

THE COVENANT CONNECTION

Volume XVII No. 6
December 20, 2011

Covenant United Methodist Church

2011 Contributions

I will be making the last deposit for 2011 on Friday 12/30/11.

Please have any contributions to be included in 2011 into the office prior to 10:00am Friday.

Thank you!
Diana Helmer
Financial Secretary

Christmas Eve LOVE offering

Each year a Love Offering is collected during the Christmas Eve services.

This year, the offering will be given to New Hope Resource Center and the Spokane Neighborhood Action Program (S.N.A.P.)

Thank you for your generous gifts.

Christmas at Covenant

Christmas Eve Services on Saturday, December 24

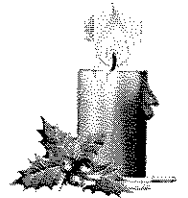
5:00pm: Family Service featuring the Covenant Kids and Youth in *Bedtime Christmas*, a play of Christmas stories. This service is an hour long with refreshments to follow. Child-care will be provided.

8:00pm: Candlelight Service filled with music, meaning and memories. The service will last about an hour. Childcare will be provided.

11:00pm: Candlelight and Communion Service. This service is quiet and contemplative, preparing our hearts to receive the mysterious and miraculous gift of God's Son.

Christmas Day on Sunday December 25

We will celebrate Christmas at **one service ~ 5pm.** This is a service of songs, stories, and fellowship to rejoice over Jesus' birthday.

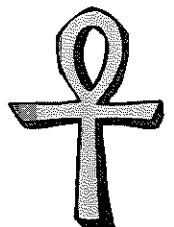


Please note: There will be No Sunday school on December 25th or January 1st. We will meet again on January 8th.

Chrismon Ornaments

Have you ever looked closely at the tree in the sanctuary? In 1991, the Thursday morning Women's group made the white and gold Chrismon ornaments that decorate the tree. Chrismon is a term used for Christian symbols.

Each year the ornaments are packed carefully away to be lovingly hung on the tree the next year. The women from this group, who still meet each week, would especially like to recognize Boosie Longmeier who made all of the crocheted items on the tree.



Do you want to be a part of a LIFE GROUP?

If so, come to the "Life Group Link" Event @ Covenant UMC, January 4th; 6:00 PM Meal, 7-8:30 PM Gathering & Meeting

Life Groups make it possible for you to meet others in the congregation, to grow together in faith, explore how we serve others and to create wonderful friendships along the way.

Groups are forming for the January - March term!

You are invited to a soup and bread dinner at 6:00 PM on January 4th to learn more about the various groups forming, or to provide information about your need for a group. Leadership training, and/or trained leaders will be provided to assist in facilitation of the groups. On-going support will be provided as you continue to meet during the months of January through March.

Types of groups:



- * Jayce and Marty Keeling will be leading a group using Marcus Borg's "The Heart of Christianity".
- * A "Couples" Group will explore how we might grow in faith with our spouse. The day of week we will meet has not yet been set, but may meet on Wednesdays.
- * One Life Group will meet either on Saturday or Sunday afternoons.
- * Many other groups will form that evening based on topics, times, mission, etc.

We need to know ahead of time if you are coming, and if you are interested in a specific group listed above. Please also let us know if you have a specific interest or logistical concern ahead of time. You can contact the church office (phone 466-1768 or email cuminfo@covenantmethodist.org) if you will attend our LIFE GROUP LINK event on January 4th. We would also like to hear from you if you have a desire to be a part of a group, but are not able to attend on the 4th.

This is our main ministry of spiritual formation. We would love to see you there!

In our Prayers

Bill & Rena Batt, Jim Thrapp, Dave Wheat.



Prayers of Joy & Thanksgiving

For a New Granddaughter

Katherine Larson was born on November 26. She joins a happy family of two sisters, and parents Ryan & Elina. Grandparents are Dave & Mary Larson.

Stewardship Season Wrap up

As of December 14, 2011, seventy six Estimate of Giving cards have been returned totaling \$273,892. That is an increase over last year with 4 new families making their first time commitments.

The finance committee has set the 2012 budget for \$322,537. Giving is projected at \$293,532 which includes pledges, non-pledges and loose plate offerings. We will transfer \$8000 from the parsonage fund, \$14,340 from reserves and predict other income which will balance the budget.

If you would like specific information, please don't hesitate to contact Marty Keeling, treasurer or Jackie Richardson, finance committee chairperson.

Thank you for your faithful giving that supports all of Covenant's ministries and programs. It is not too late to return your Estimate of Giving card.

Kairos Outside of Eastern WA #1 at Covenant UMC! April 20-22, 2012

Servants Needed!!

Is God calling you to serve BOLDLY? If so, maybe Kairos is the ministry for you. Kairos Outside is a ministry that supports people who are affected by incarceration. If you think that this is a ministry for which you feel called to serve, please call Jen Sealey at 720-4365.

