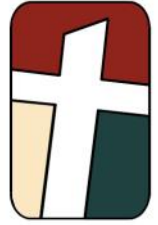


Serving the Lancaster Community Since 1884

Covenant



ECHOES Newsletter

United Methodist Church

August / September 2026



From the Pastor's Desk...

By Pastor Derrick Gutierrez

Our New Mission Statement

A church mission statement is a phrase that captures who they are; shorthand for identity. Covenant United Methodist Church has arrived at ours: As followers of Jesus Christ, we invite and welcome all people into our community of faith, where we worship and pray together, dedicating ourselves to nurture and serve in His name. I want to walk through it with you, one phrase at a time.

To call ourselves followers of Jesus Christ is to enter a lifelong discipleship journey which the Wesleyan tradition calls the Scripture Way of Salvation. God's prevenient grace meets us before we ever know to look for it, awakening something in us long before we walk through our doors. Justifying grace turns us toward home in repentance and forgiveness. And the slow, daily work of the Holy Spirit, called sanctifying grace, keeps shaping us into the likeness of Christ. We are never finished. We are always growing.

We invite and welcome all people because that is what God does. Revelation pictures a multitude no one could count — every nation, tribe, people, and language — gathered before the Lamb (Revelation 7:9, NIV). That is the horizon we're walking toward. All are welcome, and we will invite them. Whether you grew up in these pews or walked away from church and wondered if there was still a place for you, there is room.

We worship and pray together because gathering matters, not just believing. Music carries us somewhere words alone can't reach — a hymn we've sung since childhood, a new song that catches in our throat, voices rising together in-person and through the screen for those joining us online. We are nourished in the sacraments. We celebrate the communion table weekly at 8 am and monthly at 10:30 am. We open Scripture, trusting the Spirit to speak through it into our particular lives. Prayer binds us to God and to one another on Sundays and Wednesdays. We offer praise verse by verse and note by note.

Nurture and service are two sides of the same coin. Inside these walls, we nurture each other through discipleship, care, and honest community.

Sidelights

COVENANT'S VISION AND MISSION STATEMENTS

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

Our Mission Statement: **As followers of Jesus Christ, we invite and welcome all people into our community of faith, where we worship and pray together, dedicating ourselves to nurture and serve in His name.**

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 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 8:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. The 10:30 a.m. 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.

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Outside our walls, that same love turns into hands and feet — a second Saturday food box, a full community closet, brown bag lunches, First Friday concerts, Bible to School lessons, a table where neighbors are fed. This is the servant ministry Jesus modeled when he fed the 5000 and knelt to wash feet. Personal holiness and social holiness were never meant to be separated, and at Covenant, they aren't. This is who we are, together. There's room at the table, and it has your name on it.

Here's to Good Health!

I know you have seen me with one or both of my knees wrapped with ace bandages over the years. Arthritis in those knees has gotten worse over the years. I have used prescription drugs, exercises from physical therapy, injections, and even some foods to help with the discomfort. Here are some foods that you can eat to help with your arthritis pain along with using Tylenol or Advil.

- Apricots have a nutrient called beta-cryptoxanthin that may prevent osteoarthritis. Apricots also have a high level of magnesium, which may help ease pain.
- Walnuts may help fight inflammation. Walnuts are rich in omega-3 fatty acids which also help to fight inflammation.
- Cooking with olive oil can provide a similar action as taking Ibuprofen, which can help with inflammation.
- Broccoli, kale, and brussels sprouts are linked with helping to lower inflammation.
- Salmon has a boat load of omega-3 fats, again helping with inflammation.
- Yogurt has beneficial bacteria that just might fight inflammation.

Of course, along with some of these foods, remember that exercise and physical therapy can help relieve some arthritis pain.

Cindy Smith,
Wellness Coach

Childcare Center Update

Covenant Child Care Center has gone into summer mode! Graduation is behind us, staff and families are enjoying a more relaxed schedule with vacations and days off, and classrooms are spending more time outside for walks and splash days.

In June TJs ice cream truck visited our parking lot to celebrate the beginning of summer! Each child and staff person got to pick out an ice cream treat.

In July the Pre-K class went on their annual Pre-K graduation trip to see the Stormers play an early daytime game. The Stormers invite summer camps and child care centers. Each child gets a lunch to enjoy while watching the game. What a fun day!

Our new Young Preschool room will be opening at the end of August. One of our Millersville students will be returning as our full-time lead teacher for this classroom. She's already been in to set up and start planning. This classroom will accommodate 8 additional children.

The Faithful Give: Covenant Child Care Center will be participating in the Faithful Give which will start on Sunday, October 18th and run until Tuesday, October 20th. More information will be shared as we get closer!

Donations: The child care center is always in need of supplies that we use regularly. If you have any interest in giving a donation to the child care center, please see the items listed below. These can be left in the church office or gathering area with a note attached For Child Care.

