

Covenant NEWS



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**December 2016 -
& January 2017**

INVINCIBLE VINCE AND HIS MERRY BAND OF HELPERS

Now that Vince Besednjak is on the job as custodian of Covenant, there will be no stone unturned (literally) in his quest to improve our beautiful building. For example, there has been a weeping wall near the ladies' restroom for a very long time. This persistent problem has been a puzzlement—until Vince and his mighty crew tackled the issue.

Vince observed that the ground adjacent to the area was graded toward the building which caused rain to flow down with nowhere to go but into the basement of the church. Vince had a solution to the problem. So he gathered his trusty helpers on one Sunday after church and drove to a nearby BP station where there were broken chunks of concrete and gravel from a repaving job. Not-too-shy Vince asked the owner of the station if he minded if we took the debris off his hands. The owner was happy to oblige. So some of the familiar Vince helpers (Nancy Langtry, Tonya Black, Jody and Mary Kaye Bernardo) put their day of rest on hold and loaded Vince's van three or four times with the one man's trash that became a Covenant treasure.



Since building up the ground in the area of the ladies' bathroom with the concrete and gravel and directing the flow of water away from the building, the wall is slowly drying up. And the dehumidifier in the ladies' restroom is getting much rest due to the reduction in moisture. And, who knows, maybe the ladies' room will be a bit warmer this winter!

Now that Vince is our Custodian you can expect to see many more projects that will enhance our beautiful property. Vince is definitely a Covenant treasure with a vivid imagination and is very clever at recruiting volunteers for many worthwhile projects to come.

By Mary Kaye Bernardo



The Lutheran Church of the Covenant

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The 2017 Stewardship Campaign

Gwen Susanek, Chairperson of the Board of Finance, and Barb Gaglione gave temple talks at both the Saturday and Sunday services on November 12-13, 19-20 and 26-27. Pledge forms are being collected now. Please see the insert in this newsletter. This year our budget planning has been complicated by the pastoral call process. Having a budget in place allows the Lutheran Church of the Covenant to plan and carry out its ministries. Thank you all for being cheerful givers. Transcripts of the Temple Talks are below.

Week 1: For the next three weeks we will be having temple talks in connection with our 2017 Stewardship Drive. Too often we may forget that stewardship goes well beyond the yearly pledge drive, although these weeks are important because we really focus on the coming year and what we need to do, not only with our monetary pledges, but with what time and talent we have to offer all through the year.

We don't know what the future holds –right now we are one step closer to having a new pastor. We have been waiting for this for a long time. I can't help but feel a sense of relief and hopeful anticipation.

Together, the members of Covenant have been able to do amazing things. We have had to “row the boat” ourselves for the last couple of years, and all in all I think we have become stronger and have a renewed appreciation of what can be accomplished. A little faith goes a long way. A lot of faith goes even further.

As we heard at the last congregational assembly meeting, the bills are paid, there is money in the checking account. This is thanks to the pledges that were made last year at this time. The Farmers Market, the retirees lunches, the community meals and other programs continued. The parish hall was painted, the

curtains were scrubbed and cleaned. The decorations in the church are beautiful. This is thanks to so many of our members who give tirelessly of their time and talents. We have a lot to be thankful for.

Now we need to start planning for the future, without knowing what it will bring, but having faith that everything will be fine.

It seems like every day there are mailings or phone calls from one charity or another asking for donations of money or “gently used” household items or clothing. Many of us give generously to our favorite charity. Sometimes, we question how wisely our donations are used, we hear so many stories about CEO's of the charities making outrageously high salaries and the only a small percentage of donations are actually seen by those we thought we were helping. We know that our weekly offerings stay right here for maintenance, salaries, and utilities and other expenses.

Over the next couple of weeks, please give prayerful consideration to the amount that you will pledge for 2017. Think about spending just a little more of your time using the talents that you have here at Covenant. Let's continue to work together to keep Covenant healthy and strong.

Week 2: We are all guilty of comparing ourselves to others. BUSY, BUSY, BUSY!! We are all so BUSY and spend time comparing how much BUSIER we are than the next person. Being busy seems to have become some sort of status symbol, the busier we are the better we are. If we see someone who is busier than we are, we get BUSY trying to get busier.

