



EXPECTATIONS

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another...

Hebrews 10:24-25a

BY SIGNING BELOW, YOU ARE AGREEING TO THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS:

• I agree to be respectful of the church building and all that is happening within it...

• I agree to use my words and actions to be encouraging and loving towards church members, my leader and small group members...

• I agree to attend Middle School large group, small group, and service events to the best of my ability...

• I will not use my cell phone during Middle School Ministry unless directed to do so by my leaders...

• I agree to put real effort into fulfilling the Middle School Ministry expectations...

• I agree to honor God by participating, discussing, and engaging my heart and mind in what is happening here.

• I agree to not bring food or drinks into the Sanctuary.

• I agree to stay at the church from the time I am dropped off till the time I am picked up. (I will not leave the church.)

• I agree to bring my Bible every week.

Small Group Leader Signature: _____

Parent Signatures:

Student Signatures:

*Small Group Leaders, please keep this covenant in your packet and reference it as needed throughout the year.

*If a student does not follow the expectations outlined in this covenant, please inform your Grade Level Middle School Coordinator about the situation so they can support you.

Activity

Icebreaker Dice Game

Prayer

Lord God, grand architect of the universe, Your design of creation is unflawed. Yet we continue to litter your creation with defects and imperfections. Show us how not to destroy, but to create, not to demean, but to uplift, not to hate, but to love, so that your creation may be made perfect once again. Amen.

SEPT. 11 | GOD'S PROMISE TO ABRAHAM

Scripture: Genesis 15:1-6

Memory Verse:

"Abraham believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness." Genesis 15:6 (NIV)

Questions:

- 1. Ice Breaker: Where is your favorite place to stargaze?
- 2. We all believe in something. What is something you believed in growing up? Do you still believe in it?
- 3. What does it mean to believe in something?
- 4. What does it mean to believe in God?
- 5. Would you consider yourself to be a good person? What makes someone good?
- 6. How good do you think someone needs to be to go to Heaven?
- 7. How would you define the word righteousness in verse 6?
- God tells Abraham that his descendants will be as many as the stars in the sky. What do you think he meant by this? (Read Galatians 3:23-29)
- 9. What makes us a descendant of Abraham and a child of God (Read Romans 4:18-25)?

Activity: Brainstorm Questions for the "Ask the Pastor Panel"

Do you know that you have been saved? If so, how do you know? What does your faith look like? If not, what do you think is missing?

Prayer (Prayer Requests)

God of the covenant, as you promised Abraham descendants as numerous as the stars, you have also promised us that we might live under those stars as your people, faithful and loved. Show us how to live as your people, and how to nurture all your children with whom we share the same canopy of sky night after night. Amen.

SEPT. 18 | GOD WORKS THROUGH JOSEPH

Scripture: Genesis 37:3-34; 50:15-21

Memory Verse:

"You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives." Genesis 50:20 (NIV)

Questions:

- 1. Why do you think Josph's brothers treated him so poorly?
- 2. How do you normally respond when people treat you poorly?
- 3. Describe how Joseph must have felt after receiving these dreams and hearing from his brothers?
- 4. How have you seen God work good out of a bad situation?
- 5. When Joseph's brothers asked for forgiveness (verse 17), Joseph wept and forgave them. When is a time you asked someone for forgiveness?
- 6. When is a time someone asked you for forgiveness?
- 7. In verse 20, what was the good that God provided in this broken situation?

Activity: Prayer Cross Night (NC/WC)

Who is someone in your life you may need to offer forgiveness to? Who is someone in your life you need to ask for forgiveness? How will you do this?

Prayer (Prayer Requests)

God of dreams and hope, You spoke to Joseph in his dreams, and those dreams led him to great danger. Yet you used the challenges in his life to save the lives of others. In you, no good thing is accidental. You work in us and through us, even when we are not aware of your presence. Help us to know that you are with us, and that only you are capable of turning all evil to good. We pray all these things in the name of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer. Amen.

