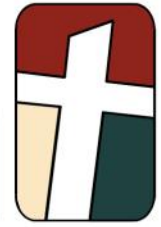


Serving the Lancaster Community Since 1884

# Covenant



ECHOES Newsletter

United Methodist Church

April-May 2025



## From the Pastor's Desk...

By Pastor Derrick Gutierrez

### Christ is Risen! Christ is Risen Indeed!

Spring has arrived, and with it, the celebration of Easter—the heart of our faith. The world around us is bursting with signs of renewal: flowers blooming, trees budding, and longer days bringing warmth and light. In the same way, Easter reminds us of the renewal we have in Jesus Christ. Through His resurrection, we are invited to step into new life, leaving behind the burdens of sin and embracing the hope and transformation He offers. "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." —1 Peter 1:3

Throughout Lent, we have journeyed together in reflection, prayer, and preparation. We have examined our hearts, sought God's presence, and reaffirmed our commitment to follow Christ more fully. Now, as we enter the Easter season, we are reminded that the resurrection is not just a moment—it is a way of life. The empty tomb declares that nothing, not even death, can separate us from God's love.

This season also brings new opportunities for our church to live out the resurrection in tangible ways. Covenant UMC is preparing for a vibrant spring filled with worship, service, and fellowship. In April, we will host our annual Easter event at the church, where children will hunt for eggs. In May, we will invite the community to celebrate the season and the Child Care Center's 30th anniversary with our parking lot event on Saturday, May 17th. Then, on Sunday, May 18th, we will celebrate the ministry of Covenant with music, with children from the Child Care Center participating in the worship service.

Additionally, we are excited to announce the return of the Chocolate Chip Cookie Concert Series, which will bring music, joy, and community into our church. This is a wonderful way to invite friends and neighbors to experience the warmth of Covenant UMC in a setting that celebrates both artistry and fellowship.

Easter is more than a day—it is an invitation to live each day with resurrection hope. As we embrace the renewal of spring and the power of Christ's victory, let us commit to being a people of light, love, and service. May this season be a reminder that, through Christ, new life is always possible.

## Sidelights

### COVENANT'S VISION AND MISSION STATEMENTS

Our Vision Statement: **Bringing Christ's Light into the Community and Beyond.**

Our Mission Statement: **We Invite, We Welcome, We Nurture, We Serve.**

### WAYS TO CONTINUE GIVING

Thank you to our faithful members who continue to support Covenant Church. Here are options for you to give your personal tithes and offerings:

- Mail checks to 110 N. Mulberry St., Lancaster, PA, 17603
- Give online. Go to our website [www.covenant-umc.com](http://www.covenant-umc.com) and click on the GIVING link and follow the directions.
- Text 717-769-1063. After the initial setup, giving is easy.

Please call the church office with questions.

## Sidelights

### PRAYER CHAIN

Covenant is a praying church. There are times when an urgent or emergency concern may arise in your life. Covenant has a Prayer Chain ready to jump into immediate action to notify our Prayer Warriors to lift that concern up to God.

This phone call system is managed by Patti Willard, 717-872-7561, who will reach out to our "callers" who will then call our Prayer Warriors to stop and pray. If you are available to pray for these urgent concerns & would like to be added to our prayer chain, please contact Patti. If you need to activate our Prayer Chain, please contact Patti or the church office. Indicate the urgent/emergency need when calling.

### LOBBY GREETERS

1st Sunday of the Month  
Bob & Cindy Hean

2nd Sunday of the Month  
Carole Horn

3rd Sunday of the Month  
Linda Henning

4th Sunday of the Month  
Bonnie & Barry Miller

5th Sunday of the Month  
Janice McElroy

## We Worship Together

### Sunday Worship

In-person worship will be held each Sunday at 10:30 am. The service will also be livestreamed on Facebook for those who wish to worship at home.

### Additional Online Opportunities During the Week

- Wednesday at 10 am join our prayer group in the church library.

