

ECHOES

December, 2020

**We Invite
We Welcome
We Nurture
We Serve**



From the Pastor's Desk...

By Pastor Quentin Wallace

**Don't Lose Everything
Because of What You Lost**



But Lot's wife looked back, and she became a pillar of salt. (Genesis 19:26)

And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer, and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him, he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners so that you will not grow weary and lose heart. (Hebrews 12:1-3)

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. (John 10:10)

Lucy Hone author of the book, *Resilient Grieving: Finding Strength and Embracing Life After a Loss that Changes Everything*, also did a Ted Talk lecture on YouTube entitled, "Three Secrets of Resilient People." In her talk Hone gave three secrets to resilience, and I'd like to highlight one of those secrets; Don't Lose Everything, Because of What You Lost. People deal with grief differently. Some seem to quickly recover and move on, and others become devastated and fall into despair, while others over time will pick themselves up and move on gradually to a place of comfort and peace.

Reinhold Niebuhr wrote this serenity prayer and most of us are familiar with the abbreviated version, "God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; the courage to change the things I can; and the wisdom to know the difference." When we arrive at this place, we are definitely recovering.

Spence Johnson wrote a book in the early 2000s about how people deal with change. In his book entitled, *Who Moved My Cheese?*, there were little people and mice that were used to getting cheese at a specific location, and their security was in knowing the cheese would always be there. Sometimes we've felt that things would always be the same, that we could rely on knowing where the cheese is located. But in the book, there comes a day when they arrived at the cheese location and it was gone! The mice returned a couple of days, and, after finding no cheese there and after a period of time, they moved on in order to survive. However, the little people couldn't move on, and they suffered because things never went back to the way they used to be. Suppose things don't go back to what they used to be?

Sidelights

COVENANT'S VISION AND MISSION STATEMENTS

Our Vision Statement: **Bringing Christ's Light into the Community and Beyond.**

Our Mission Statement: **We Invite, We Welcome, We Nurture, We Serve.**

Pastor Quentin's theme for 2020 is **Covenant is the church for ALL generations, and we mean it!**

Please be in prayer for Covenant Church.

WAYS TO CONTINUE GIVING

Thank you to our faithful members who continue to support Covenant Church. Here are options for you to give your personal tithes and offerings:

- Mail checks to 110 N. Mulberry St., Lancaster, PA, 17603
- Place offerings in the basket during our drive-in services on Sunday morning.
- Give online. Go to our website www.covenant-umc.com and click on the GIVING link and follow the directions.
- Text 717-769-1063. After the initial setup, giving is easy.

Please call the church office with questions.

Sidelights

PRAYER CHAIN

We are attempting to renew the Covenant Prayer Chain. If you have a prayer request, please call the church office during posted hours, Monday–Friday from 8:30am – 2pm, or Pastor Sally Ott at other times at 717-68-7107. If she is unavailable, please leave a message. If you are interested in being a Prayer Chain member, please contact Joan Miller at 717-397-0530.

HOSPITAL VISITATION

Don't forget to notify the church office when you or a loved one is in the hospital. Our Care Team is available to visit and share prayer.

GROCERY CARDS

You can continue to support the Mission Outreach of Covenant by purchasing your grocery store gift cards through the mail. Please mail your check to Covenant UMC at 110 N Mulberry St 17603 with a note. We have \$50 Stauffer's cards; \$25 and \$50 Giant cards; and \$50 Weis cards. And remember, grocery cards make great Christmas gifts.

Please make your checks out to Covenant UMC. After receiving your check, we will mail your grocery store cards to your home.

We Worship Together

IN-PERSON WORSHIP HAS BEEN SUSPENDED

A Letter from Pastor Quentin

Dear Covenant Family,

When I first came to Covenant Church, one of the things that I was most struck by was the caring and compassionate community. Because of the rise in COVID cases in Lancaster County, the Worship Committee has decided to suspend in-person worship until things are better. Beginning immediately, Sunday services and all meetings will be virtual. Amber will still be in the office Monday through Friday. Currently, the Covenant Child Care Center remains open. We will continue to monitor the state mandates.