SEPT. 25 | THE PROMISE OF PASSOVER

Scripture: Exodus 12:1-13; 13:1-8

Memory Verse:

"Then Moses said to the people, "Commemorate this day, the day you came out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery, because the LORD brought you out of it with a mighty hand." Exodus 13:3a

Questions:

- 1. What was the Passover?
- 2. God delivered the Israelites out of Egypt. When is a time God brought you out of a bad situation?
- 3. What does the Passover have to do with Jesus?
- 4. What do the Passover and Communion have in common?
- 5. What is God doing when we take Communion?
- 6. Why do you think God wants us to examine our hearts before we take Communion (1 Corinthians 11:28)?

Activity: Cardboard Testimonies



What is your faith story? How has your relationship with Jesus changed over time?

Prayer (Prayer Requests)

Lord God of grace and liberty, On the night of the Passover the sacrificed lamb became a sign of freedom and you freed the people of Israel from slavery in Egypt. In Jesus, you sacrificed your son as a gift, thereby freeing all humanity from sin and death. Help us live into this new life, teaching us to serve you in faithfulness as you have served us. To you we offer our gratefulness in the name of the one who turned slavery into new life, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

OCT. 2 | ASK THE PASTOR



Scripture: Exodus 32:1-14

Memory Verse:

'I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and I will give your descendants all this land I promised them, and it will be their inheritance forever.''' Exodus 32:13b

(10)

Questions:

Debrief Ask the Pastor Panel 1. What surprised you?

- 2. What did you learn?
- 3. What was confusing?
- 4. What questions do you still have?

Activity: Prayer Cross Night (SC)

If you could ask God only one question, what would it be and why?

Prayer (Prayer Requests)

Faithful God, thank you for being a God of truth. In a world full of lies and deceit, we know that we can trust in you. Thank you for having answers to our questions. Please bless us as we continue to learn your truth. Amen.

OCT. 9 | BAPTISM

Scripture: Exodus 12:1-13; 13:1-8

Memory Verse:

"Then Moses said to the people, "Commemorate this day, the day you came out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery, because the LORD brought you out of it with a mighty hand." Exodus 13:3a

Questions:

- 1. Questions to come
- 2. What is a sacrament? what three things make up a sacrament?
- 3. What is baptism?
- 4. What is the Word of God?
- 5. What benefits does Baptism give?
- 6. What are these words and promises of God?
- 7. How can water do such great things?
- 8. What does baptizing with water indicate?

Journal Time

What do you remember from your baptism? Who is someone you can ask this week who was there to share about this experience with you?

WHERE IN MY BIBLE CAN I LEARN MORE ABOUT BAPTISM?

Genesis 1:2, "The Spirit of God was hovering over the waters." The Bible starts with water and Spirit.

Exodus 12:24-28, "When your children ask you, tell them, 'It is the Passover sacrifice to the Lord." On Passover, the parents' faith protected their child.

Leviticus 12:3, "On the eighth day the boy is to be circumcised," entering God's Covenant. Baptism is the new circumcision (Colossians 2:11-12).

Numbers 19:18, "Dip it in the water and sprinkle the tent." The Greek (LXX) word here is baptizo, "baptize," meaning "cleanse with water."

2 Kings 5:14, the leper Naaman "dipped himself in the Jordan seven times... and became clean." This baptizo foreshadows our cleansing in baptism.

Psalm 51:5, "Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me." From birth, we all need to be cleansed from sin.

Ezekiel 36:25 prophesies baptism, "I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities." Matthew 19:14, "Jesus said, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." The kingdom of heaven has no age limit.

Matt. 28:19 is the Great Commission: "Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." Jesus commands us to be baptized and to baptize.

Mark 16:16, "Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved." Belief and baptism work together for our salvation.

Luke 1:59, "On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child." The Greek word for this infant is teknon. Acts 2:38 says baptism is for teknon.

Luke 18:15, "People were also bringing babies to Jesus for him to place his hands on them."

Luke 23:43, Jesus tells the thief, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise." While baptism matters (a lot), God is God able to save even an unbaptized thief.

John 1:32, when Jesus was baptized, "John gave this testimony: 'I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him." Jesus made the water holy. Now, water and Spirit make us holy.

John 3:22, "Jesus and his disciples went out into the Judean countryside... and baptized." From the beginning, baptism is central to Jesus' ministry.

Prayer (Prayer Requests)

Lord Jesus, we thank you today for the gift of baptism. That in baptism you join us to the death of Jesus so that we might also join Him in His Resurrection. Please help us every day to remember our baptisms. In your name we pray, Amen!

