

COVENANT CONNECTION

2ND QUARTER NEWSLETTER - JULY 2026



COVUCC.ORG |   @COVUCC

A vertical photograph on the left side of the page shows a hand holding a golden tray filled with white petals. The hand is wearing a dark beaded bracelet. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light color.

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FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF FAITHFULNESS AND IMPACT

REV. DR. PATRICK L. DAYMOND, SENIOR PASTOR



Beloved Covenant Family,

This year, we celebrate a remarkable milestone of 30 years of ministry, mission, and impact. As we reflect on this sacred journey, we do so with hearts full of gratitude for every member, past and present, who has poured into this ministry through faithful stewardship, service, and prayer. We also honor those who have joined the ancestral realm, whose legacy continues to live on through the work we carry forward today. It is because of your collective faithfulness that Covenant United Church of Christ stands as a beacon of hope, healing, and transformation in our community.

One of the clearest expressions of your faithfulness has been your generosity. For three decades, Covenant has been a generous church, and we have been intentional about cultivating a culture of generosity that reflects the very heart of Christ. Through our Covenant Cares initiative, we have leaned even further into that calling. In the last quarter of this year alone, we have committed ourselves to being intentionally generous to our neighbors in need by providing groceries, offering utility assistance, purchasing gas, and creating meaningful outlets for our seniors.

I extend heartfelt thanks to our Covenant Cares team, who have gone into the community not only to respond to urgent needs, but also to tell the story of those needs and seek the welfare of the city, as instructed in Jeremiah 29:7. Your compassion in action is a living testimony of our faith.

For nearly 30 years, our food pantry has been a steady and shining light each Saturday morning in serving as a vital resource in combating food insecurity. To our faithful volunteers, your consistency and commitment have made a lasting difference in countless lives. We are deeply grateful.

Likewise, for nearly three decades, we have been blessed to invest in the future by supporting high school seniors as they pursue higher education—whether in college or trade school. Thank you to those who have begun establishing scholarships to ensure that this legacy of empowerment continues for generations to come.

We would be remiss not to express our profound appreciation to our Pastor Emeritus, Rev. Dr. Ozzie E. Smith, Jr., whose visionary leadership laid the strong foundation upon which we continue to build as a thriving faith community.

Over the past eight years of my tenure, alongside our dedicated staff and ministry leaders, we have sought to honor that foundation by advancing our mission: connecting the disconnected to Christ and equipping the connected to be more like Christ. We have done this by remaining outwardly focused in creating opportunities for others to encounter Christ through acts of generosity, love, and service. In doing so, we are not only doing the work of the church. We are honoring God and building the kin-dom of God here on earth.

As you explore this newsletter, you will find powerful stories that reflect the impact of your faithfulness over just the past quarter. From our Rush Hour to Calvary Good Friday Service to Youth Takeover Sunday, it has truly been an extraordinary season in the life of our church.

To God be the glory for the great things God has done and continues to do through Covenant.

Love U 2 Life,

Rev. Dr. Patrick L. Daymond Senior Pastor

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWS

REV. DR. CARMIN FREDERICK-JAMES

Beloved Covenant Family,

As we stand on the threshold of our upcoming August Sabbath Month, a collective exhale is beginning across our community. This season of rest is a sacred boundary—an invitation to unburden, let our souls catch up with our bodies, and sit quietly in the presence of the Divine. Yet, we rest with a posture of holy expectancy for what lies on the other side.

When we return in September for the fall session of Connect Groups, Sunday School, and Noon Bible Study, our Christian Education Department will step fully into the next chapter of our DiscipleSHIFT journey. We are moving away from traditional classroom models and leaning completely into Communal Discovery. This shift is a direct tool to live out our sacred mission: to connect the disconnected to Christ and equip the connected to be like Christ.

As you enter this rest, we leave you with a beautiful paradigm shift to ponder. We are unlearning the old idea that leadership requires an “expert” with all the right answers. Look at how the Holy Spirit is transforming our approach to growing together:

Our Focus is Shifting: From the transmission of information to experiential transformation.

Our Posture is Shifting: Our leaders are stepping away from being the “expert with answers” to serve as lead learners and discoverers.

