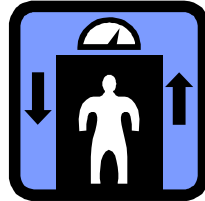




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GROWING UP? –OR– GOING DOWN?



WE CAN CHOOSE TO GROW OUR CHURCH!

PASTOR THOMAS WILLCOX

Now is a critical time in the life of our CPC Family! We have the opportunity to grow our church. I believe that the choice to build is an important part of the choice to grow our church family. The work we are doing, installing an elevator and renovating the older facilities, is a choice to grow. We will have an added appeal with a new, attractive entrance from the parking lot. Our facilities will become accessible to nearly everyone, including those who are less physically able. Does this mean that once the construction is done we should see our numbers grow? Sadly, the answer is no. We may have a few new folks in church because of the new elevator, but probably very few.



What will it take to grow our church? In order to answer that question, we must first establish what we mean by "Church Growth". One answer could be that a church is growing when the number of people attending worship each Sunday goes up. Another answer could be that a church is growing when the amount of money people give is going up. Yet another answer might be that a church is growing when believers become more mature believers. The truth is that all of these are a part of church growth but none of them is at the heart of church growth.

Church growth at the time of the birth of the Church was described as followsⁱ.

The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, *not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.* 2 Peter 3:9

And the Lord *added to their number daily those who were being saved.* Acts 2:47b

Church growth is about unsaved people being saved!

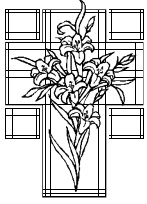
According to the scripture then, Church growth is happening when the Lord adds to our number "those who are being saved." Church growth is about unsaved people being saved! If we could succeed in attracting believers from the valley to come to Covenant instead of staying home or worshipping elsewhere, we would *not* be succeeding in Church growth. We might enjoy the benefits of congregational growth if we got the valley's believers to attend Covenant. But, it would only be a redistribution of the Church, the body of believers already in the valley. This is not Church growth.

continued on page 6

Contact us

Phone
724-981-3535
Fax
724-981-4852
Email
covenant@verizon.net
Website
www.covenantpressharon.org

Easter Flowers



Easter is right around the corner and we are inviting you to participate in our worship services by placing a flower in the sanctuary. If you wish, this may be given in honor or memory of a loved one and given to a shut-in.

Please fill out the response form in the bulletin and include a check made payable to Covenant Presbyterian Church. The forms and money may be placed in a pew envelope and

marked "EASTER FLOWER" and then placed in the offering plate or brought to the church office.

Each flower is foil-wrapped with a bow. Each plant is \$6.50. You may take your flowers after the Easter morning service. The deadline for ordering flowers is Monday, March 7th.

Elevator and Renovation Project Update

On Sunday, Feb. 13th, the Elevator Extra Giving Campaign brought in \$10,658. Commitments in the amount of \$26,410 for a total of \$37,068.

Income received into the Elevator Fund to date: \$99,768.34

Expenses to date: \$26,415.72

Current Elevator funds available: \$73,352.62

Below is the timeframe of when the money is needed. As you can see, we have about as much money as needed to get us through the middle of March and then it becomes crunch time. We need about \$102,000 by mid-March and we have \$73,000 available; however, we also have some renovation restricted funds and some memorial funds that could be used. From that point forward it will be legacy money minus whatever comes in, and as mentioned in Sunday's sermon, we have needed those funds to help pay our normal operating expenses during the year. On average, it has been costing us from \$40,000 to \$60,000 a year more to fund our programs than we have been receiving in offerings.

82 families made commitments as of this date. If you have not yet made your commitment, please do so. You can put your card in the offering plate, or mail it to the church office.

Amount	Description	Due Date
\$1,800.00	Architect Fee	Paid
\$3,700.00	Electrical	Paid
\$15,000.00	Deposit	Paid
\$15,000.00	Partial Payment	2/15/2005
\$87,500.00	Partial Payment	3/15/2005
\$87,500.00	Partial Payment	5/15/2005
\$17,000.00	Final Payment	5/15/2005
\$227,000.00	Total Estimated Cost	



This is a glimpse of new shelves and countertop in the women's restroom. The doorway has been enlarged for wheelchair access and new toilet facilities are also handicap accessible.

