



COVENANT MATTERS!

The Newsletter of the Saints at
Covenant Presbyterian Church

June 2025

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FROM THE PASTOR'S HEART:

The Power and Relevance of Pentecost

As we gather this season to celebrate Pentecost, we are reminded of a profound moment in the life of the Church—a moment when the promises of Jesus were fulfilled and the Spirit of God moved in a way that changed everything. Often referred to as the “birthday of the Church,” Pentecost is not just a celebration of an event from long ago, but a powerful reminder of what it means to live as God’s people today.

The story of Pentecost, found in Acts 2, tells of the Holy Spirit descending upon the disciples while they were gathered in Jerusalem. It was the fiftieth day after Easter, a Jewish festival day known as Shavuot, and the city was filled with pilgrims from across the known world. As the disciples prayed together, suddenly there was a sound like a rushing wind, and tongues of fire appeared above their heads. They were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages—languages understood by the diverse crowd outside.

At first, many were confused. “Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?” they asked. “How is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language?” It was the apostle Peter who stepped forward, filled with boldness, to explain what was happening. He pointed to the prophet Joel, who had spoken of a time when God would pour out His Spirit on all people. That time, Peter said, had now come through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

This moment is foundational for us as Presbyterians and as Christians. It reminds us that the Church was born not of human effort, but of divine initiative. The Spirit did not wait for perfect conditions or perfect people. The Spirit came upon the gathered community, empowering them to speak, witness, and act in ways they never imagined possible.

For Presbyterians, who hold the sovereignty of God and the work of the Spirit in high regard, Pentecost is a profound affirmation of God’s ongoing work in the world. It reminds us that the Church is not a static institution but a living, breathing body moved by the Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit is the one who calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the Church. We do not rely on our strength alone, but on the Spirit’s presence among us.

Pentecost also speaks to our mission. Notice that when the Spirit came, it did not lead the disciples inward but outward. They were propelled into the streets, into the lives of those around them, sharing the good news in ways that could be understood. The miracle of Pentecost was not just in the speaking, but in the hearing. God desires all people to hear and understand the gospel in their own language, in their own context. This reminds us that the Church must always be

June Birthdays

- 02 Verona Lawson
Tom Poe
Patti Adams
Christina Siemen
- 04 Dick Negley
- 06 James Kaserman
- 11 Allan Engler
Sandy Chapman
Larry Chapman
- 12 Bill Pape
Fred Caraher
- 13 Barbara O'Neil
Elizabeth Birkby
Rick Kaserman
- 16 Joan Fedorak
- 22 Pete Bishop
- 23 Church Roberts



Anniversaries

- 14 Juan Pablo Oliva &
Zoe Pereda
- 21 David & Karen Viele
- 25 Tom & Diane Means

FROM THE PASTOR'S HEART *continued*:

listening, always learning, and always speaking in ways that make the gospel accessible to others.

In today's world—marked by division, uncertainty, and change—the message of Pentecost is deeply relevant. The Spirit still moves. The Church still lives. And we are still called to bear witness to the good news of Jesus Christ. The languages may be different, the places unfamiliar, but the calling remains the same: to proclaim, to serve, and to love in the power of the Spirit.

So as we wear red on Pentecost Sunday, as we hear once again the story of wind and fire, may we open our hearts anew to the Spirit's presence. May we be reminded that God is not done with us—that the Church is still being formed, shaped, and sent into the world. And may we, like those first disciples, be bold in our witness, generous in our love, and joyful in our mission.

Come, Holy Spirit. Renew Your Church again.

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Becky

Session Highlights - Stated Meeting - May 19, 2025

Session approved Visitor Parking spaces and signage as requested by Membership/Evangelism committee.

VBS - starts June 23 - 27th - 6:00 - 8:30 pm. Volunteers still needed.

Missions Committee will host a church wide luncheon on July 20. All are invited.

Missions collected 414 lbs of PB & J and the Kaserman family delivered it to Community Cooperative.

Missions will also collect new (or nearly new) clothing for our Cuba Partnership w/ El Fuerte. They will continue to collect fabric and sewing notions also. Our sister church in Cuba is in desperate need of clothing, shoes, undergarments - all ages.

Property Committee hosted a church wide work day on May 18. Huge success! 34 helpers volunteered to clean windows, gutters, level brick pavers, clean and sort nursery toys, etc. It was a great time.

Property Committee has completed the new nursery flooring and painting is complete. CE will continue to organize equipment and toys for the opening of the new nursery in F2. Date to be announced.

Session approved a motion to add the installation of the Dolphin Window and repair/replace of the front entry doors of Heflin Hall to the Steeple Committee oversight. Deborah Maurer serves as chair of the Steeple committee. The Dolphin Window was gifted to Covenant from Chapel by the Sea and includes \$15,000.00 for its install and repair/replacement of the front entry doors.



CEDARKIRK SUMMER CAMP FUN BEGINS!

