



AUGUST 2026

COVENANT MATTERS!

The Newsletter of the Saints at
Covenant Presbyterian Church

IN THIS ISSUE

Concert Series.....	7
Library News	5
Mark Your Calendars.....	2
Missions	4
VBS.....	6

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FROM THE PASTOR'S HEART:

Siblings in Christ,

Paul writes these words in his letter to the Romans, "First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed throughout the world," (1:8).

In July, I celebrated not only my 17th ordination anniversary and my (undisclosed) birthday, but this month also marked my 18-month anniversary of being the pastor at Covenant Presbyterian Church. So, like Paul, I thank God through Jesus Christ for all of you.

Your faith, your fellowship, your service, your worship, your care and concern for one another, your dedication, and your love is something I proclaim throughout the world. Whenever I travel for camps and conferences, whenever my family calls because they have watched our worship services, whenever I connect with friends far and wide, you all are consistently a topic of conversation.

People are impressed with all that we do together - our trips to Misión Peniel and the Mobile Food Pantry, the amazing amount of produce our garden provides for Cultivate Abundance, the incredible work we do for InAsMuch and our long commitment to L.I.F.E. They want to know how our Youth Group is so involved in worship and how intergenerational the relationships with children and youth and adults formed and seems so natural.

They *really* want to know if we have as much fun in worship as it appears while still being faithful and challenged by the Word of God. They also want me to know how impressed they are with our music programs - our choir, bell choir, worship band, our soloists and instrumentalists, and the concert series.

In our 18 months together, I want you all to know that I have grown deeper in my faith and my commitment to service because of this congregation. Because, what I tell people when they ask questions is this: the congregation was *already* involved in mission, the congregation *already* loved their young people, the congregation *already* had an amazing music program, I just stepped into all that they were *already* doing.

Continued page 2

SESSION

Class of 2026

Pat Arner
Madeleine Doran
Richard Shafer
Carissa Sprung
Rosemary Wallace

Class of 2027

Beverly Grady
Mary Lee Mann
Anna Siemen

Class of 2028

Christine Larson
Dave Nelson
David Viele

Rev. Becky Schwandt

Moderator / Pastor

Deborah Maurer, Clerk

DIACONATE

Class of 2026

Allan Engler
Beth Richter
Karen Tasman
Connie Willhite

Class of 2027

Connie Burkert, *Moderator*
Linda Nelson
DeAnne Sawyer
Karen Viele

Class of 2028

Angelette Arias
Yacelis Dotres
Sally Kaskocsak
Juan Pablo Oliva

TRUSTEES

Wilson Wheeler (2026)
Beverly Beardsley (2027)
Pete Burkert (2028)

COVENANT MATTERS!

Edited by Deanna Gordon
Submissions due by
the 20th of each month to
dgordon@covpcfm.com

From the Pastor's Heart continued:

We have had a lot of transition over the last 18 months; there is always transition when a new pastor starts. But the heart of the congregation and the core of the church has never wavered. Has everything been perfect? Of course not, because all churches are made up of imperfect people, but we have continued to do what God has called us to do. We have lived in community, we have communicated with one another, and I believe that by welcoming me and showing me all that the church does, it has only strengthened your love of this community of faith and our shared commitment to showing God's love.

I love being the pastor at Covenant Presbyterian Church and I hope we will continue to love and serve God together for many years to come! Thank you for making July the month of celebration it turned out to be!

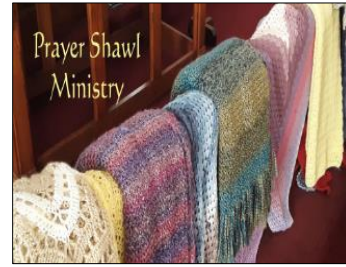
Grace and Peace,

Pastor Becky

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

August 9	Ice cream reception after worship hosted by Finance Committee
August 14	Misión Peniel - Immokalee
August 18	FSW Mobile Food Pantry
September 7	Labor Day holiday
September 8	Women's circles begin meeting
September 13	Ice cream Sundae Social after worship hosted by Worship Committee
September 27	Luncheon and program about Cedarkirk hosted by Membership & Evangelism Committee
October 4	World Communion Sunday and luncheon after worship hosted by Fellowship Committee
October 24	Peace River Presbytery PW Gathering
October 31	JP & Friends concert <i>and</i> Trunk or Treat
November 1	PW Fall Gathering Luncheon with Julie Mercer, speaker
November 6	Brass Elements Concert
November 13	Concert Series – Bobby VanDeusen Concert
November 22	PW Craft & Bake Sale
November 26	Thanksgiving holiday

Prayer Shawl Ministry meets the fourth Tuesday of every month at 10:00AM in F207. New members are always welcome to join us for conversation and fellowship as we knit and crochet beautiful shawls which are donated to friends in need of a warm "hug." Yarn, needles and crochet hooks are available. Our next get-together is Tuesday, August 25, 2026, at 10AM in room F207 to knit and crochet our prayer shawls. Join us!