We compare what we have to what others have, too often we want bigger, better, faster, new and improved. The old, keeping up with the Joneses. We forget that in God's eyes, we are all equal. GOD doesn't compare one person to the next. HE loves us no matter what we have, no matter how busy we are. What is important to God is HOW we use our time and our talent.

Everything we have is only on loan to us anyway, and when GOD decides what HE wants for us, our “busyness” and our pile of loot doesn't matter and really isn't important after all. We all have things that we want and don't really NEED. Have you ever spent money on things to impress others or simply because it was something that we just couldn't live without? During these weeks when you are considering your pledge for next year, please look past your wants and look at the church's needs. We are all so blessed and we need to take a moment and realize just how blessed we are.

Week 3: Gwen Susanek

We come to church on Sunday morning the first day of the week, to be inspired, refreshed and refilled to start a new week..

We come to church, sharing the word of GOD in prayer and Holy Communion. The Lord forgives our sins, cleanses and purifies us, and then he sends us out into the world for the week as his own. It doesn't get much better than that.

We tend to put on different masks during the week, whether it is at work, socializing with friends or simply at home. We are who we are wherever we are. We, being baptized never go anywhere alone. We are guided by the Spirit in everything that we do. As you consider your giving for 2017, let your heart be guided by the Holy Spirit.

We have a Christian duty to support our church, to give our time, money and any abilities that we have to benefit Covenant. How much you pledge is a very personal matter, consider pledging a percentage of your income as opposed to a set amount each week. Compare your offering to your total income, is your pledge first on your list or is it what is "left over?" Think about making your pledge your first priority. Make your pledge, a spiritual gift based on what the Lord provides to all of us 24/7.

So to conclude, I ask that you please take the time and look at your individual circumstance and see if it is at all possible to increase your pledge from last year, no matter how small the amount.

As this is the third and final week of the temple talks for the 2017 Stewardship Drive, if you haven't already turned your pledges in, please do so as soon as possible. Thank you.

Berean Bible Class & ELCA Good Gifts Program

During last year the Berean Bible Class supported various ministries through their collection each Sunday morning; Lutheran Disaster Relief, The Hunger Center, Meals on Wheels, World Hunger and the Hunger Walk to name a few. Last year before Christmas, the Bible Class decided to make a gift of \$200.00 to the ELCA Good Gifts program. That gift purchased 4 goats for a family or families somewhere where there is a need. Fresh milk from a goat provides daily nutrition for children and their families and the offspring can transform a community when they are shared with other families in need. We will be building up our account for a future investment in some type of farm animal to make a lasting impact through the ministries of the ELCA.

If others in the congregation would like to contribute to the Good Gifts program see Alex Hohenstein or Harry Werner.

Thank you.

Alex Hohenstein
Treasurer, Berean Bible Class

Save the Date!

Tuesday Evenings 6:00-7:15

Nov. 29, Dec. 6, and Dec. 13.

Weeknight Advent Dinner and
Worship Services at **Lutheran
Church of the Master.** (see pg 4)

Friday, 12/2, 6:45 - 8:30 pm:

St. Nick Nite children's event.

See page 5.

Monday, 12/12, Noon:

Retirees' Luncheon

Call the Church Office to sign up

for lunch! See page 4.

Saturday, 12/24, 7:00 PM:

Christmas Eve Service

Sunday, 12/25:

No Sunday Eucharist at Covenant.

Please join the Hope United
Methodist Church congregation for

a **potluck** breakfast and caroling
service at 10:30 AM at

79 Center Road, Bedford.

Sign up on clipboard in sanctuary or
call COVENANT'S office

by Thurs 12/22.

Thursday, 12/29, 5:00 PM:

Covenant-Hope-Faith Walk
Fellowship Community Meal

Saturday 12/31:

No Saturday Evening Eucharist

Sunday, 1/1/17

Worship service plans to be
determined

Office Closed

After an Advent season
which is sure to be

blessed and memorable,
but also busy at Covenant,

the office will be

closed beginning

Monday, December 26

and will be open on

Tuesday, January 3.

