

ECHOES ECHOES

February / March 2024

**We Invite
We Welcome
We Nurture
We Serve**



**COVENANT
United Methodist Church**

From the Pastor's Desk...

By Pastor Derrick Gutierrez



Happy New Year. 2024 is finally here and time is flying. By the time you read this, January will be over, and we will be preparing for the Lenten season. Before we know it, Easter will be here.

Time is something we do not celebrate enough. When we are young, time seems to drag on as we wish to grow up and be on our own. When we become adults and start our independent lives, careers, and families, time seems to be a luxury as we are busy trying to live our best lives. Then, as we reach the age of retirement, time seems to be running out as try to do those things that we have put off for so long.

Our lives are a tapestry of seasons—moments of joy and sorrow, success and failure, birth and death. Each season is intricately designed by our Creator. Our challenge lies in recognizing the divine timing within the ebb and flow of our lives.

As followers of Christ, we must trust in God's sovereignty, understanding that every event, every circumstance, is a thread in the larger masterpiece that He is crafting. Even when we face trials or encounter challenges, we can rest assured that God's timing is perfect, and He is working all things together for our good

Fortunately for us, time is in God's hands. If we endeavor to live according to God's time in all stages of life, God will bless us with full and complete lives. Nothing will feel wasted or lost. We will always be on time. "He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end." Ecclesiastes 3:11

This does not mean we can idle away our time waiting for the next bolt of inspiration for action. God has given Covenant clear instructions to Invite, Welcome, Nurture and Serve. So for 2024, we are planning for a full year with Outreach events to our community and fellowship opportunities to nurture our church family. These events will be tied to our celebration of 140 years of ministry at Covenant.

As we plan for our future, we will be taking time to celebrate our past. In the six months that I have been at Covenant, it is clear to me that our Church family is immensely proud of its legacy. So, we will be inviting those who have shared in our ministry over the years to celebrate with us and lay a foundation for our future. As details unfold, there will be opportunities for everyone to share ideas, hopes, and dreams. Be on the lookout for announcements and, of course, opportunities to serve on a committee or task force to help us plan.

Every voice is valued at Covenant. We have been engaged in listening sessions to hear one another and pray. As we listen to one another, we will discern our pathway forward from the many ideas presented. When two ideas conflict, we will pray and discern God's will for our church.

As we navigate the various seasons of our Church family, may we recognize the beauty in God's timing, cultivate a longing for eternity in our hearts, and humbly submit to the mystery of His sovereign plan.

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.**

Please be in prayer for Covenant Church.

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
Barry & Bonnie 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.

FEBRUARY / MARCH EVENTS

2/3	Care & Share Luncheon	12:00 pm
2/4	Nurture Team Meeting	8:00 am
2/4	Worship, Holy Communion	10:30 am
2/4	WOW Luncheon/Bible Study	12:00 pm
2/5	Pathways Meeting	5:00 pm
2/10	Food Box Distribution	10:00 am
2/11	Worship, Transfiguration Sunday	10:30 am
2/12	Community Table	8:00 am
2/14	Ash Wednesday Service	7:00 pm
2/17	IMPACT! Missions Work Day	9:00 am
2/18	Worship, 1st Sunday in Lent	10:30 am
2/25	Worship, 2nd Sunday in Lent	10:30 am
3/2	Care & Share Luncheon	12:00 pm
3/3	Worship, Holy Communion, 3rd Sunday in Lent	10:30 pm
3/9	Community Closet	9:00 am
3/9	Food Box Distribution	10:00 am
3/10	Worship, 4th Sunday in Lent	10:30 am
3/10	WOW Luncheon/Bible Study	12:00 pm
3/16	IMPACT! Missions Work Day	9:00 am
3/16	Easter Event	TBA
3/17	Worship, 5th Sunday in Lent	10:30 am
3/24	Worship, Palm Sunday	10:30 am
3/28	Maundy Thursday Service	7:00 pm
3/29	Good Friday Service	7:00 pm
3/31	Worship, Easter Sunday	10:30 am

Here's to Good Health!

