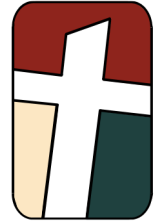


140th Anniversary

Covenan Church



Covenant Echoes
December 2024 — January 2025



From the Pastor's Desk...

By Pastor Derrick Gutierrez

As the days grow shorter and the air turns crisp, we enter a season of deep expectation, joy, and renewal. This season provides us with a sacred rhythm, inviting us to pause, reflect, and rejoice in the light of Christ that shines even in the darkest of days. "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." – John 1:5

Advent, the beginning of the Christian year of worship, conveniently begins on December 1st. We end the previous year with Thanksgiving and start a new year with eager expectations. It is a time to prepare our hearts, to realign our focus, and to anticipate the fulfillment of God's promises. During the days of December, intentionally create space for stillness, prayer, and reflection as we welcome Christ into our lives and our world again. May this Advent season fill your heart with hope, as you light candles against the darkness and trust in the God who is faithful to His word. During this time, the sermons each Sunday will focus on Waiting in Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love.

Although difficult, waiting is not wasted time. Christmas is the culmination of our patience—the Word made flesh, God dwelling among us. As we gather with family and friends, exchange gifts, and sing familiar carols, may we also remember the extraordinary gift of Emmanuel, God with us. May the joy of this holy season overflow in your lives, filling your homes with laughter, your hearts with peace, and your spirits with the light of Christ's love. Make the effort to invite friends, neighbors, or strangers you've just met into your celebrations. Find new and interesting traditions that stretch your faith and share the Gospel of Jesus Christ through genuine, radical hospitality. As the calendar year comes to an end and the new year begins, we are reminded of God's promise to make all things new. This is a time to reflect on where we have been, to give thanks for God's faithfulness, and to step forward with courage into what lies ahead.

May this New Year be an opportunity to deepen your faith, renew your commitments, and dream boldly with the guidance of the Holy Spirit. In 2025, Covenant will be entering a season of introspection and renewal as we take time to reflect on our mission and the direction of our Christian journey so that we conceive a fruitful future. Join us in prayer and spiritual disciplines as we discern the necessary steps to reinvigorate our commitment to share the Gospel with new people looking for a church home.

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 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

If you have a prayer request, please call Patti Willard at 717-872-7561. If she is unavailable, please leave a message. Also, if you are interested in being a member of the Prayer Chain, please contact her to add your name to the list .

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.

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 Opportunities During the Week

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

Child Care Center Update

The fall is always a busy time of year with one holiday after the next for us to celebrate! Thank you to members of the congregation who attended Covenant Child Care Center's Halloween Parade! The kids loved showing off their costumes and collecting treats. We would also like express our sincere appreciation to all who ordered R&K subs from the center. This was an extremely successful fundraiser for us. Our older classrooms participated in our annual Charlie Brown Thanksgiving celebration. We enjoyed a "Snoopy Thanksgiving Meal" while watching the movie on the big screen in Bethany Hall.

What's coming up...

Coats for Kids - Covenant Child Care Center is serving as a Coats For Kids Ambassador for WGAL's coat drive this year. We are collecting new or gently used coats as well as monetary donations. Please help the center reach its goal by placing a coat in our big, red collection bin in the church lobby. (We will take adult coats as well.) We will be accepting donations November 25th-December 13th. If we surpass our goal, the children will participate in a dance party complete with an ice cream treat! Look for us on WGAL news coverage and their website!



Kids enjoyed a visit from Pastor Sally's pet bunny.

2025 marks Covenant Child Care Center's 30th anniversary! We will officially celebrate in May, but hope the entire year is full of growth and improvements for the center. We plan to update the space we already use as well as explore ways to expand the number of families we provide service to. We invite you to join us in this effort! We are always in need of donations for snacks, cleaning and art supplies. If your company or an organization you are involved with participates in charitable giving or is able to donate items, the center is in need of refrigerators, changing tables, sleeping mats, cribs, flooring, educational materials, etc. Please contact Emily at emily@covenant-umc.com with any questions.