Adopt-A-Turkey

Southeast Clergy Hunger Center Thanksgiving Food Drive

The Southeast Clergy Hunger Center continues to feed families and individuals in increasing numbers. Because the U.S. Department of Agriculture is giving less food to the Cleveland Foodbank, the Hunger Center's funds don't go as far.

As a result, the Center is asking member churches to consider an "Adopt-a-Turkey" drive to provide turkeys for the families at Thanksgiving and Christmas.

To that end, Covenant has established an "Adopt-a-Turkey fund".

On average, turkeys run from \$12 to \$14 dollars each.

If you are so moved, please make a contribution to the Southeast Clergy Hunger Center, either directly or through the Lutheran Church of the Covenant. Thanks in advance for your generosity.



Weeknight Advent Dinners

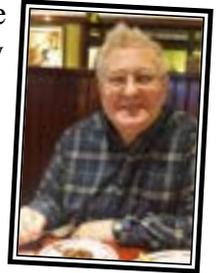
Lutheran Church of the Master has invited us to join their Weeknight Advent Dinner and Worship Services: Tuesday Evenings 6:00-7:15 on Nov. 29, Dec. 6, and Dec. 13. Join COTM for a meal and worship during Advent. 860 Northfield Road, Bedford.

In Memoriam

It is with a heavy heart that we share the news of the passing of Covenant member, John Ingham, on Monday, November 14, less than seven weeks after his beloved wife, Shirley, was laid to rest. Friends and family celebrated John's life at Covenant on Thursday, November 16.

John Wilson Ingham, Jr. was born to John and Sara Ingham on January 22, 1933, and was raised with his sister Nancy Kowalski (late Albert) and step-brother Neil Hawley (late Pat) in Pennsylvania. He met Shirley Haynes in Erie and they were wed on May 13, 1952.

John and Shirley lived in Erie and then moved to Maple Heights in the early 1960s, and raised their six children: Gail Jeffrey (Bill), Karen McMaugh (Gary), Donna Kobella (Steven), Mark Ingham (Elizabeth), Kimberly Hoffner (Michael) and Denise Tousley (Matthew).



John adored his grandchildren: Tracy (Vic), Melissa (Chris), Sara (Doug), Matthew (Miriam), Ashley, Melanie, Christopher, Ashley, Jonathan, Ethan, Colin, Aidan, Austin, and Cassidee. He was blessed with two great-grandchildren, Grayson and Sonny. He was also a dear brother-in-law, uncle and great-uncle of many.

John was proud of his service to our country as a member of the United States Navy. Throughout his life, he loved to fish, taking friends and family members out to the lake every chance he had.

As a faithful member of The Lutheran Church of the Covenant for over 50 years, John was a deacon, an usher, a softball coach and held a variety of leadership roles.

We thank God for having given John to us to know and to love as a companion in our pilgrimage on Earth. We share with Gail, Karen, Donna, Mark, Kimberly, Denise, and the rest of the family in their sorrow, and we rejoice in the hope of the Resurrection, that we all may rise to new life in Jesus Christ.

Retirees Luncheon!

The next Retirees Luncheon is set for Monday, **December 12, at 11:00 AM** in the Parish Hall. Please note the date change from our usual "second Thursday" and the time change to 11:00 AM. These changes are to accommodate our entertainment. **The Bedford High School Madrigal Singers** will perform for us after lunch. What a special treat! Be sure to sign up on the clipboard at the back of the sanctuary, or call the church office.

If you have an idea for a future guest speaker or entertainer, or a topic you would like to learn more about, please notify the church office.

Raise the Roof!

At the moment, the building is sealed up nicely, and we have no immediate plans for repairs to the roof.

However, the need for major repairs to the parking lot and driveway is looming upon us.

Therefore the "Roof Fund" remains open as an account to gather money for property repairs. Keep this fund in mind when you are inspired to send in a donation or memorial offering.

Alex Hohenstein, Board of Managers

The Lutheran Church of the Covenant proudly presents its annual St. Nicholas Festival

Friday, December 2, 6:45-8:30 pm

The St. Nicholas Festival is free & open to all children of the community

along with their parents, aunts, uncles, grandparents & friends,

who are welcome to assist the children with crafts & activities. All children MUST be accompanied by an adult.



REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED

and is limited to the first 40 children, ages 3yrs-8th grade.

Call (216) 662-0370 with names and ages of children, name and phone # of chaperone who will attend with them.

Festivities Include:

Fun Advent Crafts, Christmas Music, The Story of St. Nicholas, Light Refreshments of Cookies & Punch.



Bedford High School Madrigal Singers

Blessed Birthday

Wishes to...

A blessed birthday to each of the following Covenant members born in

December:

6th - Laura Bewsey

8th - Mary Kaye Bernardo
Gwen Susaneck

14th- Jane Gradert

15th- Peggy Smith

18th- Heather Lasher

20th- Kara Constant

24th- Olive Evanofski

26th- Courtney Wright

28th- Dick Ptak

29th- Sheila Werner



January:

5th - Linda Wright

10th - Maud Wright

12th- Joshua Reddig

14th- Kelly Bhatnagar

16th- Rebecca Werner

17th- Phyllis Nemeth

20th- John Werner

22nd- Alivia Kyle

24th- Bryan Treichel

25th- Janet Wilkens,

Karen Zack

28th- Jean Smith

29th- Jean Rusher

Happy Anniversary

Wishes to...

12/4 Belinda &
John Arnold



Covenant-Hope-Faith Walk Fellowship Community Dinner

The Community Dinner got off to a slow start with about thirty-five people attending on a consistent basis. A good portion of those attending are from the Senior Center. But over the past couple of months, the attendance has increased. Word has gotten out that we are serving delicious meals, and attendance has slowly increased.

At the October meal over seventy-five attended. Luckily, our cooks are very optimistic and there was more than enough food for all. An added group of attendees include the residents of Cato House, where Covenant plays bingo on the last Monday of each month.



Thanks to Linda Vopat at the Senior Center for arranging to have the Cato group picked up by the senior bus.

The only thing that is missing is YOU! We have very few members of Covenant coming to enjoy a delicious meal lovingly prepared by loyal faithful volunteers from Hope, Covenant, and Faith Walk Fellowship Church. We occasionally have members of Maple Heights Council attending the meal.

So this is a great opportunity to find out what great things are happening in the community. I hope you will consider taking the time to join us on the last Thursday of the month for an evening of food, fellowship and faith at the Hope-Covenant-Faith Walk Fellowship Community Meal. And don't forget, we are always looking for volunteers to lighten the burden and add to the great satisfaction that is achieved by making the community meal and bingo at Cato House available to members of our community. For more information or to volunteer, call Mary Kaye Bernardo at 216-924-6096.



Reaching Out, Reflecting Christ, Renewing Lives.

Mary Kaye Bernardo
Board of Evangelism & Social Ministry

Special Congregational Assembly Meeting regarding Pastoral Candidate To Be Held In January

The Call Committee has submitted the name of a pastoral candidate to Council, and Council voted to recommend him to the congregation! Triune Lutheran has also approved him. Representatives from the two churches are meeting several times in November and December to negotiate arrangements for the joint employment.

On the morning of Saturday November 12, the Covenant congregation met with the candidate. The next step is to have an assembly meeting to discuss the candidate and vote to determine if he is our congregational choice for pastor. This will likely take place in January.

The Special Congregational Assembly Meeting will be scheduled soon. Continue your prayers as we move forward.

Covenant Recycles!

Bring your paper & cardboard each time you come for worship or events.

Covenant earns money for each ton we collect.

And we help the Earth too!

Did you know? An average tree can yield 2,700 copies of an average-sized daily newspaper.

Be sure to recycle all those copies!

Items accepted:

- * Newspapers * Mail * Phone Books * Magazines *
- * Office & School Paper *
- * Catalogs * Brown Paper Bags *
- * Hard & Soft Bound Books * Cardboard *
- (Please put shredded paper in a tied bag so it doesn't blow away in the wind.)

Items not accepted:

- * Any type of Plastic (bottles/bags) * Styrofoam *
- * Glass * Trash * Aluminum * Metal *

Take your recyclable paper to the green dumpsters at the back of the parking lot any time!