Lenten Newsletter 2005

Special Lenten Services

Seder Service

Saturday, March 19th

Tureen Dinner at 5:30 pm

Service 6:30 pm

Maundy-Thursday Service

Thursday, March 24th 7 pm

Tenebrae Service

Friday, March 25th 7 pm



Sunday Night Prayer Services

Please keep your **Sunday evenings** during Lent open to attend the Lenten services beginning at **7:00** with worship, then a time of testimony, teaching and prayer (corporate and personal) from **February 13 - March 13**.

Special Holy Week Music

The Chancel Choir is preparing "special music" for services on Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday morning. We would love to have "extra voices" joining us at these special services.

Anyone grade 7 to adult is welcome to come. Rehearsals will begin Thursday, March 3rd at 7:30pm in the sanctuary. There will be four rehearsals:

Thursday, March 3 at 7:30 pm

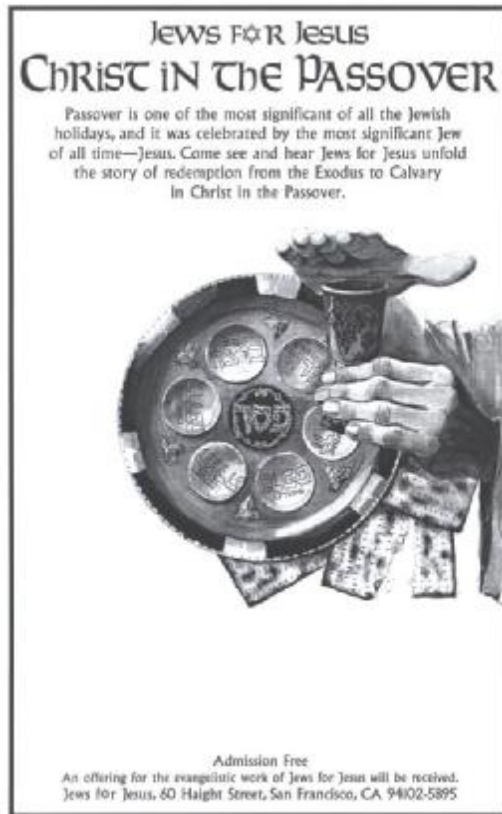
Thursday, March 10 at 7:30 pm

Thursday, March 17 at 7:30 pm

Wednesday, March 23 at 7:30 pm

Please call Penny (724-347-3637) if you have any questions.

"Christ in the Passover" Presentation



What do the Jewish Passover and Jesus' Last Supper have in common? Garrett Smith, with Jews for Jesus, will answer that question in a presentation called "Christ in the Passover" at Covenant Church on March 19th at 6:30pm in the sanctuary. Prior to the presentation, we will have a tureen dinner in the multi-purpose room.

Garrett Smith will use a visual display of traditional Passover accouterments in order to enhance the Christian's understanding and appreciation for the Jewish background of the Christian Communion. Ancient and modern Jewish customs are discussed and described with an emphasis on the aspect of redemption which Christ accomplished at Calvary.

A table is set with traditional Jewish Passover items, including representative foods which are explained, but not eaten. The ceremonial seder plate, the three-compartment pouch in which the Matzo (unleavened bread) is kept, as well as the traditional cup of Elijah are presented which will shed new insights to their christological significance.

Jews for Jesus has presented this demonstration in over five thousand churches. Originally written by Moishe Rosen, the founder of Jews for Jesus, the presentation was abstracted from the writings of the late Rabbi Leopold Cohn, who came to faith in Jesus in 1894 and died in 1936.

Dr. Rosen contends that some of the most important elements of Christian doctrine, such as the Trinity, the principle of substitutionary atonement and salvation through a personal relationship with the Messiah, are implied in the Seder as observed by Orthodox Jews even today. "Our message is not new, but we're telling it in a new way. For too long the Jewish roots of Christianity have been forgotten."

