

Covenant Call – September 2026

A Letter from Caitlin

Greetings Covenant Family,

Summer flew by in the Culp-Okpala household! I hope your season was filled with peace and joy. As a new school year begins, I want to share an important update and invitation.

On August 18th, Covenant's Session met with Olanda Carr and Erin Skinner from the Presbyterian Foundation to share our "Covenant stories"—why we are here and how God called us to this place. This was the first of three meetings as we embark on **Project Regeneration**, a consultative service through the Presbyterian Foundation that guides churches through prayerful discernment and financial analysis. <https://www.presbyterianfoundation.org/services/project-regeneration/>

Project Regeneration helps churches clarify their identity and discern God's calling. Typically, this process concludes by helping churches identify options for their future, including:

- **Age-in-place:** Use existing resources to stay in our location as long as fiscal health allows. (*I call this "hospice" for a church: continuing outreach while planning for the end of our current life cycle.*)
- **Share our campus:** Partner with another group to sustain ministry. (*We already do this with our sister church, EIPC.*)
- **Merge:** Join another church to form a new, healthy congregation.
- **Relocate:** Sell the property to find a space better suited to our needs. (*This aligns with a growing movement in Virginia to repurpose church land for affordable housing or other uses.*)
- **Reinvent:** Launch new ministries and reimagine our work (*we've started to do some of this but I wonder what else we might imagine and try*)
- **Restart:** Close the current congregation and re-launch as a new church.
- **Legacy Endowment:** Close the church and establish a perpetual endowment to fund ministries we support.

These options are not exhaustive, and our path forward will become clearer as we pray together. A central part of this project will be a **40-day prayer and discernment period** for our entire congregation. Please keep an eye out for details on prayer partners and the 40-day prayer booklets that will guide us.

I feel deeply hopeful knowing we are taking this step as a community. Please reach out to me if you want to chat more about this.

Blessings on the start of this season,

Caitlin

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Covenant Fall Worship* and Education!



Thursdays, September 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th 12pm – Zoom devotionals. We will be focusing on the upcoming Sunday's scripture lessons this year for our weekly devotionals.

Sunday, September 6th, 10am - Combined Communion worship w/EIPC focusing on labor.

Sunday, September 14th, 10am-12pm - Rally Day Worship Through Work - bring a brunch item to share - we'll be creating "kits" for Doorways. We'll eat, worship, celebrate communion, and do community service together.

Sunday, September 20th, 10am – Children Sunday School begins in the Sunday School room. The Sunday School lessons will follow the worship lectionary this year (this is new!), including Godly Play lessons when most effective.

Sunday, September 20th, 11am - Worship introducing Project Regeneration's 40 days of prayer & discernment that we participate in as a congregation from September 20th - October 29th

Sunday, September 27th, 11am - Worship continuing on the Project Regeneration journey

Sunday, October 4th, 11am World Communion Sunday - Combined worship w/EIPC, special instrument music that we're invited to join (see flyer), and after-church potluck where you're asked to bring a dish that reminds you of "home"

*** Always on Zoom as well**



“Wisdom” Will be the Focus of Bible Study This Fall

Our Old Testament includes a number of “wisdom” books—like Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon. This fall we will be studying “The Wisdom of Solomon,” which is part of the Old Testament canon in Catholic Bibles, but was considered non-canonical--part of the “Apocrypha”-- by those who shaped the Protestant Bible. What are the “Apocrypha” and why do Protestants differ from Catholics in defining sacred scripture? More importantly, what can this “wisdom” book add to what we can already learn from the books that are part of our canon?

We will explore these questions as we read through “The Wisdom of Solomon” together, beginning Tuesday, September 15 at 10 am on Zoom. The noted scholar N.T. Wright believes that this “apocryphal” book is a significant resource for understanding Jewish thought at the turn of the first millennium, perhaps before Jesus walked the earth and Paul wrote his letters to the early churches. All you need to participate is a copy of “The Wisdom of Solomon;” if your Bible does not include the Apocrypha, you can find a free copy of this “Wisdom” book online or purchase a copy on Amazon for less than \$10. After worship the next couple of Sundays, we will also put out some copies you may borrow from the church library or from personal libraries. If you have an extra copy to share, feel free to add your loaner to the collection.

If you're not already receiving the Bible study emails, watch for the Zoom link in the Thursday email updates (that comes with the Thursday Devotional link), or contact Susan Tarr (starr4321@aol.com or 703-527-7816).



Older Adult Resources at Covenant

Save-The-Date for a 2-part workshop on **Sundays November 1st and 8th after worship** --- we'll gather for lunch and a workshop hosted by Rev. Caitlin and a Death Doula who will facilitate conversations about advance healthcare directives, burial options, and planning your memorial service.