Supplies for the Classrooms:

Paper lunch bags, Cotton balls, scrap/drawing paper or coloring books, dry erase markers, pipe cleaners, markers and crayons, puzzles, paper plates, glue sticks or bottles, etc.

Snacks for Students:

Pretzels, Goldfish, Animal crackers, Crackers, Cheerios or other dry cereals, Bananas, Yogurt sticks, Cheese sticks

Cleaning Supplies:

Clorox wipes (other brand or generic is fine as well), Lysol aerosol spray (other brand or generic is fine as well), Clorox bleach, Gloves (Costco sells nitrile exam gloves in the pharmacy department which is the best deal I've found)

Thank you! Any donations are truly appreciated!

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

Groff Family Funeral & Cremation Services, Inc.

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

Willard Hypnosis Center

Roger J. Willard
3304 Main Street, Conestoga PA 17516, 717.872.7561 or willardhypnosis.com

COMMUNITY AID DONATIONS HELP THE CHURCH

Community Aid sends us checks for a percentage of any items dropped off at by our members. They are now accepting items other than clothing for credit (household items, electronics, toys, & more). There is a full list of items they will take posted on the hall bulletin board.

Because we have limited space here at the church, you will need to take the items to Community Aid yourself. When you donate items, tell them you are from Covenant Church and give them number 40070. They are located at 31 Rohrerstown Rd. (just off Columbia Ave onto Good Drive).

Sidelights

THE WOW FELLOWSHIP

The women and men's group that meets once a month starting in September 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.



Legacy Giving Part 4

A Different Kind of Firstfruits

Every fall, we focus on giving from the heart. However, giving can also be influenced by timing, and this season is a good opportunity to consider what's in your investment accounts. If you own stocks or bonds that have grown in value since you bought them, you're carrying more than an investment. You're carrying an opportunity. When you give appreciated securities directly to Covenant rather than selling them first, you can avoid the capital gains tax you'd otherwise owe, and you may still be able to claim a charitable deduction for the full value of the gift. In other words, a gift that costs you less can do just as much for our shared ministry.

King David prayed as he gathered materials for the temple: "Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand" (1 Chronicles 29:14, NIV). Our portfolios, like our paychecks, are a means of giving from what has grown and returning what God already entrusted to us.

2026 CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIE CONCERT SERIES

FIRST FRIDAY AT 6:00 PM

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

Friday August 7 Ukulele Uprising - Lancaster's first and premier ukulele club. A "gang" of fun-loving musicians strumming into your hearts.

Friday Sept. 4 Sound of Roses Big Band - From Dorsey to Disco, local musicians thrill with jazz, disco, rock, and swing music.

Friday October 2 Music For Everyone Community Chorus

Friday Nov. 6 Midst The Noise – Acoustic Band playing hits from the 70s and more.

Friday Dec. 4 String Sisters - Violin, mandolin, guitar, and autoharp play folk, blues, Christmas, fiddle tunes, waltzes, and more.

Local artists will display artwork before and after the concerts.

August 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
26	27	28	29	30	31	1 12p Care and Share Lun
2 Holy Communion 8a Bilingual Worship Ser 9a Adult, Children & Youth 10:30a Worship & FaceE	3 7p Narcotics Anonymous	4 1p Staff Meeting 6:30p Bible Study	5 10a Prayer Group	6 6p Chocolate Chip Cooki	7 9:30a Food Box Distribu	8
9 8a Bilingual Worship Ser 9a Adult, Children & Youth 10:30a Worship & FaceE	10 7p Narcotics Anonymous	11 1p Staff Meeting 4:15p Fulton Back to Sc 6:30p Bible Study	12 10a Prayer Group	13	14 8a Yard Sale 9a IMPACT! Missions Woi	15
16 8a Bilingual Worship Ser 9a Adult, Children & Youth 10:30a Worship & FaceE	17 7p Narcotics Anonymous	18 1p Staff Meeting 6:30p Bible Study	19 10a Prayer Group	20	21	22
23 8a Bilingual Worship Ser 9a Adult, Children & Youth 10:30a Worship & FaceE	24 7p Narcotics Anonymous	25 1p Staff Meeting 6:30p Bible Study	26 10a Prayer Group 7p Covenant Chorus Ret	27	28	29
8a Bilingual Worship Service 9a Adult, Children & Youth Sunday School 10:30a Worship & FaceBook Live Streaming	30 7a MOOS 7p Narcotics Anonymous	31				

