



SEPTEMBER 2026

COVENANT MATTERS!

The Newsletter of the Saints at
Covenant Presbyterian Church

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FROM THE PASTOR'S HEART:

Statement of Faith

We believe in God, in Jesus Christ, in the Holy Spirit, and in you
and in me.

We believe the Holy Spirit has freed us to worship as a community.

We believe the Holy Spirit works through

balloons and ministers

daisies and wiggly children

clanging cymbals and silence

drama and the unexpected

choirs and banners

touching and praying

spontaneity and planning

faith and doubt

tears and laughter

leading and supporting

hugging and kneeling

dancing and stillness

applauding and giving

creativity and plodding

words and listening

holding and letting go

thank you and help me

Scripture and alleluias

agonizing and celebrating

accepting and caring

through you and through me

through Love.

We believe God's Holy Spirit lives in this community of dancing,

hand-holding people where lines of age and politics and life-styles
are crossed.

We believe in praising God for Life.

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 believe in responding to God's grace and love and justice for all people.

We believe in the poetry within each of us.

We believe in dreams and visions.

We believe in old people running and children leading.

We believe in the Kingdom of God within us.

We believe in Love.

Poem taken from the book, "Reaching for Rainbows" by Ann Weems.

Grace and Peace,

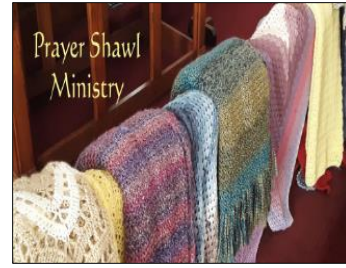
Pastor Becky

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

September 7	Labor Day holiday ~ Office closed
September 13	Ice cream Sundae Social after worship hosted by Worship Committee
September 14	Women's circles begin meeting
September 27	Luncheon (FREE!) 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 22	PW Craft & Bake Sale
November 26	Thanksgiving holiday

UPCOMING EVENTS

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, September 22, 2026, at 10AM in room F207 to knit and crochet our prayer shawls.



Join us!



There will be an **Ice Cream Sundae Social** immediately following worship on **September 13, 2026**, hosted by the Worship committee. There will be all sorts of toppings to make your favorite Sundae. Come and enjoy something cold on a hot September day!

Gathering in His Name

Small group dinners start back up this month. Sign-up sheets are at the Welcome Center if you would like to join a group.



Cedarkirk *A place apart to build up the body of Christ in love.*
CAMP & CONFERENCE CENTER

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.



WELCOME TO CEDARKIRK!

Please sign up at the Welcome Center
so we can plan for an accurate
number. But if you don't sign up, don't
stay away. Come anyways.

SUNDAY
September 27th
11:15AM
Heflin Hall





SAVE THE DATE

Peace River Presbyterian Women's Autumn Gathering ~ *Better Together*

October 24, 2026

Registration: 8:30 am

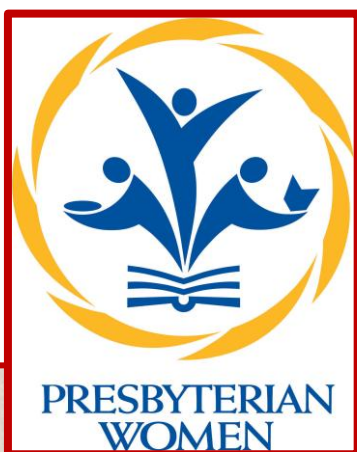
Program begins: 9:00 am

Location:

**Covenant Presbyterian Church
2439 McGregor Blvd
Fort Myers, FL 33901**

Co-hosted by Covenant & Cypress Lake

Program details & Registration Forms will be distributed in September



Covenant Presbyterian Women warmly invites all women of the church to join in our upcoming 2026-2027 Horizons Bible Study, "United Through Christ, Bound to Each Other". Lesson One is "Unity in Christ, Wisdom from God". Study books are available in the church Office for \$19.00 or contact Anna Siemen.

Our three Circles meet for fellowship, mission, study and prayer. Circles regularly meet in Room F201 the 2nd week of the month unless a holiday interferes. This Fall our meetings will start as follows:

Naomi Circle - 12:30 p.m., Monday September 14th
Deborah Circle - 10:00 a.m., Tuesday September 15th (and via Zoom)
Rehab Circle - 7:00 p.m., Wednesday September 16th

A big thank you to our returning PW Circle leaders and to Pastor Becky for leading our PW CT Bible Study Review each month:

Deborah Circle - Ellen Moore
Rehab Circle - Elizabeth Birkby
Naomi Circle - Anna Siemen and Jane Kaserman

We look forward to our new season, Dorothy McDowell, Moderator, Covenant PW

A NOTE FROM FINANCE

Thank you for your weekly giving! With an annual budgeted amount of \$546,000, it takes an average weekly giving income stream of \$10,500. This time of year is our low weekly income time. This is just a reminder of our financial obligations to continue to function as our church does. Thank you for your continued giving efforts.