Thank you!

Here's to Good Health!

Can you believe that 2024 is almost over? Where did this year go? The next few weeks will be busy ones for all of us. What I am sharing isn't anything really new, but trust it will be a reminder to you to slow down a little and enjoy the season.

1. Remember the reason for the season.. Bethlehem was a busy place the night that Baby Jesus was born. The stable was away from all the hustle and bustle. Find time to get away to a quiet place where you can remember what the first Christmas came to mean.

2. Determine what is really important. Make a list of what you need to get done. Put that list in order of priorities. If it doesn't get done today, tomorrow is a new day.

3. Get your exercise, go for a walk, even doing some chair exercises can help relieve stress.

4. Eat healthy meals and snacks. If you know you will be going to that holiday drop in, think about what you are eating throughout the day.

5. Get a good night of sleep. It is okay to take a power nap to get you going once again.

Because our Echoes goes into the New Year, I need to share a few things for getting off on the right foot in the New Year.

1. Keep washing your hands!
2. If you aren't feeling well, stay home!
3. Think about making some healthy changes in your diet. Use less sugar & fat, eat more fruits and veggies.
4. Try walking just a little more each day.
5. Take time to pray.

These next thoughts are from an article I found several years ago. Author unknown.

1. Choose to be happy.
2. Forgive and seek forgiveness.
3. Do something outside your comfort zone.
4. Wish people a lovely day.
5. Be a voice for someone who has no voice.
6. Live honestly, truly, and with integrity.

Have a healthy and happy Christmas and New Year!

Cindy Smith,
Parish Nurse

Pastor Derrick's Retreat... Part 1

Last fall, I took a silent week-long retreat to pray and plan for Covenant's ministries. Upon my return, many asked about the experience, so I decided to share it in a four-part series.

Why retreat? Jesus often withdrew to pray and seek God's guidance, showing the importance of setting aside time to realign with God. Retreats help quiet our minds and focus on God through prayer, fasting, and scripture.



Continued on page 6...

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.

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

CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

**Tuesday, December 24
8:00-9:00 p.m.**

Please invite friends and family to this special celebration of Jesus' birth. The service will include special music from our choirs, an inspiring message from Pastor Derrick, and conclude with the lighting of the Christmas candles. Christ is born!

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

Please check the News to Go for Sundays when grocery cards will be available in the lobby.

You can also continue to support the Mission Outreach of Covenant by purchasing your grocery store gift cards through the mail. Please mail your check to Covenant UMC at 110 N Mulberry St 17603 with a note. We have \$50 Stauffer's cards; \$25 and \$50 Giant cards.

Please make your checks out to Covenant UMC. After receiving your check, we will mail your grocery store cards to your home.

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.

Adult Sunday Classes Embark on New Studies

During Advent the Faith Walk Sunday School Class will study "The Angels of Christmas" with Rev. Susan Robb on DVD. The class will consider four angelic appearances surrounding the birth of Jesus and discuss God's presence in history and in our lives today. Then to start the new year, the class will explore "Christianity and World Religions" by Adam Hamilton.

The Sonshine Sunday School Class is embarking on a new study that will take participants through the Bible with designated weekly passages for reading and discussion. The program by Scripture Union and entitled "The Essential 100" will guide the class through 50 select Scriptures from the Old Testament and then 50 from the New Testament to gain an understanding of the big picture of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation.

Don't miss out on deepening your faith by understanding more about the Bible. Join the Faith Walk Class in the Chapel Library or the Sonshine Class in Room B1 on the lower level on Sundays from 9:00 to 10:00 a.m.

Christmas Caroling

Bundle up; find your Santa hat; dig out some warm gloves; and get ready to sing. Every singing voice in the church is invited to an old fashioned neighborhood evening of Christmas Caroling.

On Sunday, December 22, at 6:00 p.m. we will meet in the foyer of Covenant and go out into the neighborhood and fill our nearby streets with the music of Christmas.

