



COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
 2439 McGregor Blvd. Ft. Myers, FL 33901  
 239-334-8937 www.covpcfcm.com info@covpcfcm.com

SUNDAY MORNING ADULT CLASSES CONTINUE TO MEET THIS SUMMER

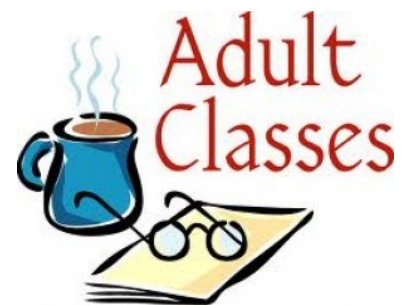
9 - 9:45 a.m. Upstairs in room 201 and 207.

ROOM 207: "DRAWING ALL THINGS TO GOD"

A weekly topic focusing around the life of Jesus. Each class begins with a short video clip by a prominent theologian, followed by open class discussion. A discussion guide is also provided. All are welcome!

Summer weekly topics include:

- "The Audacity of Vulnerability"
- "Jesus Freak"
- "The Courage of Jesus"
- "The Jesus Strategy"
- "The Cosmic Christ"
- "Birthless and Deathless"



ROOM 201: "WHO IS JESUS?" What a Difference a Lens Makes

Each of the study's nine lessons explores the question "Who is Jesus?" through a particular theological lens. The author explores the answers to the question through the lenses of Mark, Matthew, Luke, John, Paul, Hebrews, the non-canonical gospels, the Abrahamic Faiths, and contemporary cultural interpretations. She notes that each of us who reads the New Testament is an interpreter of the text, and that how we interpret depends in part on who we are. Alternating facilitators: John Sheppard, Barbara Shafer and Mary Ellen Frost.



# The Clarion

The Newsletter of Covenant Presbyterian Church

July/August 2017

*This letter is in lieu of the Pastors letter.*

Dear Pastor and Clerk of Session,

On behalf of the Misión Peniel Team we want to personally thank you for your ongoing support and interest in our mission; the purpose of which is to serve the farmworker community in Immokalee, Florida. Through your partnership in mission, we have been able to maintain a strong presence of compassionate care in the community.

Whether you are able to bring a team of volunteers to serve at the mission, encourage your congregation to collect needed donations, include Misión Peniel in your annual budget and most especially lift the mission up in prayer, know that ALL of this support continues to be of highest value to our mission! We are both humbled and grateful for the countless ways you have been able to partner with this mission; OUR mission together!

Since February of this year, the mission has expanded its physical space and reaffirmed its vision to better serve the community. We were given the opportunity to move into a larger building, allowing us to begin exploring new possibilities for our mission's outreach. This transition has had its share of blessings as well as challenges! The remodeling process has generated more than anticipated expenses. As a result, we now need to find additional funding streams to support the work being done and dreamed about. Your prayers and financial support will help us move forward, serving together in Christ's name.

Some of the ways we hope to grow include:

- ◆ Create a community garden in our new back yard space with the help of ECHO in Fort Myers that will engage community members in its development while providing them with new ways for strengthening food stability;
- ◆ Offer mid-week ministries for focus groups: young mothers, children, senior adults and others;
- ◆ Become more visible and connected with area churches that support Misión Peniel.

We encourage you to spread the word to your congregation about our new website ([www.misionpeniel.com](http://www.misionpeniel.com)) with updated information and resources that can be used to keep you informed about the mission. We also provide weekly updates through our Facebook page, "Mision Peniel". If you would like us to speak at a gathering or worship service, contact us!

We are excited to share where God is leading us in 2017 and beyond! Once again, thank you for your partnership in this mission. Together we grow!

