New Covenant Connection
New Covenant Presbyterian Church

2025

Dear friends,

Have you noticed that the world, including CHURCH, is barely recognizable with all that keeps shifting and changing today? Do you remember the way church life used to be in the "good old days" of our childhood?

Many of us grew up in churches where we sat on cold hard pews, in poorly heated buildings (which did not have air conditioning, by the way), we sang endlessly long hymns that sometimes sounded like dirges, and listened to what seemed like interminably long sermons. We wore our best clothes on Sundays, and no one was excused for sporting events or the like. We all took turns providing floral arrangements for worship (even though the cost seemed to continually increase and it stretched our budget). We had Women's Circle gatherings and Fellowship Committees who provided delicious, homemade treats after worship. We welcomed new people when they moved into our neighborhoods, because most of them gave us a try. We used hymnbooks and the offering was collected by two beautifully choreographed suited men (who might have almost reminded us of the mafia) who walked down the aisle to the front. Those were the days, and we remember them fondly.

But you know what - Thank goodness things have changed and continue to change! Today we have (in most cases), well heated buildings, comfy chairs, uplifting praise songs, multimedia presentations, filtered coffee, web and social media, bibles on our phones, sermon podcasts from anywhere in the world, and we're working on online giving to allow anyone from all over the world to support our ministries. Yes, things have changed and they will continue to do so, hopefully, mostly for the better.

Have you considered that GOD is the greatest agent for change who ever existed and yet our Lord does not change! Malachi 3: 6 says, "I am the Lord, and I do not change." However the Lord God who is unchanging – expects you and I to embrace change!

Consider Abraham who at 75 years old was told by God, presumably during a quiet time, that *'it's time to move your house – you're moving to Canaan!' No moving companies to oversee the arrangements, no planes,*

A NOTE FROM OUR PASTOR ..1

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(EVENTS, BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES)

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The Seasons Are Changing

A Note From Our Pastor (Cont'd)

trains or automobiles – but rather a 600 mile trek across desert and mountains that would have taken several months! Then to cap it off just as Abraham is finally enjoying a well-earned retirement at 99 years old with Sarah his wife (90); God tells him: *'you are going to be the Father of nations!'* Imagine standing at the school gates with your child at 105!

As we read through the Bible we see so many of God's people embracing the change that God himself had brought about. Think about Moses, Esther, Joshua, Gideon, Paul, and Peter among others. There is a common belief that people resist change – but this isn't completely true. People will change jobs, hairstyles, cars, homes, outfits, and phones continually.

Imagine if nothing ever changed? We'd all still be sitting in our soggy and stinky wet cloth diapers, sucking our thumbs just waiting for someone – **anyone** - to CHANGE us. Change does many positive things and God wants us to **EMBRACE IT**. It:

- Stops us from stagnating and stretches us to expand our horizons;
- Leads us toward progress;
- Creates new opportunities and experiences for us;
- Challenges us to scale new heights;
- Enlarges our capacity because we discover we have a greater capacity for change and growth than we ever imagined;
- Causes us to trust and rely on God more;
- Is actually refreshing when we tire of the same old things.

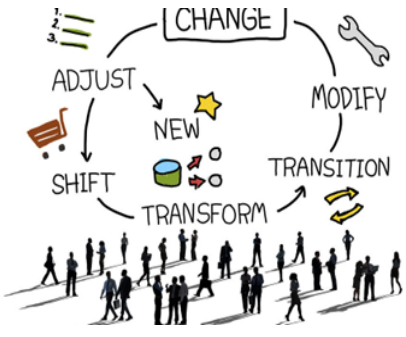
So, what does God want us to CHANGE? How about our -

1. HEARTS

How is your heart for God today or for people? When Israel had sinned and was in exile in Babylon, God used the prophet Ezekiel to speak his Word to them and twice God gave them the same challenge and promise concerning their hearts: *"**And I will give them singleness of heart and put a new spirit within them. I will take away their stony, stubborn heart and give them a tender, responsive heart,** so they will obey my decrees and regulations. Then they will truly be my people, and I will be their God." (Ez. 11: 16)*

