The Caravan

on the journey together AUGUST 2023

GROWING TIME
Hello to Megan and Looking to the Future

A letter from Pastor Charlie

I don't usually get excited about mowing the lawn, but after all the dry weather, it's good to see the grass turning green, growing, and actually needing to be mowed. (And it's just as good to have one of our sons home to do the actual mowing…!)

I'm also excited about the way things are growing around here at Covenant, as we emerge from Covid and a season of many transitions.

We welcomed Rev Megan Berry to staff in late July, and she's making plans for children and youth ministry this fall. Please say hello to her and don't forget to wear your nametags on Sundays. (And you may need to introduce yourself a few times to her.)

The Associate Pastor Nominating Committee is continuing to work, seeking our second Associate Pastor, with focus on mission, adult education, and pastoral care.

To help us grow deeper as Christians and to strengthen our connections among each other, we're planning a variety of programs, activities, and themes for the fall. Included in that will be another six week cycle of small groups. Stay tuned for more info.



The banners in the sanctuary remind us that this is GROWING TIME for us, a time to be open to God's spirit, to teach us new things.

As the grass grows, as the flowers bloom, as the corn harvest begins, let's also be mindful of ways that we can grow in faith, hope, and love every day.

On the journey together,
Charlie

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Contact Us

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MATTHEW 25

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA)

First Wednesdays Potluck
Wednesday, August 2, 12:00pm



Feel free to bring a friend as we enjoy a time of good food and warm fellowship! Cook something at home, pick up something at your favorite grocery store, or favorite restaurant for a carry-out dish to share. Beverages, plates, and utensils will be provided. This mid-week potluck takes place on the first Wednesday of the month.

Racists Anonymous Fellowship Book Study
Thursdays 7:00pm (through Aug 17)



RAF is sponsoring a book study weekly on Zoom! The book is "What Kind of Christianity: A History of Slavery and Anti-Black Racism in the Presbyterian Church" by William Woo, a book that can lead us to understand that, in order to promote racial justice, we need first to learn how much racial injustice has been a part of the denomination's history and identity. This book is available in our library or pcusa.org. Email jbmorgan@me.com to be put on the mailing list and get the meeting link.

Summer Arts & Crafts Displays
Sundays 10:30am (through Sept 3)



During the summer on Sundays, we will have an arts or crafts display in the gathering space, all original art made by Covenant members. Here are our artists for the remainder of the summer: **Aug 6 - Larry Dubisz (photography), Aug 13 - Marco Mascitti (photography), Aug 20 - Gary Bertram (watercolor), Aug 27 - Peggy Bugg (miniatures), Sept 3 - Steve Fulton (woodcarving).**

Triangle Community Meal
Monday, August 7

TRIANGLE COMMUNITY MINISTRY

Would you like to help feed hungry people in Madison? Join us on Monday, August 7 to provide dinner for the residents of the Triangle Community. There are multiple ways to become involved: grocery shopping, baking desserts, meal prep, and serving (and eating with) the residents. Contact Frances Parker at Frances@xlk9online.com to get involved!

A Program for Peace
Sunday, August 26, 6:30pm



"A Program for Peace" is a Benefit Concert for the people of Ukraine, in our continued efforts to support our brothers and sisters in need. You may recall that we held a benefit concert last Fall with beautiful music, raising over $20,000. We again will invite back Ukrainian musician Ivan Shmilo who plays the bandura. A free will donation will be collected with all donations being split between Presbyterian Disaster Assistance and Wisconsin Ukrainians, Inc.

Spiritual Stroll
Sunday, August 27, 2:00pm



Our August Spiritual Stroll will be held at **Ice Age Trail (Verona Segment)**! These strolls are part of CONNECT, a program of deacon-sponsored events with the intention of fostering connection between Covenant and the community. We visit a different park/green space every month.