Hang up the backpacks because summer is here! Make sure your children are signed up for a Cedarkirk camp. There is so much fun to be had, so don't miss out on the invaluable experiences a week at summer camp can offer. Camp programs offer a variety of activities and adventures, including swimming, rock climbing, canoeing, archery, arts and crafts, cookouts, and making deep friendships. All of our activities are centered around daily Bible studies and worships that draw our community in during the week. Some of our camps still have availability, so register today at www.cedarkirk.org.



The Montreat Youth Conference July 27-August 2, 2025 Black Mountain, NC



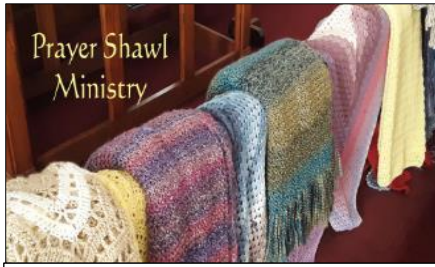
MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

June 8	Pentecost ~ WEAR RED
June 15	Father's Day
Summer	Summer camp at Cedarkirk
June 23-27	Vacation Bible School!!
July 20	Luncheon hosted by Mission Committee in Heflin Hall
July 26-8/2	Montreat Youth Conference

VBS IS HERE !!! JUNE 23 ~ 27, 2025

This year's VBS Marketplace will be held June 23-27, in the evening. Mark your calendar and sign up at church to volunteer. Please spread the word about our VBS. All kids are welcome!





The Prayer Shawl meeting will be Tuesday, June 24, 2025 at 10AM in room F207. We encourage any knitters or crocheters to join us. We look forward to seeing you.

JOIN THE CIRCLE! Our brand-new Drum Circle meets the **2nd and 4th Tuesday at 1PM** in room F207. **No experience required!** Just come and enjoy yourselves. Contact Juan Pablo Oliva at jpablo606@gmail.com for more information.



Did You Know...

Each of the banners we use during worship all have specific meanings and some of them are a bit hidden. The banners we will be using this summer are the 50th Anniversary Banners designed and made by Ellen Sheppard. Here are a few facts about the symbolism found in those banners.

1. The Celtic Cross, a symbol of Irish culture and faith, has a rich history rooted in both pagan and Christian traditions. The Celtic Cross we know today was likely developed in the 8th century, with early examples appearing in Ireland and Britain. Monks of Iona, a sacred island in Scotland, are credited with transforming the image into a powerful Christian symbol by overlaying the traditional Latin cross with the circular halo.
2. All of the colors used in the banners are found in our stained-glass windows (in both the sanctuary and in the chapel) and each color has a special meaning:
 - White - creator, light, joy, perfection, glory, innocence, and purity
 - Red - love and humanity (Don't miss the connection between those two ideas symbolized in this color)
 - Yellow - Glory to God and the Lordship of Jesus Christ
 - Green - life, growth, hope, and the Trinity
 - Purple/Violet - penitence, royalty, Advent and Lent

Congratulations Graduates!!

Victor and Ariana Arias, children of Victor and Angelette Arias, have recently achieved notable recognition by receiving scholarships from Covenant Presbyterian Church. Victor has been awarded the Judge Robert T. Shafer, Jr. Memorial Scholarship, which honors his exceptional academic performance, evidenced by a high GPA, alongside his active participation in community and school activities. Ariana, has earned the Reverend Claude and Alice Allen Scholarship, acknowledging her exemplary GPA and dedication to both community service and school engagement.

These scholarships provide crucial financial assistance for the recipients as they transition into higher education. The Judge Robert T. Shafer, Jr. Memorial Scholarship and the Reverend Claude and Alice Allen Scholarship are specifically designed to support graduating seniors in their pursuit of college courses. The achievements of Victor and Ariana not only highlight their hard work and commitment but also serve as an inspiring example for their peers regarding the significance of academic excellence and community involvement.

In addition to these scholarships, Covenant Presbyterian Church offers Book/Supply Scholarships each semester to qualifying students, ensuring continued support for those in need. The contributions from community members to these scholarship programs are vital for sustaining these resources for graduating seniors. By investing in these initiatives, the community plays a crucial role in nurturing the educational aspirations of young individuals, ultimately paving the way for their future success. Congratulations to Victor and Ariana.

Richard Shafer, Scholarship Chairman



WAYS TO VOLUNTEER!!!

Mision Peniel in May



On Tuesday morning, May 17th, seven Covenant volunteers assisted with food distribution at the mobile food pantry in Pine Manor. We helped give out fresh corn and tomatoes, eggs, milk, bread, tuna fish, rice and other non-perishable foods to a very large crowd of eager shoppers. Covenant provides assistance at this pantry on the third Tuesday morning of each month, on site at the Community Center. If you would like to help, please contact Chris Larson at: (239)-410-8950 or celarson582@gmail.com.

Veggies
from our
garden!



Our church garden has been incredibly productive throughout the Spring months. Our volunteers planted several types of peppers and field peas earlier in May, and the peppers are already being harvested. They have also started harvesting a few mangoes each week, as well as nopal cactus, peppers and eggplants. There are also avocados on one of the trees on the other side of the church parking lot. This is the first year this tree is fruiting. What a great harvest!