Our Goal is Shifting: We are no longer looking for a final graduation point; we are pursuing vitality—learning to abide and evolve.

Our Method is Shifting: We are trading lecture and listening for a rhythm of bridging and wondering.

Our Success is Shifting: We are moving from “I learned what the leader knows” to “We discovered what the Spirit is saying.”

This Fall, our leaders will serve as Lead Learners—protecting a space where every voice has a seat at the table and the Holy Spirit is the primary Teacher.

If you haven't joined our Christian Education offerings in the past, consider this your heartfelt invitation. In these new spaces, we truly will learn that the wisdom is already in the room. You do not need a title to sit with us; your life experiences, your questions, and your unique journey are essential. YOU are a vital part of the wisdom we are seeking.

While specific September launch dates are being finalized, carry this vision into August. Turn to wonder, love the questions, and expect renewal. Let us abide deeply in rest, so that we may return ready to evolve together.

Rest well, family.

With Expectancy, Rev. Dr. Carmin Frederick-James

Christian Education, Online Engagement & Outreach

GIRLS ON THE RUN IS BACK THIS FALL!

We are thrilled to welcome Girls on the Run back for a new season of growth, strength, and community. Registration is officially open, and our 10-week program begins the week of September 8th. If you have a young girl ready to grow in confidence and community, you can find details and register through scanning the QR codes below:

3rd–5th Grade Program



6th–8th Grade Program



Thank you so much for your support and partnership as we invest in the young girls of our community.



COVENANT YOUTH MINISTRY NEWS

MINISTER KEVON CARTER

The youth at Covenant UCC have been busy these past couple of months. On the fifth Sunday in May, we celebrated as five of our youth were confirmed after beginning their confirmation journey in the fall of 2025. It was truly a blessing to witness them publicly affirm their faith before the congregation.

Then, just a couple of weeks later in June, we celebrated our annual Youth Day with Youth Takeover Sunday, and what an awesome celebration we had at both services! The celebration kicked off with a special Youth Takeover skit. A special thank you to Pastor Daymond for being a part.

Our youth ushers faithfully served, our Youth/Teen Choir led us in worship, and God's Little Angels reminded us that God is indeed worthy to be praised. Our SYNC Step Ministry (Stepping Youth in Christ) ministered through stepping, singing, and scripture all at the same time, while our Total Praise Dance Ministry lifted our spirits with a high energy praise dance. If that was not enough, our youth also served as the liturgists for both services and led the altar prayer.

During our Youth Day celebration, we also had the privilege of recognizing our graduates and celebrating their accomplishments. We were especially excited to see several of our high school graduates receive scholarships as they prepare to begin this next chapter of their educational journey.

From celebrating the faith journey of our five newly confirmed youth in May to watching so many of our young people lead and serve during our annual Youth Day in June, it has been a joy to see God at work through the youth of Covenant UCC. We are grateful to every youth, parent, leader, and volunteer who makes these moments possible, and we ask that you continue to keep all of our youth and youth ministries in your prayers as they grow in faith and use their gifts for God's glory.



FROM OUR YOUNG ADULTS

My name is Danaisha, and I'm a young adult who has been working on becoming closer to the Lord. I've always had a relationship with the Lord, but there were times when my dedication felt lukewarm. However, moving out of state for college made me realize I wanted to truly lock in and take my faith journey seriously, so I started attending church services online. That carried me through college, but when I returned home, I felt it was time to take a deeper step.

Throughout my journey, it became challenging to change old habits while still being surrounded by people who weren't on the same path. The closer I grew to the Lord and His Word, the stronger the feeling of loneliness became. I started to feel distant from people and from the life I was trying to leave behind.

In my pursuit of finding a church home where I didn't feel like I was on an island, I began visiting different churches. Covenant was the second place I attended, and honestly, from the first time my daughter and I walked in, I didn't feel out of place. Even though it was a large congregation, I never felt like I was just another face in the crowd. Each Sunday I attended, I felt more and more welcomed.

