COVENANT CONNECTION

3RD QUARTER NEWSLETTER - OCTOBER 2023



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PASTOR'S WORD

Rev. Dr. Patrick L. Daymond

There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens.... -Ecclesiastes 3:1 NIV

Fall is one of my favorite seasons. It wasn't until I got to college in 1996, the same year that Covenant UCC was birthed, that I even truly experienced Autumn. Growing up in Florida where it's warm most of the year, the change between seasons was not gradual, it was sudden. But in colder climates, you can feel that transition. The air gets a little crisper, night comes a little faster, and the leaves gradually move from deep summery shades of green into a rich rainbow of gold, yellow, and red.

My first time seeing the leaves change was in college in North Carolina. I remember picking up those colorful leaves, stuffing them in Ziploc bags, and sending them home to my family. I was so amazed with how beautiful the leaves were that I wanted to share it with the people I love, because as I came to understand, such beauty doesn't last forever.

As I grow older, I have begun to grasp that truth even more. That nothing remains the same

forever. Seasons change. Circumstances shift. People leave us. It's the cycle of life. Change is the only constant. And we have two choices. We either resist or we choose to embrace. I've come to realize that church, perhaps as we once knew it across the world, will never be what it once was. But in the midst of the transition, if we open our eyes, we will see something new and beautiful is emerging.

I am so excited about what I see happening at Covenant UCC. Relationships are growing stronger through group life. Ministry has been reactivated and is in a state of becoming. Opportunities to serve abound. Our outreach into the community and world is making a difference. Souls are being saved as people find places of connection in our collective ministry. Truly, we are continuing to mature into the purpose for which we have been called - to glorify God in all that we do. The discipleshift is well underway. And as we choose to follow Christ, my prayer is that we would discern what the Lord is doing in this season and that we would choose not to resist the change, but to embrace it.

In this edition of our Covenant Connection newsletter, you'll find a recap of our third quarter ministry efforts and a preview of things to come. Please enjoy!

Love U 2 Life,

Pastor Patrick L. Daymond







JAZZIN' FOR JUSTICE 2023 Rev. Ramah E. Wright

After a three-year hiatus, Jazzin' for Justice returned this summer on Friday, August 11, 2023, with top notch entertainers, and a variety of food and merchandise vendors that did not disappoint.

This free event was well attended by members of Covenant United Church of Christ and members of the South Holland community. The gates opened at 4:00PM with music by Dee Jay Lady D, to set the mood for fun and fellowship.

Attendees looking for a little retail therapy, found a variety of goods offered by our vendors. PJ Style Designs presented her hand designed earrings and art creations. Kendra's Gems displayed a collection of earrings and jewelry for those looking for a little bling to brighten up their day. Hannah's African Design brought beautiful authentic African clothing. Prestige Purses offered an assortment of elegant handbags.

Tru2Mi brought her collection of personalized skin care products, and Simply Memories exhibited an array of mugs, tumblers, mirrors, and specialty gifts.

An assortment of refreshments was available throughout the evening. Harold's Chicken of South Holland and Homewood provided fried chicken and fish cooked to order. Francisco's Tacos offered chicken, turkey, and steak tacos prepared on an open grill with a variety of fresh toppings and condiments. For those craving sweets, Ms. Tittle brought her famous cupcakes and butter cookies. Lindsey's Italian Ice provided a menu of refreshing flavors to please your palate and the Farmers of Pembrooke were also onsite for those desiring fresh produce to take home that evening.





At 5:30 PM, the concert kicked off with Covenant's beloved comedian and Master of Ceremonies, BLT, who paved the way with humorous stories and kept the transition between entertainers flowing seamlessly.

Class Act Entertainment was the next act of the evening offering smooth grooves and melodious tunes from their talented vocalists and band.

Dominique Hammons graced the stage next with his incredible gifts as a contemporary jazz violinist. He left the stage to vibe with the concert attendees. He was warmly received and left the crowd wanting more. The concert closed with one of our all-time favorites, the renown Mike Manson, his band and guest vocalists. As per usual, they captivated the audience with a perfect balance of old school favorites and contemporary jazz.

Covenant UCC was blessed to have Tony Carpenter serve as the Production Manager, and Razor Wintercastle Griffin as the Stage Manager for this year's concert. We are eternally grateful to both of them along with the Jazzin' for Justice Committee, the Security Ministry, the Maintenance Staff, the Media Staff, the caterer, and all who contributed to the success of this event.

To God be the Glory!!!