August Birthdays



- 01 Richard Shafer
- 05 Louise Kaserman
- 11 Lucy Molloy
- 17 Rosemary Wallace
- 18 Ellen Sheppard
- 19 Warren Apple
- Tripp Collins
- 21 Vivian Hill
- Judy Marzano
- 23 David Beardsley
- 25 Tim Vance
- 27 Dale Mahle
- Rich Ward
- 30 Heather Blakely
- 31 Carolyn Mondora
- Zoe Tan Pereda



There will be an **ice cream reception** immediately following worship on **August 9, 2026**, hosted by the Finance committee. It will be a welcome treat during such a hot part of the year.

Florida Farm Bill SB 290

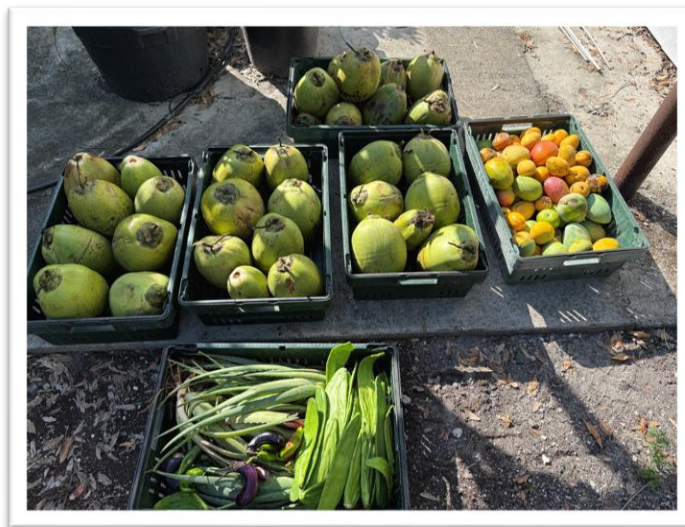


The 2026 Florida Farm Bill, SB 290, was signed by the Governor. This bill makes changes to numerous programs within the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services but unfortunately weakens key protections for Florida's environment. Some lands acquired in fee title under the Florida Forever program (FFP) could be converted to agricultural use and then remain protected only by the terms of a Rural and Family Lands Protection program (RFLPP) easement, permanently weakening Florida's conservation system and excluding public access. Additionally, the FFP, (which creates new state parks, forests and wildlife management areas), is neglected in the budget from any new dedicated funding. Instead, the budget provides a hefty \$200 million line item to the Rural and Family Lands Protection program (RFLPP). Florida leaders historically recognized that both programs are essential because they serve different purposes in preserving the lands and waters that define our state. One program cannot replace the other.

Audubon Florida Naturalist magazine, summer 2026

**Potluck and Bingo
Night with the
Spanish Church**
August 21, 2026
@ 6:30 PM
Heflin Hall

MISSIONS



GARDEN INFORMATION

For 7/1/26:

370.5 lbs. of coconuts

69 lbs. of mangoes

17.5 lbs. of bananas

7 lbs. of collards

3 lbs. of purslane

Total of 467 lbs. for the week!

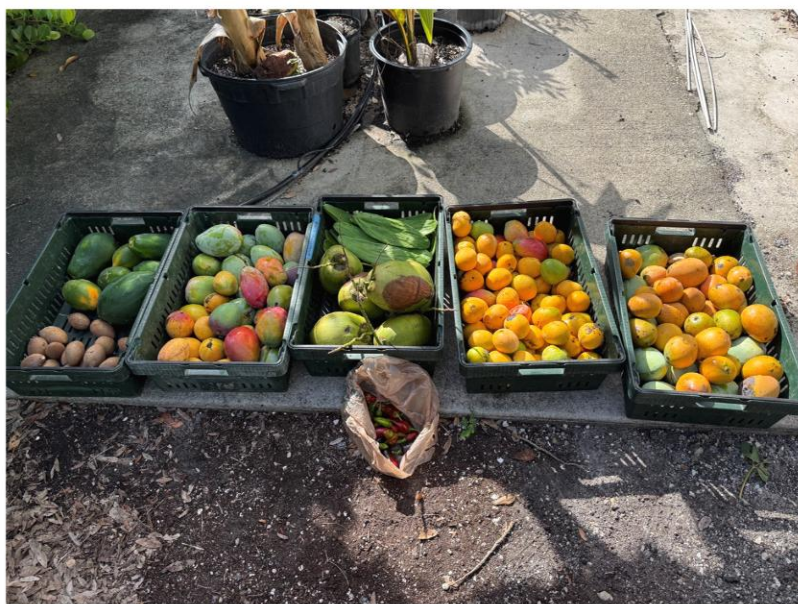
For 7/15/26:

23.3 lbs. of bananas

12 lbs. purslane

134.5 lbs. mangoes

6 lbs. misc. (peppers, nopales, starfruit)



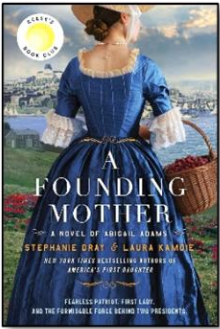
The last of Covenant's food drive donations were taken to The Community Cooperative this week - and the final totals were exciting. Our congregation donated 55 boxes of breakfast cereal, weighing in at 66 pounds. And we donated 310 pounds of peanut butter and jelly- that's a lot of sandwiches for hungry kids. Thanks to all for helping to end hunger in our community this summer!

If you have any questions regarding Missions at Covenant, feel free to contact Chris Larson at: celarson582@gmail.com

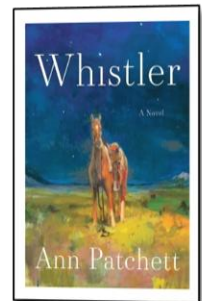


Covenant Library News for August 2026

In celebration of the 250th Anniversary of the birth of the United States comes “a sweeping, intimate portrayal of Abigail Adams—wife of one president and mother to another—whose wit, willpower, and wisdom helped shape the fledgling republic. A stunning historical novel with modern-day implications from the *New York Times* bestselling authors of *America’s First Daughter* and *My Dear Hamilton*. In the heart of revolutionary Boston, Abigail Adams raises her children amid riots, blockades, and the outbreak of war. While her husband, John Adams, rises from country lawyer to nation-builder, often away for years at a time, Abigail builds her own independence—managing their farm, making lucrative investments, amassing savings, battling plague and loss, and defending their home.” We hope that you enjoy *A Founding Mother* by Stephanie Dray and Laura Kamoie.



Also new to our library this month!
Ann Patchett’s newest novel, *Whistler*.







Cedarkirk

CAMP & CONFERENCE CENTER

*A place apart to build up
the body of Christ in love.*

Join us Sunday, 9/27th
for lunch and an
engaging time with
Matt Shick, Executive
Director of Cedarkirk.
Hosted by Membership
and Evangelism
Committee.
Lunch is free.
Donations accepted.



SUNDAY

September 27th

11:15AM

Heflin Hall

WELCOME TO CEDARKIRK!





VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

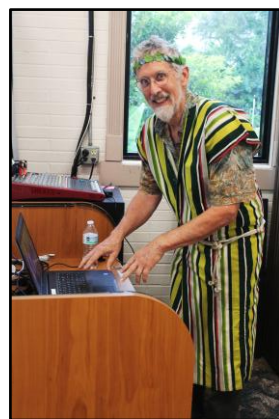
Paul and the Underground Church were Alive and Well!

The energy was amazing during our VBS. We had 21 participants, 20 adult volunteers, 10 youth volunteers, and 6 behind the scenes volunteers.

Paul shared that God's love: is a gift, changes us, is always with us, saves us, and is worth sharing.

We always promote a near, and a far, mission at VBS. This year our near mission was raising money to provide trees for our garden to help serve the Central American workers in Immokalee. We raised \$112 for trees. The far mission was to collect school supplies for our sister Church in Cuba, El Fuerte. We will be sending notebook paper and pencils to help our children there.

Nothing can separate us from God's love, and we continue to share it!





COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH CONCERT SERIES 2026 - 2027

JP & Friends

Saturday, October 31, 2026, 3:00 PM

Trunk or Treat

Informal - Courtyard

Bobby Van Deusen, Piano

Friday, November 13, 2026, 7:30 PM

Christmas Concert

Friday, December 11, 2026, 7:30 PM

King's Brass

Friday, January 22, 2027, 7:30 PM

JP & Friends

Saturday, February 6, 2027, 3:00 PM

Informal - Courtyard

Joel Raney, Pianist

Friday, February 26, 2027, 7:30 PM

Karin White, Soprano

Friday, March 12, 2027, 7:30 PM

Spring Concert

April 2, 2027, 7:30 PM

FREE ADMISSION TO ALL CONCERTS

Covenant Presbyterian Church

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Enjoy your
summer and
stay safe!



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