A lot of what I have to share this time you have heard before. I want you to stay healthy so repeating just helps to drive home the ideas that can help that happen.

February is heart month so, reminding you to care for it by:

- Eat healthy
- Get active
- Stay at a healthy weight
- Quiet smoking and avoid second hand smoke
- If you must have a drink of alcohol do so in moderation
- Get a good night of sleep

Call 911 if you or someone else has signs of a heart attack. Those signs are pain or discomfort in the center or left side of the chest. Pressure, squeezing, or fullness in the chest. Feeling sick to your stomach or throwing up. Feeling dizzy, light headed or unusually tired. Breaking out in a sweat. Don't be embarrassed to call for help, you may just save a life.

The best way to care for your heart is to have asked Jesus to come into your heart and know Him as your Lord and Savior.

The month of March is still considered to be a time to "catch" the flu, or of course Covid is going to be around and colds happen all the time. The same things that you need to do to take care of your heart will help keep you healthy and help prevent you getting any of the "germs"

My one reminder that I can't give too many times through out the year would be wash your hands.

I have a soap dispenser with this quote "WASH YOUR HANDS AND SAY YOUR PRAYERS BECAUSE JESUS AND GERMS ARE EVERYWHERE!"

Here is to a healthy and happy February and March, just remember spring is coming!

Wellness Coach, Cindy Smith

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

SPRC MEMBERS

With a new year just starting I want to share with you who the members of SPRC are. First let me remind what SPRC stands for, Staff Parish Relations Committee.

This committee is to watch over all of the church staff that includes our Child Care Center. We also are to be a connection between the staff and the congregation.

If you have a question, comment or concern about a staff member remember please don't just be talking to each other but rather bring those items to one of the SPRC members.

Pastor Derrick is the first person to approach with your concerns. He is very open and wants you to come to him. You also come talk with Bob Hean, Jeff McGary, Jenny Engle, Jeanne Schall, Lois Neidermyer, Linda Henning or Cindy Smith Chair Person.

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.

Celebrating 140 years!

2024 marks the 140th anniversary of Covenant Church. As we honor that amazing legacy and those who were a part of it, we also want to be a beacon for the future to our community – shining Christ's love through all we do.

We are currently in the planning stages of our celebrations, and we wanted all of you and your families and friends to join us. We can't celebrate without you! Do you have an idea for an overall theme? Do you have pictures, videos, or mementos to share? Not only do we need members to volunteer to help with planning and specific activities, but we also need folks to share short stories about their special Covenant experiences and/or about people who made a difference in their lives.

Additionally, we know we want to have a huge homecoming service in the fall, so now is the time to start inviting family members and friends who have been connected with Covenant over the years. Please begin collecting names, addresses, and emails so that we can invite them to participate in this service as well as all the festivities. Please send suggestions to the office.

Another very important aspect of our celebration is a \$140,000 outreach campaign. We want to involve past members, local businesses, foundations, and individuals from the community in supporting our future efforts with their financial gifts. We are already working with the Pennsylvania College of Art and Design to develop an anniversary logo. We also are looking for partners for outdoor signage and a greener look for the front of the church. If you have contacts and/ or ideas for this endeavor, please let us know as soon as possible.

Our wonderful daycare ministry, the MOOs and Bible2School programs, the Community Closet and Blessings of Hope food boxes, our Community Table, outreach programs to area schools, and hosting of weekly Narcotics Anonymous meetings continue to thrive and grow. Many more services and programs are needed. God is calling us to share His love with our neighbors. Please help us as we celebrate our many blessings as a body of Christ!

-Jenny Engle

DATES FOR UMC CONFERENCES IN 2024

- General Conference of the United Methodist Church
April 23-May
at the Charlotte Convention Center, NC
Theme: ...and KNOW that I Am GOD
- Eastern Pennsylvania Annual Conference
May 21-23
at the Wildwood Convention Center, NJ
Theme: BELONG
- Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference
(10 Annual Conferences from Maine to West Virginia)
July 8-12
at OMNI William Penn Hotel, Pittsburgh, PA
Theme: OVERFLOWING with HOPE

More information will be provided prior to these conferences as it is available.