We care! Covenant cares about our senior members. Covenant cares about those who have underlying conditions. Covenant cares about members who are in high risk groups. Furthermore, we would never want one of our members to carry the burden of spreading this virus to others. I am so proud of our church committees and their forward thinking and decision making. We are truly demonstrating the love of God by loving his people.

This means that our media team, worship leaders, myself, and probably Minister Brenda will be working diligently behind the scenes to provide opportunities for members to engage in worship. We will continue to live stream the service at 10 am on Sundays. For those without technology, you can call the conference call number and hear the service at the same time. The number is 605-313-5107. You will be prompted for the code 202700#. When you are connected, please mute your phone so that all who are on the line can enjoy the service.

If there is an interest, we may be able to make provisions for the Midweek Word of Encouragement and the Bible Study. No one is sure how long this pandemic will last. We pray that it will not be long. While we wait, we want to ensure to the best of our ability that everyone is safe. As God continues to guide us, the media team, music staff, and myself are committed to providing quality worship experiences for you. We appreciate your patience and support as we continue to find new and creative ways to worship.

God is still on the throne, and we are still his people. Psalm 100:2 says "Worship the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs." We will continue to praise the Lord and lift our voices from our homes until we can meet again at the church. I am so glad that we understand that the church is inside us. We are going to keep singing, praying, preaching, and reaching the lost. There will still be a Blue Christmas service, a Christmas eve service, and Sunday services. The building may be closed, but the church is open. We appreciate your continued prayers and financial support as we work our way through this pandemic. Covenant is a strong family that will stick together and serve the Lord at all times.

Peace and Blessings,
Pastor Quentin

Online Opportunities During the Week

- Wednesdays at 2:00 p.m. on Facebook Live, Pastor Quentin will bring words of encouragement.
- Thursday evenings at 7:00 p.m. Pastor Quentin will share a Bible Study.
- Monday through Thursday at 10 a.m. and Friday at 6 a.m. join our conference prayer call at 605-313-5107 (202700#).

...Continued from Page 1

This reminds me of an episode of the 60s' western TV series entitled "The Big Valley." In this episode the focus was an older cowboy whose nickname was Brahman. He had acquired his nickname as a young man when he had allegedly wrestled a Brahman bull to the ground. In this episode, Brahman was waiting to assist in trapping a wild stallion that the Barkley's wanted to capture. Unfortunately, this older cowboy fell asleep in the saddle and missed the stallion running by. The other cowboys teased Brahman about his falling asleep and associated it with his being too old. To prove them wrong, Brahman decides he will trap and capture this wild horse by himself, and he began to strategize. Ultimately he did trap the horse, but the horse almost killed him in the process. If one of the Barkleys had not cut the rope and allowed the horse to run free, Brahman would have died. Eventually, Brahman had to admit to himself that he could no longer do what he used to—he could no longer live up to his nickname, Brahman. He had to make peace with himself and to understand that his eyesight, energy level, and agility had changed over the years and he could no longer do as he used to years earlier. Yet he was not fired but placed into a position more suitable for that stage of his life, as a ranch administrator. In summary, Brahman almost lost everything because of one thing he grieved; his youth.

This reminds me of a story in Genesis chapter 19 when two angels of the Lord told Lot and his family to leave Sodom and Gomorrah because these cities were going to be destroyed. They were also told that as they went to not look back. That must have been very difficult to do, after all this town had been their long time home; they had friends and property there. How difficult is it for us to move forward and not to look back? I imagine that as the destruction of the city began there were screams or loud noises. Imagine hearing those things and not looking back with sympathy. And according to the Bible, Lot's wife looked back and she became a pillar of salt. If we get stuck looking back we can become paralyzed—unable to move. People who have suffered great loss and tragedy understand this quite well.

Don't lose everything, because of what you lost!