GHANA: THERE IS NO PLACE LIKE HOME

Dr. Antonia Daymond

This past September, Rev. Patrick and I, along with a vivacious group of thirty-four, composed of beloved Covenant family and friends, embarked on a two-week pilgrimage to and throughout Ghana, West Africa, an effervescent place that we embraced as "home."

Upon our arrival in Accra, we heard warm welcomes of "Akwaaba" inviting us to culturally immerse ourselves into Ghana's unique art forms, practices, traditions, and perspectives. We stood in the home, library, and final resting place of intellectual icon WEB Dubois; walked through the hollow trees of a wildlife sanctuary; tried our hands at traditional weaving; participated in a moving naming ceremony where we were bestowed Ghanaian names from village chiefs and elders; and danced to inimitable drum cadences with joyous children that made our experience sublime.

Other memorable highlights include our time in the region of Kumasi where we worshipped at Calvary Charismatic Center (CCC), a vast and vibrant community of believers whose warm hospitality is exemplary of how church should feel and be. Rev. Patrick preached at two of its three services and what a time we had. While worship was a pinnacle of our experience in Kumasi it was met with our work, that is, carrying out Christ's call to aid and empower the poor.





Amid our coming together, a unison form of exaltation to God reverberated throughout the sanctuary as our very own organist, Cliff Johnson, graced its organ to further fuse our commonalities of praise.

While worship was a pinnacle of our experience in Kumasi, it was met with our work, that is, carrying out Christ's call to aid and empower the poor. To be clear, poverty is real in Ghana, especially in its rural areas.

Considering this reality, we visited three schools in the village of Adamawoase, and through Covenant's giving and generosity we were able to donate school supplies that were gravely needed. The glee and gratitude radiating from the students' regal faces is an image that will reside in our souls for a lifetime.

We will continue our work by partnering with CCC to build a community library for our sisters and brothers in the village.

The culmination of our stay would take us to the

Elmina and Cape Coast slave dungeons, former strongholds for the transatlantic slave trade. Captured Africans were violently brought to these coastal citadels, where they were imprisoned and forced onto ships to begin their harrowing oceanic journey.

While walking through the grim walls of those dungeons we could feel the brimming pain and suffocation of our ancestors. It was a reminder that this is a brutal history that all global citizens should learn about and never forget.

And despite this bloodstained history, we witnessed a potent representation of "blackness" in the Ghanaian people. We were able to witness a people who have an extraordinary ability to address problems that were created by invaders and outsiders.

The exchange of commerce between rich, melanin hued hands in bustling markets, the opulent colorways beaming from Kente fabrics and Andinkra designs, the remarkably high threshold set in education and enlightenment, the

rhythmic dance and majestic musicality igniting every road and street, and the spiritual roots that continue to ground the land, are testaments that Ghana is God's Masterpiece.

We learned. We discovered. We danced. We sang. We laughed. We cried. We prayed. We listened. We shared. We made friends. We shopped. We indulged in delectable Ghanian cuisine. We lived.

Many thanks to Shirley Hall for orchestrating our trip to the Motherland. We look forward to traveling back home in the future. There is simply no place like it.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS

Rev. Ethel Southern

October is National Domestic Violence Awareness Month. It is a time to recognize and support survivors of domestic violence and advocate for its victims.

Domestic violence is a widespread issue that affects individuals from all walks of life, regardless of age, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, gender, race, religion, or nationality. It takes various forms, such as physical or verbal abuse, financial control, and manipulation, but power/control remains at its core. Victims, including children, experience psychological trauma which impacts their mental health, relationships, and sense of safety. The consequences of this violence can be devastating, causing physical injury, psychological trauma, and even death. Furthermore, the impact can span generations.

While progress has been made in reducing domestic violence incidents over the years, astonishingly an average of 20 people are physically abused by their intimate partners every minute. This translates to over 10 million abuse victims annually. Shockingly, 1 in 3 women and 1 in 4 men have experienced physical abuse from an intimate partner at some point in their lives. These statistics reveal the silent fear that millions live with daily within their own homes.

To escape domestic violence, survivors require coordinated community efforts ensuring they can be safe at home, attend school/work without fear, participate in social activities, and remain mentally/emotionally healthy. Local resources are available to victims of domestic violence in Chicago's south suburban region, such as Anew and the South Suburban Family Shelter.

Anew: Building Beyond Violence and Abuse, located in Homewood, offers services for victims of domestic violence, and accepts clients regardless of race, color, religion, national origin sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, or age. South Suburban Family Shelter (SSFS) is a community-based social service agency. The mission of SSFS is to provide comprehensive, coordinated services for families in which domestic violence exists

without imposing any one solution.
Available services include a 24-hour bilingual hotline, emergency shelter, crisis intervention, individual and group counseling for adult and child victims, parenting classes, court advocacy, medical advocacy, violence prevention program, B.R.O. Boys Respecting Others, abuser intervention program, and referrals.

