wear a mask.



Stay connected with our CovKids on Facebook & Instagram!

Facebook: facebook.com/CovKids

Instagram: instagram.com/covkids_

Our weekly lessons are available on our website at covenantdothan.org/connect/covkids.



Stay connected with CovStudents!

For the latest news and information for students, visit the CovStudents Facebook or Instagram pages.

Facebook: facebook.com/CovStudents

Instagram: instagram.com/covstudents

COVSTUDENTS FALL SCHEDULE

Sundays

Morning Worship – We encourage all students to attend Sunday morning worship services with family.

REFUGE – 5-6 pm, CLC Gym

A fun & enlightening student worship experience tailored specifically for 6th-12th graders.

Wednesdays

TOPICKS

Jr. High (6th-8th Grade) – 5:30-6:15 pm

Sr. High (9th-12th Grade) – 7-7:45 pm

Age and gender specific small group experience for a more in depth discussion on Biblical truths. Jr. & Sr. High will meet in the CLC Gym.

Contact Information Request

Connection and interaction is essential during this time of uncertainty and it is important to stay grounded in God's Word and in community with others. We want to make certain that Covenant has current information so that we may stay connected with you. If you have not already, please visit covenantdothan.org/contact-info to update your information or you can contact us at 793.4440.

Covenant Concerns

Sympathy

The Pastors and congregation would like to express our deepest sympathy to Mark & Ann-Marie Schwarz on the death of her uncle, *Larry Walker*.

Recent Prayer Concerns Jeanette Poplin, Densie Williams, Thomas Evans, Sandy Lisenby, Sandra Matthews, Jo Peterson, Virginia Hornsby, Dwight Jeffcoat, Gene Kearley, Paul Hall, Kenneth Arnold, Lori Lamb Weathington, Sharon Jenkins, Carrie Mathis Allday, Gianna Allday, Steve Morrell, Jennette Gayer, Ava Blackburn, Beth & Tom Sherrer, Ronnie Brannon, Molly Tew, Tom Renshaw Sr., Margaret Wilson, David Cunningham, Linda Griffith, Chris Smith, John Babinski, Tim Koogler, Linda Avera, Carrie Williams, Beverly Youse, Tammy Reese, Family of Patsy Bowling, Johnathan Berry, Carla Lawrence, Wallace Family, JJ Price Family, Alan Tidwell, Terri Daughtry, Lori Burns, Dr. Bill Lies, Lisa Silcox, Natalie Faulk, Christy Goodwin Bullard, Mary Lisenby, George Stokes, Mark Arrington, William Brown, Peter Collins Jr., Jill Walden, Sue Reynolds, Hays McKay, Helon Scott, Jeanne Stringfellow, Dutch Holland, Lucy Cline, Carolyn Benton, David Johnston, Yvonne Reid, Cher Hicks, Happy Fox, Pete Shelley, Lisa Henry, Karen Medley, Gayle Moores, Lamar Spence, Martha Jane Shannon, Jerry Dooling, Tipton Family, Kathy Clark, Wynn Arkle, June Granberry, Evie Riley, Tony Justice, Richard Duncan, Sarah Grantham, Charles Meeks, JoAnn Gamble, Laurie Axtell, Allwyn Nilsson, Trip and Haley Moseley & family, Avery Wells, Jeffrey Bostwick, Scott Berry, Jennie Lawson, Scott Brown, Angie Goodson, Janis Caddell, Shelby Clark, Kendrea White, Kelly Armstrong Smith, Bobby Simmons, Michael Buntin, Bernice White, Beverly White, Audrey Miller, Carolyn Thomley, Bob Drummond, Connie Moore

Currently Deployed Jerrad Anderson

Have a prayer request? If you have a prayer request you would like to add to this list, please email Kyle Gatlin at kyle@covenantdothan.org.