Rosen says, "Though our primary ministry is to those who do not yet believe in Jesus." Jews for Jesus is an evangelistic agency best known for creative methods and materials. Their literature deals with contemporary themes including anything from current films to chemical waste.

Those attending the "Christ in the Passover" program on March 19th at 6:30pm will have an opportunity to examine literature and materials as well as to ask questions of the speaker, Garrett Smith.

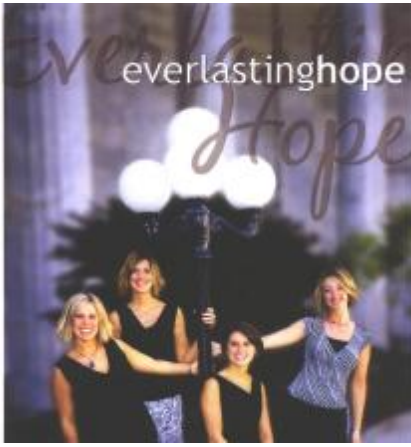
We will have a tureen dinner at 5:30pm (prior to the presentation) in the fellowship hall. We are looking for volunteers to prepare several of the dishes that were commonly eaten during the passover. Recipes for these dishes are available in the church office, please call the office 724-981-3535 if you are interested. The recipes are simple, easy to follow, and can be made with ingredients found locally in most grocery stores.

If, however, your cooking skills are more like mine, then you may choose to bring an item from the list below to share at the dinner. Drink will be provided. Please bring your own table service.

Thank you all in advance for your participation. This is a wonderful opportunity to bring a friend, neighbor or co-worker to introduce them to Christ and to our church.

First Letter of last name	Please bring
A – E	Salad
F – O	Main course
P – S	Dessert
T – Z	Choice of vegetable

Sincerely,
The Worship Committee



Everlasting Hope to Return March 12th

They're back! Everlasting Hope has agreed to return for an evening of praise, worship, and song on March 12th (Saturday) at 7:00 P.M. If you missed them the first time you won't want to miss this one. They are fresh from Nashville with 2 new CD recordings and lots of still newer material. They are now touring with their spouses who just happen to double as the band. We highly recommend this evening and invite you to bring more than a few friends. What a wonderful way to introduce someone to the Lord and to Covenant Church. The variety of music and the professional sound and presentation make for a wonderful evening of praise and glory to God. A free will offering will be taken for their ministry. We look forward to worshipping with you. The Worship Committee.

Children's Ministry Update

As February turns into March, it is easy to think about the upcoming season of spring. Just as changes occur as God's creation turns from a time of cold winter into blossoming spring, so we can see blossoming in the children's ministries. This winter has been filled with fun and excitement. We celebrated the Christmas season with the Children's Christmas Pageant. What a delight it was to see those children singing to the Lord. It has also brought the start of Children's Church, under the direction of Anne McGowan and Jen Levitt. Another blessing was the start of the Winter/Spring Term of Youth Club under the watchful eye of Dave Mannion. This term of Youth Club will end with a weekend retreat to Seneca Hills. Please be remembering all of these people and activities in your prayers and if you have any desire to volunteer with these, please contact the church office.

But now, we can see blossoms of spring in the children's ministries. VBS and SB2W are beginning to be planned (what a blessing those programs are). Celebration Sunday is just around the corner. In conclusion, spring is in the air and I personally can't wait to see not on the work of God in creation, but also in our church.

In HIS service,
Jenn Winiecki, Director of Children's Ministries

Spring Ladies Retreat

The retreat this Spring will be at Seneca Hills April 22 and April 23. Please mark it on your calendars. The Rev. Pam Maloney, the Associate Pastor from the First Presbyterian Church in Sharon, will be sharing with us. The ladies from First Presbyterian Church will be joining us. More information will follow soon in the bulletin.



Senior Fellowship

Our luncheon meetings resume at 12 noon on Tuesday, March 9th after the winter break. Jan & Bud Moore will present the program "Partners in Devotions."