Coming Up @ Covenant

Sing with the Choir!
Sunday, August 27



Is this the year that you get back to raising your voice in praise to God? Do you remember how great it felt to sing with your friends and share a joyful or thoughtful message through music? You are encouraged to join the Covenant Choir for a one-time opportunity to sing on Sunday, August 27. Singers will come together at 8:45am to learn an anthem to sing in worship that morning. You may find you like giving your voice and your heart the exercise and want to continue with this closely-knit, supportive group! Regular Wednesday rehearsals will start September 6 at 7pm.

Blood Drive
Thursday, August 31, 12:00-5:00pm





The next American Red Cross Blood Drive at Covenant is on Thursday, August 31 from 12-5pm in Bradfield Hall. Visit redcrossblood.org, click 'Find A Drive' and enter **Covenantpresmadison** to donate blood. You can also use the QR code or call 1-800-RED-CROSS.

Interfaith Pride Service @ Bethany United Methodist
Monday, August 21, 6:30pm (5pm fair)



Join together with Madison faith communities for an interfaith event to celebrate and support the LGBTQIA+ community, sponsored by Wisconsin Faith Voices for Justice. Organizations will hold an info fair at 5pm. The service is at 6:30pm. This service centers Queer voices and celebrates the LGBTQIA+ community and our allies. The interfaith service can be viewed online at Bethany United Methodist Church's YouTube Livestream channel.

Announcements

Return to Regular Worship Schedule



We will be returning to our regular worship schedule **on Sunday, September 10,** our Fall Kick-Off Sunday. Services again will be offered at 9:00am (New Day Worship) and 11:00am (Traditional Worship). Stay tuned for more info on kick-off Sunday and the Ministry Fair!

Help Stock our Food Pantries



Food banks face their greatest need for donations during the summertime. Will you help us stock our Little Food Pantry (indoor) and Little Free Pantry (outdoor)? They are located just outside the office and at the entrance to the parking lot. Specific requests include: macaroni & cheese, granola bars, cereal, shampoo, deodorant, and toothpaste. Only non-perishable foods please!

Happy Birthday!

August 1
Sally Lorenz

August 2
Silvia Kammerzelt
Ann Perry
Patty West

August 3
Sandy Nuernberg

August 4
Jeri Erickson
Molly Peterson
Cindy Schally

August 9
Helen Madsen

August 10
Mac Crump

August 12
Jack Barden
Arlene Strikwerda
Ann Sydnor

August 13
Craig Sommers

August 16
Nancy Dubisz
Lynn Krebs

August 19
David Logan
Nancy McCulley
Bill Salmonowicz

August 20
Sally Carpenter
Kathryn Richardson
Maggie Smith

August 21
Orion Pevehouse
Nan Schaefer

August 22
Leslie Blaize

August 23
Scott Beestman
Al Crist
Eliza Hardy
Don Harkness
Bernie Maroney
Greggar Petersen

August 24
Peg Eklund

August 25
Dave Rebholz
Linda Schilling

August 28
Doug McNeel

August 29
Jeremy Smith

August 31
Sherry Jordan
Charley Punt
Colin Punt

*If we missed your birthday, we apologize!
Please contact the church office and we'll add yours for next year. Thank you for understanding!

Worship Schedule

Good News from the Pews

Sunday, August 6
Holy Communion
Carrie Sanders | "The Esther Moment" | Esther 4:14

Sunday, August 13
Reflections from Guatemala Trip (July 31-Aug 6)

Sunday, August 20
Tom Blewett | "Experiencing God's Presence in Our Lives" | Isaiah 41:10

Sunday, August 27
Marilyn Krichko | "The 3 Lies" | Romans 12:1-2

Sunday, September 3
Last Sunday of ONE service
Charlie Berthoud

Unless otherwise noted, services are offered at **9:30am** in person and on YouTube.