## HOLY WEEK AT COVENANT UMC

As we approach the end of our Lenten season and our study of Lament, Holy Week is a sacred time when we walk with Jesus through his final days, from his triumphant entry into Jerusalem to the cross and ultimately to the joy of the Resurrection. We invite you to worship with us as we reflect, remember, and rejoice together.

**Palm Sunday** – We begin the week with our worship service by shouting "Hosanna!" as we remember Jesus' entry into Jerusalem.

**Maunder Thursday** – This intimate service commemorates the Last Supper, Jesus' act of humble service, and his commandment to love one another.

**Good Friday** – The church will be open for prayer and contemplation. Come and experience the Stations of the Cross in Bethany Hall.

**Easter Sunday** – The week culminates in joyful celebration as we proclaim, "Christ is risen!" and rejoice in the hope of new life.

Join us for this sacred journey. More details will be shared soon!

## Child Care Center Update

Spring is a busy time of year at Covenant Child Care! Classrooms are full and there are so many special days to celebrate.

What's coming up...

**2025 marks Covenant Child Care Center's 30th anniversary!** This May we have some special days planned to celebrate. On Saturday, May 17th, the child care center will participate in the parking lot event the Nurture Team organizes. On Sunday, May 18th, our Pre-school and Pre-K children will be singing at Sunday service to celebrate our anniversary as well.

**Pre-K Graduation:** Friday, June 6th, our Pre-K class will graduate. The center will celebrate with a graduation ceremony followed by a luncheon for graduates and their families. Best of luck to these kiddos as they move onto kindergarten!

The center is also always appreciative of donations. If you are interested, we are continually in need of the following items: Lysol or Clorox wipes, Lysol aerosol disinfecting spray, art supplies such as crayons, colored pencils, markers, coloring books, construction paper, etc.

## Here's to Good Health!

I have often "talked" about eating healthy, so my article this time is a reminder that our eating habits need to be in moderation, and most days you need to have a balanced and nutritious diet.

**April is BLT sandwich month!** Made with bacon, lettuce, and tomato, it can be a breakfast sandwich as well as a delicious lunch sandwich. The most popular way to have it is on toasted bread. Think about whole wheat or a multi grain bread.

The BLT sandwich is the second most popular sandwich in the United States. Traditionally, it includes several slices of cooked bacon (think about using turkey bacon), iceberg lettuce or maybe a spring mix, and slices of tomato between toasted bread. Mayonnaise is the traditional condiment for the BLT.

The BLT sandwich is believed to have descended from the tea sandwiches served in the Victorian Era. They became popular after World War II because of the rapid expansion of supermarkets that made BLT ingredients available year round.

Or you could make a BLT salad. Just shred the lettuce, add diced tomatoes, and toss in some bacon bits. You could also add slices of avocado and top with croutons. Add your favorite dressing.

May is the time to think about planting a garden. Is there anything better than a vine-ripened tomatoes or other fresh produce? Why not think about growing a few of your own edible plants? Use a raised flower bed, or a few pots on your patio or deck. Gardening can be fun, rewarding, and healthy. Other benefits of gardening include getting outdoors, keeping active, and sitting less. It can also be a great stress reliever and improve your diet as you eat more fruits and vegetables.

Gardening might enhance mental health as well. Being in the outdoors in the sunshine and being in nature can improve your mood. Digging in the dirt can increase physical activity and give you a feeling of well-being and connection with our Creator.

No matter where you get your fruits and veggies- your own garden, farmers market, or grocery store- just make sure you eat plenty of fruits and veggies every day.

Happy gardening and happy eating!

Cindy Smith

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## UWF Baby Shower

A big thank you to the women of Covenant who gathered diapers, clothing, baby wipes, etc. to be sent to Red Bird Mission. Additional thanks to those who gave money that will be used to purchase items to supplement our gifts. Young families who qualify will receive a monthly baby bundle from birth through 3 years. This is another way we reach out beyond our walls to help those in need.



