



Covenant News

September 2026



Genesis opens with a sentence most of us can recite without trying: "In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth." What's easy to skip past is what comes right after it. The earth is formless, empty, dark. And before God says a single word, something is already moving over that darkness — "a wind from God swept over the face of the waters." The Hebrew word there, *ruach*, means wind, breath, and spirit all at once. There's no clean way to translate it into just one. Presence, before speech. Something already there in what looks like nothing.

Then the speaking starts and a rhythm sets in: God says and it happens. God separates light from dark, water from sky, land from sea. Each time, a pause: "God saw that it was good." That phrase repeats seven times across the chapter, once for nearly everything made. There's no strain in it, no trial and error, no wrestling down some chaos monster the way other ancient creation stories tell it. Just a voice, and things listening to that voice, and a God who keeps stopping to notice that what's been made is actually good.

Humanity shows up differently than everything else in the chapter. Plants and animals are made "according to their kind." People are made "in the image of God" — the only thing in the whole account given that description. Along with the image

comes a task: to have dominion, to fill the earth. Not domination in the sense of conquest, but something closer to careful responsibility — tending what's been entrusted rather than exploiting it.

And then, after six days of speaking and separating and calling things good, God rests. Not because God is tired. The seventh day gets blessed and made holy — the only day in the whole account to receive that treatment. Rest isn't an afterthought tacked onto the work. It's part of the pattern itself.

Worth reading again this week, slower than a Sunday morning allows. See what catches your attention the second time through — the wind over the water, the goodness repeated, the rest that gets called holy.

Pastor Andrea



Covenant Lutheran Women's annual Rummage Sale will be Thursday September 10 and Friday September 11th from 10:00am-3:00pm and Saturday September 12th, from 10:00 am - 1:00 pm. Set up starts Tuesday September 8th and Wednesday September 9th. Please contact Barb Gaglione or Charlotte Zaranka if interested in helping or with questions.

Any Given Table

**Cook. Eat.
Encounter the Holy.**



**Thursday,
September 17, 2026**



6:00-7:30 PM



**Church of the Covenant
Maple Heights, Ohio**

Come cook a meal together, share it at the table, and stay for a simple time of worship and communion.

No experience needed. Just come hungry, ready to work with your hands, and open to whoever you sit next to.

No cost, but RSVP requested! Scan the QR code to register, or click [here](#) (digital only). You may also RSVP by emailing revandreamcdonough@gmail.com, or martin@covenantmaplehts.org



FREE community MEAL

Our next FREE community meal is Thursday, September 24 (5-6pm)! We invite you to come in through the back door into our fellowship hall and have a seat, as we serve you and our neighbors a FREE meal. However, if you don't need this yourself, please help us let others know of this wonderful opportunity to not only have some food, but conversations with our neighbors.

The poster features a background image of a large, empty stadium at night with red seats and bright lights. The main title 'VET CONNECT' is in large, bold, blue letters with a red star and wings graphic. Below it, 'VETERAN STAND DOWN' is written in smaller blue letters. The date and time 'SEPT. 12 2026 9AM - 2PM' are prominently displayed in a blue banner. A QR code is provided for scanning. The location 'HUNTINGTON BANK FIELD' is listed with the address '100 Alfred Lerner Way, Cleveland, Ohio 44114'. A list of 'FREE RESOURCES FOR VETERANS' includes VA Benefits Assistance, Disability Claims Support, Employment Opportunities, Housing Resources, Mental Health & Wellness, Food & Community Resources, Legal Assistance, Veteran Service Organizations, and Family Resources. The poster also mentions 'FREE ADMISSION' and 'OPEN TO ALL VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES'. At the bottom, there are logos for the United States Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Department of the Air Force, United States Space Force, and United States Coast Guard.

VET CONNECT
— VETERAN STAND DOWN —

★ **SEPT. 12 2026** ★ **9AM - 2PM** ★

★ **LOCATION:** ★
HUNTINGTON BANK FIELD
100 Alfred Lerner Way
Cleveland, Ohio 44114

FREE RESOURCES FOR VETERANS

- VA Benefits Assistance
- Disability Claims Support
- Employment Opportunities
- Housing Resources
- Mental Health & Wellness
- Food & Community Resources
- Legal Assistance
- Veteran Service Organizations
- Family Resources

Meet face-to-face with organizations ready to serve you. Whether you need help with benefits, employment, housing, healthcare, education, or simply want to reconnect with your veteran community, VetConnect brings trusted partners together under one roof.

