

## Covenant Presbyterian Church

2439 McGregor Blvd.  
Fort Myers, FL 33901  
239.334.8937  
www.covpcfm.com  
info@covpcfm.com



## Covenant Presbyterian Church

September 2017



### *A letter from our Pastor...*

Greetings,

*Pacifism* is a term that pertains to the belief that one should never resort to violence to settle disputes. On a global scale, this means that militarism and war as means of settling disputes is considered wrong by pacifists. The best living example of pacifism, of course, comes from Jesus of Nazareth, who opposed and resisted the militarism and violence of both the Jewish Temple (which had armed guards who acted on the orders of religious authorities) and the Roman Empire's occupying army. Jesus resisted the big picture militarism and violence of his day by not physically resisting when they came for him, and even instructing his followers to not resist. Clearly, not all his chosen and beloved disciples were pacifists. Some of them drew their swords until Jesus told them to put them away (I remember how surprised I was the first time I read the passage and realized that Jesus' disciples actually carried swords). That's an important thing to note so that we may recognize that even among his closest followers, Jesus the pacifist had to navigate in a world where both friend and foe did not necessarily share his absolute commitment to nonviolence as a means of settling disputes.

I know I am not an absolute pacifist. If it came down to it and I was forced into a position of responding violently to an attack upon my person or someone I loved and cared about, I know that I would not idly stand by. Beyond the personal, I am not sure what kind of heinous conditions would make me acquiesce to war, but in my lifetime I know I have not seen it yet. Since my adolescence I always knew I would not take life for the sake of abstract human principles. I say that with the understanding that I was not alive in the 1930's and 1940's and watching the threat of Nazism overwhelm Europe. My late father-in-law, the Rev. Dr. Neal Kuyper, a man I have highly respected throughout my life, joined the Army and hit Normandy Beach 40 days following D-Day. He went in as a medic and a chaplain's assistant. He chose to never carry a gun. He could not take life, but he was more than willing to go into harm's way to try and save it, and he did. He was ordered to be among the few who would go into Buchenwald concentration camp to try to save many Jews who were emaciated and just trying to hang onto life. He and the other medics both succeeded and failed in their endeavors. He talked about it, but only sparingly. But in his retirement, at the invitation of local high school history teachers in Willmar, Minnesota, he visited a number of those high school classes and gave his witness to teenagers. Other classes suspended their activities on those days so other students could hear him as well. The man who was as close to being a pacifist in his personal behavior as I have ever known saw as much, if not more, violence and death up close and personal than many of his fellow soldiers.

This is why I was horrified by what I saw in Charlottesville in regard to the *Unite the Right* rally that turned violent. This gathering of neo-nazis, white supremacists and alt-right party members came not just to demonstrate, but to provoke. They came dressed prepared for provocation. Counter-protestors came to stand in opposition to their message of racism and violence (racism, by the way is violence), and yes, sadly, a small number were provoked to violence as well. As I pointed out, some of Jesus' disciples were provoked to violence until Jesus himself made them stop. Those who oppose the sickness of racist thought and attitude are not always as pure as the driven snow. The disciples weren't. The only sure thing is that we are all sinners in the eyes of God. But it is wrong to ever draw an equivalency between those who gather to promote racist policy and action and those who firmly stand against it. The vast majority of those opposing racism in Charlottesville were not violent and would not engage in violence. Heather Heyer, the 32 year old paralegal, died marching peacefully in a city street.

The principles for which we stand tell the tale. Principles of racism are inhuman and contrary to the

### SESSION HIGHLIGHTS FOR AUGUST

The Session met on Tuesday, August 15, 2017 with Rev. Jeff DeYoe moderating the meeting and nine elders in attendance. Others present: Ellen Burnette, Deacon; Gary Brothers, Facilities Manager; and Barbara Heflin, Clerk of Session.