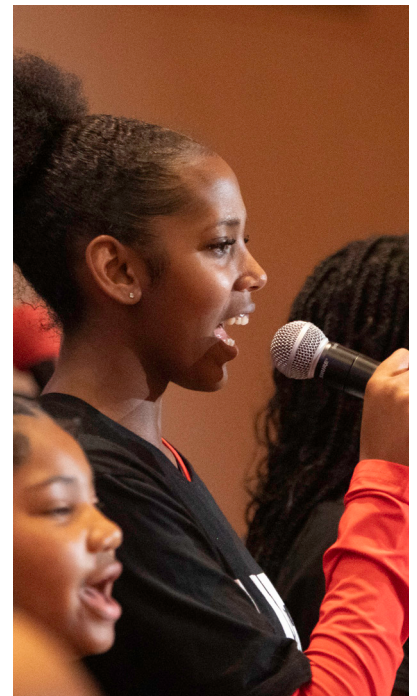
Eventually, I became curious about finding people my age and came across a flyer for the young adult Bible study. Without thinking twice, I attended the next session, and I can honestly say I've been attending ever since without missing one.

To the young adult seeking guidance and a place where you can be accepted while becoming the person God is calling you to be, The Bridge is truly your listen-and-not-judge place to be.



Not only was it a relief to know there were other young adults my age at the church, but it was also amazing to realize I wasn't alone in my walk of faith or in navigating a world that doesn't always align with God's way. Joining The Bridge has helped me meet people I now look forward to seeing every Sunday, overcome the ending of long-term friendships, discuss topics I usually don't have people who understand to talk about, and most importantly, build connections with people who genuinely check in on me.

Honestly, being a part of The Bridge has been the bridge I needed to stay dedicated to my walk with God and not fall astray. One thing I wish more people knew is how much being surrounded by people who are willing to have the hard conversations and share their perspectives can help you grow. Life can already be difficult at times, but it feels better when you don't have to walk through it alone.





COVENANT HEALTH AND FITNESS NEWS

REV. ETHEL SOUTHERN

The Health & Fitness Ministry is celebrating the successful completion of the Spring session of Motion, Garden & Music, and what a joyful season it has been! Each week, an average of seventy or more seniors gathered three days a week to participate in programs designed with their health, wellness, fellowship, and enjoyment in mind.

One of the main purposes of Motion, Garden & Music is to help reduce the isolation many seniors experience, especially during the colder months. This session provided a welcoming space where CUCC seniors and our community neighbors could come together, interact with one another, make new acquaintances, share laughter, and enjoy meaningful fellowship.

A highlight of the Spring session was the addition of Funky Fitness, a new and exciting component that quickly became a favorite. Participants exercised to lively music from the 1970s, 1980s, 1990s, and today. The room was filled with movement, music, singing, laughter, stretching, light weightlifting, and plenty of fun.

The weekly activities also focused on practical wellness. On Wednesdays, participants learned the importance of maintaining balance and practicing safe ways to stand, sit, and move within their personal space. On Thursdays, they enjoyed chair exercises, with some participants using hand weights to help maintain muscle tone. Each week brought opportunities to strengthen the body, stretch the muscles, and build confidence.

The gardening portion of the program reminded everyone of the theme that carried through the season: “We Are Family.” Participants learned about the value of planting their own herbs and vegetables, watched short films and documentaries about gardening and farming, and selected herb and vegetable plants to take home. Many are now enjoying the fruits of their labor, both from what they planted and from the relationships nurtured throughout the session. Motion, Garden & Music was more than a program—it was a season of health, joy, learning, and community. Our final fieldtrip exploration led us to the beach in New Buffalo Michigan, where the seniors sat at the beach in their beach chairs, ate a delicious box lunch, enjoyed the sun, stopped for Rainbow Cone ice cream and journeyed safely back to CUCC. After a fun-filled relaxed day, we completed the season with a field trip to Tower Hill Camp in Sawyer, Michigan, where those who were able toured the camp grounds, walked to lake Michigan, and sampled leaves from a sassafras tree!



SENIOR PROM CELEBRATION

Covenant United Church of Christ held its first-ever Senior Prom for members ages sixty-five and over, in collaboration with the Health & Fitness, Pastoral Care, and New Members ministries. As CUCC continues striving daily to live out its mission of connecting with members on every level, this event was truly an occasion of connection, joy, and fellowship.