## Sidelights

### COVENANT MEMBERS IN BUSINESS

#### Aunt Sandy's Attic

Sandy Leonard—Antiques, Collectibles, Books, Art, etc.  
545 W. Market Street, Marietta,  
PA 17547, 717-426-5091

#### Dale Building Designs

[www.DonDaleDesigns.com](http://www.DonDaleDesigns.com)

#### Groff Family Funeral & Cremation Services, Inc.

Thomas S. Buter, 394.5300  
528 W. Orange St.

#### Miller Optical

Glenn & Maryanne Miller,  
393.2020  
Glasses, Contacts, and Exams  
Lancaster & Willow Street

#### Willard Hypnosis Center

Roger J. Willard  
3304 Main Street, Conestoga PA  
17516, 717.872.7561 or  
[willardhypnosis.com](http://willardhypnosis.com)

### SPECIAL SPRING EVENTS

The Nurture and Outreach teams are holding an Easter Event with snacks, crafts, and an Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, April 5th at 10:00am.

**ALSO**, Please save the date for the Nurture and Outreach team's Spring Fest on Saturday, May 17th, at 10:00 a.m. in the parking lot. More details to follow.

## Sidelights

### THE WOW FELLOWSHIP

The women and men's group that has been meeting once a month after church for lunch and Bible study is now called The WOW Fellowship, which means **W**orship God, **O**bey His Word, and **W**itness to others. The group will be meeting the second Sunday of every month in Bethany Hall following the Worship Service. Lunch is provided.

### GROCERY CARDS

Giant (\$25 and \$50) and Stauffer (\$50) grocery cards are available for purchase. Five percent of the proceeds goes to support the Mission Outreach of Covenant Church.

Please make out checks to Covenant UMC, and put "grocery cards" on the memo line. You can also see Carole Horn on Sunday mornings, or contact the church office (717-393-1561) Monday-Friday mornings if you want to make a purchase.

### A/V HELP NEEDED

There is room for you on the sanctuary sound board. Interested? Training will be provided. Please see Darwin Tyson for more information.

## Note of Thanks from the Kepner Family

Dear church family,

On Saturday, March 15, there was a glorious celebration of the life of our mother, Dolly Kepner. It was wonderful to see the full sanctuary of those whose lives Mom touched by her music ministry and life here at Covenant.

But we would be amiss if we did not let you all know how much you touched her life all through the years as well. She knew how much you enjoyed her musical talents and you let her know that all the time. We especially think of how difficult it was for her to retire from using her musical talents for the church. Since that time of retirement and declining health she was never forgotten by this loving church family.

Your visits, calls, cards and prayers sustained her through her final months when she felt like there was less and less she was able to do. We want to say thank you for your faithfulness to Mom. You blessed her and her family as well.

Blessings to all,

Don & Cindy Dale  
Roger & Patti Willard  
Bill & Phyllis Kepner

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## The Reverend Dr. Guy Carrigan Honored



The Rev. Dr. Guy Carrigan was recently honored with a certificate of appreciation for his years of faithful ministry as Pastor of Evangelism at Covenant Church. In February Pastor Derrick Gutierrez, former SPRC chair Cindy Smith, and Lay Leader Lois Neidermyer visited Pastor Guy in his personal care room at St. John's Herr Estate in Columbia.

They presented him not only with the certificate but also with a bobblehead of John Wesley, which put a huge smile on his face. Pastor Guy is a scholar of John Wesley and has often shared the teachings of this English theologian, evangelist, and founder of Methodism.

Moving about in a wheelchair, Pastor Guy is doing well but expressed disappointment in not being able to attend or minister at Covenant Church any longer. He assured his visitors, however, that his prayers continue for Covenant's staff and congregation. Thank you and God bless you, Pastor Guy, for your faithfulness!



