

September 2011
Volume 18, Issue 9

THE COVENANT

People of The Book

As I drove to work today, I was struck by a quote I heard cited from a survey conducted in the mid-1990s. It stated that in a single year, only 4% of Americans went into a bookstore and purchased a book. That statistic stunned me, so I researched what happens when you include books purchased everywhere, from Sam's Club to Amazon. The number was better: 40%. Yet almost two-thirds of Americans don't buy a single book a year. Isn't that amazing?

What's more disturbing about that statistic is that Christians are people of a specific book: the Bible. Scripture is where we find God's Word to us. Maybe it isn't surprising that in a world that doesn't value books, we have devalued the faith passed down to us in a book. Yet the Bible transcends culture and grounds us in a relationship with God if we will take the time to read it.

What books can help us to grow in understanding God's holy word? What titles should be on our reading list? The Bible as a whole can be daunting. Some of us found *The Story* that we read together as a congregation last year difficult. What might we do to make it easier to understand? If you want to get closer to God and are willing to put in the effort, here are some books that have helped point me in the clear direction of Jesus:

Highly Recommended:

Daily Thoughts For Disciples and *My Utmost For His Highest* by Oswald Chambers. While Chambers died in 1917 at the young age of 43, his works are among the most highly regarded devotional literature ever penned. He only wrote one book, but the rest were compiled by his wife Bidy, who a stenographer took verbatim notes from all his lectures as a biblical instructor. Both of the books above are sectioned out for a year's reading.

A.W. Tozer on the Holy Spirit compiled by M. E. Foster. This year-long devotional presents some of the deepest musings of Midwestern pastor A.W. Tozer. Compared to Will Rogers as an "honest" and "homespun" preacher, Tozer was known for his sharp insight into modern Christianity and our need to boldly confront the worldliness of our day.

Mere Christianity by C.S. Lewis. Best known for the *Narnia* series, C.S. Lewis' most revered work is *Mere Christianity*, long considered one of the best introductions to the faith for skeptics as well as for Christians seeking to deepen their understanding. It's short, and while the book sounds like one written by an Englishman in the 1940s (which he was), Lewis' voice is so personable that even when you disagree with him, you'll think of him as a friend.

Knowing God by J.I. Packer. Author Elizabeth Elliot wrote that Packer "plainly shows us ordinary folks what it means to know God." This book radically affected me the first time I read it. Simply put, don't read this one if you don't want God to get ahold of you for the better.

Honorable Mentions:

The Reason For God – Tim Keller
Crazy Love – Francis Chan
Confessions – St. Augustine

Making Real What I Already Believe – John Fischer
The Holiness Of God – R.C. Sproul
The Faith – Chuck Colson

If you're looking for more books on faith, let me know. As we begin our study on discipleship, it's my prayer that all of us will want to dig a little deeper so that we become stronger followers of Christ. So just like the young ones among us do this time of year...let's hit the books!

Your brother in Christ,
Pastor Jason

CHILI COOKOFF

Save the date — Saturday, Oct. 15 at
Church of the Covenant. Bethel Church
1 members are invited to participate.



HOPE CENTER & PANTRY

Hope Center is located at 33222 Groesbeck Highway in Fraser. It is a non-profit, volunteer organization and its vision is to transform lives one family at a time, nutritionally and educationally. Our church is a partner with them and can refer people to their large, client-choice food pantry. They also provide referrals to a wide range of county and community agency services.

The pantry is open Tuesday thru Saturday 9 am to 3 pm by appointment only. Please call 586-294-4673 to speak to a counselor and find out what documentation to bring. Clients may come 6 times a year for food.

The Deacons are making arrangements to tour the Hope Center. Anyone else who may be interested in learning about the center or who may want to volunteer a few hours a month is welcome to come. The tour time will be announced soon.



COVENANT FOOD PANTRY

Please remember to bring canned or boxed food for our emergency food pantry. Suggested items to purchase are frozen meats, soup, peanut butter & jelly, cereal, spaghetti and jars of sauce, macaroni and cheese, and cans of tuna, chili or stew. When you contribute to the Deacon's Fund on the first Sunday of the month, this money goes toward restocking the food pantry. We are able to give people enough food for a few days and then refer them to the Hope Center Pantry.