OCT. 23 | SOLOMON DEDICATES THE TEMPLE

Scripture: 1 Kings 5:1-5; 8:27-43

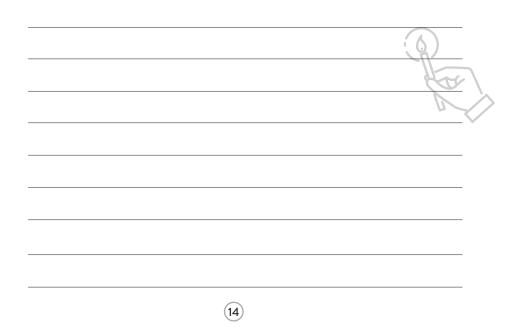
Memory Verse:

"Hear from heaven, your dwelling place, and when you hear, forgive." 1 Kings 8:30b

Questions:

- 1. How would you describe prayer to someone who had never heard of it before?
- 2. What are 10 things you can pray about?
- 3. What are 10 places we can pray?
- 4. What times of the day do you like to pray? Why?
- 5. Why does God want us to pray?

Activity: Prayer Stations



Write out a prayer to God. It can be about anything you want. You can thank Him for something... praise Him for something... ask Him for something... etc.



Prayer (Prayer Requests)

Our Father, who art in Heaven hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our Daily Bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the Kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

OCT. 30 | GOD'S CARE FOR THE WIDOW

Scripture: 1 Kings 17:1-16

Memory Verse:

Elijah said to her, "Don't be afraid." 1 Kings 17:13a

Questions:

- 1. What is a widow?
- 2. How would you describe what it may feel like to be a widow?
- 3. Describe a time you have felt this way.
- 4. Elijah was a prophet. What is a prophet? What did prophets do?
- 5. God did the impossible when the jug of oil never ran dry. What time in your life have you seen, or wanted to see God do the impossible?

Activity: Letters of Joy



What is a need in your life right now you need God to meet?

Prayer (Prayer Requests)

God of compassion, by the power of God, Elijah provided bread and oil for the widow and her household. By faith in God, the widow provided food and water for Elijah. Give us hearts to love one another, so that in providing and in receiving, we too, might experience the unimaginable power of God, through the one who has provided life itself, your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

NOV. 6 | JONAH AND GOD'S MERCY

Scripture: Jonah 1:1-17; 3:1-10

Memory Verse:

"Who knows? God may yet relent and with compassion turn from his fierce anger so that we will not perish." Jonah 3:9

Questions:

- 1. Why did God want Jonah to preach against the city of Ninevah?
- 2. Did Jonah obey? What was the consequence?
- 3. Jonah ran away from God. Have you ever ran away from God? If so, why?
- 4. Jonah repented of his sin and came back to God and obeyed him.
- 5. Was Jonah deserving of punishment or mercy for his sin? Did he get what he deserved? Why or why not?
- 6. Jonah was in the belly of the fish for 3 days and 3 nights? How do you think this connects to Jesus?

Activity: Confessions Box

When Jonah repented of His sin, God forgave him. What sin in your life do you need to repent of and ask God for forgiveness?



Prayer (Prayer Requests)

God of the seas, sky, and land, when Jonah turned to run from you, you showed him that nothing and no one could hide from your presence. You are in all things, and you love all things. Show us the gift of your presence, and help us to carry your word of compassion and grace to all the world, in the name of the one who carried out your love flawlessly, Jesus Christ our redeemer. Amen.

NOV. 13 | GOD CALLS ISAIAH

Scripture: Isaiah 6:1-8

Memory Verse:

"Woe to me!" I cried. "I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty." Isaiah 6:5

Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!" Isaiah 6:8

Questions:

- The seraphim were crying out, "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty." What does it mean to be holy? What makes something holy?
- 2. What was Isaiah's response to seeing God on His throne?
- 3. How was Isaiah forgiven of his sin? What does this have to do with Jesus?
- 4. What do you think it means to be called by God? Who are we called to be? What are we called to do? When are we called? Where are we called to go? Why are we called?



How has God has called you? What do you think this looks like in your life? If it is helpful, ask yourself, "Who, What, When, Where, and Why God has called you."