Caitlin is aware that there are multiple folks at Covenant who are discerning what's next for them in terms of care, moving, etc. In response, she is assembling an older adult resource hub. Here is the link to see what is growing there.

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1zHYXZZ5kIWmuhsCIwSsdzFA5v-AyZ54XhVDIpmUF6pM/edit?usp=sharing>

This is just the beginning!



Angklung Rehearsal for World Communion Sunday

Let's Make Beautiful Music Together! ♥

JOIN OUR ANGKLUNG PRACTICE!

PREPARING FOR WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY
WITH CHURCH OF COVENANT ON OCTOBER 4, 2026

We invite all church family and friends to be part of our Angklung practice as we prepare to glorify God together through this beautiful Indonesian musical tradition.

No experience? No problem!
Everyone is welcome!

Great news!
OUR FIRST PRACTICE IS
THIS SUNDAY!

AUGUST 23
12:00 PM
(AFTER WORSHIP)

LED BY
Ms. Trecia

Our wonderful coach will guide us step by step—come **learn**, **laugh**, and **make music** together!

Let's create harmony instruments in our hands, hearts in worship, and joy in community!

We can't wait to see you!

PRACTICE SCHEDULE

- 1** Sunday, August 23
12:00 PM (after worship)
- 2** Sunday, September 6
12:00 PM (after worship)
- 3** Sunday, September 20
3:00 PM (after worship)
- 4** Sunday, September 27
3:00 PM (after worship)

**EMMANUEL INDONESIA
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**
2666 Military Road,
Arlington, VA 22207

Questions?
Contact the Music Team
or the EIPC Church Office

*See you
Sunday!*



Prayer Partners



As Covenant prepares to embark on our Project Regeneration, which includes 40 days of praying and discerning together, we are also inviting members to join with one another as prayer partners. If you are interested in being assigned a partner, please write your name on one of the prayer cards provided in the Narthex and place in the offering plate. If you and another member have agreed to be prayer partners, write both your names on the card and place in the offering plate. If you join us on Zoom please email Kent to let him know what you would like to do at DirectorEducation.Covenant@gmail.com. All requests need to be submitted no later than Sunday, September 13th.



Mission Moment

On the morning of August 19th, Kent and Caitlin visited the Virginia Square Metro station to distribute Bagels & Blessings to the morning commuters passing through the station. They handed out baggies that included bagels, cream cheese, cheese spreaders, Covenant information cards, and refrigerator magnets with scripture blessings. Once again, all bags were claimed by commuters! As always, it's wonderful to connect with our fellow Arlingtonians and making their morning commutes a little bit brighter.

Covenant donated a check of \$475 and collected school supplies from August 2-16 for Bridges to Independence. Kent drove the check and supplies over to the Bridges headquarters where they were warmly and gratefully received by the staff.





We're glad you were born! Covenant sends Happy Birthday wishes to:

September 04 – **Clara Aasen** (2016)

October 08 – **Caitlin Culp**

September 09 – **Lourdes Gonzalez**

October 10 – **Wyatt Aasen**

September 11 – **Marita Dillery**

October 10 – **Riley Uemura**

September 20 – **Ursula Banzhaf**

October 15 – **Charles Okpala**

September 27 – **Don Whalen**

October 23 – **Emma Natiello**

October 24- **Joyce Tannehill**



Upcoming Events at Covenant

Check your weekly Thursday emails for all important upcoming events!

Worship Team Meeting: Tuesday, September 1st @ 7:30pm.

Session Meeting: Tuesday, September 8th.

Rally Day: Sunday, September 13th.

Project Regeneration Begins: September 20th.

Sunday School Begins: September 20th @ 10:00 am.

NCP Meeting (in-person): September 22nd.

Bible Study Begins: Tuesday, September 15th.

Session Meeting with Project Regeneration: Tuesday, September 15th.

Zoom Devotional: Thursdays at 12:00pm.

Walking Group: Sunday, September 27th; 8:00 am at Potomac Overlook Park.

Mission/Outreach Team Meeting: Monday, September 28th @ 7:30pm.



Connect With Covenant



<https://www.youtube.com/@churchofthecovenantarlingtonva>



<https://www.facebook.com/CovenantArlington>



<https://covenantchurcharlington.org/>

Weekly Zoom Devotional; Thursdays @ 12:00 pm:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81145588523?pwd=mk9SSHeaz8cApcDQyzpPSkYEJBtRKG.1>

Church Zoom link:

<https://cofc.zoom.us/j/86035210161?pwd=dUQ2Y2VwdThDUWVVT3B6VGZQldGQT09>



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***Office Hours: Tues, Weds, Thurs: 10am-3:00pm**