February 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
<p>Holy Communion</p> <p>8a Nurture Team Meeting</p> <p>9a Adult, Children & Youth</p> <p>10:30a Worship & FaceE</p> <p>12p WOW luncheon and</p>	<p>7a MOOS</p> <p>5p Pathways Meeting</p> <p>7p Narcotics Anonymou:</p>	<p>7a MOOS</p> <p>11:30a Bible2School 2n</p> <p>1p Staff Meeting</p>	<p>7a MOOS</p> <p>10a Conference Call Pra</p> <p>10:15a Prayer Group</p> <p>7p Chancel Choir Rehea</p>	<p>7a MOOS</p> <p>11:30a Bible2School 3rc</p> <p>12:30p Bible2School 4tl</p> <p>7p Praise Team Rehears:</p>	<p>7a MOOS</p>	<p>12p Care and Share Lun</p>
<p>9a Adult, Children & Youth</p> <p>10:30a Worship & FaceE</p>	<p>7a MOOS</p> <p>8a Community Table</p> <p>7p Narcotics Anonymou:</p>	<p>7a MOOS</p> <p>11:30a Bible2School 2n</p> <p>1p Staff Meeting</p>	<p>7a MOOS</p> <p>10a Conference Call Pra</p> <p>10:15a Prayer Group</p> <p>7p Chancel Choir Rehea</p> <p>7p Ash Wednesday Wors</p>	<p>7a MOOS</p> <p>11:30a Bible2School 3rc</p> <p>12:30p Bible2School 4tl</p> <p>7p Praise Team Rehears:</p>	<p>7a MOOS</p>	<p>9a IMPACT! Missions Woi</p>
<p>9a Adult, Children & Youth</p> <p>10:30a Worship & FaceE</p>	<p>7a MOOS</p> <p>7p Narcotics Anonymou:</p>	<p>7a MOOS</p> <p>11:30a Bible2School 2n</p> <p>1p Staff Meeting</p> <p>7p Trustee Board</p>	<p>7a MOOS</p> <p>10a Conference Call Pra</p> <p>10:15a Prayer Group</p> <p>7p Chancel Choir Rehea</p>	<p>7a MOOS</p> <p>11:30a Bible2School 3rc</p> <p>12:30p Bible2School 4tl</p> <p>7p Praise Team Rehears:</p>	<p>7a MOOS</p>	
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March 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
25	26	27	28	29	1	2
Holy Communion 9a Adult, Children & Youth 10:30a Worship & FaceE	7a MOOS 7p Narcotics Anonymous:	7a MOOS 11:30a Bible2School 2n 1p Staff Meeting	7a MOOS 10a Conference Call Pra 10:15a Prayer Group 7p Chancel Choir Rehea	7a MOOS 11:30a Bible2School 3rc 12:30p Bible2School 4tl 7p Praise Team Rehears:	7a MOOS	12p Care and Share Lun
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Holy Communion 9a Adult, Children & Youth 10:30a Worship & FaceE	7a MOOS 7p Narcotics Anonymous:	7a MOOS 11:30a Bible2School 2n 1p Staff Meeting	7a MOOS 10a Conference Call Pra 10:15a Prayer Group 7p Chancel Choir Rehea	7a MOOS 11:30a Bible2School 3rc 12:30p Bible2School 4tl 7p Praise Team Rehears:	7a MOOS	9a Community Closet 10a Food Box Distributic
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
9a Adult, Children & Youth 10:30a Worship & FaceE 12p WOW luncheon and	7a MOOS 7p Narcotics Anonymous:	7a MOOS 11:30a Bible2School 2n 1p Staff Meeting	7a MOOS 10a Conference Call Pra 10:15a Prayer Group 7p Chancel Choir Rehea	7a MOOS 11:30a Bible2School 3rc 12:30p Bible2School 4tl 7p Praise Team Rehears:	7a MOOS	9a IMPACT! Missions Voi
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
9a Adult, Children & Youth 10:30a Worship & FaceE	7a MOOS 7p Narcotics Anonymous:	7a MOOS 11:30a Bible2School 2n 1p Staff Meeting 7p Trustee Board	7a MOOS 10a Conference Call Pra 10:15a Prayer Group 7p Chancel Choir Rehea	7a MOOS 11:30a Bible2School 3rc 12:30p Bible2School 4tl 7p Praise Team Rehears:	7a MOOS	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
9a Adult, Children & Youth 10:30a Worship & FaceE	7a MOOS 7p Narcotics Anonymous:	7a MOOS 11:30a Bible2School 2n 1p Staff Meeting	7a MOOS 10a Conference Call Pra 10:15a Prayer Group 7p Chancel Choir Rehea	7a MOOS 11:30a Bible2School 3rc 12:30p Bible2School 4tl 7p Praise Team Rehears:	7a MOOS	