Prayer (Prayer Requests)

King of heaven and earth, as you cleansed Isaiah with a coal of fire to prepare him for proclaiming your word to the world, prepare us, so that we may know your bidding and carry out our callings with eagerness and urgency. Show the world greatness that cannot be contained any more than smoke or fire can be caught, in the name of the one who sacrificed everything to carry out your commands, Jesus Christ our sanctifier. Amen.

NOV. 20 | GOD PROMISES A NEW COVENANT

Scripture: Jeremiah 36:1-28; 31:31-34

Memory Verse:

"I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people." Jeremiah 31:33b

Activity: Care Cards

How has God has called you? What do you think this looks like in your life? If it is helpful, ask yourself, "Who, What, When, Where, and Why God has called you."



Prayer (Prayer Requests)

God, whose fondness for humanity knows no limit, write your word upon our hearts, so that we need no scroll, no book, no script to know that you love us. Show us the power of your covenant, that you will be faithful to us, even when we fail to remain faithful to you. For the beauty of your word inscribed upon us, we pray, in the name of the one whose body and blood became your new covenant with us, Jesus Christ, our redeemer. Amen.

DEC. 4 | GOD'S PROMISED SPIRIT

Scripture: Joel 2:12-29

Memory Verse:

"And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions." Joel 2:28

Activity: Deck the Halls



Knowing that you have the presence of God with you 24/7 through the Holy Spirit, how could this impact how you live your daily life?



Prayer (Prayer Requests)

Loving Lord, when we have strayed, you have called us to come home to you. "Return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing." With all our hearts we return to you, and gratefully accept your gentle love, for the sake of the one whose spirit lives in us, Jesus Christ our loving savior. Amen.

DEC. 11 | SPIRIT OF THE LORD UPON ME

Scripture: Isaiah 61:1-11

Memory Verse:

"The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor." Isaiah 61:1a

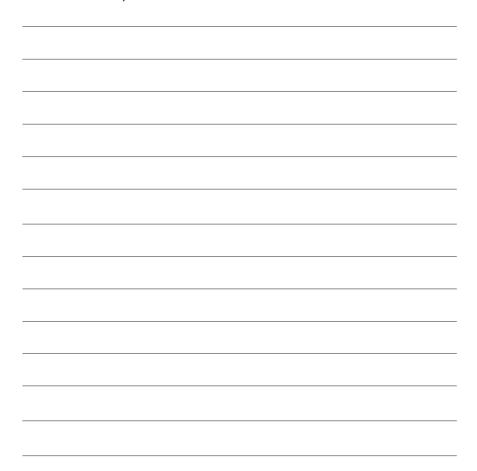
Questions:

- 1. When you hear the word service, what is the first thing that comes to your mind? Why?
- 2. Have you ever served? If so, how did you feel when you were serving?
- 3. Have you ever been served? If so, how did you feel when someone served you?
- 4. Do you know someone you would consider a servant? What makes them a servant?
- 5. How did the Holy Spirit call Isaiah to serve?
- 6. How/Where could the Holy Spirit be calling you to serve?

Activity: Mass Service Project



What is a way you could serve someone this week, or over Christmas break? How will you do this?



Prayer (Prayer Requests)

Spirit of the Lord God, you bring good news to the oppressed, bind up the brokenhearted, proclaim liberty to the captives, and release the prisoners. You comfort all who mourn, and shower your people with the oil of gladness instead of mourning; a mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. We will greatly rejoice in the Lord, our whole being shall exult in God, for the sake of the one who brought righteousness to life, Jesus Christ our salvation. Amen.

DEC. 18 | JESUS' BIRTH ANNOUNCED

Scripture: Luke 1:26-45

Memory Verse:

"You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus." Luke 1:31

Activity: Christmas Party

What is one way you can share Jesus with someone this Christmas?

Prayer (Prayer Requests)

Father God, there is no miracle as grand as birth. As we prepare for the coming of your son, Jesus, create in us new life. Transform us so that we may reflect the light of your son, and become beacons of goodness, kindness, compassion, generosity, honesty, patience, and peace, for the sake of the one whose name brings deliverance and life to all the world, Jesus Christ, infant king. Amen.

NOTES

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