A delicious meal has been planned by Sheryl Scarmack and her group. You are invited to attend if you are over 55 years young! Make your reservations by calling Alice Tatusko at 724-346-5101. Invite a friend to enjoy the luncheon with you. Cost is \$5.00.

We will meet again April 13th and May 11th.

Recent Losses in the Church Family

Peg Shickler
Virginia Madasz

Clarinda Becher
Helen Boles

Paul Jones

Dick Lawton

Sunday School ... A Choice for Life

A week of prayer for Sunday School is suggested for April 4-10, 2005 by the Mercer County Sunday School Association.

In our own church, we are blessed with dedicated teachers who regularly give of their time and talent...pray for them. And pray that students come to know Christ as Savior and grow in his/her relationship with Him. Sunday School is for everyone. Whatever your age, it should be for you, too.

The Bible tells us, "Call together all the men, women and children ... so that everyone may hear God's Word ... and hear to obey his teachings faithfully." (Deut. 31:12)



Membership at Covenant Presbyterian Church

DID YOU KNOW?

The Session of Covenant Church is responsible for the spiritual oversight of the Church's membership.

What is an active member:

The active membership roll shall consist of those who have been received into the membership of the church and who are active in the church's work and worship. Some ways in which people demonstrate an interest in the life of the church are:

- A. attendance at worship
- B. attendance and study and fellowship
- C. participation in the Lord's Supper
- D. reasonable financial support of the church's work

Some members participate vigorously in all of these areas. Others according to ability, in one or two areas. Please remember to sign the friendship pad during the services.

What is an inactive member:

The inactive membership roll which shall consist of those who have been removed from the active members roll because of their failure to participate in the church's work and worship. (The Book of Order)

Some reasons for being placed on the inactive roll may be:

- A. people who request placement on this roll
- B. people who have departed from the community and have not united with another church within a reasonable period of time
- C. people who display a lack of interest as evidenced by absence from worship, communion and lack of any active support of the life of the church for an extended period of time

NEW MEMBERS CLASS

Pastor Tom Willcox would like to meet with prospective new members for a one-hour informational and organizational meeting. Those who attend will have a chance to help choose from two or three alternative schedules for the new member class. The class will be a total of ten hours in length. Those attending will explore the answers to questions including:

- What it means to be a part of God's Family?
- What it means to be a Presbyterian?
- Who we are at Covenant and what are we about?
- Who am I in all this, how can I fit in?

The new member class will begin after Easter and according to the group's choice of schedule.

There will not be a separate class for 9th and 10th graders to join the church, as has been done in the past. Anyone age 14 yrs. old and older will take the same class as the adults. Please fill out the response form in your bulletin if you are interested or call the church office.



**Become
Part of
Our
Church
Family**

Summer's Best 2 Weeks

If summer tends to be a little boring for your 3rd through 9th grader, sign them up for two weeks of action, fun & fellowship. What a way to spend the summer: being with friends and learning new things.

SBTW runs June 20th -- July 1st. If your child will be going into 3rd to 9th grade for the 2004-2005 school year, they are eligible for this camp which runs from approximately 8:30am to 4:00pm, a whole day's worth of activities. Encourage your children to bring their friends!

If your child participated last year, they will receive an application in the mail, if not, there are applications at the back of the sanctuary or visit the youth page on the church website www.covenantpresssharon.org to download the application. Please call the church office (981-3535 or email covenant@verizon.net) for more information.

From the Pastor ... continued from cover page

What will it take to grow our church? We have to help unsaved people be saved! This is the call of Christ to his Church. In Matthew he said: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore *go and make disciples* of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." **Matthew 28:18-20** He also said: "you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and *you will be my witnesses* in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." **Acts 1:8**

The first thing we must be about is to *go*. We can't grow the church while sitting in the pews. We should be looking for opportunities to share our faith with family members, co-workers, classmates, neighbors and strangers. We should make sure that we have enough familiarity with the Good News to be able to share it when the opportunity arises.

