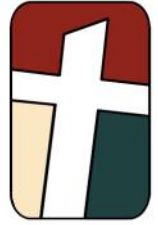


Serving the Lancaster Community Since 1884

# Covenant



ECHOES Newsletter

United Methodist Church

August / September, 2025



## From the Pastor's Desk...

By Pastor Derrick Gutierrez

As students and teachers of Fulton Elementary and Reynolds Middle School prepare to return to school, we as a church step into a holy season of service. As the new school year begins, we are called not just to observe but to act—to live out our faith boldly, as those who trust in a God who is faithful through every new beginning. In this back-to-school season, we are invited to be the kind of people described in Hebrews 11: people who walked not by sight, but by faith.

We remember: "Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1). When a child walks into a new classroom, unsure of who they'll sit next to or whether they'll succeed, they need to be surrounded by a community that believes in them. When a teacher faces another year of uncertainty, long hours, and rising expectations, they need a church that says, "You are not alone. God is with you—and so are we." For these reasons, please pray diligently for the teachers and students at the schools in our community.

Better yet, show up to one of our movie nights and meet them personally. Just like the faithful saints in Scripture—Abraham, Sarah, Moses, Rahab—who stepped into the unknown trusting in God's promises, we too are called to put our faith into action. This is not a passive belief. It's an active response. Whether it's donating supplies, mentoring students, or praying daily for educators, our service becomes a witness. It tells the world, "We are anchored in something greater."

Hebrews 12 reminds us to "run with perseverance the race set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith." Christ is not only our example—He is our strength. He endured the cross for the joy set before Him. And now, as we commit to serving others this school year, we do so with the same spirit of endurance. We press forward not because it's easy, but because it's faithful.

This year, let us be the church that builds an unshakable foundation for our children and educators. Let us offer more than encouragement—let's offer presence. Let's show up with prayer and action. Let's remember that every small act—every pencil, prayer, or kind word—is a brick in the kingdom God is building through us.

*Continued on next page...*

## 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 a.m. 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 a.m. join our prayer group in the church library.

*...continued from front page*

Hebrews 12:28 reminds us, "Since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe." This is our moment to live as citizens of that unshakable kingdom—firm in faith, generous in love, and bold in service.

To every student: You are not alone.

To every teacher: Your work matters deeply.

To our church: let's run the race together, keeping our eyes on Jesus.

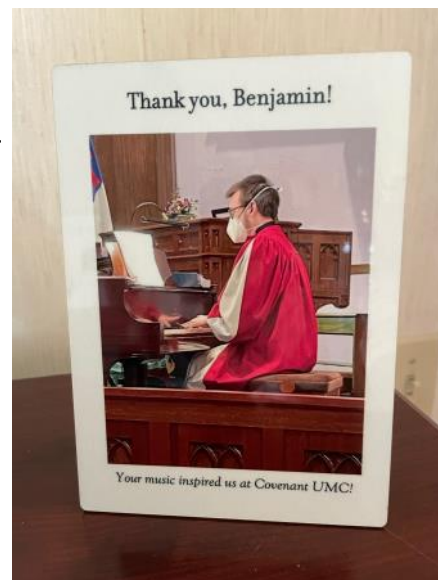
In His Service,  
Pastor Derrick

## Benjamin Wesley Honored

On Sunday, June 29, Benjamin Wesley was honored and thanked for his music ministry as Pianist/ Accompanist at Covenant Church for the the last two and a half years. He was presented with a desktop plaque of his photo at the piano in the sanctuary and with a gift card to Menchey Music. Benjamin moves on to an expanded position at another church with additional opportunities for his music career. He will be missed at Covenant.

A search is now underway for a new Pianist/ Keyboardist/ Accompanist with a somewhat expanded job description. More input and participation in the Praise Team are expected while maintaining responsibilities with the Chancel Choir and with piano/keyboard music in worship services. Keep this search in prayer.