# April 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
		7a MOOS 12:05p Bible2School 3n 1p Staff Meeting	7a MOOS 10a Conference Call Pra 10:15a Prayer Group 5:30p Covenant Ringers 7p Chancel Choir Rehear	7a MOOS 7p Praise Team Rehears;	7a MOOS	10a Family Easter Event 12p Care and Share Lun
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Holy Communion 9a Adult, Children & Youl 10:30a Worship & FaceE	7a MOOS 10:40a Bible2School 2n 7p Narcotics Anonymou:	7a MOOS 12:05p Bible2School 3n 1p Staff Meeting	7a MOOS 10a Conference Call Pra 10:15a Prayer Group 7p Chancel Choir Rehear	7a MOOS 7p Praise Team Rehears;	7a MOOS	10a Food Box Distributic
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
9a Adult, Children & Youl 10:30a Worship & FaceE 12p WOW Luncheon & B	7a MOOS 10:40a Bible2School 2n 7p Narcotics Anonymou:	7a MOOS 12:05p Bible2School 3n 1p Staff Meeting	7a MOOS 10a Conference Call Pra 10:15a Prayer Group 5:30p Covenant Ringers 7p Chancel Choir Rehear	7a MOOS 7p Maundy Thursday Wk 7p Praise Team Rehears;	7a MOOS 7p Good Friday Worship	9a IMPACT! Missions Wor
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Easter Sunday 9a Adult, Children & Youl 10:30a Worship & FaceE	7a MOOS 8a Community Table 7p Narcotics Anonymou:	7a MOOS 1p Staff Meeting	7a MOOS 10a Conference Call Pra 10:15a Prayer Group 7p Chancel Choir Rehear	7a MOOS 7p Praise Team Rehears;	7a MOOS 8a UWF Retreat	
27	28	29	30	1	2	3
UWF Retreat 9a Adult, Children & Youl 10:30a Worship & FaceE	7a MOOS 7p Narcotics Anonymou:	7a MOOS 1p Staff Meeting	7a MOOS 10a Conference Call Pra 10:15a Prayer Group 5:30p Covenant Ringers 7p Chancel Choir Rehear	7a MOOS 7p Praise Team Rehears;		