The second thing we must do is to build the ministry we offer here at the church. If we can offer *quality programs* that meet the *felt needs* of the people in our community, those people will attend our programs! You may remember the line from the movie, "Field of Dreams." Kevin Costner's character kept hearing the words, "If you build it, they will come!" The same is true for us. If we build quality programs that meet the felt needs of our neighbors, they will come and participate.

CHEAPER, BETTER, EASIER:

Pick Two!

In the aerospace industry they have a saying; "Cheaper, Better, Faster: Pick two." What they mean is that you can have something built quickly and with good quality if you are willing to spend lots of extra money. You can also have something done well and for a reasonable cost if you don't care how long it takes. Of the three qualities, you can never satisfy more than two. We may want all three, but that doesn't happen in the real world. There is a parallel in the life of the Church. Our version goes like this: "Cheaper, Better, Easier: Pick two."

BETTER: Let's start with the middle quality. In order to draw people into our church family, especially people who are not yet saved, we must offer high quality programs. People will not go out of their way for average to poor quality programs. But they will go out of their way for an excellent program. How will we improve our existing programs to make and keep them at a high level of excellence and how will we add excellent new programs to meet the felt needs in our congregation and community? That is the work of our leaders. Leaders provide the expertise and direction that yield excellent programs.

CHEAPER: We naturally want to keep the cost of running the church as low as we reasonably can. This is especially true when we are regularly running a deficit. The largest area of expense in the life of the congregation is for personnel. Paying people to support the ministry of the congregation and to run parts of its programs is expensive. The obvious way to cut expenses is to reduce the number of people on the payroll. So, we think about reducing staff in order to reduce overhead. But, you may ask, who will provide the expertise and leadership to make our programs work? Why, we will. We will move toward more lay lead ministry and away from staff led ministry. In order for this to work, the lay leaders will need to receive and apply significant training so that they can offer a *professional level of volunteer leadership*. This is much cheaper, in dollars and cents, than staff led ministry. It is also much more time and labor intensive for our volunteer leaders. It is definitely not an *easier* way!

EASIER: Ministry that is "easier" is ministry that minimizes the demands on volunteers, particularly on their time and energy. Most of us are willing to help make the congregation's ministries succeed. We are willing to clean, paint, teach, do childcare, cook, attend meetings and generally do the work of the church. What most people want to do is to show up, receive instructions, work hard, clean up and go home. What most of us do not want to do is to take responsibility for the planning, organizing, leading, overseeing, supervising, recruiting, and evaluating work needed to offer excellent programs. It is even farther from what we think we can handle to ask volunteers to become the trained "experts" who make everything mentioned above happen. But, you may ask, who will provide the expertise and leadership to make our programs work? Why, the staff will. That is why we have church staff, to lead us in offering quality programs to the congregation and to the community. This is definitely not the *cheaper* way!

Have you caught the dilemma? Cheaper, Better, Easier: Pick two. Without the regular addition of fresh, high quality, culturally relevant programs we will not bring new people to church or to salvation. In fact, without fresh, quality programming we won't even keep all the people who attend now! In a conversation with one of our elders about an area of ministry in which we "used to be strong," the elder mentioned that, if asked where to go for good ministry in that area, he would have to send someone to another church. We clearly cannot sacrifice quality, "Better" must be one of our two choices!



What will it take to grow our church? As a body, we have to give some on "cheaper" and on "easier". We will have to spend more money on redeveloping our staff and on improving our programming. We will also have to (collectively) work harder and develop a greater level of expertise as lay ministers.

Let me give you an example; we have a wonderfully dedicated group of volunteer leaders running our youth program. They care deeply about our young men and women. These leaders give of their time and energy. These leaders feel like they are, in their words, in a “holding action” awaiting someone with expertise to come along and make the ministry grow. They are willing to work hard but do not have the expertise to take our youth program to a place of excellence. They feel unsatisfied with the level of ministry we currently offer. So also do at least some of our young people. The youth recognize the dedication and passion of the leaders. They also yearn for a more exciting and life-transforming experience.