Anyone experiencing domestic violence is encouraged to contact a local or national resource for help.



LOCAL RESOURCES

Anew: Building Beyond Violence and Abuse Address: 18137 Harwood Ave, Homewood, IL Phone: 708-794-2140 After-Hours Emergency Hotline: 708-335-3028

South Suburban Family Shelter 24-Hour Bilingual Hotline – 708-335-3028

NATIONAL RESOURCES

National Domestic Violence Hotline: 800-799-7233

National Resource Center on Domestic Violence: 800-537-2238 | nrcdv.org

Child Protection and Child Custody Center: 855-CAMINAR (855-226-4627) | caminarlatino.org/

National Clearinghouse for the Defense of Battered Women: 800-903-0111, ext. 3 | ncdbw.org

National Health Resource Center on Domestic Violence: 888-792-2873 | futureswithoutviolence.org/health

Ntl' Center on Domestic Violence, Trauma & Mental Health: 312-726-7020 | nationalcenterdytraumamh.org

Safe Housing Partnerships: 800-537-2238 | safehousingpartnerships.org

2023 COVENANT **THANKSGIVING BASKET GIVEAWAY**

Your Opportunity To Serve Those Less Fortunate This Holiday We are grateful for your

Covenant's Thanksgiving Basket Giveaway has been a tradition in our congregation for many years. Each year we have distributed to families in need, and to other churches and organizations freely without cost. We know families are counting on us for a holiday dinner, and we don't want to disappoint them.

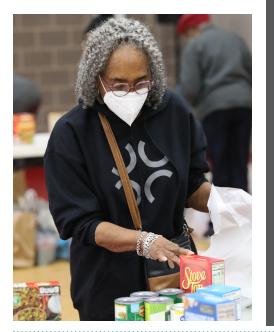
As we prepare to distribute Thanksgiving baskets for the Thanksgiving season you may now begin to bring non-perishable food items as we do each year. We have a list of requested items you may bring in a bag:

- 2 cans of Cranberry Sauce
- 2 cans of Corn
- 2 cans of Green Beans
- 2 Boxes of Jiffy Mix
- 1 Box of Stuffing
- 1 box of Cake Mix

Families Are Counting on You

Please do not bring items that are not on the list and please do not bring expired items. Food can be dropped off from 8:00AM -2:00PM, Tuesday through Saturday and Sundays before or after worship services. The deadline for donations is Sunday, November 19th. We're also offering the option of supplementing the cost of a Thanksgiving basket in the amount of \$50.00. Donors should indicate their giving number if applicable and note "Thanksgiving" if donating electronically, by check or on a giving envelope.

benevolence and faithful support!



HUNGER STATISTICS IN AMERICA

12% of the population in the US struggle with hunger (about 41 million people).

There are 38 million Americans that struggle with poverty.

Households with children that are headed by a single woman have the highest rate of food insecurity.

16.7% of all children do not know where their next meal is coming

22 million children rely on school for their meals.

12% of senior citizens experience food insecurity.

Poverty is directly correlated to hunger, and the poverty rate is going down.

The average monthly income for those who use food assistance programs is \$813/month.



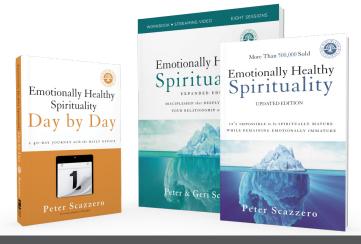
RECOMMENDED READING

Rev. Dr. Carmin Frederick-James and Rev. Kim Grice

In alignment with our theme-- "DiscipleSHIFT," part one of the course "Emotionally Healthy Discipleship" is full of resources to help us mature to be emotionally healthy disciples of Jesus Christ. Our Pastoral Team has been journeying through three books since March of 2023, while participants in our Fall 2023 sessions of Connect groups are being transformed by this powerful resource.

The three books for part one are designed to accompany each other on your journey to "Emotionally Healthy Spirituality."