- Approved the Family Ministries Fall Events schedule.
- Approved the Youth Ministry Fall Events schedule and Bible Study curriculum.
- Approved the Memorial Service Preference Form.
- Approved the wedding of Taylor Waldrop and Brian Beller on January 27, 2018.
- The youth will attend "Rock the Universe" September 8 - 10.
- Ground Hogs Work Day will resume in September. The Property Committee welcomes all ages, male and female, to join this group in helping to keep the church campus maintained. There is a job for everyone - cleaning, painting, landscape maintenance, building repairs, picking up trash, etc.

PW BIBLE STUDY—Presbyterian Women are studying "Cloud of Witnesses" *The Community of Christ in Hebrews* by Melissa Bane Sevier. Pastor DeYoe will conduct a study on September 5th at 10:45 a.m. in room F205. Everyone is welcome to attend.

PW CIRCLES—We invite you to come and visit one of the circles which meet at the following times:



- Naomi Circle - 2nd Monday at 6:30 p.m.
- Deborah Circle and Ruth Circle - 2nd Tuesday at 10 a.m.
- Elizabeth Circle - 2nd Thursday at 9:30 a.m.

For more information about Circles or PW, please call Nora Harmon at 645-1125.

*Continued on page 2...*

*Continued from front page...*

will of God, and any concerned follower of Jesus Christ must make that clear in word and action. The Principles of God, so well exemplified in the life, ministry and death of Jesus Christ needs no further explanation. That requires faith, first to believe that such are the will of God, and then to choose to live them out with all our heart, mind, body and soul.

Let us pray for the family and friends of Heather Heyer. Let us pray for the family and friends of the State Troopers who lost their lives monitoring the event. Let us pray for all those who suffered as a result of the violence that occurred in Charlottesville, both physically and emotionally. Let us pray for those who do suffer every day because of racist thought and action throughout this nation and the world. And let us pray for the whole of humanity, that we may find the better way that was clearly demonstrated by Christ as he kept his beloved compatriots from committing acts of violence, and as he met violence upon his own person with the resolve and confidence that only faith in God can bring.

Peace, *Jeff DeYoe*

### **Covenant Returns to Misión Peniel on Friday, September 15th - 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, September 15. 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 carry out meal and bag of non perishable food items to be shared with the community from the mission. Volunteers who sign up at the Connection Station board in the courtyard (or by calling the office) are asked to clarify whether they will 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.



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.

#### 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*

### **Palestine Olive Oil Special Sales Event - World Communion Sunday, October 1**

Our next special sales event for Palestine Olive Oil and Thyme spice mix will be on World Communion Sunday, October 1. Members of the Covenant Palestine Mission Team will be in the Church Courtyard before and after worship selling the olive oil (\$16/bottle) and spice mix (\$5/packet). Proceeds from these sales support planting of olive trees; production, bottling and packaging of olive oil; art based emotional therapy for Palestinian children and start-up of new businesses in Palestine. Please continue to support our Palestine Mission by purchasing these products. Thank you.



World Communion Sunday, held annually on the first Sunday of October, is a celebration of the unity of the worldwide church through Christ. Christians in congregations around the world participate in the Lord's Supper. World Communion Sunday began in 1936 in the Presbyterian Church and was adopted by the Federal Council of Churches in 1940. Since then, the celebration has grown into an international ecumenical celebration of Christian unity. The key word

for World Communion Sunday is communion, or unity. It is a day when we mark the almost universal Christian practice of breaking bread with one another and remembering both the night of Jesus' betrayal—when Jesus instituted what we now call the Lord's Supper as a lasting remembrance—and of Jesus' sacrifice. World Communion Sunday is a time for remembering that around the globe—in different languages, with different traditions and customs, and in various forms of liturgy—the Lord's Supper is celebrated. At its best, therefore, World Communion Sunday serves two purposes: it is both a joyous and meaningful partaking of Jesus' sacred meal with his friends and a mind-opening exposure to different Christian traditions from around the world.

