



RALLY DAY KICK-OFF EVENT

Join us on Sunday, September 17th, as we kick off our Christian Education programming for the year. This will be the first week of Covenant Connections hour for our children, youth, and adult education programs.

Save the Date: CPR Class

Hands and Hearts will be hosting an American Heart Association CPR Class on Monday, October 2nd at 6pm for a minimal fee. Kathy Hedges will be the instructor. More details to follow in the September Messenger.

Tuesday Speaker Series

**August 1-29 ~ Rev. Dr. Billy Younger
7:00 PM in the Parlor in person,
or via ZOOM**

Synopsis: *Wisdom Literature in the Old Testament*
Wouldn't you love to be wise and know the God who is Wisdom himself? In this five week speaker series we will be studying the three main books of Wisdom Literature in the Old Testament: Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Job. Along the way we will be not only be mining these wise principles for living, but also for the wise Person these books point to through their drama, poetry, proverb and song— Jesus Christ himself!

To sign up to participate in the Tuesday speaker series, please go to <https://tinyurl.com/cotcspeakerseries> or contact the church office.

**DITTMAN-LUTES FUND
TUITION HELP FOR SEMINARY STUDENTS**

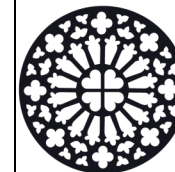
The Dittman Lutes Fund annually makes available money to help church members meet tuition expenses for seminary education. If you, or a member you know is attending seminary or planning to enroll at a seminary, contact the Endowment Committee to learn more about this opportunity for help with tuition expenses.

SOCIAL HOUR ON HIATUS

Please note - beginning **Sunday, June 4**, Social Hour will be on hold and will resume in September. It's BYOC for the summer!

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The Summer Messenger

Newsletter of The Church of the Covenant
August, 2023

“Water Walking At The Church of the Covenant”

The spiritual life cannot be made suburban. It is always frontier, and we who live in it must accept and even rejoice that it remains untamed.

---Howard Macey

*I want to ride to the ridge where the west commences
I can't look at hobbles and I can't stand fences
Don't fence me in.*

—Cole Porter

Lord, if it's you, tell me to come to you on the water.

---St. Peter

One of the most intriguing stories of the New Testament is found in Matthew 14. On one tumultuous, storm-tossed night on the Sea of Galilee Jesus walked across the waves toward his disciples. When Peter recognized His Lord, he was invited to climb out of the boat and do some “water walking.”

It's a wonderful story that seems to fit the life of faith in our times--- and also fits the experience of trying to live as a faithful and growing church post-pandemic. Sometimes our Lord calls us to get out of the boat and to take risks, not only for our own good, but for the good of his Kingdom. Suffice it to say, it is scary. We find ourselves very often way beyond our comfort zones.

Climbing out of the boat seems at times like a foolish thing to do; and yet it's exactly what is required to grow in faith. The alternative, choosing to say “NO” to Christ's command and hiding in our boat of security, comfort and stability, is actually an even more risky decision. Many churches have clung to the past, refusing to risk or change, and today they are in decline or dying.

From my perspective there is no denying that the future before us at COTC will be risky and challenging, filled with issues and challenges that are foreseeable; others, no doubt, will catch us off guard, like unexpected waves. Who knows? Perhaps we will once again find ourselves as a church knocked off balance for a season— just like these last 4 1/2 years!, or just as Peter was in Matthew 14 during his walk on the Sea of Galilee. The great comfort and assurance we have, in facing an unknown future and the storms that swirl around us, is that we are not alone. Jesus is right here with us, walking by our side as we navigate the waves and face the winds of change. Praise be to God for calling us out of our boats to walk with him in trust and obedience!

Water walking with Him,

Billy

P.S. My inspiration for this article comes from John Ortberg's devotional book *“If You Want to Walk on Water, You've Got to Get Out of the Boat.”* I highly recommend it to you.



In Memory Of

- Marguerite Bellinger
Memorial-Youth Education Jack Dagg
- Kathy Teagarden
Memorial Teagarden Fund
Memorial Mark and Kimberly O'Donnell
- James Alan Grimm
Memorial-to VBS Edna Grimm (his Mother)
- Harold Caesber
Memorial-to Preschool Mark and Kimberly O'Donnell
- Mary Alice Wilson
Memorial Carol Carnes
- William "Bill" Braun
Memorial David and Carol McClellan
- Mary Constance "Connie" Hornickel
Memorial Carol K. Kabay
Memorial Chuck and Nancy Neff
Memorial David and Carol McClellan
Memorial George and Mary Alice Jones
Memorial Randall and Elizabeth Sproull
Memorial Perry Lane, Jr.
Memorial Kathryn K. Sheehan
Memorial Bob and Kathy Hedges
Memorial Maxine Steiner
Memorial-to 11 am Choir Redstone Court #830 & 850
Memorial-to Preschool Paula Greenlee
Memorial Janet L. Rohanna
Memorial Bob and Kathy Hedges
Memorial-to 11 am choir Maxine Steiner
Memorial Anne Callahan
Memorial Gina Johnston
Memorial Hands & Hearts Cindy Johnson
Memorial Mark and Kimberly O'Donnell

