

Serving the Lancaster Community Since 1884

Covenant



ECHOES Newsletter

United Methodist Church

October/November 2026



From the Pastor's Desk...

By Pastor Derrick Gutierrez

Fall has always been my favorite time of year. When the mornings turn crisp and the trees begin to glow with red, orange, and gold, something in my spirit comes alive. I find myself reaching for my hiking boots and looking for any excuse to pitch a tent under the stars. I feel closer to God out in His creation than anywhere else.

October is also the month of my birthday, and each year it gives me a reason to pause and reflect. Another year of life is a gift. The psalmist prays, "Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom." (Psalm 90:12) Numbering our days is not about counting how many we have left. It is about making each one count for the Kingdom of God.

When I am on a trail or under the stars, I am reminded how small I am and how great God is. The trees do not hurry. The river does not worry. Every creature is held in God's care. "How many are your works, Lord! In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures." (Psalm 104:24) Creation preaches a sermon without saying a word, and the message is simple: God is faithful, and we can trust Him.

Autumn also teaches us about letting go. The trees drop their leaves to rest and prepare for new life in the spring. Some of us are holding on to things God is asking us to release: old hurts, worries about tomorrow, or the need to control every outcome. Our Wesleyan tradition reminds us that growing in grace is a lifelong journey. Every season offers a fresh opportunity to be shaped more fully into Christ's likeness.

So, I want to ask you: When was the last time you slowed down long enough to notice God's handiwork? What might God be asking you to let go of this season? How can you give thanks for the days you have been given?

I encourage you to step outside this fall. Take a walk through the park, sit on your porch with a cup of coffee, or drive out into the countryside and watch the sun go down over the fields. Leave the phone behind. Listen. Breathe. Give thanks. I truly believe God is waiting to meet us there.

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 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.

Here's to Good Health!

Just yesterday I saw a tree with some leaves that were changing color. That made me feel a little sad. The days are growing shorter and the nights are getting longer. One of the changes that happens with those changes is that night driving can become more of a challenge.

As we get older, we experience age related changes in our eye sight. Cataracts can make it more difficult to see clearly at night. You may have trouble reading road signs adapting to glare from those newer bright headlights, or correctly judging distances and speed of other cars. Let me give you some ideas just how you can drive safely at night.

1. Stay current with your eye exams.
2. Wear glasses that are anti-reflective and don't obstruct your peripheral vision.
3. Check with your doctor about any side effects of any of your medications. Could they affect your driving ability?
4. Be sure your headlights and windshield are clean. Aim your headlights correctly.
5. Don't drive if you feel impaired or sleepy.
6. Take a driving course. AAA has a driver improvement program, or check about an AARP course.
7. Remember PA law, DON'T TEXT AND DRIVE.

Did you know that November 12th is National Pneumonia Day?

Pneumonia is a common lung infection caused by germs, such as bacteria, viruses, and fungi. It causes chills and shortness of breath. Anyone can get pneumonia, but some people are more at risk than others. Pneumonia symptoms can vary from mild to severe. Treatment depends on the cause and the symptoms, along with age and overall health. Recovery can be one to three weeks. The good news is pneumonia can be prevented!

The prevention plan includes getting the annual flu shot and washing your hands often. Check with your PCP about getting the pneumo-coccal pneumonia vaccine. Eat a healthy diet, don't smoke, get plenty of rest, drink plenty of fluids, and exercise.

Be aware of what the symptoms of pneumonia are. They include respiratory infection, cough, fever along with chills, and shortness of breath. You could also have chest pain, headache, excessive sweating, and confusion. If you have any of these, see a doctor.

Childcare Center Update

Exciting news from the child care center! Covenant Child Care will be participating in Faithful Give this year. Faithful Give is an online giving event supporting local causes. The online giving will take place between Sunday, October 18th-Tuesday, October 20th. A Celebration Expo will be held on Tuesday, October 20th. All are welcome to attend and there will be plenty of family friendly activities.