In Hebrews 12, the writer speaks of how Christ kept his eyes fixed on the cross that was ahead, and ultimately he provided salvation for humanity. Though we deal with loss we must keep moving forward. In the past eight months, we Americans have suffered a great loss—loss of loved ones, loss of employment, loss of health, loss of a lifestyle we were accustomed to—and it's difficult to not long for the good old days-before Covid-19. As we approach the Christmas season, some of us will be "blue" because of these many losses. What may be a better alternative? Do we simply wait until it's safe to take off our masks and return to practices of the recent past? Do we stress out until we become depressed, and fall into despair? Lucy Hone suggests that resilient people use these crises as opportunities to move forward in innovation. Keep in mind that we cannot go back up the downside of the sliding boards of life or become younger again as Brahman was attempting to do with his actions in the Big Valley. So what do we do?

I feel three things may serve us well during these potentially disheartening times. First I ask that you be reminded of John 10:10 and be encouraged as you understand that Jesus came into the world to provide the abundant-holistic life of faith and trust in God, and we must accept that although crises come and things change. God is still in control. Next, we must embrace the fact that there are some things we cannot do as we used to, but we can still accomplish what we need to differently. And finally, don't allow the "Grinch" of looking back to steal your joy and stop your forward progress in the Lord.

Blessings,

Pastor Quentin

Sidelights

NOTE OF THANKS

Janice and Harold Ulmer and Brian Kluck send their thanks to our Covenant family for their expressions of sympathy, cards, thoughts, and prayers on the passing of Janice's mother Janet Gerlach .

Esther Mefferd and family send their thanks for all the many cards, letters, phone calls, visits, etc. during the time of Pastor Ted's illness and following his death on October 30. The graveside service was held on Saturday, November 14, at the St. Andrew UMC cemetery, Boyertown, with family friend, Pastor Fred Crider, officiating.

90+ BIRTHDAYS

Jean Patton, 12/22

KEEP UP ON THE LATEST COVENANT NEWS

If you do NOT receive the weekly "News to Go" e-mail and would like to be included, please send your e-mail information to chris@covenant-umc.com.

Pastor Quentin will also occasionally send out Calling Post messages to the congregation. This call is routed through Oklahoma City, and may not be a familiar number on your phone display. If you are not getting these calls and want to be included, please contact the church office with your preferred phone number.

Sidelights

CHILD CARE CENTER SEEKS DONATIONS

The Covenant Child Care Center continues to serve the community during the pandemic. However, the center is seeking donations for certain necessary items that are sometimes hard to find. These items are:

- Disposable adult masks
- Disposable child-sized masks
- Clorox/Lysol wipes
- Lysol Kitchen Pro spray cleaner
- Lysol All Purpose cleaner
- Hand sanitizer with 70% alcohol or more
- Lysol disinfecting spray

Donations can be brought to the church office during open hours. Thanks for your support.

BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE

Covenant's annual Blue Christmas service will be held on Sunday, December 13, at 2:00 p.m. Due to the recent interruption to in-person worship, this service will be streamed online via Facebook. This service is designed for those with heavy hearts at this time of year; those dealing with loss; those dealing with change. But the service is certainly open to all who feel a need to be lifted up during these difficult times.

Good Stewardship Throughout the Year!

It is true that we will celebrate this holiday season in a very different way from those of our past. However, one thing is constant – the celebration of the birth of Christ, the true reason for this season. Maybe this is the year we will actually slow down and count our blessings as we marvel at the wonder of this joyous season. Maybe this is the year we'll reach out to those less fortunate and/or lonely with calls, anonymous cards, gifts, and thoughtfulness.

We hope so, because there are those here at Covenant and in our community who need us. They may be hungry, they may have lost their jobs, they may have had their hours cut back, they may be homeless, or, they may not have enough extra money to buy a gift or two for their children. They may be sick or disabled. Or, they may simply be alone or lonely. Whatever their needs, we can help – through our time, talents, prayers, and financial gifts.

Won't you consider sharing the joy of the season? Please prayerfully decide how you can help. In addition to making a commitment to support Covenant in the coming year, you can make a special gift to the pastor's discretionary fund, make a gift in honor or memory of someone, purchase food gift cards, use smile.amazon.com and designate Covenant as your choice of non-profit, donate warm gently used clothing and linens to our Community Closet, donate food to the Council of Churches food bank, send cards and letters to our shut-ins, call friends you haven't seen, and pray faithfully.