During the past year, more of our community knows about Covenant church and our different acts of service and fun events.

This year, we want to personally invite them to our Christmas Eve service to worship with us.

As we sing to our neighbors we will also hand out an invitation postcard to our service on Christmas Eve.

This is your chance to share the love of Jesus with others. Please sign up in the Gathering Area.

December Visitation

Covenant church has a faithful visitation team that goes in groups of two to visit our homebound members. Our December visit this year will have added "gifts" to share.

Our December visitors will deliver some Christmas goodies from Covenant's Child-Care Center children. Last year was the first year for this, and everyone was tickled with the pictures, cards, and decorations made by our youngest contributors.

Additionally, this year we want to share the gift of music. On First Friday, directly before at 5:15 p.m. we will record choir members and any other members of Covenant who wish to join, singing a few Christmas carols that we can share when we go to visit.

Please watch for details of the time, and look for the sign-up sheets so you can be a part of the recording as well as well as the caroling.

December 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>1</p> <p>Holy Communion 9a Adult, Children & Youth 10:30a Worship & FaceE</p>	<p>2</p> <p>7a MOOS 10:40a Bible2School 2n 7p Narcotics Anonymou: 7p Nominations Meeting</p>	<p>3</p> <p>7a MOOS 12:05p Bible2School 3n 1p Staff Meeting</p>	<p>4</p> <p>7a MOOS 10a Conference Call Pra 10:15a Prayer Group 12p Worship Task Force 5:30p Covenant Ringers 7p Chancel Choir Reheal</p>	<p>5</p> <p>7a MOOS 7p Praise Team Rehears;</p>	<p>6</p> <p>7a MOOS 6p Chocolate Chip Cooki</p>	<p>7</p> <p>Children's Christma: 10a Children's Christma: 12p Care and Share Lun</p>
<p>8</p> <p>9a Adult, Children & Youth 10:30a Child Care Childi 10:30a Worship & FaceE 12p WOW Luncheon & B</p>	<p>9</p> <p>7a MOOS 10:40a Bible2School 2n 7p Narcotics Anonymou:</p>	<p>10</p> <p>7a MOOS 12:05p Bible2School 3n 1p Staff Meeting</p>	<p>11</p> <p>7a MOOS 10a Conference Call Pra 10:15a Prayer Group 7p Chancel Choir Reheal</p>	<p>12</p> <p>7a MOOS 7p Praise Team Rehears;</p>	<p>13</p> <p>7a MOOS 4p Bartley Wedding Reh</p>	<p>14</p> <p>10a Food Box Distributic 12p Bartley Wedding</p>
<p>15</p> <p>9a Adult, Children & Youth 10:30a Worship & FaceE</p>	<p>16</p> <p>7a MOOS 8a Community Table 10:40a Bible2School 2n 6p Blessed to Belong W 7p Narcotics Anonymou:</p>	<p>17</p> <p>7a MOOS 12:05p Bible2School 3n 1p Staff Meeting 7p Trustee Board</p>	<p>18</p> <p>7a MOOS 10a Conference Call Pra 10:15a Prayer Group 5:30p Covenant Ringers 7p Chancel Choir Reheal</p>	<p>19</p> <p>7a MOOS 7p Praise Team Rehears;</p>	<p>20</p> <p>7a MOOS</p>	<p>21</p> <p>9a IMPACT! Missions Woi 9a WOW Breakfast</p>
<p>22</p> <p>9a Adult, Children & Youth 10:30a Worship & FaceE</p>	<p>23</p> <p>7a MOOS 7p Narcotics Anonymou:</p>	<p>24</p> <p>7a MOOS 1p Staff Meeting 8p Christmas Eve Servic</p>	<p>25</p> <p>7a MOOS 10a Conference Call Pra 10:15a Prayer Group 4p Bethany Reserved: Li 7p Chancel Choir Reheal</p>	<p>26</p> <p>7a MOOS 7p Praise Team Rehears;</p>	<p>27</p> <p>7a MOOS</p>	<p>28</p>
<p>29</p> <p>9a Adult, Children & Youth 10:30a Worship & FaceE</p>	<p>30</p> <p>7a MOOS 7p Narcotics Anonymou:</p>	<p>31</p> <p>7a MOOS 1p Staff Meeting</p>	<p>1</p> <p>7a MOOS 10a Conference Call Pra 10:15a Prayer Group 7p Chancel Choir Reheal</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p>