In Mission Partnership,

Pastor Miguel Estrada  
 miguestrada@hotmail.com

Ruth DeYoe, Mission Coordinator  
 misionpenielpeaceriver@gmail.com

## Covenant Returns to Misión Peniel on Friday, July 28

### Volunteers of all ages welcome!

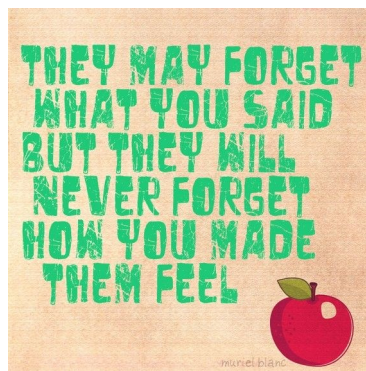
Once again, Covenant is building a team of at least, but not limited to 14 people of any age to serve the farm worker community in Immokalee on Friday, July 28. Covenant sends a team of volunteers about every six weeks to help with the mission. While there, volunteers help sort clothing and other donations for distribution as well as help prepare the meal and bag of non-perishable food items to be shared with the community from the mission site. Volunteers who sign up at the Connection Station board in the courtyard (or by calling the office) can either drive themselves or take the church bus. Volunteers are asked to arrive at the mission, now located at 208 Boston Avenue, at 2 p.m. and plan to stay until 6:30 pm. Volunteers are asked to bring the following: your own water bottle (refills at a new water cooler), a hearty snack to eat and to wear comfortable shoes. The church bus departs from Covenant around 12:30 and returns by 7:30 p.m. The bus may make an additional stop prior to arriving at the mission (snack purchase, farmer's market). An orientation to the mission is provided before serving begins. Please visit the mission's website and if on Facebook, check it out for the latest photos of service teams! website: [www.misionpeniel.com](http://www.misionpeniel.com) and Facebook page: "Mision Peniel". Additional information about donations and serving guidelines are on the website. Covenant's Misión Peniel contact: Pat Schmidt

There are lots and lots of reasons to teach Sunday School. Some of them are more important than others, but all of them are important! Would you consider teaching?

Which of the following reasons would YOU teach Sunday School?

- you are God-called
- you have experiences, abilities, and the personality that God wants to use
- God has given experiences you need to share
- the class needs you
- because you teach, you will grow more as a disciple
- you are concerned about the age group (preschoolers, children, youth, or adults)
- you have a passion to teach
- you love to connect with new people
- you love a good challenge
- you love to make a difference in people's lives
- you want to raise the next generation of leaders
- you know how important Sunday School is to keeping people connected to the church, growing as disciples, and mobilized into ministry/service
- you will become more deeply involved in the church and the Lord's ministry
- you want to influence the direction of many lives.

Interested? Contact Dawn Castner, Director of Family Ministries or Stephanie Barcliff, Christian Education Chair.



We often look to the most obvious gifts we have been given by God: athletic ability, mathematical acuity, verbal play, humor, attractiveness, good voices, business acumen, etc. but perhaps we overlook a "plain" gift. The gift of friendship, the ability to recognize a friend, and the chance to tell them that we appreciate the gift of friendship that they share with us. We, as humans, have been known to overlook what is right in front of us and to focus on what we don't see. Stop. Look around you. We are not guaranteed a tomorrow. Take today to tell your friends that they are a gift from God to you and others that they come in contact with every day. It will likely to be a pleasant surprise to them and make their day....and yours.

Pat Arner: 997-9108

Sarah Jane Essebaggers: 616-502-7086

Barb Sheets: 995-8881

Lyn Sisti-Sommer: 656-1595

Rev. Dr. Jeff DeYoe: 334-8937

### COVENANT COMMUNITY GARDEN INTEREST IS GROWING!

We have a location for the garden, people who continue to express interest and some wonderful "mentors" to help us get started! Our next meeting will be a sit down organizational meeting to go over the details of what it will take to get a garden started and what will actually be grown as our beginning point. This has already been designate as a mission outreach garden, with the harvest to be shared with Misión Peniel. Our next meeting will be held on Sunday, August 6th after worship. This will be a one hour meeting. Bring your thoughts, experience and interest...and invite others to gather as well! Homework for all: Bring a few garden name ideas! Together we continue to grow in new ways, serving Christ!