SCRIPTURE READERS

Sept. 4 - Tracy Cascio
Sept. 11 - Gloria Cynowa
Sept. 18 - Walt Lechniak
Sept. 25 - Ed Pokrzywinski

PER CAPITA

Our church pays a "per capita" payment each year in order to fund various projects sponsored by our governing bodies — our Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly. We would like to encourage you to give \$25 for each member of Church of the Covenant in your household. Our goal is to have our "per capita" money raised in the next six weeks so we can send it to Detroit Presbytery in October.

"Heading To The Hospital?"

Some congregation members remember not so many years ago when a pastor or elder would automatically show up at the hospital to pray with you or a friend or relative. They didn't have a hotline to God, though! At one time, it was standard practice for doctors and hospitals to call pastoral staff before scheduled surgeries or in emergency situations. However, due to modern privacy laws, your doctor and hospital will **not** notify the church. Pastor Jason and the elders would be happy to go with you or visit with you at the hospital, even for minor situations. If you would like a visit – even a regular home visit – please call the church office at 948-2440 or email us at pastorjasonhuff@aol.com. It is a blessing to stand with you in prayer in both joyous and difficult times...so please let us know how we can be in prayer with you!"

"So What?"

Beginning on September 25th at 11:30am following worship, all teens are invited to our new youth study called *So What?* The first section is called *Knowing The God Who Is*, and we'll be looking at problems in knowing God, really getting to know Him, loving Him, and knowing His character. The study will run twice a month with dates determined based on the availability of the majority of our youth. (Bringing a school calendar to the first session is encouraged.) We will be serving lunch with the study for the teens each week, so if you're an adult who'd like to help, let Pastor Jason know if you can supply us with that week's meal."

"Bible Study Returns!"

Our evening Bible study returns on Wednesday, September 7 at 7:00pm. If you are interested in getting in on the ground floor, so to speak, then please join us on Wednesday as we discuss possibilities for this year's studies. We'd love to have you!"

"Interested In Strengthening Your Marriage?"

We have two DVD series on the subject called *Love and War* and *Sacred Marriage*. Pastor Jason is interested in running these studies if there is enough interest in having them on a Sunday evening around 5:30pm. If you are interested, please let Pastor Jason know. (We will attempt to have child care available if enough are interested.)"

CARD MAKING CLASS AT BETHEL

At Bethel Church on Friday, Sept. 30 there will be a card making class at 6:30 pm. The cost is \$20 for the Sept. 30 class. Please call Rose at 586-566-6767 to pre-register for the class and to make sure enough materials will be available.



September Anniversaries

- 9/4 Ed & Annetta Pokrzywinski
- 9/19 Dwayne & Diana Byks

September Birthdays

- 9/2 Ed Rapin
- 9/7 Thomas Simmons
- 9/8 Sandi Haapala
- 9/12 Maxine Stephenson
- 9/14 Dawn Dickenson
- 9/23 Thomas Joseph
Norm Haase
Harv Sainsbury
- 9/30 John Putt

(If we have missed your name or the name of someone in your family for a birthday or an anniversary, please let your Deacon and the church office know. We certainly want to note your special day with a special mention here and with a card to celebrate the event.)



BEST WISHES

NEW BABY

Congratulations to the Zech family on the birth of a daughter. Brook Megan Zech was born on August 18. Her parents are Leon & Jill, her big brothers are Jackson and Grant, and her grandmother is Margaret DeMuyneck.

DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

During the service on September 11 we will remember the 10th anniversary of 9-11 and also commemorate our own baptisms.

There will be ice cream served at coffee hour in the church fellowship hall after church on that day. The ice cream will be provided and served by the Outreach Committee. Please plan to attend. This would be a good time to bring a visitor to church

MEAL & A MOVIE

In addition to offering a Sundae Ice Cream Social this month, the Outreach Team is also again sponsoring another Meal and a Movie Night at Church of the Covenant on Friday, September 16th at 6:00 p.m.

Please invite friends and family to participate in this no-cost supper and video. Just sign up in the narthex or give Gary Cynowa a call at (586) 291-0399 to let him know how many to expect.