During the summer months, Tiffany Iraheta will serve on an interim basis as Pianist/ Keyboardist/ Accompanist at Covenant Church. She has blessed us with her vocal and instrumental talents in the past and will now again. Welcome her on Sunday mornings.



## Here's to Good Health!

The "golden years" are not always very golden! Aging isn't always very easy. What can we do to make these later years of our lives a little easier? I have a few ideas to help keep you going as you age. You might just have some golden years!

1. Don't act your age. Age is just a number.
2. Be positive in your conversation. Catch yourself if you start complaining.
3. Have negative friends? Smile often and pray for them.
4. Walk like a vibrant, healthy person. I know that isn't always possible, but try to take a bigger stride. It's ok to use a cane or walker. Remember, walk with heel-first stride and wear sturdy, comfortable shoes.
5. Stand tall and straight. Can you hear your mother saying that? Stomach in, hold your shoulders back and your chin up.

6. Smile, research says people who smile are happier. Take care of your teeth. See the dentist regularly, even if you have dentures.

7. Lonely? Pick up the phone and make a call. You can make someone's day. Volunteer your time. Keep in touch with younger people.

8. Be sure you keep your annual physical and screening appointments.

9. Try something new, play an instrument, write a poem, paint a picture, try sewing, or woodworking.

10. Drink plenty of water, stay hydrated.

I hope these ideas might help you along your aging journey. Most of all remember that the Lord loves you and walks with you each day.

Cindy Smith, Wellness Coach

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## New Bilingual Worship Service Launching!

We are excited to announce the launch of a new bilingual worship service designed to welcome and reflect the rich diversity of our community. This inclusive service will be conducted in both English and Spanish, creating a space where people of different cultures and languages can come together to worship as one body in Christ.

Whether Spanish is the first language of someone you know, or you want to experience worship in a new way, ALL are invited to join us. The service will begin on August 3rd at 8:00 am in Bethany Hall, providing a more intimate setting. ¡Todos son bienvenidos! Everyone is welcome!



**¡TODOS SON  
BIENVENIDOS!**

## 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)

### UPCOMING EVENTS

Care & Share Luncheons, 8/2, 9/6

Food Box Distribution, 8/9, 9/13

IMPACT! Missions, 8/16, 9/20

Church Game Night, 8/16

Community Table, 9/15

Family Movie Night, 9/19

Words of Wisdom Bible Study  
Every Monday, 9:00 a.m.

## 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.

## Grow Your Understanding of the Bible in Sunday School

If you want to learn more from the Bible and grow in your Christian faith, consider attending a Sunday School class from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. on Sunday mornings. There are two adult classes: the Sonshine Class, which meets in room B on the lower level, and the Faith Walk Class, which meets in the Chapel Library.

During August and September the Sonshine Class will continue their way through the Bible by studying 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, and the Psalms. The class members read and discuss these passages of Scripture with the help of Whitney Kuniholm's book *The Essential 100 Challenge*.

The Faith Walk class begins its five-week study of the New Testament book of James with Margaret Feinberg's DVD presentation of "What You Do Matters." Reference to scripture and class discussion expand upon her teaching. The next study will be Twelve Women of the Bible: Life-Changing Stories for Today. All are welcome to learn and grow with the support of others in Sunday School.

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## Outreach Team Update

Our Outreach Team continues to serve our community over the summer months.

We have partnered with Lampeter UMC to serve free lunches over the summer to children and family members. We pack 50 brown-bag lunches and also hand out children's books. We serve these lunches on Thursdays at Covenant and also at New Creation Church. At both of these sites we have handed out the lunches within a half hour. We have two more Thursdays left in August. We will also be helping LUMINA during the first week in August, serving lunches for their VBS.

We will be setting up a table for Fulton's Back-to-School event and then begin our regular movie nights in September.

Please keep our Outreach Team in your prayers as we continue our community.