Our seniors arrived dressed for the occasion, with many wearing prom attire and some of the men arriving in tuxedos. They walked the red carpet, posed for photos, and gave their best smiles. Yes, it was Senior Prom time! Rev. Kim and Rev. Ethel welcomed all attendees, acknowledged their presence, and thanked them for joining the celebration.

The celebration gave many seniors the opportunity to reconnect with members and guests of CUCC they had not seen in a while. We played the game “Things My Mother Used to Say,” which brought back memories of childhood and reminded us of traditions children today may be missing.

Great music from their eras filled the room, including songs many grew up hearing and had not heard in some time. They danced to classics such as “Twine Time,” did the Jerk, and enjoyed old-school bopping. Dinner was served to our seniors, so there was no need to stand in line at the prom.

Before the prom concluded, we crowned our Prom Queen and Prom Kings. The Prom Queen was 94 years young, and our two Prom Kings were both 82 years young. We toasted the Queen and Kings with sparkling grape cider.

The afternoon concluded with beautiful memories for the seniors of CUCC as they fellowshiped with one another and had fun. Our hope is that each person left knowing: we love you, we care about you, and we are because of who you are. This event reflected ministries working together to ensure that our seniors are seen, celebrated, and lifted up as we continue to live out our mission statement, follow Christ, and honor the elders of our village.

Peace & Prayer

Rev. Kim Grice, Rev. Ethel Southern
Pastoral Care, Health & Fitness, & New Members





COVENANT CARES

MARK HALL

Since its launch, Covenant Cares has become our community impact initiative dedicated to serving local families, seniors, and individuals throughout the south suburbs. Each month, we focus on a specific need within our community, creating meaningful campaigns that provide immediate relief while working toward long-term solutions. Through the generosity of our congregation and faithful supporters, we have been able to serve more than 130 families and individuals. Every gift given has made a lasting impact, and we are grateful for the opportunity to be the hands and feet of Christ in our community.

We launched Covenant Cares with our grocery assistance campaign, taking a different approach than traditional food distributions. Rather than providing prepackaged food boxes, we surprised shoppers by paying for their groceries and allowing them to purchase the items their families truly needed. This initiative served 40 families across five grocery stores in South Holland, Dolton, and Harvey. The overwhelming response confirmed the need for this type of support and inspired us to continue expanding our outreach.



In April, our focus shifted to utility assistance. We helped 15 families by paying 20 utility bills, providing relief to individuals facing overwhelming financial burdens. Among those served were 91-year-old Gladys Walker, who was left with a \$1,700 water bill after becoming the victim of fraud, and 87-year-old Lupe Martinez, who received complete forgiveness of her outstanding utility debt after carrying the burden for years. These moments reminded us that even a single act of generosity can restore hope and provide peace of mind.



In May, Covenant Cares addressed the growing cost of transportation by assisting working families and individuals affected by rising fuel prices. We served 22 people through this initiative. Five working families each received \$150 Shell gas cards, while 17 individuals were surprised with free gas while filling their tanks. The response demonstrated just how significant this need is within our community, leading us to continue our transportation assistance efforts throughout June and July.



As Covenant Cares continues to grow, our commitment remains the same: to meet people where they are, respond to the needs of our community with compassion, and create lasting impact one campaign at a time.

Mark Hall
Director of Technology



FINANCIAL WELLNESS WORKSHOP

BUILD A STRONGER FINANCIAL FUTURE

CATHE EVANS WILLIAMS

Making wise financial decisions is an important part of being a faithful steward of the resources God has entrusted to us. Whether you are just beginning your financial journey, planning for retirement, or simply looking to strengthen your financial future, our Financial Wellness Workshop Series is designed to provide practical, easy-to-understand guidance you can begin using immediately.

Join us on select Sundays from 1:30–2:30 p.m. for five informative workshops led by experienced professionals. Each session includes a 45-minute presentation followed by a 15-minute question-and-answer session, giving you the opportunity to ask questions and receive practical guidance tailored to your needs. Light refreshments will be served during each presentation.