CHURCH OF THE COVENANT VOLUNTEERS

Head Usher — Gloria Cynowa

Elder of Month — Scottie Sowden

| | <i>Sept. 4</i> | <i>Sept. 11</i> | <i>Sept. 18</i> | <i>Sept. 25</i> |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| Ushers | | | | |
| Greeters | Gloria Cynowa | Jean Plonkey | Sara Byks | |
| Coffee Hour | Ed & Gay Rapin | Mary Jane Harcourt | Vicki & Curt Reynolds | Jerri Portlance |
| Cookies | Scottie Sowden & Kristie Brackett | Gloria Cynowa & Phyllis Haase | Jean Plonkey | Jerri Portlance & Betty Kamps |
| Nursery | Natalie Heacock | Gay Rapin | Sara Byks | Mackenzie Alm |

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

THE ARK

Our SCUBA adventure ended with a fun water day. We played on the Slip and Slide and in our wading pool. We are looking forward to more fun-filled adventures in the ARK and more great conversations with Nick and Cooper. Join us every Sunday because you don't want to miss a minute of fun!

WE NEED YOU!

The Christian Education Committee is looking for adults and youth to help us as an extra pair of hands in the classroom on Sunday morning. Whether its one Sunday or once a month we welcome everyone who was a kid, has kids, has grandkids, or is still a kid themselves (you should be able to find yourself in this list somewhere). Please see Catha Huff, Diana Byks or Barbara Chadwick for more information or to volunteer. We appreciate your continued support as we strive to provide creative, fun and educational learning opportunities for Church of the Covenant.



SCUBA THANK YOU

Thanks for all of your prayers for the Super Cool Undersea Bible Adventure in the Ark this summer. The children had lots of fun learning about loving and trusting in Jesus. The last Sunday in August was an outdoor water celebration to wrap up SCUBA with slip and slides, sprinklers and a little pool for our younger kiddos. Much appreciation goes to Barbara Chadwick and Diana Byks for their dedication to our Nick and Cooper Show and support in the education on our children. Thanks to Sara Byks and Natalie Heacock for all the ways they help behind the scenes with love and joy.

Starting on September 11, we will begin "Show Me Jesus" and concentrate on families. As the children begin to develop relationships outside the family circle, home becomes a core/foundation of their life and a way to teach them about what it mean to be a part of God's wider family. They will be challenged to trust and obey the loving heavenly Father who has called them to belong to His family and has revealed who He is through His Word.

COMING EVENTS

SENIOR CARDS & SACK LUNCH

A group for fellowship and card playing meets at the church at 11 am on the 2nd. and 4th. Tuesday of every month. Please come and chat or play Euchre or Pinochle. Bring your sack lunch, coffee will be available and there is a 50 cent donation to defray expenses. This group is open to everyone in the community; talk to Phyllis Haase if you have questions.

EUCHRE NIGHT

The next Euchre Night is on Saturday, September 24 at 5:30 pm at the church. Registration begins at 5:30 and play starts at 6:00 pm. Refreshments are for sale and prizes are given. Please be on time as seats fill up fast.

MEAL AND A MOVIE

Please come and bring a friend to a FREE MEAL on Friday, September 16 at 6 pm at the church. Everyone can enjoy a family movie on the big screen following the meal.

WOMEN'S GROUP

The next meeting of the Women's Group is on the 3rd. Saturday of October. More details will be available soon.

OUTREACH

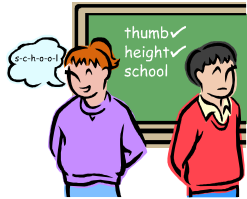
Members of the Outreach Committee have been addressing and mailing letters to families living near the church and inviting them to attend worship. We hope to see many new faces, knowing that everyone at church is always friendly and welcoming to visitors.

At the end of September we will have empty back packs to fill for a local Head Start class. Each back pack will be marked with the child's name and age and have a list of items needed to fill it.



A new Usher and Greeter list is being prepared. Please sign up for one or more Sundays. Ushers pass out bulletins and later collect the offering. Greeters stand at the door before church service and welcome people. All volunteers will be appreciated.