### SESSION HIGHLIGHTS FOR JULY

The Session met on Tuesday, June 27, 2017 with Rev. Jeff DeYoe moderating the meeting and nine elders in attendance. Others present: Rich Ward, Deacon; Gary Brothers, Facilities Manager and Barbara Heflin, Clerk of Session.

- Affirmed the email vote requested by the Finance Committee to increase the 2017 budget by \$2500 for Bethany Apelquist's seminary internship this summer to assure that the expenditure comes from the proper line item which will make it transparent and properly shown as part of the operation expenses.
- Approved Undies and Soles Sunday for Sunday, July 23, 2017.
- Approved the Alternative Christmas Giving Market for December 3, 2017.
- Approved Stewardship Dedication Sunday, November 12 with Minute for Mission speakers October 22nd, 29th and November 5.
- Approved a Back to School brunch on Sunday, August 13th following worship. Christian Education Sunday is September 17th.

**YOUTH GROUP**



Covenant Presbyterian Church hosts a full calendar of events for all youth in 6th through 12th grade! Sunday school is held every Sunday morning at 9 am before worship. Youth "Fellowships" take place every month on Sunday evenings and include meals, games, activities, music and discussions! A variety of trips, retreats and outreach opportunities are available as well. Youth do not need to be members of Covenant to participate in activities and are always welcome to invite friends! For specific information regarding dates and times of youth activities, please contact Eric Nanz at nanzet@gmail.com or visit Covenant's "Youth Ministry" page at www.covpcf.com.



This year's MAKER FUN FACTORY VBS was a great success! We had 75 children attend and 50+ volunteers during the week. We experienced adventurous Bible stories, explored fun science experiments, sang and moved to exciting songs, devoured great snacks and participated in giving back to those in need. We collected school supplies for Lee County foster care children AND we collected \$625.60 to provide safe drinking water for children the remote villages of Peru.

A HUGE THANK YOU to the many volunteers that dedicated their talents and time to this wonderful learning experience. VBS is always a highlight in the life of Covenant Presbyterian Church!

**BOOK CLUB**

Covenant's Book Club, Brown Bag 'n' Books, meets on the third Thursday of each month at 11 a.m. in room F205. Bring your lunch or cup of tea and join us! Book selections are available for lending in CPC Library. For more information, stop by our CPC library or email Beverly Campbell at campbell.beverly@gmail.com

Here are the upcoming selections:  
**Thursday, August 17, 2017** *Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis* by J.D. Vance  
**Thursday, September 21, 2017** *Honors Rendered* by local author, Robert N. Macomber (from the Honors Series)



Looking for volunteers to proofread The Clarion each month and other various publications. Contact Dawn at 334-8937 if you are interested.

**Please pray for our friends who are unable to attend services:**  
**Maureen Bashaw, Doris Flaitz, Gloria Gibbs, and Sue Loman.**  
**God Bless You!**

**LIFE Justice Coalition Update**

Following the successful LIFE 2017 Nehemiah Action last March, where Fort Myers city leaders responded "yes" to the several LIFE "asks" (requests for action) to address the high number of unsolved murders in Ft. Myers, LIFE also continued working collaboratively and actively with other DART (the umbrella organization coordinating LIFE and nine similar justice coalitions in other Florida counties) affiliates throughout Florida on statewide action for our 2014 "ask" regarding Civil Citations in lieu of arrests for first time juvenile misdemeanor offenders. This resulted in the introduction of initial bills into both the Senate and House of the Florida Legislature. DART affiliate activists throughout Florida including many Covenant LIFE Team members lobbied long and hard through April and right up to the end of the Legislative Session in early May with telephone calls and visits to legislatures in Tallahassee to request their support and priority for these bill's passage in this year's Session. Unfortunately, the Civil Citation Bill was never voted on. We were successful in getting a Senate bill passed to our satisfaction, but the House opposed our proposed bill draft, and it was never approved. The plan for the coming year is to keep working with the Legislative House leaders on a compromise bill and hope and pray for passage in the 2018 Legislative session.