Faithful Give Celebration Expo
5:00pm-8:00pm
The Junction Center
1875 Junction Rd.
Manheim, PA 17545



To give to Covenant Child Care Center, visit our Kingdom Cause page using the QR code. Please share with family, friends, and on social media:

ALSO, The center will be holding its annual Halloween Parade on Friday, October 30th at 10:00. Members of the congregation are invited to watch the parade from the Gathering Area and may bring treats to give to the children.

Prayer Warriors Invade City

On Wednesday, Sept. 16, a group of Prayer Warriors who meet weekly at 10 am. on Wednesday, had the unique experience of carrying the Privilege and Power of Prayer out of the building and into our community. We would like to express our Gratitude to Bruce Ott, who planned and led this event. We made 11 stops, at a variety of locations, such as neighboring churches; Fulton Elementary School; The Schreiber-Concord Cemetery, where we paid tribute to Thaddeus Stevens; Area small businesses, such as The PA School of Art & Design; The Community Care Clinic; Our County Courthouse Offices; Our local Police & Law Enforcement; Church members who live just across the street, and, of course, our church. For more information, feel free to contact Pastor Sally, or any of the others pictured.



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 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.



Legacy Giving Part 5

A Trust That Gives Twice

Throughout this year, we've explored various vehicles for legacy gifts that can make a lasting impact for the future of Covenant. Here is one of the most generous options available: the charitable remainder trust.

Generosity doesn't always mean giving something away all at once. Sometimes it means setting resources aside so they can bless both the people we love and the church we love — for years to come. That's exactly what this kind of gift allows.

Here's how it works. You place cash, stock, or other property into a trust. That trust then pays you income for the rest of your life, or for a set number of years. When that time ends, whatever remains passes to the ministries you've designated, including Covenant.

Why do it this way? If you're holding an asset that's grown significantly in value, this lets you sell it without owing capital gains tax right away. You may also qualify for a partial tax deduction the year you set it up. Meanwhile, you receive steady income.

It's a way of providing for yourself now while ensuring what remains continues doing kingdom work long after.

Proverbs 13:22 tells us, "A good person leaves an inheritance for their children's children" (NIV). A gift like this lets that inheritance flow in two directions at once — toward the people you love, and toward the church that will keep forming disciples long after we're gone.

These gifts involve legal and tax complexity, so please talk with your financial advisor before setting one up. We're glad to help you think it through. Reach out to the church office.

2026 CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIE CONCERT SERIES

FIRST FRIDAY AT 6:00 PM

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

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.

Update from the Lead Team

September 2026

In 2026, Covenant continues to utilize a new leadership model, the Lead Team. This model comprises church members representing 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 September 2026 meeting:

- We are thrilled to welcome 10 new members to Covenant, along with one baptism. It is a joy to see our congregation growing. If you are interested in membership, please speak with Pastor Derrick.
- Stewardship Sunday is planned for the 3rd Sunday in October. We will have an opportunity to prayerfully consider our giving for the coming year. More details to follow.
- The Organ Fund is still short of its goal. We will take a free-will offering at the upcoming concert. Every gift helps us complete the restoration of our Casavant Organ.
- The Childcare Center fall fundraiser is underway: R&K Subs, with delivery on November 11th. Watch for order forms and support our childcare ministry.
- The cost of food boxes distributed through our outreach ministry has increased by approximately \$1 per box. If you would like to help offset this cost, watch for information in the News to Go.
- The parking lot fee will increase by \$5 per month beginning January 2027. This decision was made to help cover ongoing lot expenses.
- We are working to make our chancel area more accessible. The Lead Team is exploring an ADA-compliant ramp, and we are gathering information on what that would involve.
- The Lead Team is reviewing our facility use policy and fees, as we are receiving more requests from non-members to use our space. We want to be both welcoming and responsible stewards of our building.
- A grant application for security upgrades is currently under review, with recipients to be announced soon. Please pray that this funding comes through.

The next Lead Team meeting is November 17th at 6 PM.

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.