Wilson Wheeler, *Treasurer*

MISSIONS



Volunteers from Covenant were on hand at FSW State College on Tuesday, July 18th, to help forty families receive a wide array of groceries. We distributed canned goods, pasta, cereal, milk, chicken, watermelons, and more. We partnered with the great folks at the Community Cooperative to make this happen. If you have any questions regarding Missions at Covenant, feel free to contact Chris Larson at: celarson582@gmail.com

JULY AND AUGUST 2026

Donation Need List



- Shampoo, Conditioner, bodywash (regular size)
- Deodorant
- Toothpaste-Toothbrushes
- razors, shaving cream
- Soap
- Hand towels
- Towels, used or new
- Socks
- Canned meat (please not tuna fish)
- Cooking Oil (16 oz. Bottles)
- Canned Vegetables
- Diapers # 6
- Baby wipes



Covenant Library News for September 2026

September Birthdays



- 01 Marilyn Adkins
- Bev Grady
- 07 Natalie Wright
- 09 Mary McKenzie
- 11 Don Molloy
- 12 Bill Atkin
- Carol Negley
- 14 Alex Maurer
- Tatiana Maurer
- Jean Sieminski
- 15 Marlene Dietzel
- Mary Tauson
- 20 Rosalind (Roz) Wheeler
- 21 Bob Kaskocsak
- Sally Kaskocsak
- 25 Katie Taylor
- 26 David Negip
- Kate Negip
- 28 Madeline Bailey
- 30 Ruthie Derrick

Books, Magazines, and Puzzles in Our Church Library

The Presbyterian Outlook is an independent, nonprofit magazine focused on the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). It provides news, commentary, and ministry resources to equip and inspire church leaders, lay members, and spiritual seekers within the Reformed tradition. This resourceful magazine is available in our Church Library to staff, elders, deacons, and anyone in the congregation. We can make copies of articles that you want to read at home.

We also have a copy this year's Presbyterian Women's Bible study booklet (United Through Christ: Bound to Each Other... by Rev. Dr. Rhonda Mawhood Lee) if anyone would like to look at it.

We are looking for a copy of The Calamity Club by Kathryn Stockett. If anyone has the book and would like to donate it after you finish reading it, we would greatly appreciate it. Thank you.



Welcome to
Buckingham
Presbyterian Church



Let us pray for Buckingham Presbyterian Church in their time of need. Their Sanctuary, along with the education wing, caught fire on Friday night, August 28. It currently looks like the building is a complete loss. Although the fire engulfed the contents inside of the building and the roof, the cross on the front of the Sanctuary still stands as a symbol of God's unwavering love and comfort to us all. We have offered our assistance to Buckingham. we await to hear what the needs might be in the coming weeks.

Highlights of August 2026 Stated Session Meeting

The Session welcomed Wilson Wheeler, Church Treasurer, to the meeting. Wilson gave an update on our current finances and stressed that we are in the slimmer summer months. We incurred major expenses in July and July with the replacement of the air conditioner unit for the Chapel area upstairs. That cost was \$26,000.00. With storm damage from a severe rainstorm, we removed 3 trees in the garden at a cost of \$5000.00. The fallen trees had also severely damaged the shed. Cost to replace the shed was \$4000.00. These were all emergency and unexpected expenses. Wilson also shared that payroll on a monthly basis is approximately \$20,000.00. He asked the Session to wisely spend money for the next 60 days, until our seasonal church community returns. Wilson said pledges are good and are being received.

Pastor Becky updated the Session on the plans for many of the staff to attend a Conference in Tampa in October. It will be a learning venue to expand their knowledge of our new Realm program which was switched over from ACS in January 2026.

Session received the Finance report which included the retirement of Mary Callaway as Finance Secretary. Mary will remain as a money counter and a member of the Finance committee. Human Resources is planning a reception to honor Mary and her many years of service in October.

The Property Committee has talked with donors that want to provide new cabinetry for the kitchen off of Heflin Hall. The proposal includes all new cabinetry, counter tops, sink and plumbing for the hand wash cabinet, a commercial dishwasher and repainting of the kitchen. It was noted that it will be paid for in it's entirety by the donors. Session approved the project.

Richard Shafer is organizing a Men's Group and currently has 13 men interested. They will have their initial planning meeting on Sunday, September 20 immediately following the Worship Service. Please see Richard for details.

Missions MOTION to designate the 5th Sunday of November (1st Sunday of Advent) as Noisy Offering Sunday was approved by Session. A separate offering plate to loudly receive loose change will be passed during worship. The change will assist poor families with laundry expenses through our missions project that supports InAsMuch.

The Membership and Evangelism Committee is overseeing a new Volunteer/Mentor program with the Edison Park Elementary School. Covenant's church community will be asked to participate either as a volunteer in the school office or as a reading mentor with the children. Whatever you prefer. Days and times are flexible. Background checks and sign-ups are required. Please see Bev Grady, Chair of Membership/Evangelism or any member of the committee for details.

The Nominating committee 2026 will begin meeting soon with Madeleine Doran as Chair. The congregation will be encouraged to provide names of active members to be considered for the slate of church officers. They include Elders, Deacons and Trustees.



The Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) is biennial legislation that authorizes flood risk management, navigation, and ecosystem restoration projects for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps). In July (2026) the bill passed unanimously through key House and Senate committees and is awaiting full floor votes. The bill authorizes 61 feasibility studies and 15 new or modified construction projects across the country. WRDA 2026 also reauthorizes the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) drinking water and wastewater infrastructure programs, including the State Revolving Funds.

"WRDA 2026 is an incredible bipartisan achievement that will strengthen water resources infrastructure and increase access to clean and safe drinking water nationwide. It supports flood risk management efforts, restores ecosystems, strengthens cybersecurity for critical water systems, and provides vital funding for water infrastructure projects," said Chairman Capito.

US Senate Committee on Environment & Public Works epw.senate.gov



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

2439 McGregor Blvd. Fort Myers, FL 33901

Phone: 239 334 8937 Website: www.covpcfm.com





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