SEPTEMBER 2011



| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|----------------------|---|------------------------|------------------------|---|----------------------|
| | | | | 1 7 pm Praise Team | 2 | 3 |
| 4 9am Music Rehearsal 10am Worship Communion | 5 7pm AA Meeting | 6 Administration, Deacons, Outreach & Worship meet 7pm | 7 Bible Study 7 pm | 8 7 pm Praise Team | 9 | 10 |
| 11 9am Music Rehearsal 10am Worship Ice Cream Social | 12 7pm AA Meeting | 13 11-2 Senior Cards Session meeting 7 pm | 14 Bible Study 7 pm | 15 7 pm Praise Team | 16 Free Meal & a Movie 6 pm at church | 17 |
| 18 9am Music Rehearsal 10am Worship | 19 7pm AA Meeting | 20 | 21 Bible Study 7 pm | 22 7 pm Praise Team | 23 | 24 Euchre 5:30 pm |
| 25 9am Music Rehearsal 10am Worship Youth study 11:30 am | 26 7pm AA Meeting | 27 11-2 Senior Cards | 28 Bible Study 7 pm | 29 7 pm Praise Team | 30 | |

PRAYER CONCERNS:

Armed Forces Members, including: Mark Alm, Trevor Brown and Cory Cynowa
 People affected by Hurricane Irene
 Marge Fuller & the Fuller Family
 Norm & Phyllis Haase
 Ruth McGraw
 Margaret Neebes
 Peace in the World
 Annetta Pokrzywinski
 Melissa Putt
 Betty Radcliffe
 Family of Ken Rhodes
 Justin & Alisha Vosburg (Missionaries)



Contemporary Worship Sun. 10 a.m.
Come and praise the Lord
Sunday Morning Classes for Children
Coffee hour after service

23401 23 Mile Road, Macomb Twp., MI 48042
 (586) 948-2440 www.covenantmacomb.org
 Pastor Jason Huff

MISSION TRIPS

PDA — Presbyterian Disaster Assistance



SEPTEMBER

People from area churches are planning to go to Nashville for the second mission trip to the PDA Camp there. Car pooling will be scheduled. Go to Hands-on-mission.org to access the Mission Application Form or contact Mary Lloyd at the Presbytery. The work days are September 19 to 23 and the travel time is one day each way. Cost is approximately \$100 plus a share of the gas.

OCTOBER

A group from Presbytery is returning for the 14th time to Project Homecoming in Olive Tree, LA, which is near the 9th Ward in New Orleans. You are invited to participate. Car pooling will be scheduled. The work days are Oct. 17 to 22 and the travel time will be two days each way. People of all skill levels can participate and you do not have to be a member of a Presbyterian church. The cost is approximately \$200 and includes one night's lodging each way. Please contact Julie at mfan81@yahoo.com if you are interested. The deposit and application form must be turned in by the orientation meeting on Sept. 11.

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance responding to famine in Somalia and Horn of Africa

The major famine in Somalia and other parts of the Horn of Africa has become a significant humanitarian crisis. The Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit (FSNAU) and the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) have declared famine in five areas in Somalia. Although many organizations are working aggressively in the southern regions of Somalia, with access restrictions and difficulties in scaling - up emergency assistance programs, famine could spread across all regions of the south in the coming four to six weeks.

The number of people in need of assistance has risen to 12.4 million. About 29,000 children have died from the famine, and thousands more are at risk. An unprecedented number of Somalis are taking huge risks every day, walking hundreds of miles and crossing borders into neighboring countries hoping to reach the safety of refugee camps and feeding centers. The Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya —the world's largest refugee camp—has exceeded its capacity. The camp, originally built to hold 90,000 refugees, is now holding more than 420,000 refugees.

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) is responding to this crisis in cooperation with members of ACT Alliance (Action by Churches Together). ACT members with experience and partnerships in the area are working to help meet basic humanitarian needs of food, water and sanitation, and medical care for people in the camp and in host communities in both Kenya and Somalia. Special therapeutic feeding and nutrition is being provided to children under the age of five. PDA has provided \$200,000 from One Great Hour of Sharing funds towards relief efforts in Somalia and the Horn of Africa.

You can help respond to this critical need by standing in the GAP for affected families.

GIVE. Share your financial blessings. Make a gift [online](#), through your local Presbyterian congregation, or from your cell phone: text PDACARES to 20222.

ACT. Stay informed and share information about the need with others. Use some of the prayers and worship resources found on the [Horn of Africa response index](#) to help lift up the need.

PRAY. Our best response is prayer. Please pray for families struggling to survive the harsh conditions of this famine and for those who lost loved ones due to this crisis. Pray for those responding to the disaster, and for those whose lives are linked to both the disaster survivors and the workers who minister to them.

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance

Email pda@pcusa.org

A One Great Hour of Sharing Ministry

phone (800) 728-7228, x5839

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(800) 728-7228 | (502) 569-5000