Joys, Concerns & Prayers

Prayers continue for the following Covenant families and friends mourning these loved ones:

Mildred Wiegand, friend of Art Kanitz
Dayton (Dick) Jones, Covenant member
Jim Lenz, friend of Laverne Joossee
Bill Laubenheimer, brother of Ann Larget
Pernilla Persson Hardin, friend of Marilyn Krichko
Richard (Dick) McGary, Covenant member

We celebrate the birth of:

Josias Morales Garcia, son of Rodrigo Morales
Joseph Andrew Schomer, son of Dana Wilson & Joe Schomer (Dana is niece to Peter & Nancy Gunder)

Children's Ministries

Sunday School
Sunday School resumes **Sunday, September 10.**

Kaleidoscope Kids
(3 years old through 2nd grade)
Kaleidoscope Kids meets during worship following Children's Time, and includes stories from the Bible and/or Christian tradition.

Sunday Worship
We invite families into worship! Family worship bags and Children's Bibles are available Sundays, and there is a Children's Time during the service.
Our Nursery is open from 9:15-10:45am for children ages 3 and under.

Visit covenantmadison.org/children for more information or contact Megan Berry at mberry@covenantmadison.org.

Youth Connection

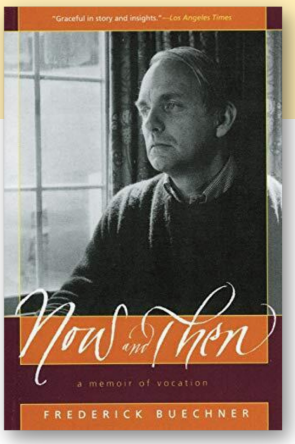
Youth Connection News
Youth Connection resumes in the Fall. Stay tuned for more information on start date, etc...

Visit covenantmadison.org/youth for more information or contact Megan Berry at mberry@covenantmadison.org.



Welcome, Megan!
We are pleased to welcome Rev. Megan Berry to the Covenant staff as Associate Pastor for Children, Youth & Families! A Missouri native, Megan graduated from Drury University with a BA in music and a minor in psychology. Megan earned her Master of Divinity degree from Louisville Presbyterian Seminary and was ordained in her home church in Heartland Presbytery in 2021. For the past two years, Megan has been a Resident Minister at First Presbyterian Church in Ann Arbor, MI. Among her activities there were writing curricula for Sunday School classes, developing a class for parents of confirmation class participants, and working with the church's high school youth program.

Library Corner



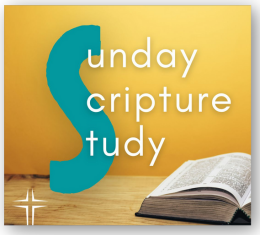
Book Review: *Now and Then*
Written by Frederick Buechner | Reviewed by Jenn Sauer

"Frederick Buechner" is a name I've been hearing for what feels like as long as I've been old enough to pay attention in church. He's one of those eminently quotable, impressively prolific twentieth-century Protestant luminaries—in some ways, an American analog of Britain's CS Lewis: a learned theologian-novelist who uses his art to witness to the unearned grace of God. But despite his 39 genre-spanning books out there in the world, I somehow hadn't read a single one until I picked up Now & Then from Covenant's library.

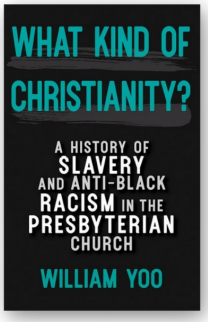
Read more at covenantmadison.org/post/now-and-then.

Adult Education

Adult Education resumes September 10!
Adult Education at Covenant takes a break for the summer, but we try and keep the Covenant family in the loop with any other Christian/Adult Education opportunities. See below for such opportunities! Check covenantmadison.org/adult-ed-classes for recordings of classes you missed or want to re-watch!



Sunday Scripture Study
Sundays, 8:45-9:20am
Sunday Scripture Study is back! Beginning Sunday, June 4, join a small group in the Lounge every Sunday from 8:45-9:20am before 9:30 worship to discuss the Sunday scripture text. With Adult Education taking a hiatus this summer, this is a great way to stay engaged in Christian education!