# May 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
27	28	29	30	1	2	3
<p>Holy Communion</p> <p><b>8a</b> Nurture Team Meeting</p> <p><b>9a</b> Adult, Children &amp; Youth</p> <p><b>10:30a</b> Worship &amp; FaceE</p>	<p><b>7a</b> MOOS</p> <p><b>7p</b> Narcotics Anonymous</p>	<p><b>7a</b> MOOS</p> <p><b>1p</b> Staff Meeting</p>	<p><b>7a</b> MOOS</p> <p><b>10a</b> Conference Call Pra</p> <p><b>10:15a</b> Prayer Group</p> <p><b>7p</b> Chancel Choir Reheal</p>	<p><b>7a</b> MOOS</p> <p><b>7p</b> Praise Team Rehears:</p>	<p><b>7a</b> MOOS</p> <p><b>3p</b> Zbinden Wedding reh</p> <p><b>4p</b> Zbinden wedding din</p> <p><b>6p</b> Chocolate Chip Cooki</p>	<p><b>11a</b> Zbinden Wedding</p> <p><b>12p</b> Care and Share Lun</p>
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<p>Holy Communion</p> <p><b>8a</b> Nurture Team Meeting</p> <p><b>9a</b> Adult, Children &amp; Youth</p> <p><b>10:30a</b> Worship &amp; FaceE</p>	<p><b>7a</b> MOOS</p> <p><b>7p</b> Narcotics Anonymous</p>	<p><b>7a</b> MOOS</p> <p><b>1p</b> Staff Meeting</p>	<p><b>7a</b> MOOS</p> <p><b>10a</b> Conference Call Pra</p> <p><b>10:15a</b> Prayer Group</p> <p><b>7p</b> Chancel Choir Reheal</p>	<p><b>7a</b> MOOS</p> <p><b>7p</b> Praise Team Rehears:</p>	<p><b>7a</b> MOOS</p>	<p><b>9a</b> Community Closet</p> <p><b>10a</b> Food Box Distributic</p> <p><b>12p</b> WOW luncheon and</p>
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
<p><b>9a</b> Adult, Children &amp; Youth</p> <p><b>10:30a</b> Worship &amp; FaceE</p> <p><b>12p</b> WOW Luncheon &amp; B</p>	<p><b>7a</b> MOOS</p> <p><b>8a</b> Community Table</p> <p><b>7p</b> Narcotics Anonymous</p>	<p><b>7a</b> MOOS</p> <p><b>1p</b> Staff Meeting</p>	<p><b>7a</b> MOOS</p> <p><b>10a</b> Conference Call Pra</p> <p><b>10:15a</b> Prayer Group</p> <p><b>5:30p</b> Covenant Ringers</p> <p><b>7p</b> Chancel Choir Reheal</p>	<p><b>7a</b> MOOS</p> <p><b>7p</b> Praise Team Rehears:</p>	<p><b>7a</b> MOOS</p>	<p><b>9a</b> IMPACT! Missions Wor</p> <p><b>10a</b> Parking Lot Event</p>
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
<p><b>9a</b> Adult, Children &amp; Youth</p> <p><b>10:30a</b> Worship &amp; FaceE</p>	<p><b>7a</b> MOOS</p> <p><b>8a</b> Community Table</p> <p><b>7p</b> Narcotics Anonymous</p>	<p><b>7a</b> MOOS</p> <p><b>1p</b> Staff Meeting</p> <p><b>7p</b> Lead Team Meeting</p>	<p><b>7a</b> MOOS</p> <p><b>10a</b> Conference Call Pra</p> <p><b>10:15a</b> Prayer Group</p> <p><b>7p</b> Chancel Choir Reheal</p>	<p>Annual Conference</p> <p><b>7a</b> MOOS</p> <p><b>7p</b> Praise Team Rehears:</p>	<p><b>7a</b> MOOS</p>	
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
<p>Heritage Sunday</p> <p><b>9a</b> Adult, Children &amp; Youth</p> <p><b>10:30a</b> Worship &amp; FaceE</p>	<p><b>7a</b> MOOS</p> <p><b>7p</b> Narcotics Anonymous</p>	<p><b>7a</b> MOOS</p> <p><b>1p</b> Staff Meeting</p>	<p><b>7a</b> MOOS</p> <p><b>10a</b> Conference Call Pra</p> <p><b>10:15a</b> Prayer Group</p> <p><b>7p</b> Chancel Choir Reheal</p>	<p><b>7a</b> MOOS</p> <p><b>7p</b> Praise Team Rehears:</p>	<p><b>7a</b> MOOS</p>	



Looking Ahead..... VBS is on June 23-27!

# JOIN THE FUN AT VBS!

**June 23-27, 6-8 PM**

**Crafts, snacks, songs, & Bible stories**

**Covenant United Methodist Church**

**110 N Mulberry St, Lancaster 17603**

**(Entrance off of the Parking Lot)**

**Register using the QR Code**



# Update from the Lead Team

For 2025, Covenant adopted a new, streamlined model for church leadership, the Lead Team. This new model differs from the Leadership team model that the church used in the past. The Lead Team consists of church members who represent various ministries and committees. Additionally, the Lead Team itself serves as the Trustees, Finance Committee, and SPRC Committee. We combined all the administrative committees into one committee to minimize meetings and support our focus on ministry. The committee meets every two months, beginning in January on the 3rd Tuesday at 7pm. Here is an update from the March meeting:

- In 2026, our Casavant Organ will be 100 years old. We are preparing to celebrate this milestone and need to schedule significant maintenance for the organ. The cost will be substantial and will require a collective effort from our congregation. More information will be provided later this year.
- The Child Care Center turned 30 years old in February. We will be celebrating during our community event on May 17th in the church parking lot.
- The Child Care Center received a \$50,000 grant, which will allow us to expand by opening an additional room in the center. We hope to support more families and generate more revenue for the Child Care Center.
- In preparation for Easter Sunday, the church will have the lighting in the sanctuary repaired. Meadow Valley Electric will be replacing the burned-out light bulbs.
- On April 12th, we will be conducting some specific maintenance and cleanup around the church beginning immediately after the food box giveaway. If you are handy with a pole saw, please join us in the parking lot.