I can remember reading these verses shortly after being called to ministry and being deeply challenged by the hardness of my heart and saying: *'God do something with my heart. Change it. Remove my heart of stone and replace it with a soft, tender, responsive heart towards you and others.'*

Dear friends, there is so much more that I want to share with you on this topic of EMBRACING CHANGE, but I am unable to do it all in one newsletter article. So, I invite you to dwell on what I've written this month, and get ready for more next month. I will develop how God wants to change not only our hearts, but our CHARACTER, OUR PERSPECTIVE ON GOD AND OTHERS, OUR FAITH AND TRUST LEVELS, and then I will invite you to consider how God can make this happen in YOU!



Your partner in ministry,

Carol

"And that is what happens when you resist change."

JUNE 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Communion & Offering for ODB	2	3	4	5	6 Our Daily Bread	7
8 Trustee Mtg @ 11:30 am	9	10 Food Truck 4:30-7 pm	11	12	13	14 Garden Party @ 4 pm
15	16	17	18 Session Mtg. @ 1p	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

EVERY SUNDAY—WORSHIP AT 10 AM FOLLOWED BY FELLOWSHIP;
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION ON A SUMMER BREAK
BELL CHOIR—CHECK WITH JENNY FOR DATES/TIMES

6/1 7th Sunday after Easter; Communion
ODB Special Offering

6/6 First Friday @ Our Daily Bread
The Cooke's Anniversary

6/8 Day of Pentecost
Barbara Montazella's Birthday
Trustees' Meeting @ 11:30 am

6/9 Deacons' Meeting @ 10 am

6/10 Barbara Bookhart's Birthday

6/15 Trinity Sunday
Frank Cerniglia's Birthday

6/18 Session Meeting @ 1 pm
Joyce Artysiewicz' Birthday

6/22 2nd Sunday after Pentecost

6/23 The Megonigal's Anniversary

6/28 Elizabeth's Stoecker's Birthday

6/29 Burkley's Anniversary

6/29 3rd Sunday after Pentecost

Clerk's Report

The Session's regular Stated meeting was held on May 21st.

The calendar for upcoming Presbytery meetings for 2025 is as follows:

September 20th (in-person or by Zoom) - Pam Leeson + Pastor

December 2nd (by Zoom only) - Jane Adams + Pastor

Membership: 46

Pat and Carol reported on the May 17th Presbytery meeting which included a reorganization and vision change for New Castle Presbytery. Also, a $20,000 grant was approved by the Ignite committee for the STAR Foundation in Newark which works to assist refugees with resettlement in New Castle Co. Tracy Keenan, Missional Presbyter, explained to the presbytery that she would be retiring at the end of this year. In addition, Rev. Jon Berquist was ordained and became a member of the presbytery. We were happy for the report of results of churches who participated in the Vital Congregations Initiative and the Session met for an additional meeting on May 28th to review and reflect on this material. The congregation will be hearing about some things we plan on trying to help our congregation thrive.

Emails: Pastor: pastornewcov@gmail.com

Clerk: clerk.ncpc24@gmail.com

Office Administrator: newcov.office2@gmail.com

Yours in Christ,

Pat Wright, Clerk

Worship

Some important dates to remember during June:

June 8th - Pentecost

After Jesus ascended into heaven, the disciples were gathered to celebrate Pentecost. The Holy Spirit filled the whole house with power, and added 3,000 new believers. The church was born!

June 15th - Trinity Sunday

The 1st Sunday after Pentecost celebrates the doctrine of our Triune God - God the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit.

June 15th - Father's Day

Remember to give thanks for and let all the fathers and father figures in your life.

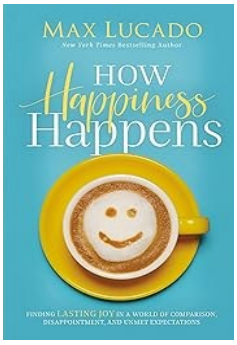
June 19th - Juneteenth

Commemorates the end of slavery in the U.S. On June 19, 1865, Major General Gordon Grainger ordered the final enforcement of the Emancipation Proclamation in Texas following the end of the Civil War.

