

The Covenant Contact

February 2025

Who Do You Say That I Am?

In three of the gospels — Matthew 16, Mark 8, and Luke 9 — a particular event is recorded between Jesus and his disciples where an important question is posed. In all of these gospel books, it's after Jesus has performed several miracles, such as feeding the 5,000, healing a blind man, and walking on

water. It's the context of the question that is curious to me — after Jesus has done all these miraculous events he poses an important question to those who've been following him the closest:

Who do you say that I am?

While I would like to think that if I'd been following around a guy for a while who claimed to be the Son of God, a man I'd witnessed perform miracles, I would be quick to answer that he is God, the Promised Messiah, I also know what a cynic I am, so it's possible I would still be doubting all I'd seen Jesus do.

We occasionally reach a point in our lives where we are at a crossroads — where we need to make a decision. Perhaps it's about a priority we are facing — two things are pulling our attention, and they are not working. One has to go.

Perhaps we face a reality that things at work or in our families are simply not working, and so something needs to change. It might be about money — how we view it or spend it — and we realize we cannot keep going in the direction we have been without consequences. It may be about time and commitments — how we've made too many, and we need to make a call on what will stay in our lives and what will go.

Crossroads is decision time. Left or right? Up or down? This one or that one?

In the three accounts where Jesus poses this question to his disciples, the first response is very nearly identical in all three:

They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, that one of the prophets of long ago has come back to life." (Luke 9:19)

The disciples waffle, it seems. They don't answer for themselves — they point to what others have said about Jesus. They don't declare who *they* believe Jesus to be, but who *others* declare Jesus to be.

Is this just like us when we are making decisions? We look at what other people do and think, "Well, maybe that will work for us." We weigh all the choices, look at how it's affected others, and think perhaps their choices should lead the way.

In this moment between Jesus and his disciples, he doesn't accept this, deferring to what others say. He asks again:

"But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" (Luke 9:20)

Peter is the disciple to give his personal answer, declaring Jesus is the Messiah.

This question, "Who do you say I am?" was a call for each of the disciples to decide if what they had witnessed and experienced was enough to change their beliefs. It was time to pick a lane.

Have you ever asked yourself that question . . . or had someone else ask you, "Who do you believe Jesus to be?"

While many of us would answer like Peter and say we believe Jesus is the Lord, the more challenging part is what Jesus says next. Because in the verses following, he calls each of the disciples to the way of the cross: a denial of self.

Believing Jesus **is** Lord is one thing; it's quite another to live like he is **your** Lord. Belief is just one part of the Christian life, because the actual, life-transforming belief that you are not the Lord of your own life, but that Jesus is Lord, comes with the denial of self . . . taking up the cross and following him.

WHAT ABOUT YOU?

We are not called to simply say that Jesus is Lord of All. We are called to *live* like he is Lord of All, which means making choices at those crossroads that reveal we are living *and* believing that truth.

Are there parts of your life you might be holding back from Jesus? Are you living like he is Lord over simply part of your life, but not all of it? This is the essence of Jesus' question, "Who do you say that I am?"

We aren't just to say he is Lord; we are to live it.

In Christ, Pastor Stephanie

New Respite Ministry

We are beginning a new ministry: respite care for caregivers.

Beginning already last month, we are starting to provide a Friday night break for caregivers of children, 5:00-9:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Room. Children will be given supper and provided with games and activities.

We will need people who can provide respite, spending time with the children, providing a meal. (Contact Janet Cappelletti to volunteer.) Respite givers working with the children will need to know and agree to the church's Safe Church policy and have a periodic background check. (Contact Brenda Tousignant about this.)

As we develop the program, we hope to be able to provide other forms of respite for caregivers.

Doctoral Class

Pastor Stephanie will be in Chicago for class Monday – Thursday, February 3 through 6. If you have any pastoral care needs during this time, please contact John Bedosky or Glenn Hafele.

Women Ministries



Women Ministries events are for all women of the church and their friends.

- **Kitchen Detail:** Wednesday, February 5, 9:00 am
- **Book Club** The book for February 12 is *James* by Percival Everett. We will meet at 6:00 pm at a location TBD.
- **Valentine's Tea:** All ladies and girls please join Women Ministries for a Valentine's Tea on Saturday, February 15 at 10:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Room. If you have a favorite teacup, please bring it! If you have a story about it, please share it! We will also have teacups available if you need one. We will serve finger sandwiches, mini fruit ka-bobs, cheese and crackers, cookies and other desserts. Of course we will have tea, coffee and hot cocoa. We will also have a quick craft available for you to make and take! So please join us for a fun time of food and fellowship and bring a friend! Contact Mary Butkevich if you have any questions.

The Search for Significance

- **Zoom Study** It's not too late to join the study. It meets by Zoom on Wednesdays at 7:00 pm. You can stay in the comfort of your warm home!