MEMORIALS AND GIFTS:

Elaine Bornstein (non-member), Mary Christian (non-member), and Chris Kimmich in memory of Ruth Neuman

Organ Fund:

Roger & Patti Willard, Sandy Leonard (in Memory of Randy Dippary, and also in Memory of Ruth Neuman), Bruce & Sally Ott (in Honor of Lois Neidermyer's birthday), Karl Moyer, Lou & Linda Henning, Carole Horn, the Sunshine Class (in memory of Ruth Neuman), Lynn Arnold (in Memory of Ruth Neuman), Jeffrey Youngquist (non-member), Colemanville UMC, Larry Leister, Richard Galen, Elizabeth Gemmill (non-member), Bonnie Herr (in Memory of Ruth Neuman), Janice McElroy (in Memory of Ruth Neuman), and Jeannine & Larry Spece (in Memory of Ruth Neuman).

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.

Celebrate the 100th Year Anniversary of Our Organ!



The Covenant building we worship and fellowship in every week was built in 1926, 100 years ago. At the same time we completed this building, the Casavant Organ Company of Canada completed building and installing our beautiful pipe organ.

During the past year we have been repairing and renovating our organ in preparation of the celebration of the 100th Anniversary of our Casavant Pipe Organ with the expertise of Brunner & Associates and the generous help of you and friends of Covenant. We are getting closer to our goal of \$100,000, with a total of \$72,171 donated as of September 25th. If you would like to continue to support this project with a donation you can do that at www.elexiogiving.com/App/Giving/covlanc or with the QR code here.



To cap off this year we are excited to have an organ concert and hymn sing on Sunday October 25 at 3:00 P.M. featuring acclaimed concert organist, Gordon Turk.

This afternoon will not be complete without you there to celebrate with our Covenant family; some descendants

of the Straubs/Eckerts who donated our organ; family and friends of past organists, Mildred Wissler and Dolly Kepner; and many more who appreciate the wonderful sounds of this gift to Covenant.

There will be a reception following the concert and we need everyone to register so we can be prepared. You can register at bit.ly/CovUMC or use the QR code here.



When you register for your FREE ticket, you may also want to do an "add-on" to spend time with Gordon, showcasing the organ in an informal setting. The cost of this second event at 5:30 is \$25.



Gordon Turk

Thank you for all your support and let's celebrate together our rich musical history.

Adult Sunday School Classes

Covenant's two adult Sunday School classes have entered their fall season and welcome any adults who are interested in learning more about the Bible and strengthening their Christian faith. Classes meet from 9:00 to 10:00 a.m. every Sunday.

The Sonshine Class is continuing their study through the books of the Bible with Whitney Keniholm's book *The Essential 100 Challenge*. They are now focusing on Paul's letters in Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and 1 and 2 Timothy with the leadership of teachers Ginny Brown and Patti Willard. They meet in the Crosby classroom downstairs, B12, right beside the elevator.

The Faith Walk Class has just finished a DVD study on the book of Judges "Finding Peace through Humility" by Joel Muddamalle and is beginning a new six-session DVD study entitled "When the Game Is Over, It All Goes Back in the Box" by John Ortberg. Class discussion will focus on the real game of life and how to set our priorities as followers of Christ. This class meets in the Chapel Library and is led by a rotation of teachers: Carole Horn, Chris Kimmich, Lois Neidermyer, and Cindy Smith.

Organist Dr. Gordon Turk



Gordon Turk will be the featured organist at our 100th anniversary celebration of Covenant's Casavant organ on October 25 2026. He is well known by many people in our area as the talented organist in residence during the summer at the Great Auditorium of the Ocean Grove Campmeeting in New Jersey. However, there is much more to be known about this organist who graciously and enthusiastically accepted our invitation to present a recital with a hymn sing in celebration of our organ.

Dr. Turk has traveled nationally and internationally for concert performances and has played in Carnegie Hall, NYC, the Kimmel Center in Philadelphia, and other landmark concert halls in the US. He has performed in several locations in Russia and in international organ festivals of Switzerland and the Ukraine. He has made two concert tours in Japan and in the Ukraine, playing solo performances and also concertos with orchestra.