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## Church Staff Appreciation Luncheons

Ten church staff members of Covenant United Methodist Church were honored by Lead Team/SPRC at appreciation luncheons during the month of March. Soups, salads, and sundaes were served to eight of the staff as they gathered together for fellowship and lunch in Bethany Hall on Tuesday, March 18. Pastor Derrick Gutierrez as their supervisor expressed words of appreciation and led in prayer, while Ginny Brown as Lead Team Chairperson shared Scripture and thoughts of appreciation on behalf of the congregation. For a time of fellowship Lois Neidermyer led the group in a challenging two-team game of pictionary, based on two topics: church items or locations and Biblical events.

During the luncheon, years of service of staff members were highlighted, noting Custodian Kevin Fritz as the longest serving staff member going on 25 consecutive years and Administrative Nicole Migliore as the newest staff member, being hired just a year and a half ago. Those with years of service in between were Bell Choir Director Robin Ingram, Pastor of Visitation and Outreach Sally Ott, Director of Child Care Emily Mekeel, Part-Time Custodian Woody White, Sexton Hugh McClure, and Senior Pastor Derrick Gutierrez.

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## Sidelights

### 90+ MAY BIRTHDAYS

Ruth Neuman  
Ethel Beck

### GIFTS GIVEN IN MEMORY OF...

**Mike Rohm** from the Chancel Choir, Carole Horn, Lynn Arnold, and Esther Mefferd.

**Dolly Kepner** from Ron & Chris Kimmich, Esther Mefferd, Carole Horn, Nancy Groff, and Denise Troop.

### NOTE OF THANKS

**Sandy Leonard** sends thanks and blessings to everyone who sent prayers and cards during her recent illness, and for remembering to send well wishes on her birthday.

### MOOS FUNDRAISER

Save the date for a Mornings On Orange Street fundraiser to be held at the Friendly's restaurant on Centerville Road on April 30th from 5-8 p.m.

### UPPER ROOM

You can purchase the Upper Room daily devotional for only \$2. We have regular and large print in the office.



## Worship Survey and Task Force Follow-Up

Thank you to the Covenant Church members who completed the worship follow-up survey in January of this year. Your input is so valued in helping to direct further considerations for Sunday morning worship. The results from the 15 surveys returned have been fully compiled and handed over to Pastor Derrick, who is sharing them with the Worship Team and then will do so with the congregation after the Easter season.

The work of the Worship Task Force, which was established by the Pathways Team, has concluded one year from its first meeting in February of 2024. Thank you to the Task Force members—Pastor Derrick Gutierrez, Asher Hadgu, Linda Henning, Sandy Leonard, Barry Miller, Bonnie Miller, Lois Neidermyer, and Laura Rappoldt for their investment of time, effort, and prayer. They researched, they brainstormed, they surveyed, they deliberated, and they prayed in order to redesign the worship service with the goal of meeting a variety of congregants' worship preferences while also appealing to prospective new members. Now after experiencing the new blended worship format and receiving feedback with the follow-up survey, the Worship Team will resume its responsibility for any changes in the worship service.

Under the direction of Pastor Gutierrez and the leadership of Chairperson Darwin Tyson, the Worship Team has been studying the book "Both And" by Jason Moore to consider ways to make our online worship more meaningful and effective. So further updates to the worship service will be focused on both in-person worship and online worship. Do keep the Worship Team in your prayers. In addition to Pastor Derrick and Chairperson Darwin, the Worship Team is composed of Dave Beznoska, Ginny Brown, Cindy Hean, and Larry Rappoldt.