Remember, prayer works wonders! Please keep Covenant and all of our members in yours.

Jenny Engle, Stewardship Chair

COVENANT CHURCH is Bringing Christ's Light into the Community and Beyond AND Preparing for Increase in 2020.

Covenant Members in Business

Aunt Sandy's Attic

Sandy Leonard
Antiques, Collectibles, Books, Art, etc.
545 W. Market Street, Marietta, PA 17547
717-426-5091

Conestoga Innovations Promotional Products

(for all your advertising needs)
Wanda Snyder, 1.800.759.8885 or
sales@conestoga-innovations.com

Dale Building Designs

Donald A. Dale, 872.4263
2086 New Danville Pike, Lanc., 17603
www.DonDaleDesigns.com

Groffs Family Funeral

& Cremation Services, Inc.
Thomas S. Buter, 394.5300
528 W. Orange St.

Interiors by Kristen

Kristen Stemmer, 875.4014
2086 New Danville Pike, Lanc. 17603

JM Services

Jeff and Brad McGary
Interior & Light Exterior Painting,
Handyman, and Junk Removal
717.330.9616 or jcmcgary@comcast.net

Kresge Computer Consultation

Roger Kresge, 299.4613 or
rkresge123@comcast.net

Miller Optical

Glenn & Maryanne Miller, 393.2020
Glasses, Contacts, and Exams
Lancaster & Willow Street

Richard B. MacDonald

Attorney at Law
312 W. Orange St., Lancaster
717.394.1508

Willard Hypnosis Center

Roger J. Willard
3304 Main Street, Conestoga PA 17516
717.872.7561 or willardhypnosis.com

Loss and the Holidays

Loss at any time is difficult. However, loss near major holidays seem to increase our emotions. Many of our members have lost loved ones within the past several months. During the holidays, memories come flooding back. Rather than feelings of joy and elation, sadness and discouragement move to the forefront.

Surprisingly, I am going to encourage you to lean into your feelings. There is no reason that you have to be strong and hold back tears. Even if you feel like screaming, that is your prerogative. Although I would discourage you from screaming in the middle of the supermarket or some other public place. My point is that grieving is a journey. It is not something that you get over, but rather something that you live with.

There are better and worse days. Some days you may be fine, and others you are just annoyed with everything and everybody. Some days you want to be social, and others you want to be alone. This is all very normal and necessary.

In addition to leaning in, I encourage you to receive support from others. Grief will tell you that you need to be alone and suffer in silence; that you do not want to burden others with your sadness. Caring family members and friends want to support you with a listening ear and/or silent presence. They aren't there just for the good times. They are there for you all of the time. Receive their kindness and allow them to bless you.

Lastly continue to speak to God. Through your pain, anger, confusion and sorrow, speak to your God. As the song states, "Jesus knows all about our troubles. He will guide till the day is done. There's not a friend like the lowly Jesus, No, not one. No, not one."

Jesus experienced grief as he walked his human journey. He understands all of your emotions. The Holy Spirit will provide comfort. Don't hold things in; tell the Lord how you feel. He understands.

While there is no time limit on grief, there is a line where things become more serious. If you are not able to get out of bed for days; refuse to eat or eat everything in sight; spend more days feeling down than up or find yourself focusing on death and darkness; this may indicate a deeper issue that should be addressed. Clinical depression is real and is different from general sadness or grieving. If you have a combination of the symptoms previously listed, it might be helpful to consult a counselor or therapist to help you sort them. Clinical depression is one of the most common mental health concerns and can appear in anyone at any age or anytime.

Depression ranges from mild to severe yet does not always require medication. So, whether you are dealing with grief or clinical depression, the key is self-care. Be aware of what your mind and body are telling you and get the help that you need. If you have a friend or loved one who is experiencing loss, check on them during this holiday season. Spend some time with them on the phone or via Zoom. Send cards and care packages to uplift their spirits. If you see them moving into something more serious, encourage them to get the help that they need. We are all in this together. Be your brother and sister's keepers.