# August 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
27	28	29	30	31	1	2
					7a MOOS 6p Chocolate Chip Cooki	12p Care and Share Lun
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Holy Communion 8a Bilingual Worship Ser 9a Adult, Children & You 10:30a Worship & FaceE	7a MOOS 9a Words of Wisdom Bib 10a Conference Call Pra 7p Narcotics Anonymou	7a MOOS 10a Conference Call Pra 1p Staff Meeting	7a MOOS 10a Conference Call Pra 10:15a Prayer Group 7p Chancel Choir Rehea	7a MOOS 10a Conference Call Pra 7p Praise Team Rehears	7a MOOS	9a Community Closet 9:30a Food Box Distribu
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
8a Bilingual Worship Ser 9a Adult, Children & You 10:30a Worship & FaceE	7a MOOS 9a Words of Wisdom Bib 10a Conference Call Pra 7p Narcotics Anonymou	7a MOOS 10a Conference Call Pra 1p Staff Meeting	7a MOOS 10a Conference Call Pra 10:15a Prayer Group	7a MOOS 10a Conference Call Pra 7p Praise Team Rehears	7a MOOS	9a IMPACT! Missions Wor 4p Church Game Night
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
8a Bilingual Worship Ser 9a Adult, Children & You 10:30a Worship & FaceE	7a MOOS 8a Community Table 9a Words of Wisdom Bib 10a Conference Call Pra 7p Narcotics Anonymou	7a MOOS 10a Conference Call Pra 1p Staff Meeting	7a MOOS 10a Conference Call Pra 10:15a Prayer Group	7a MOOS 10a Conference Call Pra 7p Praise Team Rehears	7a MOOS	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
8a Bilingual Worship Ser 8a Nurture Team Meetin 9a Adult, Children & You 10:30a Worship & FaceE	7a MOOS 9a Words of Wisdom Bib 10a Conference Call Pra 7p Narcotics Anonymou	7a MOOS 10a Conference Call Pra 1p Staff Meeting	7a MOOS 10a Conference Call Pra 10:15a Prayer Group 7p Chancel Choir Rehea	7a MOOS 10a Conference Call Pra 7p Praise Team Rehears	7a MOOS	

31

8a Bilingual Worship Service  
9a Adult, Children & Youth Sunday School  
10a Worship & FaceBook Live Streaming

# September 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
31	1 7a MOOS 9a Words of Wisdom Bib 10a Conference Call Pra 7p Narcotics Anonymou	2 7a MOOS 10a Conference Call Pra 1p Staff Meeting 6:30p Bible Study	3 7a MOOS 10a Conference Call Pra 10:15a Prayer Group 7p Chancel Choir Rehea	4 7a MOOS 10a Conference Call Pra 7p Praise Team Rehears	5 7a MOOS 6p Chocolate Chip Cooki	6 12p Care and Share Lun
7 Holy Communion 8a Bilingual Worship Ser 9a Adult, Children & You 10a Worship & FaceBoo	8 7a MOOS 8a Community Table 9a Words of Wisdom Bib 10a Conference Call Pra 7p Narcotics Anonymou	9 7a MOOS 10a Conference Call Pra 1p Staff Meeting 6:30p Bible Study	10 7a MOOS 10a Conference Call Pra 10:15a Prayer Group 12p WOW luncheon and 7p Chancel Choir Rehea	11 7a MOOS 10a Conference Call Pra 7p Praise Team Rehears	12 7a MOOS	13 9a Community Closet 9:30a Food Box Distribu
14 8a Bilingual Worship Ser 9a Adult, Children & You 10a Worship & FaceBoo	15 7a MOOS 9a Words of Wisdom Bib 10a Conference Call Pra 7p Narcotics Anonymou	16 7a MOOS 10a Conference Call Pra 1p Staff Meeting 6:30p Bible Study 7p Lead Team Meeting	17 7a MOOS 10a Conference Call Pra 10:15a Prayer Group 7p Chancel Choir Rehea	18 7a MOOS 10a Conference Call Pra 7p Praise Team Rehears	19 7a MOOS 6p Free Family Movie Ni	20 9a IMPACT! Missions Wor
21 8a Bilingual Worship Ser 9a Adult, Children & You 10a Worship & FaceBoo	22 7a MOOS 9a Words of Wisdom Bib 10a Conference Call Pra 7p Narcotics Anonymou	23 7a MOOS 10a Conference Call Pra 1p Staff Meeting 6:30p Bible Study	24 7a MOOS 10a Conference Call Pra 10:15a Prayer Group 7p Chancel Choir Rehea	25 7a MOOS 10a Conference Call Pra 7p Praise Team Rehears	26 7a MOOS	27
28 8a Bilingual Worship Ser 9a Adult, Children & You 10a Worship & FaceBoo	29 7a MOOS 9a Words of Wisdom Bib 10a Conference Call Pra 7p Narcotics Anonymou	30 7a MOOS 10a Conference Call Pra 1p Staff Meeting 6:30p Bible Study	1 7a MOOS 10a Conference Call Pra 10a Conference Call Pra 10:15a Prayer Group 7p Chancel Choir Rehea	2	3	4