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Special recognition was extended to Woody White, who resigned at the end of 2024 due to health issues. Pastor Derrick presented him with a framed certificate of appreciation for his ten years of faithful custodial service to the church.



Woody White

Each staff member was invited to select a token gift of appreciation from the table decorations. Gratitude is extended to Ginny Brown, Jenny Engle, Cindy Hean, Chris Kimmich, Lois Neidermyer, and Cindy Smith for helping to make the March 18th luncheon possible.

Since our Director of Music/Organist Larry Rappoldt and Pianist/Accompanist Benjamin Wesley were unable to attend the Tuesday luncheon because of teaching responsibilities, they were treated to lunch out after the worship service on Sunday, March 16. A relaxed time of fellowship around the table was enjoyed by them and their hosts: Pastor Derrick Gutierrez, Worship Team Leader Darwin Tyson, and Lay Leader Lois Neidermyer. Token appreciation gifts with a music theme were presented to Larry and Benjamin along with expressions of thanks for their service.

Special Note: The full-time and part-time workers in the Child Care Center are employees of Covenant Church as well. Recently an appreciation luncheon was provided for them with donations of food from the congregation; so they kept the Child Care running while their Director Emily attended the luncheon on March 18.

## Sidelights

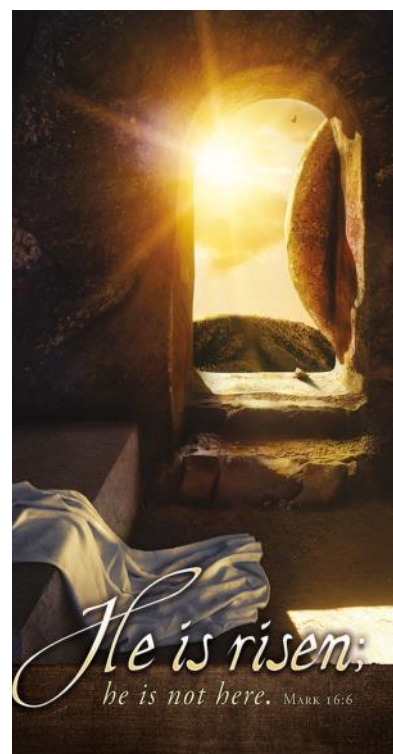
### UWF RETREAT 2025

Eleven Covenant women will be traveling to Ocean City, New Jersey, on Thursday, April 24, staying until Sunday, April 27. Our theme this year is "The Promise and the Power of Easter" with DVD sessions featuring Christine Caine and Lisa Harper.

There will be fun and fellowship, with shared meals, shopping, playing games, theme sessions and closing worship. Please pray for safe travels and a meaningful time together.

### HOSPITAL VISITATION

Don't forget to notify the church office when you or a loved one is in the hospital. Our Care Team is available to visit and share prayer.



# EPA Conference to Address Regionalization

The Eastern Pennsylvania Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church will convene from May 20 to 22, 2025, at the Wildwood Convention Center in New Jersey with the theme "PRAISE!" This is the second year for the EPA Annual Conference to meet in this location immediately following the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference as the same bishop oversees both conferences. In her first year assigned to this position, Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi will preside over the holy conferencing.

Delegates from Covenant Church will include the Rev. Derrick Gutierrez as Senior Pastor, the Rev. Sally Ott as an officially retired pastor, and Lois Neidermyer as Lay Member to Annual Conference. Pastor Derrick will leave for Annual Conference late Sunday, May 18, and thus be out of the church office though the rest of that week. He will be back for the weekend and worship service on Sunday, May 25.