January 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
29	30	31	1	2	3	4
			7a MOOS 10a Conference Call Pra 10:15a Prayer Group 7p Chancel Choir Rehea	7a MOOS 7p Praise Team Rehears:	7a MOOS	12p Care and Share Lun
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Holy Communion 9a Adult, Children & You 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 5:30p Covenant Ringers 7p Chancel Choir Rehea	7a MOOS 5p Child Care CPR Traini 7p Praise Team Rehears:	7a MOOS 12p WOW luncheon and	9a Community Closet 10a Food Box Distributic 1:30p CMCL Event- Park
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
9a Adult, Children & You 10:30a Worship & FaceE 12p WOW Luncheon & B	7a MOOS Community Table 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 Rehea	7a MOOS 7p Praise Team Rehears:	7a MOOS	9a IMPACT! Missions Woi
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
9a Adult, Children & You 10:30a Worship & FaceE	7a MOOS Community Table 10:40a Bible2School 2n 7p Narcotics Anonymou:	7a MOOS 12:05p Bible2School 3n 1p Staff Meeting 7p Trustee Board	7a MOOS 10a Conference Call Pra 10:15a Prayer Group 7p Chancel Choir Rehea	7a MOOS 7p Praise Team Rehears:	7a MOOS	
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
9a Adult, Children & You 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 5:30p Covenant Ringers 7p Chancel Choir Rehea	7a MOOS 7p Praise Team Rehears:	7a MOOS	12p Care and Share Lun

Bible2School Needs More Adult Volunteers



Covenant Church is currently hosting both second and fourth grade Bible2School classes but has not yet opened a third grade class because of lack of adult volunteers. The enrollment in the second grade class is currently at eight children with hopes of soon reaching the limit of twelve, while the fourth grade class is already at its maximum number of twelve children. There are also twelve children on the waiting list for a third grade class to open once enough adult volunteers are available. Julie Pack, the Site Director for both Fulton and Lafayette Elementary Schools, is hopeful that a full volunteer staff will be in place for Fulton third grade by the beginning of the new year. If you know an adult who might be able to help on Tuesdays for third grade, please contact the church office.

The second graders, who are studying lessons from the Old Testament, are enjoying reciting a rhyme that grows from lesson to lesson and summaries what they have been learning. In the fourth grade class on discipleship, the students are creating a game board on which they will play at the end of the program.

As of the beginning of November, 2,538 children were enrolled in the Bible2School program, most of whom are in the Lancaster County area. The program, however, extends across the state and has drawn interest from other states as well. The main concern is recruitment for additional adult volunteers to open classes for those students who remain on waiting lists in several schools. Please join in prayer for more adult volunteers.

Commemorative Magnets Help Fund 140th Anniversary

As the 140th anniversary year of Covenant Church nears its last month, there is still time to celebrate giving thanks to God for Covenant Church. One way to do so is to choose a magnet from a selection commemorating our church's history and make a donation to the 140th Anniversary Fund with a suggested donation of \$5 per magnet. Available magnets include: the current Covenant Church building, the historic buildings of Covenant since 1884, the merger of Covenant and Bethany churches, and the 140th anniversary logo. Magnets are available on Sunday mornings in the Gathering Area and throughout the week from the church office.



Sidelights

90+ BIRTHDAYS

Mary E. Keeler, 1/30

COMMUNITY AID

Covenant Church is in partnership with Community Aid. In addition to adding specific items, as needed, to our Community closet they send us checks for a percentage of any items dropped off at Community Aid by our members. Give them our #40070 when you drop off donations.



CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS EVENT
Saturday, December 7, 10 a.m.
Bethany Hall
Sponsored by the Nurture and Outreach Team

We are looking for donations of individually wrapped snacks, and also fruit, such as apple slices and grapes. Monetary donations would be appreciated as well. See Denise Troop or Cindy Hean with any questions.



ANNUAL EPIPHANY BREAKFAST

Ring in the New Year with Covenant United Women in Faith's annual Epiphany Breakfast. Saturday, January 4, at 9:30 a.m. join us in Bethany Hall for food, fellowship and fun. We will reveal our 2024 prayer partners and receive a new woman to pray for in 2025.

Gift Yourself with Grace this Advent And Christmas Season

...Words of Encouragement from Pastor Sally Ott

“My GRACE is SUFFICIENT for you, for my POWER is made perfect in WEAKNESS” (II Corinthians 12:9)



During a recent staff meeting, Pastor Derrick reminded us of these words of the Lord, spoken to the Apostle Paul, which he shared with the church at Corinth. As I write these words, I am wearing a bracelet which a friend gave me. It says, “Perfectly Imperfect.”

These two gifts – The Word of God, and the words on a bracelet help me when I experience a “meltdown.” This happened recently – of all times, on a morning when I had two back-to-back meetings. I felt both sad and embarrassed. I shed tears.

The above scripture is a vital reminder to me of how important is to know the Blessed Assurance that when I am weak, God’s Grace is, indeed, “made PERFECT in (my) weakness. The cause of my emotion was that I had made a commitment to arrive here at church half an hour earlier than usual. I felt frustrated as traffic and red lights, both things over which none of us can control, had resulted in me being late for a meeting with Pastor Derrick and the Executive Director of a local outreach called “SWAN” – an acronym for “Scaling Walls One Note at a Time.” Please stay tuned to learn more about “SWAN.” It was an important meeting, and I had looked forward to it.

When asked at staff meeting if I had written an article for our Echoes recently, I realized that I hadn’t. Now, on the morning after my meltdown, I told our Prayer Group about it. They reminded me that (my paraphrase), “Meltdowns happen to the best of us.” I am earnestly trying not to be so hard on myself. When meltdowns happen, it may take some time for us to move from our emotions into reality. In this particular situation, the reality, of course, was that being 10 minutes late for an appointment is not the end of the world.

The “bottom line” is I want to encourage you to join me in letting up on being hard on ourselves. The way to do this is to stay tuned to the healing power of God’s Grace. As Christians, we are called to GIVE God’s Grace to others when they need it the most. At the same time, it’s vitally important to RECEIVE this amazing gift for ourselves. I’ve been known to say, “I need you the most when I’m the least fun to be with.” Another brief quote I find helpful is, “To let another into your heart, first let yourself in.”

Won’t you please join me in accepting God’s Grace for YOURSELF this Christmas ... and Beyond?!

Retreat ...continued from Page 3

The goal of my retreat was to discern the next steps for leading Covenant toward a sustainable future in ministry. This work is challenging and requires focus. So, I was careful in my preparation. I wanted to listen to God, so I followed these disciplines that work well for me: Prayer, Fasting, Silence, and Reading.

To facilitate the practice of silence, I chose a location with lots of space to distance myself from others. For fasting, I prepared meals that met my dietary needs to eat one meal per day privately. For reading and prayer, I scheduled seven days to decompress and spend time carefully reading four specific books along with the Bible to gain wisdom.

I retreated to Gretna Glen Camping and Retreat Center, a peaceful place that met my needs for silence and separation. The staff was accommodating, and the environment supported my focus.

Depending on one’s needs, retreats can last a few hours or a few weeks to address big questions and seek God’s guidance. Careful preparation makes all the difference. In my next article, I will discuss expectations.