# Update from the Lead Team

Under our 2025 leadership model, 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 July meeting:

- Vacation Bible School was a success. We had 17 children from our community come and hear about the love of Christ through the stories of Weird Animals.
- The church received its final check from the COVID-era ERC program. We received a total of \$193,542.16 after covering the 15% fee for the legal services we used to apply for the funds. This money has been used to catch up on outstanding debts, as well as replenish funds borrowed from our investment accounts.
- The Lead Team has also approved approximately \$40,000 to be used for various Trustee projects to maintain our building.
- The Child Care Center has successfully prepared a new room to increase capacity for Pre-Toddlers. We are still hiring staff for the room. Please share this information with anyone who may be qualified.
- Tiffany Iraheta, who has been a guest musician in the past, has joined the Worship team as an Interim Pianist/Accompanist. At the same time, we are searching for a permanent replacement for Benjamin Wesley.
- As we approach the beginning of a new school year, the church is planning events for our neighborhood families. Please pay close attention to announcements and the calendar for the dates of our concerts, family movie nights, and holiday events. We are seeking volunteers to join us in connecting with our community.
- The Casavant Organ will celebrate its 100th anniversary in 2026. The church is working with our partner, Brunner and Associates, to prepare the organ for a celebration that will kick off a campaign to raise funds for a restoration project. Keep an eye out for more information about the campaign.

## Sidelights

### 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.

### UPPER ROOM

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

### Prayer for Protection this *School Year*

Thank you, Lord for Your divine protection over our children. Keep them safe as they travel to and from school. Protect them from any physical harm while they are in school. I stand on Your Word that no weapon formed against them will prosper. I thank you that Your angels stand guard over them and surround them like a shield. Guard their hearts and minds as they step out to meet new friends. Let negative words or comments, roll off them and not take root in their souls. Cover them as they navigate this new school year and guide them in the right direction. In Jesus' name, Amen!

 *flourishing today*

## **COVENANT**

### **United Methodist Church**

110 North Mulberry Street

Lancaster, PA 17603-3507

Office Telephone: 717.393.1561

Senior Pastor's Phone: 717.682.2374

Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m.

### **Church Staff**

The Reverend Derrick Gutierrez, Senior Pastor

The Reverend Sally Ott, Visitation & Witness

Jeffrey McGary, Echoes Editor

### **Email**

Senior Pastor...[pastorderrick@covenant-umc.com](mailto:pastorderrick@covenant-umc.com)

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Echoes Editor...[jcmcgary@comcast.net](mailto:jcmcgary@comcast.net)

Web Page...<http://www.covenant-umc.com>

## **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, August 1: Benjamin Wesley and Friends -Evening of music with piano, and voice.

Friday, Sept 5: 4 Strings 4 Him – A ukulele group strumming tunes for all to enjoy.

Friday, Oct. 3: Vocal Harmonix – A premier women's a cappella show chorus

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.**

Return Service Requested

Covenant United Methodist Church  
110 N. Mulberry St.  
Lancaster, PA 17603-3507