He has been recognized for his excellence in the performance of J. S. Bach's music and has been a prizewinner in a national improvisation competition of the American Guild of Organists. He has made television appearances in concert and has played live concert broadcasts for National Public Radio. He has performed in concert and conducted master classes at universities throughout the US and in Europe as well as for conventions of the American Guild of Organists.

A graduate of the famed Curtis Institute of Music, he went on to study at the Manhattan School of Music, earning the Master's degree and the Doctor of Musical Arts, both with honors. He taught as Professor of Organ at West Chester University in Pennsylvania from 1992 to 1999 and as professor of organ instruction at Rowan University from 2013 to 2025.

As Resident Organist of the historic Auditorium in Ocean Grove, NJ, he plays weekly recitals on the organ of over 13,000 pipes, during the summer season. He is also Founder and Artistic Director of the Summer Stars Chamber Music Festival. He has recorded several CDs, which have been critically acclaimed.

Dr. Turk is Organist and Choirmaster of St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Wayne, Pennsylvania. He is also active as a consultant for the building of new pipe organs and restoration of historic instruments. His love of improvisation has led to his interest in composition itself and has resulted in works for chamber orchestra, organ, voice, and chorus.

Casavant Pipe Organ Gets Ready for Celebration

Covenant's Casavant pipe organ is almost ready to celebrate its 100th anniversary. Technicians from Brunner & Associates have been working diligently to repair and partially restore the organ especially in time for the October 25th recital and hymn sing. They have removed pipes and parts from the organ chambers and taken them to their shop in Silver Spring to work on them, and then they have returned them in prime condition to the chambers behind the decorative pipes in the front of the sanctuary and the facade in the balcony.. The organ thus has undergone significant tonal and mechanical adjustments, although not a total restoration. During this carefully orchestrated work, the organ has always remained usable, just not all of its stops and sounds. Final tuning will occur shortly before the concert. Brunner & Associates are confident that the organ in its 100th anniversary concert will sound exactly like it did in 1926.

Thank you again to all of you who have made contributions to the Casavant Organ Fund and thus made all of this work on the organ possible.



COVENANT

United Methodist Church

110 North Mulberry Street

Lancaster, PA 17603-3507

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Bible2School Underway

Covenant Church is again hosting students from Fulton Elementary School for Bible2School, the weekly released-time program held during the school day. Six second graders so far are coming to learn about the Old Testament on Mondays. Following them on that day are twelve fourth graders, who are participating in the Discipleship curriculum. On Tuesdays twelve third graders are coming to the church to learn about Jesus and the New Testament. As site director for a second year, Angela Licata is leading the program for Fulton Elementary School and for Lafayette Elementary School as well. Cindy Hean and Lois Neidermyer continue to volunteer as teachers with the Fulton second graders. More adult volunteers are always needed to provide for additional students.

As of mid September 2,201 students were enrolled in a Bible2School program for this school year. Many of these students are in Lancaster County and in the western part of Pennsylvania, and others are in beginning programs in four other states. The hope is that even more students will join in the program this year.

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

October 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
27	28	29	30	1	2 6p Chocolate Chip Cooki	3
4 Holy Communion 8a Bilingual Worship Ser 9a Adult, Children & You 10:30a Worship & FaceE	5 8a Community Table 11a Bible2School 2nd G 12:30p Bible2School 4tl 7p Narcotics Anonymou	6 12p Bible2School 3rd Gr 1p Staff Meeting 6:30p Bible Study	7 10a Prayer Group 7p Covenant Chorus Rel	8	9	10 9:30a Food Box Distribu 12p Care and Share Lun
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November 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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22 8a Bilingual Worship Ser 9a Adult, Children & You 10:30a Worship & FaceE	23 11a Bible2School 2nd G 12:30p Bible2School 4th 7p Narcotics Anonymou	24 12p Bible2School 3rd Gr 1p Staff Meeting 6:30p Bible Study	25 10a Prayer Group 7p Covenant Chorus Ref	26	27	28
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