One of the key items of business at Annual Conference will be the discussion and vote on ratification of the constitutional amendments passed by the General Conference regarding regionalization of the world-wide United Methodist Church. Nine regional conferences with some autonomy for their areas would be recognized, and the United States would now be one. If you have questions or input, do not hesitate to direct them to Covenant's delegates.

**An explanation and visual representation of regionalization can be found on the following page.**

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## COVENANT UMC PRESENTS 2025 CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIE CONCERT SERIES



**FIRST FRIDAYS AT 6:00 p.m.  
110 North Mulberry Street**

**Free Church Parking Lot Entrance on 300 block of West Orange St.**

- Friday, May 2 Sound of Roses Big Band - From Dorsey to Disco local musicians thrill with jazz, disco, rock, and swing music.
- Friday, June 6 Lancaster Flute Ensemble - Group of Central Pennsylvania flutists bringing music and joy.
- Friday, July 4 Amy Yovanovich and Christian Seay- Mezzo soprano and tenor share their love of music in song.
- Friday, August 1 Benjamin Wesley and Friends -Evening of music with piano, brass and voice.
- Friday, Sept 5 4 Strings 4 Him – A ukulele group strumming tunes for all to enjoy.
- Friday, Oct. 3 Laus Deo Chorale Concert – Teen and young adult voice and instruments. Guest soloist Brenten MeGee
- Friday, Nov. 7 Midst the Noise - Five-member band playing pop songs from the 70's.
- Friday, Dec. 5 Music For Everyone Community Chorus – Chorus and audience participate in the Sounds of the Season.

**Local artists will display artwork before and after the concerts.**



Open Hearts.  
Open Minds.  
Open Doors.

The people  
of The United  
Methodist  
Church®

# REGIONALIZATION: EFFECTIVE MINISTRY IN EVERY CULTURE

Regionalization allows United Methodists throughout our connection to best serve their unique communities as they share the love of God, make disciples and transform the world.



## WHAT IS REGIONALIZATION?

- Regionalization allows each region of the church to make decisions that will best support outreach and ministry efforts in their specific setting. This ability is already in place in the central conferences; regionalization will bring that ability to the U.S. as well.
- Regionalization was developed collaboratively by United Methodists across the globe.
- It was adopted by an overwhelming majority of General Conference delegates.
- Nine regional conferences will comprise The UMC: one in the U.S. and eight in Africa, Europe and the Philippines.



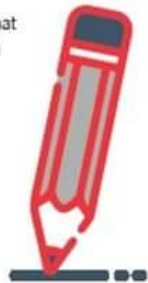
## WHAT CAN'T REGIONAL CONFERENCES DO?

- Create their own constitution or adopt any policy in violation of the constitution contained in the General Book of Discipline
- Alter The Doctrinal Standards, Our Theological Task, The Ministry of All Christians or The Social Principles



## WHAT CAN REGIONAL CONFERENCES DO?

- Draft and publish their own regional Book of Discipline, hymnals, books of worship and other liturgical resources
- Set requirements for ordination and licensed ministry with respect to their needs and resources
- Set standards for lay membership
- Develop practices around marriage ceremonies, funerals and other rites that align with cultural contexts and laws in each country
- Reorganize their annual conferences, districts or charge conferences to best serve their missional needs and convene their own judicial courts
- Work with annual conferences to ensure policies and practices align with the laws in each country



## WHAT NOW?

- The regionalization plan will require amending the United Methodist Constitution. Constitutional amendments must be passed by at least 2/3 of General Conference, which already happened.
- Now, the amendments must be ratified by annual conferences. Amendments must be supported by 2/3 of the total voting members of all the annual conferences combined – this process could last until 2026.
- The Council of Bishops will announce when the amendments have met the threshold to become church law.

“Regionalization is a pathway to make manifest the world-wide nature of The United Methodist Church. It will expand the Church’s witness, embrace the cultural diversity, strengthen the connection and empower each missional context.”

BISHOP TRACY SMITH MALONE, PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL OF BISHOPS





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