Barbara Montazella
Worship Elder

Christian Education Report

Weekly Christian Education Classes



We are pausing for a summer break in regard to our Christian Education Classes. We have been meeting every Sunday morning at 8:30 am and Tuesdays at 10:30 am. Our study's focus has been on Max Lucado's book, *How Happiness Happens: Finding Lasting Joy in a World of Comparison, Disappointment, and Unmet Expectations.* We have found several very practical ways of being more faithful in our discipleship, following Christ's example and learning from scripture. Our plan is to resume our study in the fall with the second half of the book. Let us know if you are interested and we'll get you a book to read over the summer.

The Bethel Series

Skip Leeson continues to teach the Bethel classes on Sunday mornings following Fellowship Time. The class should be finished up soon.

Jane Adams,
Christian Education Elder

Don't forget to keep on reading/studying/learning over the summer when you have free time. We are blessed to have many resources to help us grow in our discipleship. So, get busy bees and enjoy the summer!

Mission Report

Our Daily Bread: We served 182 meals on First Friday in May. Our mission with Our Daily Bread has become especially important as they have lost 2 large grants from the Federal Government due to the closing of the Federal Emergency Food and Shelter program. We will continue to prepare and serve our First Friday meal each month and if anyone is interested and able, ODB has begun a Saturday Sandwich program which has groups and/or individuals who have an hour or two on a Saturday morning, to come to the dining room in Middletown to prepare sandwiches to place in the community refrigerator for the weekend. This can help ensure that there are easy meals available in the refrigerator even when ODB is closed for the weekend. If you are interested, contact Pat Wright at church or contact ODB directly at ourdailybread.2016@gmail.com

The Neighborhood House: We continue to collect non-perishable food items for the food pantry at Neighborhood House. They provide food items for people in the community who have urgent need. They need a wide range of non-perishable items such as pasta, particularly spaghetti, and pasta sauces. In addition, there is always a need for simple items like peanut butter and Jelly. They also are feeling the pinch from the federal government's decision to discontinue the Emergency Food and Shelter program.

Special Offerings: We concluded the One Great Hour of Sharing special offering on Easter Sunday. The total was $515.

Our next Offering will be the Pentecost Offering which will begin in mid-May and continue through Pentecost Sunday. This is the offering that connects with God's hope and future, supporting ministries with children, youth and young adults by building a life of faith. 40% of this Offering stays here with our congregation. We place the funds into our Youth Club Fund and use the money for any youth directed activities in our church or in our community. Most of the funds have been used to give scholarships to the Massanetta, Montreat and the Triennium conferences.

Operation Christmas Child

On July 13th during the Fellowship Hour we will be packing some shoeboxes. Please get started with your purchasing of the items we need to fill them. Reminder no bars of soap this year! There will be a bin in the Library that you can drop items in. Let's see if we can top our number from last year! Children around the world will come to know Jesus through this amazing project!

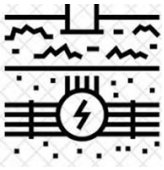
Pat Wright,
Mission Elder

Trustee Report

The Trustee Meetings are open to all and is normally scheduled each month on the 2nd Sunday after worship and fellowship time. Our next Trustee Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, 8 June 2025.

Projects:

We will be adding new LED pole heads to the parking lot lights and they should be installed later this month. We will probably need to do some landscaping around the main electrical connection so that it won't be damaged by grass mowers.



We have run an electrical line, underground from our main church building out to the two signs we have out by Boyd's Corner Road. This allows them to be illumined.

We have started to discuss the type of sign(s) we plan on having to let people know how to travel through the development to get to and from our church. This is on hold for now since we need to talk to the neighborhood developer on how large a sign to install with their agreement.

We are still looking at what additional security we will be making to increase security around our property with all the construction going on around us. More investigation needed.