First Sunday of Advent *Longing for Peace*

Isaiah 2:1-5; Psalm 122; Romans 13:11-14; Matthew 24:36-44

Take a moment to read Isaiah 2:1-5 and Psalm 122. Taken together, these readings are rich in symbolism of peace. These are images of God's kingdom that we do not see this Advent on the evening news. The first days of Advent find children waiting and longing for the baby Jesus, festive celebrations, and gifts. Yet this season, as in every day of faith-filled living, we wait and long for God's kingdom to fully break into our world with its promise of peace.

- * What do you think inhibits peace today?
- * Where do you experience God's gift of peace?
- * In the Isaiah and Psalm passages, what symbols stand out to you?
- * How can you be an instrument of peace?



Second Sunday of Advent *Longing for Justice*

Isaiah 11:1-10; Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19; Romans 15:4-13; Matt. 3:1-12

John the Baptist calls out of the wilderness for the people to prepare the way of the Lord, to make straight his paths, and to bear fruit in their lives. God's way of making "a straight path" is often different from our usual concepts of justice. This week's readings speak in terms of liberating the oppressed, hearing the cries of the poor, and reconciling opponents. The prophets proclaim that God's kingdom will need justice, not just charity.

- * Where do you hear the cry of the poor and oppressed?
- * Who are the opponents in your life or in the life of your congregation/parish that need to be reconciled?
- * In what justice-focused ministries does your congregation/parish participate?

Longing for Peace, Justice, Joy and Jesus *Advent 2016*



Third Sunday of Advent *Longing for Joy*

Isaiah 35:1-10; Psalm 146:5-10; James 5:7-10; Matthew 11:2-11

Buried within every newscast is a human-interest story grounded in hope and joy. The negative always seems to get more attention. We can lose heart if we only look in the direction of what is wrong and what is missing. When we look at our church at large or our congregation/parish through dark glasses, we miss the virtues James suggests of patience, strength of heart, and endurance. With these gifts, we can renew a sense of joy. Joy yesterday: Jesus came into our world and forever changed it. Joy tomorrow: Jesus will come again and usher in the fullness of the kingdom. Joy today: Jesus comes in brief and holy moments.

- * Where do you experience joy in your congregation?
- * In what ways are you a joy to others?
- * How can the gifts of patience, strength of heart, and endurance help you focus on the joy of Jesus?



Fourth Sunday of Advent *Longing for Jesus*

Isaiah 7:10-16; Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; Romans 1:1-7; Matt. 1:18-25

As children, the longing of Advent ends on Christmas day with manger, carols, celebrations, and gifts. We experience great joy until a few days pass and we sense a long wait ahead of us once again. This is the way of Advent, the joy of Jesus among us, yet not fully. Joy gives way to more longing. But we remember God is Emmanuel (God with us). The greater celebrations help us see God breaking into our lives and our joy is deep. But so is our longing. We wait for peace. We wait for justice. We wait for joy. We wait for Jesus.

- * When do you have the most difficulty waiting? When is waiting a joy?
- * What names for God are most helpful to you in times of struggle? In times of joy?
- * What does the name Emmanuel (God with us) mean for you today?

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE COVENANT

DECEMBER 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2 6:45-8:30 pm St. Nick Nite	3 5:00 pm Saturday Evening Eucharist
4 9:00 am Sunday Eucharist 10:30 Sunday School Hour	5	6 7:00 pm Bd. of Worship & Music 6:00-7:15 Church of the Master's Weeknight Advent Dinner and Worship	7	8	9	10 5:00 pm Saturday Evening Eucharist
11 9:00 am Sunday Eucharist 10:30 Sunday School Hour	12 11:00 AM Retirees Luncheon	13 7:00 pm Council Meeting in Parlor 6:00-7:15 Church of the Master's Weeknight Advent Dinner and Worship	14	15	16	17 5:00 pm Saturday Evening Eucharist
18 9:00 am Sunday Eucharist 10:30 Sunday School Hour	19	20 7:00 pm Evangelism & Social Ministry Mtg. in Parlor	21	22	23	24 7:00 pm Christmas Eve Service
25 Christmas Day No Sunday Eucharist	26 Office Closed	27 Office Closed	28 Office Closed	29 Office Closed 5:00 pm Covenant-Hope Community Meal	30 Office Closed	31 NO Saturday Evening Eucharist