September 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
30	31	1 1p Staff Meeting 6:30p Bible Study	2 10a Prayer Group 7p Covenant Chorus Ref		4 6p Chocolate Chip Cooki 12p Care and Share Lun	5
6 Holy Communion 8a Bilingual Worship Ser 9a Adult, Children & You 10:30a Worship & FaceE	7 7a MOOS 8a Community Table 7p Narcotics Anonymou	8 7a MOOS 1p Staff Meeting 6:30p Bible Study	9 7a MOOS 10a Prayer Group 7p Covenant Chorus Ref	10 7a MOOS 12p WOW luncheon and	11 7a MOOS	12 9a Community Closet 9:30a Food Box Distribu 6p CMCL Using Parking I
13 8a Bilingual Worship Ser 9a Adult, Children & You 10:30a Worship & FaceE	14 7a MOOS 7p Narcotics Anonymou	15 7a MOOS 1p Staff Meeting 6p Lead Team Meeting 6:30p Bible Study	16 7a MOOS 10a Prayer Group 7p Covenant Chorus Ref	17 7a MOOS	18 7a MOOS 6p Free Family Movie Niç	19 9a IMPACT! Missions Woi
20 8a Bilingual Worship Ser 9a Adult, Children & You 10:30a Worship & FaceE	21 7a MOOS 7p Narcotics Anonymou	22 7a MOOS 1p Staff Meeting 6:30p Bible Study	23 7a MOOS 10a Prayer Group 7p Covenant Chorus Ref	24 7a MOOS 11a Bible 2 School	25 7a MOOS 11a Bible 2 School	26 4p Game Night- Nurture
27 8a Bilingual Worship Ser 9a Adult, Children & You 10:30a Worship & FaceE	28 7a MOOS 7p Narcotics Anonymou	29 7a MOOS 1p Staff Meeting 6:30p Bible Study	30 7a MOOS 10a Prayer Group 7p Covenant Chorus Ref	1 7a MOOS 11a Bible 2 School	2	3

Update from the Lead Team

July 2026

Covenant uses the Lead Team model for governance, consisting of church members from various ministries and committees. The Lead Team itself serves as the Trustees, Finance Committee, and SPRC Committee. We combined all the administrative committees into a single committee to minimize meetings and support our ministry focus.

The committee meets every two months, beginning in January on the 3rd Tuesday at 6 PM. Here is an update from the July 2026 meeting:

- Covenant officially adopted a revised Mission Statement: "As followers of Jesus Christ, we invite and welcome all people into our community of faith, where we worship and pray together, dedicating ourselves to nurture and serve in His name." This statement now guides our shared life and ministry.
- Our financial health continues to improve. Giving and daycare income are both tracking near the halfway point for the year, a significant turnaround from where we were in early 2025. We are grateful for the faithfulness of this congregation.
- Work on our historic Casavant Organ is actively underway. The swell section has been repaired, and work on the great manual and reeds is in progress. The Organ Fund now stands at approximately 40% of our goal. Thank you for your generous support in this restoration. (See the progress bar in the gathering area).
- The Outreach Team received a donation of towels, sheets, and blankets. Quality items will be available at the yard sale; the remainder will be donated to Tenfold.
- Yard Sale update: We have enough volunteers for Friday setup, but we need male volunteers available Saturday at 1 PM for cleanup and transport to Community Aid. If you can help, please let Cindy Hean know.
- The fire suppression system for the kitchen will be replaced at a cost of \$1,386.50. There are additional items in the kitchen that must be repaired so we can have a fully functional kitchen licensed by the city.
- There are other facility maintenance items that need attention, including emergency lighting in the youth area, plaster and moisture damage in classrooms, and touch-up painting. If anyone would like to volunteer their time to assist the church, please contact the pastor or Karen Schneider.
- We are searching for a Hand Bell Choir Director as well as an accompanist. We are praying for renewed interest as we revise some aspects of the position.

The next Church Council meeting is September 15th.

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.

IN MEMORY...

Of **Ronald Kimmich**, gifts to the Organ Fund from Ruth Neuman the Kepner Family

YARD SALE, AUGUST 15

Our annual yard sale will be on Saturday, Aug 15th, at 8:00 AM, and will be indoors. You can start bringing gently used, sellable items. Items can be stored in the empty office between Nicole's office and Pastor Sally's office, or downstairs in the men's choir room. Please hold furniture and larger items until the week of the sale. We will be looking for volunteers to help clean up on Saturday, Aug 15, at 1:00 PM. Please see Cindy Hean or Chris Kimmich with any questions, and to volunteer.

BACK TO SCHOOL DONATIONS

Help Fulton students start the school year strong! We will be collecting school supplies for the next few weeks. See Denise Troop or Cindy Hean for more information. Thank you for sharing Christ's love through your generosity.

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.

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West District Day at Gretna Glen

All West District UMC clergy and laity are invited to a time of fellowship, fun, and food at Gretna Glen on Saturday, August 29, from 10:30 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. There will be activities for young and old: fishing, making Smores, boating, archery, and sitting and chatting with friends. There will be a short morning worship service followed by lunch in the pavilion. Come when you can; leave when you must.

This is a free event, but donations to Retreat Scholarships are appreciated. The address for Gretna Glen is 87 Old Mine Road, Lebanon, PA 17042. Transportation from the parking lot to the main event area will be provided on golf carts if needed. Information about registration will be forthcoming.

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