We had a request for a Coffee/Refreshment Truck to use our parking lot several times a week to provide food for all the workers in our adjoining neighborhood and across the street where the grocery store/gas station are being constructed.

If there are any questions or comments you would like to make, please let the trustees know. You can use Al's email: al.grimminger@icloud.com Thanks for helping us make NCPC an inviting community of faith.

Your Friendly Trustees,
Al Grimminger, Bill Shields, and Bob Megonigal

It takes **all of us** to pitch in and clean and maintain our buildings and grounds. Thanks for taking part in this important work!

STEWARDSHIP & FINANCE

Is it not enough for you to feed on the good pasture? Must you also trample the rest of your pasture with your feet? Is it not enough for you to drink clear water? Must you also muddy the rest with your feet?
Ezekiel 34:18

Trampled pasture and muddied water seem like surprising issues to merit the notice of one of Israel's great prophets. For most of us, clean water is no more than a twist of the tap away. Our food supply does not have much to do with local pastures (or so we think). Instead, it comes from the grocery store in seemingly endless supply.

But what if you did have to get your drinking water from a stream? How would you feel if you dipped your bucket in the water and noticed your neighbor leading his cows into the stream to cool off? Or, after planting your backyard garden, the next day you wake up to see it is wiped out in a single evening by rabbits, groundhogs or deer?

Ezekiel 34 makes us think about the way we steward the resources of the earth. It is not just about clean water and fresh pasture – it is about any resource that we humans find valuable yet are inclined to hoard or squander. It is about oil stockpiled underground over millennia upon millennia through geological processes. We are on pace to consume almost all of it in a flash of energy extravagance. The stored carbon deposits from ancient forests and swamps incinerated in less than 300 years.

In Michigan, pristine forests of white pine and hardwood were expected to provide timber for 500 years but were clear cut in just 80 years (1940-1920). Clear cutting unleashes erosion and spawn wildfires. Spring log drives destroyed rivers and streams. As the pines disappeared, fish, birds and animals native to Michigan were driven out. Pictures taken of northern Michigan in the 1920s show a wasteland looking much like a bomb-blasted war zone.

The logging era made some people very rich. Timber barons built mansions and amassed impressive fortunes. Immigrants from northern Europe, living and working in abominable conditions, earned their first paychecks in the northern woods and got a toehold on this continent. Michigan's economy had a timber base until the dawn of the automobile era.

Ezekiel warns of two all-too-familiar traits that undermine stewardship: greed and self-centeredness. The need human need for homes and building drove the harvest of the Michigan trees. The Chicago Fire of 1871 necessitated rebuilding much of the city. However, the way it was done displayed a lust for wealth and a disregard for long-term effects. The attitude was we can treat the earth any way we wish and it will not matter. Only humans count.

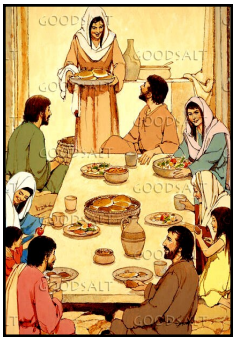
Ezekiel reminds us that our actions have consequences. We need to consider the effect of our actions on other people and the rest of creation.

Barbara Bookhart
Finance & Stewardship Elder

Deacon Ministry & Fellowship

The deacons strive to care for our congregation through our Shepherding Ministry and by providing fellowship events for us to build our community of faith. We encourage one and all to get involved so that we might all benefit from the gifts that we all have to share. Please let us know if we can be of help to you!

In May, our Progressive Dinner on the 24th turned in to a gathering of 10 people at the home of Win and Barbara Bookhart. The early Christian Church understood the value of gathering for a meal and we took their example and enjoyed a wonderful time together. We had an abundance of appetizers plus a special drink (Bourbon slush) made by our hosts which some greatly enjoyed. The food and fellowship was wonderful and it was a perfect spring evening to join together. Not the typical "progressive" dinner but it could not have been a nicer gathering of friends. Hope to see more of you next year!