**Money
Management
and Debt
Elimination**



**Estate Planning
Essentials**



**Funeral
Planning**



**Understanding
Insurance**



**Basics of
Investing**

Each workshop is designed to provide practical knowledge, valuable resources, and actionable steps you can implement right away. Whether you attend one session or the entire series, you'll gain the confidence and tools needed to make informed financial decisions and build a stronger financial future. As an added incentive, participants who attend at least **three of the five** workshops will qualify to receive a financial stipend to help them begin implementing the financial goals and action plan they develop throughout the series. Our goal is not only to provide information but also to empower participants to take meaningful action toward greater financial stability and stewardship.

We encourage individuals, couples, young adults, seniors, and families to participate in this valuable educational opportunity. Invite a friend, neighbor, or family member to join you as we grow together in financial wisdom and faithful stewardship.

Registration information will be announced soon. We encourage you to reserve these dates now and plan to join us for this valuable series.

We look forward to seeing you this fall!

Cathe Evans Williams
Church Business Administrator and General Counsel



30 YEARS OF COVUCC

CELEBRATING THE LAST THREE DECADES

This year, Covenant United Church of Christ joyfully celebrated 30 years of ministry, faith, and community. Since opening its doors on Easter Sunday, April 7, 1996, Covenant has remained committed to its mission of connecting the disconnected to Christ and equipping the connected to be like Christ.

What began under the faithful leadership of Pastor Emeritus Rev. Dr. Ozzie E. Smith, Jr. has grown into a thriving, multi-generational congregation dedicated to worship, discipleship, and serving the community. Through the years, Covenant has expanded its campus, launched impactful ministries, invested in future generations, and touched countless lives through outreach and service. Today, under the leadership of Senior Pastor Rev. Dr. Patrick L. Daymond, the church continues to build on that strong foundation while pursuing a vision centered on justice, healing, love, and the transformation of lives.



Our 30th Anniversary Celebration brought together members, friends, and guests for a joyful day of fellowship, delicious food, and powerful preaching as we reflected on God's faithfulness over the past three decades. While we celebrated all that God has done, we also looked ahead with anticipation, recommitting ourselves to the work He has called us to do.

As we enter our next chapter, we remain grateful for the leaders, members, and community who have helped shape Covenant's story. We give God all the glory for 30 incredible years and look forward to continuing His work for generations to come.

PHOTOS OF THE QUARTER









CURRENT AND UPCOMING EVENTS



covenant cares in partnership with SOHO SHOPS

BUY THE BLOCK event

Saturday, August 1, 2026 | 1:00pm-4:00pm

SOHO SHOPS
16114 South Park Ave.,
South Holland, IL 60473

SCAN HERE

The first 100 CUCC members to register to support this event will receive \$25 of Covenant Cares seed dollars to shop with.

Everyone is encouraged to join while we support small businesses in the community.

BUY THE BLOCK
AUGUST 1ST 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM



SAVE THE DATE!

JAZZIN' FOR JUSTICE CONCERT

FRIDAY, AUGUST 7, 2026

JUSTICE SUNDAY
AUGUST 9TH

JUSTICE SUMMIT
AUGUST 15TH

COVUCC.ORG | @COVUCC

JUSTICE WEEK
AUGUST 7TH, AUGUST 9TH, AND AUGUST 15TH



COV UCC

FALL REVIVAL

OLD SCHOOL STYLE

SEPTEMBER 1ST - 3RD
7PM NIGHTLY

THREE CONSECUTIVE NIGHTS OF SINGING, PREACHING, AND REVIVAL!

REV. DR. MARCUS COSBY
WHEELER AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH
HOUSTON, TX

LIVE SERVICE AND STREAMING!

COVUCC.ORG | @COVUCC

FALL REVIVAL
SEPTEMBER 1ST - 3RD
7:00 PM



COV UCC

GOSPEL RUN CHICAGO

GOSPEL RUN CHICAGO 2026

39TH STREET BEACH
Saturday, September 12th
8:00 A.M.

Run your Race. Walk your Pace. Finish Strong. Be Inspired!