Racists Anonymous Fellowship Book Study
Thursdays 7:00pm (through Aug 17)
RAF is sponsoring a book study weekly on Zoom! The book is "What Kind of Christianity: A History of Slavery and Anti-Black Racism in the Presbyterian Church" by William Woo, a book that can lead us to understand that, in order to promote racial justice, we need first to learn how much racial injustice has been a part of the denomination's history and identity. This book is available in our library or pcusa.org. Email jbmorgan@me.com to be put on the mailing list and get the meeting link.

Visit covenantmadison.org/adult for more information about Adult Education at Covenant.

Behind the Scenes

It takes many hands to do the work that keeps Covenant running smoothly, and many of those tasks happen behind the scenes.

Thank You to:

- Building & Grounds Committee and others who put up numbers on exit doors and cleaned out and painted three offices
- Sanctuary Adornment volunteers who adorn the sanctuary for all church seasons
- Office volunteers covering the front desk while Bailey is in Guatemala
- The many small group leaders who foster Christian fellowship and education within our congregation

If you would like to take part in one of these ministries, please contact the church office at info@covenantmadison.org.

Session Report

Laurie Jones, Clerk

Your Session met in-person for their regularly scheduled meeting on July 25. The evening began with a visit from Jo Wiersema as they seek to move further in the ordination process. Jo has been an Inquirer with the Presbytery for the last year, and they have advanced their studies at the Dubuque Theological Seminary. Jo is now ready to enter the second phase as a Candidate. Those present were happy to hear the progress Jo has made and about the four interesting positions Jo holds this summer. The Session wholeheartedly approved Jo's move from the Inquirer to Candidate stage in the ordination process. The request will now go to the Committee on Preparation for Ministry at the Presbytery level. We are exceedingly proud of Jo and our prayers continue for success in their final year of seminary training.

The second joyous topic was to welcome Megan Berry to her first Session meeting at Covenant. Following introductions, all were grateful to have her join our church family and look forward to working with her!

In other business, the new form to continue the search for another Associate Pastor, now called an MDP, or Mission Discernment Profile, was reviewed and approved. The Elders are very grateful to the APNC in their diligent work and continue their prayers for these faithful servants. The Finance Committee Chair reported that our financial status is strong and more policies were approved as they continue to work toward fulfilling the recommendations of the financial review consultants. With joy, the Nominating Committee announced they have a completed their search for 2024 officers and Vice-Chair people. This is the earliest the task has been completed! Election of the 2024 officers will happen at a congregational meeting this fall.

As summer continues, the Session will take the month of August off and reconvene in September. As we enter the fall, excitement is in the air with a new Associate Pastor, positive energy, and joy. Your Session is excited about participating in what is to come. Are you?

Mission Spotlight

RIP MEDICAL DEBT

Unfortunately, medical debt can be all too easy to accumulate. In many cases, all it takes is getting sick or being involved in an accident. From that point, the existence of medical debt turns many people's lives upside down. Home foreclosures and bankruptcies are common. A tarnished credit rating makes it next to impossible to take out a loan or to rent an apartment. In too many cases, trying to pay a medical bill depletes a person's savings. Some have even become homeless. Even worse, a lot of people carrying medical debt do not pursue the care they need or fail to buy medications that will keep them healthy.

RIP Medical Debt is an organization that is a leader in the purchase and forgiveness of medical debt. They buy debt that has been sent to a collection agency for pennies on the dollar. This method allows contributions to go much further toward the elimination of medical debt. A single dollar will remove at least $100 of medical debt for someone struggling to pay their bills.

Last year, the John Knox Presbytery sent $14,245.25 to RIP Medical Debt where it grew to take care of $1,925,734.76 worth of medical debt for 2,594 families. The presbytery will participate again this year in this ministry to relieve medical debt for as many families as possible.

As a Matthew 25 church, we are called to work toward the eradication of systemic poverty. Relieving the burden of medical debt will change peoples' lives and offer them hope for the future. The Mission Committee has chosen the John Knox Presbytery's Generosity Task Force Initiative with RIP Medical Debt as the beneficiary of our portion of the Peace & Global Witness Offering this year.

Covenant Presbyterian Church
326 S. Segoe Road
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