In June, Food Truck Outreach on the 10th, 4:30 - 7 pm. Come one and all! Out of the Ordinary will be serving food. Come and invite your neighbors and friends.

Also in June, a Garden Party on the 14th at 4 pm is planned at the home of Bill and Cheryl Shields. Rich Goldberg will provide music, just like he did last year, playing our favorite doo-whop oldies. Start your list now of your favorites. And feel free to bring an appetizer, side dish or dessert to share plus lawn chairs and tents. Come one and all for a great time!

On July 13th, a Movie Night and Build Your Own Brownie Sunday is planned.

Got any ideas for good Christian Fellowship? Let us know. There are a lot of new homes being built around the church. We need to do something to welcome and accommodate those moving in, both young and old. And remember, the deacons are here to serve YOU!

Outreach

Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the intersects of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus. **Philippians 2: 4-5**

This verse is a call to action to prioritize the needs and well-being of others, encouraging a mindset of humility and service. It's about recognizing the importance of others and actively seeking ways to help them, rather than only focusing on one's own desires and ambitions. Outreach to those in our community is essential at New Covenant Church.

Our new business cards a fine new resource for reaching out to first time visitors. We will now include the card in our welcome “I am the Bread of Life” gift bread for first time visitors. Our church pamphlet, and other sources of information and a sign up card in the gift bag. Carry our business cards with you and hand them out often.

Session met on May 27th to read the results of Vital Congregations as reported by several churches ad Presbytery. Our discussion throughout this closing Vital Congregations bor new ideas as well as recognizing what worked and what did not. Your input on any topic is always welcomed.

TOGETHER WE GROW AND MEET NEEDS
Beverly Cook,
Outreach Elder

Frog Corner

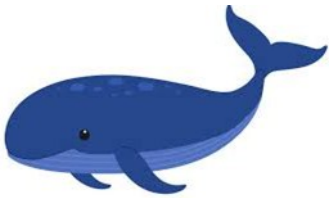
F.R.O.G. CORNER: *Forever Rely on God*

Don't forget the meaning behind the acronym **R I B B I T :**
Revere, ***I***nvite, ***B***less, ***I***nspire, and ***T***rust in the Lord.

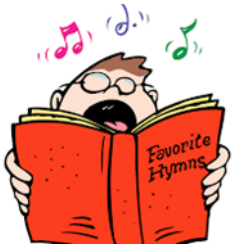
My Dad is Better Than Your Dad

Three boys on the playground were bragging about their dads. One said, "My dad scribbles a few words, calls it a song and they pay him $50." "Oh, yeah. My dad scribbles a few words, calls it a poem and they pay him $100." "That's nothing," said the third kid. My dad scribbles a few words, calls it a sermon and it takes six people to collect all the money in the room!"

Jonah and the Whale



One day, a teacher was talking to her first grade class about whales when a little girl had a question. **Little Girl:** "Do whales swallow people?" **Teacher:** "No, even though they are much bigger than a person, they have throat pleats that filter their food of krill and plankton**. Little Girl:** "But Mrs. Thurston says Jonah was swallowed by a whale." **Teacher** (getting angry): "Blue whales cannot swallow people." **Little Girl:** "Well, when I get to heaven I'll just ask Jonah if he was really swallowed by a whale." **Teacher**, (still red with anger): "What if Jonah went to hell?" **Girl:** "Well, then you can ask him."

Hymns for Christians Over 65 Years Old

- *Give Me the Old Timers Religion*
- *Precious Lord, Take My Hand, And Help Me Up*
- *Just a Slower Walk with Thee*
- *Go Tell It on the Mountain, But Speak Up*
- *Nobody Knows the Trouble I Have Seeing*
- *Guide Me, O Thou, Great Lord God, I've Forgotten Where I've Parked The Car*
- *Count Your Many Birthdays, Count Them One By One*
- *Blessed Insurance*
- *It Is Well With My Soul, But My Knees Hurt*

"You might wanna pull up a chair.
I've had a pretty busy day."