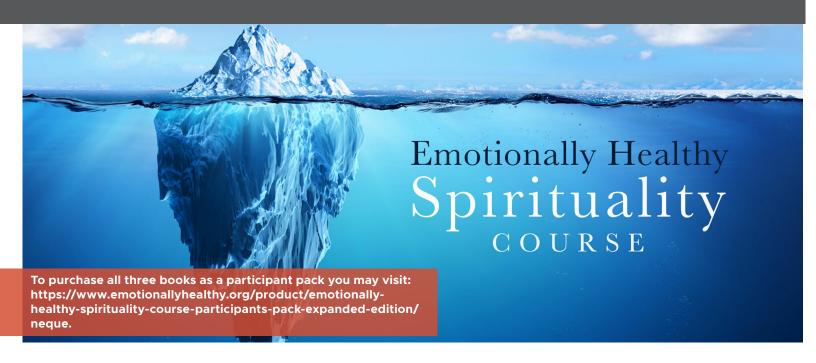
- 1.) "Emotionally Healthy Spirituality: It's Impossible to be Spiritually Mature While Remaining Emotionally Immature" (Updated Edition) This book helps you to identify the top ten symptoms of emotionally unhealthy spirituality. The author then moves you through becoming your authentic self, breaking the power of the past, letting go of power and control, surrendering to your limits, stopping to breathe the air of eternity, learning new skills to love well, and LOVING CHRIST ABOVE ALL ELSE!
- 2.) "Emotionally Healthy Spirituality: Discipleship that Deeply Changes Your Relationship with God



(Expanded Edition)" -- This is a workbook and Bible Study that "addresses directly the reality that emotional maturity and spiritual maturity are inseparable." The book also "equips people in a personal, firsthand relationship with Jesus by incorporating stillness, silence, and scripture as daily life rhythms."

3.) "Healthy Spirituality Day by Day: A 40-Day Journey with the Daily Office: Day by Day"-- Ever felt like your relationship with Jesus was underdeveloped? The author states, "The purpose of this book is to introduce you to the spiritual discipline that is both ancient and revolutionary called the 'Daily Office." Rev. Kim Grice says, "The 'Daily Office' has created a transformational way of being intentional about my daily time with Jesus...it has made me accountable to being engaged with Jesus daily."

These books are a must read if you want to GROW into the Emotionally and Spiritually Healthy selves that God calls YOU to be as a disciple of Jesus Christ!



YOUTH HAPPENINGS

MIN. KEVON CARTER

BREAKFAST WITH SANTA!

Minister Kevon Carter and the Youth Department of Covenant are excited to host Breakfast with Santa on **Saturday, December 9 from 9am – 11 am** in the Family Life Center gym. Some of the exciting activities planned for the children include face painting, a balloon artist, a "decorate an ornament" station, popsicle stick crafts, a Bozo the clown bucket game, and much more.

The young people will be able to write letters to Santa and place them in a special mailbox. Photos with Santa will be available so that this special day can be remembered for years to come.

Breakfast will be served, and we ask that parents sign up in advance so that we can prepare for each guest to experience Covenant's Winter Wonderland.

Please check the website for further information. We encourage you to sign up for Flocknote to receive messages on all the events happening at CUCC. Please contact Seena Brodnax at sbbrown@covucc.org or (773-718-8245) for additional information.



Youth Choirs God's Little Angels (GLA)

We invite all youth between the ages of 3 and 9 to join God's Little Angels choir. GLA provides an opportunity for our youngest members to worship God and connect with other young people through the medium of music. The director of God's Little Angels is Mrs. Jackie Pettis, assisted by Karl Cunningham. Rehearsals are held on the second, third and fourth Saturdays at 12:00 Noon. Rehearsals are held in the Ozzie E. Smith Youth Center.

Youth, Teen, & Young Adult Choir (YTYA)

The Youth, Teen and Young Adult Choir invite all singers ages 10 through 20+ to experience the joy of musical connection to God through an organized choral group. The directors of the choir are Minister Kevon Carter (our youth pastor) and Seena Brodnax. We rehearse second, third and fourth Saturdays in the youth church sanctuary from 12 Noon-12:45pm. For additional information, please contact Seena at sbbrown@covucc.org.



EVENTS OF THE QUARTER

FALL REVIVAL, MEN'S PRAYER BREAKFAST AND MEN'S DAY



BWS FAMILY LIFE CENTER NEWS

EXPUNGEMENT INFORMATION SUMMIT

It has been three years since the Barbara W. Smith Family Life Center hosted its annual expungement event during our Justice weekend. On August 12, 2023, Second Chance redoubled its commitment to assist individuals by providing resources for expunging or sealing their criminal records. The Expungement Information Summit facilitated connections between the community and various stakeholders, including judges, the Criminal Bureau of the Cook County Clerk of the Circuit Court, attorneys, legal clinics, law enforcement, and other mutual aid organizations. Notably, the summit marked a milestone, as we supported a record number of individuals seeking to have their records reviewed.

