COVUCC.ORG | @COVUCC

GOSPEL RUN
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12TH
8:00 AM



COV UCC

THE BRIDGE

YOUNG ADULT BIBLE STUDY

Every First and Third Wednesday
6:30 PM - 8:00 PM

Looking for a place to connect, grow, and talk about real life and real faith?

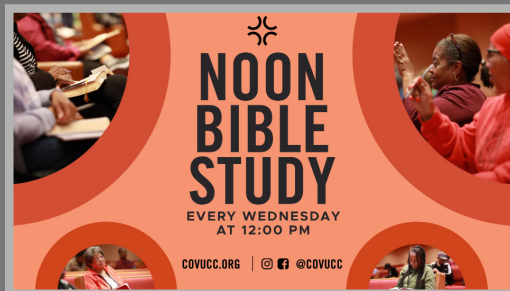
Come as you are. Leave encouraged.

Come enjoy food, fellowship, and faith-filled conversation.

Where faith meets life!

COVUCC.ORG | @COVUCC

THE BRIDGE
EVERY FIRST AND THIRD WEDNESDAY
6:30 - 8:00 PM



COV UCC

NOON BIBLE STUDY

EVERY WEDNESDAY
AT 12:00 PM

COVUCC.ORG | @COVUCC

NOON BIBLE STUDY
EVERY WEDNESDAY AT NOON



COV UCC

IF MY PEOPLE PRAYER CALL

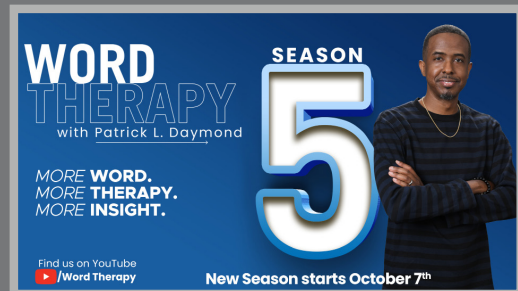
WITH PASTOR PATRICK L. DAYMOND

EVERY WEDNESDAY @ 7:14AM

Dial: (760) 548-9759

COVUCC.ORG | @COVUCC

IF MY PEOPLE PRAYER CALL
EVERY WEDNESDAY @ 7:14 A.M.
With Rev. Dr. Patrick L. Daymond
Dial: 760-548-9759



COV UCC

WORD THERAPY

with Patrick L. Daymond

MORE WORD. MORE THERAPY. MORE INSIGHT.

Find us on YouTube
Word Therapy

SEASON 5

New Season starts October 7th

WORD THERAPY
EVERY TUESDAY AT 7:00 P.M.
EXCLUSIVELY ON YOUTUBE

JOIN US VIRTUALLY AND IN PERSON

WEEKLY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

SUNDAY WORSHIP

SUMMER SCHEDULE

Sunday worship 9:00 A.M.

Regular Schedule Resumes 9/6

Sunday Worship 7:30 A.M. and 11 A.M.

Sunday School 9:30 A.M.

SOCIAL MEDIA

FB, Instagram & TikTok: @covucc

EMAIL

Info@covucc.org

WORD THERAPY

Tuesday at 7 p.m.

Starting July 28, Word Therapy will be on hiatus until 10.6.26

BIBLE STUDY

Wednesday at 12 P.M.

Starting in August, noon Bible Study will be on hiatus until 9.9.26

THE BRIDGE

Young Adult Bible Study

1st & 3rd Wednesday

6:30 P.M. - 8:00 PM

RADIO BROADCAST

Friday at 12:30 P.M. – WYCA 102.3

SUBSCRIBE TO OUR

YOUTUBE CHANNEL

<https://bit.ly/CUCCSouthHollandYouTube>

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Church of Christ

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REV. DR. CARMIN

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BOARD / COMMITTEE / COUNCIL CHAIRS

NIASA HOLLINS-WATSON

Deacon Board

SHIRLEY HALL

Pastoral Relations Committee

IMANI MCROYAL

Youth Representative

SHANNON STATON

Trustee Board

CONNIE LINDSEY

Financial Oversight Committee

LELA BRIDGES-WEBB

Member at Large

KAY GILES-SLAUGHTER

Member at Large

EDGAR WRIGHT

Member at Large

SCAN TO VISIT
OUR WEBSITE