How will we take our youth ministry to the next level? How will we offer our youth what they need and deserve? What will it take to make our church grow in the area of youth ministry? Growing our youth ministry will take all the passion and dedication now being offered. Additionally it will require a professional level of expertise, leadership and knowledge to make our youth ministry grow. Where will this professional level of youth leadership be found? There are three possible answers.

We may have expert youth leaders in our membership who have not yet been identified and released into this particular ministry. I don’t actually believe that this is the case, but it is possible. If there are such leaders in our midst, who are willing to give what it takes to make youth ministry explode, we just need to identify and release them.

Another possibility, and it is a much more believable possibility, is that we have people who could *become* our expert youth leaders. Some of our current members may feel led to receive the training and education needed to develop into volunteer leaders able to offer a professional level of youth leadership. They would then be able to invest themselves, their time, energy and new expertise, to develop and extend the excellence of our youth program. This approach takes a significant commitment of time and energy by the volunteers developing and applying a professional level of youth leadership ability. It also takes time to develop such expertise and therefore this is not a quick way to improve our youth ministry.

The alternative to finding or developing a professional level of volunteer youth leadership is to hire someone to bring that expertise, knowledge and leadership. Once you hire someone with the education, training and experience to run an outstanding youth program, they can get to work immediately. Finding them may take time, but once they are hired the improvement begins. This approach takes a significant commitment of funding by the congregation.

The last alternative is to do the best we can with the leaders we have now. The outcome of this approach would probably include the following. The leaders we have now will burn out and quit. They are trying to do something vitally important without the training, knowledge, experience or time to do it with excellence. Nothing is more draining! We will also lose our kids. Our youth are being trained to expect to be entertained and amazed. Television, movies and the internet all aim to thrill and excite our children (and us) through glitzy, stimulating and highly polished programming. If what we offer pales by comparison, our children will lose interest and stop attending. We will also stop attracting new, young families. The number one draw for young families looking for a church is the youth program of the church. A great youth program will draw young families. A mediocre youth program will cause them to look elsewhere. If we stop drawing new, young families we will eventually decline and die as a congregation. But if we draw new families through outstanding youth ministry, we will grow. Though this is only a part of the larger picture, it really is that simple.

If we stop drawing new, young families we will eventually decline and die as a congregation. *But* if we draw new families . . . we will grow.

How can we give more money, more time and more energy? We are already spread thin. The answer is good stewardship. Stewardship is simply doing what is right with stuff that belongs to someone else. As Christians, we believe that our time, our talents and our money are all gifts from God. Ultimately they still belong to God. Since most of us don’t have many uncommitted dollars or minutes to give to growing the ministry of the church, we will have to redirect our resources to the work of the church. Tough choices will have to be made. We will have to take time and funding away from other good things in our lives in order to redirect them to accomplish God’s best things. We may have to give up some sport or school related commitment of our time in order to invest that time in the ministry of the Church. We may have to redirect some of our finances to help provide the financial resources needed for the growth of our congregation’s ministries.

If we make these choices, these sacrifices I believe that we can grow our congregation. More importantly, if we make these sacrifices we can build God’s Church. We will also be investing in our community, our children and our future. We have to get up out of our pews and go, telling people who are not yet saved about the love of Christ. We have to build programs that will draw folks and help them grow in Christ. Then, we will have to do it all over again. And so it will go until Christ comes again.

¹ Acts 2:41; Acts 4:4; Acts 5:14; Acts 6:7; Acts 9:32-42; Acts 11:18; Acts 11:24; Acts 13:48

Don't Forget to Visit the Church Website Often

www.covenantpressharon.org

There are many helpful pages including: the Prayer Page, calendars, youth & children's activities, applications and much more. If you would like to receive an email alert each time the prayer page is updated, please email the church at covenant@verizon.net.

Military Ministry

Over the past few months over 16 packages have been sent to military personnel. Approximately \$750 has been raised to purchase and send these care packages. Thank you for your generosity. The packages have meant a lot to these men. They really appreciated the international phone cards so they could call their families.