**Peacemaking Commitment**

So much big reconciliation work needs to be done— between races, political parties, theologies and religions. We look at the gaping holes between us and feel overwhelmed. But we can't do nothing. Jesus' life shows us that reconciliation starts small, as a baby born in an empire. He shows us that everyday choices matter. Each time we chose to eat with someone or touch someone, we can make the hole that keep us apart a little smaller. Each time we cry out for justice, offer forgiveness, and give of ourselves, we help to close the gap. Each time we practice reconciliation, we are living into the call Jesus places upon our lives. The good news is that we don't have to be perfect. We just have to practice.



Sue Washburn, Pastor, Reunion Presbyterian Church, Mount Pleasant, PA

**May 2017 Financial Report**

Income for May	\$45,454
Income Year-to-date	\$298,342
Expenses for May	\$54,502
Expenses Year-to-date	\$270,680
Year-to-date overage	\$27,661
Current Balance on Loan	\$405,000
Principal & Interest Paid in May	\$1,288

A complete finance report is available in the church office. The June Financial Report was not available at print time.

**June 2017 Financial Report**

Income for June	\$37,798
Income Year-to-date	\$325,715
Expenses for June	\$55,150
Expenses Year-to-date	\$325,830
Year-to-date deficit	\$116
Current Balance on Loan	\$402,244
Principal & Interest Paid in June	\$4,094

A complete finance report is available in the church office. The June Financial Report was not available at print time.





**2017/2018 Covenant Concert Series**

**November 10, 2017**

*Dick Hyman, Jazz Pianist*

**December 15, 2017**

*Covenant Christmas Concert*

**January 19, 2018**

*Joel Raney, Pianist*

**February 9, 2018**

*Manni Cadet, Vocalist—Baritone*

**February 25, 2018**

*Washington Saxophone Quartet*

**March 16, 2018**

*Covenant Spring Concert*

**April 6, 2018**

*Woodworks Marimba Quartet  
and Debra Polkingham*

**CHAPEL CHOIR at COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

Come join the fun while we laugh, sing great songs, and bring joy to the worship experience here at Covenant Presbyterian Church.

Who can join?

- ◆ Chapel Choir is for kids between 1st grade and 6th grade

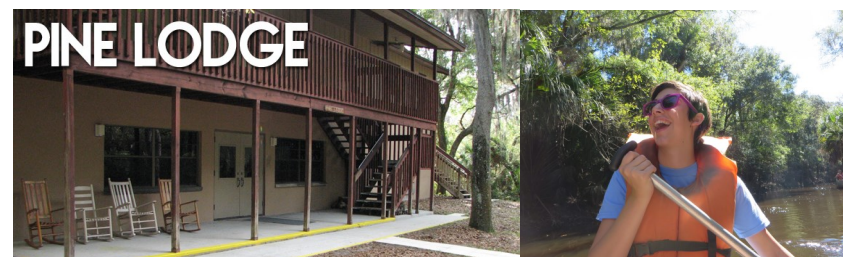
What do you do in Chapel Choir?

- ◆ We practice on Sundays after worship from 11:15 a.m. to 12 noon.
- ◆ Sing during worship the 2nd Sunday of the month.
- ◆ Sing at special holidays such as Easter and Christmas.
- ◆ Take the gift of music to communities in the area.
- ◆ Go on fun outings periodically.

Our first rehearsal will be Sunday, August 13 and our first Sunday to sing will be Sunday, September 10. We would love for your child to be part of the fun and fellowship of Chapel Choir this year. Please call or text Maria Bahruth at 239-994-5509 to get started singing to the glory of God and learning more about his Kingdom.