***We welcome you to participate in our own celebration of World Communion Sunday by participating in bread making on Sunday, September 24th promptly at 9 a.m. This is an intergenerational event in the life of our church and will be a interactive educational event you won't want to miss.***

## 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](mailto:campbell.beverly@gmail.com)

Here are the upcoming selections:

**Thursday, September 21, 2017** *An Honorable War (The Spanish-American War Begins)* by local author, Robert N. Macomber (from the Honors Series)

**Thursday, October 19, 2017** *Learning to Walk in the Dark* by Barbara Brown Taylor

### COVENANT COMMUNITY GARDEN PLANNING UNDERWAY!

The next meeting will be Sunday, Sept 10th, "in the field" We have a location for the garden, people who continue to express interest and some wonderful experienced "mentors" to help gets things started. All that is harvested will go directly to the farm working community in Immokalee though Misión Peniel.

This meeting will take place at the garden site, between the two parking areas at the south end of Covenant property. It is in the same area where the shed is located.

Please join us as together we continue to grow in new ways,



Darryl Strawberry. Some of us haven't heard that name in years but it immediately brings up thoughts of a baseball star, fame, clubs, arrests, fights, drugs, fall from fame.

An all-too-familiar story in not just the world of sports, unfortunately and yet, today I heard he was speaking of finding his way back to both better choices and God. Finding, or for some, re-finding God's love, forgiveness, and grace is a story worth telling. If you would like a Stephen Minister to listen to you, walk with you, help you re-find God's compassion, all in a confidential setting, please, ask. We are here to help. Contact a Stephen Minister today...

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



### Peacemaking Commitment

Reconciliation is at the heart of Christian faith. It is arguably the most radical and transforming work done by God and practiced in our own lives. In 2 Corinthians 5:19, the apostle Paul teaches us that through Christ, God was "reconciling the world to himself" and calls us to a ministry of reconciliation with each other.

Reconciliation is more than just simply getting along. It's a way of living that allows us, and others, to thrive. It's an invitation to wholeness in our relationships with God, ourselves, each other and our earth.

Reconciliation doesn't depend on punishment to even the score, but is a restorative process that creates fair and just relationships.

Shannon Beck, *Presbyterians Today*, Sep./Oct., 2016

### Gathering In His Name

"... for where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them." Matthew 18:20

*Gathering in His Name* completed another season in May, and Betty Whitaker and Laura Ruzicho want to thank everyone who participated. Approximately 53 of your fellow Covenant friends gathered between October and May to share food and fellowship.



In what has become a *Gathering* tradition, Bill and Betty Whitaker invited the whole group to their home on Kentucky Derby Saturday for the season finale. Prizes were awarded for the Best Ladies Kentucky Derby Hat and the Wildest Men's Shirt. Competition was stiff, but **Becky Garrison** won the Best Hat contest and **Jeff Coffman** took home the Wildest Men's Shirt prize.

*Gathering in His Name* is a wonderful way to meet or get re-acquainted with everyone at Covenant as we rotate from group to group throughout the season, sharing our common desire for fellowship.

This coming season of *Gathering in His Name* is just around the corner and now is a good time for us to answer some concerns that have been expressed.

**Concern** – I don't feel comfortable hosting a formal sit down dinner.

**Answer** – Whether you enjoy providing a casual buffet or a formal setting; whether you put out the soup bowls or the good china; whether you have guests grab a stool or sit around a dining table, let's remember that fellowship is the most important ingredient. We are *Gathering in His Name*.

**Concern** – I don't have room to host 8 people.

**Answer** – Not a problem! Let's remember Matthew 18:20 – "for where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them." It's about fellowship, not about the number of folks we can fit around a table. Whether you can host 2, 4, 6, 8 people, etc, we are *Gathering In His name*.

**Concern** – Sometimes I can't find a date to suit all of my invitees and I really want to have a full table.

**Answer** – Your desire to host a full group in your home is appreciated! If you are unable to pinpoint a date for all of your invitees, you are welcomed and encouraged to invite a friend or neighbor. *Gathering in His name* is not exclusive to Covenant church-goers!