Dr. Brenda Ingram-Wallace,
Clinical Psychologist

Sidelights

TEA WITH MINISTER B.

Coming in January

During my most recent midweek word of encouragement, I asked the question, "How do you see the "glass" of COVID?" Is it half full or half empty? Well, I am making a choice to see the glass as half full and to use the time that I have for the glory of God.

If you would like an opportunity to spend 30–60 minutes catching up, praying, talking about the scriptures and/or the Lord and anything else, I would LOVE to be there with you. Although my preference is Zoom, I want to be available for everyone. We can meet via Zoom or by phone; whatever works for you.

To schedule a date and time, please reach out to Amber in the office or me via email at ministerbjw@gmail.com. We will find a time that works for both of us. I look forward to stimulating conversations, prayer times, and lots of laughter with you.

BOOK RECOMMENDED

Pastor Quentin is recommending a book he recently read entitled *The Way Back* by Phil Cooke and Jonathan Bock. The subtitle is *How Christians Blew Our Credibility and How We Get It Back*. We have purchased some and they are in the library for you to check out. Please read it and return as soon as you can so others also have the opportunity to read this book.

Ages & Stages Class Explores *The Case for Christmas*

This December the Ages and Stages Sunday School Class will join with Lee Strobel via video as he investigates whether the account of the birth and divinity of Jesus is logically and historically credible. Perhaps you have read books by this former atheist-turned-Christian, such as *The Case for Christ* about his conversion to Christianity or his 2016 award winning *The Case for Grace*. Now you are invited to join with this class on Sunday mornings from the comfort of your own home through Zoom to participate in four lessons based on Strobel's *The Case for Christmas*. Sessions begin at 8:45 a.m. by connecting to the Zoom link sent through email to your computer or smartphone and end by 9:25 a.m. allowing time to prepare for the online service at 10:00 a.m. All you need to do is send an email to Lois Neidermyer, loiseqn@aol.com, so that she can email the Zoom link to you on Sunday mornings.

The Ages and Stages Class schedule for this study on *The Case for Christmas* is:

- December 6 —Setting the Record Straight
- December 13 —Beneath the Fake News
- December 20 —A Mind-Boggling Proposition
- December 27 —The Prophetic Fingerprint

Four teachers share in teaching the lessons along with the videos: Greg Barton, Guy Carrigan, Carole Horn, and Lois Neidermyer.

Along with this study comes an Advent Scripture reading plan that walks you through prophecies about the Messiah in the Old Testament that could only be fulfilled by Jesus as revealed in the New Testament.

<u>Prophecies</u>	<u>Fulfillment</u>
Genesis 3:15	I John 3:8
Psalms 22:14-18	John 19:23-37
Isaiah 7:14	Luke 1:35
Isaiah 9:6-7	Luke 1:32-33
Isaiah 40:3-5	John 1:23
Hosea 11:1	Matthew 2:14-15
Micah 5:2	Matthew 2:4-6
Zechariah 9:9	Matthew 21:8-10
Zechariah 11:12-13	Matthew 27:6-10
Malachi 4:5-6	Matthew 11:10-15

A Special Message from Bishop Peggy Johnson



Dear Members and Friends of the Eastern Pennsylvania Annual Conference,

As the holy seasons approach and virus fatigue is at an all-time high, we are also experiencing a resurgence of COVID-19 infections in our state. I ask you, I beg you to heed the directives of the Pennsylvania Health Department and your city and county health officials.

We must all wear masks indoors and outdoors, and continue vigilant hand-washing and social distancing. Travel should be restricted; and if you do leave the state, you should receive a negative test within 72 hours before your return, as should anyone else who enters the state. Or those who do not get tested should self-quarantine for 14 days. It has been reported that 50 percent of virus transmission comes from people who do not show any symptoms.