**CEDARKIRK FAMILY CAMP \*\* NOVEMBER 3-5, 2017**

Join us for this fun, family weekend of fellowship, canoeing, swimming, line dancing and more. A \$30 per-person, non-refundable fee is required to register. The cost of the camp is \$119 (ages 13 to adult) and \$104 (ages 5 to 12). Children under 5 are free. The registration fee includes lodging, activities and all meals. The maximum per family unit is \$355. Registration is limited and your spot is only reserved with the required deposit. REGISTER TODAY TO SEE WHAT CEDARKIRK HAS TO OFFER YOU AND YOUR FAMILY!!!



The Christian Education Committee will be hosting a Back to School Brunch on Sunday, August 13th  
11:15 a.m. in Fellowship Hall  
RSVP 334-8937

**2017-18 MOPS International Theme –**

*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor, he has sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are oppressed, to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord. - Luke 4:18-19*

**What do you long for? What is the thing that your heart craves?**

Is it possible that your deepest desire is to be free?

- Free from worry.*
- Free from feeling stuck.*
- Free from hustling to be loved.*
- Free from a heaviness you can't put your finger on.*
- Free from thinking you should be someone other than exactly who you are.*
- At the core, maybe what we are all longing for is to be Free Indeed.*



**In order to unfold our wings this year, we will ...**

**Let Love Be The Loudest Voice**

**Proclaim Favor**

Sometimes, especially as moms with young kids, life can sneak up on us, and we don't realize that we have gotten stuck. Stuck in patterns of thinking or habits that are holding us captive. This is the year that changes, this is the year we will stop settling for what simply gets us by and do the work to get to what's best. We will examine our worries and not believe everything we feel. We will bask in the freedom of living loved by understanding who God is, and who we are because of it. We will be free from the need to hustle for our worth, and we will live in the truth that we are already loved and loveable without all the striving. We will parent with fresh perspectives and will treat ourselves with tenderness, because love is the loudest voice we hear, and it is proclaiming freedom and favor.

This is about putting in the work to live fully loved and fully free. To recover our sight in order to view not only ourselves, but other people as God's beloved children. To internalize the truth that God does not expect us to earn or hustle for our worth. God tells us, *Take my yoke upon you and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.* – Matthew 11:29-30

**Be Gutsy**

**Proclaim Release**

Sometimes we don't take responsibility for our lives. WE carry the weight of expectations, feeling out of control over the pace and trajectory of our days. Being gutsy is about realizing that you get to decide how busy you are, what you say yes to, what is best for your family and what you make a priority in your mothering. If you need to slow down your life –you can do that. If you feel like you don't have any friends, go out and make some. This is the year of release from believing life has to look a certain way, and isn't there so much freedom and audacity in that? The truth is, we have more authority to shape our daily lives than we think we do. Your life can match your values and your passions, it will just take some guts to make it happen.

We will proclaim release from the unwritten expectations that tell us we are supposed to live in ways that are incongruent with who God created us to be. It is freedom to mother and freedom to shape your family rhythms. To trust your gut and to move with freedom and passion just like Paul tells us to, *Live freely, animated and motivated by God's Spirit.* – Galatians 5:16

**Go First**

**Set Free**

It is a fact that freedom is contagious. That is why we are choosing to go first in order to spark a revolution of women who are choosing freedom over fear. Going first is about being courageous enough to take steps before you are ready, to share the details of your journey, extend invitations, conquer fears, and lead the way for friends and kids and family. In fact, one of the best ways to advocate for others' freedom is to go first ourselves, and then we can share with courage and honesty because we have found the keys that can set others free. We will go first so that we can set other captives free.

**Going first means being the first to tell your story, the first to strike up a conversation with a stranger, the first to invite a friend to MOPS. It is walking in freedom and inviting others to get free by encouraging other women to get honest about their failures, fears and secrets. Because what we know is, *The truth will set you free.* – John 8:31-32**

**JOIN US FOR THIS YEARS MOPS OPEN HOUSE ON TUESDAY, AUGUST 22 from 9:30 to 12.**

**Nursery is provided. Pack a lunch and drink for each child.**

**\* We currently need to fill Early Childhood Staff positions in the nursery for this program. Please contact Dawn Castner.**