What constitutes a meaningful life? We seek fulfillment in success, prosperity, recognition, relationships, and even self-sufficiency, but we always seem to come up short. Dive into the book of Ecclesiastes with us as we look at what the Bible has to say about this. Let Pastor Stephanie know if you would like the zoom link emailed to you for convenience.

<https://tiu-edu.zoom.us/j/97439143562>

Summary: Annual Meeting of January 19

Some heating issues are being addressed. Trustee officers for 2025 are: Chair: Co-Chairs Lori Vigeant and Bee Bothroyd, Nominating Committee representative : Mike Barrett

Diaconate officers for 2025 are: Chair, Cathy Fredlund; Vice Chair, Glenn Hafele; Secretary, Jean Morton; Treasurer, John Butkevich; Nominating Committee representative: Linda Lawrence.

Christian Education board officers are: Co-Chairs: Patricia Vigeant and Lori Vigeant; Secretary, Courtney Ayer; Sunday School Superintendent, Christy Barrett; Nominating Committee representative, Ruth Hopkins. The Sunday School Treasurer is Sue Abbott.

A separate bank account for UNITE funds will be closed and the monies will be transferred to the Restricted Fund.

Missions & Evangelism officers are: Chair, Jessica Bedosky; Vice Chair, Jay Fredlund; Secretary, Gary Merrill; Treasurer, Nick Samela; Nominating Committee representative, Brenda Tousignant.

The Missions & Evangelism, Diaconate, and Christian Education boards will be developing a program to provide respite for church caregivers of children. This will start as an "in-house" program, with a goal toward expanding the services available. A "Parents' Night Out" for Valentine's Day Friday, February 14, will be offered.

Women Ministries officers are: Chair, Martha Tillow; Vice Chair, Dawn Johnson; Treasurer, Christy Barrett; Hospitality: Elsa Hurlbert and Karen O'Connell; At-Large board members: Mary Butkevich, Linda Chandon, Cathy Fredlund, and Jean Morton.

Women Ministries is sponsoring a fund drive to replace the two stoves in the kitchen. WM and CE will hold a bake sale

on March 15.

A change to the bylaws eliminating the December quarterly meeting and changing elections of boards and committees from December to January was approved

Two Restricted Fund items totaling \$50,186 will be moved from the church's bank account to the Vanguard account managed by the Investment Committee.

John Bedosky, Chair

Youth Groups

Trailblazers/Pathfinders is for students in Grades K-6. Leaders are Brenda Tousignant, Lori Vigeant, and Haley Morton. They meet once a month



2/23 11:30 am Regular Meeting (Potter's House)

D/C (Discipleship/Confirmation) is for students in grades 7-8, a two-year journey, exploring who God is and what God means in our life. All junior high students are welcome to attend. Pastor Stephanie is the leader. They meet on Sundays at the 9:00 am Sunday School time.



CHYG (Covenant High Youth Group) is for all students in grades 7-12. The leaders are Beth Campbell and Sue Sundell.



Liturgical Dance is for girls in grades 1-8. The leader is Jessica Bedosky. Practice times vary and are in the Sanctuary.



Parents' Night Out

Need a date night? A break? A time-out? Friday evening, February 14 for Valentine's Day, we are offering a "Parents' Night Out" to the public. From 5:00-8:00 we've got games, activities, and dinner for your kiddos. Registration is required; please sign up using the link on our Facebook Event. Contact: Brenda Tousignant.

Banquet of Blessing

- **Need:** cereals, canned vegetables, canned fruit, soups (not vegetarian vegetable), paper towels, toilet paper.
- **No perishable foods. Check expiration dates.** We don't give away out of date food.

Prayer Chain

Contact Prayer Coordinator Mary Butkevich for prayer concerns and rejoicings.

Meal Coordinator

Providing a meal to someone during a difficult time is one way to show how much we care. If you know someone who might benefit, contact Sandy Dunn.

Crafty Fridays

In the Potter's House, 6:00-8:00 pm. If you have a craft to do, bring it. If you don't have a craft but would like to visit and chat, that's okay! Contact: Ruth Johnson.

Giving Made Easy

- Give online in just two minutes. You can opt for one time, weekly or monthly donations. Just open the camera app on your phone and scan the QR Code. You will then be taken right to the Giving Page on our website.

Covenant Church of Thomaston

Giving Page QR Code



February 2025

(Rev 1/30/2025)

For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.