SAVE THE DATE

Presbyterian Women's Annual Retreat,
Saturday, October 7, 2023 ~ 9:00am-1:00pm ~ Cost \$45.00
Southpointe The Loft Conference Center, Canonsburg, PA
Speaker - Rev. Dr. Karen Younger

CHANGE TO NURSERY HOURS

The Nursery will be unstaffed until September 17th. The room will be open for the convenience of families who may need it.

DEADLINE FOR THE September MESSENGER is August 15

FUNERALS

Barbara Richmond joined the Church Triumphant on July 11, 2023. A time of visitation was held at Piatt and Barnhill Funeral Home on Friday, July 14th with The Rev. Dr. Scott Shetter officiating. All other funeral arrangements were private.

PARISH NURSE CORNER

The Health Topic Bulletin Board is located on the wall in the Covenant Center hallway next to the offices. Thank you to Jerry Davison and Ralph Farabee for mounting a new improved bulletin board! Check out the bulletin board weekly for new information on



timely topics related to health and wellness. If you would like to see any particular topic covered, please contact me. Stop by Room 302 on Sunday mornings from 10-10:45am. Any questions contact me at 724-263-7911. Good Health to all,
Linda Grimm, RN, Parish Nurse.

CHURCH DIRECTORY APP AVAILABLE

We have exciting news! Along with our new Pictorial Directory comes the opportunity to download it electronically using an app that is available from The App Store (Apple) or Goggle Play (Android). Each family will have a UNIQUE IDENTIFIER (a code) that can be used to create an account. The church directory can then be downloaded on a cell phone or tablet.

By July 31, 2023 you should receive an email containing the UNIQUE IDENTIFIER code. The email will come from Universal Directories. The subject line will read "Unique Identifier to Church of the Covenant Directory" There will be attachments to that email with specific instructions on how to download the App.

If, by the end of July, you haven't received the email containing your family's UNIQUE IDENTIFIER or if you have any questions please call or email the office: (724)222-0190 x 111 or churchoftheco@comcast.net.

LIVESTREAMED SERVICES UPDATE

For those who enjoy worshipping online, our Sunday service live streaming will hopefully be up and running again soon. We are blessed to have a few people who have expressed interest in being trained for this ministry! If everything goes well we'll be streaming the 11:00am worship service again as soon as possible!

FROM THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Nominating Committee is seeking names of potential candidates to serve as church elders and deacons to be elected in the fall. Soon, there will be an insert in the bulletins with information on officer qualifications and a ballot. Please start to prayerfully consider whether you, or someone you know, would be a faithful church officer. Suggestions can be placed in the offering plate or mailed to the church office.

UPDATE FROM HANDS AND HEARTS

We are not able to accept donations of medical equipment or pill bottles at this time. Thanks, very much, for your generous donations in the past.
Linda Grimm, RN, Parish Nurse

VBS THANK YOU

Thank you to all who helped plan and prepare for our Hero Hotline VBS. Our church is full of everyday heroes who helped ensure a great week for more than 140 children. The donations, willingness to volunteer, and incredible support shown by many in our church is a huge blessing and much appreciated.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL, PREVIEW DAY, 2023

On July 9th, over 125 guests and 40+ VBS volunteers had a SUPER fun time at VBS Preview Day! Everyone enjoyed themed snacks and games, a coloring station, and creating a special banner for our local first responder superheroes. VBS kids met group leaders and volunteers, and new friends to prepare for the exciting week ahead! RJM Safety Resources, LLC showed us how all ages can be superheroes with hands-only CPR demonstrations. It was a great way to show our VBS families a warm Covenant welcome before the start of VBS the following week.



Captain America & Friends



Hands-Only CPR was taught to VBS kids

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL, JULY 17-21, 2023

The VBS Leadership Team sincerely thanks everyone who generously donated through our Amazon wish list, snack donations, gift cards, home-made goodies for our volunteers and for continued support and prayers along the way. This mission could not happen without your support, and we are so blessed and awe-struck by your generosity! With sincere gratitude, your VBS Leadership Team.
Amy Dille, Lois Core, Tara Dyer, Yvonne Gayle, Heidi and Dan Gottron, Darla Pepper Miller, Bonnie Saffell



Our VBS heroes had a visit from community super-heroes.



They played and laughed



sang songs and danced,



and prayed together