The good news is that several of the men may be coming home soon. Dan Pustinger is now home. Many thanks and a big welcome home to Dan.

Ssgt. Jim Crisman wrote the church a thank you note, "The citizens come up to us and thank us for driving the insurgents out and giving them their town back."

~~~~~  
 "I just want to say thank you for the package. I shared most of it with my marines." ~Jim Crisman  
 ~~~~~

We will continue to send packages to these men. If there are other members or friends of Covenant Church, please contact Dick Abbott 724-347-3359 or the church office 724-981-3535 with an address and photo. Since the men are sharing their goodies with other troops as well as the Iraqi troops, who have nothing, we may have a contact person overseas who will coordinate larger packages being delivered. Continue to donate the items listed below to the boxes at the back of the sanctuary and in the Commons Area. If you would like to make a donation to help cover postage which costs approximately (\$15-\$20 per box), use a white pew envelope and mark it MILITARY. The check should be payable to the church.

- | | | | | |
|------------------------------|--|--------------|-------------|--------------------|
| Beef jerky | Deet fly spray | Eye drops | Energy bars | Saline nasal spray |
| Pens | Paper towels | Paper plates | Baby powder | Deodorant |
| Men's health magazines | Sports magazines These can be used magazines | | | |
| Small packages of baby wipes | | | | |

International phone cards

"It has been my pleasure to do this," said Dick Abbott. He is also requesting photos from any veterans or anyone currently serving. This will be put into a display to be located in the church.

- CPL Keith Ricciardi II -- May be coming home briefly in March
- LCPL Mark Argenziano, Jr.-- May be coming home briefly in February
- SPC Keith Thompson – May be coming home soon
- SGT. Shawn Hibbard – Afghanistan
- SSGT. James E. Pacillo -- Awaiting orders

SSgt. Crisman J.D.
 2nd BN 24th MAR
 H&S Co Truck PLT
 UNIT 43495
 FPO AP 96426-3495

SPC Randy Veccia
 HHC 1-103 Armor/Maintenance
 FOB Summerall OIF3
 APO AE 09392

SGT. Luke Charlton
 334 Ophelia
 Apt. #1
 Pittsburgh, PA 15213



Mark Argenziano, Jr.



Keith Ricciardi, II



Keith Thompson



Jim Crisman





- Thanks to all those contributing to the new choir robes. They are a beautiful addition to our worship services. Thank you.
- I wish to thank the Presbytereers Sunday School class for the Christmas gift and the church members for the lovely poinsettia. ~Irene Thomas
- Just a note of to thanks the youth group for caroling at Whispering Oaks. You were all in good voice and it was so good to see our friends. The cookies were so tasty also. Bill & I hope to return one day soon. Love and best wishes. ~Bill & Helen Scheffter
- Sincere appreciation to the congregation for their prayers, numerous visits, and most recently for the many cards for Elnor "Bebe" Allen's 94th birthday. ~the Allen Family
- To all the church families who knew Clarinda over her life: Thank you for her 100th Birthday party, all the visits, cards and gifts over the years. These gestures really brightened her days. She spoke of everyone at the church so often and in such high regard. We'll all miss Clarinda.
Eleanore Hayes and Michalene Miller

Mother's Day Out

Five days a week from 9 am to 1 pm

- Provides loving childcare for 3 months to 5 year olds
- Structured play environment with age appropriate activities
- Daily scheduled includes free play, stories, snack, songs, and games
- Fine motor skills development through the use of clay, fingerpaint, crayons, playdoh, sand, and water
- Applications available at the back of the sanctuary or at www.covenantpressharon.org