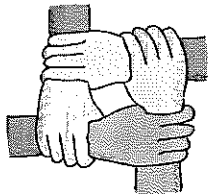
There are many ways you can help. You can come and work the entire weekend, help for just a couple of hours for the weekend, or you can donate money for meal tickets. Please let Jen know how you might be willing to serve.

From your Pastor's Heart

"How Can I Serve?"

Hello Friends,

At our All-Church Conference (Dec. 11), we had the opportunity to visit about much that has happened in the life of the church in the past year, as well as peer into the future to see how God might use us in the healing and transformation of our world. Several people have told me how uplifted they felt after the meeting. After discussing this vision God has given us for our future, one of our "business items" was to approve the list of leaders who will serve in 2012. As I look through that document, I began to think of all the ways that people might be called to serve. Certainly some important groups, committees and teams are represented on that sheet, but not every opportunity is listed...



I have also had a few conversations with people lately regarding the "nudges" they are receiving (from God and/or others) to serve in some specific ways. One person referenced the fact that in several sermons recently I have made the several statements along these lines: "If we come to church on Sunday mornings, but it has no impact on the other six-and-a-half days of the week, then what is the point?" I really want what we do in the life of the church to matter. When we gather for worship, we are not "playing church." To that end, I want to invite you to prayerfully discern whether or not God might be calling you to be involved in any of these opportunities to serve:

* New Hope Resource Center - Serving the needs of people and families with financial difficulties in our area, this organization would love to have more folks from Covenant involved in their ministry. We already have two people involved, but could always use more people to serve the various needs.

* Family Promise - Barry McClinton has been helping to coordinate our involvement as we host families as they journey out of homelessness, but we could always use more servants who are invested in this life-giving ministry.

* Preschool Advisory Board - We need several people from our community of faith (along with several Preschool parents) to meet with Angie, our Preschool Director, approximately 2-3 times per year. It is in an advisory capacity that you would help make leadership decisions for forward movement and change.

* Rockwood Homes Board - Founded by Methodists, Rockwood is seeking persons with a variety of professional backgrounds (particularly in the areas of finance, hospitality, and real estate - but not limited to these areas) to serve on their Board of Trustees.

Please let me know if any of these interest you. Also, there are a virtually endless number of ways we can serve others. As we all step out in faith to serve, we live with integrity and positively impact the lives of others. I wonder how many ways God will "stretch" us beyond our comfort zones in the coming year?

May God continue to grant us peace and grace on the journey of faith. I am grateful for the ways I can both lead and follow you here at Covenant United Methodist Church.

Prayerfully,

Gregg

Pastor Gregg

He came down that we may have joy! And joy abounded. This season of Christmas has brought so many talented people forward to share their gift of music. I have the great fortune to collaborate with them to bring about sounds and melodies that honor God. **Thank you to all of the wonderful musicians that manifested God's joy and love at Covenant.**

New Year's Resolution Idea:

Play marimbas!

The Marimba Band will be starting again in January 2012 with TWO groups. These groups will be a mix of experience so EVERYONE is welcome.

Sharon's Testimony: "I never knew how to play music, but with the Marimbas I get my notes and just have fun. Now I can't get enough."

Be a part of a marimba group on Mondays at 7pm or Wednesdays at 7pm. First days will be Jan. 23 and Jan. 25. This is a resolution with guaranteed success.

Please contact Sarah to sign up, 954-1107

Coming Soon: A marimba design and construction workshop. Stay tuned for details.

Sunday Schedule

Worship.....9:30am
Sunday School for all ages.....10:45am
Sunday Night Live Service..... 5:00pm

Covenant Staff

PastorRev. Gregg Sealey
Church Secretary.....Karen King
Worship Arts/Children's Ministry Coordinator .. Sarah Marken
Pianist.....Laura Everett
Custodian..... Stan Gray
Assistant Custodian Kyle Smith
Youth Director..... Bethany Pyle
Nursery Supervisor..... Marcy Hansen
Preschool Director.....Angie Canavan

Office Hours:

Mon.-Fri 9:30am-3:00pm

"The Covenant Connection" is printed twice a month by Covenant United Methodist Church. **Deadline to turn in articles for the next newsletter is Tuesday, Jan. 10**

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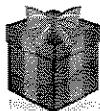
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Christmas Youth Event:

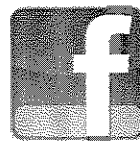
We will have a special combined youth group on Wednesday, December 21st from 6:30-8pm.

The middle school and high school youth groups will meet together for a Christmas party.



Come at 6:30 and bring a wrapped gift (\$5 or less) for the gift exchange.

Have you "liked us" on Facebook?



If you are on the social media network, Facebook, look for Covenant United Methodist Church!

We post updates, including weekly scripture readings and the link to the audio sermon.

If you are away from home, but want to keep up on what's happening at church, this is a great way to stay in the loop!

2012 Upper Room Disciplines

Purchase your copy of the 2012 Upper Room *Disciplines* for \$10.

Cultivate your Relationship with God through daily prayer and devotions.



Purchase the 2012 Daily Devotional book, *Disciplines* from the church office.