Covenant Pathway 2024



This past year Covenant Church has followed a pathway, determined with God's help, that prayerfully will lead to sustainability and growth for our church. The Rev. Jenny Freymoyer, West District Superintendent, continued to serve as our facilitator and encourager through August as our Pathways Team focused on worship and the celebration of Covenant's 140th anniversary year. Three task forces set to work: 140th anniversary observances, communications and marketing, and worship advisory. The results of their efforts are still unfolding.

The Chocolate Chip Cookie Concert series was born this year to invite more people into our sanctuary and into our fellowship, while enjoying music from a variety of groups. With Lancaster First Fridays being an ideal time to initiate this monthly endeavor, the first concert was planned for May with seven more concerts to follow to the end of the year. Concert attendance has averaged 66 people, usually half of whom have been Covenant members and the other half community members. Since the concerts have been so well received, plans are underway to host such concerts again next year with the help of grant money.

Other efforts were also extended to make Covenant Church known throughout the community. Fliers and letters were distributed to new people moving into downtown Lancaster, and more church events were advertised on Facebook. The church made positive headlines in the newspaper and on TV. More intense work on updating and improving the church website is now underway. Gratefully, the church's established outreach programs have continued with an increase in food box and clothing distribution and in attendance at our church-sponsored community events.

In recognition of Covenant's 140th Anniversary, a homecoming weekend from October 4-6 provided opportunities to reflect upon and thank God for those 140 years and to fellowship and worship together in observance of our living legacy. From the Friday night concert to the Saturday evening dinner to the Sunday morning worship service, God was in the midst of our celebration. As member anniversaries were honored on Sunday morning, prayers were offered with hope for continuing ministry to touch the hearts of many more for Jesus Christ.

Realizing that sustainability of the church not only requires more people but also additional financial support, the 140th Anniversary Fund was established and promoted inside and outside of the church to raise additional revenue. Donations are continuing to be accepted.

With the understanding that worship is the heart of the church, the Worship Task Force was charged with providing recommendations to enhance the worship experience at Covenant Church. The main emphasis was to create a worship experience where people could sense the presence of God and be in communion with Him. A second goal was to invite and attract more people into the church through a meaningful worship experience. Therefore, the task force members with Pastor Derrick's leadership explored the meaning of worship, sought insights from those with experience in designing and leading worship, and asked the congregation to provide input through a worship survey. Reflecting upon all of these insights, the task force made recommendations for some changes to the blended worship service. During the month of September Pastor Derrick preached on worship and shared the findings of the survey along with the recommendations of the task force, which were put into effect in October. At the beginning of the new year, the Worship Task Force will conclude its work by inviting the congregation to complete a follow-up survey to provide more feedback, which will then be passed on to the Covenant Worship Team for any further deliberation and action. The pathway toward sustainability and growth will continue.

Appreciation is expressed to all who faithfully served on the Pathways Team and to those who planned and carried out the work of our task forces. Special thanks goes to those in the congregation who baked hundreds of cookies for the concert series, who provided input through the worship survey, who participated in the Homecoming Weekend, who invited others to Covenant Church, and who contributed to the 140th Anniversary Fund.

We as a church family are on this pathway together for sustainability and growth and continue to pray for God's direction into 2025 as we remember Deuteronomy 5:33—"You are to walk in every pathway that the Lord your God commanded you, so that life may go well with you."

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

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Echoes Editor...jcmcgary@comcast.net

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

Our Last “First Friday” Chocolate Chip Cookie Concert

As a part of our 140th celebration, we have hosted musical concerts here at Covenant on First Fridays. Please mark your calendars for Friday, Dec 6, at 6:00 p.m., which will be our last Chocolate Chip Cookie Concert of the year. If you would like to assist with making cookies, please see Cindy Smith. In addition, there will be artwork displayed by local artists for viewing and for sale in the Gathering Area.

Friday, December 6—**Christmas Carol Sing-Along**

Let's start December off with a burst of song! Darla Bair from Music For Everyone (MFE) will be here to lead us to “Sing in the Season.” Invite your family and friends to join us at 6:00 to sing along in the sanctuary. And don't forget to enjoy the homemade chocolate chip cookies.

Return Service Requested

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