Our churches should consider conducting worship using virtual means as much as possible. If you do gather onsite, please limit your attendance, carefully social-distance yourselves, do not sing, keep the services brief, refrain from having fellowship dinners, and use individually wrapped cups and wafers for Communion.

As Dr. Rachel Levine, the state's Commissioner of Health, said today, "It depends on us." It is our personal responsibility to protect ourselves and one another from this deadly disease.

We are all praying for the day when we can receive COVID vaccines and see this pandemic become history. That day will come sooner if we stay united and committed in our efforts to stop the spread of this virus.

Thank you for your careful vigilance. I hold you in my prayers.

Sincerely,

Bishop Peggy A. Johnson

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
DECEMBER 2020						
6 Holy Communion Sunday Worship Adult, Children & Youth Sunday School Worship & FaceBook Live Streaming 10am	7 Conference Call Prayer Group 10am Narcotics Anonymous 7pm	8 Conference Call Prayer Group 10am	9 Conference Call Prayer Group 10am Midweek Word of Encouragement on Facebook 2 pm	10 Conference Call Prayer Group 10am Shalom Partnership Meeting 4:30pm Bible Study on Facebook 7pm	11 Conference Call Prayer Group 6am	12
13 Sunday Worship Adult and Children Sunday School Worship & FaceBook Live Streaming 10am	14 Conference Call Prayer Group 10am Narcotics Anonymous 7pm	15 Conference Call Prayer Group 10am Trustee Board 7pm	16 Conference Call Prayer Group 10am Midweek Word of Encouragement on Facebook 2pm Bell Choir Rehearsal 5:30pm	17 Conference Call Prayer Group 10am Bible Study on Facebook 7pm	18 Conference Call Prayer Group 6am	19 IMPACT! Missions Workday 9am
20 Sunday Worship Adult, Children & Youth Sunday School Worship & FaceBook Live Streaming 10am Bells Ring	21 Community Table 8am Conference Call Prayer Group 10am Narcotics Anonymous 7pm	22 Conference Call Prayer Group 10am	23 Conference Call Prayer Group 10am Midweek Word of Encouragement on Facebook 2pm	24 Conference Call Prayer Group 10am Bible Study on Facebook 7pm Christmas Eve Services TBD	25 CHRISTMAS DAY Conference Call Prayer Group 6am	26
27 Sunday Worship Adult and Children Sunday School Worship & FaceBook Live Streaming 10am	28 Conference Call Prayer Group 10am Narcotics Anonymous 7pm	29 Conference Call Prayer Group 10am	30 Conference Call Prayer Group 10am Midweek Word of Encouragement on Facebook 2pm	31 Conference Call Prayer Group 10am Bible Study on Facebook 7pm		

COVENANT

United Methodist Church

110 North Mulberry Street

Lancaster, PA 17603-3507

Office Telephone: 717.393.1561

Senior Pastor's Phone: 610-334-3440

Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m.

Church Staff

The Reverend Dr. Quentin E. Wallace, Senior Pastor

The Reverend Sally Ott, Visitation & Witness

The Reverend Dr. Guy Carrigan, Dir. of Evangelism

The Reverend Theodore C. Mefferd, Pastor Emeritus

Mr. Jeffrey McGary, Echoes Editor

Mrs. Chris Kimmich, Administrative Assistant

Email

Senior Pastor...pastorquentin@covenant-umc.com

Admin. Asst....chris@covenant-umc.com

Echoes Editor...jcmcgary@comcast.net

Web Page...<http://www.covenant-umc.com>

Covid 19 Prayer

When this is over,

may we never again

take for granted

A handshake with a stranger

Full shelves at the store

Conversations with neighbors

A crowded theater

Friday night out

The taste of communion

A routine checkup

The school rush each morning

Coffee with a friend

The stadium roaring

Each deep breath

A boring Tuesday

Life itself.

When this ends,

May we find

that we have become

more like the people

we wanted to be

we were called to be

we hoped to be

and may we stay

that way—better

for each other

because of the worst.

- Laura Kelly Fanucci

Covenant United Methodist Church
110 N. Mulberry St.
Lancaster, PA 17603-3507
Return Service Requested