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE COVENANT

JANUARY 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 New Year's Day Worship Service plans to be determined	2 Office Closed	3 7:00 pm Bd. of Worship & Music	4	5	6	7 5:00 pm Saturday Evening Eucharist
8 9:00 am Sunday Eucharist 10:30 am Sunday School Hour	9	10 7:00 pm Council Meeting in Parlor	11	12	13	14 5:00 pm Saturday Evening Eucharist
15 9:00 am Sunday Eucharist 10:30 am Sunday School Hour	16	17 7:00 pm Evangelism & Social Ministry Mtg. in Parlor	18	19 7:00 pm Board of Education Mtg. in Parlor	20	21 5:00 pm Saturday Evening Eucharist
22 9:00 am Sunday Eucharist 10:30 am Sunday School Hour	23	24	25	26 6:00 pm Covenant-Hope Community Meal	27	28 5:00 pm Saturday Evening Eucharist
29 9:00 am Sunday Eucharist	30	31				

Those Who Serve

Date	Asst. Min	Lector	Crucifer	Ushers	Altar Guild	Greeters
Dec. 4	Maud Wright	Nel Lanese	K. Garberich	A. Treichel B. Treichel	C. Frajter J. Garvin M. Zahn	Alex & Paula Hohenstein
Dec. 11	Allan Treichel	T. Lockmiller	J. Bernardo	D. Schirmer K. Frajter S. Dobush	C. Frajter J. Garvin M. Zahn	Don & Ron Schirmer
Dec. 18	A. Hohenstein	Steve Dobush	E. Lockmiller	M. Garvin B. Zahn	S. Werner A. Copeland P. Hohenstein	Janet Wilkins
Dec. 24	Nel Lanese	Maud Wright	E. Garberich	V. Besednjak M. Garvin S. Senderak	S. Werner A. Copeland P. Hohenstein	Barb Gaglione
Jan. 1	Worship service plans to be determined		[J. Bernardo]	[A. Treichel B. Treichel]	[M. Ptak N. Lanese L. Bewsey]	[Harry & Sheila Werner]
Jan. 8	Dick Ptak	Madeline Ptak	K. Garberich	D. Schirmer K. Frajter S. Dobush	M. Ptak N. Lanese L. Bewsey	Bob & Donna Franz
Jan. 15	Allan Treichel	T. Lockmiller	E. Lockmiller	M. Garvin B. Zahn	J. Rusher C. Senderak J. Skowronski G. Susaneck	Mary Kaye Bernardo
Jan. 22	Marie Zahn	Bert Zahn	E. Garberich	A. Treichel B. Treichel	J. Rusher C. Senderak J. Skowronski G. Susaneck	Bert & Marie Zahn
Jan. 29	A. Hohenstein	Steve Dobush	J. Bernardo	S. Senderak V. Besednjak	C. Frajter J. Garvin M. Zahn	Steve and Claudia Senderak
Feb. 5	Maud Wright	Nel Lanese	K. Garberich	A. Treichel B. Treichel	C. Frajter J. Garvin M. Zahn	Annie Copeland

**The Lutheran Church of the Covenant
2017 Stewardship Drive**

I/We thank God for all His blessings and support Covenant as it spreads God's work through:

- Worship services
- Ministries
- New opportunities to serve
- Other activities

Name: _____

Envelope Number: _____

For the year 2017, I pledge to contribute:

\$ _____ weekly

\$ _____ every two weeks

\$ _____ monthly

\$ _____ annually

I would like to use my talent(s) in the area of : _____

I am able to give my time as follows (indicate your availability in hours/days/weeks, etc.):

Please cut at dotted line and retain bottom portion for your records

2017 Pledge

Name: _____ Envelope Number: _____

Pledge: \$ _____ per week two weeks month year

Pledge of Time and Talents:

Covenant NEWS

The Lutheran Church of the Covenant
19000 Libby Road, Maple Heights, Ohio 44137

Help the Church avoid additional postal fees; please notify us of your address change.

If you would prefer to receive the newsletter online instead, contact covenantlc@sbcglobal.net.

The newsletters are always available our website CovenantMapleHts.org.