Romans 12:4-5

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>* Sundays: 9:00 Sunday School; 10:00 am Worship; 11:15 Fellowship Sunday worship services are recorded and posted on the church website (covchurchthomaston.org). Worship bulletins, which include the weekly announcements, also are posted on the church website.</p>						1
2*	<p>3 10:45 39ers Study (Fellowship) <i>Pastor Stephanie away</i> 6:30 Zumba (Potter's)</p>	<p>4 <i>Pastor Stephanie away</i> 4:00 Prayer (Church Office)</p>	<p>5 9:00 Kitchen Detail <i>Pastor Stephanie away</i> 6:30 NA (Fellowship) 7:00 Zoom Study</p>	<p>6 <i>Pastor Stephanie away</i> 7:30 NA Subcommittee (Gathering)</p>	<p>7 5:00 Respite Care (Fellowship) 6:00 Crafty Fridays (Potter's House)</p>	8
<p>9* 11:30 Diaconate (Conference Room) 4:00 CHYG (Fellowship)</p>	<p>10 10:45 39ers Study (Fellowship) 6:30 Zumba (Potter's)</p>	<p>11 9:30 Women's Study (Conference) 4:00 Prayer (Church Office)</p>	<p>12 6:30 WM Book Club 6:30 NA (Fellowship) 7:00 Zoom Study</p>	13	<p>14 5:00 Parents' Night Out (Fellowship) 6:00 Crafty Fridays (Potter's House)</p>	<p>15 10:00 WM Valentine's Tea</p>
<p>16* 11:30 Trustees (Conference)</p>	<p>17 Presidents' DAY 6:30 Zumba (Potter's) 6:30 Tres Dias Secretariat (Fellowship)</p>	<p>18 9:30 Women's Study (Conference) 4:00 Prayer (Church Office)</p>	<p>19 6:30 NA (Gathering) 7:00 Zoom Study</p>	20	<p>21 6:00 Crafty Fridays (Potter's House) 6:30 Tres Dias Secuela (Fellowship)</p>	<p>22 9:30 "Chosen" Group (Esme's & Ruby's) 4:00 CHYG (Fellowship)</p>
<p>23* 11:30 Trailblazers/Pathfinders (Potter's House)</p>	<p>24 10:45 39ers Study (Fellowship) 6:30 Zumba (Potter's)</p>	<p>25 9:30 Women's Study (Conference) 4:00 Prayer (Church Office)</p>	<p>26 7:00 Zoom Study</p>	27	<p>28 5:00 Respite Care (Fellowship Room) 6:00 Crafty Fridays (Potter's House)</p>	

Volunteers: . . . through love serve one another. Galatians 5:13b

Coffee Fellowship sponsored by: Social Committee **

****Only beverages are needed and are provided by the church. If you provide snacks, at least one that is gluten-free, please.**

NURSERY		ALTAR FLOWERS		LAY READERS:		SCREEN MONITORS	
2/2	Patricia Vigeant Megan Campbell	3/2	Lori Vigeant	2/2	Communion	2/2	Peggy Schwetz
		3/9	Courtney Ayer	2/9		2/9	Beth Campbell
2/9	Gina Whaley Lauren Whaley	3/16	Cathy Fredlund Haley Morton	2/16		2/16	Cathy Fredlund
				2/23		2/23	Martha Tillow
2/16	Sue Sundell			3/2	Communion	3/2	Peggy Schwetz
		3/23	Patricia Vigeant	3/9		3/9	
2/23	Christy Barrett		Megan Campbell	3/16		3/16	Cathy Fredlund
				3/23		3/23	Peggy Schwetz
		3/30	Mary Butkevich	3/30		3/30	

Sunday School Staff

K &-Pre-K Grace Duke	3-4 Mary Butkevich	7-8 (D/C) Pastor Stephanie
1-2 Lori Vigeant	5-6 Ruth Hopkins	Class Helpers: Christy Barrett, Drew Gomes, Patricia Vigeant, Haley Morton

Youth Staff

CHYG (Grades 7-12) Beth Campbell Sue Sundell	Trailblazers/Pathfinders (Grades K-6) Brenda Tousignant, Lori Vigeant, Haley Morton
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Liturgical Dance (Girls, grades 1-8) Jessica Bedosky

February Birthdays and Anniversaries

Birthdays			Anniversaries	
1 David Fredlund	18 Ron Hapken	24 Rob Trzuskoski	16 Sheila & Rob Trzuskoski	
2 Sue Sundell	19 Deb Gomes	25 Brody Conlon	25 Harriet & Dave McClay	
6 Britta Saghafi	19 Dawn Roaix	27 Susan Abbott		
10 Margrit Saghafi	21 James Bothroyd (11)	27 Emma Sanson		
11 Manuel Gomes	22 Brooke Holway	28 Sandra Murphy-Bishop		

Connections:

- Pastor: Stephanie Nelson: pastor@covchurchthomaston.org or 860-283-9146 (study)
- Church Chair: John Bedosky:
- Diaconate Chair: Cathy Fredlund:

- Treasurer: Ken Hopkins:
- Office "Churchmouse" Ruth Johnson: cmouse@covchurchthomaston.org
Office/Kitchen: 860-283-5071
- Meal Coordinator: Sandra Dunn
- Prayer Coordinator: Mary Butkevich