Kiddie Korner Preschool

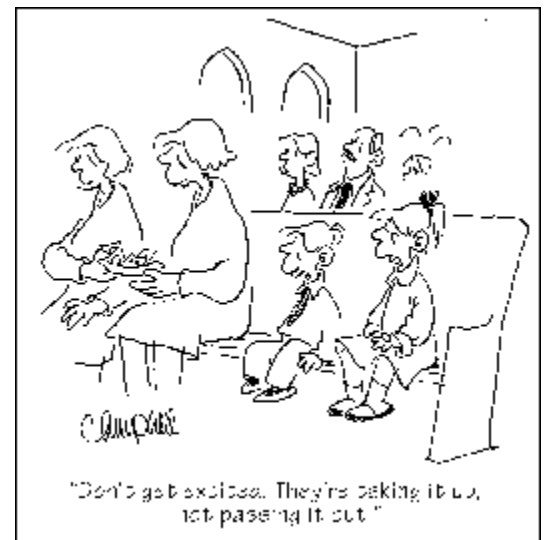
We continue serving the children of Covenant Church and the Shenango Valley. We are taking applications now. Please pick up a registration form from the information centers at the back of the sanctuary.

- Mini-Preschool for 3 or 4 year olds 9-11:30 and 12:00 -2:30 Monday, Wednesday and Friday
- Pre-Kindergarten for 4 or 5 year olds 9-1pm Monday and Wednesday
- Mother's Day Out (now open 5 days a week). This is a supervised play program for infants through Pre-Kindergarten children.

We are committed to providing an environment in which young children can grow toward what we believe is each person's highest purpose: the fulfillment of individual, God-created potential. There are registration forms at the back of the sanctuary or available on the church website at www.covenantpressharon.org.

Graduating High School or College Seniors

If you will be graduating in May or the summer, please call 724-981-3535 or email covenant@verizon.net so that we may honor your achievement in the Summer 2005 newsletter.



Reflections on the Blue Christmas Service

- The Blue Christmas was a blessed experience for those who have suffered loss of a loved one recently. The Pastor has assured me that this will be an annual event. It is good to encourage people who are grieving to go. If they do not want to go alone it would be good to offer to go with them. Carolyn Van Cise
- Tom & Raylene's Blue Christmas service was beautiful, spiritual and so very comforting to both of us. We were going through a very difficult and emotional holiday. We speak from the heart when we say thank you. The Norris & Stevenson Family
- The Blue Christmas service was a special moment. It is a great comfort sharing healing with others and this service led to much healing. I never dreamed lighting a candle and listening to the mix of hymns and music by Jim & Patty could lead to such a feeling of love in the midst of grief. Jack Macom
- After losing my Mom in April, the days seemed empty. The one person who remembered my baby hood and my early years was gone. The person who had stood by and approved of me was no longer here.



As the months passed, the pain eased a little and I could remember with gratitude the Mother that was mine. However, as Christmas neared, I found myself increasingly depressed. How would we get through the holidays without my Mom? She had spent her last 20 years at our house and was an integral part of everything we did during the season.

A friend of mine mentioned that there was going to be a "Blue" Christmas service at Covenant Church. I had not attended church in quite sometime, and felt apprehensive about going, especially since there was a new minister that I had not met. On the same day, Elaine Ross mentioned the service to my hubby and he came home and told me. We felt that we were being directed to that service.



The service was beautiful. We remembered those we all loved and lost, we shared the fact that this Christmas was not going to be as happy as those past, and we allowed each other those feelings. Pastor Tom was great and he had us light a floating candle and say the name of each person that we missed.

Somehow, in that quiet church, I felt Jesus tap me on the shoulder and tell me that I was not alone. I was reassured that I would see Mom and Nona and Grandma and all those who I dearly loved again. I realized that Mom was suffering no pain and that she could breath the light of God freely again.

Both my hubby and I were impressed by the love of other church members, and remembered why we used to go to Covenant Church. Now, whenever we are in town, we are in the pews praising and worshipping our wonderful, everlasting Lord. Starlit Koshar



Youth Group Ski Trip

Summer Newsletter Articles Needed by May 16th

Monday, May 16th will be the deadline for the summer edition of the newsletter.

Remember to take your camera to your events. Pictures are encouraged to show the fellowship of Covenant Presbyterian Church. Articles may be emailed to covenant@verizon.net.

Men's ARISE Field Day 2004



*Covenant Presbyterian Church
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