Pathways



PATHWAYS

The Pathways Team met again on Tuesday, January 23, 2024, to determine the next steps on our church's path toward sustainability and growth. Building upon our previous work, we made the decision to create and follow a pathway focused on worship—its design and intent along with its appeal to and impact on more people. With 2024 being the 140th anniversary of the founding of Covenant Church, celebrations that build upon our legacy will help light our pathway this year.

With the challenges before us, the team worked to create several smaller task forces to address the various steps on our pathway. An advisory task force on worship will be formed with church members beyond the Pathways Team being invited. This group will serve as a think tank to provide insights and ideas to the team. Another task force composed of team members will identify places to advertise the church and its mission, people to be contacted, and ways to do so. One committee has already been working on updating and eventually rebuilding the church's website with the assistance of an outside website designer. The goal is to provide a website that accurately reflects who Covenant Church is and what the church is already doing in spreading God's love in our community. Then in order to plan a calendar of events and celebrations for the 140th anniversary of the church, an additional task force was created. A homecoming service in the fall is already part of that plan as is a campaign with the challenge of raising \$140,000 for the 140th anniversary. The art of giving along with strategies for fund raising will be researched and developed for our situation.

District Superintendent Jenny Freymoyer challenged and inspired us throughout the meeting. She advised us to explore what truly makes worship meaningful for us, while also considering varieties of worship that could have further appeal. She encouraged Pastor Derrick to enroll in the Financial Leadership Academy sponsored by the Mid-Atlantic United Methodist Foundation. She also reminded us that people are looking to give to a cause that matters. In sincerity she illuminated on ways Covenant Church has and currently is making a positive difference in our community.

Our agenda moving forward is an ambitious one. We need God's help, the congregation's prayers and engagement, and the diligent work of our staff and task forces in order to step out in faith on this pathway to sustain and grow Covenant Church.

If you have input to share with our Pathways Team or skills to assist the task forces, please contact a member of the team. Those members include: Pastor Derrick Gutierrez, Dave Beznoska, Ginny Brown, Jenny Engle, Cindy Hean, Chris Kimmich, Lois Neidermyer, Pastor Sally Ott, Bruce Ott, Larry Rappoldt, Karen Schneider, Cindy Smith, Denise Troop, and Darwin Tyson. The next Pathways meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 5, at 7:00 P.M.

Sidelights

90+ BIRTHDAYS

William Balabanow	2/17
Betty Farkas	2/02
Daniel McGary	2/27
Jacqueline King	3/10

MEMORIALS GIVEN

In Memory of Charles Miller: Carol Hendershot, and Lois Neidermyer, Carole Horn

In Memory of Harold & Olive Quickel: Lois Neidermyer

In Memory of Greg Schneider: Carole Horn, and Ron & Chris Kimmich

NURTURE TEAM EVENTS

The Nurture team will be holding a couple events this spring, including an Easter Event on March 16, and a Parking Lot Event on May 18th.

More details to come!

COVENANT

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