**Concern** – I am concerned about driving in the dark.

**Answer** – This is true for many of us. If you will let your host know of this concern, they will work with you to find a ride with another participant. When we *gather in His name*, we look for ways to include everyone.

For this coming season, we will begin *Gathering in His Name* in January and enjoy each other's company on a monthly basis through May. Check the Connection Station in October for more information and sign-up as we once again *Gather in His Name!*



Mary Ellen Frost and Pat Arner



## 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!!!

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

*God Bless You!*

### July 2017 Financial Report

Income for July	\$44,160
Income Year-to-date	\$369,875
Expenses for July	\$53,906
Expenses Year-to-date	\$379,737
Year-to-date deficit	\$9,862
Current Balance on Loan	\$399,480
Principal & Interest Paid in July	\$4,094

A complete finance report is available in the church office.

MOPS meets the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month from 9:30 a.m. to 12 in F-204. Join us this month!



**September 12: Perspectives on Marriage Video & Discussion**

**September 26: Pastor Jeff & Ruth speak on Marriage**

**Notes to Spouse craft**

Nursery is provided. For more information contact Dawn Castner at 334-8937.

### 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 Sundays 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.covpcfm.com.

#### SEPTEMBER EVENTS:

- 9/3 Labor Day Weekend (No YG/Sunday school)
- 9/8-10 Rock the Universe Trip (2pm, Fri - 8pm, Sun)
- 9/12 Tuesday Night Fundraiser at the DQ on US-41 (5pm - 8pm)
- 9/17 Sunday School & Afternoon Youth Group (9am - 1:15pm)
- 9/20 Wednesday Youth Band Rehearsal (7pm - 8pm)
- 9/24 Sunday School, Youth Band performs & Afternoon Youth Group (9am - 1:15pm)

## Sunday Mornings from 9 a.m. to 9:45 for all ages...



Preschoolers are invited to join us on Sunday mornings in the Children's Center/Nursery to participate in positive faith-building experiences that will give them the opportunity to learn at their level about God, Jesus, the church, and others. The fall lessons include: God Made the World; Noah and Abraham; and Joseph and Samuel.



Elementary aged students are invited to join us on Sunday mornings in D2 to continue their faith journey. Growing in Grace & Gratitude is rooted in the foundation of Presbyterian identity where God's grace and our gratitude are the heartbeat of our faith, life, and worship; extends an invitation to discipleship that inspires children to learn and practice hospitality, generosity, and love; and reaches beyond Sunday morning, encouraging children to live their lives as an expression of God's grace.



Youth are figuring out who they are as they search for whose they are. Feasting on the Word materials provide opportunities for this age group to explore their personal and communal identity in Jesus Christ through meaningful community-building experiences, engaging Bible study, and relevant learning activities. Biblical stories will come alive in new and creative ways. In response to God's amazing, unconditional love, youth will be challenged to put their faith into action as they grow to understand themselves as Christ's disciples. Classes meet in the Youth Room (D3/D4).



### The Work of the People: Faith Engaging the World (F207)

Each Sunday's class begins with a brief introduction, followed by a short video clip that opens up into open discussion about relevant matters of faith. Facilitated by Barb Sheets and Ruth DeYoe. All are welcome to participate in this welcoming class "community"!

*Fall Series Titles Being Considered Include: Seeking Aliveness; Spiritual Formation, Reorientation and Activism; Allegiance to Empire; Practices of Kingdom Citizenship; A Calling to the Beloved; Entering a Life of Vocation; To Stand Again: Practices of Resurrected Life; or Jesus, Bombs and Ice Cream.*

**"Who is Jesus? What a Difference a Lense Makes" (F201)** with John Sheppard and Barbara Shafer facilitating.



**Mark your calendars...**

**Sunday, October 29 after worship**