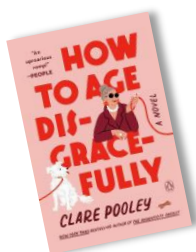
DERBY PARTY 2025



Thank you, Betty, for hosting the 2025 Derby Party. This was the final Gathering In His Name event for the season. It was a fun time had by all. See everyone again soon!



No Book Club Meetings in June, July and August!!



Thursday, September 18, 2025:
 “How to Age Disgracefully”
 by Clare Pooley

A senior citizens’ center and a daycare collide with hilarious results in the new ensemble comedy from *New York Times*-bestselling author Clare Pooley.

A copy of this book with a wait list can be found in our library!

Please email Bev Campbell at Campbell.Beverly@gmail.com or stop by the library with your book suggestions for our 2025-2026 Book Discussions!

So many books, so little time!



WINDOW UPDATE

As some of you are aware, our upper floor windows have been leaking down to the lower-level offices for years. Several months ago, we had McGregor Glass remove one of the windows and discovered the cause of the water leaking in the offices. We discovered wet and rotten wood at the base of the windows due to a poor installation from when this building

was constructed. During the week of May 12th, McGregor Glass removed the lower section of our upstairs windows, replaced the wet rotted wood and built a substantially better metal flashing under the window and over the exterior brick sill. We really appreciate the great work that McGregor Glass has done for us with this project and also the installation of the hurricane windows in Heflin Hall.

One of the many talents of John Anderson. Thank you, John for hanging our Volunteer Appreciation sign in the church office!



Please remember Covenant Presbyterian Church in your estate planning!

We need your help!

Our sister church in Cuba, El Fuerte, Request from Cuba

Our Sister church in Cardenas, El Fuerte, has sent an additional request for assistance. The situation there is dire with very few consumer goods to purchase and many serious shortages. They have asked if we could send clothing and shoes of all sizes, including children's, women's and men's items. They lack even the most basic items like T Shirts and sandals. We will try to send all donations to Cuba with a local shipper, who charges us \$2.00 per pound. Please donate lightweight items, suitable for a tropical climate and spaces without much access to air conditioning. We ask that you please donate new or "like new items" and that shoes be attached to each other by the laces or with twist ties, etc. so that they do not become separated on the journey. Items you don't wear could be huge gifts to our sister-church members. Thank you.

LIBRARY HELP NEEDED!

We need volunteers to help check out books and puzzles in our library for 30 minutes before and after the worship service on Sunday mornings. Please sign up for a Sunday in the summer so that I can take some time off to go visit my beautiful new granddaughter ;-) ~ Beverly Campbell

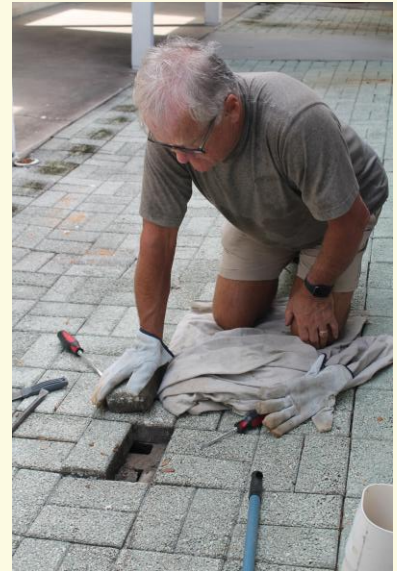
Mision Peniel's Annual Backpack Extravaganza

Mision Peniel will again be helping the farmworker children of Immokalee to prepare for the upcoming school year by providing each child with a backpack loaded with necessary school supplies. Lists of the supplies requested by the schools will be furnished later this summer. If you could purchase a backpack suitable for an elementary or middle school age child, or some school supplies, the Mission Committee will be collecting these items and making sure they reach the Mission in time for this big event. The children are always so excited to receive their new, fully loaded backpacks. Thank you for your support!





Saturday, May 17 at 9:00 AM







The Membership/Evangelism committee met and forwarded motions to Session for approval. These included moving the coffee station near the Welcome Center, located in front of the elevator. We are expanding our coffee to include a cold drink for the summer, as well as the coffee, tea bags, and some goodies. Check-in with our Welcome Center for information regarding activities. We also have purchased and installed (thank you, Gary Brothers for your help) visitor parking space signs for our first-time visitors. If you see someone parking in one of these spaces, please welcome them to our church home! More to come!!!

We want to say a great big thank you to the members that donated a phone to us. We received two phones to connect to the church Wi-fi giving us the ability to control multiple equipment. We would like to thank Maurie Salvesen and Marion Vale for their donation. And we would like to also thank Patricia Zimmerman for her donation. The great part of this is that we have been blessed with an iPhone *and* an Android. So, whether we are iPhone users, or Android users, we will have one of each to use. Thank you Maurie, Marion, and Patricia for your kindness and donation.



Special recognition of Ellen Moore by the Presbyterian Women for her dedication and service this year.



What is rewilding in simple terms? Rewilding aims to restore healthy ecosystems by creating wild, biodiverse spaces. It rebuilds ecosystems that have previously been modified by human disturbance, using the plant and animal life that would have been present had the disturbance never occurred.



***SUMMER
IS
HERE!!!***



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