★ **FREE ADMISSION** ★
OPEN TO ALL VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES

[HTTPS://CUYAHOGAVETS.ORG/VETCONNECT/](https://cuyahogavets.org/vetconnect/)



September Birthdays

9/2 William Mendat
9/11 Doris Akerley
9/16 Barb Gaglione
9/16 Jason Lanese

9/22 Madeline Ptak
9/26 Allan Treichel
9/28 Ethan Lockmiller
9/28 Evan Bernardo



9/24 Bishop Abraham Allende & Linda Godhardt Allende
Happy 20th Anniversary

Lutheran Church of the Covenant
Council Meeting Minutes for Tuesday, June 16, 2026
Meeting called to order at 7:09pm by President Ted Lockmiller.

Present: MaryKaye Bernardo, Vince Besednjak, Mike Davis, Jennifer Lasher-Dobush, Ted Lockmiller, Pastor Andrea, Gwen Susanek, Charlotte Zaranka
Absent - Chuck Dickey

Brian from Edward Jones Investments came to talk to us about our investments. Portfolio has done well. Bonds are producing income. The economy is doing pretty good. Strong consumer spending right now. Church is a 501C3 – at age 72 you can donate to church with no taxes. People do this at the end of a year to help keep down taxes or could also pay more for Medicare. Can donate \$750 per year to a religious school instead of paying state tax. Barb Gaglione's son is Principal at Luther Memorial grades K-8. Can gift a person \$19,000 per year and not be reported. 5-year lookback from date of gifting to give to kids. May possibly have Brian come to do a presentation on a Sunday after church to inform people.

Devotion and Prayer – MaryKaye - “Your Community Needs You”.

Council Business:

Minutes were approved/amended for meeting Tues, May 19. 2026.

Motion made by Jen - Seconded by Gwen.

Pastor’s Report – Written report – There will be a combined service with New Cornerstone 3 times a year. Good feedback from the last one. Next one may be at Master, August 30th? There will possibly be a Health and Wellness seminar after church for all 3 churches. Coffee, food, bakery, etc. Sunday, July 12 will be our assembly meeting after church service. Masters

Congregational retreat is scheduled after church on Sunday, June 28th . Same as Covenant already had.

Treasurer’s Report – Mike – Written report - Ted may talk to the congregation up front about money situation. Mike is concerned about the Visa bill for \$10,500. Will have to take \$10,000 out of the investment account. Need to put more in the bulletin about our money situation. Need \$2,000 per week coming in/\$8,000 a month. That is about \$50 per person. May have a Christmas in July to get much needed funds.

BOARDS:

Finance – Gwen – no writtten report. End of June giving statements will go out.

Social Ministry – MaryKay – no written report – Cuyahoga County Diversion Program, Juvenile Justice system will get kids to help with projects around the church. They need to keep them busy. They also have community service responsibilities. (minors) They would transport them in a van back and forth. Parents are supposed to bring them to the monthly community meal but don't usually.

Education – Chuck – Absent - No written report – Bible class and Sunday school off for the summer. Idea for kids during outdoor service – use sidewalk chalk to draw something pertaining to the sermon. Pick the best one and print in the bulletin.

Worship and Music – Jen – No written report – Idea during outdoor service - leave a section open in front row for cars to park for those who want to stay in cars during service, for hearing purposes.

Manager's Report - Vince – no written report – He turned the boiler off in May.

Old Business: May shed amt was \$91.41 - hugh pickup did not take place in time to make May figures. Could only take 10 bags first trip because truck was mostly full already.

New Business: MaryKaye – no written report - Help fund – best MaryKaye could do was \$325 for a used refrigerator for a family in Garfield Hts who does not have one. Then Jen mentioned a 3rd refrigerator in panty downstairs not being used; they could have that one. Shane, the lawn guy, said he would deliver it free of charge. Shelves will be put up in its place downstairs.

Next Council Meeting: Tues, Aug 18, 2026 – 7:15pm

Devotions/prayer: unknown for now

Meeting Adjourned: 9:45pm with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Charlotte Zaranka

Council Secretary

Comments: We can be generous with what we have for others

More open to doing things with others. We are rowing in the same direction.

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