PASTORAL CARE & WELLNESS

REV. ETHEL SOUTHERN

BREAST CANCER AWARENESS

How many people worldwide are diagnosed with breast cancer? In 2020, there were approximately 2.3 million women globally who were diagnosed with breast cancer, leading to 685,000 deaths. It is concerning to note that every 14 seconds, a woman somewhere in the world receives a breast cancer diagnosis.

Breast cancer is now the most commonly diagnosed cancer worldwide, surpassing lung cancer for the first time in 2020. It is also the most frequently diagnosed form of cancer among American women and a leading cause of death in less developed countries. Additionally, it ranks as the second leading cause of death related to cancers among American women. According to notable sources such as the American Cancer Society's Breast Cancer Facts & Figures 2022-2024 report and Cancer Facts & Figures 2023 publication, the five-year relative survival rate stands at 83 percent for African American women and 92 percent for Caucasian women within recent periods.

Cancer often instills thoughts of mortality. However, research and

statistics have shown that early detection through methods like mammograms, regular check-ups, and self-awareness can significantly improve outcomes. Therefore, Covenant United Church of Christ has partnered with the American Cancer Society to raise awareness about the importance of early detection and available treatments.



For over a century, the American Cancer Society (ACS) has played a crucial role in advancing breast cancer prevention efforts along with other types of cancers.

As America's leading organization dedicated to fighting against cancer, ACS funds research initiatives while providing expert information and support for individuals affected by this disease. Through their advocacy

affiliate called ACS CAN (American Cancer Society Cancer Action NetworkSM), they actively work towards influencing public policies related to cancer issues. What sets ACS apart is their integration of discovery-driven research with advocacy efforts and direct patient support aimed at measurably improving lives.

Earlier this year, Covenant UCC and ACS organized their first Cancer Symposium held at our sanctuary and the Barbara W. Smith Family Life Center. It was an important event where we discussed the significance of early detection, available treatments, supportive services, and other resources. In 2024, Covenant UCC and ACS will build on this momentum by hosting the second annual event on May 4th. I encourage you to save the date for this upcoming symposium.



For more information on breast cancer or related topics such as survivorship or prevention measures, we recommend visiting reputable sources such as:

- American Cancer Society: Breast Cancer Facts & Figures 2022-2024
- National Cancer Institute SEER Stat Fact Sheets: Breast Cancer
- · World Cancer Research Fund International
- · World Health Organization

By accessing these resources, individuals can gain comprehensive insights into all aspects of this disease.



UPCOMING AND CURRENT EVENTS



HOLIDAY MISSION

DEADLINE FOR DONATIONS IS SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 19TH SEE WEBSITE FOR COMPLETE LIST OF ITEMS



CHRISTMAS CONCERT

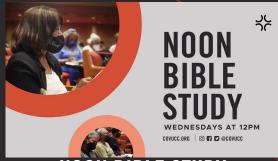
Sunday, December 17, 2023 during 11:00 a.m. Worship



WORD THERAPY

EVERY TUESDAY @ 7:00 P.M.

With Rev. Dr. Patrick L. Daymond | Only on YouTube



IBLE STUDY

EVERY WEDNESDAY @ 12:00 P.M.



ADOPT -A- FAMILY DETAILS COMING SOON



BREAKFAST WITH SANTA SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9,2023

9:00 A.M. - 11:00 A.M.



PRAYER CALL EVERY WEDNESDAY @ 7:14 A.M.

With Rev. Dr. Patrick L. Daymond | Dial: 708-546-9759



<u>food Giveaway</u>

SATURDAYS 9:30 AM - 12 PM | CUCC WEST 1102 EAST 154TH STREET, SOUTH HOLLAND, IL 60473

JOIN US VIRTUALLY AND IN PERSON

WEEKLY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

SUNDAY WORSHIP

7:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. Sunday School at 9:30 a.m.

SOCIAL MEDIA

FB, Instagram & Twitter: @covucc

EMAIL

Info@covucc.org

WORD THERAPY

Tuesday at 7 p.m. Exclusively on YouTube **BIBLE STUDY**

Wednesday at 12 p.m.

RADIO BROADCAST

Friday at 12:30 p.m. – WYCA 102.3

SUBSCRIBE TO OUR YOUTUBE CHANNEL

https://bit.ly/

<u>CUCCSouthHollandYouTube</u>

CHECK US OUT ON TIKTOK

https://www.tiktok.com/@covucc

FACEBOOK LIVE

Covenant United Church of Christ

WEBSITE

covucc.org

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Youth Representative

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SCAN TO VISIT OUR WEBSITE

